



Eurofound

Active inclusion of young people with disabilities or health problems

National report – Slovakia

[Click for contents](#)

Authors: Kvetoslava Repková, Institute for Labour and Family Research, Bratislava and Katarína Šelestiaková, Slovak Disability Council, Bratislava

Project managers: Robert Anderson and Anna Ludwinek

Research project: Active inclusion of young people with disabilities

Contents

Summary	1
1. National profile	3
2. Case studies	21
3. Conclusions	39
Bibliography	43
Annexes	45

Current status of the target groups

In 2010, young people aged 16–24 and 25–39 years made up 9.1% and 18.2% respectively of the total population of severely disabled people aged 16–61 years in Slovakia.

Although more men than women under the age of 24 were represented in the total population of people with disabilities, there were more severely disabled women in the older age group. In addition, both of these age categories had a higher proportion of women than men with health-related limitations in activities of daily living.

The majority of young people with health problems or disabilities in both age categories were designated as inactive in the period 2000–2010. The highest proportion of inactive people in both age groups was recorded in 2010, when as many as 87% of those aged 15–24 and 80% of those aged 25–34 were inactive. Only a minority of young people with health problems or disabilities in both age categories were classified as part of the active population; in other words those in employment. The highest level of employment was recorded in 2005 in the 25–34 age group, when it reached almost 25%. The lowest rate was in 2010 among young people with disabilities aged 15–24, of whom fewer than 7% had a paid job.

The most popular measure to support the employment of young people with health problems or disabilities is a public subsidy for employers and for self-employment to establish sheltered workshops or sheltered workplaces and to cover the related running costs. Some social and work rehabilitation programmes are provided by specialised centres (in Bratislava for physically disabled people and in Levoča for visually impaired people) or by employment support agencies (in May 2011 59 agencies in total provided assistance to people with all types of disabilities in Slovakia). The available data revealed that employment support measures were provided mainly for people with disabilities over 25 years of age. Moreover, there were no national programmes/projects which focused explicitly on supporting the specific target groups for this study. The employment support needs of young people with health problems or disabilities were addressed in the main within programmes aimed at a broad category of people with disabilities. Successful projects for the labour market integration of young people were primarily initiated by the NGO sector in partnership with other relevant stakeholders, as illustrated in the case studies in chapter 2 of this report.

Some parallels between developments in the areas of employment and social protection were identified. While the numbers of those employed declined gradually at the end of the decade, the numbers of recipients of social benefits (early and regular invalidity/disability pensions, cash benefits for compensation of severe disability) increased. This suggests that social benefits served as the main source of income while individuals were inactive or looking for a job. There was clear evidence of a connection with the economic crisis and that the unfavourable general employment situation served to keep people with disabilities (of all ages) out of the regular labour market and reliant on disability-related social benefits. The negative employment and economic situation for all groups of workers from 2008 to 2010 impacted on the attitudes of the social partners, who refused to agree to a strategy for any additional protection for young people with health problems or disabilities. The social partners argued that there was a need to keep a balance in labour protection for all groups of employees and that this would in turn benefit people with disabilities.

How societal and individual needs are currently addressed

The way in which the social and individual needs of young people with health problems or disabilities are currently addressed is shaped by a number of factors. Firstly, their additional needs in relation to vocational training and employment are generally acknowledged by the Slovak constitution and are covered under special protection measures.

However, traditionally, children and young people have been treated as people with acknowledged special needs¹ only within the formal educational process. To date, all other support systems (such as labour relations, employment services, income support) have not transformed the age-related aspects of disability into concrete legislation, services or practice. At the administrative level, in most cases young people with health problems are treated either within the broad category of ‘people with disabilities’ or within a separate broad category of ‘young people’. This particular type of ‘age blindness’ in the national legal framework and practice extends to the entire youth population in Slovakia, where presently only a small number of employment supports are targeted specifically at young job seekers. With regard to income support there is an early invalidity/disability pension aimed at younger people. In addition, young people with health problems can access all of the other disability supports that are available if they are deemed to be eligible.

In national statistics, data on disability-related entitlements are not ordinarily disaggregated and presented according to age. When this does occur, the information relating to young people is masked as they are incorporated into the broad age range of 18–59 years. More detailed data on disability entitlements is only available for older groups of recipients (those over 60 years).

Finally, another complication encountered when looking at active inclusion policies and the employment situation of young people with health problems or disabilities relates to the lack of, or poor coordination of, sectoral data which makes it difficult to carry out any comprehensive quantitative analysis on the status of the target groups.

¹ The term ‘people with special needs’ is used to describe people with disabilities who require distinctive/special conditions to meet their needs, which are principally the same as the needs of those without disabilities (Repková, 1999).

Status of active inclusion in national and sectoral policy

According to Article 35 of the Slovak Constitution (Ústava Slovenskej republiky; Act No. 460/1992 as amended): ‘Everybody has the right to a free choice of occupation and to vocational training, but also a right to engage in business and other earning activities.’ To exercise this right: ‘Women, young people and people with disabilities have a right to special protection in relation to occupational health and safety and a right to specific working conditions.’ Moreover, ‘Young people and people with disabilities have a right to specific protection in relation to their labour relations and a right to assistance with their vocational training.’

The general commitments in the constitution have subsequently been translated into specialised strategic or programmatic documents and legislative acts, primarily in the areas of education, social assistance and employment. The main documents that impact on disability issues are discussed here.

Special obligations to meet the educational needs of children and young people with disabilities are explicitly included in the most recent documents. Examples of this include the ‘Key areas and actions plan of state policy focused on children and youth in the Slovak Republic for the years 2008–2013’, (Kľúčové oblasti a akčné plány štátnej politiky vo vzťahu k deťom a mládeži v Slovenskej republike na roky 2008–2013), specifically Article 4.1, point 4.1.5, which obliges the state to ‘create conditions for improving the education of children and young people with special educational needs’ (Kľúčové oblasti, 2008, p. 3).

Another very relevant document is the ‘National programme on the development of living conditions for persons with disabilities in all life areas’² (referred to in this report as the ‘National Programme’; Národný program rozvoja životných podmienok občanov so zdravotným postihnutím vo všetkých oblastiach života, 2001). This represents the state’s policy on support for people with disabilities in all areas of life, including education and employment. In rules No. 6 ‘Education’ and No. 7 ‘Employment’, the document formulates commitments for various public and private authorities to regulate the conditions under which people with disabilities can exercise their educational and employment rights. The national programme articulates an explicit commitment to creating a system to help graduates with disabilities with their choice of occupation to enhance the likelihood of gaining employment. This requires that career counsellors cooperate with the Offices of Labour, Social Affairs and Family (National Programme, article 7.3.2). Despite this political commitment, the system of cooperation has not been fully established and the preparation of plans to support the transition of young people with health problems or disabilities from school to employment has not yet become integrated into practice.

In relation to Slovakia’s active inclusion policy, a crucial role has been played by the Slovakian National Action Plan for Social Inclusion (Národný akčný plán sociálnej inklúzie, Slovenská republika). From 2008 to 2010 the primary aim was to improve access to the labour market, increase employment and improve the employability of groups at risk of social inclusion (Priority goal 3; Národná, 2008, p. 36). More specifically, a minimum target of 1.5% was set for the proportion of employees in the total working population with disabilities (Národná, 2008, p. 39).

