

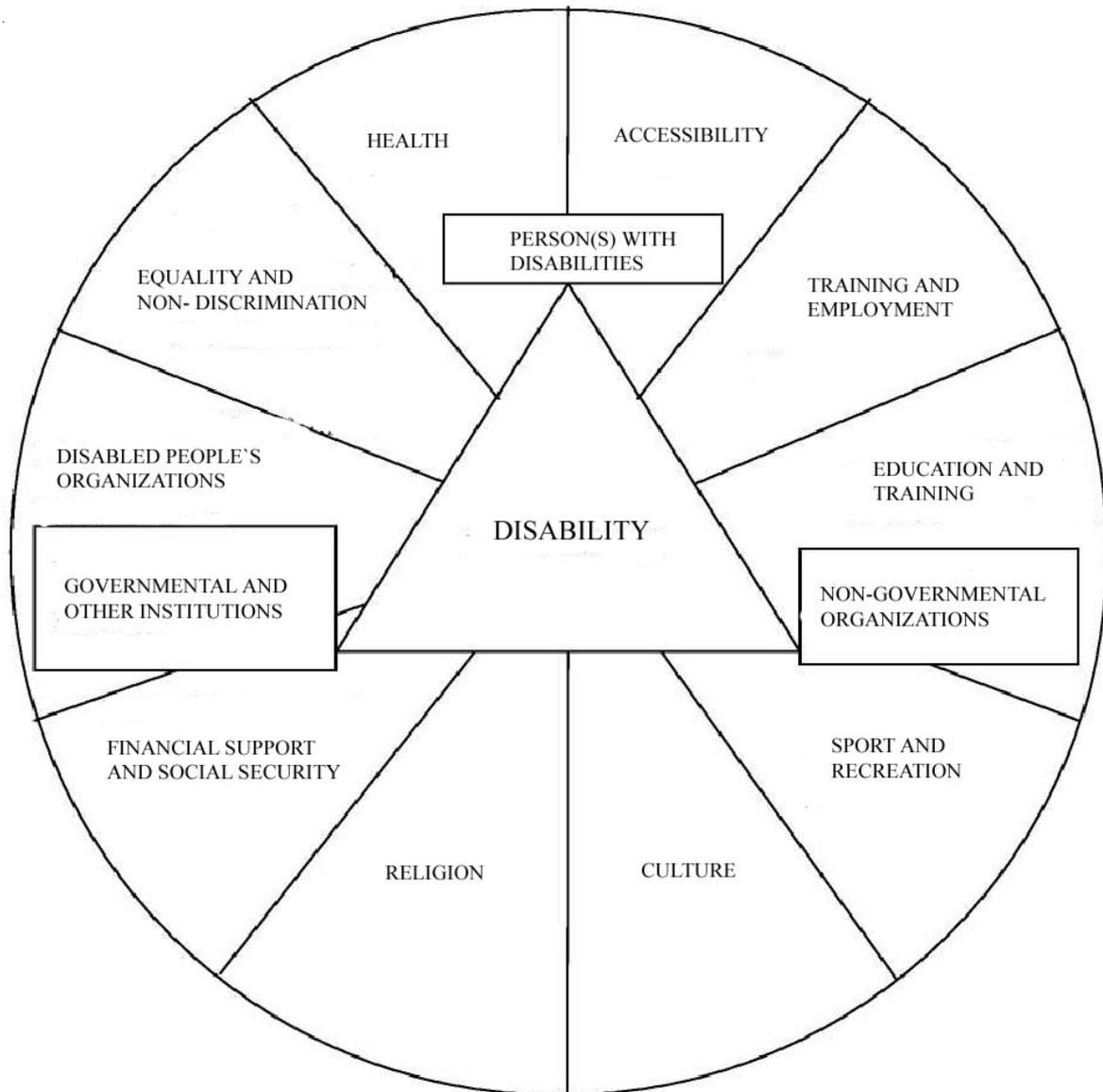
# **ACTION PROGRAMME FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES 2007-2013**

The Government of the Republic of Slovenia adopted on 30 November 2006.

## **0 INTRODUCTION**

The last decade is marked by political, social and technological changes. Globalization, changes in work and employment, health and demographical movements, transition to market economy, capabilities of information and communication technology have also changed the policy and methods of implementation of persons with disabilities policy. Current view on invalidity is based on human rights, meaning ban on discrimination and assurance of equal opportunities and equal treatment of all. Disability shall be understood as a multifaceted condition resulting from the interaction between persons with impairments and their physical and social environment, that hinders their full and effective participation in society. Persons with disabilities as defined in the draft Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. In order to assure the persons with disabilities proper opportunities for a full and equal involvement in the society in addition to individual approach as in health care, upbringing, education, training and employment, etc. social action and responsibility are required as well.

ACTION PROGRAMME FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES 2007 - 2013



## 1. STARTING POINTS

According to Article 14 of the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia everyone shall be guaranteed equal human rights and fundamental freedoms irrespective of personal circumstance. In the amendment of Article 14 which entered into force on 15 June 2004 personal circumstances also include disability. The Constitution thus expressly underlines the equality of persons with disabilities before the law, and that nobody shall be disadvantaged on grounds of disability.

