

North Macedonia

2025

National Child Protection Legislation

National Legislation

- Age of Child: **Under 18 years of age**
[Law on Family](#)
Article 10
 1. The parental right shall cease with the majority of the child or in other manner prescribed by this law.
 2. The majority shall be attained when the individual reaches 18 years of age, when the major person acquires his/her working competence.

- Age of Consent: **14 years of age**
[Criminal Code of North Macedonia](#)
Article 193-b

Whosoever by computer-communication means, by scheduling a meeting or in any other manner entices a child who has not turned 14 to sexual assault or other sexual act or to production of children pornography, and by such intention directly meets the juvenile, shall be sentenced to imprisonment of one to five years.

- Age of Marriage: **18 years of age** (if 16 and want to marry, they have parental permission and a court must also agree they are fit to marry)
[Criminal Code of North Macedonia](#)
Article 197
 1. An adult who lives in an unwed partnership with a child who has reached the age of 14, but not the age of 18, shall be sentenced to imprisonment of three months to three years.
 2. The sentence referred to in paragraph 1 shall also be imposed to a parent, adoptive parent, or guardian, who allows a child who has reached the age of 14, but not the age of 18, to live in an unwed partnership with another, or who induces him to do so.
 3. If the crime referred to in paragraph 2 is committed out of covetousness, the offender shall be sentenced to imprisonment of one to five years.
 4. If the crime referred to in paragraphs (1) and (2) is committed with a minor who has reached the age of 16, but not the age of 18, the prosecution shall be initiated upon a proposal.

- [Law on Family](#)
Article 16
 1. A person who has not reached 18 years of age cannot stipulate a marriage.

2. The competent court, in a non-suit procedure, shall allow to a person who has reached 16 years of age to stipulate a marriage, if it has established that the person has reached the required the bodily and mental maturity for the exercise of the rights and duties which come to happen in a marriage, and upon previously obtained opinion of a Medical Institution and afforded professional advice in the Centre of Social Work.

- **Age of Criminal Responsibility: 14 years of age**

- [Criminal Code of North Macedonia](#)

- **Article 6-a**

1. The Criminal Code shall not be applied against a juvenile who at the time of committing the act, anticipated by law to be a crime, has not turned the age of fourteen.
2. The provisions of this Code shall be applied against juveniles and younger adults for crimes anticipated by law or by international agreements ratified in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia, unless otherwise determined by law.

- **Extraterritoriality & Dual (or Double) Criminality**

- [Criminal Code of North Macedonia](#)

- **Article 118**

The criminal legislature shall also be applicable to a citizen of the Republic of Macedonia when he commits a crime abroad, except for the crimes listed in Article 117, if he finds himself on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia or is extradited.

- **Article 119**

1. The criminal legislature shall also be applicable to a foreigner who commits a crime outside the territory of the Republic of Macedonia but directed against her or against her citizen, also when this does not concern the crimes listed in Article 117, if he finds himself on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia or is extradited.
2. The criminal legislature shall also be applicable to a foreigner who commits a crime abroad, against a foreign country or a foreigner, who according to that legislature may be sentenced to five years of imprisonment or to a more severe punishment, in case he finds himself on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia, and is not extradited to the foreign country, Unless otherwise determined by this Code, in such a case the court may not pronounce a more severe punishment than the one prescribed by law of the country of commission of the crime.

- **Art. 120 Special conditions for prosecution**

1. If in the cases referred to in Article 116, the criminal procedure is initiated or completed in a foreign country, the prosecution in the Republic of Macedonia shall be initiated only after obtaining approval from the Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Macedonia.
2. In the cases referred to in Articles 118 and 119, no prosecution shall be initiated if:
 - a) the offender has served out the punishment to which he was sentenced abroad,