The National Reform Programme of the Slovak Republic 2011–2014 (Národný program reforiem Slovenskej republiky 2011–2014) formulated political commitments in the employment area in more general terms. One of the targets was to increase the employment rate of men and women aged 20–64 to 72% by 2020, and to cut the long-term unemployment rate to 3% in that period. In pursuit of this target the education system and the system of job preparation is being

² Not publicly available as an electronic document at the time of preparation of this report.

reorganised to provide greater flexibility for job seekers in the labour market and in lifelong learning activities. The programme document does not specifically mention disability or age factors. Nevertheless, the Memorandum of the Slovak government for the period 2010–2014 (Programové vyhlásenie vlády Slovenskej republiky na obdobie rokov 2010–2014) specifically addresses the vocational training and employment of people with disabilities. A general commitment is given that the Slovak government will increase the integration and inclusion of people with disabilities and establish a network of integrated care for children (Programové vyhlásenie, 2010, p. 28).

The most recent political development was the preparation of a draft of a new national disability programme by a disability committee working under the governmental council for human rights, national minorities and gender equality. The programme will be designed as a mechanism to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), which was ratified by the Slovak Republic in May 2010.

The general framework under which active inclusion must operate in Slovakia is spread across sectoral policies which have limited links with one another. Each sectoral system has its own terminology, needs assessment, administrative procedures and set of measures (entitlements), but in most cases they do not include an obligatory consideration of the factors of age or type of disability. These factors are considered only within an educational context. Act No. 245/2008 Coll. on Education/School Act (Zákon o výchove a vzdelávaní/Školský zákon) uses the term a ‘child or pupil with special educational needs’ and refers to a situation where a child or pupil requires special facilitation in relation to the conditions, content, forms, methods and approaches used in the education process due to his/her health handicap. The broad category ‘child or pupil with health handicap’ includes children or pupils with disabilities, poor health status, developmental impairments, or behavioural/mental disorders. However, these specifications do not fully extend beyond the school environment in terms of supportive measures around the assessment of functional impairment and limitations in working capacity. The primarily sectoral approach, which is poorly coordinated, makes the situation for young people with disabilities more complicated and administratively demanding. Moreover, it does not support their smooth transitions in early adult living phases and developmental tasks.

Indicative statistics

It should be noted that in order to prepare this part of the National profile the authors approached the relevant authorities directly for data, because the necessary data broken down by age are not ordinarily available. The institutions that collaborated were: the Central Office for Labour, Social Affairs and Family (<http://www.upsvar.sk>); the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic (<http://www.statistics.sk>) and the Social insurance company (<http://www.socpoist.sk>).

There is no single national dataset on the incidence of disability in the Slovak population. This profile relied on two main sources: data generated in the compensation system and data generated in the EU-SILC.

Table 1: *Prevalence of severe disability in Slovakia (December 2010)*

Severe disability	Men		Women		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total population	189,259	42	258,792	58	448,051	100
16–61 years	82,306	49.5	84,084	50.5	166,390	100
16–24 years	7,946	52.6	7,166	47.4	15,112	100
25–39 years	15,095	49.7	15,252	50.3	30,347	100

Source: *Central Office for Labour, Social Affairs and Family, Republic of Slovakia*

As of December 2010 a total of 448,051 people (about 8% of the entire Slovak population), regardless of age and type of disability, had acquired the status of people with severe disabilities. More than 15,000 people aged 16–24 were classified as severely disabled, which represented 3.4% of the total severely disabled population and 9.1% of the severely disabled population aged 16–61 years. Another group, those aged 25–39 years, represented 6.8% of the total severely disabled population and 18.2% of the severely disabled population aged 16–61 years. Although the proportion of women classified as severely disabled was higher than men overall (58%:42%), in the younger age range up to 24 years of age the ratio was reversed.

The EU-SILC database (www.statistics.sk) offers another perspective on the incidence of disability in Slovakia.

Table 2: *ADL limitations* according to EU-SILC in Slovakia (%)*

Year	Population 16+	16–24			25–34		
	Total	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
2005	26.8	8.4	7.2	9.6	10.7	10.9	10.3
2006	29.5	8.1	7.6	8.6	9.1	7.6	10.5
2007	28.1	6.9	6.4	7.4	8.6	8.8	8.4
2008	33.4	8.8	8.7	8.7	11.5	11.1	11.9
2009	33.4	8.9	8.7	9.1	10.7	10.7	10.8

*Figures merge categories of severe and partial ADL limitations

Between 2005 and 2009 about one-third of the total population over the age of 16 experienced partial or serious limitations in terms of activities of daily living (ADL) due to chronic health problems, with the trend rising over that period from about 27% in 2005 to more than 33% in 2009. The proportion in the 16–24 age group was lower than the 25–34 year age range and representation of women with ADL limitations was higher than men in both groups.

Employment rates

Tables 3, 4 and 5 and Figure 1 present data on the proportion of young people with health problems or disabilities in the total working age population in Slovakia and some information about their economic status and employment arrangements.

Table 3: *Selective indicators of activity status of young people with disabilities in years 2000, 2005 and 2010*

	Age group 15–24						
	Total	Employed		Unemployed		Inactive	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2000	12,900	1,100	8.53	1,300	10.08	10,500	81.39
2005	17,800	2,000	11.24	2,000	11.24	13,800	77.52
2010	13,300	900	6.77	800	6.02	11,600	87.21
	Age group 25–34						
	Total	Employed		Unemployed		Inactive	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
2000	24,600	5,200	21.14	3,000	12.2	16,400	66.66
2005	25,200	6,100	24.2	2,300	9.13	16,800	66.67
2010	27,800	3,400	12.23	2,200	7.91	22,200	79.86

Source: *Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic*

Table 4: Total working age population in Slovakia and selected groups of young people with disabilities in years 2000, 2005 and 2010

	Working age population (15+)				
	Total (000s)	15–24		25–34	
		Total	People with disabilities	Total	People with disabilities
2000	4.329	21.46%	0.3%	18.2%	0.57%
2005	4.466	19.65%	0.4%	19.53%	0.56%
2010	4.594	17.28%	0.29%	20.17%	0.61%

Source: Labour Force sample survey 2000/4q; 2005/3q; 2010/4q (Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic)

Figure 1: Economic status of young people with disabilities aged 15–24 years in 2000, 2005 and 2010 (absolute numbers)