***"In Slovenia everyone shall be guaranteed equal human rights and fundamental freedoms irrespective of national origin, race, sex, language, religion, political or other conviction, material standing, birth, education, social status, disability or any other personal circumstance" (Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia).***

General principles and obligations of Action Programme for Persons with Disabilities 2007-2013 based on international and national acts may be summed up as follows:

- **respect for difference and acceptance of disability as part of human diversity and assurance of equal opportunities: the principle ensures positive measures for ensuring equal opportunities in all areas necessary for enjoying full citizenship;**
- **non-discrimination: the principle of non-discrimination shall ensure that persons with disabilities are not treated as different, excluded or restricted in enjoying the rights that are guaranteed to all other members of the community;**
- **on the level of society, ensure full and effective participation and inclusion in society: persons with disabilities shall have equal opportunities as other citizens for effective participation in the development of the community they live in on the local, regional and state levels and to take responsibilities for its development;**
- **at the level of an individual ensure respect for human rights - dignity and autonomy of persons including freedom of their own choice and independence;**
- **individualized approach to the provision and performance of services and programmes intended for persons with disabilities, and**
- **accessibility as a prerequisite for exercising rights and social inclusion.**

Policy of policy of persons with disabilities in the period 2007-2013 is therefore focused on the following targets set by the European Union as basic starting points:

- **comprehensive analysis of policy of persons with disabilities with an overview of rights of persons with disabilities under sectoral legislation;**
- **identify measures for removal of barriers to full participation (equal opportunities) of persons with disabilities on local community and society levels and systematic approach to developing such measures;**
- **prevention and measures to combat discrimination of persons with disabilities and assure access to fundamental rights;**
- **conformity of future Slovenian legislation with the *acquis* and measures laid down in this programme;**
- **to ensure partnership with persons with disabilities in planning, selection, implementation, supervision and evaluation of projects to be financed by the EU Structural Funds.**

The adoption of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the purpose of which is to encourage the persons with disabilities to fully enjoy human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis, to protect such rights and freedoms, to ensure them to persons with disabilities and encourage the respect for their dignity is expected in 2006. The Slovenian Action Programme is based on the draft Convention. In preparation of the Programme in addition to the Convention the following basic UN acts have been taken into consideration: Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities and World Programme of Action concerning Persons with disabilities, and

additionally, Equal opportunities for people with disabilities: A European Action Plan (COM 2003 650), Situation of persons with disabilities in the enlarged European Union: the European Action Plan 2006-2007 (COM 2005 604) and the Council of Europe Action Plan to promote the rights and full participation of people with disabilities in society: to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities in Europe 2006-2015 (Recommendation Rec(2006)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member states). Slovenia's Action Programme for persons with disabilities 2007-2013 takes into account development policies of Slovenia set in the Slovenia's Development Strategy (2005) and in the Framework of Economic and Social Reform to Increase Welfare in Slovenia (2005).

## **2. EVALUATION OF IMPLEMENTATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES POLICY 1991-2006**

In 1991 Slovenia adopted the Concept of Development Strategy for Persons with Disabilities, which includes four particularly important aspects:

- the definition of disability based on human rights instead of defining disability by its medical aspect only;
- document describes various policies according to the fields, such as healthcare, training and education, employment, rehabilitation, benefits, disability policy, status, funding and work of disabled people's organizations, etc.
- the document underlines the right to independent living of persons with disabilities;
- persons with disabilities, representatives of the state and experts participated jointly in preparation of the document.

Between 1991 and 2006 a set of regulations was adopted in the fields of education, healthcare, employment, elimination of obstacles in the environment and ensuring benefits for persons with disabilities. Various national and development programmes in different fields offer solutions essential for the living of persons with disabilities. Special stress has been put on following themes:

- amendment to Article 14 of the Constitution providing constitutional policy against discrimination, based on disability (2004);
- adoption of the Programme for training and employment of persons with disabilities by 2002 and Employment and Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities Act in 2004;
- National guidelines to improve built environment, information and communications accessibility for persons with disabilities, adopted by the Government in 2005; Slovenian building standards for the needs of persons with disabilities and other functionally impaired persons;
- Use of Slovenian Sign Language Act (2002) in which the state provides equal opportunities to the deaf in the area of communications;
- adoption of Children with Special Needs Act (2000);
- adoption of The Implementation of Equal Treatment Act (2004);
- adoption of Employment Relationships Act (2002), by which distinguishing between indirect and direct discrimination related to disability was introduced into the Slovene legislation;
- amendments to regulations governing rights in the area of disability insurance, parental policy, family benefits and social assistance;
- in Slovenia promotion of disabled people's organizations was specially supported. Thus the Disabled People's Organizations Act was adopted in 2002.

Two analyses of the system of policy of persons with disabilities were prepared:

- Assessment of development of persons with disabilities policy (1995),
- Report on the implementation of persons with disabilities policy in the Republic of Slovenia (2001).

### **3. OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTION PROGRAMME**

**OBJECTIVE 1: Raising awareness about persons with disabilities regarding their contribution to the development of society, and to foster respect for their rights, dignity and needs.**

#### **Objective description**

The European Union declared the year 2003 as the European Year of Persons with Disabilities. The Government of the Republic of Slovenia also adopted the decision to declare the International Year of Persons with Disabilities. That year was marked by a broader European-wide action addressing awareness raising and combatting discrimination of persons with disabilities. In Slovenia a comprehensive programme of activities was organized at the national level that comprised 42 consultation sessions, conferences, public forums, round tables and presentations. There were even more events organized at the local levels.

The year 2007, was declared as the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All, with the motto "Towards a Just Society". In the European Year of Equal Opportunities were all activities focused on better understanding of the scope and effect of discrimination and inequality, on the monitoring of application of the EU law, on support to training activities and to greater awareness of major challenges and policies of all stakeholders in the society.

By raising awareness of the expert and general public the change in social dimension of disability shall be achieved. Raising awareness is aimed at removal of obstacles to participation of persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others.

