



**REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA**  
**MINISTRY OF LABOUR, SOCIAL AFFAIRS**  
**AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

# **NATIONAL STRATEGY ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

STATE INSTITUTION'S PRIORITIES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLAN

FIRST MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

LAW ON SOCIAL ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES

Tirana, September 2006



*Supported by OSCE Presence in Albania*

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## **A Strategy to promote opportunities and improve the lives of People with Disabilities**

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The National Strategy on People with Disabilities, which we here present updated with the Government's priorities, is the result of a successful multi-year, cross-sector dialogue between civil society and the Government of Albania, aimed at building confidence and sharing responsibilities in the adoption of the first national strategy in the field of disabilities. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, and the Albanian Disability Rights Foundation were at the heart of this process. The drafting and the recent review and update of the Strategy were supported by the OSCE Presence in Albania.

The National Strategy on People with Disabilities was drafted to improve the access of people with disabilities to social and medical care, education, culture, sports, employment, information, transportation, and participation and representation in public life.

The strategy document, approved by the Council of Ministers on 7 January 2005, was drafted by an inter-ministerial working group in cooperation with a spectrum of civil society's disability organizations. Thanks to the OSCE Presence in Albania and the German Office of the High Commissioner for the Affairs of People with Disabilities, the drafting was also assisted by a German disability expert.

The Strategy on People with Disabilities is a long-term scheme of measures which aim to improve the lives of people with disabilities. It reflects the international principles of equality, non-discrimination, participation and self-determination of people with disabilities, and it is based on the U.N. Millennium Development Goals, the Strategy of Economic and Social Development, and the relevant sector strategies.

On 12 December 2005, the Government of Albania gave a further substantial impetus to the Strategy by establishing a National Council for the Affairs of People with Disabilities. The establishment of the Council represents a systemic achievement in the promotion of the rights for people with disabilities. The National Council is headed by the Deputy Prime Minister with the participation of the ministers of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Education and Science, Health, Justice, Tourism, Public Works, and Internal Affairs. The inclusion of civil society activists makes the council a model for state-society cooperation also in other thematic fields. For people with disabilities, the Council offers a unique possibility to take part in policy making.

In addition to the establishment of the National Council, a new important element in the implementation of the Strategy is the creation of a Technical Secretariat for the Affairs of People with Disabilities inside the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. The Secretariat will be in charge of collecting disability-related data, liaising with contact points in the line ministries and civil society, and support the implementation of the Council's policy decisions.

This edition of the National Strategy on People with Disabilities, contains a supplement with the Government's priorities defined in an Action Plan for 2006. The Action Plan provides a number of tasks for each state institution along with recommendations for the future implementation of the Strategy. It is the result of an OSCE supported evaluation of the Strategy's implementation in 2005 and it should facilitate the planning and follow up of activities. Needless to emphasise that a consistent and determined implementation will be the key to the success of the Strategy.

Among the new elements presented in the Action Plan are the transition over and above cash allowances to possibilities of rehabilitation, vocational training and employment, and the provision of community-based services through day care centres, home service and communication via mobile services. These are all means to facilitate the independent living of people with disabilities and enhance their participation in the lives and developments of their communities.

The Action Plan tasks ministries, regional structures and government units with duties and responsibilities but also foresees a role for civil society and the donor community as implementing partners and as monitors of the state activities.

Thanking all the actors who participated in the drafting of the National Strategy on People with Disabilities and in hope of continuous cooperation through the implementation, we bring you this publication of the updated Strategy, made possible through the support of the OSCE Presence in Albania.

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Minister of Labour,  
Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities



**Pavel VACEK**

Ambassador  
Head of OSCE Presence in Albania





**REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA**  
**MINISTRY OF LABOUR, SOCIAL AFFAIRS**  
**AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

**NATIONAL STRATEGY ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

September 2006

## Chapter I

### Definitions, Principles and Objectives

#### New Definition of Disability

In accordance with the United Nations terminology and concepts on Equal Opportunities for people with disabilities, and in accordance with the international categorisation of the World Health Organisation (WHO) 2001, the term 'handicapped person' is replaced by the term 'person with disability' (individually) and 'people with disabilities' (at the society level).

From now on 'disabled persons' are defined as persons whose physical function, mental capacities or psychological health are highly likely to deviate for more than six months from the condition which is typical for the respective age and whose participation in the life of society is therefore restricted.

This definition, which follows the WHO recommendations is not based on real or supposed deficits, it is the aim of participation in the different areas of life which is in the foreground. A deviation from the typical condition means the loss of or restrictions with regard to physical, mental or psychological structures, which are normally present at the respective age. A disability exists if this impairment leads to a participation restriction which affects one or several areas of life. The requirement of a probable duration of the restriction of six months does exclude temporary irregularities but not interventions to be taken as early as necessary in individual cases. This applies in particular if children are already disabled or in danger of becoming disabled.

#### Fundamental Principles of the Strategy

*The Principle of Civil Rights, Equality and Non-Discrimination* implies that disabled persons are equal members of their society, they can claim the same rights and are entitled to the same social benefits and types of assistance as all other citizens and must not be discriminated against in any field of social life. This includes social benefits which enable people with disabilities to live in human dignity. Legal action has to be taken, if these principles are violated.

*The Principle of Self-Determination* derives from the civil rights approach and implies that the environment of people with disabilities shall be built in such a way that enables them to lead an independent and self determined life. Self-determination also covers the right to manage personal / individual movement, time and property. This principle also implies that each measure in rehabilitation should be worked out together with the disabled person. He / She shall never be forced to a treatment without his/her consent.

*The Principles of Inclusion, Participation and Equal Opportunities* underline that people with disabilities are already part of the society they live in and therefore do not have to be integrated and are entitled to the same opportunities as the "non disabled". Furthermore they are entitled to benefits which enable them to full participation in all fields of social life, this includes medical rehabilitation, participation in working and community life. Barrier free access is the key precondition for participation.

*The principles of Free Access and Barrier Free Environments* mean that buildings and other facilities, means of transport, technical utensils, systems of information processing, acoustic and visual sources of information and communication facilities and other designed environments are defined as barrier free if they are accessible and usable for disabled persons in the usual way, without particular difficulties and, as a rule, without help by others.

*The Principles of Prevention, Early Detection and Early Intervention* imply targeted measures that are intended to avoid the manifestations of disabilities and chronic diseases in all age groups and areas of life as far as possible. Important fields in this respect are health protection, safety at work and accident prevention and environmental protection. These principles also include prevention from early childhood on such as vaccination and early detection of disabilities. This reflects the insight that the earlier in a child's development an irregularity is perceived the better prevention or successful treatment is possible. This of course accounts for all age groups.

*The Principle of Rehabilitation* implies all measures that are provided in order to avert, eliminate, alleviate or compensate for a disability or prevent its aggravation or to avoid, overcome or alleviate reductions in earning capacity or the need for long term care or prevent an aggravation and to prevent the early receipt of social benefits or reduce social benefits that are paid.

*The Principle of Finality* implies that all necessary assistance shall be offered to every disabled person regardless of the cause of his/her disability, even when the responsibility for this assistance pertains to different funds and/or institutions.

## Objectives

The overall objective of the National Strategy on People with Disabilities is to ensure significant improvement in the status and life quality of people with disabilities in the Republic of Albania in accordance with UN Standards and Equal Opportunity Acts.

### *Objective 1: Encourage and educate for a non-disabling society*

- Recognise that it is people with disabilities who are experts on their own experience.
- Recognise and honour the achievements of people with disabilities.
- Include the perspectives of people with disabilities in ethical and bio-ethical debates.
- Encourage ongoing debate on disability issues.

### *Objective 2: Ensure rights for people with disabilities*

- Provide information on disability rights
- Provide education to ensure that people with disabilities understand their rights,
- Educate agencies responsible for supporting children and families about the rights and abilities of disabled parents.
- Review Human Rights legislation to ensure ongoing enhancement and strengthening of the rights of people with disabilities.
- Investigate, and if appropriate, support, development of a United Nations convention on the rights of people with disabilities.
- Investigate the level of access that people with disabilities have to independent advocacy, and address any shortfall in service provision.
- Evaluate Albania's performance on the rights of People with Disabilities.



*Objective 3: Provide the best education for People with Disabilities*

- Ensure that no child is denied access to their local, regular school because of their impairment.
- Support the development of effective communication by providing access to education in Albanian Sign Language, communication technologies and human assistance.
- Ensure that teachers and other educators understand the learning needs of People with Disabilities.
- Ensure that disabled students, families, teachers and other educators have equitable access to the resources available to meet their needs.
- Improve schools' and universities responsiveness to and accountability for the needs of disabled students.
- Promote appropriate and effective inclusive educational settings that will meet individual educational needs.

*Objective 4: Employment and economic development opportunities for People with Disabilities*

- Provide education and training opportunities to increase the individual capacity of People with Disabilities to get employment.
- Enable People with Disabilities to lead the development of their own training and employment goals, and to participate in the development of support options to achieve those goals.
- Educate employers about the abilities and capacities of People with Disabilities.
- Provide information about career options, ways to generate income, and assistance available for People with Disabilities.
- Find ways for the reasonable adjustment of working places in accordance with the needs of People with Disabilities

- Improve prevention in working places to avoid the development and aggravation of disabilities.
- Investigate longer-term incentives to increase training, employment and development opportunities for People with Disabilities.
- Encourage the development of a range of employment options recognising the diverse needs of People with Disabilities.
- Ensure people with disabilities have the same employment conditions, rights and entitlements as everyone else has, including minimum wage provisions for work of comparable productivity.
- Provide communication services, resources and flexible workplace options.
- Encourage staff and service organisations to appoint or elect People with Disabilities as delegates and members of their executives.
- Ensure that the needs of People with Disabilities are taken into account in developing more flexible income support benefits, to make access to work and training easier.
- Review income support provisions to ensure they provide an adequate standard of living.

*Objective 5: Aware and responsive public service*

- Develop mechanisms to ensure that all government policy and legislation is consistent with the objectives of the National Strategy on People with Disabilities.
- Adapt public sector training to ensure that service development and service delivery are consistent with the National Strategy on People with Disabilities.
- Ensure that all government agencies treat People with Disabilities with dignity and respect.
- Improve the quality of information on services available and how to access them.
- Make public information available in formats

appropriate to the different needs of People with Disabilities.

- Ensure that locations and buildings of all government agencies and public services are accessible.

*Objective 6: Support quality living in the community for people with disabilities*

- Increase opportunities for people with disabilities to live in the community with choice of affordable, quality housing.
- Support people with disabilities living in rural areas to remain in their own communities by improving their access to services.
- Support the development of independent communication for people with disabilities.
- Ensure people with disabilities are able to access appropriate health services within their community.
- Require all new scheduled public transport to be accessible in order to phase out inaccessible public transport.
- Encourage the development of accessible routes to connect buildings, public spaces and transport systems.

*Objective 7: Collect and use relevant information about people with disabilities and disability issues*

- Ensure that guidelines for research funding take into account the need for research on disability issues, include people with disabilities in the development and monitoring of the disability research agenda, and enable people with disabilities to put forward their own experiences in the context of the research.
- Collect relevant and useful information about disability through all relevant surveys to inform the research programme.
- Use disability research, and analyse disability data to contribute to policy work, service development and monitoring.

## Chapter II

### Situation Analysis of People with Disabilities in Albania

#### Statistics

The statistical coverage of people with disabilities in Albania has not yet been sufficiently dealt with. The available information comprises the number of people with disabilities who are evaluated and certified by state disability assessment commissions. The total number of people defined as disabled is derived from the state budget funds allocated for them.

Gender desegregated data is not available so far. Also problematic are statistics concerning the unemployment rate of people with disabilities. Their employment rate is very low and currently only 2,275 out of 9,533 people who are partially able to work found employment. In most cases this work is only subsidiary and unqualified.

**Table 1 - People with Disabilities by Category**

Description	Total	Urban	Rural	Caretakers
<i>I. People with disabilities, (inborn, or though later injuries) under 21</i>	44794	19669	25125	7288
<i>a) mental, physical, senses</i>	35547	15166	20381	3593
<i>b) blind</i>	8621	4197	4424	3142
<i>c) para-and tetraplegic</i>	626	306	320	553
<b>II. Disablend</b>	<b>30250</b>	<b>26274</b>	<b>3976</b>	<b>1462<sub>2</sub></b>
<i>a) of Labour</i>	29676 <sub>1</sub>	25904	3772	1500
<i>b) of War</i>	574	370	204	
<b>Total</b>	<b>75044</b>	<b>45934</b>	<b>29101</b>	<b>8788</b>

At present, 75,044 people with disabilities are accounted for<sup>1</sup>. This figure includes only those, who are considered as subject to payment of allowances. The actual number of people with disabilities should be significantly higher. The first group of people with disabilities includes 44,794 persons who became disabled after the 21 years threshold by causes other than labour.

*Divided by cause of disability, stats are as follows:*

- 3,289 persons incurred disabilities owing to incidents at work, out of which 26,2% have fully lost the ability to work, whilst 73,8% have partially lost ability to work.
- 26,378 people incurred disabilities owing to a general disease.<sup>2</sup> and benefit from the law on social security that provides that these persons may enjoy the rights stipulated in the Status of Labour Invalids.

1. Statistics of the first semester of 2003

2. 1462 people with disabilities who need caretaking services receive an additional 15% on the baseline allowance

*According to the disability level, labour invalids are divided as follows:*

- 888 persons need permanent caretakers;
- 14,527 persons are totally unable to work;
- 9,533 persons are partially unable to work;
- 4,728 persons have reached retirement age, and based on Law no 7703 "On Social Security in the Republic of Albania", Art 63, have opted for the invalidity benefits in accordance with the Statute of Labour Invalids.

*In addition to the Statute, Labour invalids benefit from following statuses:*

- 30,250 labour invalids receive an additional payment on their entitlement of retirement based on Council of Ministers Decree Nr.204, dt 16.4.2004. These people account for 33.1% of the general number of labour invalids.
- 1,935 labour invalids receive additional allowances through the Status of the Blind
- 258 labour invalids receive allowance through the Status of Paraplegics
- 328 labour invalids are equipped with mobility means and get their fuel reimbursed.

During the last ten years, the disability allowances were increasing, mostly in the towns, which implies that the social security schemes are involving more and more people in the rural areas. This is related to the fact that contributes paid to the social security schemes from the private farmers are recognized in the same way as the contributes paid by a state employee.

### **Recommendations**

- Concrete measures have to be taken to gather exact data on people with disabilities in Albania concerning service and allowance provision and employment rate.
- Data needs to be gender desegregated to

reflect the special needs of girls and women with disabilities.

### **Disability Assessment**

Disability assessment is carried out by the Medical Commission on Work Capability (KMCAP) and the Medical Blindness Assessment Commission (KMPV).<sup>3</sup> Both commissions operate under the supervision of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) based on agreements and regulations approved in co-operation with the Ministry of Health (MoH).

The KMPV, as a specialised commission to assess people with limited or no eyesight, is situated in Tirana. The KMPV decides whether blind people get an allowance based on the contribution paid during their working years, a special payment as blind people and support through a caretaker if necessary, as well as other facilities such as housing, and communication facilities.

Currently the KMCAP is directly supervised by the Institute of Social Insurance (ISSH), which belongs to the MoLSA. The KMCAP has branches in 26 districts of the country with mobile units to meet the needs of people with disabilities at the local level. The KMCAP headquarters is situated in Tirana and deals with all citizens' complaints about local KMCAP-s.

The KMCAP groups people with disabilities into two main categories, namely persons disabled since birth or those who became disabled until they reached their 21 year and labour invalids covered by social insurance. The first group is provided for with welfare payments for limited disability, other facilities, custody and different services. The disabled war veterans make up for an additional category.

<sup>3</sup>. Commission members are medical doctors, pediatricians and others.

These categories are then split into further groups of people with disabilities, such as persons with sensorial disability, including persons with limited optical and acoustic abilities; people with physical disability, including mainly people with limited moving capabilities such as paraplegics and tetraplegics, work disabled, war disabled and others; persons with mental disabilities, including with mental disorders of chronic mental diseases.

The KMCAP considers labour invalids as entitled to full disability benefits, if the disabled person was bereaved of more than 67% of the ability to work. Otherwise, the disabled are entitled to partial disability benefits.

If the KMCAP comes to the conclusion that people with disabilities of both groups are not capable of taking care of themselves, they have the right to get a caretaker who is paid out of state funds for the services provided.

Despite the existence of a legal framework on people with disabilities, which regulates the payment of allowances and the rendering of services, the number of people with disabilities, who need treatment is assessed by all stakeholders to be much higher than the number of those actually benefiting from social services. Several reasons explain this current state of affairs, such as unclear definitions on disability, unsuitable mentality and approach towards disabled, which results in many cases not being reported to the pertinent institutions. Furthermore the existing legislation is not always clear and people with disabilities and their relatives and caretakers lack understanding and knowledge on it. Many people, though, fall through the roster, because they became disabled while working without being member of the social security scheme. The before-mentioned commissions do not identify all of the disabled in their area of operation.

## Recommendations

- As a matter of fact resulting from the principles of free access and self-determination the assessment branches of the KMCAP should be built and reconstructed according to the norms of free access.
- Effective remedies against the decisions of the assessment institutions should be established
- As far as hearing impaired persons are assessed, a sign interpreter or an adequate communication aid must be provided by the KMCAP.
- Additionally the idea that disabled persons can decide, whether they will be accompanied by a representative of an association of people with disabilities, should be considered in the procedure.
- Naturally the assessed person has the right to have an insight in the assessment of the commissions and is entitled to get photocopies. The commissions are obliged to enlighten the assessed person about the whole range of his/her rights. Blind people are entitled to get the decision of the KMPV and on their demand the assessment report in Braille script.
- Information and awareness-raising measures should be considered on how the number of assessed persons and the information about existing legislation can be increased.
- The actual situation with assessment and annual reassessment focus too much on the impairment itself and the medical aspect of disability.
- Societal participation and representation of People with Disabilities should be considered as a priority by state institutions.

## Chapter III

### Legal Framework

The legal framework for the improvement of the social and economic status, which aims at offering the guarantee of equal opportunities for people with disabilities in the Albanian society, is improving gradually. This comes as a result of the lobbying of People with Disabilities, the pressure exercised by civic groups and organisations that protect and represent their rights and interests.

The improvement is also a result of the higher public awareness and of the gradually improving economic conditions; it reflects the will of the Albanian Government to support people with disabilities in order to include them in the community they live in.

The state is starting to spend more on people with disabilities. In 2003, the overall state disbursements towards people with disabilities amounted to 4.2 billion lek. In 2004, the state disbursements amounted to 4.7 billion lek.

However, so far the initiatives aimed at the rehabilitation of disabled persons were sporadic and short-term. Usually, and out of economic reasons the state funding for these issues has been modest. NGOs have tried to fill the gap and provided some rehabilitation services. Despite the undertaken efforts, the services offered are fragmented rather than integrated.

The state supports the organisations of people with disabilities and considers them party in drafting and approving the legal acts, policies and programs for disabled persons.

Furthermore the Albanian Government accepts the necessity to institutional reforms in order to develop a system of disability mainstreaming to

secure, that all legislation considers the rights of people with disabilities. Qualification and sensitisation of the responsible staff in the government is also an issue the authorities will focus on and will develop concrete projects on conscience raising and growing of competencies.

The rights of people with disabilities are sanctioned by the Albanian Constitution and by the overall legislative framework.

Article 25 of the Constitution of Albania guarantees the fundamental rights and freedoms of People with Disabilities. Chapter V of the Constitution, at the Social Objectives section, article 59 point (e) and (f) sets out as follows: "The Albanian State, shall, in compliance with its constitutional competencies and its means, and in concert with the private initiatives and responsibilities, provide for (e) care and support for the old persons, orphans and disabled" and (f) rehabilitation, vocational training, and social integration of Disabled, and the continuous improvement of their living condition". Article 52, point 1, sets out: "Each person is entitled to social insurance after the retirement or in case of a disability by law". Point 2 sets out: "Each person that loses his job because of causes independent of his will, is entitled to social welfare allowances by law, if this person has no alternative subsistence means".

Article 49 of the Constitution of Albania provides for equal employment rights: "Everyone has the right to earn the living through a legal work that he/she has chosen or accepted himself/herself. He/She is free to choose the profession, position of work and also the system of qualification for his/her profession. The employees have the right of social protection of the work". The employment

of People with Disabilities, according to their capabilities, is provided in the statutes of groups of People with Disabilities, such as labour invalids, blinds, para- and tetraplegic persons and the subsidiary acts applied to them.