- b) a safety measure involving imprisonment has been applied with regard to the offender abroad,
 - c) the offender was acquitted abroad with a sentence that has become legally valid, or the sentence has reached time-barred status or was pardoned and
 - d) according to the foreign law, a crime is prosecuted upon request from the damaged party and no such request was submitted.
3. In the cases referred to in Articles 118 and 119, prosecution shall be initiated only when the crime is punishable according to the law of the country in which the crime was committed. When in the cases referred to in Article 118 and 119, paragraph 1, there is no sentence for the committed crime according to the law in the country of commission, prosecution may be initiated only after approval from the Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Macedonia.
 4. Only after approval from the Public Prosecutor of the Republic of Macedonia may prosecution be initiated in the Republic of Macedonia in the cases referred to in Article 119, paragraph 2, regardless of the law of the country where the crime was committed, if this concerns a crime which, at the time it was committed, was considered to be a crime according to the general legal principles, recognized by the international community.
 5. In the cases referred to in Article 116, the prosecution of a foreigner may be handed over to a foreign country, under the condition of reciprocity.

Article 121

The custody, the arrest during the extradition procedure, as well as the sentence or the safety measure involving imprisonment which the offender served according to a sentence by a foreign court, shall be reckoned in the sentence which shall be pronounced by the domestic court for the same crime, and if the sentences are not of the same kind, the reckoning shall be done according to the assessment of the court.

Article 121-a

When, based on an international agreement, the criminal sanction pronounced abroad shall be enforced in the Republic of Macedonia, the provisions stipulated in this Code regarding probation release, rehabilitation, time-barring, amnesty, and pardon shall be applied accordingly.

- **Mandatory reporting requirements**

- [Criminal Code of North Macedonia](#)

- **Article 28-a**

...

2. The legal entity shall be held liable for the criminal act, resulting in significant property benefit or in significant damages caused to another person, committed by its employee or representative of the legal entity if:

...

c. the administrative body, the management body or the supervisory body has not prevented the criminal act or covered it or failed to report it before the initiation of a criminal procedure against the perpetrator.

Article 136

A person who does not give help to a person who finds himself in a situation dangerous for life, even though he could have done this without the danger to himself or others, shall be punished with a fine, or with imprisonment of up to one year.

Article 363

1. A person who knows that the perpetration of a crime is being prepared, for which according to the law a punishment of imprisonment of five years or more may be pronounced, and who did not report this during the time when it was still possible to prevent its perpetration, while the crime was attempted or committed, shall be punished with a fine, or with imprisonment of up to one year.
2. If the preparation of a crime was not reported, for which according to law a punishment may be pronounced of life imprisonment, the perpetrator shall be punished with imprisonment of one to five years.
3. A person shall not be punished for not reporting the preparations for a crime from paragraph (1) for whom the perpetrator is a marital partner, blood relation of the first line, brother or sister, adoptive parent or adoptive child, or a person living with the perpetrator in a permanent extra-marital community.

Article 364

1. An official person who consciously fails to report a crime that they found out about while performing their duty, if according to the law a punishment of imprisonment of five years or more may be pronounced for this crime, while the crime is prosecuted in line of duty, shall be punished with a fine, or with imprisonment of one to three years.
2. The punishment defined in paragraph (1) shall apply to the person that shall intentionally avoid reporting a criminal activity from Articles 123, 141, 142, 158, 162, 165, 165-1, 186, 187, 188, 215, 216, 231, 232, 236, 237, 238, 258, 259, 268, 269, 273, Articles 305-326, 348, 349, Articles 353-362, 382, 383, 394, 394-a, 396, and Articles 403-42212.
3. A person shall not be punished for not reporting the preparations for a crime from paragraphs (1) and (2), for whom the perpetrator is a marital partner, blood relation of the first line, brother or sister, adoptive parent or adoptive child, or a person living with the perpetrator in a permanent extra-marital community.

- **Statute of Limitations**
[Criminal Code of North Macedonia](#)

Article 96-n

1. Criminal prosecution of a legal entity cannot be initiated after:
 - a) three years from the commission of the crime wherefore a fine or imprisonment sentence of up to three years has been prescribed;
 - a. five years from the commission of the crime wherefore an imprisonment sentence of more than three years has been prescribed and
 - b. ten years from the commission of the crime wherefore an imprisonment sentence of more than five years has been prescribed.

