

## Report on the employment of disabled people in European countries

**Country:** Slovakia

**Author(s):** Eneke Hanzelova, Lydia Brichtova, Kvetoslava Repkova

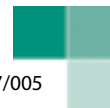
### Background:

The [Academic Network of European Disability experts](#) (ANED) was established by the European Commission in 2008 to provide scientific support and advice for its disability policy Unit. In particular, the activities of the Network will support the future development of the EU Disability Action Plan and practical implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People.

This country report has been prepared as input for the *Thematic report on the implementation of EU Employment Strategy in European countries with reference to equality for disabled people*.

The purpose of the report ([Terms of Reference](#)) is to review national implementation of the European Employment Strategy from a disability equality perspective, and to provide the Commission with useful evidence in support of disability policy mainstreaming. More specifically, the report will review implementation of EU Employment Strategy and the PROGRESS initiative with reference to policy implementation evidence from European countries, including the strategies addressed in the EU Disability Action Plan (such as flexicurity and supported employment).

The first version of the report was published in 2008. This is the second version of the report updated with information available up to November 2009.



## Summary of changes since 2008

### New quantitative data:

For the purpose of country updates on employment policies and employment situation of persons with disabilities for 2008-2009 years, ad hoc data from the Labour Force Survey are available. Due to lack of other sources, data from Labour Force Survey are the only reliable source for calculation of employment rate, activity rate and inactivity rate of people with disabilities.

#### Key trends in labour market indicators of persons with disabilities

According to the LSF data 2008 there were 261.4 thousand people with disabilities aged 15 and over (263.5 thousand in the first quarter 2009). The employment rate of disabled population for year 2008 was 8.74% and rose up to 9.16% in the first quarter of 2009 (for comparison, the employment rate of non – disabled population aged 15 and over for year 2008 was 53.7%, and for the first quarter of year 2009 – 52.5%).

The activity rate of the disabled population between year 2008 and the first quarter of 2009 slightly increased from 11.03% to 11.91%. It is almost five times less than the activity rate of the non-disabled population (59.4% for year 2008 and 58.7% for the first quarter of year 2009).

The inactivity rate of disabled population in the surveyed period decreased from 88.97% in year 2008 to 88.09% in the first quarter 2009. The high inactivity rate of the disabled population indicates that the vast majority of them remain outside the labour market.

The majority of working disabled people (74.93% in year 2008 and 75.43% in the first quarter 2009) have permanent contracts. The share of persons with disabilities in temporary contracts significantly decreased from 8.59% in year 2008 to 5.97% in the first quarter 2009.

The share of persons with disabilities in full time work demonstrated a significant increase from 70.50% in year 2008 to 75.35% in the first quarter 2009. Conversely, the share of part time work of persons with disabilities demonstrated a decreasing pattern: in the first quarter of 2009 the share of part time work decreased by 4.55 % compared to the year 2008.

Time	1q 2008	2q 2008	3q 2008	4q 2008	2008	1 q 2009
<b>Employment rate</b>	9.11%	8.42%	8.50%	8.94%	8.74%	9.16%
<b>Activity rate</b>	11.88%	10.69%	10.70%	10.84%	11.03%	11.91%
<b>Inactivity rate</b>	88.12%	89.31%	89.30%	89.16%	88.97%	88.09%
<b>Permanent contracts</b>	76.16%	73.06%	76.16%	74.34%	74.93%	75.43%
<b>Temporary contracts</b>	7.11%	9.65%	9.60%	8.01%	8.59%	5.97%
<b>Full time work</b>	69.07%	70.87%	70.01%	73.23%	70.80%	75.35%
<b>Part time work</b>	30.93%	29.13%	29.99%	26.77%	29.20%	24.65%

**Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic**

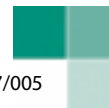
#### Notes:

Employment rate – persons with disabilities as a percentage of the population with disabilities aged 15 and over

Activity rate – economically active persons with disabilities as a percentage of population with disabilities aged 15 and over

Inactivity rate- economically inactive persons with disabilities as a percentage of the population with disabilities aged 15 and over

Employment quotas



Accordance with the Act on Employment Services requires employers with more than 20 employees to employ a minimum of 3.2 % of workers with disabilities of the overall number of employees.

Data relating to fulfilment of this obligation are gathered by the Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. According to these data there were 12 465 employers with more than 20 employees fulfilling the statutory obligation in the 1<sup>st</sup> half of 2009.

### **New policy changes:**

As has been reported in the Slovak Republic Country Report on the Employment of disabled people, amendment of the Act № 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services introduced new labour market policy measures which went beyond the existing scheme for employment support of persons with disabilities. This amendment was prepared in 2007 and came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2008 as follows:

- Job preparation, skills training and skills development for persons with disabilities
- Financial subsidy to employers to maintain persons with disabilities in employment
- Financial contribution to replace out-of-date technical equipment and property in sheltered workshops or sheltered workplaces
- In order to improve statistical data on disability, an obligation to keep a separate register of disabled jobseekers registered at the labour office was introduced.

There were no additional special measures relevant to employment of persons with disabilities in this period. However, new policies relevant to employment in general have been enforced under from the influence of global financial and economic crisis. An amendment of the Act on Employment Services (See annex 2), which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2009, introduced new measures focused on avoiding of the global financial and economic crisis impact on employment. The measures are temporary (until the end of year 2010) and their objective is to support the maintenance of existing work places and the creation of new jobs. They are being enforced through:

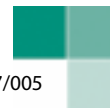
- An employment maintenance subsidy for those employers who maintain work places in circumstances of economic hardship with the objective of avoiding or restricting employee dismissal.
- An employer subsidy to encourage hiring and the creation of new work places for unemployed persons registered at the Labour Office.
- An employee's wage subsidy for those who had been registered as unemployed and were social assistance recipients before they entered the job.
- A self-employment grant for registered unemployed persons who were social assistance recipients.
- A self-employment grant for registered unemployed persons who start own businesses in the field of processing of agricultural products.

According to data of the Centre for Labour, Social Affairs and Family, between the 1st of March and 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2009 31 282 workplaces received support by means of these measures.