#### **Actions:**

- 1.1 preparation and implementation of effective activities for raising awareness of the key public: in the area of employment, independent living, education, public administration, professionals (architects, medical staff, social workers, ...). Activities regarding persons with disabilities and their rights will be focused on combatting stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices, also including equal opportunities regardless of sex and age;
- 1.2 encouragement of the media when enlarging the media space intended for this subject (e.g. orientation to the capacities and contribution of persons with disabilities to the labour market, at the workplace, etc.), to describe persons with disabilities in informing general public in accordance with the European Declaration on Media and Disability (Athens, 2003) in the way corresponding to the aim of this Action Programme;
- 1.3 enforcement of examples of good practices in all areas (education, access, health, employment, ...);
- 1.4 publishing information materials and other publications aiming at raising awareness of general and professional public;
- 1.5 promoting the role of persons with disabilities as consumers and users;
- 1.6 raising awareness of persons with disabilities of their rights and access to information, of their opportunities and obligations in all areas of their lives.

#### **Responsible bodies:**

Government Communication Office, Government Council for Persons with disabilities, disabled people's organizations, Public Institute of Radiotelevizija Slovenija, Slovenian Press Agency, public institutes in the area of education and healthcare, mass media.

**OBJECTIVE 2: All persons with disabilities have the right to decide, on an equal basis with others and without discrimination, where they wish to live and have the right to fully participate in community living**

**Objective description**

This objective is focused on ensuring the possibility for persons with disabilities to live as independently as possible and to have the right to decide where, with whom and how they wish to live. Although in new guidance criteria deinstitutionalization of persons with disabilities and their inclusion into the common living environment is emphasized, for many persons with disabilities institutions are still needed.

In order to achieve the strategic objective of giving persons with disabilities the possibility to choose, the persons with disabilities should be given new opportunities of living in their own local environment or institutions, and should be offered such forms of care which would give them the option of living in a housing for persons with disabilities, in a living community or in an institution. System of community services in Slovenia should be based on the following organizational structures and processes:

- restructuring of institution capacities,
- establishing community services by planning at local levels.

By services which are the basis of community care, persons with disabilities are given appropriate support needed to live independently.

For some groups the environment usually does not understand or denies their need for family, partnership and sexuality. The programmes of assistance in promotion of partnership and sexuality should be encouraged and training should be offered to parents, persons with disabilities and persons who are in contact with persons with disabilities. In development, safe homes, residential communities and other possible forms of living arrangements, the right to family, partnership, sexuality and children should be respected.

No person with disabilities, regardless of place of residence or living arrangement (family or institution), shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence or other types of communication.

**Actions:**

- 2.1 ensuring persons with disabilities the possibility to choose their place of residence and to decide where and with whom they will live.
- 2.2 ensuring equal opportunities to persons with disabilities for starting and planning family and parenthood with special emphasis on preventing discrimination against women with disabilities;
- 2.3 providing accessibility to social services and programmes of help at home (including time availability - at any time of the day), in the neighbourhood and community, including personal assistance essential for living within a community and inclusion into it as well as for prevention of isolation or separation from the community, through pluralization and engagement of non-governmental, public and private sectors;
- 2.4 encouraging deinstitutionalization, support and assistance within the community;
- 2.5 providing assistance and care at home for all groups of persons with disabilities and their transport as well as expansion of such facilities, including adjustment of living arrangements.
- 2.6 provision of non-profit rental apartments for persons with disabilities;
- 2.7 social recognition and establishment of the advocacy system;
- 2.8 encouraging of innovative programmes, services and approaches that are expected to strengthen empowerment and self-advocacy of persons with disabilities.

**Holders of activities:**

Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Public Administration, Health Insurance Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Foundation for

Financing Disabled People's Organizations and Humanitarian Organizations of Slovenia, municipalities, Social Work Centres, disabled people's organizations, other institutes and non-governmental organizations, operating in the area of social security.

### **OBJECTIVE 3: Ensuring persons with disabilities access to built environment, transport, information and communications;**

#### **Objective description**

The right to accessible built environment, information and communications in the Republic of Slovenia is based on the Constitution, according to which everyone has the right to freedom of movement, to choose his place of residence, to freedom of association with others, to a healthy living environment and the state is obliged to enable the citizens to get proper housing.

The Use of Slovenian Sign Language Act, adopted in 2002, grants deaf persons the right to use Slovenian sign language, to be informed in techniques adjusted to their needs and lays down the scope and method of exercising the right to a sign language interpreter. In implementation of the above Act there are still problems in ensuring individual rights.

On 7 December 2005, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia adopted National guidelines to improve accessibility of built environment, information and communications to persons with disabilities. The objectives laid down in the National guidelines are based on a number of acts adopted by the Republic of Slovenia (such as in the area of environmental planning, building construction, accessibility to apartments, working environment and equipment, air and road transport, electronic communications, etc.). Access to services of public and private sectors and to physical environment is considered to be the right of persons with disabilities and of all other functionally impaired persons. By this project the state aims at establishing accessible environment for living and work of all people and at providing all groups of people equal opportunities of living and participating in social developments both in the areas of education, culture and recreation and in the areas of notification and decision-making.

