January 2026

# European Social Charter (revised)

## European Committee of Social Rights

## Conclusions 2025

# NORTH MACEDONIA

*This text may be subject to editorial revision.*

The function of the European Committee of Social Rights is to rule on the conformity of the situation in States with the European Social Charter. In respect of national reports, it adopts “conclusions”; in respect of collective complaints, it adopts "decisions".

A presentation of this treaty as well as statements of interpretation formulated by the Committee appear in the General Introduction to the Conclusions.[1]

*The European Social Charter (revised) was ratified by North Macedonia on31 March 2005. The time limit for submitting the 11th report on the application of this treaty to the Council of Europe was 31 December 2024 and North Macedonia submitted it on 31 December 2024. On 9 July 2025, a letter was addressed to the Government requesting supplementary information regarding Articles 2§1, 3§2, 6§1 and 6§2. The Government submitted its reply on 20 August 2025.*

The present chapter on North Macedonia concerns 8 situations and contains:

– 1 conclusion of conformity: Article 2§1

– 7 conclusions of non-conformity: Articles 3§2, 4§3, 5, 6§1, 6§2, 6§4, 20

The next report from North Macedonia will be due on 31 December 2026.

[1]*The conclusions as well as state reports can be consulted on the Council of Europe's Internet site (www.coe.int/socialcharter).*

## Article 2 - Right to just conditions of work

*Paragraph 1 - Reasonable working time*

The Committee takes note of the information contained in the report submitted by North Macedonia.

The Committee recalls that for the purposes of the present report, States were asked to reply to targeted questions for Article 2§1 of the Charter (see the appendix to the letter, whereby the Committee requested a report on the implementation of the Charter in respect of the provisions falling within Group 1).

The assessment of the Committee will therefore concern the information provided by the Government in response to the targeted questions.

### *Measures to ensure reasonable working hours*

In the targeted question, the Committee asked for information on occupations, if any, where weekly working hours can exceed 60 hours or more, by law, collective agreements or other means, including information on the exact number of weekly hours that persons in these occupations can work; as well as information on any safeguards which exist in order to protect the health and safety of the worker, where workers work more than 60 hours.

In reply, the report states that full-time work may not exceed 40 hours per week. With the exception of work on projects of strategic national importance determined by law and due to the need of work continuity, overtime work may last longer than eight hours per week and 190 hours per year, upon prior written consent by the worker.

The report further states that for workers from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and workers from the National Security Agency, overtime work can be longer than 190 hours per year.

The Committee notes that workers performing specific functions in certain sectors and in exceptional circumstances may be allowed to exceed 16 daily working hours limit or 60 weekly working hours limit during short periods. However, certain safeguards must exist (Conclusions 2025, Statement of Interpretation on Article 2§1 on maximum working time).

### *Working hours of maritime workers*

In the targeted question, the Committee asked for information on the weekly working hours of maritime workers.

The report provides no information on working hours of maritime workers.

In response to a request for additional information, the report states that North Macedonia is a landlocked country with no access to the sea and does not possess a fleet of vessels sailing under its flag in international waters. Accordingly, the national legislation does not recognise the category of maritime workers, nor does it regulate their working conditions.

### *Law and practice regarding on-call periods*

In the targeted question, the Committee asked for information on how inactive on-call periods are treated in terms of work or rest time on law and practice.

In reply, the report states that inactive on-call is the characteristic of the healthcare and internal affairs sectors. In the healthcare sector, when the worker is on-call and is called to report at work, that period at work is considered working time. If a worker is on-call but is not called to perform work, that period is not considered working time but compensation is paid for being on-call. In the internal affairs sector, home duty implies an obligation to be at home or at a certain place on standby. For that time, a salary allowance of 5% per hour is paid.

The Committee notes that, with regard to inactive parts of on-call period during which no work is carried out and where the worker stays at home or is otherwise away from the employer‘s

premises, under no circumstances should such periods be regarded as rest periods in their entirety. However, there are two situations that need to be addressed. Firstly, the situation involves a worker who is on-call away from the employer‘s premises (at home or at another designated place by the employer) and who is under an obligation to be immediately available or available at very short notice and on a recurring basis to the employer, and where there are serious consequences in cases of the failure to respond. Such on-call periods, including where no actual work is performed (inactive on-call), must be classified as working time in their entirety and remunerated accordingly in order to be in conformity with the Charter. Secondly, the situation involves a worker who is away from the employer‘s premises (at home or at another place designated by the employer) and who has a certain degree of freedom to manage their free time and is allowed time to respond to work tasks (i.e. they do not have to report for work immediately or at a very short notice or on a recurring basis). In these circumstances, the inactive on-call periods amount neither to full-fledged working time nor to genuine rest periods. In such cases the situation may be considered as being in conformity with the Charter if the worker receives a reasonable compensation. The Committee will assess the reasonableness of the nature and level of such compensation on a case-by-case basis and will take into account circumstances such as the nature of the worker‘s duties, the degree of the restriction imposed on the worker and other relevant factors (Conclusions 2025, Statement of Interpretation on Article 2§1 on on-call periods).

*Conclusion*

The Committee concludes that the situation in North Macedonia is in conformity with Article 2§1 of the Charter.

**Article 3 - Right to safe and healthy working conditions**

*Paragraph 2 - Safety and health regulations*

The Committee takes note of the information contained in the report submitted by North Macedonia.

The Committee recalls that, for the purposes of the present report, States were asked to reply to targeted questions for Article 3§2 of the Charter (see the appendix to the letter, whereby the Committee requested a report on the implementation of the Charter in respect of the provisions falling within Group 1).

The assessment of the Committee will therefore concern the information provided by the Government in response to the targeted questions.

***The right to disconnect***

In a targeted question, the Committee asked for information on the measures taken to ensure that employers put in place arrangements to limit or discourage work outside normal working hours, including the right to disconnect; and on how the right not to be penalised or discriminated against for refusing to undertake work outside normal working hours is ensured.

Based on the report, it appears that North Macedonia does not have any regulations on the right to disconnect. However, the Law on Labour Relations contains strict rules on working time, including overtime and rest periods, as well as a prohibition on victimisation, subject to supervision and control by the State Labour Inspectorate.

The Committee recalls that, consistent with States Parties' obligations under Article 3§2, in order to protect the physical and mental health of persons teleworking or working remotely and to ensure the right of every worker to a safe and healthy working environment, it is necessary to fully enable the right of workers to refuse to perform work outside their normal working hours (other than work considered to be overtime and fully recognised accordingly) or while on holiday or on other forms of leave (sometimes referred to as the "right to disconnect") (Statement of interpretation on Article 3§2, Conclusions 2021).