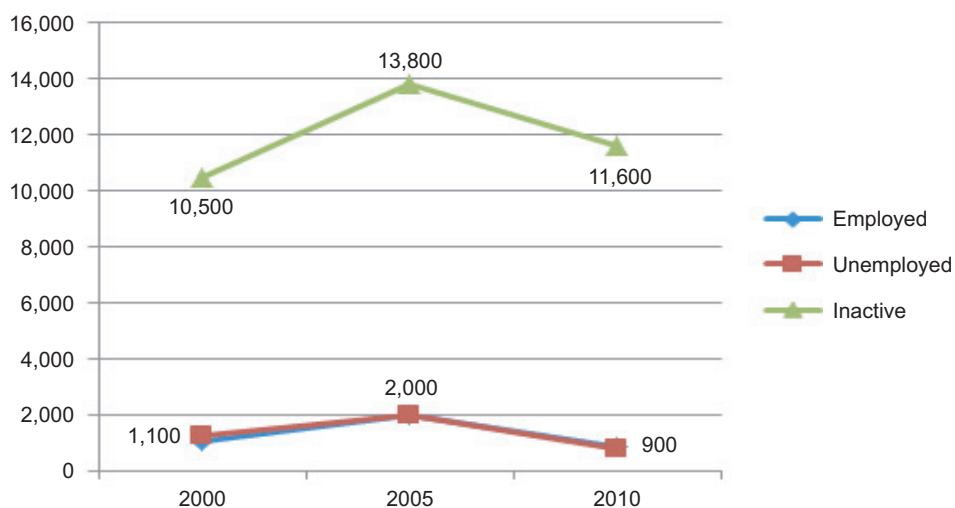
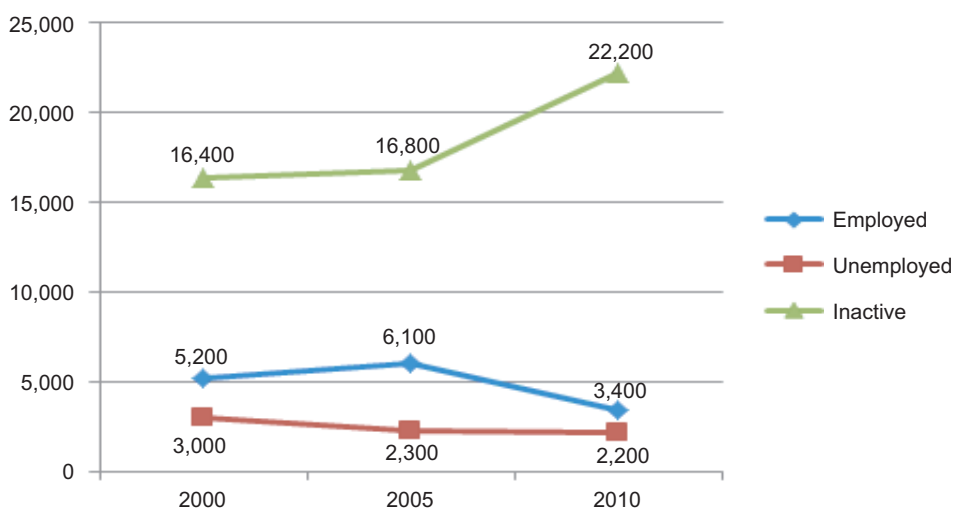


Figure 2: Economic status of young people with disabilities aged 25–34 years in 2000, 2005 and 2010 (absolute numbers)



Source: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

Table 5: Full-time and part-time jobs of young people with disabilities in years 2000, 2005 and 2010 by age

	Total 15–24 employed (000)	Full time 15–24 (%)	Part time 15–24 (%)
2000	1.1	91.67	8.33
2005	2.0	90	10
2010	0.9	55.56	44.44
	Total 25–34 employed (000)	Full time 25–34 (%)	Part time 25–34 (%)
2000	5.2	71.15*	25*
2005	6.1	74	26
2010	3.4	83.33	16.67

Source: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic

The majority of young people with disabilities in both age groups were classed as inactive during the whole period monitored. The highest inactivity rate was recorded in 2010 when the 15–24 age category reached more than 87% and the 25–34 age category almost 80%.

The number of those categorised as job seekers fell in this period – from 10% to 6% among 15–24-year-olds, and from 12% to 8% among those aged 24–35 years.

The employment rate of young people with disabilities in the period monitored did not exceed 11% in the 15–24 year age category, and 24% in the 25–34 year age category. The situation for both groups was at its worst in 2010 when the proportion of those employed fell rapidly (to less than 7% among 15–24-year-olds and about 12% among those 25–34 years old).

During the period 2000–2005 young people with disabilities in both age categories gained mainly full-time jobs (more than 90% in the 15–24 age bracket and more than 70% among 25–34-year-olds). The situation changed in 2010 when the total number of employed people in both monitored groups fell sharply in comparison with 2005. Moreover, among 15–24-year-olds the share of part-time work arrangements rose just as sharply (from 10% to almost 45%), while the share of part-time work among those 25–34 years old fell (from 26% to 17%).

Inclusive labour market for young people with disabilities

Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment services, as amended, contains supportive provisions for disadvantaged job seekers with disabilities. These include contributions for:

- Establishing sheltered workshops or sheltered workplaces ('ESW'; section 56 of the Act) (Table 6);
- Maintaining the person with a disability in a job ('MPDJ'; section 56a of the Act) (Table 7);
- Assisting a person with a disability to become self-employed ('PDSE'; section 57 of the Act) (Table 8);
- Assistance at work ('AW'; section 59 of the Act) (Table 9);
- Covering the operating costs of a sheltered workshop or sheltered workplace and for reimbursing the employee's transport costs ('OSWET'; section 60 of the Act) (Table 10).

Active inclusion of young people with disabilities or health problems

Table 6: Numbers of ESW recipients 2004–2010 by gender and some special target groups

Year	Total	Women	Job seekers with disabilities	School leavers
2004	127	81 (64%)	127	3
2005	304	160 (53%)	271	11
2006	570	312 (55%)	452	14
2007	883	506 (57%)	668	17
2008	899	544 (61%)	306	3
2009	1,710	956 (56%)	948	15
2010	1,838	1,114 (61%)	1,346	19

Table 7: MPDJ recipients 2008–2010 by gender, level of working capacity, limitations and age (actual numbers)

Year	Supported employers	Supported employees	Women	71%+ working limitation	41–70% working limitation	Up to 25 years	25–54 years
2008	33	189	114 (60%)	42	147	X	X
2009	76	297	180 (61%)	68	229	X	X
2010	66	316	161 (51%)	108	208	8	261

Table 8: PDSE recipients 2004–2010 by gender, level of working capacity limitations and age (actual numbers)

Year	Total	Women	School leavers	71%+ working limitation	41–70% working limitation	Up to 25 years	25–54 years
2004	107	43 (40%)	1	–	–	–	–
2005	271	108 (40%)	2	–	–	–	–
2006	405	153 (38%)	14	–	–	–	–
2007	389	170 (44%)	8	–	–	–	–
2008	337	167 (50%)	3	260	77	–	–
2009	439	196 (38%)	10	304	135	–	–
2010	599	248 (41%)	13	432	167	34	478

Table 9: AW recipients 2004–2010 by gender and age (absolute numbers)

Year	Total	Women	Up to 25 years	25–54 years
2004	18	13 (72%)	–	–
2005	58	25 (43%)	–	–
2006	61	32 (52%)	–	–
2007	73	40 (55%)	–	–
2008	159	89 (56%)	–	–
2009	275	172 (62%)	–	–
2010	338	222 (66%)	30	478

Table 10: OSWET recipients 2004–2010 by level of working capacity limitations (absolute numbers)

Year	School leavers	71%+ working limitation	41–70% working limitation
2004	0	0	0
2005	2,731	104	2,627
2006	2,793	218	2,575
2007	2,674	220	2,454
2008	6,592	1,195	5,397
2009	12,668	3,361	9,307
2010	17,844	5,435	12,409

Only small numbers of young people with disabilities were registered as job seekers (between 800 and 2,000 in the 15–24 age category and 2,200 to 3,000 in the 25–34 age category). The most common forms of support for the general population of job seekers with disabilities were subsidies (incentives) for self/employers to establish sheltered workshops or individual workplaces and to cover the related running costs (that is, for ESW, PDSE and OSWET recipients). Generally, more women received supportive employment measures than men. Only in relation to self-employment supports (the PDSEs) were men with disabilities slightly in the majority. A greater proportion of employees with lower rates of work incapacity (below 70%) were supported through job maintenance subsidies to employers (the MPDJs), whereas those employees with greater limitations in working capacity (71%+) were supported more often through subsidies for self-employment.