#### **Actions:**

- 3.1. consistently observing the Environmental Planning Act, the Construction Act and the Rules on the requirements for barrier free access to, entry to and use of public buildings and facilities and multi-apartment buildings, the National standard SIST ISO/TR 9527 – building construction: needs of persons with disabilities and other functionally impaired persons in buildings and the Use of Slovenian Sign Language Act;
- 3.2 ensuring public transport to all places in Slovenia all days in the week and ensuring a number of affordable rides to persons with disabilities unable to drive their own cars;
- 3.3 ensuring that the public passenger transport service provides transport for assistance dogs of visually impaired persons;
- 3.4 adapting buses, coaches and trains for persons with functional and sensory impairments (access to and getting on and off buses, access to information on screen and in spoken form, access to public railway premises) and implement EU Directive No. 2001/85 on special provisions for city and local buses;
- 3.5 ensuring that an adequate number of taxi service vehicles are adapted for transport of persons with disabilities;
- 3.6 ensuring accessibility to persons with physical and sensory impairments in airports, bus and railway stations (persons to assist with orientation of blind and partially sighted persons, ramps or elevators for persons on wheelchairs etc.) in compliance with EU Directive No 96/48 on high speed trains, Regulation on International Rail Passengers' Rights and Obligations COM 2004/143, proposal for a directive on railway transport COM 617/1999 and Regulation (EC) No 1107/2006 of the European Parliament and of

- the Council of 5 July 2006 concerning the rights of persons with disabilities and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air;
- 3.7 adapting or preparing materials relating to decision-making on national and local levels in accessible modes (such as materials for elections and documents of importance for mentally disabled persons);
  - 3.8 using Slovenian sign language and provide subtitles and descriptions of action on screens for blind, for informative, scientific and other television programmes of general education at least;
  - 3.9 ensuring equal access to information and public administration services on Internet for all;
  - 3.10 preparing a manual for public procurement with recommendations for better accessibility on Internet and implementation of EU Regulation No. 1083/2006 on partnership, non-discrimination and accessibility of structural funds;
  - 3.11 encouraging the use of information and communication technology for better inclusion and communication of disabled and functionally impaired persons as regards accessibility of e-government, including the use of internet, software and hardware;
  - 3.12 setting up a coordinating body within the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs to monitor and analyse the degree of accessibility of environment;
  - 3.13 ensuring accessibility of tourist programmes to persons with disabilities; Encourage travel agencies to create tourist offer for persons with disabilities through adequate measures;
  - 3.14 ensuring accessibility of educational institutions;
  - 3.15 ensuring that renovation of religious buildings is done in such a way as to allow premises and rites to be accessible;
  - 3.16 encouraging dissemination of good practice at municipal and administrative units' level – for example, the scheme "Persons with disabilities-friendly municipality";
  - 3.17 setting up relay points for persons with sensory and communication disability, that is centres that provide for the exchange of information among the deaf/hard of hearing and other persons;
  - 3.18 encouraging producers to furnish their products with Braille script, enabling thus persons with sensory disabilities easier access to goods;
  - 3.19 putting in place safety rules regarding persons with disabilities on passenger ships and high-speed passenger crafts in compliance with EU Directive No. 98/18 on passenger ships and high-speed passenger crafts on domestic voyages.

**Responsible bodies:**

Ministry of the Environment and Planning; Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Public Administration, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Education and Sports, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Government Office for Local Self-government and Regional Policy, Government Communication Office, Institute for Rehabilitation of the Republic of Slovenia, Urban Planning Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Association of Slovenian Sign Language Interpreters, disabled people's organizations.

**OBJECTIVE 4: Ensuring an inclusive education system at all levels and life long learning without discrimination and on equal basis.**

**Objective description**

Education is a fundamental element of ensuring social inclusion and independence of all persons - including persons with disabilities<sup>1</sup> – at all levels: preschool, elementary,

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<sup>1</sup> In the national programme the term used within the context of education and life long learning is "person with disabilities".

In compliance with Articles 1 and 2 of the Children with Special Needs Act this term covers children, adolescents and young adults with special needs (children with mental disorders, blind and partially sighted children, deaf and hard of hearing children, children with speech and language disorders, physically impaired children, children with

secondary, undergraduate and post-graduate. In compliance with the Constitution and international instruments Slovenia ensures equal rights and opportunities in terms of education, schooling and training to all children.

Most educational systems are based on inclusion and additional particular measures, when needed. The Children with Special Needs Act, adopted in 2000 and the regulations for its application give children with special needs with equal opportunities in educational field through their inclusion in different adapted and adequate forms of education - regular education, adapted educational programmes and special programmes. These measures enable adaptation of programmes and methods of communication, adaptation of premises, tools and teaching methods, provision of professional assistance, interpreters and physical assistance.

Persons with disabilities are often less educated and are less integrated in any level of schooling in comparison with other people; their share in secondary and higher education structures is particularly low. Inclusion in secondary and higher education is a challenge for equal opportunities for persons with disabilities within the whole educational system, from the preschool level up to higher education level. In this context it is necessary to be aware of barriers they face, for instance in terms of the built environment (in particular for physically impaired), access to study literature (for blind and visually impaired), right to an interpreter (for the deaf), access to an induction loop (for the hard of hearing). It is also imperative to support awareness-building measures in all educational institutions. Particularly important is also to give persons with disabilities the opportunity to have practical training during their education, in order to obtain adequate professional qualification.

Professionals agree that individuals with moderate, severe and the most severe mental development disabilities need besides other adaptations, a longer time to be able to progress after the period of compulsory basic schooling. It is necessary to ensure to persons with moderate, severe and the most severe mental development disabilities equal opportunities of schooling, education and training by consistently providing conditions for the implementation of the Organisation and Financing of Education Act and of the Special programme of education that provides for the possibility of education and training until the age of 26.