Despite the fact that these are anti-crisis measures aimed at maintenance and growth of employment in general, some of them (such as the Employment maintenance subsidy) will also have a positive effect on employment of persons with disabilities.

### Progress on ratification of the UN Convention

The preparation for ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (MOLSAF).



As part of this process, the MOLSAF has organised a working group composed of the ministries responsible, the representatives of Slovak National Council of People with Disabilities and representatives of municipalities. Upon the request of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family the individual ministries carried out analyses of compatibility of UN Convention with the Slovak legislation.

These analyses show that there are no fundamental obstacles to the ratification of the Convention. The proposal for the ratification of the Convention should be submitted by the end of year 2009 to the Slovak Government.

### **New research evidence:**

During the surveyed period no new research related to disability and work/employment has been carried out.

A useful contribution to disability employment policy evaluation is the annual report of Social situation of the Slovak republic's population<sup>1</sup> in the year 2008 published by Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. The report covers an evaluation of active labour market interventions focused on employment and employability of disabled persons. It notes contradictory trends in the outcomes of active labour market measures in 2008 compared with 2007: a downward trend in the number of established sheltered workshops and sheltered workplaces and an upward trend in the number of work assistants for disabled persons.

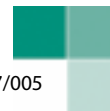
### **The economic crisis:**

The labour market situation has been visibly changed under the influence of the global financial and economic crisis. As a result of the decline in labour demand, employment in the 1<sup>st</sup> half of 2009 decreased by 1.1% compared to the same period last year. The employment rate (for people aged 15-64) fell over 1<sup>st</sup> half of 2008 by 1.3% to 60.4%. The number of unemployed persons rose and the unemployment rate increased compared to 1<sup>st</sup> half of 2008 by 1.2% and reached 11.3%. In the meantime the negative developments in the labour market have been reflected in moderate growth of the number of unemployed people with disabilities registered within Public Employment Offices. The Public Employment Offices registered 8 357 unemployed jobseekers with disabilities (2.88% of total number of registered unemployed) in 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2009 (8 302 in year 2008).

As reported (see section on New policy changes), concrete measures to alleviate the impact of the global financial crisis on the labour market have been put into practice. In the short term there is no available evaluation of their impact on labour market performance.

---

<sup>1</sup>Social situation of the Slovak republic's population: <http://www.employment.gov.sk/index.php?SMC=1&id=50>



## PART ONE: GENERAL EVIDENCE

### 1.1 Academic publications and research reports (key points)

Currently, research focused on employment of persons with disabilities, as a prioritized governmental agenda, has been provided primarily by the state (governmental) research authorities - mainly by the Institute for Labour and Family Research<sup>2</sup>. Selected questions concerning vocational education/training of pupils and young people with disabilities have been researched by the Research Institute of the Child Psychology and Pathopsychology<sup>3</sup>. These institutions are subordinated to the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, or to the Ministry of Education of the Slovak Republic, respectively. There is a lack of systematic university-based disability research and poor cooperation between governmental research institutions and university settings in disability research field. The universities (e.g. Comenius University, Trnava University, University Prešov, University Nitra) provide some types of disability-focused research, primarily within their educational programmes (e.g. as a part of BSc, Master or PhD theses) but not as an integral part of their systematic scientific/research programmes.

The situation for state research institutions is different. Employment-focused disability research is carried out as an integral part of an overall concept of disability research, based on governmental commitments assigned within the strategic document *The National Programme on Development of the Living Conditions of Persons with Disabilities in all Living Areas*<sup>4</sup> (approved by the Slovak Government in June 2001 and updated every year). Article 13 'Information and research' of the National Programme includes the commitment: 'To support systematic research projects and programmes on the living conditions of persons with disabilities as a basis for new conceptions and legislations in a social field'. Responsibilities for this task have been given to the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic (MOLSAF) in co-operation with The National Council of Persons with Disabilities (the umbrella civic organisation representing persons with disabilities in Slovakia, in the European Disability Forum). According to the above commitment the Institute for Labour and Family Research, as a research body affiliated to MOLSAF, has been applying a collaborative/integrative approach to disability-focused research. This approach is based on co-operation with bodies representing people with disabilities, including the National Council and individual civic organisations as authorities with 'first-hand experience'.

Some survey research initiatives on employment of persons with disabilities have been developed and conducted by civic organisations themselves (e.g. by The National Council of persons with disabilities; Reháková, Pavlíková, 2006) thanks to co-financing by the European Social Fund (for a review of conducted research projects see the list of references).

It is useful to note the annual report of the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family *Implementation of measures on active labour market policy*<sup>5</sup>. The report covers data relating to the outcomes of applied active labour market policy, including data of number of persons with disabilities supported in the previous year by different types of public employment services, and provides analysis in this field.

The newest governmental document, *Report on Implementation of National Programme on Development of Living Conditions for Persons with Disabilities in all Living Areas for years 2006-2007*<sup>6</sup> (August 2008) brought information of employment issues within the overall context of living conditions of persons with disabilities in Slovakia.

---

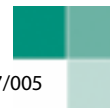
<sup>2</sup> [www.sspr.gov.sk](http://www.sspr.gov.sk)

<sup>3</sup> [www.vudpap.sk](http://www.vudpap.sk)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.employment.gov.sk/index.php?SMC=1&id=799>

<sup>5</sup> [www.upsvar.sk](http://www.upsvar.sk)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.rokovania.sk/appl/material.nsf/0/FFF337BE14B96F97C12574B3003473FF?OpenDocument>



Since 2004 up to the present the Institute for Labour and Family Research has been conducting some analysis and surveys, in cooperation with the National Council of Persons with Disabilities, focused to the following issues:

- labour market integration of persons with disabilities with connection to the system of social protection those persons,
- public employment services to disabled persons and their accommodating to meet the needs of disabled persons
- employer's attitudes toward people with disabilities ,
- public social services for persons with disabilities,
- employment situation and access to life-long learning of visually impaired persons,
- employment-related affairs as a part of living conditions of adult persons with disabilities and their families,
- employment perspective of family caregivers.