2. Time-barring of enforcement of a fine or sentence - revoking of permit, license, concession, authorization or other right determined with a separate law shall start after three years from the day of the verdict imposing them has become legally valid.
3. Time-barring of enforcement of sentences consisting of prohibitions shall start after the expiry of the time period wherefore they have been pronounced.
4. In regard to the termination and the course of the time-barring of the criminal prosecution and the course and the termination of the time-barring of the enforcement of the fine and the secondary sentences, the provisions of Articles 107 through 112 of this Code shall be applied.

Article 107

1. Unless otherwise determined by this Code, criminal prosecution may not be undertaken when the following expires:
 - a. 30 years from the commission of the crime, for which according to the law, a life imprisonment may be pronounced,
 - b. 20 years from the commission of the crime, for which according to the law, imprisonment of more than ten years may be pronounced,
 - c. ten years from the commission of the crime, for which according to the law, imprisonment of more than five years may be pronounced,
 - d. five years from the commission of the crime, for which according to the law, imprisonment of more than three years may be pronounced,
 - e. three years from the commission of the crime, for which according to the law, imprisonment of more than one years may be pronounced,
 - f. two years from the commission of the crime, for which according to the law, imprisonment of one year or a fine may be pronounced.
2. If several sentences are prescribed for a crime, the time barring is determined according to the most severe prescribed sentence.

▪ **Prohibition to hold certain positions**

[Criminal Code of North Macedonia](#)

Article 33

The following punishments may be imposed upon criminally liable perpetrators:

...

- c. Prohibition to exercise a profession, a business activity or duties.

Article 38-b. Prohibition to exercise professional, business activity or duty

1. Court may decide to prohibit the exercise of certain professional or individual business activity, of duties or affairs related to disposing, using, managing or handling or keeping property to a perpetrator punished to a sentence of imprisonment or to a conditionally sentenced one, if the perpetrator has abused his/her profession, business, or duties for the purpose of committing the crime and if the nature of the crime committed and the circumstances under which it has been committed, raise a suspicion that the perpetrator would abuse their position to commit another crime.

2. The punishment referred to in paragraph (1) of the present Article shall also refer to the prohibition to perform the duty to an official person, a responsible person within a legal entity, or a person performing activities of public interest.
3. In the cases determined with law, a compulsory imposition of the prohibition may be prescribed, along with the imprisonment penalty, when the perpetrator has been sentenced to imprisonment with a duration of a minimum of six months.
4. The court shall determine the duration of the prohibition provided in paragraph (1), this period of time may neither be shorter than one nor longer than ten years as of the day the verdict has come into effect. Time served in prison shall not be considered as included in the period of time determined for the prohibition itself.
5. When ruling a conditional sentence, the Court may decide that the conditional sentence be revoked should the perpetrator violate the prohibition to exercise a profession, a business activity or duty.

Article 362-b

Under the conditions determined in Article 38-b of this Code, the court shall impose the offender prohibition to perform profession, activity or duty in duration of one to ten years, for the crimes referred to in Articles 357, 358, and 359 - (giving or receiving a bribe).

- **Criminal Law - Defamation**

In 2012, North Macedonia decriminalized defamation, and it is no longer treated as a criminal offense, but rather as a civil matter. See, [Law on Civil Liability for Insult and Defamation](#).

- **Employment Law**
Labor Relations Law
Article 108

3. Termination of Employment Enforced by Law

Employment shall terminate through law enforcement in the following instances:

...

- 2) when according to the provisions of law, i.e., on the basis of the effective decisions issued by the court or another organ, employees are prohibited to perform certain tasks and duties and can not be appointed to other positions - on the date of issuing the effective decision;
 - 3) when the employees are absent from work over six months due to a confined prison sentence - on the enforcement date of the sentence; ...
- **Privacy Law/Data Protection Law**
Criminal Code of North Macedonia
Article 149
 1. A person who collects, processes or uses personal data from a citizen without his permission, contrary to the conditions determined by law, shall be punished with a fine, or with imprisonment of up to one year.
 2. The punishment from paragraph (1) shall apply to a person who penetrates a computerized information system of personal data, with the intention of using

- them in order to attain some benefit for them or for another, or to inflict some harm upon another.
3. If the crime from paragraphs (1) and (2) is committed by an official person while performing their duty, they shall be punished with imprisonment of three months to three years.
 4. The attempt shall be punishable.
 5. If the criminal act from the present Article is committed by a legal entity, the person shall be punished with a fine.