Although the data available on age and disability are inadequate, it is possible to conclude that school leavers with disabilities or those in the younger age category were less represented in supportive programmes than those aged 25 or over.

Access to lifelong learning opportunities

In 2008 an amendment of Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment services came into force, establishing a system to prepare people with disabilities for employment (section 55a of the Act). This introduced a new provision to increase the employability of people with disabilities. The system has two primary components: (1) training for a job, and (2) preparation for a job by adapting the job.

In 2010 a total of 81 disabled job seekers attended job preparation programmes. There was a balance between the numbers of men and women participating. Almost 80% of all job preparation programme recipients with disabilities fell into the broad 25–54 age category and only two people in the age range 16–24 years participated. This once again supports the general finding that there is poor inclusion of the youngest people with health problems or disabilities in employment support programmes.

Slovakia's Institute for Work Rehabilitation (located in Bratislava), and its organisational component the Centre for Social and Work Rehabilitation (<http://www.iprba.sk/cspr.php>), has been designated a special position in the provision of social and work rehabilitation programmes for people with physical disabilities. Social and work rehabilitation programmes for people with visual impairments are provided by a rehabilitation centre for visually impaired people (located in Levoča, eastern Slovakia; <http://www.rszp.sk/>). Table 11 shows the numbers of participants in these programmes between 2008 and 2010.

Table 11: Number of clients attending the social and work rehabilitation centres in Bratislava and Levoča, 2008 and 2010

2008			2010		
Bratislava					
Total	Under 25 years (%)	26–45 years (%)	Total	Up to 25 years (%)	26–45 years (%)
38	16	40	49	20	65
Levoča*					
Total	86		93		

*age disaggregated data are not available; the centre's annual report states only that the rehabilitation services were provided mainly for clients aged from 18–45 years.

Source: Bratislava centre: Annual report 2010, Levoča centre: Annual report 2010

The social and employment-related support programmes and rehabilitation activities noted above were provided mainly for young people over 25 years who had physical and visual disabilities.

Income support measures

Disability/invalidity pensions

According to Act No. 461/2003 Coll. on Social Insurance, as amended, young people who became disabled as dependent children, who are at least 18 years old and who are not entitled to regular disability/invalidity pension, can receive the early invalidity/disability pension³ (invalidný dôchodok z mladosti; 'EIP').

Table 12: Number of EIP recipients 2005–2010

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Number	173	732	1,565	2,553	3,968	5,146

Note: Data according age or type of disability are not available

In circumstances where a young person becomes disabled after entering the labour market (for example because of an accident or occupation-related illness), and has paid sufficient contributions into the invalidity fund, they are entitled to apply for the invalidity/disability pension ('IP').

Young people with health problems who have problems securing a regular job after finishing a job preparation programme may have to rely on the invalidity/disability pension as the main source of income to cover their daily living costs. The data in Table 13 indicate that the number of young people entitled to the full IP was double that of those entitled to partial IPs (about 5,500 compared with about 2,500 monthly). There was a slight decline in the total number of people entitled to an IP in the 15–24 age category, while among 25–34-year-olds the total number of entitlements increased slightly.

³ In Slovakia this is generally known as an 'invalidity/disability pension from youth', and this term is also used in national statistics. Among health assessment professionals, however, the benefit is called an 'invalidity/disability pension in extraordinary cases'.

Table 13: Number of IP recipients* 2000–2010 by age group and disability level

Year		Number of recipients	
		15–24 years	25–34 years
2000	Partial IP**	2,406	6,194
	Full IP***	5,843	12,198
	Total	8,249	18,392
2001	Partial IP	2,418	6,290
	Full IP	5,744	12,147
	Total	8,162	18,437
2002	Partial IP	2,433	6,371
	Full IP	5,683	12,224
	Total	8,116	18,595
2003	Partial IP	2,347	6,429
	Full IP	5,476	12,385
	Total	7,823	18,814
2004	Partial IP	****	****
	Full IP	****	****
	Total	7,476	18,785
2005	Partial IP	****	****
	Full IP	****	****
	Total	7,238	18,579
2006	Partial IP	****	****
	Full IP	****	****
	Total	7,352	18,928
2007	Partial IP	****	****
	Full IP	****	****
	Total	7,600	19,858
2008	Partial IP	2,489	7,767
	Full IP	5,136	12,561
	Total	7,625	20,328
2009	Partial IP	2,628	8,074
	Full IP	5,232	12,691
	Total	7,860	20,765
2010	Partial IP	2,802	8,685
	Full IP	5,063	12,877
	Total	7,865	21,562

* the figures include figures for EIPs

** partial IP – calculated on the basis of a reduction in working capacity in the range of 41–70%

*** full IP – provided on a reduction in working capacity of 71+%

**** no data available. In 2004 new social insurance legislation was adopted which included some new criteria to assess reduction of earning capacity, as well as new terminology

Table 14 shows the figures on new IP claims granted in the years 2004, 2006 and 2009 broken down by type of health problem. The number of IP claimants increased constantly over the years. The most frequent health reasons for acquiring invalidity status in the population as a whole were tumours (cancer), circulatory system impairments, and mental health and behavioural problems. Young people suffered mainly from mental health disorders and behavioural problems. Neurological problems were the second most frequent reason in the age category up to 24 years and tumours were the second most frequent reason in the category 25–34 years.

Table 14: *New IPs awarded by type of health problem and age in years 2004, 2006, 2009*

Year	Age		Health problems		
			Tumour	Mental health	Neurological
2004	All ages	Number	1,693	1,156	401
	>24 years	Number	88	442	146
		%	5	38	36
	25–34 years	Number	94	135	27
%		6	12	7	
2006	All ages	Number	2,210	1,391	438
	>24 years	Number	98	602	163
		%	4	43	37
	25–34 years	Number	161	183	39
%		7	13	9	
2009	All ages	Number	2,139	1,449	428
	>24 years	Number	61	692	200
		%	3	48	47
	25–34 years	Number	128	202	23
%		6	14	5	

Source: *Statistics on the health reasons for claiming invalidity pensions in the years 2004, 2006, 2009; Slovakian Social insurance company*

Compensatory cash benefits

The cash benefit for personal assistance (CBPA) and the cash benefit for increased living costs related to severe disability (CBILC; intended, for example, for a special diet, for running an adapted car, or for hygiene needs) are social benefits provided to recipients on a monthly basis as regular income support. Annual figures are shown in Table 15.