A number of key findings have emerged from above mentioned research projects (corresponding with national statistics):

1. High level of economic inactivity of adult (15-64) population with disabilities (more than 70% compared to 25% of non-disabled population)<sup>7</sup>
2. High percentage of unemployed and long-term unemployed persons within disabled population<sup>8</sup>
3. High risk of labour market exclusion and poverty risk of people with disabilities because of being out of the regular well-paid job<sup>9</sup>
4. Weak interactivity among subsystems of social protection of people with disabilities, preference of invalidity pension subsystem without utilising of further possibilities provided by e.g. the accident insurance subsystem to return people with disabilities into labour market and paid job<sup>10</sup>
5. Insufficient access of people with disabilities to lifelong learning often caused by insufficient access to the vocational training centres (transport, lack of appropriate devices)<sup>11</sup>

Lessons resulting from research towards good policy and practice:

1. Improving access of people with disabilities to labour market by early assessment of their specific competence/requirements and setting up an approach based on their abilities rather than on their disabilities and work-incapacities
2. Promoting job retention of people with disabilities through job trial and in-work training
3. Preventing long-term unemployment through individual coaching and vocational guidance
4. Improving employers attitudes towards people with disabilities in order to break down their conventional stereotypes (e.g. perceiving persons with disabilities as incapable of work) and their fear concerning adaption of work places to be suitable for job performance by persons with disability
5. Disseminate and communicate good practices on employment of persons with disabilities (particularly persons with mental disabilities, psychiatric impairments and combined disabilities)

Present research findings do not provide comprehensive information on the labour market position of people with disabilities and suggest for new research with particular emphasis on:

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.sspr.gov.sk/texty/File/pdf/2006/Nevidiaci.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.sspr.gov.sk/texty/File/pdf/2006/Nevidiaci.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.sspr.gov.sk/texty/File/vyskum/2006/ZPRZPC.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.sspr.gov.sk/texty/File/vyskum/2006/Kostolna/Zmapovanie.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.sspr.gov.sk/texty/File/pdf/2006/Nevidiaci.pdf>



- Wage level of disabled population (by age, gender) compared to non-disabled population
- Participation of disabled population in lifelong learning (by age, gender) compared to non-disabled population
- Poverty risk of disabled population (by type of household) compared to non-disabled population

## 1.2 Employment statistics and trends (key points)

The main source of reliable data relating to the disabled population is the Labour Force Survey, applied in Slovakia since 1993. For data collection the Labour Force Survey uses the legislative definition of persons with disabilities fixed in Act 46 1/2003 on Social Insurance and Act 5/2004 on Employment Services. The Labour Force Survey provides data on the employment and unemployment of disabled population. Data provided by the Labour Force Survey are published quarterly by Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic and are easy to access, reliable and up to date.

Another source is the database of the Centre for Labour, Social Affairs and Family (CLSAF), which collects data on disabled jobseekers registered at offices for labour, social affairs and family operating within the remit of the public employment services. The CLSAF database includes monthly figures for disabled jobseekers, inflows and outflows of disabled jobseekers, total number of registered disabled jobseekers including their regional (district) distribution and the number involved in active labour market programs. CLSAF data are published monthly and easy accessible on the CLSAF web-site<sup>12</sup>. However, these data cover only a certain part of total number of jobless disabled persons (i.e. those who are registered within public employment offices). This may be considered an essential weakness in data reliability.

According to the 2008 LSF data there were 261,400 people with disabilities aged 15 and over. Although the continued growth in overall employment rate reached 62.3% in 2008, the employment rate of disabled population remains extremely low at 8.7% (see table1). There were 22,800 employed persons with disabilities in 2008 (56% men and 44% women). Educational attainment of those disabled people who are employed shows a relatively positive picture: 11% had a university degree, 43% a secondary vocational and secondary education with graduation, 37% with secondary vocational and secondary education without graduation, and only 10% with only primary school. They are generally working on permanent labour contracts (75%) and in full-time work (71%). According to the LFS data, the unemployment rate of persons with disabilities was 20.7% in 2008 and significantly exceeded overall unemployment rate (9.6%).

The high inactivity rate of the disabled population (89% in 2008) suggests that the vast majority remain outside the labour market and receive disability benefits.

Total population	261,400
Activity rate *	11.03%
Inactivity rate**	88.97%
Employed (number)	22,800
Employment rate***	8.74%
Unemployed (number)	6,000
Unemployment rate ****	20.70%
Full-time work	70.80%
Part-time work	29.20%
<i>Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistical Office of the Slovak republic</i>	

<sup>12</sup>[http://www.upsvar.sk/statistiky/nezamestnanost-mesacne-statistiky.html?page\\_id=1254%20](http://www.upsvar.sk/statistiky/nezamestnanost-mesacne-statistiky.html?page_id=1254%20)  
[http://www.upsvar.sk/statistiky/aktivne-opatrenia-tp-statistiky.html?page\\_id=1248](http://www.upsvar.sk/statistiky/aktivne-opatrenia-tp-statistiky.html?page_id=1248)

and

*\*Activity rate – economically active persons with disabilities as a percentage of population with disabilities aged 15 and over*

*\*\*Inactivity rate- economically inactive persons with disabilities ( out of labour market) as a percentage of the population with disabilities aged 15 and over*

*\*\*\*Employment rate –employed persons with disabilities as a percentage of the population with disabilities aged 15 and over*

*\*\*\*\*Unemployment rate – unemployed persons with disabilities as a percentage of the economically active population with disabilities aged 15 and over*

The Labour Force Surveys provides quarterly data of numbers of employed persons with disabilities that enable us to monitor of changes or improvements in this area (see table 2 below).

year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
number	27,900	26,300	32,000	26,000	22,800

Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistical Office of the Slovak republic

Although the Slovak labour market experienced growth of overall employment in recent years, figures for employed people with disabilities have been continually dropping (with the exception of year 2006). There is no research providing a clear evidence-based explanation of this situation. According to the analysis provided by Central office of labour, social affairs and family<sup>13</sup> stagnation is caused by complicated administrative procedures in applying for public supportive instruments (for different types of public employment services, by persons with disabilities and potential employers) and a preference to employ non-disabled persons. Some evidence about an 'avoidance strategy' amongst employers is evident in the *Report on Implementation of National Programme on Development of Living Conditions for Persons with Disabilities in all Living Areas for years 2006-2007*<sup>14</sup>. In 2008 only 46% of employers had an obligation to employ the minimal 3.2% disabled persons to fulfil the statutory quota. Significant number of employers preferred to pay levies for not fulfilling the obligation rather than employing disabled persons.