#### **Actions:**

- 4.1 ensuring equal opportunities for entering in all educational programmes;
- 4.2 enabling persons with moderate, severe and the most severe mental development disabilities to enter all levels of the Special programme of education (also at the level of training for life and work);
- 4.3 ensuring adequate implementation, termination and development of adopted programmes concerning education, schooling and training in the pre-school, elementary school, vocational/secondary school levels. Special attention must be devoted to programmes on early treatment of children with special needs.
- 4.4 encouraging a more extensive inclusion of persons with disabilities into regular forms of education and training;
- 4.5 ensuring adequate environmental and technical conditions for the realisation and implementation of educational and training programmes, including the provision of adequate transportation;
- 4.6 ensuring an adequate number of professionals and dissemination of basic knowledge into educational programmes for teachers and school counsellors;
- 4.7 ensuring that text books and educational tools are in a form adequate to the type of disability, including text books for children included in programmes with a lower educational standard;

- 4.8 ensuring adequate educational equipment for individual use;
- 4.9 granting the right to additional communication equipment necessary because of physical impairment;
- 4.10 providing support for students with disabilities in the form of personal assistance, companionship and counselling;
- 4.11 ensuring practical training, traineeship and practice in the context of secondary and higher education by providing incentives for employers;
- 4.12 ensuring assistance to all students that need it, including the functionally impaired ones (currently, assistance is provided only to the physically impaired);
- 4.13 providing for a bursary system that will encourage persons with disabilities to acquire a higher level of education;
- 4.14 providing adequate residence for students with disabilities;
- 4.15 encouraging public administration to offer work practice opportunities to students with disabilities;
- 4.16 developing and encourage life-long learning of adult persons with disabilities, both employed and unemployed;
- 4.17 encouraging the learning of the sign language as second language;
- 4.18 encouraging bilingual education of the deaf.

**Responsible bodies:**

Ministry of Education and Sports, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Association of Slovenian Sign Language Interpreters, educational institutions, disabled people's organizations.

**OBJECTIVE 5: Ensuring persons with disabilities access to work and employment without discrimination in a work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible.**

**Objective description**

Work and employment are key elements of social inclusion, economic independence, individual autonomy and dignity of persons with disabilities. Analyses carried out in EU Member States and in Slovenia confirm that on the labour market persons with disabilities are vulnerable and discriminated group. For this reason states carry out various programmes and actions with the intent to enhance employability of persons with disabilities. Promoted are, in particular, employment opportunities for persons with disabilities on an open labour market. It is necessary to encourage persons with disabilities to actively seek work, to ensure transition between unemployed persons with disabilities and employers and to provide adequate assistance, training and education.

The EU Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation prohibits any discrimination based on disability. The Directive provides practical and effective measures to adapt the workplace to the disability, for example adapting working environment and equipment, patterns of working time, the distribution of tasks or the provision of training. The Directive further defines what is meant by discrimination in the sphere of employment and working conditions with a view to putting into effect in the Member States the principle of equal treatment.

Objectives regarding the employment of persons with disabilities are:

- increasing the share of persons with disabilities in the total active population and thus reduce the amount of social transfers;
- increasing career development possibilities for persons with disabilities,
- ensuring working and living conditions that will reduce the possibility of work accidents
- providing adequate support, services, adaptations, access and technical solutions that will enable persons with disabilities to work effectively.

**Actions:**

- 5.1 monitoring of implementation of Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation; and monitoring of implementation of the Employment and Rehabilitation of Persons with disabilities Act and its regulations;
- 5.2 including persons with disabilities in active forms of treatment as early as possible, in order to enhance their employability and raise their standard of living;
- 5.3 improving the ratio between unemployed persons with disabilities and the number of rehabilitation advisers in regional offices of the Employment Service;
- 5.4 providing training programmes for employment rehabilitation advisers, members of the Employment Service commissions, professionals and experts of the Institute of Pension and Disability Insurance, concessionaries of employment rehabilitation, providers of social inclusion schemes, employment centres and companies for persons with disabilities;
- 5.5 encouraging and supporting inclusion of women with disabilities in the labour market;
- 5.6 expand the network of providers of employment rehabilitation and social inclusion, so that all persons with disabilities have this opportunity regardless of their place of residence or type or degree of disability;
- 5.7 establishing criteria regarding inclusion of unemployed persons with disabilities that receive benefits in employment or programmes of training, education and employment;
- 5.8 promoting employability of persons with disabilities by combining employment-training programmes and short-term employment in the context of non-market employment opportunities and other forms of subsidised employment;
- 5.9 creating a system that will allow the transition of persons with disabilities from being beneficiaries of social rights to employment seekers or employed persons and vice versa (ensure to persons with disabilities rights in compliance to the Act Concerning Social Care of Mentally and Physically Disabled Persons or the Pension and Disability Insurance Act for the period when they don't have an employment contract or have a job);
- 5.10 developing programmes providing training for the persons with disabilities;
- 5.11 ensuring the right to employment rehabilitation to part-time employed persons with disabilities;
- 5.12 increasing allowances to persons with work-related disabilities for periods of employment rehabilitation; such increase will give persons with disabilities a strong motive to claim this right and to be more active in solving their occupational problems and overcoming difficulties;
- 5.13 eliminating barriers to combine part-time employment and part-time retirement for persons with disabilities who may not claim this right in compliance with the Pension and Disability Insurance Act (persons with disabilities whose disability is not considered to be work-related);
- 5.14 encouraging employment of persons with severe disability on the open labour market, in employment centres and companies for persons with disabilities;
- 5.15 promoting implementation of supported employment in practice;
- 5.16 promoting higher quality of employment and development of human resources in companies for persons with disabilities and employment centres;
- 5.17 harmonizing disability assessment criteria used by the Institute of Pension and Disability Insurance and by the Employment Service of Slovenia;
- 5.18 establishing educational, awareness rising and information programmes for employers;
- 5.19 promoting innovative projects and examples of good practice relating to training and employment of persons with disabilities without discrimination based on sex;
- 5.20 promoting employment training and employment of persons with disabilities in public administration organs;

- 5.21 supporting awareness rising and prevent persons with disability of harassment or mobbing;
- 5.22 ensuring support to employers in the process of career advancement of disabled employees;
- 5.23 ensuring support to employers for the provision of adequate technical aids and adaptations of workplaces for all persons with disabilities.