The Committee concludes that the situation in North Macedonia is not in conformity with Article 3§2 of the Charter on the ground that workers do not have the right to disconnect.

***Personal scope of the regulations***

In a targeted question, the Committee asked for information on the measures taken to ensure that self-employed workers, teleworkers and domestic workers are protected by occupational health and safety regulations; and on whether temporary workers, interim workers and workers on fixed-term contracts enjoy the same standard of protection under health and safety regulations as workers on contracts with indefinite duration.

***Self-employed workers***

The report notes that North Macedonia has comprehensive occupational health and safety regulations in place that apply to workers, but it does not clarify whether these provisions also extend to self-employed workers. The report further notes that work is foreseen on a new and more inclusive Law on Occupational Safety and Health. In response to a request for additional information, the Government notes that labour regulations govern only work relationships established under an employment contract, thereby excluding self-employed workers. The Committee recalls that, under Article 3§2 of the Charter, all workers, including the self-employed, must be covered by health and safety at work regulations on the ground that employed and self-employed workers are normally exposed to the same risks (Conclusions 2003, Romania). The Committee therefore concludes that the situation in North Macedonia is not in conformity with Article 3§2 of the Charter on the ground that self-employed workers are not protected by occupational health and safety regulations.

***Teleworkers***

The report notes that North Macedonia has comprehensive occupational health and safety regulations in place that apply to workers, but it does not clarify whether these provisions also extend to teleworkers. The report further notes that work is foreseen on a new and more inclusive Law on Occupational Safety and Health.

The Committee notes that, under Article 3 of the Charter, teleworkers, who regularly work outside of the employer's premises by using information and communications technology, enjoy equal rights and the same level of protection in terms of health and safety as workers working at the employer's premises. States Parties must take measures to ensure that employers comply with their obligations to ensure safe and healthy working conditions for their teleworkers, such as: (i) assessing the risks associated with the teleworker's work environment; (ii) providing or ensuring access to ergonomically appropriate equipment and protective equipment; (iii) providing information and training to teleworkers on ergonomics, safe use of equipment, physical risks (e.g. musculoskeletal disorders, eye strain) and prevention of psychosocial risks (e.g. isolation, stress, cyberbullying, work-life balance, including digital disconnect, and electronic monitoring); (iv) maintaining clear documentation and records; (v) providing appropriate support through human resources or health and safety officers/services; and (vi) ensuring that teleworkers can effectively report occupational accidents or health and safety issues encountered during telework. States Parties must also take measures to ensure that teleworkers comply with the guidelines and regulations on health and safety and co-operate with employers and labour inspectorate or other enforcement bodies in this sense.

The Committee therefore concludes that the situation in North Macedonia is not in conformity with Article 3§2 of the Charter on the ground that it has not been established that teleworkers are protected by occupational health and safety regulations.

***Domestic workers***

The report notes that North Macedonia has comprehensive occupational health and safety regulations in place that apply to workers, but it does not clarify whether these provisions also extend to domestic workers. The report further notes that work is foreseen on a new and more inclusive Law on Occupational Safety and Health. In response to a request for additional information, the Government notes that occupational health and safety regulations apply in equal measure to domestic workers but provides no supporting information demonstrating their application in practice. The Committee notes from other sources that many domestic workers are deprived of labour protections because they lack a formal employment contract, even though they are in a genuine employment relationship (Gerovska Mitev, M. (2024). *Access for domestic workers to labour and social protection – North Macedonia*. European Social Policy Analysis Network, Brussels: European Commission). The Committee therefore concludes that the situation in North Macedonia is not in conformity with Article 3§2 of the Charter on the ground that it has not been established that domestic workers are protected by occupational health and safety regulations.

***Temporary workers***

The report notes that North Macedonia has comprehensive occupational health and safety regulations in place that apply to workers, but it does not clarify whether these provisions also extend to temporary workers, interim workers and workers on fixed-term contracts. The report further notes that work is foreseen on a new and more inclusive Law on Occupational Safety in Health. In response to a request for additional information, the Government notes that temporary workers enjoy the same standard of protection under occupational health and safety regulations as workers on contracts with indefinite duration.

*Conclusion*

The Committee concludes that the situation in North Macedonia is not in conformity with Article 3§2 of the Charter on the grounds that:

- workers do not have the right to disconnect;
- self-employed workers are not protected by occupational health and safety regulations;
- it has not been established that workers performing telework are protected by occupational health and safety regulations;
- it has not been established that domestic workers are protected by occupational health and safety regulations.

**Article 4 - Right to a fair remuneration**

*Paragraph 3 - Non-discrimination between women and men with respect to remuneration*

The Committee takes note of the information contained in the report submitted by North Macedonia.

The Committee recalls that in the context of the present monitoring cycle, States were asked to reply to the targeted questions for Article 4§3 of the Charter (see the appendix to the letter, whereby the Committee requested a report on the implementation of the Charter in respect of the provisions falling within Group 1).

The assessment of the Committee will therefore concern the information provided in the report in response to the targeted questions.

***The notion of equal work and work of equal value***

In its targeted question the Committee asked the report to indicate whether the notion of equal work and work of equal value is defined in domestic law or case law.

The Committee recalls that under Article 4§3 in order to establish whether work performed is equal or of equal value, factors such as the nature of tasks, skills, educational and training requirements must be taken into account. Pay structures shall be such as to enable the assessment of whether workers are in a comparable situation with regard to the value of work. The value of work, that is the worth of a job for the purposes of determining remuneration should be assessed on the basis of objective gender-neutral criteria, including educational, professional and training requirements, skills, effort, responsibility and working conditions, irrespective of differences in working patterns. These criteria should be defined and applied in an objective, gender-neutral manner, excluding any direct or indirect gender discrimination.

The Committee considers that the notion of equal work or work of equal value has a qualitative dimension and may not always be satisfactorily defined, thus undermining legal certainty. The concept of “work of equal value” lies at the heart of the fundamental right to equal pay for women and men, as it permits a broad scope of comparison, going beyond “equal”, “the same” or “similar” work. It also encompasses work that may be of a different nature, but is, nevertheless, of equal value.

States should therefore seek to clarify this notion in domestic law as necessary, either through legislation or case law (Conclusions XV-2, Article 4§3, Poland). No definition of work of equal value in legislation and the absence of case law would indicate that measures need to be taken to give full legislative expression and effect to the principle of equal remuneration, by setting the parameters for a broad definition of equal value.