### **Labour Invalids**

Law No.7889, dated 14.12.1994 "On the Status of Labour Invalids" amended by Law No.8052, dated 21.12.1995 "On some amendments to law No.7889", dated 14.12.1994 and Law No. Law No. 7889, dated 14.12.1994 "On the Status of Labour Invalids" amended by law no.8052, dated 21.12.1995 "On some amendments to Law No.7889, dated 14.12.1994 and Law No.7821, dated 26.12.2000 stipulates the right of labour invalids to following benefits resulting from their disability: 100% reimbursement of medical treatment for full invalids and 50% for those who have partially lost the ability to work, provision of mobility means, exclusion from direct taxes and custom taxes for different rehabilitation devices including vehicles, public transport is free, while private transport is 50% of the market value.

The law provides compensation for persons with the status of invalidity who were employed before, for electricity bills and for the cost of a minimal food basket. There is a monthly extra payment on top of the invalidity pensions of 2000-3000 Lek regarding three categories of disability. There is an increase of 15% for those who have benefited by the Council of Minister's Decree No. 381 and a refund for fuel of 4000 Lek is paid

### **Retirement allowances in the village**

In case the invalids live in the village the allowance amounts at 2980 Lek, with a compensation of 200 lek. The total amount is 3180 Lek. The allowance does not change in case the recipient changes his/her residence.

### **War Veterans**

Law No.7663, "On the status of war invalids during the war against Nazi-fascists", dated 21.01.1993 provides benefits to war veterans according to the groups of invalidity depending on the level of deformation or wounding. They receive extra money apart from the invalidity pension or the average of the pension of the invalid in case they have no pension, which is applicable according to the group of invalidity. The invalids of the first group are entitled to a caretaker, who is paid by the local government structures. In addition they receive medicines and medical treatment free of charge. When necessary war invalids are treated in clinics abroad. Free urban transport and inter-urban transport for half the price are provided for.

### **The Blind**

Law No.8098 "On the Status of the Blind", dated 28.03.1996 regulates the evaluation of the ability to see, the integration into normal life and sets forth appropriate living and working conditions and also favourable conditions for medical treatment.

Council of Minister's Decree No.227, dated 18.06.1997 "On obtaining the status of the blind" establishes the commissions for blinds at the State Social Service.

Council of Minister's Decree No.671, dated 15.12.2000 "On the establishment of medical commission of blind" provides favourable telephone tariffs and also compensation of electricity bills.

Council of Minister's Decree No.83, dated 26.02.2001 "On phone tariffs" and the Council of Minister's Decree No. 573, dated 22.10.2001 "On amendments of phone tariffs" provide further details on the matter.

Council of Minister's Decree No.632, dated 21.11.2001 "On benefits from national department of the residence". Instructions of Ministry of Labour for the implementation of law No. 8098, dated 28.03.1996 provides special treatment concerning sheltering.

The blind receive following services, which are not depending on the family income: free urban transport, 50% reduction on private transport together with their caretaker, phone tariffs of the first level and 700 impulses without VAT and only 20% of the monthly phone bill have to be paid.

Blind persons are excluded from custom tax for their vehicles and when they are self employed, they pay only half of the taxes. Only 20% of the electric bills per month have to be paid.

The minimum payment for blind persons is 6400 Lek. Currently there are 8715 blind who are receiving the above mentioned services. Their disability benefits are classified as follows:

- 8235 get 100% of the disability allowance;
- 408 get 150% of the disability allowance;
- 45 get 200% of the disability allowance;
- 27 get 300% of the disability allowance.

At the moment 3451 persons receive payment as caretakers to the amount of 5306 Lek/month. They are also entitled to 14 square metres living space free of charge.

### **Para- and Tetraplegic Persons**

Law No.8626, "On the status of the para- and tetraplegics", dated 22.06.2000 and in addition the Council of Minister's Decree No. 31, dated 20.01.2001, "On the benefits from the status of para- and tetraplegic invalids"; the Council of Minister's Decree No. 83, dated 26.02.2001 "On telephone tariffs and electric bills"; the Council of

Minister's Decree No. 387 "On exclusion of para- and tetraplegic invalids from taxes and tariffs" and the Council of Minister's Decree no. 687, dated 15.12.2000 regulate all benefits and service for para- and tetraplegic disabled persons.

Law No.8626 deals with paraplegics and tetraplegics who suffer from spine diseases, as a result of an accident and regulates their treatment by the medical commissions (KMCA) and the amount of payment the persons receive. Special rooms for the treatment of paraplegic and tetraplegic persons have to be provided, also medicine free of charge and services at home. Favourable tariffs for telephone and electricity bills are comparable to those concerning the blinds.

Further stipulations regulate the exclusion of these disabled from 11 kinds of taxes and also from customs taxes for the import of equipment for personal use. Furthermore they receive refunding of the cost for buying fuel and lubricant oil and they benefit from the disability payment.

The paraplegics and tetraplegics who benefit from this status are labour invalids and as such they are entitled to the same services as the labour invalids. Therefore, these persons receive an extra payment of 10.612 Lek/month. The total payment per month is 17.412 Lek. Caretakers receive 6000 Lek per month. Day care centres and community services are provided mainly by NGOs. However, around 1000 persons benefit from services in public institutions. The annual average cost for one person is 260.000 Lek, provided from the budget of these institutions.

### **Assistance and Social Care Legislation**

The economic aid provided to persons with physical, mental and sensor handicap, inborn or through incidents before reaching the 21 year, the blind, para - and tetraplegic work invalids is regulated



through Law No. 7710 "On Assistance and Social Care", dated 18.05.1993, the Council of Minister's Decree No.307, dated 24.05.1994 "On services of social care", Council of Minister's Decree No. 311, dated 11.07.1994 "On obtaining disability allowances" with some amendments in the Council of Minister's Decree No.457, dated 21.08.1995 and the Council of Minister's Decree No.304, dated 27.06.2002. Further rules are laid out in the Council of Minister's Decree No.510, dated 24.11.1997 "On the criteria of the treatment at the care institutions", the Council of Minister's Decree No.786, dated 24.11.2003 "On the commission and payment for People with Disabilities".

This law and the corresponding Council of Ministers Decree lay out the blueprints of service provision for the disabled, the assessment, the rules of payment and its increase during the years. Stipulations are made for the treatment at care institutions, both public and private ones and for payment for disabled pupils and students. Middle school pupils receive 200% of the minimum payment, students get 300%. The caretaker receive 5000 Lek in case the family has no incomes. The para-and tetraplegics receive 110 Lek per month for the refunding of the electricity bills.

### **Health Insurance System**

Law No.7880, dated 13.10.1994 "On the health insurance in the Republic of Albania" includes those persons who have paid health insurance before they became disabled.

### **Mental Health**

Law No.8092 "On mental health", dated 21.03.1996 addresses the rights of all persons with mental disabilities

### **Employment Situation**

The Labour Code prohibits any kind of discrimination in employment and professional training of People with Disabilities. They have the right to work in appropriate jobs according to the evaluation of the Medical Assessment Commission that defines their ability to work. According to the Code the employer should provide appropriate jobs and facilities for persons with disabilities. Working hours for the disabled employees are reduced to 6 hours per day.

Law No.7995 "On the encouragement of employment", dated 20.09.1995 provides and supports employment, advise and professional qualification for People with Disabilities. Article 15 sets forth that out of 25 employees, one should be a person with disabilities able to work. An employer can chose to employ one person with an aggravated disability instead of five persons with light disabilities. Every employer who does not fulfil his employment quota for the disabled shall pay to the National Employment Fund an amount equal to a minimal pay for each of the persons with disabilities he ought to have employed. Article 16 sets out incentives for employers of people with disabilities: "An employer of people with disabilities may ask for subventions from the Labour Office for the suitable equipment of the disabled person. The payment for the people with disabilities is exempt from taxation as stipulated by the Acts of the Council of Ministers."

An assessment showed that in particular this law was implemented poorly in Albania, out of several reasons. Small businesses with less than 25 employees dominate in the country, sanctions and practices for the proper application of the pertinent law do not exist and alternative mechanisms have not been found so far. There also exists a need to sensitise the society, the tax authorities

and the employers to comply with the law.

In the recent past, protected businesses for employment of disabled have been established and are functional. Organised by NGOs and supported financially by the State, some initiatives for the production of mobility means were set up by people with disabilities themselves. There are successful initiatives for employment of people with disabilities and other groups in need; it is a state responsibility to provide sustainability and to promote the employment of disabled persons.

### **Education and Vocational Training**

Law No.7952 "On the pre-university educational system", dated 21.06.1995 recognises the right to education for all citizens, regardless their social status, nationality, language, sex, religion, race, political background, health situation and economical level.

The opening of schools or special classes is made possible through his law, also the qualification of staff to work with disabled persons. To this end a special branch was opened in Vlora for the qualification of specialised educational staff. Persons with disability may study in normal schools, in special classes next to normal schools, or in special public schools.

The national institutions accomplish 80% of needs for this kind of schooling and 2% for daily schooling in districts. The education of children with special needs is free of charge at public educational institutions, in case this is the wish of the parents and the right professional choice. The state undertakes measures to guarantee the necessary conditions to integrate children with disabilities gradually in normal schools. (Article 40)

At present there are 760 children attending special classes. The two main institutions covering the needs of the blind and deaf children fulfil ap-

proximately 80-90% of the demand. As to the other specialised institutions, they cover less than 2% of the demands for treatment.

The Ministry of Education, working jointly with other institutions has done commendable work to sensitise schools to accept children with disabilities in the normal classes. At any rate, schools lack basic infrastructure and the teachers themselves lack training to support this process.

Law No. 8872 "On education and vocational training in the Republic of Albania", dated 29.03.2002 includes the rules for education and professional training, and persons with disabilities are among the main beneficiaries of this law. One of the stipulations is that people with disabilities may attend programs of professional training free of charge at public centres and receive payment for private courses.

### **Transport and Accessibility**

Law No.8308 "On road transport", dated 18.03.1998 and the Minister's instruction No.1649, dated 16.08.1999 provide facilities for people with disabilities in transport issues. They are entitled to free urban transport and reduced prices for inter-urban transport.

The approval of town planning and architectonic rules and norms to abolish the barriers for persons with disabilities, elaborated by the Ministry of Territorial Adjustment and civil society organisations (ADRF Advocacy Group, Engineering Institute, National Association of Constructors) through the Council of Ministers in June 2004 made it legally binding that all building activities have to avoid barriers for people with disabilities.

## Recommendations

- As it was shown in this chapter, the legislative framework on disability in Albania is quite scattered. Therefore measures should be taken to analyse the existing legislation and combine it in one law on disability for the Republic of Albania.
- This will be undertaken by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, as the leading ministry in close co-operation with the Ministry of Justice and the respective disability civil society organisations.
- People with disabilities have the right to get informed on their rights and entitlements. Governmental and non-governmental institutions have to join to organise a public awareness campaign and compile information brochures, in which all rights, allowances, reimbursements and services are summarised in an understandable language.
- The Republic of Albania has ratified the Revised European Social Charter, has left aside the ratification of Article 15. It is strongly recommendable to catch up on this setting a clear sign towards the Council of Europe that the Government of the Republic of Albania has the decisive will to implement a non-discrimination and inclusion policy.

**Table 2 - Allowances for People with Disabilities in Albania**

**I. Full Disability Allowance (monthly entitlement)**

<i>a. Full invalidity because of a general disease</i>	
- Allowance	7266 lek
-5% of the baseline retirement allowance foreach of his/her children but in any case not more than 20% according to law 7703, 11.05.1993 (Art 39)	1120 lek
- Compensation per capita per family	414 lek
- Compensation for the energy	350 lek
- Compensation for the bread basket	150 lek
-Additional allowance (ComD 204)	3000 lek
<b>Total</b>	<b>12300 lek</b>
<i>b. In case of a disability caused by an incident or by a professional disease</i>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>12300 lek</b>
<i>c. In case of a full invalidity because of a general disease that requires additional services by a care-taker the benefits are as follows:</i>	
-Allowance	7266 lek
-Allowance for caretaking	1600 lek
-Compensation for the children	1120 lek
-Compensation per capita per family	414 lek
-Compensation for the energy	350 lek
-Compensation for the bread basket	150 lek
-Additional allowance (ComD 204)	3000 lek
<b>Total</b>	<b>13900 lek</b>

**II. Partial Disability Allowance (monthly entitlement)**

<i>a. Partial invalidity because of a general disease</i>	
Allowance	3633 lek
-Compensation for the energy	350 lek
-Compensation for the bread basket	150 lek
-Compensation per capita per family	414 lek
<b>Total</b>	<b>4547 lek</b>
<i>b. Additional allowance for a partial invalidity caused by an incident at work or by a professional disease according to ComD, 16.4.2004</i>	
	2000 lek
<b>Total</b>	<b>6547 lek</b>

## Chapter IV

### Fields of Intervention

An analysis of the existing disability policies in Albania revealed two major challenges:

- 1) Improvement of the policy framework, which should be harmonised with international standards.
- 2) Effective implementation of existing laws and regulations.

It is crystal-clear, that the overall goal of full inclusion of People with Disabilities in the Albanian society will require long term commitment and will need strong efforts by the Government and the civil society.

The Government of Albania fully commits itself to this obligation and has a devoted ally in the Disability NGOs.

The main objective of all policies and projects shall be to improve the overall living conditions of People with Disabilities and to achieve lasting results in including them in all aspects of life as self determined citizens, who enjoy the full range of civil and human rights.

Therefore the Government of Albania and the representatives of People with Disabilities have decided to start their efforts in the key fields of:

- 1) Accessibility for People with Disabilities;
- 2) Services for people with disabilities;
- 3) Education, vocational training, employment;
- 4) Institutional capacity building
- 5) Research and legal framework

The aims and principles of the strategy outlined in chapter II shall be implemented in all policies and projects, with a continuous emphasis on the self

determination of People with Disabilities.

By increasing the inclusion grade of people with disabilities progressively there will also be progress in sensitising and awareness raising in the whole society, thus reaching at the same time a general agreement on the inclusion efforts for people with disabilities.

Special attention will be paid towards the designing of an effective monitoring and reporting structure, which enables all stakeholders, including international donors, to measure the progress in implementation of the National Strategy on People with Disabilities.

#### **Accessibility**

The building of a barrier free environment is definitely a key issue for the inclusion chances of people with disabilities in all sectors of social life including their integration into all education and employment fields.

The Council of Europe and the European Union have been focussing on this issue in the last years and their efforts have lead to a number of resolutions, lining out the definitions, standards and measures of the current understanding of accessibility and universal design. The United Nations have set out this principle in the UN standard rules as well.

Buildings and other facilities, means of transport, technical utensils, systems of information processing, acoustic and visual sources of information and communication facilities and other designed environments shall be considered barrier free if they are accessible and usable for disabled persons in the usual way, without particular difficulties and as a rule, without help from others.

Accessibility is therefore a precondition to the full and equal enjoyment of civil rights and for the access of people with disabilities to all services on equal terms with all other citizens.

The Government of Albania and all other stakeholders are keeping this in mind while mainstreaming all future legislation and standards concerning the built environment.

Therefore it will only be a starting point to abolish visible and physical barriers in everyday life of people with disabilities. First efforts have been undertaken already by the town planning and architectural regulations for people with disabilities, elaborated by the Ministry of Territorial Reform and Tourism in co-operation with civil society and approved by the Council of Ministers in June 2004.

The proposed projects of the national and local government institutions and the civil society organisations have decided to focus on this out of two main reasons:

1. Considering the actual conditions of public infrastructure in Albania this is the most striking barrier problem prohibiting people with disabilities to take part in everyday life. It is at the same time the greatest barrier for education, employment and access to training facilities for people with disabilities.
2. Bringing People with Disabilities into the "sight" of the society is seen as an important factor in the awareness raising process in society and will built the basis for a greater sensitiveness of lawmakers and all members of society.

Future steps shall also be undertaken<sup>1</sup>:

- In building up structures to enable people with disabilities to take part in all sectors of social and cultural life. Major stress should be put on political life, especially national and local elections since participation is an indispensable civil right, which people with disabilities are entitled to enjoy.
- By abolishing information-, communication- and transportation-barriers and mainstreaming the standards, bearing in mind that the right to information is a genuine civic right. People with disabilities shall therefore become entitled to get information on all services in Braille, sign or easy language.
- By implementing disability issues as a compulsory element into the curricula of studies as e.g. architecture, design, media and computer professions.

### **Services**

The Law on Social Services institutionalises the practice that experienced and advanced civil society organisations offer a large number of services for people with disabilities on the communal level. The local government orders these services at the NGOs and pays for them. This system was established out of the Albanian Government's commitment to the reduction of employees in the public sector in order to reduce the public spending.

At the same time this draft law reflects the high esteem of the Albanian Government for the services provided by the organisations of people with disabilities, among others. This system is again something that has developed out of the

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1. The institutional responsibilities, the measures to be taken regarding accessibility and their deadlines are stated in Appendix 1, Point 1, of the National Strategy on People with Disabilities.

current Albanian history and could be assessed as the best model under the existing circumstances. Nevertheless the Albanian Government is responsible for all kinds of health services.

This field can hardly be covered by the Albanian civil society organisations. Therefore the national and local authorities will set a priority in improving measures for early prevention and the delivering of medical and rehabilitation services to prevent the deterioration of the disabled health state.

All stakeholders are aware that the policy in economically more advanced countries develops towards supplying the disabled with an individual budget, which enables them to decide for themselves which services they need and want to buy. The Albanian Government will follow up this objective to implement the principle of self-determination.

However, the economic situation of most families of people with disabilities in Albania bears the danger, that cash might not be used to fulfil the needs of the disabled person, but to supplement the family's budget. Therefore the short and middle term focus will be set on providing qualified services but on doing so always taking into account the needs expressed by the disabled person him/herself.

The Albanian Government and the disability NGOs will give high priority to bringing caretaker services to the homes of people with disabilities. Qualification and securing of high quality services shall be included in all aspects. Disabled persons shall have the right to decide on the person who is the respective caretaker including the right to decide for a person of the same sex. The suppression of the right to self-determination of people with disabilities is a clear violation of their human and civic rights.

Therefore a timeframe shall be developed to abolish all kinds of institutionalised treatment of disabled persons and replace it by daily commune based care centres respectively home services.

High quality social services are very important for the inclusion and integration of People with Disabilities. It is recommended to put emphasis on them in the implementation of the strategy and to take into account the decrease in access to social services from urban to rural areas of the country.

On the local level there shall be community based Social Service Centres in addition to the assessment centres. The staff in these centres shall work closely together with the local disability NGOs and shall advise the disabled person with a holistic approach and develop together with him/her an individual inclusion plan, which takes into account his/her individual disability and participation needs. The plan shall include measures on medical rehabilitation, education, vocational training and employment.

The staff in the Social Service Centres must be highly qualified in all fields of disability policies and must be trained in an inter-disciplinary manner. A concept on qualification and logistics to establish a nation-wide network of these centres is one of the key projects within the strategy. Mobile units should also be considered to fulfil the needs of disabled persons in remote areas.

As far as the housing of the centres is considered it is recommended to situate them in the municipality buildings and to take care that they are access free. For hearing impaired persons a sign interpreter or other appropriate measures shall be provided.

The key principle shall be that the provision of social services should follow the individual instead the other way around. At present this holistic sup-

port and service is already carried out by a number of centres run by the associations of people with disabilities or self help groups. The state initiative should not replace them but amend these services. While building up the state service centres people with disabilities should be employed in these centres to the utmost extent, practising the idea of peer counselling (the consultation of People with Disabilities by People with Disabilities).

### **Employment**

Unemployment among People with Disabilities in Albania is considered as one of the main problems. People with disabilities have hardly any chance to earn their own living and to participate fully in society. It also goes along with the priorities set out in the European Union: The Action Plan of the European Commission to promote equal opportunities and fight discrimination puts a major stress on the employment of people with disabilities in 2003. Working places shall be designed barrier free and shall be adjusted the needs of people with disabilities. They also shall be supported in starting their own businesses. Despite the introduction of Law No.7995 "On the encouragement of employment", dated 20.09.1995 there is a lack of successful state-led efforts in Albania so as to integrate people with disabilities into the open labour market.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore NGOs have to play a decisive role on a self help basis and should receive support not only by donors but also by the Government itself. This has already started through the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, which supports several NGO employment projects.

Albanian disability NGOs have so far contributed remarkably with their expertise to train People with Disabilities and support their integration into

the labour market. However, it should also be kept in mind, that capacity building in state institutions shall have the aim of supporting the chance, that the State Employment Agency will be more and more effective in bringing People with Disabilities into open or alternative forms of employment. Even then, a close co-operation with the Disability NGOs shall be guaranteed in the status of the State Employment Agency.