**Responsible bodies:**

Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Employment Service of Slovenia, Institute of Pension and Disability Insurance, Institute of Rehabilitation of the Republic of Slovenia, Fund of the Republic of Slovenia for the Promotion of Employment of Persons with Disabilities, chambers of economy and chambers of craft, representative trade unions, Social Chamber of Slovenia, universities, disabled people's organisations.

**OBJECTIVE 6: Ensuring persons with disabilities an adequate standard of living, financial assistance and social security.**

**Objective description**

It is necessary to ensure to persons with disabilities an adequate standard of living in all cases when they remain without income because of their disability or because of other disability-related circumstances. In this context it must be considered that persons with disabilities and their families have higher expenses because of the disability. Factors for such higher expenses differ in relation to the type of disability.

Many researches have proven that there is a direct link between disability and poverty. Many persons with severe disabilities face poverty as a result of a combination of poorer access to employment, low income and high cost of living that is the consequence of disability.

State benefits (in services of income) for persons with disabilities are not unified, they come from different resources and to receive them is difficult and time consuming. Social policy programmes must include incentives that will enable persons with disabilities to earn their own living as possible.

**Actions:**

- 6.1 adjusting the state benefit scheme concerning services and benefits to cover disability-related expenses. The scheme has to respect the needs of persons with disabilities.
- 6.2 ensuring access to persons with disabilities (in particular the most vulnerable groups, such as women and girls with disabilities and persons with severe disabilities) to social policy programmes and poverty reduction programmes;
- 6.3 providing income and social security to persons that take care of persons with disabilities;
- 6.4 ensuring adequate minimum allowance to persons with disabilities that live in institutions and have no own income;
- 6.5 enabling parents with disabilities to have longer parents' leave and longer leave for children care;
- 6.6 ensuring personal direct financing and - after financing has been transferred from institutions to the individual - traceability of financial transfers;
- 6.7. setting a scheme of long-term care that will ensure equal access and rights for all persons with disabilities (current scheme is based on various allowances and programmes of help, and care and personal assistance for those who are unable to adequately care for themselves).

**Responsible bodies:**

Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Health, Health Insurance Institute, Foundation for Financing Disabled People's Organizations and Humanitarian Organisations of the Republic of Slovenia.

## **OBJECTIVE 7: Providing persons with disabilities with effective health care.**

### **Objective description**

Health and health care are fundamental human rights that every individual, regardless of their health, social and economic condition or ability, have to be ensured. At the same time, health policy and healthy living are basic duties of every individual. There are adequate programmes to enable persons with disabilities to regain or maintain proper health condition.

Persons with disabilities are ensured effective health care within the health care and the health insurance system under the Health Care and Health Insurance Act. The Act defines a system of social, group and individual factors, measures and services for the promotion of health, prevention of disease, early detection, timely appropriate treatment, nursing care for and rehabilitation of the ill and injured, as well as social security in case of illness, injury or death. Health service activity is performed as a public service within the public health service network established at the primary, secondary and tertiary level.

Health care of persons with disabilities, which is an integral part of the health care system for all citizens, is at a comparable level with those of other European countries. Additional fundamental legislation on disability should be introduced to cover the issues of:

- rehabilitation of persons experiencing loss of sight at adult age or mental health problems,
- medical rehabilitation for persons with head injuries,
- promotion of programmes on rehabilitation support at home,
- improved accessibility of medical spa treatment etc.

### **Actions:**

- 7.1 developing a comprehensive and coordinated health and social policy, and applying the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health of the World Health Organization and promoting innovative organizational approach aimed at increasing health care flexibility to meet disability-related needs;
- 7.2 ensuring improved access to health programmes and services by paying special attention to the specific needs of women with disabilities. Accessibility of services and programmes necessarily involves such values as solidarity, social justice and accessibility for all persons with disabilities, and provision of equal rights to all groups of persons with disabilities that have previously received different treatment;
- 7.3 providing early detection and comprehensive early treatment of children with specific needs (children with impaired physical and mental development) and their families, with particular emphasis on mobile forms of assistance that allow the children to stay with their families;
- 7.4 improving fundamental acts governing the assistive device issues;
- 7.5 providing comprehensive rehabilitation services to the blind and partially sighted, deaf and hard of hearing, and deafblind adults;
- 7.6 improving medical staff knowledge and information about different types of disabilities (e.g. mental disability, deafness etc.) in order to provide appropriate treatment for a particular type of disability);
- 7.7 encouraging persons with disabilities to take active role in managing their health problems, supporting healthy living awareness programmes, encouraging the expansion of programmes on the follow-up rehabilitation and on the education concerning the rights within the health care system;

- 7.8 systematically collecting information on the health condition and needs of persons with disabilities and of children with specific needs, on the existing network connections in the community, as well as seek methods for the health care capacities to meet the actual needs of persons with disabilities;
- 7.9 promoting awareness of health professionals of persons with disabilities needs.

**Responsible bodies:**

Ministry of Health, Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia, health organizations, Institute of Public Health, Institute of Rehabilitation of the Republic of Slovenia, disabled people's organizations.

**OBJECTIVE 8: Ensuring inclusion of persons with disabilities in cultural activities and their cooperation in issues dealing with accessibility to cultural goods on equal footing.**

**Objective description**

Our intention is to prepare the basis for managing cultural policy on the issue of full enjoyment of cultural rights by persons with disabilities, and to create equal opportunities for them to participate in cultural life, by applying a twin-track approach:

- positive discrimination in taking account of the specific needs in accessing cultural facilities and
- equal inclusion of persons with disabilities in social and cultural life.