The report states that pursuant to Article 6 of the Law on Labour Relations women and men must have equal opportunities and equal treatment regarding the pay for equal work. Moreover, according to Article 108 the employer shall be obliged to pay equal salary to workers for equal work with equal responsibilities at the position, regardless of their gender.

The Committee notes from CEACR Observation regarding Convention No. 100 (2024) that the process of amending the Law on Labour Relations, including Section 108(1) requiring “equal pay for equal work with equal job requirements”, is still ongoing. The new Law on Labour Relations will ensure that women and men be provided with equal opportunities and equal treatment in relation to, among others, equal payment for work of the same “value”. The CEACR noted in its observations that the Government defines this as “two persons of different sex who perform equal work of equal value under the same conditions, same qualifications, invested labour, results of labour and responsibility, have the right to equal payment.” In this regard, the CEACR considered that the concept of equal “value” should permit a broad scope of comparison, including “equal”, “the same” or “similar” work, and also encompass work that is of an entirely different nature, but which is nevertheless of equal *value*.

The Committee considers that Articles 6 and 108 of the Labour Law do not lay down parameters to give a broad definition to equal value and there is no case law. Therefore, the situation is not in conformity with the Charter.

***Job classification and remuneration systems***

In its targeted question the Committee asked the report to provide information on the job classification and remuneration systems that reflect the equal pay principle, including in the private sector.

The Committee considers that pay transparency is instrumental in the effective application of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value. Transparency contributes to identifying gender bias and discrimination and it facilitates the taking of corrective action by workers and employers and their organisations as well as by the relevant authorities. In this respect, job classification and evaluation systems should be promoted and where they are used, they must rely on criteria that are gender-neutral and do not result in indirect discrimination. Moreover, such systems must consider the features of the posts in question rather than the personal characteristics of the workers (UWE v. Belgium, complaint No. 124/2016, decision on the merits of 5 December 2019). Where gender-neutral job evaluation and classification systems are used, they are effective in establishing a transparent pay system and are instrumental in ensuring that direct or indirect discrimination on the grounds of gender is excluded. They detect indirect pay discrimination related to the undervaluation of jobs typically done by women. They do so by measuring and comparing jobs the content of which is different but of equal value and so support the principle of equal pay.

The Committee considers that States Parties should take the necessary measures to ensure that analytical tools or methodologies are made available and are easily accessible to support and guide the assessment and comparison of the value of work and establish gender neutral job evaluation and classification systems.

The Committee notes that the report does not provide any information on this issue. The Committee notes that no information was provided on this issue in Conclusion 2020 (Article 20) nor Conclusions 2022 (Article 4§3). The Committee notes from the Direct Request (CEACR) (2025) concerning Convention No. 100 that the Government also failed to provide information concerning job evaluation systems.

In this context, the Committee considers that it has not been demonstrated that there are job classification and remuneration systems in place in public and private sectors which guarantee the existence of a transparent and gender-neutral pay system.

***Measures to bring about measurable progress in reducing the gender pay gap***

In its targeted question the Committee asked the report to provide information on existing measures to bring about measurable progress in reducing the gender pay gap within a reasonable time.

The Committee considers that States are under an obligation to analyse the causes of the gender pay gap with a view to designing effective policies aimed at reducing it. The Committee recalls its previous holding that the collection of data with a view to adopting adequate measures is essential to promote equal opportunities. Indeed, it has held that where it is known that a certain category of persons is, or might be, discriminated against, it is the duty of the national authorities to collect data to assess the extent of the problem *(*European Roma Rights Centre v. Greece, Complaint No. 15/2003, decision on the merits of 8 December 2004, §27). The gathering and analysis of such data (with due safeguards for privacy and to avoid abuse) is indispensable to the formulation of rational policy (European Roma Rights Centre v. Italy,Complaint No. 27/2004, decision on the merits of 7 December 2005, §23).

The Committee considers that in order to ensure and promote equal pay, the collection of high-quality pay statistics broken down by gender as well as statistics on the number and type

of pay discrimination cases is crucial. The collection of such data increases pay transparency at aggregate levels and ultimately uncovers the cases of unequal pay and therefore the gender pay gap. The gender pay gap is one of the most widely accepted indicators of the differences in pay that persist for men and women doing jobs that are either equal or of equal value. In addition, to the overall pay gap (unadjusted and adjusted, the Committee will also, where appropriate, have regard to more specific data on the gender pay gap by sectors, by occupations, by age, by educational level, etc (University Women of Europe (UWE) v. Finland, Complaint No. 129/2016, decision on the merits of 5 December 2019, §206).

The Committee has held that where the States have not demonstrated a measurable progress in reducing the gender pay gap, the situation amounted to a violation of the Charter (University Women of Europe (UWE) v. Finland, Complaint No. 129/2016, decision on the merits of 5 December 2019).

According to the report there are no recent analyses or studies on the gender pay gap. The date from the State Statistical Office show that women earn less than men in all wage categories. However, over time, the wages of women have steadily increased.

The report states that the Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2027 with the Action Plan for Gender Equality outline measures for improving the inclusiveness in the labour market and addressing gender inequality, one of the objectives being the reduction of the gender gap in economic participation of women in the labour market.

The Committee considers that States are under an obligation to analyse the causes of the gender pay gap with a view to designing effective policies aimed at reducing it (University Women of Europe (UWE) v. Ireland, Complaint No. 132/2016, decision on the merits of 5 December 2019, § 186). The Committee recalls its previous holding that the collection of data with a view to adopting adequate measures is essential to promote equal opportunities. Indeed, it has held that where it is known that a certain category of persons is, or might be, discriminated against, it is the duty of the national authorities to collect data to assess the extent of the problem *(*European Roma Rights Centre v. Greece, Complaint No. 15/2003, decision on the merits of 8 December 2004, §27). The gathering and analysis of such data (with due safeguards for privacy and to avoid abuse) is indispensable to the formulation of rational policy (European Roma Rights Centre v. Italy, Complaint No. 27/2004, decision on the merits of 7 December 2005, §23).

The Committee also notes from the Country Gender Equality Profile of North Macedonia (UN Women, 2023) that in terms of gender statistics, there is a need in investing to increase the capacities of the State Statistical Office to enhance the work on gender indicators, by introducing new indicators and systematising the collection of data with line ministries, primarily aligned with the SDG gender-related indicators.