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs shall take concrete measures to ensure the implementation of the already existing Law "On the encouragement of employment".

As People with Disabilities often have lack in qualifications due to the exclusion from education and vocational training systems, it is important to initiate efforts to enable People with Disabilities to build up capacities on equal basis.

The NGOs shall receive support from the Government in their efforts to provide vocational training for people with disabilities but the Government itself is also aware of the obligation to offer vocational training for people with disabilities in their training programs.

The declared aim is to create a system of integrated kindergartens and schools on the elementary and secondary level. The Ministry of Education is already working on a progressive policy on integrative education including accessibility and capacity building elements.

To abolish physical barriers in schools, universities

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1. Law No 7995 "On the encouragement of employment" is a commendable effort, which stipulates that out of 25 employees, 1 should be a person with disabilities able to work. After the changes in the 90ies, however, big enterprises nearly ceased to exist and the smaller businesses normally have less than 25 employees.



and vocational training centres is an important step but can only be seen as an indispensable precondition to an integrated concept in learning at all levels of education, studying and training. Given the status quo in Albania a mixed system of integrated schools and special schools is considered the best short term solution.

The Government of Albania and the civil society organisations will co-operate closely to build up an education system, where integrated schools will be the rule. The special needs of all kinds of People with Disabilities should be met in special classes in these schools only if considered necessary. The social life in itself and all cultural activities shall take place on an integrated basis.

To increase the knowledge within the staff in this sector the disability mainstreaming of all curricula of schoolteachers, doctors, architects, social workers, psychologists etc. shall also be a major objective.

*Note:* The institutional responsibilities, the measures to be taken regarding Employment, Education and Vocational Training and their deadlines are stated in Appendix 1, Point 3, of the National Strategy on People with Disabilities.

### **Capacity Building**

Capacity building is considered as a further key issue. As mentioned above, the knowledge on existing disability legislation and policy making is only fragmentarily developed in the Albanian state institutions. Even among the specialised Disability NGOs a lack of knowledge on the legal framework and the rights of and services for People with Disabilities could be detected.

The Government of Albania, however, commits itself fully to good governance on disability issues and the establishment of disability mainstreaming in policy making. All actors involved are also aware of the need of a working monitoring structure for the implementation of the National Strategy on People with Disabilities.

This requires special training including the acquaintance with best practice examples. A certain need for human resources with expertise arises from countries where disability policies are more advanced than in Albania. Specialised capacity building is needed for staff, who are dealing directly with People with Disabilities when it comes to assessment, vocational training and employment, medical and rehabilitation services. Therefore, following measures are deemed necessary:

- 1) In order to ensure for solid quality standards caretakers of People with Disabilities shall have to be included in all capacity building measures.
- 2) Judges, prosecutors and lawyers have to receive training and awareness-raising on Disability issues so as to be in a position to implement existing legal remedies for People with Disabilities.

*Note:* The institutional responsibilities, the measures to be taken regarding Capacity Building and their deadlines are stated in Appendix 1, Point 4 of the National Strategy on People with Disabilities.

### **Legal Framework and Research**

A legal framework on People with Disabilities has been created in Albania, including assessment and legislation on allowances, rights and services. However, the analysis of the current situation has shown that it is quite scattered and that therefore a lack of knowledge on it both at the state level and within individual persons with disabilities prevails. Implementation and development of remedies of the existing legal framework have to be priorities.

In order to harmonise the Albanian legislation with international standards and based on the principles outlined in Chapter I, to implement a new definition on disability in Albania and to built up effective monitoring structures it is necessary to get an extended overview on existing data, statistical gaps and missing links within the legal framework.

In order to inform and sensitize all People with Disabilities on their rights, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities will publish, in full cooperation with the Albanian Disability NGOs, a brochure, in which all services, allowances, benefits and remedies for the People with Disabilities are summarised, in order to keep the interest groups but also the responsible staff in state institutions and the civil society fully and continuously informed.

Irrespective of the outlined projects, the Government of Albania will undertake measures to set clear signs towards the international community, the Council of Europe and the European Union and towards the society in Albania itself underlining the decisive will for a policy of non-discrimination and inclusion of People with Disabilities by:

- Ratifying Article 15 of the Revised European Social Charter (RESC) within one year
- Giving the strategy a secure legal framework by proofing positively, how the principle of non-discrimination of people with disabilities can be amended to the Art. 25 of the Constitution of Albania. Furthermore, the drafting of an Albanian Act on Equal Opportunities, again in close co-operation with civil society shall begin at the earliest possible time.
- Engaging actively at the ongoing process of the drafting of the United Nations Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities including the communication with the member states of the European Union. In order to operationalize the expertise of Disability NGOs they will be actively engaged in the process of the drafting of the United Nations Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities, including the communication with the member states of the European Union.
- There shall be a close exchange of views between the Albanian Government and civil society including regular briefings of the public and consultations of the Ministries and the Albanian Foreign Office with NGOs on the UN Human Rights Convention.

## Chapter V

### Monitoring and Reporting Structures

The monitoring and reporting structure for the National Strategy on People with Disabilities is built according to the following hierarchy:

#### 1. National Council on the Affairs of People with Disabilities

(Established by Prime Minister's Order 196, 12.12.2005)

##### Members:

Deputy Prime Minister (chair)

Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Minister of Education and Science, Minister of Health, Minister of Justice, Minister of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports, Minister of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunication, Minister of Interior

Representatives of 4 National Disability NGOs: Albanian Labour Invalids Association, Albanian Blind Association, Albanian Para and Tetraplegics Association, and Albanian Disability Rights Foundation.

**Meets:** At least 3 times per year, in accordance with the mandate of the National Council

##### Tasks:

- Policy making on Disability Affairs at the national level based on the National Action Plan of the National Strategy on People with Disabilities;
  - Disability Rights mainstreaming in the Republic of Albania
- Provision of recommendations on new legislation and sublegal acts related to Disability
- Approves the consolidated report on disability rights for Albania<sup>1</sup>

**Needs:** Statute of the National Council

#### 2. Technical Secretariat (Established by Prime Minister's Order 40, 23.03.2006)

##### Members:

3 full-time employees of Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.

The Head of Secretariat is a Person with Disabilities

**Line Authority:** Reports to the Directorate of Equal Opportunities (MoLSA)

**Support by:** Focal Points in Line Ministries

**Needs:** Selection criteria for the 3 employees, job descriptions, by-law, capacity-building

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1.The report is submitted to the Albanian Assembly as the highest democratic representation body. The report shall be published and sent to all governmental and non-governmental institutions in Albania and also to international donors. For the first 3 years after the publication of the National Strategy a report has to be made every year. After that a report shall be published every 2 years.

**Tasks:**

- Collection of all disability-related information from line ministries, local government units, regions, municipalities, communes; dissemination of disability-related information at all levels.
- Liaison with all focal points in the line ministries
- Liaison with Disability NGOs of the National Council and Administrative Council of State Social Services
- Liaison with the 12 Regional Offices of the State Social Service
- Preparation of meetings of National Council and the Administrative Council
- Reports to Administrative Council<sup>2</sup>

**3. Administrative Council of the State Social Service**

**Members:**

Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (Chair), Director of the State Social Services (Deputy Head) Director of the State Insurance Institute, Director of the State Employment Service, Deputy Minister of Interiors, Deputy Minister of Health, Deputy Minister of Education and Science, a representative of the Budget Dept of MoF, and a representative of the national network of the disability organisations, who will be elected by the network.

**Support by: Technical Secretariat**

3 full-time employees of Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.

The Head of Secretariat is a Person with Disabilities

**Tasks:**

- Oversees the implementation of the National Strategy on People with Disabilities
- Provides recommendations to National Council on People with Disabilities
- Guidelines for and supervision of Technical Secretariat
- Gives guidelines to 12 Regional Offices of State Social Service
- Gives guidelines to local government units

**Needs:**

By-law: timeframe of meetings<sup>3</sup>, voting procedures<sup>4</sup>, organisation of identifying 3 NGOs for representation in the National Council<sup>5</sup>, guidelines and templates for reporting to National Council.

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2. Reports are due every 2 months 10 days before the meeting of the Administrative Council.

3. For the first 2 years of its existence the Administrative Council shall meet 6 times per year. After 2 years the Council revises the meeting schedule. The Administrative Council has to meet 3 weeks before the meeting of the National Council takes place.

4. Governmental and non-governmental institutions have the same vote. One institution has one vote.

5. Regional NGOs need to be human rights based, work on cross-disability issues and have a working experience of 5 and more years.

#### 4. Focal Points in line ministries

**Members:** One designated person in the following ministries: MoEd, MoH, MoJ, MPWTT, Mol.

**Line Authority:** Technical Secretariat of the National Council on the Affairs of People with Disabilities

**Support by:** All departments of respective ministries (by CoM decree)

**Needs:** Selection criteria and job description

Capacity building:

- Disability aspect of the respective ministry
- Project cycle management
- Office management
- IT

**Tasks:**

- Reports to Technical Secretariat
- Reports to respective deputy ministers in the Administrative Council of State Social Services
- Liaison with the local government units under the line authority of the respective ministry
- Liaison with the NGOs represented in the Administrative Council

#### 5. Regional Offices of State Social Service

**Members:** Staff of regional offices, 1 designated person from the Social Service Centres

**Needs:** Selection criteria and job description

Capacity building

- Disability Rights
- Project cycle management
- Office management
- IT

**Tasks:**

- Implementation of the Strategy on regional level
- Rendering services to people with disabilities
- Payment of social welfare disbursements for People with Disabilities
- Reports to Technical Secretariat, copied for information to respective line ministry

## **6. Local Government Units**

**Members:** 12 Regional Councils, 36 Municipalities, 373 Communes: 1 local focal point on Disability

**Support by:** Regional Offices of State Social Service, Technical Secretariat, Focal Points in Ministries

**Needs:** Selection criteria and job descriptions

### **Capacity building:**

- All aspects of disability with emphasis on services and legal remedies, accessibility, employment, education and vocational training
- Project cycle management
- Office and contacts management
- IT

### **Tasks:**

- Implementation of Strategy
- Reports to Regional Offices of State Social Service
- Refer people to State Social Service Offices
- Regular consultation meetings with local NGOs



## ***National Action Plan on People with Disabilities***

*Life without barriers*

*Services*

*Education, Employment and Vocational Training*

*Capacity Building*

*Legislation and Research*

## National Action Plan on People with Disabilities

Intervention Fields / Objectives	Measures	Deadlines	Implementing institution	Financial coverage
<p><b>I. Life without barriers</b></p> <p>1. Ensure accessibility for people with disabilities through the gradual removal of existing architectonic, infrastructure and transport barriers and through preventing the creation of new accessibility barriers</p>	<p>1.1 Accessible flats will be built and accessibility measures will be applied to 10% of the buildings constructed with the funds of the Housing Directorate.</p> <p>1.2 Funds will be allocated to remove existing barriers in the roads and public infrastructure, public buildings, health institutions and state-owned buildings.</p> <p>a) Establishment of a barrier-free Tirana. Interventions on Tirana's urbanistic environment, to be followed by accessibility measures in Albania.</p> <p>b) Accessibility measures will be applied to the main hospitals in Tirana 82.8 milionë lekë.</p> <p>c) The hospitals at the regional and municipal level will provide for accessible environment adapted to the needs of people with disabilities.</p> <p>ç) 8 Vocational Training Centres will become accessible for the training of people with disabilities by the State Employment Service</p> <p>d) 100 schools and 90 kindergartens will become accessible for people with disabilities</p> <p>e) Continuous efforts will be undertaken to ensure that polling stations become accessible for people with disabilities</p> <p>1.3 Accessibility measures shall be applied to transport means starting from the urban transport in Tirana and continuing with railway transport.</p> <p>1.4 Acoustic signals and other signals suitable for people with disabilities applied to the urban infrastructure.</p>	<p>2007 - 2014</p> <p>2007 - 2014</p> <p>2005 - 2007</p> <p>2005 - 2010</p> <p>2005 - 2007</p> <p>2005 - 2007</p> <p>2004 - 2014</p> <p>starting from 2006 -</p> <p>starting from 2007 -</p> <p>starting from 2007 -</p>	<p>Ministry of Territorial Adjustment and Tourism (now MPWTT)</p> <p>Ministry of Territorial Adjustment and Tourism, local government units</p> <p>Tirana Municipality, MPWTT</p> <p>Ministry of Health</p> <p>Local Government units</p> <p>State Employment Service, MoLSA</p> <p>Ministry of Education</p> <p>Ministry of Territorial Adjustment</p> <p>Ministry of Transport and Telecommunication (now MPWTT)</p> <p>Ministry of Transport and Telecommunication, Local Government Units</p>	<p>State budget, donors</p> <p>State budget, donors</p> <p>Donors, municipal budget</p> <p>State budget, local government, donors</p> <p>local government, donors</p> <p>State budget, local government, donors</p> <p>State budget</p> <p>State Employment Service, donors</p> <p>State budget, local government, donors</p> <p>Ministry of Transport, local government units</p>



## National Action Plan on People with Disabilities

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
2. Utilization of modern technologies to gradually overcome communication and information barriers towards people with disabilities	<p>2.1 Support for the creation of "talking books" and publications in brail, that includes school curricula, technical, legal and artistic literature.</p> <p>2.2 Access to public services is particularly supported for people with disabilities during communications with public administration</p> <p>2.3 Sign language included in visual media.</p>	<p>starting from 2005 -</p> <p>starting from 2005 -</p> <p>starting from 2005 -</p>	<p>NGOs, Albanian Blind Association</p> <p>NGOs</p> <p>NGO</p>	<p>NGOs, donors</p> <p>NGOs, donors</p> <p>NGOs, donors</p>
<b>II. Services</b>				
1. Prevention of Disability at the earliest possible stage through early detection, and treatment of the children aged 0-6 years.	<p>1.1 Establishment of inter-disciplinary teams for the drafting of programmes on early prevention of disability, identification of disability, and drafting of rehabilitation and reintegration programmes.</p> <p>1.2 Establishment of the laboratory of molecular biochemistry and genetics for the pre-birth diagnostics in the gynecologicals hospital.</p> <p>1.3 Upgrading the genetics laboratory at the department of Pediatrics.</p> <p>1.4 Research on early prevention of disability. Preparation of information bulletins on early prevention.</p>	<p>starting from 2004 - 2005</p> <p>starting from 2004 - 2005</p> <p>starting from 2004</p> <p>2 times per year</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, NGOs</p> <p>Ministry of Health</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Health Insurance Institute</p> <p>Ministry of Health</p>	<p>State budget, donors</p> <p>State budget, donors, NGOs</p> <p>State budget, donors, NGOs</p> <p>State budget, donors, NGOs</p>
2. Provision of coordinated health and social services by the public and non-public institutions for the people with disabilities in accordance with a shared philosophy of rehabilitation and integration.	<p>2.1 Provision of new services such as daily services, family and community-based services aimed at the integration of people with disabilities.</p> <p>2.2 Piloting new service models and assessment of the distribution of the services in Albania</p> <p>2.3 New standards and regulations on the services for people with disabilities.</p>	<p>2005 - 2006 and continuous</p> <p>starting from 2004</p> <p>2004 - 2014</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs /State Social Service, Local Government Units</p> <p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</p> <p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs /State Social Service, Health Insurance Institute Local Government Units, donors, NGOs</p> <p>State budget, donors, NGOs</p>

## National Action Plan on People with Disabilities

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
	<p>2.4 Revision of the regulations of the public residential centres. Adoption of new measures for people with severe disabilities, that can not benefit from services in the families.</p> <p>2.5 Provision of psycho-social counselling in 36 schools in Albania. Implementation of accessibility measures in these schools.</p>	<p>2004 - 2006 (3 centres) 2005 - 2007 (3 centres) 2007 - 2009</p> <p>2004 - 2010</p>	<p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</p> <p>Ministry of Education</p>	<p>State budget, donors</p> <p>Ministry of Education, Local Government Units, donors, NGOs</p>
3. Ensuring equal opportunities in the provision of basic health care services for people with disabilities	<p>3.1 Review of the regulations on the provision and distribution of medical supplies to people with disabilities. A dedicated budget line will be established for people with disabilities</p> <p>3.2 Review of the curricula of the family doctor. Inclusion of programmes on disability in the family doctor's curricula.</p> <p>3.3 Analysis of the options to provide extended services for people with severe disabilities</p>	<p>2004 - 2008</p> <p>Yearly</p> <p>Yearly</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Health Insurance Institute</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Health Insurance Institute</p> <p>Health Insurance Institute</p>	<p>State budget, donors</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Health Insurance Institute</p> <p>State budget, donors</p>
4. Improvement of the rehabilitation services targeted at people with disabilities	<p>4.1 Approval and implementation of a national programme for the establishment and functioning of rehabilitation services, which will gradually cover the whole territory of the Republic of Albania.</p> <p>4.2 Establishment of an accreditation system for the centres of early care, rehabilitation centres and training centres.</p> <p>4.3 Establishment of the vertical structures including local government units, that will deal with people with disabilities at the central, regional and local level</p>	<p>Special Planning 2005 - 2015</p> <p>starting from 2005 -</p> <p>starting from 2004 -</p>	<p>Ministry of Health</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Education</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, donors, NGOs</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Social Insurance Institute, donors</p> <p>State budget, donors, NGOs</p>

## National Action Plan on People with Disabilities

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
5. Information on Disability Needs and provision means to overcome disability through accessible information.	5.1 Provision of people with disabilities with the most suitable means and tools to enable them to benefit at the fullest extent from the public education and public health and integration services	starting from 2005 -	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Education, NGOs	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Education, NGOs, donors
	5.2 Support for the publication of leaflets and information materials on modern approaches towards disability.	starting from 2005 -	(idem)	(idem)
	5.3 Support for the establishment of the specialized information and resource centres dealing with disability so as to encourage a well distributed and harmonised public-private information coverage for Albania	starting from 2005 -	(idem)	(idem)
6. Adequate Service Provision through Local Government Units in compliance with the Local Government Law and inline with the overall state policies on Disability	6.1 Establishment of the vertical structures with the inclusion of the Local Government Units in the social service provision with a focus on Disability	starting from 2005 -	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Education, NGOs	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Education, NGOs, donors
	6.2 Community treatment to replace gradually residential treatment. Training will be provided for the caretakers of the persons with hearing impairments and for the blind.	starting from 2005 -	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service	(idem)
	6.3 Daily centres will become primary service centres	2010	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service	(idem)

## National Action Plan on People with Disabilities

Intervention Fields / Objectives	Measures	Deadlines	Implementing institution	Financial coverage
<b>III. Education, Employment and Vocational Training</b>				
1. Policy improvement and effective policy implementation for the employment of people with disabilities	<p>1.1. Study on the employment situation of people with disabilities, recommendations on employment options of people with disabilities in Albania.</p> <p>1.2. Support for the creation of protected employment for people with disabilities and support for the transport of people with disabilities to their workplaces.</p> <p>1.3. Reform of the benefits/pensions scheme for people with disabilities so as to avoid conflicts with active employment policies.</p> <p>1.5 Effective implementation of legislation on employment of people with disabilities and provision of targeted vocational training / counselling to enable people with disabilities to compete on equal terms in the labour market.</p>	<p>starting from 2004 -</p> <p>starting from 2004 -</p> <p>starting from 2005 -</p> <p>starting from 2007 -</p>	<p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Employment Service</p> <p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Employment Service</p> <p>State Insurance Institute, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</p> <p>State Employment Service, MoLSA</p>	<p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Employment Service, donors</p> <p>State budget, donors, private sector</p> <p>State budget</p> <p>State Budget, Local Government Units budget</p>
2. Improvement of the policies and programmes for vocational training of People with Disabilities	<p>2.1 Reform of the vocational training system aimed at the inclusion of People with Disabilities in the vocational training programmes</p> <p>2.2 Provision of extended services aimed at the employment of People with Disabilities in cooperation with employers</p>	<p>2005 and ongoing</p> <p>2005 and ongoing</p>	<p>State Employment Service, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</p> <p>(idem)</p>	<p>State budget</p> <p>State budget, donors</p>