The Labour Force Survey provides data on employment of disabled people broken down by gender. Gender distribution of employment of disabled people shows a higher share of men compared to women (see table 3 below).

year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
total	27 900	26 300	32 000	26 000	22 800
men (number)	15,700	16,000	16,300	13,900	12,800
share (%)	56%	61%	51%	54%	56%
women (number)	12,200	10,300	15,700	12,100	10,100
share (%)	44%	39%	49%	46%	44%

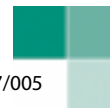
Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistical Office of the Slovak republic

Data on age composition of employment of disabled people are also available from Labour Force Survey. Out of 22,800 employed persons with disabilities in 2008, there were 1,300 (6%) aged 15-24 years; 13,000 (57%) aged 25-49 years; 8,500 (37%) aged 50 or more (see table 4 below).

<sup>13</sup> [www.upsvar.sk](http://www.upsvar.sk)

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.rokovania.sk/appl/material.nsf/0/FFF337BE14B96F97C12574B3003473FF?OpenDocument>





	number	share
15 – 24 years	1,300	6%
25 – 49 years	13,000	57%
50 years and more	8,500	37%
Total	22,800	100%

*Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistical Office of the Slovak republic*

According Labour Force Survey ad hoc module on employment of disabled people (2002) there were amongst total number of people with disabilities aged 15-64:

- 46% with chronic illnesses (internal health chronic problems)
- 39,4% with physical impairment
- 9,4% with mental or psychiatric impairment
- 2,7% with visual impairment
- 1,5% with hearing impairment

Employment data of disabled people, broken down by health condition, are available from the 2002 ad hoc module on employment of disabled people (Labour Force Survey). According to these data only 12% of the total number of disabled persons aged 15-64 were disabled from birth. The rest acquired impairment connected to work, traffic, household, leisure time or sport-related accidents. However, often the reason for impairment is not identified.

The Slovak Republic does not report data for the disabled population who are migrants or from ethnic minorities.

### 1.3 Laws and policies (key points)

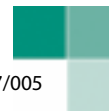
Recent changes in laws or policies that affect the employment of disabled people in Slovakia.

The low employment rate, high rate of economic inactivity and the vulnerability of persons with disabilities to social exclusion makes the disability agenda as a very important topic of policy makers. Therefore, the governmental 'National Reform Programme' and 'National Programme on Development of Living Conditions for Persons with Disabilities in all Living Areas' consider improvement in employment of persons with disabilities and their integration into the labour market as a basic prerequisite to attaining Lisbon employment targets, and to prevent their social exclusion.

Recently, distinctive policy effort have been made in order to improve the labour market environment towards people with disabilities and to increase incentives for employers for hiring people with disabilities (new active labour market measures targeted to disabled persons were introduced). However, the labour market situation of disabled people and the quality of their lives is still not adequate or satisfactory, resulting from access to employment in the open labour market and to lifelong learning. People with disabilities still do not have the same rights, conditions, opportunities and choices as non-disabled people. There are still many barriers (not only physical but also attitudinal, including the prejudices of employers).

The most important law for disabled people in the field of employment in Slovakia is the Act<sup>15</sup> 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.employment.gov.sk/index.php?SMC=1&id=1153>



This act provides the legal framework for promoting employment and self-employment of persons with disabilities by a varied scheme of tools such as financial contribution for employers to establish and maintain sheltered workshops or workplaces, financial contribution for self-employment by disabled persons, financial contribution to cover employees transport costs, quota system (obligation for employers with more than 20 employees to employ minimally 3.2% of workers with disabilities), financial contribution to maintain persons with disabilities in employment, financial contribution to replace out-of-date technical equipment and property in sheltered workshops or sheltered workplaces, personal assistance at work, job preparation, skills training and skills development.

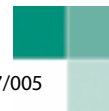
People with disabilities are a concern for policy makers as a disadvantaged group in the labour market with a high risk of social exclusion. Accordingly, the National Reform Programme 2008-2010<sup>16</sup> regards increasing their employment and employability as a key prerequisite for alleviation of social exclusion. The National Reform Programme explicitly refers to people with disabilities in connection with new measures for active labour market policy targeted to disadvantage groups introduced by recent amendment of the Act of Employment Services (see part I. Implementation of the Lisbon measures in the previous year p.8) and with the issues of lifelong learning and lifelong career counselling (part III. Reform measures for 2008-2010 p.32). There appears to be no mention of disability in the 2009 Implementation Report. Employment rates are provided for women/men, older/younger workers, but not for disabled people. (Appendix 1).

One of the important changes in employment policies focusing on people with disabilities is amendment of the Act on Employment Services which came into force on 1st May 2008. This amendment introduced new active labour market tools to facilitate entry and retention people with disabilities in employment as follows:

- Job preparation, skills training and skills development for persons with disabilities (also including personal assistance at work for a period up to one month; the person with disabilities is entitled to income during preparation period; legal or physical entity who guarantees the job preparation or training for persons with disabilities receives a financial grant).
- Contribution for employers to maintain the person with disabilities in job (entitled are employers are those who employ more than 25% of persons with disabilities)
- Contribution to replace out of date technical equipment and property in sheltered workshops or sheltered workplaces (for purchasing new machines, equipment, cars, etc. for employer who employed least 50% of persons with disabilities in the last three years – paid from state budget)
- Legislative requirements to create social enterprises with the aim to employ disadvantaged groups of job seekers or carry out volunteer activities, including persons with disabilities. The aim of this measure is to support employment of disabled persons in the open labour market. From September 2008, social enterprises are entitled to contribution for a maximum period of two years.