The Committee notes that the report does not contain any statistics on the gender pay gap. It therefore considers that the Government has failed to collect and analyse data on the gender pay gap. Therefore the situation is not in conformity with the Charter.

*Conclusion*

The Committee concludes that the situation in North Macedonia is not in conformity with Article 4§3 of the Charter on the grounds that:

- there is no broad definition of work of equal value in law or in case law;
- it has not been established that job classification and remuneration systems are applied in practice;
- the Government has failed to collect and analyse reliable statistical data on gender pay gap.

## Article 5 - Right to organise

The Committee takes note of the information contained in the report submitted by North Macedonia.

The Committee recalls that in the context of the present monitoring cycle, States were asked to reply to the targeted questions for Article 5 of the Charter (see the appendix to the letter, whereby the Committee requested a report on the implementation of the Charter in respect of the provisions falling within Group 1).

The assessment of the Committee will therefore concern the information provided in the report in response to the targeted questions.

### *Positive freedom of association of workers*

In its targeted question a), the Committee asked for information on measures that have been taken to encourage or strengthen the positive freedom of association of workers, particularly in sectors which traditionally have a low rate of unionisation or in new sectors (e.g., the gig economy).

In reply, the report indicates that the Government, in cooperation with the social partners, the International Labour Organisation and the European Union implemented two projects for the promotion of the social dialogue at the bipartite and tripartite level, as well as for the strengthening of the capacities of trade unions and employers' associations. According to the report, within the context of these projects, activities were carried out, which led to the strengthening of the role of the Economic and Social Council, as well as a growth of the number of unionised workers.

The report mentions in these respects the following measures: the translation and publication of the Compilation of Decisions of the Committee on Freedom of Association of the ILO; the development of materials to promote the freedom of association: organisation of seminars on the application of the ILO Convention C87 and the ILO Convention C98 for judges, prosecutors and lawyers; as well as for trade unions, employers' associations, government representatives and members of Parliament; the revision of the Macedonian version of the modules for learning the right at work for young people; seminars on labour rights for students and youth sections of trade unions; the organisation of discussions in the context of the Economic and Social Council regarding the comments of the ILO supervisory bodies.

The Committee notes from outside sources (Institute for European Policy, Mapping Platform Work in North Macedonia, Background paper, 2025) that platform workers in North Macedonia are largely excluded from union representation and collective bargaining due to their classification as self-employed rather than workers. The Law on Labor Relations and the Constitution guarantee unionisation rights only for workers, leaving platform workers without formal protections. The Committee also notes, from the same sources, that the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, the Ministry of Finance, and the Employment Agency have expressed openness to addressing freelancers' needs. However, the labour laws remain rigid and lack provisions for new forms of employment.

The Committee further notes, from the same sources, that as part of broader efforts to formalise informal work, the Strategy for Formalising the Informal Economy, 2023–2027, introduces targeted measures to support freelancers and other independent workers, including those engaged in platform work. However, in the absence of any further information in the report concerning the implementation and outcome of those measures, the Committee concludes that it has not been established that measures have been taken to encourage or strengthen the positive freedom of association of workers, particularly in sectors which traditionally have a low rate of unionisation or in new sectors.

### *Legal criteria for determining the recognition of employers' organisations for the purposes of social dialogue and collective bargaining*

In reply to the Committee's request for information concerning the legal criteria for determining the recognition of employers' organisations for the purposes of social dialogue and collective bargaining (targeted question b)), the report indicates that a representative employers' association for the purpose of participating in collective bargaining, is an association that meets the following conditions: To be registered in the Registry of Employers' Associations kept by the ministry in charge of labour-related matters; at least 10% of the total number of employers in the private sector to be members of the association or the employers that are members of the association to employ at least 10% of the total number of workers in the private sector.

In addition, the legal framework provides for two other alternative ways of acquiring representativeness: in case no employers' association meets the above-mentioned criteria, the domestic law allows the employers' organisation that has the largest number of members to participate in collective bargaining. The second alternative way to participate in collective bargaining assumes a "contractual association" of two or more employers' associations.

### *Legal criteria for determining the recognition and representativeness of trade unions in social dialogue and collective bargaining*

In a targeted question, the Committee requested information on the legal criteria for determining the recognition and representativeness of trade unions in social dialogue and collective bargaining. It particularly requested information on the status and prerogatives of minority trade unions; and the existence of alternative representation structures at company level, such as elected worker representatives (targeted question c)).

According to the report, the legal framework for regulating the representativeness of trade unions for the purpose of participating in collective bargaining provides for three levels of determining representativeness, namely, at national level, sectoral level and employer level. The determination of representativeness for national and sectoral levels depends on the fulfilment of two cumulative conditions: the trade union must be registered in the registry kept by the ministry in charge of labour related matters; and the union must represent at least 20% of the workers in the public/private sector.

According to the report, at the enterprise level, given that the law does not provide for an obligation for the direct and immediate registration of trade unions, the only condition for recognition of representativeness at the employer level is to have at least 20% of the number of workers of the employer. The legal framework provides for two other alternative ways of acquiring representativeness: in case no trade union meets the legal requirements, the trade union with the largest number of members is allowed to participate in collective bargaining. Also, a "contractual association" of two or more non-representative trade unions may also participate in collective bargaining.

With regard to to trade unions that are not representative (minority trade unions), the report indicates that they have the right to advocate, represent, promote and protect the rights of their members, as well as to accede to already concluded collective agreements. According to the report, the trade union is the only form of workers' representation at the enterprise level.

### *The right of the police and armed forces to organise*

In a targeted question, the Committee requested information on whether and to what extent members of the police and armed forces are guaranteed the right to organise (targeted question d)).

According to the report, under the domestic legislation, there is no limitation of the right to organise in the state and public administration including the police and members of the armed forces. This, according to the report, is confirmed by the number of registered trade unions for police and armed forces.

*Conclusion*

The Committee concludes that the situation in North Macedonia is not in conformity with Article 5 of the Charter on the ground that it has not been established that measures have been taken to encourage or strengthen the positive freedom of association of workers, particularly in sectors which traditionally have a low rate of unionisation or in new sectors.

## Article 6 - Right to bargain collectively

*Paragraph 1 - Joint consultation*

The Committee takes note of the information contained in the report submitted by North Macedonia.

The Committee recalls that for the purposes of the present report, States were asked to reply to the targeted questions for Article 6§1 of the Charter (see the appendix to the letter, whereby the Committee requested a report on the implementation of the Charter in respect of the provisions falling within Group 1).

The assessment of the Committee will therefore concern the information provided in the report in response to the targeted questions.