Present projects in Slovenia are focused on the blind and partially sighted and the deaf and hard of hearing. They are based on legal acts (Mass Media Act, Librarianship Act, Act on Fulfilment of Public Interest for Culture) and depend on the available financial resources. The co-financing of projects and technical development of infrastructure is a contribution of the government to a better communication accessibility and a greater diversity of disability programmes.

Persons with disabilities have a right to be recognized their specific cultural and linguistic identity, including sign language and culture of the deaf.

**Actions:**

- 8.1 analysing the culture accessibility situation and preparing comparative evaluations of the situation of persons with disabilities in culture, developing appropriate measures to meet the specific needs of persons with disabilities and raising awareness of the whole population of the barriers they face and of their cultural contribution to the entire society;
- 8.2 extending possible budget co-financing for the projects intended for the persons with disabilities. Attention should also be paid to persons with mental disability;
- 8.3 encouraging public libraries to provide books adapted for the blind and partially sighted;
- 8.4 including a library for the blind and partially sighted into the national scheme of libraries and ensuring state funding (for school textbooks, scientific works etc.) and approving a special library status for library for the blind;
- 8.5 setting up a system of funding and publishing adapted newspapers (for the blind and partially sighted, and for persons with mental disability)
- 8.6 setting up a system of providing the rights of the blind and partially sighted to have printed media available in electronic form;
- 8.7 promoting the status of self-employed persons with disabilities (e.g. the deaf, the blind) within the cultural sector;
- 8.8 promoting the establishment/formation of special forms of cultural performance of the disabled (e.g. deaf, blind theatre etc.);

- 8.9 promoting the establishment of cultural associations of disabled artists;
- 8.10 updating legal acts on the accessibility to culture and on the involvement of persons with disabilities in the planning and delivery of culture;
- 8.11 preparing the legislation that, in compliance with the international law, will prevent the intellectual property policy laws to represent unreasonable and discriminatory barriers to the access of persons with disabilities to cultural material.

**Responsible bodies:**

Ministry of Culture, universities, cultural institutions, disabled people's organizations.

**OBJECTIVE 9: Ensuring persons with disabilities participation in sports and recreational activities.**

**Objective description**

Movement, play and sporting activities have important role for persons with disabilities, as they strengthen their life force, self-respect and social inclusion. At the same time sporting activities are means of rehabilitation. All those who are particularly interested in sports have to be given the opportunity to take part in competitions. Our goal is to adopt such measures as to create equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in sporting and recreational activities and thus improve their quality of life. Sporting and recreational activities have to become an integral part of any education and rehabilitation.

It is necessary to encourage the participation of persons with disabilities in group sports activities at all levels, adequate education, training and resources, and to provide access to the places where sporting and recreational events take place.

Appropriate recreational activities are requirement for a quality living of persons with disabilities. Recreation protects persons with disabilities from various modern health problems. Any person with disability should be provided with rehabilitation, regardless of the type and degree of their disability, age or level of physical abilities, and recreational activities have to be tailored to their specific needs.

**Actions:**

- 9.1 implementing the education of the of persons with disabilities' sport into the education programmes of sports workers;
- 9.2 promoting national sport competitions for all persons with disabilities (within the school system);
- 9.3 providing quality sport education for persons with disabilities by including the knowledge in the curriculum of education programmes and by training education professionals;
- 9.4 supervising construction works and renovation of old sports facilities in order to be used by persons with disability as performers and spectators (accessibility, toilets, signs, information and communication);
- 9.5 promoting sport status/legal equality of persons with disabilities (categorization, bonuses,...);
- 9.6 learning of sport elements should become part of education and rehabilitation of any person with disability;
- 9.7 encouraging such recreational activities within disabled people's organizations and other associations to be suitable with the type/degree of disability and age.

**Responsible bodies:**

Ministry of Education and Sports, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Olympic Committee of Slovenia – Association of Sports Federations, universities,

Foundation for Financing Disabled People's Organizations and Humanitarian Organizations, Sports Foundation, disabled people's organizations.

## **OBJECTIVE 10: Ensuring equality of participation to persons with disabilities in religious and spiritual life of their communities.**

### **Objective description**

A number of barriers prevent inclusion of many persons with disabilities in the religious and spiritual life of their communities. Measures must therefore be prepared to ensure their equal participation in the religious and spiritual life of their communities. The principle of inclusion should thereby be respected, as the measures are not intended to create separate groups but rather to include persons with disabilities into the religious and spiritual organizations of their local communities by taking account of all their needs.

Some persons with disabilities, for example persons with mental disability, deaf and hard of hearing, blind and partially sighted, may only be included in the religious and spiritual life of the community if they are assisted in experiencing faith. Apart from the symbols they understand, they also need contacts with people who live with religion. They therefore have to be provided with various forms of assistance possibly represented by further religious education, religious conversation, support by organization leaders and close contacts with religious community workers.

### **Actions:**

- 10.1 providing permanent spiritual care to the person with disability who wish to receive it, especially for persons with mobility impairments in permanent nursing care at home or in homes for elderly, by visits from religious workers or other spiritual leaders of a registered religious community of their own choice;
- 10.2 providing for special funding for publishing religious and spiritual literature for the communication and sensory impaired, through budgetary procurement procedures.

### **Responsible bodies:**

Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Ministry of Culture, religious communities, providers of cultural activities.