Article 157

1. A person who in their own name or in the name of another, without authorization, publishes, shows, reproduces, distributes, performs, transmits, or in some other way encroaches upon the author's right or some related right of another, respectively author's work, performance, or object of related right, shall be punished with a fine, or with imprisonment of from six months to one year.
2. A person that commits the criminal act referred to in paragraph (1) through a computer system, shall be punished with prison for a duration of from six months to three years.

Article 251-b.

The person who intends for them or for another to acquire illegal property gain by entry of inaccurate data in a computer or information system, by modification, erasing or covering computer data, by counterfeiting an electronic signature or in another manner causes inaccurate result during electronic processing and data transfer, shall be punished with a fine of three years of imprisonment.

Sexual Offenses Against Children

Criminal Code of North Macedonia

Art. 65 a Medical and Pharmacological Treatment

1. The court may impose a measure medical and pharmacological treatment on an offender of sexual assault upon a child of up to 14 years of age if there is a threat he to continue committing such acts
2. If life sentence is prescribed for the act, the court may sentence the offender to imprisonment of 40 years, provided that he agrees to medical and pharmacological treatment which lasts until the end of his life or until the time the court considers necessary for the treatment.
3. If long-lasting sentence of 40 years is prescribed for the act, the court may sentence the offender to imprisonment of 20 years, provided that he agrees to medical and pharmacological treatment which lasts until the end of his life or until the time the court considers necessary for the treatment.
4. If imprisonment of 20 years is prescribed for the act, the court may sentence the offender to minimum imprisonment for the act, provided that he agrees to medical and pharmacological treatment which lasts until the end of his life or until the time the court considers necessary for the treatment.

5. The measure referred to in paragraph (1) of this Article shall be served in freedom in specialized medical institutions upon serving the sentence of imprisonment and the supervision over the enforcement of the measure shall be conducted by the Directorate for Execution of Sanctions. The Directorate for Execution of Sanctions shall at least once in six months notify the court about the execution of the measure referred to in paragraph (1) of this Article and about the need of its extension or termination
6. If the offender in the cases referred to in paragraphs (2), (3) and (4) of this Article does not subject to the measure medical and pharmacological treatment or voluntarily stops the treatment, the court may determine to coercively implement the measure in a health or another specialized institution.
7. As an exception to paragraphs (2), (3) and (4) of this Article, the court shall mandatorily impose the measure referred to in paragraph (1) of this Article even without the consent of the offender if the offender recommitments the act. The measure medical and pharmacological treatment shall last until the end of the life of the offender or until the time the court assesses is necessary for the treatment.
8. The manner of serving the measure medical and pharmacological treatment shall be regulated in detail by the Law on Execution of Sanctions.

Article 106-a.

1. Data on the legally valid court decision for pronounced safety measure shall be submitted by the court to the state administration body competent for issues in the field of health, for the purpose of entry in the health records, as well as to the state administration body competent for issues in the field of labor and social policy, for the purpose of entry in a special register.
2. The court shall also submit data to the state administration body competent for issues in the field of labor and social policy for persons sentenced by a legally valid verdict for crimes against the gender freedom and morality and for the crime referred to in Article 418-d of this Code against juveniles, for which a specific register is being kept.
3. The data referred to in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this Article may be exclusively used for the purpose of protection of the health of the persons being pronounced safety measures or for the purpose of protection of the juveniles' rights, under the conditions and according to a procedure determined by law.

Article 143

Whosoever, while performing a duty, harasses, intimidates, insults, or generally acts against another in such a manner as to humiliate the human dignity and personality, shall be sentenced to imprisonment of one to five years.

Article 186

1. A person who by the use of force or threat to directly attack upon the life or body of another or upon the life or body of someone close to that person, forces them to intercourse, shall be punished with imprisonment of three to ten years.
2. If the criminal act referred to in paragraph (1) from the present Article has been committed against a child under the age of fourteen, the perpetrator shall be punished with a minimum of ten years of imprisonment.