### *Measures to promote joint consultation*

In a targeted question, the Committee asked as to what measures are taken by the Government to promote joint consultation.

The report states that the Government encourages consultations with social partner through the Economic and Social Council (ESC), which in the past period has positioned itself as the most significant body of the tripartite social dialogue.

The Committee recalls that it in its previous conclusion, the Committee considered the situation in North Macedonia to be in conformity with Article 6§1 of the Charter, pending receipt of the information as to whether joint consultation in the public sector was institutionalised (Conclusions 2014, 2018, 2022). The Committee notes that, according to the report, at the initiative of the ESC, after 15 years, in July 2023, following intensive negotiations, the trade unions and the Government signed the General Collective Agreement for the Public Sector, where they agreed on the most problematic issues in the negotiations and determined the dynamics of increasing wages in the public sector. The Committee concludes that joint consultations have effectively taken place in the public sector.

The Committee also notes that the Decent Work Programme 2023-25 signed by the government, the social partners, and the ILO in July 2023 aims at fostering an inclusive labor market through strengthened social dialogue (Decent Work Country Programme 2023-25 North Macedonia | International Labour Organization).

### *Issues of mutual interest that have been the subject of joint consultations and agreements adopted*

In a targeted question, the Committee asked as to what issues of mutual interest have been the subject of joint consultation during the past five years, what agreements have been adopted as a result of such discussions, and how these agreements have been implemented.

According to the report, key issues related to the economic situation in the country caused by the health, energy and military crisis (anti-crisis measures) were reviewed at the sessions of the ESC. The ESC continued to play a major role in determining the minimum wage and in discussing wage policies in the public sector.

More specifically, workers' and employers' representatives have been conducting months-long intensive negotiations to find an appropriate solution for determining the minimum wage for 2022. The successfully conducted social dialogue resulted in a harmonised position of the ESC to amend the criteria for harmonising and to increase the minimum wage, and to related subsidies to the employers, and the law on Minimum Wage was amended accordingly.

In response to a request for additional information, the report states that collective bargaining in the private sector has not resulted in the signing of any agreements over the past five years. However, consultations for the conclusion of a new General Collective Agreement in the private sector, specifically in the field of economic activity, commenced last year [2024].

The report emphasises that the ESC remains operational and regularly addressed issues within the socio-economic domain. These include: the determination of the annual minimum wage in the country; annual operational plans for active employment programs and labor market services; amendments to the Law on Labour Relations, including the introduction of Sunday as a non-working day for all; and the ratification of ILO Conventions C167, C176, and C190, among others. In parallel, over the past six years, a working group established by the ESC with the participation of both representative and non-representative social partners has been preparing a new Law on Labour Relations.

According to another source consulted by the Committee (European Commission, 'Commission Staff Working Document: 2024 Report on North Macedonia'), the ESC met five times between 15 June 2023 and 1 September 2024.

***Joint consultation on the digital and the green transition***

In a targeted question, the Committee asked if there has been any joint consultation on matters related to (i) the digital transition, or (ii) the green transition.

According to the report, the ESC, in cooperation with the ILO, has started activities for raising the awareness of the concept and key principles of just transition and green jobs, as well as the integration of dignified work and just transition in the Nationally Determined Contributions.

The Committee recalls that joint consultation within the meaning of Article 6§1 is consultation between workers and employers or the organisations that represent them (Conclusions I (1969), Statement of Interpretation on Article 6§1.) The Committee notes that North Macedonia has recently launched cooperation activities which aim at promoting strengthening social dialogue in the areas of the green transition and the digital transition. However, there is no information of such dialogue having already taken place. The Committee takes note of the Government's additional information according to which the agenda of the working group established by the ESC to prepare a new law on labour relations "specifically addressed work performed through the use of information and communication technologies". In the absence on more detailed information on joint consultation in this area, the Committee concludes that North Macedonia is not in conformity with Article 6§1 of the Charter with regard to joint consultations on matters related to the digital and the green transition.

*Conclusion*

The Committee concludes that the situation in North Macedonia is not in conformity with Article 6§1 of the Charter on the ground that it has not been established that joint consultations have been held on issues relating to the digital and the green transition.

**Article 6 - Right to bargain collectively**

*Paragraph 2 - Negotiation procedures*

The Committee takes note of the information contained in the report submitted by North Macedonia.

The Committee recalls that, for the purposes of the present report, States were asked to reply to targeted questions for Article 6§2 of the Charter (see the appendix to the letter, whereby the Committee requested a report on the implementation of the Charter in respect of the provisions falling within Group 1).

The assessment of the Committee will therefore concern the information provided by the Government in response to the targeted questions.

***Coordination of collective bargaining***

In a targeted question, the Committee asked for information on how collective bargaining was coordinated between and across different bargaining levels. Specifically, the question sought details on factors such as *erga omnes* clauses and other mechanisms for the extension of collective agreements, as well as to the favourability principle and the extent to which local or workplace agreements could derogate from legislation or collective agreements concluded at a higher level.

The report notes that collective bargaining in the private sector takes place at the national, sectoral and enterprise levels. Agreements concluded at the national and sectoral levels are referred to as general collective agreements, while those concluded at the enterprise level are termed individual collective agreements. Accordingly, the report distinguishes between “general” (national-level), “special” (sectoral-level), and “individual” (enterprise-level) collective agreements. Negotiations are conducted between representative employers’ organisations, individual employers, or the relevant State agencies, on the one hand, and trade union associations or individual trade unions, on the other, depending on the level concerned.

According to the report, general, as well as 'individual', collective agreements have *erga omnes* effect. General collective agreements apply immediately and are binding on all employers and workers in the private or public sector, as the case may be. Individual collective agreements apply to the entire enterprise, irrespective of whether it has one or more subsidiaries, and to all workers, regardless of their trade union membership. By contrast, special collective agreements have a limited personal scope, applying exclusively to the members of the signatory trade unions and employers’ organisations.

The report notes further that, as a general rule, lower-level sources of labour law may not establish conditions less favourable to workers than those provided by higher-level sources. The favourability principle also applies in cases of conflict between different types of collective agreements or between collective agreements and individual employment contracts. Accordingly, any lower-level legal source that provides less favourable working conditions is void, and the terms prescribed by the immediately higher-level source apply.

***Promotion of collective bargaining***

In a targeted question, the Committee asked for information on the obstacles hindering collective bargaining at all levels and in all sectors of the economy (e. g. decentralisation of collective bargaining). The Committee also asked for information on the measures taken or planned to address those obstacles, their timeline, and the outcomes expected or achieved in terms of those measures.