## National Action Plan on People with Disabilities

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
3. Improvement of the inclusive education schemes aimed at a full integration of children with disabilities in the Albanian public schools	<p>3.1 Establishment of a new integrative school curriculum</p> <p>3.2 Preparation of a package with practical guidelines, didactical materials and standards for the public schools.</p> <p>3.3 Drafting of a normative act on the individual educational plan that sets out the rules of admission and initial assessment of the children with disabilities</p> <p>3.4 Creating resource materials in schools to work specifically with disabled children</p> <p>3.5 Improvements in the legal provisions on the teachers' workload and their financial treatment.</p> <p>3.6 Preparation of bulletins and resource materials and readers for teachers and parents.</p> <p>3.7 The registration of the children with disabilities is treated as a priority</p>	<p>2004 - 2006</p> <p>2004 - 2006</p> <p>2004 - 2006</p> <p>starting from 2004</p> <p>2005 - 2006</p> <p>starting from 2005</p> <p>starting from 2004</p>	<p>Ministry of Education</p> <p>Ministry of Education/Education Directorates</p> <p>Ministry of Education/Education Directorates</p> <p>Ministry of Education/Education Directorates</p> <p>Ministry of Education/Education Directorates</p> <p>Ministry of Education/Education Directorates</p> <p>Ministry of Education/Education Directorates</p> <p>Ministry of Education/Education Directorates</p>	<p>State budget</p> <p>State budget, donors</p> <p>State budget, donors</p> <p>State budget, donors</p> <p>State budget, donors</p> <p>State budget, donors</p> <p>State budget, donors</p> <p>State budget, donors</p>
4. Improvement of the teaching process in the special schools	<p>4.1 Preparation and implementation of special integrative programmes and more field work for disabled students</p> <p>4.2 Support for the provision of transport services for students with disabilities from rural areas</p> <p>4.3 Provision of special programmes for those categories of children with disabilities presently not covered with services</p>	<p>2004 - 2006</p> <p>2006 - 2010</p> <p>starting in 2006</p>	<p>Ministry of Education</p> <p>Ministry of Education/Education Directorates, local government units</p> <p>Ministry of Education/Education Directorates, local government units</p>	<p>State budget, donors</p> <p>State budget, donors</p> <p>State budget, donors</p>

## National Action Plan on People with Disabilities

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
5. Gradual establishment and extension of integrated schools and kindergartens	5.1 Piloting of 12 integrated schools and 12 integrated kindergartens in 6 regional centres .	2004 - 2006	Ministry of Education, local government units	State budget
	5.2. Establishment of 90 integrated schools and 90 integrated kindergartens in Albania	2006 - 2014	Ministry of Education, local government units	State budget, donors
6. Establishment and gradual extension of psycho-paedagogic and psycho-social services in the integrated schools and kindergartens	6.1 Special structures of psycho-pedagogic and psycho-social services will be created in the integrated schools and kindergartens consisting of 1 psychologists, 1 social worker, and 2-3 teachers (part-time) starting from the bigger towns in Albania.	Phase 1 (2003 - 2005) Phase 2 (2005 - 2008) Phase 3 (2008 - 2013)	Ministry of Education	State budget, NGOs, donors
	6.2 Establishment of 7 psycho-pedagogic centres in order to provide for national coverage	2003 - 2013	Ministry of Education	2 billion LEK, state budget
7. Support for people with disabilities in the sport and cultural activities	7.1 Identification of number and types of people with disabilities likely to engage in sport and culture events	2005 - 2006	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports	state budget, donors
	7.2 Allocation of a special budget to fund sport and culture events for people with disabilities and mixed events	2005 - 2006	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, local government units	state budget, local government budget, donors
	7.3 Fund-raising events to be organised for the sport and culture events for people with disabilities	yearly	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports	state budget, donors
	7.4 Proper medical and logistic support to be provided to people with disabilities engaged in sport and cultural events in accordance with a yearly calendar of events.	starting from 2005	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports	state budget, donors

## National Action Plan on People with Disabilities

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
<b>IV. Capacity Building</b>				
1. Enhancement of the capacities of the state structures that deal with disability, maximisation of their performance, output and coordination capacity.	1.1. Establishment of a monitoring structure for the National Strategy on People with Disabilities	2005	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	state budget, donors
	1.2. Establishment and consolidation of new regional structures for the multi-disciplinary assessment (physical, medical and social) of the people with disabilities	2005	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs State Social Service	state budget, donors
	1.3. Establishment of a medical expertise centre at the General Directorate of State Insurance Institute and modernisation of regional directorates.	starting from 2005 -	State Insurance Institute	state budget, donors
	1.4. Capacity building for the State Employment Service at the central and local levels through:	6 centres in 2005	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs State Employment Service	state budget, donors
	a) Disability-related training for the Vocational Training Centres b) Vocational training courses for Support Staff dealing with People with Disabilities	2005 - 2006	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs State Employment Service	state budget, donors
<b>V. Legislation and Research</b>				
1. Ensure full equality for people with disabilities through improvements in the legislation on social services, education, housing and telecommunication.	1.1 Preparation of the basis for the establishment of a state institution specialised in dealing with disability rights and issues.	2006	MoLSA	state budget, donors
	1.2 Preparation of a comparative study on the disability-related legislation	2005 - 2006	MoLSA, MoH, MoI, MPWTT, MoJ	state budget, donors
	1.3 Preparation of an integral law on disability.	2006	MoLSA	state budget, donors
	1.4 Improvement of the construction-related legislation. Preparation of a new article in the basic law on construction on the removal of accessibility barriers.	2005	MPWTT	state budget, donors

## National Action Plan on People with Disabilities

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
	1.5 Improvement of the existing legislation on transport, aiming at the removal of the transport barriers	2006 and ongoing	MPWTT	state budget, donors
	1.6 Preparation of technical standards for public transport bearing in mind disability and accessibility measures.	2006	MPWTT	state budget, donors
	1.7 Amendments to the Road Code and technical specifications for the utilization of transport vehicles. (Disability Mainstreamed)	2006	MPWTT	state budget, donors
	1.8 Manual to be prepared and published on the accessibility measures to be adapted on the public infrastructure.	2005 - 2007	MPWTT	state budget, donors
2. Improved access and simplification of the procedures related to people with disabilities	2.1 Simplified procedures regarding the equipment of children with disabilities with teaching material, exclusion from taxes, lower VAT.	2006	Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health/ Social Insurance Institute	State budget, local government budget
	2.2 Legislation shall provide for customs exemptions for tools and accessories for people with disabilities	2004 - 2005	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs / Social Insurance Institute, / State Social Service (idem)	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Local Government, Local Government Unit, NGOs, donors, State Insurance Institute
	2.3 Preparation of the legal framework for a minimum coverage of free-of-charge services provided by caretakers. Social insurance coverage for caretakers should be considered	2007	(idem)	(idem) + donors
	2.4 Improvement of the legislation supporting disability NGOs that provide services for people with disabilities.	2006 ongoing	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Local Government, Local Government Unit, NGOs	(idem) + donors
	2.5 Public Television broadcasts a daily news of 5 minutes in sign language.	2006 ongoing	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	



## National Action Plan on People with Disabilities

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
3. Ensuring relevant and updated information and data on number, typology and social situation of people with disability.	3.1 Collection and update of statistical data on people with disabilities	2005	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, INSTAT, Ministry of Local Government/ local government units INSTAT, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health	State budget and donors
	3.2 Periodical studies on people with disabilities, their needs and the disability-related services	Yearly		State budget, local government budget donors
	3.3 Establishment of a registry of people with disabilities with data from the population census	Included in the next population registration plan		State budget, donors
4. Support for the research programmes on the economic, social, and rehabilitation issues related to people with disabilities	4.1 Establishment of a database on the health and economic situation of : 1) people with haemophilia 2) people with cancer	2005 - 2006	MoLSA, NGOs	state budget, donors, NGOs
	4.2 Studies on the types of disabilities, distribution patterns and measures to counter them.	2005 - 2015	Ministry of Health	Donors, NGOs
	4.3 Development of the professional terminology related to disability. Preparation of a vocabulary on disability.	2004 - 2005	Ministry of Education,	Donors, NGOs
	4.4 Publication of the list of disabilities by categories in Albania	starting from 2005	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Local Government, NGOs.	State budget, donors, NGOs
5. Preparation and distribution of information on people with disabilities at the national, regional and local level.	5.1 Publication of periodical brochures and materials on people with disabilities, rehabilitation and integration, legislation reviews, useful informations etc.	yearly	Institutions , NGOs	State budget, donors, NGOs
6. Support for the education programmes against the discrimination of people with disabilities	6.1 Cooperation with the media to establish a strategy of cooperation regarding the coverage of the issues of people with disabilities and accessibility of people with disabilities to information.	starting from 2005 -	State Structures, NGOs, media	Donors, NGOs, media
	6.2 Promotion of the initiatives of people with disabilities through fairs with the products of people with disabilities	Yearly	Local Government Units, NGOs	Donors, local government, NGOs
	6.3 Yearly award for excellence in Disability Affairs	Yearly	MoLSA	State budget

## **State Institution's Priorities for the implementation of the National Action Plan**

### **Priorities by Institutions as reflected in the 2006 Edition of the National Strategy on People with Disabilities:**

*Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunity – MoLSA*

*Ministry of Education and Science - MoEd*

*Ministry of Health - MoH*

*Ministry of Public Works, Transportation and Telecommunication - MPWTT*

*Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sport - MoTCYS*

*Ministry of Interior - Mol*

*Ministry of Justice - MoJ*

*Municipality of Tirana - MoT*

## **Foreword to the 2006 Edition**

The National Strategy on People with Disabilities is the most comprehensive document of the Albanian Government in the field of Disability Rights. This Strategy was compiled at the closure of European and World Decade on Disability 1992 – 2003.

The National Strategy on People with Disabilities came as the result of the initiative of several civil society organizations working on the protection of Disability Rights who joined forces with the Albanian Government in a major effort aimed at the achievement of an important milestone in the field of Disability Rights for Albania. The Albanian Disability Rights Foundation organized a group of Disability Rights Associations, in order to analyze the situation of People with Disabilities in Albania, in the light of the United Nations Standard Rules on Equal Opportunities for People with Disabilities.

The report and the results of this analysis were submitted to the Government of Albania, including a request for the drafting of the National Strategy on People with Disability (NSPD).

Following Prime Minister's Order, dated 19.06.2003, an Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Disability Rights was created to draft the National Strategy on People with Disabilities. The working group was chaired by Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and included representatives of the ministries in charge of policies that affect the life of people with disabilities, of institutions under their responsibility, as well as representatives of the organizations working in the field of Disability.

The process of the drafting of the Strategy was strongly supported by the OSCE Presence in Albania, which offered the precious assistance of a foreign expert in the field of Disability Rights, a representative of the Office of the Federal Commissioner on the Issues of People with Disability, from the Federal Republic of Germany.

The National Strategy on People with Disabilities was approved by Council of Ministers Decision No.8, dated 7.01.2005. It aims at improving the living conditions of the People with Disabilities through education, employment, support services and avoiding any obstacle that excludes them from the society all inclusive policies and which ignores their human rights.

The Strategy includes objectives and actions against the discrimination of the people with disability, as well as objectives on promoting equal opportunities to participate in the national social development.

This Strategy defines the policies, in accordance with the national economic capacities, to reduce the social disadvantages and inequalities related to disability, in order to make People with disabilities useful and productive members of the society.

The Strategy plans the means for access to premises and information by people with disability; health care; employment and vocational training; social care services; education; transport; regional planning and development; as well as other activities so that people with disability have equal opportunities in decision making and become active part of the society. These measures are in compliance with the general objectives of the National Strategy on Development and Integration (NSDI) and should be applied in accordance with the deadlines defined in the Action Plan of this Strategy.

It highlights the need for legal improvement in compliance with the standards set forth in the United Nations and European Union documents.

The Strategy is ruled by the philosophy that People with Disabilities enjoy fundamental rights, just like other citizens and they should also enjoy equal opportunities to be part of the social life.

***This document:***

- Describes the real situation of the People with Disabilities in Albania by focusing on the trends and defines objectives and policies to improve the situation.
- Defines Government active policies and coordination of the activities of state institutions, individuals and organisations working in the field of Disability Rights.
- Represents the will of all parties involved, in order to synchronize the Albanian policy on People with Disabilities with the United Nations and European Union international legal framework.
- Aims at improving the living conditions for People with Disabilities, removing barriers in the fields of education, employment, services, legislation, etc.
- Coordinates its efforts with the goals of the National Strategy on Development and Integration (NSDI), by enabling the monitoring process by a bi-partisan agency.
- The National Strategy on People with Disabilities was the response of the Albanian Government to the Group of Associations on Disability Rights, to achieve a framework of policies and measures to implement them. The Government took the institutional responsibility and made the financial and role forecast in the budget in order to support the implementation of these responsibilities.

***The National Strategy on People with Disabilities is structured as follows:***

- Main principles and objectives,
- Analysis of the situation of people with disability in Albania,
- Main areas of intervention,
- Action Plan,
- Monitoring and Reporting Structure.

The Action Plan includes the specific objectives and the concrete measures to implement them, as well as the time frames, responsible institutions in charge and financial supporters.

***The National Strategy on People with Disabilities will serve and be available for:***

- Central level institutions, which are in charge of and have foreseen the time frames and budget implications for the implementation of concrete measures outlined in the Strategy.
- Regional and local level administration, respective bodies within the regions, municipalities, communes, education, health departments, etc, to present the implications for the local administration in the framework of the decentralisation process.
- Organisations working in the field of the rights of the people with disability, in the role of monitor of its implementation.
- Organisations working in the field of Disability Rights in order to promote the Strategy implementation process and also to offer the cooperation and involvement in specific fields, as necessary.
- Donors, to guide them towards the implementation of the main objectives and fields of the Strategy.
- Written and electronic media, as an ally and opponent in the course of the whole process in order to promote the implementation of the Strategy.

The Strategy's drafting process was open and democratic. The Strategy included and reflected the ideas of the responsible and beneficiary actors by allowing them sufficient time and space to provide recommendations for improvement. The strategy document itself will serve as an instrument that helps changing the attitudes and mentality of the people, organisations and state institutions for creating social equality for people with disabilities.

It is quite natural that the Strategy's implementation process and its monitoring require continuous changes and improvements, in response to the general developments of the society, and in particular to the developments in the field of Disability Rights. The reformulation of its Action Plan, with the priorities of 2006 for each institution, is a first step in this direction. The purpose of this update is to reflect changes occurred so far and to facilitate the formulation of priorities for each institution that will be involved in the implementation of the Strategy.

**We would like to thank the OSCE Presence in Albania that enabled the republication of the National Strategy on People with Disabilities. The republication occurs in the right time, in compliance with the requests of local government units and other institutions responsible for the implementation of the National Strategy on People with Disabilities.**

Tirana, September 2006

# ***National Action Plan on People with Disabilities***

*Priorities as of 2006 for the State Institutions*

*Life without barriers*

*Services*

*Education, Employment and Vocational Training*

*Capacity Building*

*Legislation and Research*

**National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities**

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
<b>I. Life without barriers</b>				
1. Ensure accessibility for people with disabilities through the gradual removal of existing architectonic, infrastructure and transport barriers and through preventing the creation of new accessibility barriers	1.1 Funds will be allocated to remove existing barriers in the roads and public infrastructure, public buildings, health institutions and state-owned buildings.  1.2 Eight Vocational Training Centres will become accessible for the training of people with disabilities by the State Employment Service	2007 - 2014  2005 - 2007	Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunication, MoLSA, local government units  State Employment Service, MoLSA	Donors, state budget  Donors, state budget
<b>II. Services</b>				
1. Prevention of Disability at the earliest possible stage through early detection, and treatment of the children aged 0-6 years.	1.1 Establishment of inter-disciplinary teams for the drafting of programmes on early prevention of disability, identification of disability, and drafting of rehabilitation and reintegration programmes.	starting from 2004-2005	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, NGOs	State budget, donors
2. Provision of coordinated health and social services by the public and non-public institutions for the people with disabilities in accordance with a shared philosophy of rehabilitation and integration.	1.2 Provision of new services such as daily services, family and community-based services aimed at the integration of people with disabilities.  1.3 Piloting new service models and assessment of the distribution of the services in Albania  1.4 New standards and regulations on the services for people with disabilities.  1.5 Revision of the regulations of the public residential centres. Adoption of new measures for people with severe disabilities, that can not benefit from services in the families.	2006 - continuous  2004 - 2007  2004 - 2006  2006 and ongoing	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs /State Social Service, Local Government Units  Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs  Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Health  Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs /State Social Service, Health Insurance Institute Local Government Units, donors, NGOs  State budget, donors, NGOs  State budget, donors, NGOs

**National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities**

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
<p>3. Improvement of the rehabilitation services targeted at people with disabilities</p>	<p>3.1 Approval and implementation of a national programme for the establishment and functioning of rehabilitation services, which will gradually cover the whole territory of the Republic of Albania.</p> <p>3.2 Establishment of an accreditation system for the centres of early care, rehabilitation centres and training centres.</p> <p>3.3 Establishment of the vertical structures including local government units, that will deal with people with disabilities at the central, regional and local level</p>	<p>Special Planning 2005 - 2015</p> <p>starting from 2005 -</p> <p>starting from 2005 -</p>	<p>Ministry of Health</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Education</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, donors, NGOs</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Social Insurance Institute, donors</p> <p>State budget, donors, NGOs</p>
<p>4. Information on Disability Needs and provision means to overcome disability through accessible information.</p>	<p>4.1 Provision of people with disabilities with the most suitable means and tools to enable them to benefit at the fullest extent from the public education and public health and integration services</p> <p>4.2 Support for the publication of leaflets and information materials on modern approaches towards disability.</p> <p>4.3 Support for the establishment of the specialized information and resource centres dealing with disability so as to encourage a well distributed and harmonised public-private information coverage for Albania</p>	<p>starting from 2005 -</p> <p>starting from 2005 -</p> <p>starting from 2005 -</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Education, NGOs</p> <p>(idem)</p> <p>(idem)</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Education, NGOs, donors</p>



**National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities**

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
5. Adequate service provision through Local Government Units in compliance with the Local Government Law and in line with the overall state policies on Disability	<p>5.1 Establishment of the vertical structures with the inclusion of the Local Government Units in the social service provision with a focus on Disability</p> <p>5.2 Community treatment to replace gradually residential treatment. Training will be provided for the caretakers of the persons with hearing impairments and for the blind.</p>	<p>starting from 2005 -</p> <p>starting from 2005 -</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Education, NGOs</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Education, NGOs</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Education, NGOs, donors</p>
<b>III. Education, Employment and Vocational Training</b>				
1. Policy improvement and effective policy implementation for the employment of people with disabilities	<p>1.1 Study on the employment situation of people with disabilities, recommendations on employment options of people with disabilities in Albania.</p> <p>1.2 Support for the creation of protected employment for people with disabilities and support for the transport of people with disabilities to their workplaces.</p> <p>1.3 Reform of the benefits/pensions scheme for people with disabilities so as to avoid conflicts with active employment policies.</p> <p>1.4 Effective implementation of legislation on employment of people with disabilities and provision of targeted vocational training / counselling to enable people with disabilities to compete on equal terms in the labour market.</p>	<p>starting from 2004 -</p> <p>starting from 2004 -</p> <p>starting from 2005 -</p> <p>starting from 2007 -</p>	<p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Employment Service</p> <p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs State Employment Service</p> <p>State Insurance Institute, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</p> <p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</p>	<p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Employment Service, donors</p> <p>State budget, donors, private sector</p> <p>State budget</p> <p>State budget, Local Government Units budget</p>
2. Improvement of the policies and programmes for vocational training of People with Disabilities	<p>2.1 Reform of the vocational training system aimed at the inclusion of People with Disabilities in the vocational training programmes</p> <p>2.2 Provision of extended services aimed at the employment of People with Disabilities in cooperation with employers</p>	<p>2005 ongoing</p> <p>2005 ongoing</p>	<p>State Employment Service Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</p> <p>(idem)</p>	<p>State budget</p> <p>State budget, donors</p>

**National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities**

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
<b>IV. Capacity Building</b>				
<p>1. Enhancement of the capacities of the state structures that deal with disability, maximisation of their performance, output and coordination capacity.</p>	<p>1.1. Establishment of a monitoring structure for the National Strategy on People with Disabilities</p> <p>1.2. Establishment and consolidation of new regional structures for the multi-disciplinary assessment (physical, medical and social) of the people with disabilities.</p> <p>1.3. Establishment of a medical expertise centre at the general ISSH Directorate and modernisation of regional directorates.</p> <p>1.4 Capacity building for the State Employment Service at the central and local levels through:</p> <p>a) Disability-related training for the Vocational Training Centres.</p> <p>b) Vocational training courses for support staff dealing with People with Disabilities.</p>	<p>2005 - 2006</p> <p>2005 - 2006</p> <p>starting from 2005</p> <p>6 centres in 2005</p> <p>2005 - 2006</p>	<p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA)</p> <p>MoLSA, State Social Service</p> <p>MoLSA, State Insurance Institute</p> <p>MoLSA, State Employment Service</p>	<p>state budget, donors</p> <p>state budget, donors</p> <p>state budget, donors</p> <p>state budget, donors</p>
<b>V. Legislation and Research</b>				
<p>1. Ensure full equality for people with disabilities through improvements in the legislation on social services, education, housing and telecommunication.</p>	<p>1.1 Preparation of the basis for the establishment of a state institution specialised in dealing with disability rights and issues.</p> <p>1.2 Preparation of a comparative study on the disability-related legislation.</p> <p>1.3 Preparation of an integral law on Disability.</p>	<p>2005 - 2006</p> <p>starting from 2005</p> <p>starting from 2006</p>	<p>MoLSA</p> <p>MoLSA, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Culture Youth and Sports, Ministry of Justice</p> <p>MoLSA</p>	<p>state budget, donors</p> <p>state budget, donors</p> <p>state budget, donors</p>