Under the influence of global financial and economic crisis the new measures of active labour policy have been enforced. Recent amendment of the Act on Employment Services (See annex 2), which came into force on 1 March 2009, introduced new measures focused on avoiding the global financial and economic crisis impact on employment. The measures are temporary (until the end of 2010) and their objective is to support the maintenance of existing work places and the creation of new jobs. They are being enforced through:

<sup>16</sup>[http://ec.europa.eu/archives/growthandjobs/pdf/member-states-2008-2010-reports/National%20Reform%20Programme%20SR%202008-2010\\_EN.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/archives/growthandjobs/pdf/member-states-2008-2010-reports/National%20Reform%20Programme%20SR%202008-2010_EN.pdf)



- An employment maintenance subsidy for those employers who maintain work places in circumstances of economic hardship with the objective of avoiding or restricting employee dismissal.
- An employer subsidy to encourage hiring and the creation of new work places for unemployed persons registered at the Labour Office.
- An employee wage subsidy for those who have been registered as unemployed and were social assistance recipients before they entered the job.
- A self-employment grant for registered unemployed persons who receive social assistance benefit.
- A self-employment grant for registered unemployed persons who start own businesses in the field of processing of agricultural products.

According to data from the Centre for Labour, Social Affairs and Family, between the 1 March and 30 June 2009 31,282 workplaces received support through these measures. Despite the fact that these are anti-crisis measures, aimed at maintenance and growth of employment in general, some of them (such as the Employment maintenance subsidy) will also have a positive effect on employment of persons with disabilities.

Persons with disabilities, due to their unfavourable situation in society and high labour market exclusion risk, are considered as a highly disadvantaged group in terms of employment policy. Considering the specific nature of targeted measures and services, persons with disabilities are not so often supported within the mainstream employment policy. Persons with disabilities have the same access to employment services as non-disabled persons, however there are also different policies, explicitly targeted to persons with disabilities (e.g. quota system, job assistance, agencies for supported employment, sheltered workshop and sheltered workplace).

#### **1.4 Type and quality of jobs (summary)**

Statistical source in Slovakia do not report comparative data for sheltered and regular employment of people with disabilities. However, there are data on the number of employees employed in sheltered workshops provided by Centre for Labour, Social Affairs and Family. According to these data there were 8,614 employees in sheltered workshops in first quarter of 2009 (more than one third of all disabled people who are employed).

People with disabilities more likely work in the service sector (trade, hotel and restaurant services, telecommunications, healthcare etc.) and less likely to work in agriculture or industry. According of LFS data almost three fifths of employed disabled workers are engaged in the service sector (58%), more than a one third in industry (38%) and only 4% in the agriculture sector. The sectoral distribution is rather similar to that for the general population.

According to the data of Labour Force Survey there were 71% of employed persons with disabilities in full-time work and 29% in part-time work in 2008. The incidence of full-time work within disabled employed population is lower than the national average and, conversely, the incidence of part-time work is higher than the national average.

Slovak statistical sources do not report data for employment of people with disabilities broken down by public and private sectors.

Data on active labour market policies targeted to disabled persons indicate imbalances between training programme placement and job placement programmes. According to data from Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, in 2008, 584 disabled people were engaged in different types of vocational and work-related training while 1,076 were placed in paid work through sheltered employment. There is a serious concern that activation policy is more concentrated on sheltered employment and less on improving the employability of people with disabilities.

Social enterprise is a new tool of labour market activation in Slovakia (introduced in September 2008). The basic objective of social enterprise is to enable transition of disadvantaged groups into paid employment in the regular labour market by diverse types of support (training, work, counselling). Currently, eight pilot projects for social enterprises are being implemented in different regions of Slovakia.

Employment support schemes explicitly targeted to disabled persons include a wide range of tools (see table 5 below).

<b>Table 5 Supported employment scheme of disabled persons in Slovakia</b>			
Type of support	Beneficiary	Objective	Outcomes <sup>17</sup>
Employment quotas <sup>18</sup>	Employers with more than 20 employees have an obligation to employ a minimum of 3.2 % of workers with disabilities of the overall number of employees.	Promoting employment of persons with disabilities on the open labour market	45.5 % of overall number of employers with more than 20 employees fulfilled obligation by direct hiring of disabled persons in 2008.
Contribution for Establishing the Sheltered Workshop or Sheltered Workplace and for Running Costs <sup>19</sup>	Employer	Promoting employment of disabled people by funding disabled-related cost of special equipment and adaptation of work place to enable perform job by disabled worker	739 sheltered workshops or sheltered work places were established in 2008
Contribution for Operating or Performing Self-Employment to Disabled Persons <sup>20</sup>	Disabled job seekers	Promoting entry on labour market by funding start –up of self-employment of disabled persons	337 disabled people received financial contribution and started own business in 2008
Training <sup>21</sup>	Disabled jobseekers	Improving employability by upgrading obsolete skills or by acquiring new skills	584 persons with disabilities participated on training programmes in 2008
Job preparation <sup>22</sup>	Disabled jobseeker Training provider	Improving employability by induction of disabled jobseekers in work environment	Not yet available

<sup>17</sup> Data on implementation of active labour market policy in 2008 (Internal document of Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family)

<sup>18</sup> Act No.5/2004 Coll.on employment services, §63 <http://www.employment.gov.sk/index.php?SMC=1&id=1153>