Article 188

1. A person who commits statutory rape or some other sexual act upon a child under the age of 14 shall be punished with imprisonment of a minimum of 12 years.
2. If because of the crime from paragraphs (1) and (2) a severe body injury, death or some other severe consequences were caused, or the crime was perpetrated by several persons, or in an especially cruel and degrading manner, or due to hatred the perpetrator shall be punished with imprisonment of at least fifteen years or life imprisonment.
3. The perpetrator of the criminal act referred to in paragraph (2) of the present Article shall be imposed with a punishment of prohibition to perform profession, activity, or duty under the conditions stated in Article 38-b from the present Code.

Article 189

A person who by misusing their position induces another, who is subordinate or dependent in relation to them or maltreats, intimidates or treats him/her with the same intentions, in a manner that is regarded as humiliating to human dignity and human personality, to intercourse or to some other sexual act shall be punished with imprisonment of a minimum of five years.

Article 190

...

2. A person who performs a sexual act in front of a child under the age of 14, or who induces a child to perform such an act in front of them or in front of another, shall be punished with imprisonment of three to eight years.

Article 191

1. A person who recruits, instigates, stimulates or entices another to prostitution, or a person who in any kind of way participates in handing over another to someone for performing prostitution, shall be punished with imprisonment of five to ten years.
2. A person who because of profit enables another to use sexual services shall be punished with a fine, or with imprisonment of three to five years.
3. If the criminal act referred to in paragraphs (1) and (2) has been perpetrated upon a minor, the perpetrator shall be punished with imprisonment of a minimum of ten years.

Article 193

Whosoever sells, shows, or by public display in any other way makes available pictures, audio-visual or other objects with pornographic content to a child who has not turned 14, or shows him a pornographic performance, shall be sentenced to imprisonment of six months to three years.

1. If the crime is committed through the mass media, the offender shall be sentenced to imprisonment of three to five years.
2. The sentence referred to in paragraph (2) shall be imposed to whosoever abuses a child who has turned 14 in the production of audio-visual pictures or other objects with pornographic content or for pornographic presentations, as well as whosoever participates in the presentation.
3. If the crime referred to in paragraph (3) of this Article is committed against a child who has not turned 14, the offender shall be sentenced to imprisonment of at least four years.

4. Whosoever coerces a child who has turned 14 to preparation and production of photos or other objects with pornographic contents or to pornographic presentation, shall be sentenced to imprisonment of minimum ten years.
5. If the crime referred to in paragraph (4) of this Article is committed against a child who has not turned the age of 14, the offender shall be sentenced to imprisonment of minimum ten years.
6. If the crime referred to in this Article is committed by a legal entity, it shall be fined.
7. The objects referred to in paragraphs (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), and (7) of this Article shall be seized.

Article 193-a.

Whosoever produces child pornography for the purpose of its distribution or transfer or offer or in any other manner to make the child pornography available, shall be sentenced to imprisonment of a minimum of five years.

1. Whosoever purchases child pornography for himself or for another, or whosoever owns child pornography shall be sentenced to imprisonment of five to eight years.
2. If the crime referred to in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this Article is committed via an information system or other mass communication media, the offender shall be sentenced to imprisonment of a minimum of eight years.
3. If the crime referred to in this Article is committed by a legal entity, it shall be fined.

Article 193-b.

Whosoever by computer-communication means, by scheduling a meeting or in any other manner entices a child who has not turned 14 to sexual assault or other sexual act or to production of child pornography, and by such intention directly meets the juvenile, shall be sentenced to imprisonment of one to five years.

Article 418-d.

1. Whosoever induces a child to sexual activities or enables sexual activities with a child or persuades, transports, transfers, buys, sells, or offers for sale, obtains, supplies, harbors, or accepts a child for the purpose of exploiting him in sexual activities for money or other forms of compensation or other forms of sexual exploitation, pornography, forced work or servicing, begging or exploitation for an activity prohibited by law, slavery, forced marriages, forced fertilization, illegal adoption, or forces consent as a mediator for child adoption, illegally transplants human organs, shall be sentenced to imprisonment for at least eight years.
2. Whosoever commits the crime of paragraph (1) by use of force, serious threat, delusion or other form of forcing, kidnapping, defraud, abuse of the position or pregnancy, powerlessness or physical or mental disability of another, or by giving and receiving money of other benefit for the purpose of obtaining consent of a person controlling another person, or the act is committed over a child younger than 14 years shall be sentenced to imprisonment of minimum ten years.
3. Whosoever uses or enables another to use sexual services or other type of exploitation of a child knowing, or being obliged to know that he is a victim of human trafficking, shall be sentenced to minimum imprisonment of eight years.