**National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities**

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
2. Improved access and simplification of the procedures related to people with disabilities	<p>2.1 Simplified procedures regarding the equipment of children with disabilities with teaching material, exclusion from taxes, lower VAT.</p> <p>2.2 Legal framework established for the financial treatment of people with severe disabilities Feasibility study on the possibility to provide social insurance for caretakers.</p> <p>2.3 Preparation of the legal framework for a minimum coverage of free-of-charge services provided by caretakers.</p>	<p>2006</p> <p>2004 - 2006</p> <p>2007</p>	<p>Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Social Insurance Institute</p> <p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Social Insurance Institute, State Social Service</p> <p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</p>	<p>State budget, local government budget</p> <p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Interior, Local Government Units, NGOs, donors, State Insurance Institute</p> <p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</p>
3. Ensuring relevant and updated information and data on number, typology and social situation of people with disability	<p>3.1 Establishment of a data-base on the health and social and economic situation of people with disabilities</p> <p>3.2 Publication of the list of disabilities by categories in Albania</p>	<p>2005 - 2006</p> <p>yearly</p>	<p>NGOs, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</p> <p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>state budget, donors, NGOs</p> <p>State budget, donors, NGOs</p>

**National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities**

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
4. Preparation and distribution of information and research on people with disabilities at the national, regional and local level.	4.1 Publication of periodical brochures and materials on people with disabilities, rehabilitation and integration, legislation reviews, useful informations etc.	yearly	Institutions , NGOs	State budget, donors, NGOs
5. Support for the education programmes against the discrimination of people with disabilities	5.1 Cooperation with the media to establish a strategy of cooperation regarding the coverage of the issues of people with disabilities and accessibility of people with disabilities to information. 5.2 Award of the yearly prize to a state institution for outstanding performance in disability mainstreaming	starting from 2005 -  Yearly	All State Structures, NGOs, media  Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	Donors, NGOs, media  State budget

## National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Ministry of Education

Intervention Fields / Objectives	Measures	Deadlines	Implementing institution	Financial coverage
<b>I. Life without barriers</b>				
1. Ensure accessibility for people with disabilities through the gradual removal of existing architectonic, infrastructure and transport barriers and through preventing the creation of new accessibility barriers	1.1 Funds will be allocated to remove existing barriers in the roads and public infrastructure, public buildings, health institutions and state-owned buildings. 1.2 100 schools and 90 kindergartens will become accessible for people with disabilities	2007 - 2014  2004 - 2014	Ministry of Territorial Adjustment and Tourism, Ministry of Education, local government units  Ministry of Education	Donors, state budget  State Employment Service, donors
<b>II. Services</b>				
1. Prevention of Disability at the earliest possible stage through early detection, and treatment of the children aged 0-6 years.	1.1 Research on early prevention of disability. Preparation of information bulletins on early prevention.	2 times per year	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education	Ministry of Education, Local Government Units, donors, NGOs
2. Provision of coordinated health and social services by the public and non-public institutions for the people with disabilities in accordance with a shared philosophy of rehabilitation and integration.	2.1 Provision of psycho-social counselling in 36 schools in Albania. Implementation of accessibility measures in these schools.	(3 centres) 2005 - 2007 (3 centres) 2007 - 2009 2004 (piloting), 2009-2010 (finalization)	Ministry of Education	Ministry of Education, Local Government Units, donors, NGOs
3. Improvement of the rehabilitation services targeted at people with disabilities	3.1 Establishment of vertical structures including local government units, that will deal with people with disabilities at the central, regional and local level	starting from 2005 -	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Education	State budget, donors, NGOs

## National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Ministry of Education

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
4. Information on Disability Needs and provision means to overcome disability through accessible information.	4.1 Provision of people with disabilities with the most suitable means and tools to enable them to benefit at the fullest extent from the public education and public health and integration services	starting from 2005 -	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Education, NGOs	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Education, NGOs, donors
	4.2 Support for the publication of leaflets and information materials on modern approaches towards disability.	starting from 2005 -	(idem)	
	4.3 Support for the establishment of the specialized information and resource centres dealing with disability so as to encourage a well distributed and harmonised public-private information coverage for Albania	starting from 2005 -	(idem)	
5. Adequate Service Provision through Local Government Units in compliance with the Local Government Law and inline with the overall state policies on Disability	5.1 Establishment of the vertical structures with the inclusion of the Local Government Units in the social service provision with a focus on Disability	starting from 2005 -	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Education, NGOs	State Budget, donors, NGOs
	5.2 Community treatment to replace gradually residential treatment. Training will be provided for the caretakers of the persons with hearing impairments and for the blind.	starting from 2005 -	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service	State budget, donors, NGOs
<b>III. Education, Employment and Vocational Training</b>				
1. Improvement of the inclusive education schemes aimed at a full integration of children with disabilities in the Albanian public schools	1.1 Establishment of a new integrative school curriculum. Preparation and implementation of special integrative programmes and more field work for disabled students	2004 - 2006	Ministry of Education	State budget
	1.2 Preparation of a package with practical guidelines, didactical materials and standards for the public schools.	2004 - 2006	Ministry of Education/Education Directorates	State budget, donors

## National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Ministry of Education

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
	<p>1.3 Drafting of a normative act on the individual educational plan that sets out the rules of admission and initial assessment of the children with disabilities Creating resource materials in schools to work specifically with disabled children</p> <p>1.4 Improvements in the legal provisions on the teachers' workload and their financial treatment.</p> <p>1.5 Preparation of bulletins and resource materials and readers for teachers and parents.</p> <p>1.6 The registration of the children with disabilities is treated as a priority</p>	<p>2004 - 2006</p> <p>starting from 2004</p> <p>2005 - 2006</p> <p>starting from 2004</p>	<p>Ministry of Education/Education Directorates</p> <p>Ministry of Education/Education Directorates</p> <p>Ministry of Education/Education Directorates</p> <p>Ministry of Education/Education Directorates</p>	<p>State budget, donors</p> <p>State budget, donors</p> <p>State budget, donors</p> <p>State budget, donors</p>
2. Improvement of the teaching process in the special schools	<p>2.1 Preparation and implementation of special integrative programmes and more field work for disabled students</p> <p>2.2 Support for the provision of transport services for students with disabilities from rural areas</p> <p>2.3 Provision of special programmes for those categories of children with disabilities presently not covered with services</p>	<p>2004 - 2006</p> <p>2006 - 2010</p> <p>starting in 2006</p>	<p>Ministry of Education</p> <p>Ministry of Education/Education Directorates, local government units</p> <p>(idem)</p>	<p>State budget, donors</p> <p>State budget, donors</p> <p>State budget, donors</p>
3. Gradual establishment and extension of integrated schools and kindergartens	<p>3.1 Piloting of 12 integrated schools and 12 integrated kindergartens in 6 regional centres .</p> <p>3.2 Establishment of 90 integrated schools and 90 integrated kindergartens in Albania</p>	<p>2004 - 2006</p> <p>2006 - 2014</p>	<p>Ministry of Education, local government units</p> <p>Ministry of Education, local government units</p>	<p>State budget</p> <p>State budget, donors</p>

**National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Ministry of Education**

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
4. Establishment and gradual extension of psycho-paedagogic and psycho-social services in the integrated schools and kindergartens	4.1 Special structures of psycho-pedagogic and psycho-social services will be created in the integrated schools and kindergartens consisting of 1 psychologist, 1 social worker, and 2-3 teachers (part-time) starting from the bigger towns in Albania.	Phase 1 (2003 - 2005) Phase 2 (2003 - 2008) Phase 3 (2003 - 2013)	Ministry of Education	State budget, NGOs, donors
<b>V. Legislation and Research</b>				
1. Ensure full equality for people with disabilities through improvements in the legislation on social services, education, housing and telecommunication.	1.1 Preparation of the basis for the establishment of a state institution specialised in dealing with disability rights and issues. 1.2 Preparation of a comparative study on the disability-related legislation 1.3 Preparation of an integral law on disability.	2005 - 2006  2005 - 2006  2006 - 2008	MoLSA  Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Culture Youth and Sports, Ministry of Justice Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	state budget, donors  state budget, donors  state budget, donors
2. Improved access and simplification of the procedures related to people with disabilities	2.1 Simplified procedures regarding the equipment of children with disabilities with teaching material, exclusion from taxes, lower VAT. 2.2 Preparation of the legal framework for a minimum coverage of free-of-charge services provided by caretakers.	2006  2007	Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health/ Social Insurance Institute  MoLSA, State Social Service, Ministry of Education, NGO's	State budget, local government budget  State budget
3. Support for the research programmes on the economic, social, and rehabilitation issues related to people with disabilities	3.1 Publication of the list of disabilities by categories in Albania	starting from 2006	Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Interior, Local Government Units, NGOs.	State budget, donors, NGOs



**National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Ministry of Education**

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
4. Preparation and distribution of information on people with disabilities at the national, regional and local level.	4.1 Publication of periodical brochures and materials on people with disabilities, rehabilitation and integration, legislation reviews, useful informations etc.	yearly	Institutions , NGOs	State budget, donors, NGOs
5. Support for the education programmes against the discrimination of people with disabilities	5.1 Cooperation with the media to establish a strategy of cooperation regarding the coverage of the issues of people with disabilities and accessibility of people with disabilities to information.	starting from 2005 -	All State Structures, NGOs, media	Donors, NGOs, media

## National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Ministry of Health

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
<b>I. Life without barriers</b>				
1. Ensure accessibility for people with disabilities through the gradual removal of existing architectonic, infrastructure and transport barriers and through preventing the creation of new accessibility barriers	<p>1.1 Funds will be allocated to remove existing barriers in the roads and public infrastructure, public buildings, health institutions and state-owned buildings.</p> <p>1.2 Accessibility measures will be applied to the main hospitals in Tirana 82.8 million lek.</p> <p>1.3 The hospitals at the regional and municipal level will provide for accessible environment adapted to the needs of people with disabilities.</p>	<p>2007 - 2014</p> <p>2005 - 2010</p> <p>2006 and ongoing</p>	<p>Ministry of Territorial Adjustment and Tourism, MoLSA, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Local Government Units</p> <p>Ministry of Health</p> <p>Ministry of Health Local Government Units</p>	<p>Donors, state budget</p> <p>State budget, local government, donors</p> <p>State budget, local government, donors</p>
<b>II. Services</b>				
1. Prevention of Disability at the earliest possible stage through early detection, and treatment of the children aged 0-6 years.	<p>1.1 Establishment of inter-disciplinary teams for the drafting of programmes on early prevention of disability, identification of disability, and drafting of rehabilitation and reintegration programmes.</p> <p>1.2 Establishment of the laboratory of molecular biochemistry and genetics for the pre-birth diagnostics in the gynecologics hospital.</p> <p>1.3 Upgrading the genetics laboratory at the department of Pediatrics.</p> <p>1.4 Research on early prevention of disability. Preparation of information bulletins on early prevention.</p>	<p>starting from 2004 - 2005</p> <p>starting from 2004 - 2005</p> <p>starting from 2004</p> <p>2 times per year</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, NGOs</p> <p>Ministry of Health</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Health Insurance Institute</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education</p>	<p>State budget, donors</p> <p>State budget, donors, NGOs</p> <p>State budget, donors, NGOs</p> <p>State budget, donors, NGOs</p>
2. Provision of coordinated health and social services by the public and non-public institutions for the people with disabilities in accordance with a shared philosophy of rehabilitation and integration.	<p>2.1 Provision of new services such as daily services, family and community-based services aimed at the integration of people with disabilities.</p>	<p>2005 - 2007</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs /State Social Service, Local Government Units</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Health Insurance Institute, Local Government Units, donors, NGOs</p>

## National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Ministry of Health

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
	<p>2.2 New standards and regulations on the services for people with disabilities.</p> <p>2.3 Revision of the regulations of the public residential centres. Adoption of new measures for people with severe disabilities, that can not benefit from services in the families.</p>	<p>2004 - 2006</p> <p>2004 - 2006</p>	<p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Health, Local Government Units, NGOs</p>	<p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, donors</p>
3. Ensuring equal opportunities in the provision of basic health care services for people with disabilities	<p>3.1 Review of the regulations on the provision and distribution of medical supplies to people with disabilities. A dedicated budget line will be established for people with disabilities</p> <p>3.2 Review of the curricula of the family doctor. Inclusion of programmes on disability in the family doctor's curricula.</p> <p>3.3 Analysis of the options to provide extended services for people with severe disabilities</p>	<p>2004 - 2008</p> <p>Yearly</p> <p>Starting from 2006</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Health Insurance Institute</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Health Insurance Institute</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Health Insurance Institute</p>	<p>State budget, donors</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Health Insurance Institute</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Health Insurance Institute</p>
4. Improvement of the rehabilitation services targeted at people with disabilities	<p>4.1 Approval and implementation of a national programme for the establishment and functioning of rehabilitation services, which will gradually cover the whole territory of the Republic of Albania.</p> <p>4.2 Establishment of an accreditation system for the centres of early care, rehabilitation centres and training centres.</p> <p>4.3 Establishment of the vertical structures including local government units, that will deal with people with disabilities at the central, regional and local level</p>	<p>Special Planning 2005 - 2015</p> <p>starting from 2005 -</p> <p>starting from 2005 -</p>	<p>Ministry of Health</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Education</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, donors, NGOs</p> <p>Ministry of Health, Social Insurance Institute, donors,</p> <p>State budget, donors, NGOs</p>

## National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Ministry of Health

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
5. Information on Disability Needs and provision means to overcome disability through accessible information.	5.1 Provision of people with disabilities with the most suitable means and tools to enable them to benefit at the fullest extent from the public education and public health and integration services	starting from 2005 -	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Education, NGOs	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Education, NGOs, donors
	5.3 Support for the establishment of the specialized information and resource centres dealing with disability so as to encourage a well distributed and harmonised public-private information coverage for Albania	starting from 2005 -	(idem)	(idem)
6. Adequate Service Provision through Local Government Units in compliance with the Local Government Law and inline with the overall state policies on Disability	6.1 Establishment of the vertical structures with the inclusion of the Local Government Units in the social service provision with a focus on Disability	starting from 2005 -	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Education, NGOs	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Education, NGOs, donors
	6.2 Community treatment to replace gradually residential treatment. Training will be provided for the caretakers of the persons with hearing impairments and for the blind.	starting from 2005 -	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service	
<b>V. Legislation and Research</b>				
1. Ensure full equality for people with disabilities through improvements in the legislation on social services, education, housing and telecommunication.	1.1 Preparation of the basis for the establishment of a state institution specialised in dealing with disability rights and issues.	2005 - 2006	MoLSA	-
	1.2 Preparation of a comparative study on the disability-related legislation	2005 - 2006	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Culture Youth and Sports, Ministry of Justice	state budget, donors
	1.3 Preparation of an integral law on disability.	2006	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs	state budget, donors

## National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Ministry of Health

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
2. Improved access and simplification of the procedures related to people with disabilities	2.1 Simplified procedures regarding the equipment of children with disabilities with teaching material, exclusion from taxes, lower VAT.	2006	Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health/Social Insurance Institute	State budget, local government budget
3. Ensuring relevant and updated information and data on number, typology and social situation of people with disability.	3.1 Collection and update of statistical data on people with disabilities 3.2 Periodical studies on people with disabilities, their needs and the disability-related services	2005 Yearly	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, INSTAT, Ministry of Local Government/local government units INSTAT, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health	State budget and donors State budget, local government budget donors
4. Support for the research programmes on the economic, social, and rehabilitation issues related to people with disabilities	4.1 Studies on the types of disabilities, distribution patterns and measures to counter them. 4.2 Publication of the list of disabilities by categories in Albania	2005 - 2007 long term until 2015 starting from 2005	Ministry of Health Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Local Government, Local Government Units, NGOs.	Donors, NGOs State budget, donors, NGOs
5. Preparation and distribution of information on people with disabilities at the national, regional and local level.	5.1 Publication of periodical brochures and materials on people with disabilities, rehabilitation and integration, legislation reviews, useful informations.	yearly	Institutions , NGOs	State budget, donors, NGOs
6. Support for the education programmes against the discrimination of people with disabilities	6.1 Cooperation with the media to establish a strategy of cooperation regarding the coverage of the issues of people with disabilities and accessibility of people with disabilities to information.	starting from 2005 -	State Structures, NGOs, media	Donors, NGOs, media

## National Action Plan on People with Disabilities

### Priorities of 2006 of Former Ministry of Territorial Adjustment and Tourism + Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunication

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
<b>IV. Life without barriers</b>				
1. Ensure accessibility for people with disabilities through the gradual removal of existing architectonic, infrastructure and transport barriers and through preventing the creation of new accessibility barriers	1.1 Accessible flats will be built and accessibility measures will be applied to 10% of the buildings constructed with the funds of the Housing Directorate.	2005 - 2007 2007 - 2014 (Yearly)	Ministry of Territorial Adjustment and Tourism	State budget, donors State budget,
	1.2 Funds will be allocated to remove existing barriers in the roads and public infrastructure, public buildings, health institutions and state-owned buildings.	2007 - 2014	Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunication, local government units	Donors, state budget
	1.3 Establishment of a barrier-free Tirana. Interventions on Tirana's urbanistic environment, to be followed by accessibility measures in Albania.	2005 - 2007	Tirana Municipality	Donors, municipal budget
	1.4 Continuous efforts will be undertaken to ensure that polling stations become accessible for people with disabilities	starting from 2006 -	Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunication, Ministry of Interior, local government units	State budget, local government, donors
	1.5 Accessibility measures shall be applied to transport means starting from the urban transport in Tirana and continuing with railway transport.	starting from 2006 -	Tirana Municipality Ministry of Health	Directorate of Public Transport, Local Government Units
<b>V. Legislation and Research</b>				
1. Ensure full equality for people with disabilities through improvements in the legislation on social services, education, housing and telecommunication.	1.1 Passing a Council of Minister's Decree for the implementation of the norms and standards on Town Planning and Disability.	2006	MPWTT	state budget, donors
	1.2 Improvement of the construction-related legislation. Preparation of a new article in the basic law on construction on the removal of accessibility barriers.	2005	MPWTT	state budget, donors

**National Action Plan on People with Disabilities  
Priorities of 2006 of Former Ministry of Territorial Adjustment and Tourism + Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunication**

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
	<p>1.3 Improvement of the existing legislation on transport, aiming at the removal of the transport barriers</p> <p>1.4 Preparation of technical standards for public transport bearing in mind disability and accessibility measures.</p> <p>1.5 Amendments to the Road Code and technical specifications for the utilization of transport vehicles. (Disability Mainstreamed)</p> <p>1.6 Manual to be prepared and published on the accessibility measures to be adapted on the public infrastructure.</p>	<p>Starting from 2006</p> <p>Starting from 2006</p> <p>Starting from 2006</p> <p>2005 - 2007</p>	<p>Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunication</p> <p>Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunication</p> <p>Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunication</p> <p>Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunication</p>	<p>state budget, donors</p> <p>state budget, donors</p> <p>state budget, donors</p> <p>state budget, donors</p>
<p>2. Preparation and distribution of information on people with disabilities at the national, regional and local level.</p>	<p>2.1 Publication of periodical brochures and materials on people with disabilities, rehabilitation and integration, legislation reviews, useful informations etc.</p>	<p>yearly</p>	<p>Institutions , NGOs</p>	<p>State budget, donors, NGOs</p>

**National Action Plan on People with Disabilities - Priorities of 2006 of Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports**

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
<b>III. Education, Employment and Vocational Training</b>				
1. Support for people with disabilities in the sport and cultural activities	1.1 Identification of number and types of people with disabilities likely to engage in sport and culture events	2005 - 2006	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports	state budget, donors
	1.2 Allocation of a special budget to fund sport and culture events for people with disabilities in accordance with a calendar of events.	2005 - 2006	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, local government units	state budget, local government budget donors
	1.3 Fund-raising events to be organised for the sport and culture events for people with disabilities	yearly	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports	state budget, donors
<b>V. Legislation and Research</b>				
1. Support for the education programmes against the discrimination of people with disabilities	1.1 Cooperation with the media to establish a strategy of cooperation regarding the coverage of the issues of people with disabilities and accessibility of people with disabilities to information.	starting from 2005 -	State Structures, NGOs, media	Donors, NGOs, media



