### Country Care Review:
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

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**II. Positive aspects**

4. The Committee commends the State party for:

   (b) Its renewed ban on the institutionalization of children and its commitment to end the placement of children under 3 years of age in institutions;

   (c) The adoption of urgent measures to improve the situation at the Demir Kapija institution, the process of developing a new strategy for deinstitutionalization as a first step and the alignment of anti-discrimination law policies;

**III. Principal areas of concern and recommendations**

**B. Specific rights (arts. 5–30)**

**Children with disabilities (art. 7)**

13. The Committee is concerned about:

   (a) The absence of specific legislation on the rights of children with disabilities in the State party;

   (b) The lack of criminalization of violence against children with disabilities, including corporal punishment and sexual violence, in all settings;

   (c) The expiration of the National Strategy for Equality and Non-discrimination 2005–2015 and the non-inclusion of the rights of children with disabilities, including the principle of the best interest of the child, in national policies, plans and programmes for children;

   (d) The prevalent stigma, discrimination and harmful stereotypes against children with disabilities, and the enduring approach to seclusion and institutionalization;

   (e) The lack of early assistance and provision of services for independent living;

   (f) The absence of mechanisms to ensure the participation of children with disabilities in decision-making processes affecting their lives, particularly the lack of mechanisms to ensure the right of
14. The Committee recommends that the State party:
   (a) Adopt specific legislation on the rights of children with disabilities;
   (b) Criminalize violence against children with disabilities in all settings, including corporal
   punishment and sexual violence, and adopt and implement measures for sanctioning the
   perpetrators;
   (c) Adopt a new National Strategy for Equality and Non-discrimination that includes specific
   measures to protect the rights of children with disabilities, based on sex, age, gender and
   ethnicity;
   (d) Mainstream the rights of children with disabilities, including the principle of the best interest of
   the child, in national policies, plans, programmes and compliance frameworks that apply to
   children and young people in general;
   (e) Adopt measures to address stigma and discrimination against, and stereotypes that are harmful
   to, children with disabilities;
   (f) Provide continuous support for children with disabilities, from early assistance to independent
   living;
   (g) Promote comprehensive strategies and mechanisms for the full participation of children with
   disabilities in consultations, decision-making processes and policy development, through
   representative organizations of persons with disabilities, in order to promote an adequate choice
   of services that best fit the needs of the child, taking into consideration the child’s evolving
   capacities.

Liberty and security of the person (art. 14)

25. The Committee is concerned about the legal provisions allowing for deprivation of liberty, non-
   consensual treatment and restraint of persons with psychosocial disabilities in mental health facilities.

26. The Committee recommends that, in line with its guidelines on article 14 (2015), the State party repeal
   all legal provisions allowing for involuntary deprivation of liberty on the basis of impairment and
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<th>involuntary treatment of persons with psychosocial disabilities, and further develop recovery-oriented and community-based rehabilitation services for persons with psychosocial disabilities.</th>
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**Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse (art. 16)**

27. The Committee is concerned that the Law on Prevention of and Protection against Domestic Violence is not sufficiently explicit on the prohibition of exploitation and abuse of and violence against persons with disabilities. It is also concerned that there are not enough shelters for victims of family violence and that the services provided there are not always accessible to persons with disabilities.

28. The Committee recommends that the State party take measures to:

   (a) Review the existing legislation and policies to incorporate remedies and sanctions that prevent, in both the public and the private spheres, all forms of violence against and abuse and ill-treatment of persons with disabilities, particularly women, girls and children with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities;
   (b) Train the personnel working in shelters on the human rights-based approach to disability;
   (c) Ensure that shelters and centres for victims of violence and the services provided there are accessible to persons with disabilities;
   (d) Conduct investigations into all allegations of violence against and abuse of persons with disabilities, especially those with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities, and suspicious deaths of residents in institutions.

**Living independently and being included in the community (art. 19)**

31. The Committee notes with concern:

   (a) The weakness of the deinstitutionalization process and the emphasis placed on the resettlement of persons with disabilities in small group homes instead of independent living arrangements;
   (b) The absence of services and provision of personal assistance to promote independent living of persons with disabilities in the State party;
   (c) The fact that the State party still spends more on institutions than community-based services;
   (d) The fact that the personal assistance pilot programme is discriminatory on the basis of age.
32. With reference to its general comment No. 5 (2017) on living independently and being included in the community, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Provide adequate human, financial and technical resources for the full implementation of deinstitutionalization, particularly for implementing the transition to independent living conditions;
(b) Allocate sufficient resources for the provision of personal assistance and to ensure that services in the community are available, accessible, affordable, accommodating and of high quality in order to enable persons with disabilities to exercise their right to live independently and be included in the community;
(c) Adopt the measures necessary to ensure that persons with disabilities have a legal entitlement to a sufficient personal budget for independent living, which takes into account the additional costs related to disability, and redirect resources from institutionalization to community-based services;
(d) Adopt measures to ensure the provision of personal assistance for persons with disabilities, regardless of age limitations.

Respect for home and the family (art. 23)

37. The Committee is concerned about the legal provisions in the Law on the Family that discriminate against persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities with regard to the right to marry and form a family. The Committee is further concerned about the provision in that Law that requires persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities to be certified as “knowledgeable and understanding”.

38. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Review the Law on the Family to ensure that persons with disabilities can exercise their rights relating to marriage, family, parenthood and relationships on an equal basis with others and on the basis of their free and informed consent;
(b) Adopt measures to promote adequate training of judicial and social workers and legal protection to ensure that persons with disabilities are not discriminated against during legal and administrative proceedings concerning their sexual and reproductive rights, the right to create a family and legal custody of their children.
### Acronyms and Abbreviations:

- **CEDAW**: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- **CRC**: Convention on the Rights of the Child/Committee on the Rights of the Child
- **CRPD**: Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- **ICCRP**: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- **ICESCR**: International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- **OPAC to CRC**: Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict
- **UN**: United Nations
- **UPR**: Universal Periodic Review

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