Table 15: *Number of CBPA and CBILC recipients 2004–2010*

Year	CBPA			CBILC		
	All ages	18–59 years**		Total	18–59 years	
	Number	Number	%	Number	Number	%
2004	4,338	3,693	85	115,934	38,713	33
2005	5,023	4,154	83	135,212	43,034	32
2006	5,580	4,602	82	143,290	45,064	31
2007	5,890	4,835	82	143,370	44,019	31
2008	6,099	5,025	82	142,789	43,239	30
2009	6,634	5,402	80	149,754	62,379	42
2010	6,903	5,402	78	156,868	66,152	42

* Data always refer to December of a calendar year

** No data available for the requested age category

While there was a consistent increase in the overall number of recipients of both cash benefits between 2004 and 2010, the proportion of CBPA recipients between 18 and 59 years fell from 85% in 2004 to 78% in 2010. This may indicate that the numbers of younger and middle-aged people with severe disabilities (18–59 years) grew more slowly than in the higher age group (60+).

The increased numbers qualifying for means tested social benefits after 2008 reflects the worsening labour market situation and the reduction in the real income of people with disabilities at the end of the last decade.

Under the compensation system some one-off cash benefits can also be provided. The primary goal of these benefits is not to support the daily living income of young people with health problems or disabilities, but rather to enable them to cover extraordinary costs, such as those associated with the purchase of necessary aids or a personal car, or to make adaptations to their dwelling. The main ones relevant to young people with disabilities are the cash benefit to purchase and adapt a personal car (CBPC) and the cash benefit for a device (to purchase, adapt and repair a device and to get training in its use (CBD)). Cash benefits are sometimes provided on a repeat basis after a defined time period (for example, every seven years in the case of a personal car). According to figures from Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, in December 2004 a total of 60 people in the age category 18–59 years were granted CBPC and 188 qualified for CBD. Equivalent figures for 2007 were as low as 5 and 11 respectively. In December 2010 the numbers had increased to 97 people receiving CBPC and 123 receiving CBD.

Unemployment benefits

Unemployed people with a reduction of between 41% and 70% in their work capacity can, under certain conditions, qualify for unemployment benefits. According to the data available (source: <http://www.socpoist.sk>) the number of all unemployment benefit recipients increased from 20,967 in December 2006 to 37,408 in December 2010. The highest year-end figure was in December 2009 when 48,373 unemployed people were provided with this financial support. Unfortunately, there are no data on the number of people with disabilities that are in receipt of unemployment benefits.

National policies and programmes

When discussing the active inclusion of young people with health problems or disabilities some general characteristics of the Slovakian approach can be considered.

Firstly, there is great variation in the disability-related terminology used in the various sectoral policies, needs assessment processes, and rules and entitlements (services, direct payments), all of which are provided under legal and organisational conditions that are uncoordinated. Each of the sectoral systems applies different criteria for eligibility and uses different terms to describe the intended beneficiaries.

The system of social insurance (Act No. 461/2003 Coll. on Social insurance as amended; *Zákon o sociálnom poistení*) is based on the term ‘invalid/disabled insured and invalidity (disability) pension’. According to section 71 of the Act, an insured person is invalid/disabled when his/her working capacity is reduced by more than 40% in comparison to a person without a disability. In the employment sector (Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment services as amended; *Zákon o službách zamestnanosti*) a job seeker can be recognised as disadvantaged in the labour market if his/her working capacity is reduced by more than about 40% (for which the term used is ‘person with a disability’) in comparison to a person without a disability. The system for providing cash benefits for compensation of severe disability (Act No. 447/2008 Coll. on direct payments for compensation of severe disability; *Zákon o peňažných príspevkoch na kompenzáciu ťažkého zdravotného postihnutia*; hereinafter ‘compensation system’), applies the term ‘person with a severe disability’. A person is severely disabled if his/her functional impairment is at least 50% compared to a non-disabled person.

In the healthcare system (Act No. 580/2004 on health insurance, as amended; *Zákon o zdravotnom poistení*) the term ‘person with a disability’ is applied. Both those who are given the status of invalid persons (under the social insurance system) and those given the status of persons with severe disabilities (under the compensation system) fall into this category. The system of social services (Act No. 448/2008 on social services, as amended; *Zákon o sociálnych službách*) uses the terms ‘a person with severe disability’ or ‘a person with unfavourable health conditions’. Both of these terms refer to situations where a person is dependent on the care of another person due to his/her disability, senior age or unfavourable health status.

Secondly, the Slovak legislative framework is relatively generic. There are few provisions that specifically address young people with health problems or disabilities. Moreover, the trend has been towards more generic legislative measures. For example, specific commitments relating to the employment of people with disabilities within the former NAP for Social Inclusion (up to 2010), were incorporated into a general category on the employment of men and women aged 20–64 within the National Reform Programmes 2011–2014. The lack of focus on the distinct employment needs of young people with health problems or disabilities stems from the general lack of consideration given to the employment of young people in Slovakia as a whole. For example, the Act on employment services provides only one specific provision to support young job seekers, namely for school leavers (*Absolventská prax*). The Slovak disability framework can be described as blind to the specific needs of young people with disabilities. In practice, this group is not explicitly specified as a group but is treated either within the broad category of ‘young people’ or within the broad category of ‘people with disabilities’.

Thirdly, there is little or no evidence of cooperation between sectors. Until 1999 a coordinated care system for children and young people with disabilities was in operation in Slovakia. Children with physical, visual, hearing or mental impairments aged up to 18 years were registered to be provided with complex and coordinated health, social and educational care. Children and young people with low levels of impairment, whose families were not able to ensure appropriate care, were included in the system of coordination. As a result of the adoption of Act No. 195/1998 Coll. on Social Assistance, and subsequent legislation (the Act on social services and the Act on compensation for the social consequences of severe disability), the system of coordinated care was ended and was not replaced by another one.

Instead, there are individual, non-coordinated responsibilities for the health, employment, education and social sectors, which have separate funding mechanisms and organisational structures, and apply various categorisations of people with disabilities according to their age that makes it difficult to compare sector-based data. The Network on Integrated Care for Children with Disabilities, which is an ambition of the present Slovak government, has not yet been fully established.

Finally, there are very limited data on type of disability and age and their impact on inactivity. For this reason terms such as ‘disability’ and ‘health problems’ are considered to be common legal constructs within a generic disability policy, with the exception of the education sector.

Adequate income

Income support for young people with disabilities is administered through the social insurance system (Act No. 461/2003 Coll. on social insurance, as amended) which provides for an early disability/invalidity pension and a regular disability/invalidity pension. The early disability pension is not dependent on employment status and a minimum period of paying social insurance contributions. Entitlement for early disability pension is based on an impairment arising in childhood and for this reason it is also called a *disability/invalidity pension for youth*. The person must be at least 18 years old and not entitled to a regular disability pension. Legislation on the early disability pension has been changed a number of times since 1988. According to the current legal conditions, the majority of new entitlements in the period 2004–2010 were provided to people aged 30 and over, who have very low formal education and experience problems

with work adaptation and work performance, and people with mental disorders, behavioural problems, or a neurological diagnosis. These people were usually registered with labour offices as job seekers who had not successfully integrated into the supportive employment programmes and sheltered or open job markets (Majtánová, 2011).