**National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Former Ministry of Local Government (now Mol) and Local Government Units.**

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
<b>I. Life without barriers</b>				
1. Ensure accessibility for people with disabilities through the gradual removal of existing architectonic, infrastructure and transport barriers and through preventing the creation of new accessibility barriers	<p>1.1 Funds will be allocated to remove existing barriers in the roads and public infrastructure, public buildings, health institutions and state-owned buildings.</p> <p>1.2 The hospitals at the regional and municipal level will provide for accessible environment adapted to the needs of people with disabilities.</p> <p>1.3 100 schools and 90 kindergartens will become accessible for people with disabilities</p> <p>1.4 Continuous efforts will be undertaken to ensure that polling stations become accessible for people with disabilities</p>	<p>2007 - 2014</p> <p>2005 and ongoing</p> <p>2004 - 2014</p> <p>2005 and ongoing</p>	<p>Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunication</p> <p>Ministry of Health Local Government units</p> <p>Ministry of Education</p> <p>Mol</p>	<p>State budget, donors State budget,</p> <p>Donors, state budget</p> <p>State budget, local government, donors</p> <p>State budget, local government, donors</p>
<b>II. Services</b>				
1. Provision of coordinated health and social services by the public and non-public institutions for the people with disabilities in accordance with a shared philosophy of rehabilitation and integration.	<p>1.1 Provision of new services such as daily services, family and community-based services aimed at the integration of people with disabilities.</p> <p>1.2 Piloting new service models and assessment of the distribution of the services in Albania</p> <p>1.3 New standards and regulations on the services for people with disabilities.</p> <p>1.4 Revision of the regulations of the public residential centres. Adoption of new measures for people with severe disabilities, that can not benefit from services in the families.</p>	<p>2005 - 2006 continuous</p> <p>starting from 2004</p> <p>2004 - 2014</p> <p>2004 - 2006</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs /State Social Service, Local Government Units</p> <p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs / State Social Service, Ministry of Health, Local Government Units, NGOs</p> <p>Ministry of Labour , Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities</p> <p>Ministry of Labour , Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Ministry of Health</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs /State Social Service, Health Insurance Institute Local Government Units, donors, NGOs</p> <p>State budget, donors, NGOs</p> <p>(idem)</p> <p>(idem)</p>

**National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Former Ministry of Local Government (now Mol) and Local Government Units.**

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
2. Improvement of the rehabilitation services targeted at people with disabilities	2.1 Establishment of the vertical structures including local government units, that will deal with people with disabilities at the central, regional and local level	starting from 2004 -	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Education	State budget, donors, NGOs
<b>III. Education, Employment and Vocational Training</b>				
1. Improvement of the teaching process in the special schools	1.1 Support for the provision of transport services for students with disabilities from rural areas	2006 - 2010	Ministry of Education/Education Directorates, local government units	State budget, donors
2. Gradual establishment and extension of integrated schools and kindergartens	2.1 Piloting of 12 integrated schools and 12 integrated kindergartens in 6 regional centres .	2004 - 2006	Ministry of Education, local government units	State budget
	2.2. Establishment of 90 integrated schools and 90 integrated kindergartens in Albania	2006 - 2014	Ministry of Education, local government units	State budget, donors
3. Support for people with disabilities in sport and cultural activities	3.1 Allocation of a special budget to fund sport and culture events for people with disabilities in accordance with a calendar of events.	2005 - 2006	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, local government units	state budget, local government budget, donors
	3.2 Fund-raising events to be organised for the sport and culture events for people with disabilities	yearly	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports local government units	state budget, donors
	3.3 Proper medical and logistic support to be provided to people with disabilities engaged in sport and cultural events.	yearly	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports local government units	state budget, donors

**National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Former Ministry of Local Government (now MoI) and Local Government Units.**

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
<b>V. Legislation and Research</b>				
1. Ensure full equality for people with disabilities through improvements in the legislation on social services, education, housing and telecommunication.	<p>1.1 Preparation of the basis for the establishment of a state institution specialised in dealing with disability rights and issues.</p> <p>1.2 Preparation of a comparative study on the disability-related legislation</p> <p>1.3 Preparation of an integral law on disability.</p>	<p>2005 - 2006</p> <p>2006</p> <p>2006</p>	<p>MoLSA</p> <p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Culture Youth and Sports, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>state budget, donors</p> <p>state budget, donors</p> <p>state budget, donors</p>
2. Improved access and simplification of the procedures related to people with disabilities	<p>2.1 Simplified procedures regarding the equipment of children with disabilities with teaching material, exclusion from taxes, lower VAT.</p> <p>2.2 a) Legal framework established for the financial treatment of people with severe disabilities b) Consideration of the possibility to provide social insurance for caretakers.</p>	<p>2006</p> <p>2004 - 2005</p>	<p>Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health/Social Insurance Institute Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs Social Insurance Institute, State Social Service, Ministry of Interior</p>	<p>State budget, local government budget</p>
3. Ensuring relevant and updated information and data on number, typology and social situation of people with disability.	<p>3.1 Collection and update of statistical data on people with disabilities</p>	<p>2005</p>	<p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, INSTAT, local government units</p>	<p>State budget and donors</p>

**National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Former Ministry of Local Government (now MoJ) and Local Government Units.**

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
4. Support for the research programmes on the economic, social, and rehabilitation issues related to people with disabilities	4.1 Publication of the list of disabilities by categories in Albania	starting from 2005	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Interior, Local Government Units, NGOs.	State budget, donors, NGOs
5. Preparation and distribution of information on people with disabilities at the national, regional and local level.	5.1 Publication of periodical brochures and materials on people with disabilities, rehabilitation and integration, legislation reviews, useful informations etc.	yearly	Institutions , NGOs	State budget, donors, NGOs
6. Support for the education programmes against the discrimination of people with disabilities	6.1 Cooperation with the media to establish a strategy of cooperation regarding the coverage of the issues of people with disabilities and accessibility of people with disabilities to information. 6.2 Promotion of the initiatives of people with disabilities through fairs with the products of people with disabilities	starting from 2005 -  Yearly	State Structures, NGOs, media  Local Government Units, NGOs	Donors, NGOs, media  Donors, local government budgets, NGOs

**National Action Plan on People with Disabilities. Priorities of 2006 of Ministry of Justice (MoJ)**

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
<b>V. Legislation and Research</b>				
1. Ensure full equality for people with disabilities through improvements in the legislation on social services, education, housing and telecommunication.	1.1 Preparation of the legal basis for the establishment of a state institution specialised in dealing with disability rights and issues. 1.2 Preparation of a comparative study on the disability-related legislation 1.3 Preparation of an integral law on disability.	2005 - 2006  2005 -  2006	MoLSA, MoJ  Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Culture Youth and Sports, Ministry of Justice MoLSA, MoJ	state budget, donors  state budget, donors state budget, donors

## National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Municipality of Tirana.

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
<b>I. Life without barriers</b>				
1. Ensure accessibility for people with disabilities through the gradual removal of existing architectonic, infrastructure and transport barriers and through preventing the creation of new accessibility barriers	<p>1.1 Funds will be allocated to remove existing barriers in the roads and public infrastructure, public buildings, health institutions and state-owned buildings.</p> <p>1.2 Establishment of a barrier-free Tirana. Interventions on Tirana's urbanistic environment,</p> <p>1.3 Continuous efforts will be undertaken to ensure that polling stations become accessible for people with disabilities</p> <p>1.4 Accessibility measures shall be applied to transport means starting from the urban transport in Tirana and continuing with railway transport.</p>	<p>2007 - 2014</p> <p>2005 - 2007</p> <p>starting from 2006 -</p> <p>starting from 2007 -</p>	<p>MPWTT, local government units Local Government units</p> <p>MPWTT, Municipality of Tirana</p> <p>Mol, MPWTT, Tirana Municipality</p> <p>MPWTT, Tirana Municipality</p>	<p>State budget, donors State budget</p> <p>Donors, state budget</p> <p>Donors, state budget</p> <p>State budget, local government, donors</p>
<b>II. Services</b>				
1. Provision of coordinated health and social services by the public and non-public institutions for the people with disabilities in accordance with a shared philosophy of rehabilitation and integration.	<p>1.1 Provision of new services such as daily services, family and community-based services aimed at the integration of people with disabilities.</p> <p>1.2 Piloting new service models and assessment of the distribution of the services in Albania</p> <p>1.3 New standards and regulations on the services for people with disabilities.</p> <p>1.4 Revision of the regulations of the public residential centres. Adoption of new measures for people with severe disabilities, that can not benefit from services in the families.</p>	<p>2005 - 2006 and continuous</p> <p>starting from 2004</p> <p>2004 - 2014</p> <p>2004-2006</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs /State Social Service, Local Government Units</p> <p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, State Social Service, Ministry of Health, Local Government Units</p> <p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</p> <p>Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs /State Social Service, Health Insurance Institute Local Government Units, donors, NGOs</p> <p>State budget, donors, NGOs</p> <p>State budget, donors, NGOs</p>

## National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Municipality of Tirana.

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
2. Improvement of the rehabilitation services targeted at people with disabilities	2.1 Establishment of the vertical structures including local government units, that will deal with people with disabilities at the central, regional and local level	starting from 2004 -	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Interior Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Education	State budget, donors, NGOs
<b>III. Education, Employment and Vocational Training</b>				
1. Improvement of the teaching process in the special schools	1.1 Support for the provision of transport services for students with disabilities from rural areas	2006 - 2010	Ministry of Education, Education Directorates, local government units	State budget, donors
2. Gradual establishment and extension of integrated schools and kindergartens	2.1 Piloting of 12 integrated schools and 12 integrated kindergartens in 6 regional centres .	2004 - 2006	Ministry of Education, local government units	State budget
	2.2 Establishment of 90 integrated schools and 90 integrated kindergartens in Albania	2006 - 2014	Ministry of Education, local government units	State budget, donors
3. Support for people with disabilities in the sport and cultural activities	3.1 Allocation of a special budget to fund sport and culture events for people with disabilities in accordance with a calendar of events.	2005 - 2006	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports, local government units	state budget, local government budget donors
	3.2 Fund-raising events to be organised for the sport and culture events for people with disabilities	yearly	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports local government units	state budget, donors
	3.3 Proper medical and logistic support to be provided to people with disabilities engaged in sport and cultural events.	yearly	Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports local government units	state budget, donors

**National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Municipality of Tirana.**

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
<b>V. Legislation and Research</b>				
1. Ensure full equality for people with disabilities through improvements in the legislation on social services, education, housing and telecommunication.	1.1 Preparation of the basis for the establishment of a state institution specialised in dealing with disability rights and issues.	2006	MolSA, State Social Service, Local Government Units	state budget, donors
	2. Ensuring relevant and updated information and data on number, typology and social situation of people with disability.	2.1 Collection and update of statistical data on people with disabilities 2.2 Periodical studies on people with disabilities, their needs and the disability-related services	2006 and continuous Yearly	state budget, donors state budget, donors state budget, donors State budget, donors State budget, donors

**National Action Plan on People with Disabilities – Priorities of 2006 of Municipality of Tirana.**

<b>Intervention Fields / Objectives</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>	<b>Implementing institution</b>	<b>Financial coverage</b>
3. Support for the research programmes on the economic, social, and rehabilitation issues related to people with disabilities	3.1 Publication of the list of disabilities by categories in Albania	starting from 2006	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Interior Local Government Units, NGOs.	State budget, donors, NGOs
4. Support for the education programmes against the discrimination of people with disabilities	4.1 Promotion of the initiatives of people with disabilities through fairs with the products of people with disabilities	yearly	Institutions , NGOs, Local Government Units	State budget, donors, NGOs



## Recommendations

Based on the evaluation of the results of the implementation of the NSPD in 2005 and priorities defined for 2006, outlined in the NSPD Action Plan, considering also the results from meetings and discussions with the state institutions and representatives of civil society (as the main responsible actors for the Strategy's implementation) its imperative and important to:

- Define exact, detailed and in proper time budgets for enabling realization of the measures stated in the action plan of the strategy. This is one of the utmost priorities that should be carefully considered by each responsible institution, which must include the budget in the total institutional annual budget planning.

It results that actually no budgeting was done in 2005 to respond to action plan of the NDS, and very few institutions have budgeted for 2006.

- Establish and normal function of monitoring structures for the implementation of NDS. Capacity building of these structures, extended in all levels at central and local level, should be one of the priorities, which otherwise will hinder the implementation process.

MoLSA realized that with a CoM Decision the National Council on Disability was established, as being one of the priorities of the NSPD. It is important that this structure is extended and strengthened in local level. It's also important that alongside with the National Council, the technical secretariat of this council is created. This has been a widely discussed issues during the process of drafting and approving NSPD. It is worth noting that civil society organisations still insist on establishing the technical secretariat not as a Structure under State Social Service, but under the Presidency or Council of Ministers. It's important that capacity building in all line governmental institutions remains a priority especially becoming more imperative in the situation of changes in structures and human resources after political changes as a result of parliamentary election in July 2005.

- Review and study of disability legislation in compliance with international standards and conventions, aiming at an integral law on disability remains a priority, which will tend to stimulate sustainable impacts in disability rights area, by challenging discrimination and fragmentary solutions.

MLSA&EO realized with a CM Decision the establishment of a working group that will analyze the existing legislation and come up with recommendations.

The attached Annex lists specific and clearly outlined priorities for each governmental institutions, necessary to be implemented in order to ensure a life without barriers for People with Disabilities, education, vocational training and employment, health care and social services as well as consistent capacity building, research and legislation on disability and disability rights.

The NSPD document should be subject of a continuous, open and democratic review process, in order to reflect the best experiences during its implementation, and also to respond to the overall progress of the society, which should consequently be reflected in this policy paper.



## **First Ministerial Conference on People with Disabilities**

On 30 June 2006, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (MoLSA), supported by OSCE Presence in Albania, organised the First Ministerial Conference on People with Disabilities.

The Conference's objective was to assess and evidence progress during the first implementation year of the National Strategy on People with Disabilities (NSPD), in order to single out problems encountered and lessons learned with regard to the further engagement of central and local level institutions tasked with the Strategy's implementation. The Conference was attended by Deputy Prime Minister Ilir Rusmali, Head of the National Council on the Affairs of People with Disabilities, members of the Government, central state institutions, representatives of international and disability rights organisations.

### **The Conference was opened by Mr. Koço Barka, Minister of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.**

Minister Barka thanked the Deputy Prime Minister Rusmali, the ministers, and Ambassador Pavel Vacek for the support given in drafting and implementing the National Strategy on People with Disabilities. Minister Barka also thanked the disability rights organisations for their important contribution to the process.

Minister Barka pointed out that state institutions and the society should abide by their legal and moral obligations so that people with disabilities become a natural part of the society. In order to achieve this, the government and the society at large are obliged to design and ensure an environment accessible to all with regard to social and health services; to plan for all-inclusive education and employment in accordance with the law; to guarantee housing in accordance with the needs of people with disabilities; to ensure suitable information and communication. All these goals are envisioned in the Strategy on People with Disabilities.

As the leading agency tasked with the drafting of this important sectorial strategy, MoLSAEO has also taken over the responsibility to follow up on the strategy's objectives implementation. Minister Barka informed the participants about Prime Minister's Order no 196 dated 12.12.2005, which established a National Council on the Affairs of People with Disabilities (NCAPD) and its Technical Secretariat, which is staffed with three specialists, one of which is a disabled person, so as to channel at best the concerns of people with disabilities to the government's strategic planning and policy making processes.

The Technical Secretariat will monitor the Strategy's progress by touching base with the relevant institutions tasked with implementation responsibilities within the framework Strategy's National Action Plan; it will work with the line ministries, local government units, municipalities and communes through a network of focal points located at the central and local level.

The Technical Secretariat will support the activity of the National Council on the Affairs of People with

Disabilities and provide for the administration and logistics of its regular meetings. The collection of disability-related data, their processing through the Technical Secretariat, and the reporting of those data to MoLSAEO are core processes, vital to the implementation of the Strategy.

Minister Barka said that People with Disabilities have come more and more to the focus of the Government's attention. Therefore, for 2006, the Central Government has allocated 16% additional funds on Disability compared to the previous year. During 2006, MoLSAEO has continuously and actively addressed and responded to Disability Rights Organisation's requests concerning legal improvements, structural improvements, implementation of obligations deriving from actual disability statuses as well as policies to support and resolve their needs within the limitations of the current state budget.

In conclusion of his address, Minister Barka stated that his Ministry will consider the obligations deriving from the National Action Plan of NSPD as a matter of high priority throughout its mandate. Upon conclusion of his address, Minister Barka gave the floor to Deputy Prime Minister Ilir Rusmali.

### **Mr. Ilir Rusmali, Deputy Prime Minister**

Mr. Ilir Rusmali, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the National Council on the Affairs of People with Disabilities thanked the ministers, Ambassador Vacek and the participants at the First Ministerial Conference on Disability. Mr. Rusmali commended the conference, which he considered as an important platform to relaunch Albanian Government's previous engagements towards the implementation of NSPD.

Deputy Minister Rusmali emphasized the clear political will reflected in the government's agenda to respond to the issues raised by People with Disabilities. Mr. Rusmali said that bringing the response to disability rights up to the European standards is a challenge that the new Government is willing to take. The Deputy Prime Minister pointed out that the new government has already taken concrete steps in improving the legal framework in order to guarantee better education for People with Disabilities. The supplementary fees for the university secondary quotas have been abolished, reducing them to a symbolic price paid for the first attendance in the university.

Mr. Rusmali stated that the Government has granted direct or indirect assistance and financial support for disabled persons, such as monetary rewards, end of year remunerations, and clothing and financial allowances for children who receive special education. Recently, the Government promoted people with disabilities' attendance in social activities and public museums by reducing ticket fares up to 50 %.

Mr. Rusmali informed the participants that a few months ago the social service standards and the social care standards for children in residential institutions were approved. Both documents bear a special importance because they define the obligation of the public institutions of the social care and assistance to guarantee high quality service to vulnerable categories.

Mr. Rusmali talked in length about the role of the National Council on the Affairs of People with Disabilities

(NCAPD). He informed the participants that NCAPD, established in December 2005, represents the highest national policymaking body in the field of disabilities.

Mr. Rusmali stated that the National Council was established to support the institutions in responding to the obligations arising from the National Strategy, and to facilitate the implementation of the Government's social integration policies for the people with disabilities. Mr. Rusmali considered the establishment of the Council as an important step in carrying out the obligations of the government stemming from the international conventions and the Albanian Constitution.

NCAPD is organized so as to facilitate cooperation between high level government representatives and representatives from Disability Rights organizations. The mission of the council reflects the UN rules and standards on full participation and equal opportunities for people with disabilities.

Mr. Rusmali stressed that the key priorities of NCAPD are the following:

- Initiate in a coordinated manner the implementation of the National Action Plan of NSPD, monitor and evaluate it.
- Coordinate the programs and services for People with Disabilities, ensure the compatibility of NSPD with the new development and integration strategy.
- Facilitate the development of the policies for People with Disabilities in the programs of the respective ministries and follow up on their implementation.
- Minimize service duplication and ensure a fair geographical distribution of service provision.
- Facilitate information and further promote good existing practices in fostering social change.
- Strengthen the participating capacity of People with Disabilities in the drafting and monitoring of policies for disability issues in a national level.
- Identify the needs for services at a national level and draft recommendations for the entire government sector.
- Serve as a focal point for proving information disability issues in Albania to national and international organizations as well as promote awareness campaigns for the rights and values of People with Disabilities.

In conclusion of his address, the Deputy Prime Minister cordially thanked the actors involved in the area of disability rights for their commitment and contribution to the drafting and implementation of the Strategy.

### **Ambassador Pavel Vacek, Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania**

Ambassador Pavel Vacek, Head of the OSCE Presence in Albania, greeted the Deputy Prime Minister Rusmali, Minister Barka, the ministers and the participants and commended the Albanian Government on the progress achieved in implementing the National Strategy on People with Disabilities (NSPD). Ambassador Vacek complimented in particular the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities for taking on the responsibility for the implementation of the Strategy in full compliance with international standards on disability.

Among the positive steps taken by the Albanian Government to implement NSPD, Ambassador Vacek identified the establishment of the National Council on the Affairs for People with Disabilities with its Technical Secretariat. Ambassador Vacek also praised the efforts of the Government of Albania to define its priorities in the implementation of the Strategy. Of particular significance was the fact that these priorities were discussed in collaboration with the relevant civil society organizations.