According to the report, the right to collective bargaining is not restricted based on the size of the employer or the occupation of the workers concerned. However, in practice, collective bargaining is hindered by low rates of unionisation, particularly in small and medium-sized

enterprises, which constitute the majority of the national economy. At the same time, the Government highlights a recent increase in the number of collective agreements concluded in the public sector.

The Committee notes that the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (CEACR) has recently expressed a range of concerns in relation to the implementation of ILO Convention no. 98 in North Macedonia (International Labour Organization. (2025). Observation (CEACR) – adopted 2024, published 113rd ILC session (2025). Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98) – North Macedonia (Ratification: 1991). NORMLEX). Notably, these refer to the impartiality of the committee responsible for deciding on the representativeness of the social partners for the purposes of collective bargaining and the provision of the Labour Code requiring enterprise-level trade unions to obtain an approval from a higher-level union to obtain legal personality and engage in collective bargaining. At the same time, the CEACR noted a sharp rise in the number of workers covered by collective agreements between 2019 and 2021 including, in particular, a General Collective Agreement for workers in the public sector, a General Collective Agreement for the private sector of the economy, 20 branch collective agreements and 146 enterprise-level collective agreements. The Committee also notes that the collective bargaining coverage rate was estimated to be 49% in 2022 and that North Macedonia is currently implementing a Decent Work Programme with support from the ILO, that has measures aimed, among others, at improving social dialogue (International Labour Organization (2023). *Decent Work Country Programme 2023-2025: Republic of North Macedonia*. ILO).

***Self-employed workers***

In a targeted question, the Committee asked for information on the measures taken or planned to guarantee the right of self-employed workers, particularly those who are economically dependent or in a similar situation to workers, to bargain collectively.

The report does not provide the requested information. The Committee notes, based on other sources, that platform workers in North Macedonia are largely excluded from union representation and collective bargaining due to their classification as self-employed rather than workers (EUROPEUM Institute for European Policy. Background paper - Mapping platform work in North Macedonia, 31 March 2025).

The Committee recalls that rapid and fundamental changes in the world of work have led to a proliferation of contractual arrangements designed to avoid the formation of employment relationships and to shift risk onto the labour provider. As a result, an increasing number of workers who are de facto dependent on one or more labour engagers fall outside the traditional definition of a worker (*Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) v. Ireland*, Complaint No. 123/2016, decision on the merits of 12 September 2018, §37). In establishing the type of collective bargaining protected by the Charter, it is not sufficient to rely solely on distinctions between workers and the self-employed; the decisive criterion is whether an imbalance of power exists between providers and engagers of labour. Where providers of labour have no substantial influence on the content of contractual conditions, they must be given the possibility of improving that imbalance through collective bargaining (*ICTU v. Ireland*, §38).

The Committee concludes that the situation in North Macedonia is not in conformity with Article 6§2 of the Charter on the ground that it has not been established that the right to collective bargaining in respect of self-employed workers, particularly those who are economically dependent or in a similar situation to workers, has been sufficiently promoted.

*Conclusion*

The Committee concludes that the situation in North Macedonia is not in conformity with Article 6§2 of the Charter on the ground that it has not been established that the right to collective bargaining in respect of self-employed workers, particularly those who are economically dependent or in a similar situation to workers, has been sufficiently promoted.

**Article 6 - Right to bargain collectively**

*Paragraph 4 - Collective action*

The Committee takes note of the information contained in the report submitted by North Macedonia.

The Committee recalls that for the purposes of the present report, States were asked to reply to targeted questions for Article 6§4 of the Charter (see the appendix to the letter, whereby the Committee requested a report on the implementation of the Charter in respect of the provisions falling within Group 1).

In its previous conclusion (Conclusions 2022), the Committee held that the situation in North Macedonia was not in conformity with Article 6§4 of the Charter on the ground that the restrictions on the right of the police to strike go beyond the limits set by Article G of the Charter. The assessment of the Committee will therefore concern the information provided by the Government in response to the targeted questions, including the previous conclusion of non-conformity as related to the targeted questions.

**Prohibition and Restrictions on the right to strike and a minimum service requirement**

In its targeted questions, the Committee asked States Parties to indicate the sectors in which the right to strike is prohibited as well as to provide details on relevant rules and their application in practice, including relevant case law. In addition, the Committee asked States Parties to indicate the sectors where there are restrictions on the right to strike as well as to provide details on relevant rules and their application in practice, including relevant case law.

According to the report, under the Law on Public Sector Employees public sector workers have the right to strike provided that a minimum level of service is upheld to maintain smooth performance of the relevant institution's tasks and the necessary level of rights and interests of citizens and legal entities. Under the Law on Public Sector Employees, public sector workers are: workers that work in state and local government bodies and other state bodies and institutions that perform activities in the field of education, science, healthcare, culture, labour, social and child protection, sports, as well as in other activities of public interest established by law, and organised as agencies, funds, public institutions and public enterprises established by the Republic of Macedonia or by the municipalities, the City of Skopje and by the municipalities in the City of Skopje.

Minimum levels of service as well as the number of workers that are required to provide such minimum service are determined by the act of the head of the respective institution in accordance with the law and collective agreement.

The Committee considers that the range of sectors covered is overly extensive, it has not been demonstrated that all the sectors in which the right to strike of public workers are restricted are essential to the community and that a strike could pose a threat to the rights and freedoms of other to the public interest, to national security and/to public health.

Therefore, the Committee concludes that the situation is not in conformity with Article 6§4 of the Charter on the grounds that the range of sectors in which the right to strike may be restricted is too extensive and it has not been established for the full range of sectors that the restrictions on the right to strike fall within the limits permitted by Article G of the Charter.

The report states that under the Law on Public Enterprises the strike board and the workers participating in the strike in public enterprise are required to ensure that a minimum level of service necessary to prevent putting at risk the life, health and economic and social security of the citizens is maintained and that the essential economic and other activities continue to be performed. The strike board has a duty to cooperate with the director of the public enterprise during the strike to ensure the minimum level of service.

The Committee notes from the report that the employer and the strike committee shall ensure that during a strike the minimum services requirement is maintained. The Committee recalls

that employers should not have the power to unilaterally determine the minimum service required during a strike.