A regular disability pension is derived from working and paying job-related social insurance contributions into an invalidity pension fund. Entitlement depends on the claimant's age and how long they paid contributions into the fund. For young people under 20 the minimum contribution time is less than a year; for those aged 20–24 it is at least one year; for those aged 24–28 years it is at least two years; and for people aged 28–34 at least five years of contributions are required. Traditionally, the goal of providing invalidity pensions to people with health problems or disabilities was to compensate them for loss of income as a result of their disability using the substitution principle; in other words, they either received a full income from work or a full invalidity pension. Since 2004, the qualifying rules allow people to have a combination of an unlimited job income and an invalidity pension. The invalidity pension is thus not considered to be a substitution for a regular income due to loss of employment but rather as compensation for unfavourable employment opportunities and living conditions. Despite this policy provision, the invalidity pension currently serves as the exclusive income for the majority of young people with disabilities who do not have a regular income from work. The trend identified in the statistics section of this report, of a rise in claimants for invalidity pensions, is a reflection of the very weak position of young people with health problems or disabilities in the labour market rather than the friendliness of the new legislation.

Inclusive labour market measures

As mentioned earlier, people with disabilities are afforded special protection under the Slovak Constitution in respect of their employment and vocational preparation. This generic commitment has been translated into the Labour Code (Act No. 311/2001 Coll., as amended) under which employers are charged with creating reasonable working conditions for employees with disabilities and providing them with opportunities for lifelong learning, preparation for a job or requalification. These measures aim to retain employees with disabilities in their jobs. If the employment of a person with a disability is not possible under regular working conditions then, according to the Labour Code, the employer can establish a sheltered (protected) workshop or a sheltered (protected) workplace.

Under Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on employment services, as amended, a range of employment support measures are provided by specialised local state governments (Offices for Labour, Social Affairs and Family operating at district levels) and are financed from direct taxes and structural funds. There is an obligation on district government offices to compile a special/separate register of job seekers with disabilities. Supports offered include:

- state subsidies for employers (for example, to set up a sheltered workshop or workplace, to run a sheltered workshop or workplace, to maintain employees with disabilities in their job, subsidies for assistance at work);
- subsidies for people with disabilities (for example, to set up or run their own business);
- work training (provided by specialised training centres, by 'open labour market' employers, or in sheltered workshops or workplaces);
- the provision of support services (such as agencies for supported employment, advice and information centres).

An employment quota has also been set in relation to the employment of people with disabilities. There is an obligation for employers with at least 20 employees to ensure that 3.2% of their workforce is made up of people registered as having a disability. If this quota is not filled the employer must pay a levy.

Since 2004, the majority of inclusive labour market actions aimed at people with health problems or disabilities have been organised and financed under the European Social Fund in the form of the national project 'Support of employment for people with disabilities' (Podpora zamestnanosti občanov so zdravotným postihnutím).⁴ Despite these initiatives, and the highly developed and diversified public support system, the majority of young people with health problems or disabilities were classified as inactive in the period reviewed. There were no specific national programmes/projects focused on the target groups specific to this report. Any good practice examples identified were initiated by the non-governmental sector in cooperation with public authorities and employers.

Agencies of supported employment can be established under the provision for creating employment services. The agencies are contracted by local state administrations to provide individualised support to job seekers with disabilities and to employers. This includes offering job-related counselling, providing mediation between job seekers and potential employers, and assisting with the process of job adaptation. In May 2011 a total of 59 employment support agencies were operating in Slovakia (<http://www.upsvar.sk/>).

Social health care and social care services

The system of cash benefits (direct payments) for compensation (Act No. 447/2008 Coll. on cash benefits for compensation of a severe disability, as amended) plays an important role in social inclusion initiatives that support young people with health problems or disabilities. Cash benefits are provided, regardless of age and type of disability, for everyone with a functional impairment that is at least 50% of those without disabilities. The system operates an assessment of needs and is means tested. The aim is to support the social inclusion of people with disabilities by preventing or minimising negative impacts of their impairment on their living conditions, in four particular areas: mobility and transport; communication and orientation; dependency on help of another person to perform daily living activities; increased disability-related living costs. Cash benefits are financed from direct taxes and provided by local state administrative systems (Offices for Labour, Social Affairs and Family operating at district level). They can take the form of regular (monthly) or one-off occasional payments.

The personal assistance scheme is a key social inclusion initiative for young people with health problems or disabilities. After a number of pilot projects the programme was adopted into national legislation in 1999 as a special provision to support the independence, self-determination and social inclusion of young and middle-aged people with disabilities, who made up 78–85% of all recipients. To pay for personal assistance, a person with a disability can apply for a personal budget called the cash benefit for personal assistance.

All disability-related cash benefits are means tested. This has been repeatedly criticised by their users and by civil society, mainly because if they apply for a disability pension or have income from work, young people with disabilities can lose their entitlements to cash benefits. These benefit traps have often been cited as a factor in the very poor labour integration of people with health problems or disabilities (including young people). It is also a motivating factor for people to resort to 'opportunistic' employment behaviour (such as operating in the black market, refusing some employment offers and the lack of motivation for work).

⁴ http://www.upsvar.sk/europsky-socialny-fond/narodne-projekty-v-programovom-obdobi-2007-2013/narodny-projekt-ii-2.html?page_id=1243

There are no special provisions that are explicitly intended to support the inclusion of young persons with health problems in the labour market within the social services system (Act No. 448/2008 Coll. on social services, as amended). They are most likely to apply for cash benefits which offer them more flexibility in managing their education, employment or leisure time activities.

The healthcare system (Act No. 580/2004 Coll. on health insurance, as amended, and related legislation) provides young people with health problems or disabilities with the necessary special devices (such as wheelchairs, hearing appliances) to overcome the impacts of their functional impairments. One incentive provision specifies that the compulsory health insurance rate for workers or self-employed people with health problems or disabilities is half that of their non-disabled counterpart. In addition, payment rates for medicines are regulated for people with severe disabilities. The aim of both provisions is to protect the income levels of people with functional impairments and to promote their active inclusion in the labour market.

Lifelong learning including further education and training

In December 2009, Slovakia adopted Act No. 568/2009 Coll. on Lifelong learning. Lifelong learning was defined as a school education and subsequent further education building on the formal education achievements attained in the compulsory school system. Employers play a very important role in the implementation of further education programmes. They are incentivised by public employment services to provide special programmes for training employees with disabilities for their job. These programmes are financed by the state.

A number of specialised institutes/centres for social and vocational rehabilitation provide services to people with physical disabilities or visual impairments. These centres are subsidised by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. The main goal of the institutes is to maximise the work potential of young adults with functional impairments by preparing them for their first job or helping them return to work as soon as possible. The centres provide training for performing activities of daily living, occupational guidance and counselling, preparation for a job, training for a new job, and some awareness-raising activities.