Ambassador Vacek reminded the audience about the support provided by the OSCE Presence in Albania since 2004 in this field, starting with the drafting of NSPD through the technical assistance by a disability expert from Germany, to providing support for the implementation of the NSPD in Mid-December 2005 with Albanian consultant Bardhylka Kospiri, who worked with the line ministries to define priorities in the implementation of this strategy; to assisting in budgeting the action plan as well as in providing consultancy for the organizational development of the NSPD monitoring mechanism in the summer 2006. The OSCE Presence had also recently donated personal computers to the National Council of the Disability Organizations as a way of strengthening the coordination and contribution of the civil society in the implementation of the National Strategy

### **Mr. Genc Pollo, Minister of Education and Science**

In his address, Mr. Genc Pollo, Minister of Education and Science, thanked the Deputy Prime Minister Rusmali, Ambassador Vacek, the ministers, and the other participants in the conference, and stated that, according to his reading of NSPD, the most important objective in the field of education is the gradual expansion of all-inclusive education and the improvement of special schools, transforming them into resource centers for normal education. Mr. Pollo pointed out that the aim of his ministry is to transform educational facilities for people with disabilities from special, segregated places, to facilities integrated to the general educational institutions. In order to achieve this, measures have been taken to provide for a series of services, such as in-house psychological services in the schools.

Mr. Pollo said that the standards already approved by the ministry of education for the schools to be build and the ones that will be restructured, take into account compatibility to the needs of disabled students. Work is being done on establishing human resource capacities able to respond to the needs of People with Disabilities; in every regional directorate or educational office, the specialists who cover special education

issues are currently being trained. Mr. Pollo stated that the drafting of an integrated school curricula aims at favoring the all-inclusive processes, which will affect the greater inclusion of the People with Disabilities in the educational system. Minister Pollo stated that the normative provisions concerning special education will be soon reviewed. Based on actual skills and abilities of each child, the Ministry of Education has facilitated the enrollment of students with disabilities in art and professional schools.

According to Minister Pollo, since 1963, 122 students have completed obligatory education at the Institute for Students with Sight Impairments, 40% of whom have continued and finished higher education. In 2006, by means of a special order of the Ministry of Education 10 students with sight and hearing impairments were enrolled in high schools (where enrollment is based on the results of an admission exam) without having to take the admission exam. Minister Pollo informed the participants about the latest Council of Ministers' Decision on reducing higher education fees, secondary quotas, for students having sight impairments and for paraplegics. Minister Pollo said that Ministry of Education is currently looking at the possibility for reducing to zero the schooling fees for this category in the upcoming weeks by means of a Council of Minister's Decree.

In conclusion of his address, Mr. Pollo informed the participants that the Ministry of Education will launch in September a pilot project in 12 kindergartens and 12 integrated schools in 6 towns and regional centers where there is a university. The Ministry of Education is drafting a platform and taking the respective measures for training teachers and schools' headmasters in those schools where the integrated teaching and the other measures for this purpose will be piloted.

### **Ms. Arenca Trashani, Minister of Integration**

Ms. Arenca Trashani, Minister of Integration, commended the organizers of the conference and stated that Albania has already become part of a range of very important international documents and is currently working to implement its international obligations. Ms. Trashani emphasized that the harmonization of Albanian and EU legislation, as well as its implementation in favour of People with Disabilities will be one of the priorities of the Ministry of Integration. This ministry plays a major role in the approximation of the legislation as the key coordinator, observer and reporter of this process, being one of the main pillars of the European integration of the country.

Ms. Trashani stated that Ministry of Integration shares with the entire Government and with all stakeholders in this integration process, a great awareness and sensitivity on Disability Rights issues. Ms. Trashani expressed her Ministry's good will and availability to integrate in the Albanian legislation the relevant European standards on Disability Rights.

Minister Trashani concluded her address ensuring that the office for Human Rights in the Ministry of Integration will approach with special attention Disability Rights issues, as it considers its commitment in this area as a very important contribution to the country's integration.

**Mr. Jemin Gjana, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumers Protection**

In his address Mr. Jemin Gjana, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumers Protection, stated that the National Strategy on People with Disabilities contains objectives and tasks for every structure of the executive branch. According to Mr. Gjana, special attention should also be paid to the relatives of People with Disabilities. In this respect Minister Gjana raised the concern for the people with disabilities in rural areas and the remote mountainous areas who do not benefit from social services and live in severe poverty. Minister Gjana drew the Conference's attention on the people crippled by land mines at the border line with Kosovo, In conclusion of his address Mr. Gjana asked that these people be supported with concrete and targeted projects by the responsible actors.

**Ms. Marjeta Zaçe, Deputy Minister of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities**

Ms. Marjeta Zaçe, Deputy Minister of Labor, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities dwelt on the fact that after the approval of the strategy, the MoLSA collaborated with OSCE Presence in Albania for publishing the Strategy so that all structures and actors at the central and local level tasked with the Strategy's measures get familiar with it. There have been conferences, round tables, various meetings, regional seminars organized to this end. MoLSA has worked on establishing a Technical Secretariat for the Affairs of People with Disabilities. At the end of 2005 the newly established Technical Secretariat sent to all line ministries a document with the matrix outlining the tasks for 2006 envisaged in the NSPD in the plans and budget of 2006. Ms. Zace said that for the year 2006, 7.1 billion ALL were granted for the labour invalids, the paraplegics and the tetraplegics as well as for people with mental and physical disabilities. New social services have been established in the framework of MoLSAEO's Project "Distribution of the social services in the community" in 8 regions and 2 districts.

Deputy Minister Zaçe said that benefits for People with Disabilities have been extended as follows: (i) financial benefits for disability regardless of age, thus the 21 years old limit is removed; (ii) all disabled who by decision of medical commission need caretaking service are entitled to a paid caretaker even in cases when their family is not included in the economic assistance scheme. (iii) For the tetra and paraplegics, the benefits range has been extended even to those who have become such regardless of the cause of impairment. Ms. Zaçe mentioned that except for the 6 development residential centers, a great role in offering services is being played by the non-profit organizations, in establishing new services in collaboration with the local structures in four pilot districts in the context of a World Bank project. The second phase of this project supported some other 9 services for people with disabilities.

Deputy Minister Zaçe informed the participants on the ongoing work for the preparation of a Council of Ministers' decision which, besides the indicators for poverty evaluation and other social protection programs, will define indicators for gathering detailed information on people with disabilities through the local government units.

In conclusion of her address, Ms. Zaçe laid stress on the importance of the establishment of the Technical



Secretariat on the Affairs of People with Disabilities, which will periodically process the progress indicators and send to the National Council accurate and regular analysis, evaluations and recommendations on the improvement of policies and legislation on People with Disabilities.

### **Ms. Zamira Sinoimeri, Deputy Minister of Health**

In her address, Ms. Zamira Sinoimeri, Deputy Minister of Health, considered Disability as one of Ministry of Health's stated priorities. According to Ms. Sinoimeri, People with Disabilities in Albania account approximately for 2.7% of the population. In 2005, 0.8% of the total number of the newly born babies or 307-310 children were born with congenital abnormalities. These children are at risk of becoming people with disabilities. A study made in 2000 and which is being redone by the Ministry, indicates that out of 1900 children born in five regions, 45% suffer from serious deficiencies which lead to serious impairments to their mental health at a later stage.

Another well-known phenomenon that Albania faces today is the numerous trauma and accidents. Approximately 400 out of 100 thousand inhabitants are hospitalized with very serious trauma and the health service is not properly prepared to handle their physical rehabilitation.

Ms. Sinoimeri dwelt on the reform of the psychiatric hospitals. From 840 persons hospitalized in psychiatric hospitals only 50% of them suffer from chronic diseases, thus the other 50% need alternative services, which have already been envisioned in the Strategy of the Ministry of Health.

Ms. Sinoimeri stated that the two main objectives in the healthcare area are: (i) the establishment of modern mental healthcare services and (ii) the establishment of physical rehabilitation services. One of the intermediate objectives is the complete reduction and transformation of the psychiatric hospitals. At present there are 104 mentally disabled persons who do not need to stay in psychiatric hospitals, they should rather be accommodated in completely different centres.

The third major objective of the Ministry is regionalization and decentralization. By regionalization it is meant that with the establishment of the mental healthcare services the needs at the regional level will be evaluated and the services will be tailored to fit them and this will go hand in hand with the indispensable need for decentralization by defining the needs of each region in order to identify and deal with such problems. The Ministry aims at restructuring mental healthcare services completely; it further aims at establishing mental healthcare wards and community centers able to function as daily centres.

Ms. Sinoimeri informed the participants that the Ministry is working on creating a multidisciplinary treatment for People with Disabilities in collaboration with WHO, the Swedish, Italian, and Swiss Governments and particularly with Handicap International, with which a very valuable project targeting North East Albania is being developed. With regards to the strengthening of health infrastructure, Ms. Sinoimeri said also that the Ministry is planning on establishing rehabilitation facilities according to the European standards in 12 hospitals. Ms. Sinoimeri stated that the Ministry has already started to evaluate the situation of the

healthcare institutions and the hospitals to see if they meet the requirements for easy access for People with Disabilities.

In conclusion of her address, Ms. Sinoimeri ensured the Disability Rights organizations that Ministry of Health will not only offer institutional collaboration, but it will also ask for the Government's support to increase the budget and will make all the necessary efforts for the donor's coordination and awareness.

**Ms. Suzana Turku, Deputy Minister of Tourism, Youth and Sports**

Ms. Suzana Turku, Deputy Minister of Tourism, Youth and Sports (MTCYS), emphasized that the level of inclusion and integration of People with Disabilities in the society is a very significant indicator of its civilization. In this respect, MTCYS has supported a number of artistic, cultural and sports projects with the participation of People with Disabilities. According to Ms. Turku, these activities will remain a priority in the programs of the ministry in the implementation of the strategy in the mid term.

Ms. Turku informed the participants that her ministry will ask that the high class hotels provide for easy access for disabled individuals in compliance with the standards of the hotels in other countries. The Theater of Opera, the Puppets Theater, the Sports Palace, and stadiums will be required to facilitate the participation of people with disabilities in their activities. MTCYS also plans to organize a festival with songs and poetries performed by young people with disabilities in the framework of the implementation of the National Youth Strategy.

Ms. Turku concluded her speech promising that in the framework of the implementation of the NSPD, in full co-operation with the non-profitable organizations, MTCYS will enable the regular publication of the planned artistic, cultural and sports activities for people with disabilities in order to ensure their wider participation in the society.

**Mr. Stavri Ristani, Deputy Minister of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunication**

Mr. Stavri Ristani, Deputy Minister of Public Works, Transport and Telecommunication (MPWTT) informed the participants on difficulties encountered in ensuring access and inclusion of People with Disabilities as well as free movement, which is clearly an area where there is still a lot to be done.

Mr. Ristani said that MPWTT is aware of the fact that neither in the sector of public works nor in that of the transport enough has been done to meet the principle of a life without barriers for people with disabilities. Mr. Ristani informed the participants that in 2005, thanks to a commendable initiative of the Disability Rights organisations, which collaborated with the Urban Planning Institute, specific town planning and architectonic norms on accessibility for people with disabilities were drafted and subsequently endorsed by the Government through a Council of Minister's Decree.

Mr. Ristani stated that MPWTT appreciates the fact that the NSPD action plan has dedicated a special attention to the chapter on the life without barriers. Mr. Ristani stressed his ministry's engagement in accomplishing the tasks outlined in this chapter.

Mr. Ristani informed the participants that the permit issued to public transportation carriers reflects in a detailed manner the obligations of transportation companies towards People with Disabilities. In the framework of the above plan, MPWTT has planned a range of duties for implementing this strategy regarding adjustments in infrastructure, road signals, and urban buildings. According to Mr. Ristani, these concrete steps show the Ministry's commitment to work towards meeting European norms.

Mr. Ristani informed the participants that in this context work have started on drafting a new law on urban planning as well as on adjusting the standards of design codes with the European codes standards. It has already become a methodology of the government to have every draft amendment go through discussions by all interested parties and the interest groups. Mr. Ristani ensured the participants that the new legislation on urban planning area and the construction area will be subject to a wide discussion including representatives from People with Disabilities.

In conclusion of his address, Mr. Ristani stated that MPWTT will take on its specific responsibilities in the area of legal framework covering urban planning and construction, as well as the monitoring and the implementation of such laws.

### **Mr. Sherefedin Shehu, Deputy Minister of Finance**

Mr. Sherefedin Shehu, Deputy Minister of Finance, informed the participants that the financial support for People with Disabilities has been continuously increasing over the years. He pointed out that in 2006 this support has increased more than in the previous years' budgets. Mr. Shehu ensured that MoF will endeavour to provide for an effective management of funds available to People with Disabilities. Furthermore, MoF will encourage the commercialization of the services for People with Disabilities in order to enable the business community to be part of the service provision scheme. MoF will support all Government's structures in order to establish standards as well as institutions which will be monitored by the government against accurate standards.

Mr. Shehu concluded his address stating that the MoF will take over the responsibility for establishing and monitoring the service standards, financial compensation and other forms of support for People with Disabilities. Within such standards, the MoF will encourage the participation of all the other actors, particularly that of the business community, although the responsibility for guaranteeing standards will remain with the Government.

**Mr. Ndrek Ismailaj, Chairman of the National Council of the Disability Rights Organizations**

Mr. Ndrek Ismailaj informed the participants about the establishment of the National Council of the Disability Rights Organizations, composed of 5 national organizations representing the interests of the People with Disability. The organizations adhering to this Council are the Association of Persons with Hearing Impairments, the Association of Persons with Visual Impairments, the Association of Para and Tetraplegics, the Association of Labour Invalids and the Association of Mentally Impaired Persons.

Mr. Ismailaj stated that the community of Disability Rights Organisations highly appreciates the presentation of the Government priorities on Disability for 2006. Mr. Ismailaj said that some of the key challenges faced by the Government whilst addressing Disability Rights issues are core funding and fund management. According to Mr. Ismailaj both can be improved through a better coordination and cooperation between Government and civil society.

Mr. Ismailaj stated that the National Council of the Organisations of People with Disabilities respects the principle of pluralism and existence of organizations motivated by beliefs and interests, but however it thinks that the existing chaos among the organisations of People with Disabilities is extremely harmful. Therefore, on behalf of the Council, Mr. Ismailaj proposed that: (i) The Government should act on the basis of the universal principle "Nothing for us without us" (ii) The Government should support partnerships with national organizations of people with disabilities by encouraging and facilitating the creation of national organizations of those categories which encounter difficulties in doing so. (iii) Any subjective attitude of the state administration employees that leads to a division of these organizations must be considered a harmful action.

In his address, Mr. Ismailaj pointed out the need that the Government should pay special attention to the real impact of the funds allocated and used either by the donors or by the local NGOs. Mr. Ismailaj proposed that Government should accept as members of the National Council on the Affairs of People with Disabilities only those national organizations that represent the interests of impaired communities; further to this, Mr. Ismailaj proposed an increase of the number of NGOS entitled to participate in the Council with the purpose of including the Association of Persons with Hearing Impairments and that of Mentally Impaired Persons in this important policy-making body.

Mr. Ismailaj concluded his speech stating that the Disability Rights organizations will always be there to offer support, expertise and good will to the state institutions, whilst assuring that state institutions will always find real and constructive partners among those civil society organisations seriously engaged in upholding disability and human rights.

**Bardhylka Kospiri, OSCE consultant**

Bardhylka Kospiri, Coordinator of the Advocacy Program of the Albanian Foundation for the Rights of People with Disabilities and OSCE consultant for the support of the NSPD implementation said that subsequent to the 3rd of July National Elections, the Albanian institutions have resumed work, as the new Government took over promptly the bulk of the responsibilities on the implementation of the National Strategy on People with Disabilities, started under the former Government.

Ms. Kospiri stated that the structural changes in the institutions responsible for implementing the strategy by the end of 2005 dictated the need to intervene on: (i) Reaffirming once more the priorities of all the institutions responsible for the implementation of NSPD and identifying the priorities for 2006 (ii) Republishing and distributing the strategy document, required by the local government, which in most cases was not informed on the Strategy.

Ms. Kospiri stated that the purpose of such interventions consisted in facilitating the work of each institution for the implementation of this strategy. Ms. Kospiri informed the participants that such intervention was made possible thanks to the support of OSCE, which has played an active role in the drafting process and the approval of the Strategy. Further to her address, Ms. Kospiri commended the performance of the Government and MoLSAEO in particular, in view of the following major achievements: (i) The establishment of the National Council on the Affairs of People with Disabilities, and its Technical Secretariat; (ii) The establishment of the working group which will analyze the existing legislation in the area of disability and will prepare the respective recommendations.

Based on the results of her consultancy and on the discussions with Disability Rights organizations, Ms. Kospiri singled out following recommendations were defined as the main priorities among the strategy priorities: (i) The necessity to change the evaluation procedures for People with Disabilities, by evaluating not only their impairment and disability but also their abilities and opportunities for inclusion. This should start with reviewing and restructuring the commissions and the evaluation methods; (ii) The necessity to eliminate the discrimination of various categories of People with Disabilities, by accelerating the process of the disability legislation review in compliance with international standards and conventions, in order to allow for the drafting of an integral law on disability; (iii) The necessity to carry out a preliminary budget evaluation for the strategy objectives in order to facilitate budget planning by all the institutions in each year's budget planning; (iv) The necessity that the central monitoring structures for the implementation of NSPD start functioning and that the structures at local level be established and start functioning and (v) The necessity to build and strengthen the capacity of the monitoring structures.

Concluding her address, Ms. Kospiri said that the discussions addressed in this first ministerial conference, where each ministry presented concrete measures and commitments in support of NSPD, are proof of the impact that the work done by MoLSAEO and the OSCE in the beginning on this year had to encourage the implementation of the NSPD.

Ms Kospiri concluded that all the disability associations will continue to play their role in the monitoring of the implementation of NSPD, not only by being demanding towards the institutions but by offering their collaboration, expertise and capacities as well, aiming at ensuring the continuity of the process for achieving better life quality for People with Disabilities in Albania.

### **Conclusions of the First Ministerial Conference on Disability**

At the conclusion of the First Ministerial Conference on Disability, the ministers received and answered questions from the participants. Further to the questions and answers session, Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities Mr. Kosta Barka noted down following conclusions:

- (i) The conference focused on the involvement and concrete responsibilities of the state institutions in the implementation of NSPD;
- (ii) The strategic objectives of NSPD have become an integral part of the Government's program in all fields: education, healthcare, culture, infrastructure, constructions, communication, housing, and social services;
- (iii) The Strategy's monitoring unit, which works under MoLSAEO, will maintain close institutional contacts with the line ministries and local government's units;
- (iv) The monitoring cannot not be successful in the absence a continuous flow of information between the central and local government and in the absence of a functional communication among the central institutions themselves;
- (v) The National Council on the Affairs of People with Disabilities was introduced during the Conference. The Council will define its duties and mission in its first meeting;
- (vi) The cooperation with civil society actors represented by the Disability Rights organizations is indispensable for achieving the objectives of the National Strategy.



# REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA ASSEMBLY

## LAW

**No. 9355, date 10/03/2005**  
**“On Social Assistance and Services”**

Relying on point 2 of Article 52, letter 2, letter 2, point 1 of Article 53, of the Article 78, 81, point 1, and Article 83, point 1 of the Constitution and upon the proposal of the Council of Ministers, the Assembly of the Republic of Albania

## DECIDED:

### CHAPTER I

#### GENERAL DISPOSITIONS

##### Article 1

The purpose of this law is to:

1. Define social assistance and services for individuals and groups in need, who are unable to provide for their basic life necessities or to develop their own personal skills and abilities and preserve their integrity due to limited economic, physical, psychological and social circumstances.
2. Mitigate poverty and social exclusion for individuals and families, as well as to create equal opportunities for their integration through ensuring an intervention and service system aimed at improving their living conditions.

##### Article 2

This law regulates for funding arrangements and provision of social assistance and services in Albania.

##### Article 3

The fundamental principles on which the social assistance and services scheme operates are:

1. Respect and guaranteeing of personal values and personality of the individual;
2. Universality;
3. Equality of opportunities;
4. Eligibility to Entitlement;
5. Partnership;
6. Transparency and impartiality;
7. Decentralisation;
8. Independence, social integration and participation in the life of the community;
9. Non-discrimination;
10. Subsidiarity.