## **OBJECTIVE 11: Empowerment of disabled people's organizations**

### **Objective description**

Persons with disabilities sharing the same interests and their legal representatives associate in disabled people's organizations on a voluntary basis in order to determine, defend and satisfy specific needs of persons with disabilities and to represent their interests. The purpose of disabled people's organizations is improvement of the quality of life of persons with disabilities:

- promoting of human rights of persons with disabilities,
- drawing attention to the principle of non-discrimination of persons with disabilities,
- promoting of the inclusion of persons with disabilities in social life,
- promoting of public awareness,
- co-operating in preventing and eliminating barriers, etc.

In representing the interests of persons with disabilities, at both individual and collective level, disabled people's organizations must be enabled to strengthen their consulting and representative role at the national, regional and local level in accordance with the Disabled

People's Organizations Act. This Act also defines the role of the National Council of Disabled People's Organizations of Slovenia.

Legislation and its implementing measures have to ensure disabled people's organizations permanent, sufficient and independent resources to carry out their social programmes.

**Actions:**

- 11.1 increasing the role of disabled people's organizations by permanent, stable, sufficient and independent funding through the Foundation for Financing Disabled People's and Humanitarian Organizations;
- 11.2 providing co-financing system for the National Council of Disabled People's Organizations of Slovenia, modelled on the system of funding of the European Disability Forum;
- 11.3 creating criteria for permanent funding of disabled people's organizations.

**Responsible bodies:**

Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Ministry of Public Administration, disabled people's organizations, Foundation for Financing Disabled People's Organizations and Humanitarian Organizations of Slovenia.

**OBJECTIVE 12: Prevention of violence and discrimination against persons with disabilities.**

**Objective description**

Persons with disabilities are more exposed to various forms of sexual harassment as well as psychological, verbal and physical violence, or to forms of inhuman or degrading treatment, punishment, torture, exploitation or abuse.

Violence, abuse and harassment incidents are frequent in families and in institutions. Affected persons therefore need urgent assistance from the state, local communities as well as social networks of the non-governmental sector. Persons with disabilities must be ensured the policy of personal integrity also in cases of non-voluntary hospitalization. Involuntary treatment must be reduced to the minimum by seeking alternative ways. It must comply with procedures based on legislation and relevant legal safeguards, and carried out in the least restrictive environment in full respect of individual interests and requirements.

Women as a vulnerable group are even more exposed to violence and discrimination. Measures are therefore needed to help them fully enjoy their rights. Beside the barriers and stereotypes connected with disability, women with disabilities face also sex discrimination. The areas of life in which women with disabilities are particularly disadvantaged are family life, parenthood, sexual life and employment.

**Actions:**

- 12.1 empowering of persons with disabilities of their rights and possibilities of action in the case of abuse or violence;
- 12.2 calling attention of the public to violence and abuse (notably violence against disabled children, women and elderly people);
- 12.3 providing training for professionals on the identification of abuse, prevention of violence and action-taking;
- 12.4 providing premises and other facilities for the implementation of programmes covering issues of detection, handling and prevention of violence against persons with disabilities;
- 12.5 ensuring equal access to safe places (including safe houses) and appropriate professional help to victims with disabilities;

- 12.6 increasing inclusion of women with disabilities in the decision-making process within the community, disabled people's organizations, working environment etc.;
- 12.7 promoting education of women with disabilities;
- 12.8 providing education and training on the rights and needs of the disabled women in families;
- 12.9 developing services for assistance and promoting measures for self-assistance of persons with disabilities, particularly women;
- 12.10 ensuring prohibition of medical or scientific tests on persons with disabilities without their free and informed consent;
- 12.11 publishing information handbooks on detection and prevention of violence against persons with disabilities in accessible formats (for the blind and partially sighted, persons with mental disability, etc.);

**Responsible bodies:**

Ombudsman, Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Interior and Police as attached body, Office for Equal Opportunities, Social Work Centres, local community, Institute of Criminology, non-governmental organizations dealing with violence issues, Faculty of Social Work, Faculty of Education, disabled people's and humanitarian organizations.

#### **4. IMPLEMENTATION AND CONTROL**

Appropriate conditions (personnel, financial and other) must be provided in order to carry out, monitor and control the implementation of objectives and measures laid down in the Action Programme for Persons with Disabilities 2007–2013. The programme has the character of recommendations at the level of programme guidelines and will be implemented by means of appropriate programmes and financial resources of the relevant ministries. Ministries will take their own decisions about introducing the measures in their legislation and make adequate provision for them in their financial plans for each budget yearly.

Preparations have to be made to provide for the collection of relevant information about persons with disabilities on the basis of a comprehensive analysis, including research and statistical data. The procedure of collection and storage of these data must be in compliance with legally established safeguards, including the legislation on personal data policy, in order to ensure confidentiality and respect for the privacy of persons with disabilities. Statistical data thus collected are to be used to help assess the pursuance of the objectives laid down in the Action Programme.

##### **Actions:**

- 1 designating a government committee which is responsible for monitoring of Action Programme, which reports annually on its implementation;
- 2 ensuring that disabled people's organizations are fully involved in control procedures;
- 3 providing legal basis for the Government Council of Persons with Disabilities
- 4 forming a special independent commission for disability issues within the National Assembly of the RS;
- 5 collecting relevant information, in compliance with the European statistical classification, including statistical and research data, in order to prepare a comprehensive analysis of the disability policy;
- 6 preparing an IT system to enhance analytical capacities in the field of the disability policy;
- 7 establishing an institute for disability studies;
- 8 establishing trilateral municipal councils for disability issues composed of common representatives of persons with disabilities, municipality representatives and experts in the field of policy of persons with disabilities;
- 9 promoting adoption of action programmes on disability issues at the local community level to be discussed annually at municipal councils;
- 10 proposing deputy disability ombudsman to be responsible for persons with disabilities.

##### **Responsible bodies:**

Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Government Council of Persons with Disabilities, disabled people's organizations.