<sup>19</sup> Ibidem, § 56

<sup>20</sup> Ibidem, §57

<sup>21</sup> Ibidem, §46

<sup>22</sup> Ibidem, §55a

Contribution for employers to maintain disabled person in job <sup>23</sup>	Employer	Retaining employment of disabled people by providing contribution to employers who maintain person with disability in job	Not yet available
Contribution to cover operating cost of the sheltered workshop and sheltered workplace and employee's transport costs <sup>24</sup>	Legal or physical entities who run sheltered workshops and sheltered workplaces	Retaining number of sheltered workshops and sheltered workplaces by providing financial contribution to cover operating costs	6,592 workplaces received financial contribution in 2008
Contribution to replace out of date technical equipment and property in sheltered workshop or sheltered workplace <sup>25</sup>	Legal or physical entities who run sheltered workshops and sheltered workplaces	Retaining employment of disabled people and labour productivity in sheltered workshops or sheltered workplaces by renovation technical equipment	Not yet available
Personal assistance at work <sup>26</sup>	Disabled person Person who provide assistance	Promoting entry to labour market of disabled persons by providing personal assistance at work	138 personal assistant workplaces were established in 2008. They provide assistance for 443 disabled workers
Agency for supported employment <sup>27</sup>	Legal or physical entities who provide employment services for disabled persons and for long-term unemployed persons	Promoting employment of disabled persons by involving a wide range of employment services providers (non state, non governmental and non profit)	43 agencies for supported employment were operate in 2008

Considering the available evidence, the available data and information do not suggest the exclusive orientation of activation policy for disabled people on specific kinds of work, specific sectors or specific type of jobs. In spite of this fact, there are some implicit messages, arising from research, that persons with certain types of impairment should perform certain types of jobs being 'typical' for them (e.g. 'typical' jobs for visually impaired persons might be masseur, technical services, telephonist, Braille corrector, etc).

In principle, activation measures should be equally available to all disable people because the legislation is based on the principle of antidiscrimination.

<sup>23</sup> Ibidem, §56a

<sup>24</sup> Ibidem §60

<sup>25</sup> Ibidem, § 57a

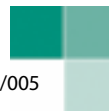
<sup>26</sup> Ibidem, § 59

<sup>27</sup> Ibidem, § 58



However, persons with intellectual disabilities, chronic psychiatric conditions and multiple disabilities clearly experience the most serious barriers to accessing the labour market (not least because of strong prejudices in society) and are perceived by employers as potentially the most problematic. Research evidence suggests that employers, in maintaining their quota, prefer to hire people with lesser degrees of disability or those who are not far distant from the labour market (Hanzelová et al 2007).





## PART TWO: SPECIFIC EXAMPLES

### 2.1 Reasonable accommodation in the workplace

Slovak employment legislation (Act No. 5 /2004 Coll.on Employment Services) recognizes the following supporting measures to make employment for people with disabilities more accessible:

#### 1. Contribution for Establishing the Sheltered Workshop or Sheltered Workplace and for Running Costs

Sheltered workshop and sheltered workplace are primarily designed to enable labour market assertion of disabled persons. An employer who decides to establish a sheltered workshop or workplace can obtain a financial contribution from the district employment office. This contribution covers employer's expenses relating to adjusting the work place or employer's premises, outfitting of the sheltered workshop or workplace with machines, equipment and aids required for performance of the activities by a disabled person. The amount of the contribution depends on the type of region eligible for the provision of the State aid and the average rate of registered unemployment of the district.

*Availability of contribution:* Employers commencing to establish a sheltered workshop or sheltered workplace shall be granted a contribution pursuant to a written agreement with the district employment office.

*Financing:* the responsible body for financing all active policy measures including the contribution for Establishing Sheltered Workshop or Sheltered Workplace, is the Centre for Labour, Social Affairs and Family. The amount of the contribution depends on the type of region eligible for the provision of the State aid and the average rate of registered unemployment of the district. The maximum amount of contribution is 65% of sixteen-fold of the total labour costs derived from the national average wage (total costs is the sum of the average wage and contributions paid by employer to social insurance and health insurance)

#### 2. Contribution for Self-Employment of Disabled Persons

The disabled person commencing the operation or performance of self-employment in a sheltered workshop or at a sheltered workplace shall be granted by the district employment office a contribution for reimbursement of the expenses related to self-employment. The application for the contribution shall include the business plan and a calculation of the estimated costs of establishing the sheltered workshop or sheltered workplace.

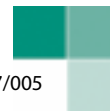
*Availability of contribution:* The disabled person must have been registered as a job seeker at the district employment office for at least three months. The district labour office will grant a contribution pursuant to a written agreement with the applicant.

*Financing:* The amount of the contribution depends on the type of region eligible for the provision of the State aid and the average rate of registered unemployment of the district. The maximum amount is 65% of sixteen fold of total labour costs derived from the national average wage (total labour costs is: sum of average wage and contributions paid by employer to social insurance and health insurance.)

#### 3. Contribution to replace out of date technical equipment and property in sheltered workshop or sheltered workplace

Contribution is designed to restore and update substantial property of sheltered workshops or sheltered workplaces.

*Availability of contribution:* The employer or self-employed disabled person who runs sheltered workshop or sheltered workplace shall be granted, by the district employment office, a contribution to replace out of date technical equipment and property.



The employer must employ at least 50% persons with disabilities during three previous years and self-employed person must have run their own business for at least two years.

*Financing:* The amount of contribution is determined by Centre for Labour, Social Affairs and Family (COLSAF) and depends on the disposable budget of COLSAF.

#### 4. Contribution for activities of assistance at work

The district employment office shall grant to an employer or to a self-employed person, who is disabled person a contribution for personal assistance at work. Personal assistance at work is defined as an employee who provides assistance to an employee or to employees, who are disabled persons in their execution of employment and personal needs during working time, or a person who provides assistance to a disabled self-employed person in operating or performing self-employment.

*Availability of contribution:* The personal assistant must be at least 18 years of age and of legal capacity. The contribution is granted pursuant to written agreement concluded between employer or self-employed person, personal assistant and district employment office.

*Financing:* The contribution is provided monthly, the maximum amount is 90% of the total price of work (total price of work is the sum of the average wage and contributions paid by employer to social insurance and health insurance).

In order to improve access of disabled people to employment the Slovak Labour Code recognizes flexible employment contracts, such as part-time employment, work at home and telework. These types of contracts contribute to increasing the employment prospects of disabled people. Unfortunately, there no available statistical data on flexible employment contracts broken down by disabled and non-disabled population (although the incidence of part-time working was mentioned earlier).