In 2006, due to the relatively poor utilisation of lifelong learning programmes among young people with health problems or disabilities, the Institute for Labour and Family Research conducted research to identify the barriers to greater participation in further education and training for people with visual impairments. According to those who were employed, the main barriers preventing their participation were associated with the distance to the location where the programmes were running and the related transport problems. These aspects were noted mainly by young people with visual impairments (up to 25 and 25–34 years old). Respondents who were without a regular job justified their absence from further education programmes by the fact that the programmes were either not appropriate for people with visual problems or that they did not help them to find a job (Kostolna et al., 2006).

Social partner initiatives

Commitments within the Slovak Labour Code are supportive of the efforts of social partners to deal with issues relating to the employment of people with disabilities. Specifically, employers are required to negotiate with employee representatives to create measures and conditions for employing people with disabilities and to deal with issues that are crucial to their care (section 159 of the Labour Code).

In the preparation of this report a flash survey was carried out in August 2011 with representatives of the Social partners, from the National Union of Employers (Republiková únia zamestnávateľov v SR; 'RUZ SR') (<http://www.ruzsr.sk/?pageid=22>) and the Confederation of Trade Union of the Slovak Republic (Konfederácia odborových zväzov SR; 'KOZ SR') (<http://www.kozsr.sk/index.php?langz=en>). The survey complemented previous

research findings (Repková, 2005; Hanzelová et al., 2007) which focused on the social dialogue around the employment of people with disabilities and the attitudes of employers to employing people with disabilities (although not specifically young people with disabilities).

Despite the fact that the survey was carried out six years after the earlier one, the findings were practically identical. According to a statement by RUZ there was a good understanding of the problems facing people with disabilities in the labour market and in employment relations, but tackling those problems was not among its priorities. The RUZ was focused primarily on protecting the interests of employers and on eliminating difficulties in the business environment brought about by various government provisions. Six years later the rhetoric of employers' representatives was practically the same. The RUZ acknowledged the employment-related problems of both age groups, but it did not make any special effort to solve these problems due to a lack of personnel and because its efforts are targeted at the most pressing economic problems. According to an employer representative the top priority was to increase the employability of people with health problems or disabilities. This means improving their chances on the labour market. The approach proposed by the employers in their contribution to the amendment of the Labour Code involved removing barriers which inhibit the employment of people with disabilities. In particular, they recommended the removal of the special conditions for the dismissal of employees with disabilities in comparison to other employees under current legislation. The view was that this actually created problems for job seekers with disabilities because employers were less interested in employing them. In the view of RUZ's representative the high legal protection afforded to people with disabilities reduced their employability in the labour market (Repkova, 2011).

From the employers' perspective there is every likelihood that a new recession will worsen the general unemployment situation. In this context, the real priorities should include reducing the very high rate of unemployment in Slovakia, equalising the employment status of all groups of employees, supporting greater labour and employment flexibility for all job seekers, reducing administrative and contribution burdens on business, and relaxing the legislation on occupational health and safety (Repkova, 2011). Under these conditions the employment of any special target group (people with health problems or disabilities in general, and those who are young in particular) is considered to be a marginal problem at best.

At the time of the previous survey in 2005 the trade union organisation KOZ SR did not keep a register of employees with disabilities, although they acknowledged that such a register would be useful as it would enable union organisations at local level to monitor the rights of employees with disabilities in the workplace (Repkova, 2005, p. 3). In the event the organisation has not put a register in place.

There are a number of consultation boards within the structure of KOZ SR, including a Council of Youth (Rada mladých pri KOZ SR). This council is responsible for a number of areas, including supporting the interests and requests of young people in labour/employment matters and relations, preparing critical reviews of relevant labour, social and employment issues, communicating relevant information, and assisting in the preparation of work plans at local level. Although KOZ SR considers it very important to give appropriate attention to all groups of employees, including young employees with health problems and disabilities, its approach is similar to that taken by employers in that it is very generic.

Neither employers' representatives nor trade unions currently consider that issues relating to the employment of young people with health problems or disabilities are a real priority. Instead they consider it to be part of a generic policy which should be directed at the general welfare of all employees. There are two possible reasons for this attitude. Firstly, unemployment is very bad in Slovakia. This leads to an intensive 'front-line approach' which is focused on protecting the employment rights of a broad range of target groups (such as long- and very long-term unemployed people, older people, early school leavers, young graduates, and people with disabilities). Secondly, the generally very low employment rate of people with disabilities in Slovakia (regardless of their age) means that there has been little reason to make a special effort to negotiate reasonable working conditions for them within collective bargaining.

According to research conducted by Hanzelova et al. (2007), only about 50% of employers complied with the legally required quota for employing people with disabilities, about 25% paid the levy for breaching this obligation, and the remainder commissioned some goods and services in sheltered workshops or workplaces. There was no age-related information available in relation to the quota.

The main barriers to the employment of young people with disabilities identified through the research included ensuring that workplaces are accessible and meet the needs of employees with health problems or disabilities; unjustified assumptions about frequent work absences on the part of employees with health problems or disabilities; and concerns about increased requirements in relation to occupational health and safety provisions. These barriers were identified primarily by small companies. The need for special training and a fear of communication problems were also identified as significant barriers. More than a half of respondents (employers) reported a lack of appropriate information in relation to different aspects of employing people with health problems or disabilities, including those belonging to younger age groups.

Case study 1: Slovak Disability Council and IBM

While the Constitution of the Slovak Republic affords everyone the right to a free choice of profession and training, there are many young people with health problems or disabilities who are full of enthusiasm and energy and who are able and want to work in the open labour market but lack the confidence. Companies might like to employ them but they do not know how to find those people and the young people usually lack the confidence to apply for work at companies operating in the open labour market. To help overcome this problem NGOs and companies in the IT sector have been cooperating in recruiting and placing people with disabilities. NGOs can recruit disabled people according to the requirements of the company, provide them with training according to their needs and prepare young people with health problems for work in the company. This cooperation helps to increase the opportunities for young disabled people to succeed in the open labour market. Cooperation between the Slovak Disability Council and IBM has already been taking place for a number of years. Because of the positive results of this collaboration, IBM plans to implement the same project in other countries. In 2010 the Slovak Disability Council embarked on collaboration with another company in the same sector, Lenovo.

How the project started

The Slovak Disability Council (SDC) was established as an umbrella organisation of disabled people's organisations to promote their common interests at national and European levels. At present, SDC brings together 20 organisations representing people with different types of disabilities, operating across Slovakia and including people with physical, mental and intellectual disabilities, people with hearing and sight impairments, and people suffering from various chronic diseases. The main goal of SDC is to promote and advance their common interests, regardless of the type and level of disability. The activities of the SDC are focused on helping improve the conditions and quality of life of people with disabilities and their families, for example by assisting them in accessing education and employment services.

From the outset, the SCD has also been trying to help people with health problems or disabilities to become active in society by increasing opportunities for their employment in the open labour market. The council has done this in different ways, for example carrying out research, making submissions on legislation, implementing different kinds of projects, negotiating with decision-making bodies and forming partnerships.

In 2005–2006 the SDC implemented a project aimed at supporting equal job opportunities for people with disabilities by removing barriers to the labour market. This project was the first step of the SDC–IBM collaboration.

As a result of negotiations on ideas, needs, possibilities and the previous experience of both partners, a joint project financed by IBM entitled the 'Education of disabled people for work at IBM' was developed. The project started as an open training course for disabled people who were potential employees of IBM. At present this project is running under the name 'Learn and get a job at IBM'.