4. The user of sexual services given by a child younger than 14 years shall be sentenced to imprisonment of at least 12 years.
5. Whosoever seizes or destroys an ID, passport or another's personal identification document, for the purpose of committing the crime referred to in paragraphs (1) and (2), shall be sentenced to imprisonment of minimum four years.
6. If the crime referred to in paragraphs (1), (2), (3) and (4) of this Article is committed by an official person while performing his service, he shall be sentenced to at least ten years of imprisonment.
7. The consent of the child for the actions anticipated in paragraph (1) is not significant to the existence of the crime of paragraph (1).
8. A child - victim of human trafficking shall not be punished in the cases where the law foresees punishment of a child, when the offender forced him to commit a crime, if such action is a direct consequence of his position as a victim.
9. If the crime referred to in this Article is committed by a legal entity, it shall be fined.
10. The immovables, objects, and means of transport used for the commission of the crime, shall be seized.

[Law on the Protection of Children \("Official Gazette of the Republic of North Macedonia" No. 23/2013\)](#)

I Basic Provisions; Art. 12

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2. All forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse are prohibited of children (harassment, child pornography, child prostitution), violently pimping, selling or trafficking of children, psychological or physical violence and mistreatment, punishment or other inhumane treatment, all types of exploitation, commercial exploitation and abuse of the children they violate basic human freedoms and rights and the rights of the child.

▪ **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)/ Female Genital Circumcision**

[Criminal Code of North Macedonia \(Unofficial Translation\)](#)

Article 129-a.

1. Whoever, in whole or in part, performs mutilation, infibulation or any other type of mutilation of the female external genital organ, will be sentenced to imprisonment from six months to five years.
2. With the punishment prescribed in paragraph (1) of this Article will be punished the one who will force the woman to undergo the actions included in paragraph (1) of this article.
3. Whoever invites or helps a woman to undergo actions prescribed in paragraph (1) of this Article, will be punished with a fine, or with imprisonment from six months to three years.
4. If the offense according to paragraphs (1), (2), and (3) of this Article is committed out of hatred, or against a girl, or a serious bodily injury is caused to the woman, the perpetrator will be sentenced from one to eight years in prison.
5. If due to the criminal offense from paragraphs (1), (2), (3), and (4) of this article, the death of a woman or girl has occurred, the perpetrator will be sentenced to prison from one to ten years.

▪ **Child/Early/Forced Marriage**

Criminal Code of North Macedonia

Article 197

1. An adult who lives in an extra-marital union with a child who has reached the age of fourteen years, but not the age of eighteen, shall be punished with imprisonment of three months to three years.
2. The punishment from paragraph 1 shall apply also to a parent, adoptive parent, or guardian, who allows a child who has reached the age of fourteen but not yet eighteen years, to live in an extra-marital community with another, or who induces them to this.
3. If the crime from paragraph (2) is committed from self-interest, the perpetrator shall be punished with imprisonment of one to five years.
4. If the act from paragraphs (1) and (2) has been committed with a minor who reached the age of sixteen, but has not yet reached the age of eighteen, the prosecution shall be initiated by proposition.

Article 418-d.

1. Whosoever induces a child to sexual activities or enables sexual activities with a child or persuades, transports, transfers, buys, sells, or offers for sale, obtains, supplies, harbors, or accepts a child for the purpose of exploiting him in sexual activities for money or other forms of compensation or other forms of sexual exploitation, pornography, forced work or servicing, begging or exploitation for an activity prohibited by law, slavery, forced marriages, forced fertilization, illegal adoption, or forces consent as a mediator for child adoption, illegally transplants human organs, shall be sentenced to imprisonment for at least eight years.