## **2.2 Other activation policies**

Other examples of positive action to support disabled people in employment (relevant to the EU Disability Action Plan):

- *financial incentives to work*  
Implicitly, persons with disabilities supported to work within a system of compensation for the social consequences of severe disability. Primarily for those who work this could include, e.g.:
  - cash benefit for purchasing a personal car
  - cash benefit for operating a personal car (for petrol)
  - cash benefit for personal assistance
  - cash benefit for procurement of special device (utilizable in work too)
- *positive recruitment measures*  
When offering new workplaces for unemployed people by the Centre for Labour, Social affair and Family, employers designate some of them as workplaces available for persons with disabilities. These workplaces are primarily occupied by persons with disabilities.
- *job matching/profiling services, mapping of competencies etc.*  
This type of professional service is provided according the Act N<sup>o</sup> 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services. Examples:
  - elaboration of 'individual action plan' based on assessment of educational level of job seeker, professional and practical skills, personal traits, to fit them with a certain job offer,

- activities of Centres of counselling and information (Poradensko-informačné centrá) established by Centre for Labour, Social Affairs and Family. Presently six Centres are operating in Slovakia. They assess the work potential of disabled job seekers, provide counselling for persons with disabilities and employers to fit (match) expectations and skills with the expectations and requirements of the workplace.
- *job retention schemes*  
Amendment of Act<sup>Nº</sup> 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services (which took effect on 1 May 2008) has established a job retention scheme to improve employment of people with disabilities (see table 5). This scheme is based on providing a monthly contribution for an employer who employs more than 25% disabled employees, to retain disabled employee in employment. The amount of monthly contribution is 0.72% of total labour cost (as defined previously) per employed disabled person with more than 70% loss of work capacity and 0.36% of total labour costs per employed person with more than 40%, but less than 70%, loss of work capacity.
- *help with transport to work*  
Support in this field is provided by Act<sup>Nº</sup> 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services as ‘a cash benefit for operating costs of sheltered workshop or sheltered workplace reimbursement or for employees transport costs reimbursement’. Cash benefit is provided to employer. According to national statistics this type of support has been utilised only minimally.
- *supported employment / job coaching*  
There is no direct scheme of job coaching for persons with disabilities. The above mentioned Agencies of supported employment provide coaching of persons with disabilities after their insertion into work and for some period after that to increase the chance of their retention in work.
- *vocational training services*  
Amendment of Act<sup>Nº</sup> 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services (which took effect in May 2008) has established a new vocational training scheme called ‘Príprava na pracovné uplatnenie občana so zdravotným postihnutím’ (Job preparation of person with disability, see table 5). It is a kind of on-the-job-training which can provide better preparation for a disabled person in performing the job in a real workplace.

### 2.3 One example of best practice

The CAFÉ RADNĚKA in Bratislava is an example of supported employment, which was created through co-operation between a non-profit non-governmental organisation and the local government of Bratislava. It was established in January 2001. The aim of the Café has been to create jobs for persons with severe disabilities (intellectual disabilities) within the open (free) labour market (placed where is high flow of people).

It is a good example because it offers the same services as any other café in the city centre of Bratislava, provided by waiters with intellectual disabilities under the guidance of two qualified waiters. It involves a multi-sectoral co-operation in support of labour inclusion (NGO Inclusion, NGO Agency for Supported Employment, Bratislava Municipal Office, Municipal Museum, District Labour Office, Hotel Academy School, Open Society Foundation, other sponsors from business sector and many private volunteers).

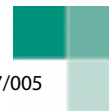
The café has offered job opportunities for five young persons with intellectual disabilities (as waiters).

The wider public visiting the place are also able to recognise the working potential of persons with intellectual disabilities. Crafts made by disabled people are also sold in the café.



The District Labour Office (local state administration body) provided initial financial support for creation of the jobs for disabled persons. The Hotel Academy School provided an initial six-months training course for waiting staff. The Open Society Foundation in Slovakia supported the start of the project by a grant.

This example could be expanded within our country, or transferred to other countries. To increase awareness about these type of initiatives in different type of ways (visits, media, dissemination strategy).



## References

Kondášová, A., Pavlíková, E.: Analýza doterajších skúseností subjektov vstupujúcich do procesu zamestnávania osôb so zdravotným postihnutím (*Analysis of the previous experience of subjects entering into employing of persons with disabilities*). VÚPSVR, Bratislava 2002

Reháková, A., Pavlíková, E.: Bariéry a problémy v oblasti zamestnávania osôb so zdravotným postihnutím (*Barriers and problems to employ persons with disabilities*). NROZP, Bratislava 2006

Kostolná, Z., Hanzelová, E., Reichová, D., Repková, K.: Nevidiaci a slabozrakí ľudia na trhu práce a v prístupe k celoživotnému vzdelávaniu (*Blind and Partially Sighted People at the Labour Market and their Access to Lifelong Learning*). IVPR, Bratislava 2006. [www.sspr.gov.sk/Výskumná\\_činnosť/Výskumné\\_projekty/IVPR\\_a\\_ESF](http://www.sspr.gov.sk/Výskumná_činnosť/Výskumné_projekty/IVPR_a_ESF)

Kostolná, Z., Hanzelová, E., Reichová, D., Repková, K.: Verejné služby zamestnanosti a činnosť osôb so zdravotným/zrakovým postihnutím (*Public Employment Services and Persons with Disabilities/with Visual Impairments*). IVPR, Bratislava 2007. [www.sspr.gov.sk/Výskumná\\_činnosť/Výskumné\\_projekty/IVPR\\_a\\_ESF](http://www.sspr.gov.sk/Výskumná_činnosť/Výskumné_projekty/IVPR_a_ESF)

Hanzelová, E., Kostolná, Z., Reichová, D.: Očania so zdravotným /zrakovým postihnutím v optike postojov a názorov zamestnávateľov (*Persons with Disabilities/with Visual Impairments in optics of Employers' Attitudes*). IVPR, Bratislava 2007. [www.sspr.gov.sk/Výskumná\\_činnosť/Výskumné\\_projekty/IVPR\\_a\\_ESF](http://www.sspr.gov.sk/Výskumná_činnosť/Výskumné_projekty/IVPR_a_ESF)