According to the report, under the Law on Internal Affairs the workers of the Ministry of Internal Affairs may exercise the right to strike under the condition that the regular performance of internal affairs is not significantly disturbed. The minister or the worker authorised by the minister has a duty to ensure the necessary functioning of the organisational units during the strike in order to prevent harmful consequences. Under the Law on Internal Affairs the following activities and tasks must be performed during a strike: operation of the telecommunication and information systems and crypto protection system in the case of an urgent need, issuance of personal documents (travel documents, identity cards, traffic and driver's license) to citizens in an urgent cases and other activities and tasks as may be determined by specific legislation. No further information has been submitted on the existence of any specific legislation further restricting the right to strike.

Pursuant to the Law on Internal Affairs, in the Ministry of Internal Affairs can prohibit strikes in a state of war, emergency or crisis. Moreover in the event of a complex security situation, disturbance of the public order and peace on a wider scale, natural disasters and epidemics or threats to life and health and to property on a wider scale, no more than 10% of the workers of the Ministry of Internal Affairs may participate in the strike and the strike may not last more than three days.

As regards police officers, an absolute prohibition on the right to strike can be considered to be in conformity with Article 6§4 only if there are compelling reasons justifying it in the specific national context in question (European Confederation of Police (EuroCOP) v. Ireland, Complaint No. 83/2012, decision on the admissibility and merits of 2 December 2013, §211). Where restrictions to the right to strike of police officers are so far reaching as to render the right to strike ineffective, such restrictions go beyond those permitted by Article G of the Charter. This includes situations where police officers may exercise the right to strike, but only provided certain tasks and activities continue to be performed during the strike period, defined extensively so as to render the exercise of the right to strike ineffective (Conclusions 2022, North Macedonia).

The report does not provide any information on the right to strike of police officers. The Committee recalls that in its previous conclusions it found that the situation in North Macedonia was not in conformity with Article 6§4 on the grounds that the restrictions on the right of the police to strike go beyond the limits permitted by Article G of the Charter (Conclusions 2022).

In the absence of any new information the Committee reiterates its previous conclusion.

According to the report, under the Law on Defence a strike in the armed forces is prohibited in a state of a crisis, emergency and war, as well as where the armed forces participate under international agreements in the activities, training, peace or humanitarian operations in or outside of the Republic of North Macedonia. Otherwise, members of the armed forces may strike on the condition the strike does not endanger the combat readiness and life and health of its members. No more than 10% of the armed forces may participate in the strike at the same time and the strike may not last more than three days. The participants in the strike are due to remain at their work posts and perform activities necessary to maintain the functioning of the army.

The right to strike of members of the armed forces may be subject to restrictions under the conditions of Article G of the Charter, if the restriction is established by law, and is necessary in a democratic society for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others or for the protection of public interest, national security, public health or morals. This includes a requirement that the restriction is proportionate to the aim pursued. The margin of appreciation accorded to States in terms of the right to strike of the armed forces is greater than that afforded to States Parties in respect of the police (European Organisation of Military

Associations (EUROMIL) v. Ireland, Complaint No. 112/2014, decision on the merits of 12 September 2017, § 114-116).

Having regard to the special nature of the tasks carried out by members of the armed forces, the fact that they operate under a system of military discipline, and the potential that any industrial action disrupting operations could threaten national security, the Committee considers that the imposition of an absolute prohibition on the right to strike may be justified under Article G, provided the members of the armed forces are have other means through which they can effectively negotiate the terms and conditions of employment, including remuneration (European Organisation of Military Associations (EUROMIL) v. Ireland, Complaint No. 112/2014, decision on the merits of 12 September 2017, §117; Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro (CGIL) v. Italy, Complaint No. 140/2016, decision on the merits of 22 January 2019, §152; European Organisation of Military Associations (EUROMIL) v. Portugal, Complaint No. 199/2021, decision on the merits of 11 September 2024, §100).

**Prohibition of the strike by seeking injunctive or other relief**

The Committee asked the States Parties to indicate whether it is possible to prohibit a strike by obtaining an injunction or other form of relief from the courts or another competent authority (such as an administrative or arbitration) and if the answer is affirmative, to provide information on the scope and number of decisions in the past 12 months.

1. The report provides no information in relation to these questions.

*Conclusion*

The Committee concludes that the situation in North Macedonia is not in conformity with Article 6§4 of the Charter

even taking into account the possibility of subjecting the right to collective action to restrictions under Article G, on the grounds that:

- the restrictions on the right of the police to strike go beyond the limits permitted by Article G of the Charter;
- the range of sectors in which the right to strike may be restricted is too extensive and it has not been established for the full range of sectors that the restrictions on the right to strike fall within the limits permitted by Article G of the Charter.

## Article 20 - Right to equal opportunities and equal treatment in matters of employment and occupation without discrimination on the grounds of sex

The Committee takes note of the information contained in the report submitted by North Macedonia.

The Committee recalls that in the context of the present monitoring cycle, States were asked to reply to the targeted questions for Article 20 of the Charter (see the appendix to the letter, whereby the Committee requested a report on the implementation of the Charter in respect of the provisions falling within Group 1).

The assessment of the Committee will therefore concern the information provided in the report in response to the targeted questions.

The Committee recalls that the right to equal pay without discrimination on the grounds of sex is also guaranteed by Article 4§3 and the issue is therefore also examined under this provision for States Parties which have accepted Article 4§3 only.

### *Women's participation in the labour market and measures to tackle gender segregation*

In its targeted question the Committee asked the report to provide information on the measures taken to promote greater participation of women in the labour market and to reduce gender segregation (horizontal and vertical) as well as information/statistical data showing the impact of such measures and the progress achieved in terms of tackling gender segregation and improving women's participation in a wider range of jobs and occupations.

Under Article 20 States Parties should actively promote equal opportunities for women in employment, by taking targeted measures to close the gender gap in labour market participation and employment. They must take practical steps to promote equal opportunities by removing *de facto* inequalities that affect women's and men's chances. The elimination of potentially discriminatory provisions must therefore be accompanied by action to promote quality employment for women.

States must take measures that address structural barriers and promote substantive equality in the labour market. Moreover, the States should demonstrate a measurable progress in reducing the gender gap in employment.

In its assessment of national situations, the Committee examines the evolution of female employment rates as well as the gender employment gap and considers whether there has been a measurable progress in reducing this gap. The Committee notes, that according to Eurostat in 2025 the female employment rate in the EU 27 stood at 71.3%, up from 70% in 2023, compared to 81% and 80.3% for males, respectively, revealing a gender employment gap of around 10%.