## Article 4 Definitions

According to the meaning of this law:

1. By "**Disability Entitlement**" is meant the monthly payment in ALL (lek) paid to disabled persons in compliance with the stipulations of this law.
2. By "**Disabled Person (DP)**" is meant the individual who has become disabled as a result of physical, sensory, mental or psycho-mental damages, whether born with this or acquired in life due to accidents; temporary or permanent illness, linked to reasons not related to employment.
3. By "**Work Invalid**" is meant those individuals, who have been considered as such through the Decision of the Medical Commission for Determining the Ability at Work (MCDAW) and benefit from the law with No. 7889 of 14.12.1994 "On the status of the invalids", as amended.
4. By "**Social Services**" is meant the whole variety of services provided to individuals and groups in need, who are unable to meet, with their own resources, their life needs with a view to the preserving, developing and rehabilitating of individual abilities to fulfil emergency or chronic needs.
5. By "**Local Government Unit**" is meant the municipality/commune where the beneficiary subjects, according to the law, exercise their right to demand compensation for material or/and monetary income, which are partially or fully lacking, as well as for social services.
6. By "**Social Administrator**" is meant the civil service employee working for the local government bodies, who administers the delivery of economic assistance and provision of social services to individual persons in need.
7. By "**Family**" is meant a group of individuals, who enter into marital relationships as well as the parent/child relationships, relationships among members of the families and those in foster care, who share the same shelter.
8. By "**Foster Care Family**" is meant an alternative family, according to the definition given in Article 266 of the law with no. 9062 of 08.05.2003.
9. By "**Head of Family**" is meant the person according to the following order: the father, the mother, the eldest member of the family, in the active age-group (18-65 years old), the youngest member of the family, in the age-group above 65 years old and the carer when all the members of the family are under the age of 18 years old.
10. By "**Poor Families**" are meant the families that do not have material and/or monetary income or have insufficient income generated from any economic activity and other programmes related to social services and the capital.
11. By "**Agricultural Family**" are meant those families, who own arable land regardless of their location and that of their land.
12. By "**Family income**" is meant the income of all the members of the family, coming from every kind of resources, including also those members temporarily living and working abroad. Entitlements to benefits which are received by the members of the family with mentally, physically or sensory disabled persons, the blind, paraplegics and tetraplegics, entitlements of invalids according the Status of the Work Invalid, as well as of those children born as triplets or more, are not included in the category of the family income.
13. By "**Orphan**" is meant the child without parents and up to the age of 25 years, according



to the respective definition in the Status of the Orphan.

14. By **"Social Services to the Community"** are meant all kinds of social, public and non-public services, which are provided to the local level, to the territory under the municipality/commune jurisdiction.
15. By **"The Elderly"** is meant every person having reached the age of retirement according to the existing legislation.
16. By **"Residence"** is meant the place where the family or the individual, due to their work or permanent service, property location or fulfilment of own interests, reside usually or most of the time.
17. By **"Location"** is meant the place to live for a certain period of time for reasons of work, undertaking of studies, of undergoing medical treatment, having holidays and military compulsory service or serving a prison sentence or other cases of the same nature.
18. By **"Living Resources"** are meant all monetary means or any income in kind, which makes living possible.
19. By **"Economic Activity"** is meant every activity in the form of employment, self-employment, voluntary work in assisting a self-employed member of the family as well as every other similar activity which generates income for the individuals and their families.
20. By **"Capital"** is meant any kind of property, which may generate income.
21. By **"Deliberate Action"** is meant any action, which intends to avoid remunerated employment, training for employment purposes and for employment opportunities, medical treatment in the cases of drug addicts or excessive alcohol users, failure to use own capital where the possibility exist to secure basic living means, failure to declare real income as well as every action which encourages the

separation of families who are proved to live in the same abode with a view of benefiting economic assistance.

## CHAPTER II

### BENEFICIARIES OF SOCIAL ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES

#### Article 5

The beneficiaries of the economic assistance are the following:

1. Families lacking income or generating insufficient income;
2. Unemployed orphans above 25 years of age, not residing in institutions or who are under no foster care;
3. Parents having more than two children born simultaneously, which belong to families in need.

#### Article 6

The beneficiaries of the social services are: children, youths up to the age of 25 years, the elderly, the disabled, women, girls in need and all those at risk of joining a group in need.

#### Article 7

Beneficiaries of the disability entitlement are as follows:

1. **Blind persons**, with fully or partial loss of eyesight, born or acquired, who have been declared as unable to work by the decision of the Medical Commission for Determining Blindness (MCDB).
2. **Paraplegic and tetraplegic invalids**, who,

by the decision of the Medical Commission for Determining Ability at Work (MCDAW), have been declared as such despite the reason for that or their age.

3. **Disabled people**, declared as unable to work by the decision of the Medical Commission for Determining Ability at Work (MCDAW).

4. **Persons**, who have been declared as work invalids by the decision of the Medical Commission for Determining Ability at Work (MCDAW), benefiting from a monthly addition on top of the invalidity entitlement in compliance with the Status of the Work Invalid.

### **Article 8**

The beneficiaries as defined in point 1,2 and 3 of Article 7 of this law, who by decisions of the special medical commissions are considered as in need for care, are also entitled to a paid caretaker.

### **Article 9**

The following people do not benefit from this Law:

1. Albanian citizens, who live abroad as emigrants, with the exception of those persons and their families assigned to work at Albanian diplomatic missions and international organizations;
2. Asylum-seekers, who are not granted asylum status;
3. Albanian and foreign citizens or persons without citizenship in need of an emergency assistance as a result of natural disasters and wars.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **TYPES OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND SOCIAL SERVICES ENTITLEMENTS**

#### **Article 10**

Economic assistance is rendered in the form of a monthly instalment in ALL (lek) or monthly benefit in kind for the categories as defined in Article 5 of this law.

The amount of economic assistance entitlement is defined by a decision of the Council of Ministers.

#### **Article 11**

The disability entitlement is given in the form of a monthly payment in ALL (lek). The amount of entitlement for these individuals and their carers is determined by the decision of the Council of Minister.

The beneficiaries defined in Article 7 of this law, classified by decision of the medical ability commissions as belonging to the second category of disability, are not entitled to the disability benefit once they are employed.

#### **Article 12**

Social services, in terms of their natures are divided into the following categories:

1. social care services;
2. socio-medical care services.

#### **Article 13**

Social care services include services provided to persons, families, and groups in need, as well as

communities as defined in Article 6 of this law in order to meet their basic needs.

Socio-medical care services are provided by specialised personnel in reintegrating, rehabilitating, and residential centres, daily centres or at home for the people who are unable to live a normal life as a result of temporary or permanent deterioration of their physical, psychic, mental and/or sensory state.

#### **Article 14**

Based on their organization and functioning method, the social care services are classified into:

1. Residential care services;
2. Community care services.

#### **Article 15**

Services at the residential institutions are provided to individuals to whom home care is not possible. Their accommodation at the social care centres is made with their own consent or of their legal representative, following the assessment of their social, economic and medical situation.

Community care services are provided at daily centres or people or foster care families' homes, according to the specific needs of the beneficiary groups.

#### **Article 16**

Based on their funding method, the social care services are divided into public and private services.

#### **Article 17**

Public social services include the social care services provided to the groups in need in residential institutions, daily centres and people's homes.

These services are funded by the state budget and the independent budgets of the local government units:

- a) Municipalities/communes administer all social services provided to individuals, who are inhabitants of that city or commune.
- b) The region (Qarku) administers services when they are provided to individuals residing in several local units in that region;

Private social services include social care services provided in the residential and daily centres, or at home, which are privately funded.

#### **Article 18**

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs licenses all the public and private legal persons providing social care services. The licensing criteria and procedures are defined by a decision of the Council of Ministers.

The public social services, which are financed by the funds of central or local state budget, are procured by the local government bodies to their private providers in compliance with the existing law on public procurement.

The local government bodies enter into agreements with private legal persons considered as winning bidders in tenders for services, which they provide in the territory of their jurisdiction.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs drafts the social service standards as well as monitors and checks their enforcement. The standards of the social care services are endorsed by the decision of the Council of Ministers.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **CRITERIA FOR RECEIPT OF BENEFITS AND THE PROCEDURE ON PROVISION OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

#### **Article 19**

Families in need benefit from full or partial economic assistance.

Full economic assistance benefit is granted to families or persons who do not generate income from:

- a) any economic activity;
- b) social assistance and services programmes or any other system of social protection;
- c) own capital;
- d) members of the family who have emigrated.

Economic assistance is partial when the claiming family does not generate sufficient income from

- a) Land;
- b) Livestock, poultry, apiculture, viticulture, horticulture;
- c) Pensions and other income.

The assessment of the coefficient of revenues defined in letters "a" and "b" of point 2 of this article, for the purpose of calculating the full or partial economic assistance benefit, is defined by a decision of the Council of Ministers.

#### **Article 20**

The economic assistance and disability entitlement is allocated once a month by a decision of the council of the local government unit.

The request for benefiting from economic assistance is presented in writing by the head of the

family and signed by all its adult members.

The applicants submit the necessary documentation to the Social Administrator in the local government unit. The criteria and procedures for benefiting from economic assistance are determined by a decision of the Council of Ministers.

The request and documentation for benefiting from disability entitlements are presented to the social administrator in the local government units. The criteria for benefiting from disability entitlements are determined by a decision of the Council of Ministers.

#### **Article 21**

The Council of the municipality/commune is entitled to approve special criteria on the basis of which is granted the economic assistance or provided social care services through using local funds for poor families or families with many members.

#### **Article 22**

People in need of social care services are admitted to the public residential institutions at no charge, in those cases where their families do not generate any income. Expenses related to them are covered by the state budget.

#### **Article 23**

People in need of social care services, who generate personal income, are admitted to social care public institutions against payment of a fee in relation to their monthly income or the income of the dependable persons. The amount of contribution is defined by a decision of the Council of Ministers.

The disability entitlement in compliance with article 7 of this law is not considered in the calculation of the personal income of the people housed

in public social care institutions.

The social care service beneficiaries housed in the social care institutions is handed over an amount in cash in ALL (lek) to cover their personal expenses. This amount is defined by a decision of the Council of Ministers.

#### **Article 24**

The expenses quota levels for social care in the public residential and community institutions are approved by Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. The expenses' quota levels for the non-public institutions cannot be lower than those of the public institutions.

Service standards in the public or non-public social care institutions are adopted by a decree of the Council of Ministers.

#### **Article 25**

The applicant who is refused economic assistance benefit, disability entitlement or the social service by the decision of the Council of the local government unit, has the right of appeal to the court.

### **CHAPTER V**

#### **MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE SOCIAL ASSISTANCE AND SERVICES SCHEME**

#### **Article 26**

1. The State Social Service is a public institution and dependent on the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.
2. The status of the State Social Service is endorsed by a decision of the Council of Ministers.

3. The State Social Service is administered and headed by the Administrative Council, which is the highest decision-making body.

4. Functions and membership of the Administrative Council are defined by a decision of the Council of Ministers.

5. The State Social Service is responsible for the implementation of the policies of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in the area of social assistance and care services for:

- a) Planning and controlling the use of the funds of the state budgets for the economic assistance, disability entitlement and social care services.
- b) Drafting standards of services and proposals for the approval of new services;
- c) Identification of the specific documentation for the applicants and beneficiaries of the social services in compliance with this law.

#### **Article 27**

1. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is the authority formulating policies and legislation, and programming, the planning of economic assistance funds, of disability entitlement and of social services, of the norms and standards of these services, and checking as well as monitoring their implementation at both central and local level and in the public and non-public sector.
2. The Minister of Labour and Social Affairs creates the Economic Assistance and Disability Entitlement Inspectorate which monitors the activity and the implementation of legislation in its dependent structures and institutions and the sections of the economic assistance in the municipality or commune, as well as endorses the documentation as provided for in article 26, point 5, letter "c" of this law.

3. The procedures on the control to be carried out by these inspectorates are defined by the decision of the Council of Ministers.
4. MoLSA collects information, statistics and reports from the local government units to be used for the assessment, monitoring and execution of policies, achievement of standards on the economic assistance, disability entitlement and social care services. The content, periodicity and the statistical indicators are defined by a decision of the Council of Ministers.

### **Article 28**

MoLSA calculates and presents to the Ministry of Finance the needs for state budget funds related to economic assistance, disability entitlement and social care services.

### **Article 29**

The municipal/communal council has the following responsibilities:

The municipal/communal council has the following responsibilities:

1. Approves the fund amount and number of families, eligible for economic assistance.
2. Approves the fund amount for disability entitlement.
3. Approves the fund amount for social care services.
4. Drafts the social care services development plan based on local resources, needs, and priorities.
5. Approves and supports the social care services on the bases of local priority needs' assessment.
6. Takes decisions on individuals, families and

types of the services to be provided on the basis of:

- a) an assessment of the needs of individuals and of families carried out by the Social Administrator and
  - b) 5mm financial possibilities on the provision of such services.
7. Decides, in conformity with the existing legislation, eligibility and amount of economic assistance per family as well as on the provision of special benefits provided for by the law.
  8. Authorises the local government units to contract licensed providers of private services in the cases when these social services are not provided by public providers.
  9. Through their own funds and on the basis of specific criteria, it supports with economic assistance or other forms of immediate assistance the families in need.
  10. Approves the programs for conditioning economic assistance with work and services to be carried out in the community. The criteria for conditioning of economic assistance with work and services in community are defined by the decision of the Council of Ministers.
  11. Approves the structures of its subordinate institutions, responsible for the delivery of the economic assistance, of the disability entitlement and the provision of the social care services in its jurisdiction.
  12. Approves cooperation programs with NGOs, religious institutes and representatives of civil society in compliance with the national and regional social assistance and care services plans.

### **Article 30**

The relevant structures are established to administer the scheme of social assistance and the social

services scheme at the regions and municipalities/communes. The duties and responsibilities of these structures are defined by the decision of the Council of Ministers in compliance with this law.

### **Article 31**

Social administrators in municipalities/communes have the following responsibilities:

1. To identify the families in need of economic assistance, disabled persons and the needs of the people for social care services;
2. To verify the social and economic situation of the families in need, when they first enter into the scheme as well as, twice a year, the social and economic situation of all the families benefiting from economic assistance;
3. To propose to the municipal/communal council, those families in need who could benefit from the economic assistance;
4. To assist in the preparation of the documentation on persons applying for economic assistance, disability benefit and the provision of social care services;
5. To assist in the process of the preparation of the draft law on families to be granted economic assistance, of the list of the disabled and of the persons in need of social care services;
6. To calculate and propose for approval at the assistance and social case services unit of the municipality/commune, the amount of economic assistance;
7. To draft every two months the request and payment fund related to the assistance package and the disability entitlement for the local government unit;
8. To cooperate in drafting the local and regional plans in support of the people in need;
9. To assess the needs of the individuals or families which request the receipt of social ser-

vices in compliance with the national and local priorities, financial possibilities to cover for them, as well as prepares the documentation and proposals to be approved by the municipality/commune council.

10. To collect and prepare information and statistics and to maintain the beneficiary registry / record, to monitor the expenses earmarked for economic assistance, disability benefit, and for people in need of social care services.
11. To collect information on the private and public services network operating in the jurisdiction of the municipality/commune.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **FINANCING OF SOCIAL ASSISTANCE AND CARE SERVICES**

#### **Article 32**

The state provides social assistance services as well as other support services to the people in need in compliance with the possibilities of the state budget.

#### **Article 33**

The funding for economic assistance, disability entitlement, and social services is covered by the state budget and the budgets of the local government units.

#### **Article 34**

The sources of financing of social assistance and of disability benefit consists of:

- a) Funds from the Central State budget;
- b) Funds generated from local taxes and duties.

### **Article 35**

1. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs plans the funds for the economic assistance package and for disability benefit in compliance with the assessment of the requests sent by the local government units. The transfer of the funds is done every two months to the municipality/commune.
2. The criteria and the indicators used to plan the economic assistance package are proposed by the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs and are approved by the decision of the Council of Ministers.

### **Article 36**

1. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs delegates every 4 months the economic assistance package fund to the municipalities/communes, which condition the granting of the economic assistance on the work and social care services in the community.
2. The unused funds of economic assistance resulting from a better management of the assistance package remain with the local unit, following the approval by MoLSA. These funds are used to support programs related to work and services in community within the year.

### **Article 37**

1. The funding sources for social care services provided by the public and non-public institutions at regional, and municipality/commune level, in residential and daily centres, at home or community mobile service centres consist of:
  - a) Funds delegated by the central state budget;
  - b) Funds generated by local taxes and duties;
  - c) Revenues from properties and other activities

of the municipality/commune.

- d) Contributions of the beneficiaries of social care services defined in Article 23 of this law.
- e) Donations, sponsorships and funding from other organizations, natural or other persons or other persons not included in letters "a", "b", "c", and "d" of this article.

### **Article 38**

1. State budget funds earmarked for the funding of social care services are delegated by MoLSA to the municipality/commune at the beginning of the year in compliance with the needs assessment and the possibilities of the state budget. The fund calculation and distribution methodology is determined by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in cooperation with the Ministry of Finances and it is approved by a decision of the Council of Ministers.

### **Article 39**

1. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs establishes the Social Fund to support the development of the new social care services and social policies. This fund consists of:
  - a) A part of the funds planned for the social care services;
  - b) Other funding outside the budget created by organizations, natural or legal persons or other individuals;
  - c) Other revenues acquired through direct implementation of bilateral or multilateral agreements that Republic of Albania enters into with other countries;
  - d) Revenues from own resources and properties/assets in the ownership of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

The rules on the use of the Social Fund are defined by a decision of the Council of Ministers.



#### **Article 40**

The audit of the use of the assistance funds, disability benefit and social care services is carried out by specialized audit bodies in compliance with the law "On Internal Audit and Financial Control".

### **CHAPTER VII**

#### **Article 41**

##### **Sanctions**

Any infringement of this law and its sub-legal acts is considered an administrative infringement in compliance with the law no.7697, dated 07/04/1993 "On administrative infringements."

#### **Article 42**

##### **Transitory dispositions**

1. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs drafts the programme of the transfer of the social care institutions under the competence of the local government.
2. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs drafts and follows the procedures on the transfer of the social care institutions under the competence of the local government starting from 2005 up to 2007.
3. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs takes measures related to the transfer of the funds for all the institutions to the local government
4. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs establishes the Inspectorate of Economic Assistance and Disability Entitlement as well as the Inspectorate of Social Services within the year 2006.
5. The qarks, municipalities/communes are assigned to set up and complete structures on

the administration of the scheme of economic assistance, disability entitlement and of social services according to the needs within the period 2005-2006.

#### **Article 43**

The Council of Ministers is charged with issuing the sub-legal acts (by-laws) to assist in the application of Articles 10,11,18,19,20,23, 26, 27,30, 35, 38 and 39 of this law.

#### **Article 44**

The law no. 7710, dated 18.5.1993, "On Social Assistance and Care", the revised versions, the decisions of the Council of Ministers for the purpose of its application, and article 2 of the Law No.8626, dated 22.6.2000, "On the Status of the paraplegic and tetraplegic invalids" are abrogated.

#### **Article 45**

This law comes into effect, 15 days after its publication in the "Official Journal".

### **SPEAKER OF PARLIAMENT**

**Servet PËLLUMBI**

## Acknowledgements

The drafting of the National Strategy on People with Disabilities, its Action Plan and all the supporting documentation included in this edition was supported by the contribution of a large number of individuals, state institutions, and civil society organisations. We take the opportunity to thank them all for their engagement, commitment and participation:

Nexhmedin Dumani, Natasha Pepivani, Etleva Murati, Anila Selmani, Raina Kovaçi, Lolita Hoxha, Loreta Çollaku, Anola Shala, Maksim Bozo, Fatmir Bezati, Xhelil Cibaku, Shpresa Leka, Genci Lubonja, Margarita Çaçi, Daklea Shtylla, Bardhylka Kospiri, Ndrek Ismajli, Sinan Tafaj, Abdulla Omuri, Flora Kalemi, Nasi Duka, Aferdita Seiti, Vera Minga, Merita Myftari, Rajmonda Prifti, Vera Paja, Mimoza Ceca, Artan Muca, Muharrem Mullaj, Zela Koka, Ismail Hysenllari, Tasim Kullolli, Engjellushe Bejtja, Eduart Ajazi, Albana Dimraj, Nikoleta Spahi, Llazar Dako, Shqipe Zekthi, Majlinda Brahaj.

Consultancy and Support for the National Strategy Document:

Office of the High Commissioner for the Affairs of People with Disabilities, Federal Republic of Germany, High Commissioner Karl-Hermann Haack, Ulrike Geith.

OSCE Presence in Albania: Caroline Milow, Elton Lelo, Karin Fällman, Rezart Xhelo