Hanzelová, E., Kostolná, Z., Kešelová, D., Repková, K.: Sociálna ochrana osôb so zdravotným postihnutím po systémových zmenách sociálnej politiky. II. etapa: Integrácia osôb so zdravotným postihnutím na trh práce: súčasná prax a možné riešenia (*Social protection of persons with disabilities after systemic changes of social policy. II. phase: Labour market integration of persons with disabilities: current practice and possible solutions*). IVPR, Bratislava 2007. [www.sspr.gov.sk/Výskumná\\_činnosť/Výskumné\\_projekty/2007](http://www.sspr.gov.sk/Výskumná_činnosť/Výskumné_projekty/2007)

Hanzelová, E.: Podpora zamestnávania osôb so zdravotným postihnutím: výskumné zistenia a implikácie pre prax (*Support of employment of persons with disabilities: research findings and practice implications*). [www.sspr.gov.sk/Výskumná\\_činnosť/Výskumné\\_projekty/2007](http://www.sspr.gov.sk/Výskumná_činnosť/Výskumné_projekty/2007)

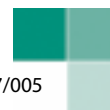
Hanzelová, E., Kešelová, D., Kostolná, Z., Repková, K.: Trh práce a očania so zrakovým postihnutím v mozaike výskumu (*Labour Market and Visually Impaired Persons in a research mosaic*). IVPR, Bratislava 2008, ISBN: 978-80-7138-125-9. [www.sspr.gov.sk/Výskumná\\_činnosť/Výskumné\\_projekty/IVPR\\_a\\_ESF](http://www.sspr.gov.sk/Výskumná_činnosť/Výskumné_projekty/IVPR_a_ESF)

Repková, K.: Životné podmienky rodín so zdravotne postihnutým členom (*Living conditions of families with disabled member*). IVPR, Bratislava 2006. [www.sspr.gov.sk/Výskumná\\_činnosť/Výskumné\\_projekty/2006](http://www.sspr.gov.sk/Výskumná_činnosť/Výskumné_projekty/2006)

### Governmental reports

National Reform Programme of the Slovak Republic for 2008-2010 ([www.finance.gov.sk](http://www.finance.gov.sk))  
Realizácia nástrojov aktívnej politiky trhu práce za rok 2007 (*Implementation of the instruments on active labour market policy*)

Správa o realizácii Národného programu rozvoja životných podmienok osôb so zdravotným postihnutím vo všetkých oblastiach života za roky 2006-2007 (*Report on Implementation of National Programme on Development of Living Conditions for Persons with Disabilities in all Living Areas for years 2006-2007*) ([www.employment.gov.sk](http://www.employment.gov.sk))



## Annex 1: quantitative data on the employment of disabled people

Year: 2008	Absolute (N)	Percentage (%)	Change (from previous year)
<b>Disability rate</b>	261 400	-	-
<b>Employment rate of disabled people</b>		8.74%	-
<b>Activity rate of disabled people</b>		10.84%	-
<b>Inactivity rate of disabled people</b>		89.16%	-
<b>Employment in open labour market</b>	-	-	-
<b>Employment in sheltered workshop</b>	8 614 (1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2009)	-	-
<b>Reason for leaving the labour market due to disability or long standing health problem</b>	118 700	-	-

*Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic*

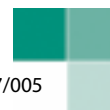
Year: 2008	% Permanent	% Temporary
<b>Permanent contracts vs. short term contracts</b>	74.93%	8.59%
<b>Full time vs. part time jobs</b>	70.80%	29.20%

*Source: Labour Force Survey, Statistical Office of the Slovak republic*

Year: 2008	Public sector	Private sector	
<b>Fulfilment of employment quota (if it exists)</b>	No available data	No available data	45,5% of total number of employers having obligation to employ disabled persons fulfilled employment quota in 2008

<b>Participation in training of disabled people – year 2008</b>	According to data of Centre of Labour, Social Affairs and Family 584 disabled people have been engaged in different types of vocational and work related training (3.4% out of total number of training participants).	(e.g. comment or give number of people participating in vocational or work-related employment)
---	--	--





## Annex 2: 2008-9 laws and policies on the employment of disabled people

<b>Name of law:</b>	Amended Act Nº 5/2004 on Employment Services by the following legal regulations: Nº 139/2008;; Nº 233/2008; Nº 263/2008; Nº 460/2008; Nº 562/2008; Nº 49/2009 and Nº108/2009
<b>Date of entering into force:</b>	Nº 139/2008 – 1 <sup>st</sup> of May 2008 (with the exception of some paragraphs coming into force 1 <sup>st</sup> of September 2008); Nº233/2008 - 1 <sup>st</sup> of July 2008(with the exception of some paragraphs coming into force 1 <sup>st</sup> July 2009); Nº263/2008 – 1 <sup>st</sup> of August 2008; Nº460/2008 -1 <sup>st</sup> of January 2009; Nº562/2008 -1 <sup>st</sup> of January 2009; Nº49/2009 - 1 <sup>st</sup> of March 2009 Nº 108/2009 – 1 <sup>st</sup> of April 2009
<b>Objective:</b>	Improving employment and active labour market policy in general and particularly for people with disabilities. Introduction of new labour market measures in order to alleviate the impact of the global economic and financial crisis.
<b>Impact assessment (positive/negative):</b>	As yet there are no available statistical data and evaluations (positive or negative) related to the impact of adopted legislative changes on labour market in general and particularly on disabled people.



### Annex 3: 2008-9 research/evaluation on the employment of disabled people

<b>Publication details (author, date, title, etc):</b>	
<b>Key findings from the research:</b>	
<b>Comment or assessment:</b>	

<b>Publication details (author, date, title, etc):</b>	
<b>Key findings from the research:</b>	
<b>Comment or assessment:</b>	

<b>Publication details (author, date, title, etc):</b>	
<b>Key findings from the research:</b>	
<b>Comment or assessment:</b>	