As regards the measures taken to promote greater participation of women in the labour market and to reduce gender segregation the report refers to the Gender Equality Strategy 2022-2027 and the National Employment Strategy 2021-2027.

According to the report the Republic of North Macedonia has implemented a range of active employment measures and services aimed at increasing the employability of all unemployed persons, including women and other vulnerable groups. These measures are part of the Operational Plan for Active Employment Programmes and Services, coordinated by the Employment Service Agency.

Furthermore, a variety of programmes have been deployed to support the integration of women into the labour market. In 2023, a total of 1,487 individuals benefited from the self-employment programme, out of which 555, or 37.1%, were women. Another significant measure was the programme for creating new jobs through wage subsidies, which provided employment support to 1,360 unemployed persons, 777 of whom were women, representing

57.1%. Similarly, through the sub-programme for employment and growth in legal entities, 278 women (51%) received employment support.

Training programmes for the development of digital skills were attended by 700 unemployed persons, of whom 350, or 47.8%, were women. In parallel, the employment engagement programme focused on involving persons with low qualifications in infrastructure and environmental protection projects at the local level, with women comprising 41.7% of participants.

According to data referred to in the report, 46% of the participants in employment programmes in 2023 were women. In total, 59,590 employment-related services were provided through the operational plan, and 27,779 of these (48%) were provided to women.

The report states that the employment gender gap was reduced to 17.8% in 2023 due to an increase in the employment rate of women and a decrease in the working age population. The employment gender gap is the highest for women with a low level of education. The total active population in North Macedonia was 791,647, of whom 638,296 were employed and 103,351 were unemployed. Women made up only 42.8% of the active population, and the number of employed women stood at 292,168—37.9% of the total employed population.

The Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men provides for ensuring balanced representation of men and women in employment measures. A key objective is to include young people under 29 years of age in at least 40% of programme activities. Support for female entrepreneurship has also been a priority. Within the framework of developing partnerships and enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), subsidies were granted to women-owned and managed businesses. In 2023, 22 women entrepreneurs received subsidies, and 13 women entrepreneurs were supported under the programme for subsidising crafts. In the tourism sector, eight female-owned enterprises received subsidies for the first time under the Programme for the Development of Tourism. Moreover, the government adopted a programme for social security support of women engaged in agricultural activities.

The Committee considers that the Government has taken supportive measures to promote the participation of women in the labour market. However, gender employment gap remains high at 17.8% and therefore, there is insufficient measurable progress. Therefore, the situation is not in conformity with the Charter on this point.

### *Effective parity in decision-making positions in the public and private sectors*

In its targeted question, the Committee asked the national report to provide information on measures designed to promote an effective parity in the representation of women and men in decision-making positions in both the public and private sectors; the implementation of those measures; progress achieved in terms of ensuring effective parity in the representation of women and men in decision-making positions in both the public and private sectors.

Article 20 of the Revised European Social Charter guarantees the right to equal opportunities in career advancement and representation in decision-making positions across both public and private sectors. To comply with Article 20, States Parties are expected to adopt targeted measures aimed at achieving gender parity in decision-making roles. These measures may include legislative quotas or parity laws mandating balanced representation in public bodies, electoral lists or public administration.

The Committee underlines that the effectiveness of measures taken to promote parity in decision-making positions depends on their actual impact in closing the gender gap in leadership roles. While training programmes for public administration executives and private sector stakeholders are valuable tools for raising awareness, their success depends on whether they lead to tangible changes in recruitment, promotion, and workplace policies. States must demonstrate measurable progress in achieving gender equality by providing statistical data on the proportion of women in decision-making positions.

In its assessment of national situations, the Committee examines the percentage of women in decision-making positions in parliaments and ministries and considers whether a measurable progress has been made in increasing their share. The Committee notes from EIGE that 32.5% of the members of Parliaments were women in the EU27 in 2023 and 32.8% in 2025.

The report refers to the Law on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men that establishes an obligation for public institutions to give preference to equally qualified persons belonging to the less represented gender, until equal representation is achieved in all bodies and at all levels in the legislative, executive and judicial authorities.

The Electoral Code mandates that at least 40% of candidates on party lists must be women. It also requires that at least one out of every three seats, as well as one out of every ten seats, be allocated to female candidates. Furthermore, if a female Member of Parliament vacates her seat, she must be replaced by another woman. These provisions apply to candidate lists for both municipal councils and the Council of the City of Skopje. Additionally, the Law on Political Parties obliges political parties to uphold the principle of gender equality within their organizational structures and operations.

The report highlights the impact of gender quota implementation on women's parliamentary representation. Following the 2024 elections, the country elected a female President, and women now constitute 39.2% of the Assembly.

In public enterprises men participate with a percentage of 57,47 % in municipalities, in bodies within ministries with 57,5%, in ministries with 52,08% as well as in the independent bodies of the state administration 52,26%. In the judiciary women constitute 60,6 % of all current professional judges. Women make up more than half of the professional judges in the first and second instance courts. As for the Supreme Court women represent 47,1 % of Court presidents.

The Committee considers that there has been a measurable progress in the representation of women in decision-making positions.

### *Women's representation in management boards of publicly listed companies and public institutions*

In its targeted question the Committee asked the national report to provide statistical data on the proportion of women on management boards of the largest publicly listed companies and on management positions in public institutions.

The Committee considers that Article 20 of the Charter imposes positive obligations on States to tackle vertical segregation in the labour market, by means of, inter alia, promoting the advancement of women in management boards in companies. Measures designed to promote equal opportunities for women and men in the labour market must include promoting an effective parity in the representation of women and men in decision-making positions in both the public and private sectors (Conclusions 2016, Article 20, Portugal). States must demonstrate a measurable progress achieved in this area.

In its assessment of national situations, the Committee examines the percentage of women on boards and in executive positions of the largest publicly listed companies and considers whether a measurable progress has been made in increasing their share. The Committee notes from EIGE that the percentage of women on boards of large publicly listed companies amounted to 33.2% in 2023 and 35.1% in 2025 in the EU 27. As regards the percentage of female executives, it stood at 22.2% in 2023 and 23.7% in 2025.

The Committee notes that the report does not provide any information on this issue. Therefore, it concludes that it has not been established that a measurable progress has been made to promote women's representation on management boards of the largest publicly-listed companies.

*Conclusion*

The Committee concludes that the situation in North Macedonia is not in conformity with Article 20 of the Charter on the grounds that:

- insufficient measurable progress has been made in reducing the gender employment gap;
- it has not been established that a measurable progress has been made to promote women's representation on management boards of the largest publicly-listed companies.