The Slovak Disability Council has received accreditation from the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport for the following modules:

- Removing barriers to employing people with disabilities;
- People with disabilities and the labour market;
- Communication skills and personal development;
- Basic PC skills;
- Increasing levels of communication in English.

Accreditation from the Ministry of Education was also one of the factors that helped to shape the collaborative project between the SDC and IBM.

Aims and objectives

The aim of the project is to increase the opportunities for people with health problems or disabilities to get a job with IBM or with other companies in the open labour market. This opportunity is available to people who have acquired the status of a person with a disability/invalid person under Act No. 461/2003 Coll. on Social Insurance, have finished secondary or university education and have acquired basic PC skills and a communicative level of the English language.

Intended beneficiaries

This project is for people with all kinds of disabilities who meet the criteria. Participants include people with physical or sensory impairments, mental health difficulties or people with visual impairments and people with various chronic diseases.

This project is not necessarily aimed at young people and young adults, but in most cases applicants are between 18 and 35, as older people do not usually meet the requirements for PC and English language skills.

This project also offers the possibility for employers to choose employees and to train them according to their needs and requirements. This is a great opportunity for companies to educate their future employees according to their specific needs.

Relevance to the needs of beneficiaries

Very often young people with health problem or disabilities do not have enough self confidence to apply for a job at big international companies. Even if they have the required skills they may be too nervous, may not have enough experience within the environment of an international company, or may not trust in their own abilities. This project helps them not only to improve their PC and language skills but also to increase their self-esteem. They can experience the environment of the company as the courses are held on IBM premises. Young people sometimes also have problems with expressing their thoughts in front of other people and asserting themselves. During the courses they have an opportunity to get to know people with other types of disabilities, improve their working skills, mainly by training in language and PC skills, and also become more self-confident and more effective communicators.

Activities and processes

IBM informs the SDC of its requirements for potential employees with disabilities. SDC looks for potential candidates through its member organisations, universities, secondary schools and Offices of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. Candidates send their CVs to the SDC. Suitable candidates are chosen by representatives of the SDC and IBM, and are invited for an interview. Interviews are conducted by IBM and SDC representatives in English. After the interview, the selected candidates can begin to attend the training courses.

During the project candidates' PC, English language and communication skills are developed. PC skills and English are required because of the type of company that IBM is (multinational, IT-based). The previous experience of SDC has shown that training in communication skills and self presentation is necessary. Young people usually have low self confidence and need to be taught how to express their feelings and thoughts, as well as the basic rules of self presentation. This part of the training is led by a psychologist.

After this candidates are prepared to apply for the job in IBM and to succeed. IBM does not create any special positions for the candidates. They can apply for any suitable positions which become available.

Relationships with other service suppliers

Within this project the main players (SDC and IBM) cooperate with other very important service providers. The SDC cooperates during the recruitment phase with other service providers, including its member organisations, other NGOs supporting various target groups, schools for students with disabilities, district Offices of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, and the Institute for the Work Rehabilitation of Disabled People.

Role of social partners

In Slovakia, employing people with disabilities as a part of a company's corporate culture is mainly associated with big international companies. For IBM, diversity means offering the same access to all of their employees and it does not take into consideration factors which are not linked to their job performance. IBM realises that people with disabilities represent an important and very often neglected pool of talent. The company knows that the best teams are teams comprising people with diverse characteristics.

IBM wants to provide the same opportunities for people with disabilities but does not create preferential measures or special positions for job seekers. The project is one of many projects being implemented at IBM under the auspices of its Diversity and Inclusion programme, which aims to promote equality for a diverse group of employees. The cooperation with the SDC ensures that participants are properly prepared for entering the project and ultimately to integrate into the labour market.

Connection to policy or legislation

The project supports the commitment in the Constitution of the Slovak Republic to the right to choose one's profession and appropriate training freely. This project is for people who have gained the status of a person with a disability/invalid person according to Act No. 461/2003 Coll. on Social insurance, and it has been operating in accordance with Act No. 386/1997 Coll. on Further education.

In 2010, the Slovak republic ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. According to Article 27 of the Convention, state parties are required to recognise the right of people with disabilities to work on an equal basis with others including the right to gain a living by work freely selected in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities.

Inputs

The project was organised by one person from the SDC and one person from IBM. There are also other people working on the project: an IT instructor, an English language tutor, and a psychologist who trains in communication. After the training courses the participants are entitled to an interview with recruiters and managers from IBM.

In 2010, the training of communication skills was eliminated from the training programme in order to provide more time for the English language course, which had proved to be the most crucial issue. The duration of the English language course is 76 hours. The training course is financed by IBM and is free for participants.

Outputs and evaluation

Both partners evaluated the first project, 'Education of disabled people for work at IBM', as very successful, so since 2007 the project has been implemented every year. A positive finding of the evaluations was that people with different types of disabilities showed an interest in this kind of training/education.

Since it started in 2007, more than 200 disabled people have expressed an interest in being included in the project. These individuals have had different kind of disabilities, different levels of education, and different levels of language and PC skills. Not all of them have met the criteria required (for example, they had not gained the status of a person with disability/invalid person according to Act No. 461/2003 Coll. on Social insurance, or had inadequate language skills).

Out of these 200, 148 applicants who met the criteria for the project were interviewed and 51 were selected and trained. Out of 51 participants in the training, eight have been hired by IBM. These were mainly in full-time jobs in HR, finance and accounting, IT and telecommunications, and the marketing and communications department. More than 20 have been employed by other companies in the open labour market and five have been employed by NGOs, mainly in administration work.

Good practice in active inclusion

From an active inclusion perspective the project offers a bridge between education and work through cooperation between private and third sector organisations. It offers training in an open employment setting for young people who have not had experience in the open labour market. In addition, it serves as a good example of the effectiveness of an integrated approach between all relevant parties (job seekers, state administration, civil society organisations and employers).

Contact details

Anna Reháková, Director

Michaela Hirčková, Project manager

Slovak Disability Council

Email: rehakova@nrozp.sk, hirckova@nrozp.sk, sekretariat@nrozp.sk

<http://www.nrozp.sk>

<http://www.ibm.com/sk/sk/>

Content

Skill-building (including VET and further education)	✓
Job placement (such as supported employment)	✓
Self-employment	✓
Activation	✓
Condition relevant (including mental health difficulties)	✓
Other:	

Approach

Proactive: reaching out to the target groups	✓
Focus on an individual pathways approach (open employment as the goal)	✓
Targeting the individual and the community (including parents and employers)	✓
Empowerment processes (e.g. decision-making, self-advocacy)	✓
Partnership, networking and links (to other agencies and private companies) that assist in achieving the goals	✓
Links to national policy or programmes	✓
Training and support for staff	
Social partner involvement	✓
Monitoring and measurement (i.e. data on output, impact or cost effectiveness and individual benefits)	✓
Regional or local sphere of activity	✓
De-institutionalised and community focused	✓

Case study 2: Work assistants for employees with disabilities

Legislation relating to the labour market has undergone some changes in Slovakia in recent years. Under section 59 of Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services it is possible for an employee with a disability to have a work assistant. The purpose of this is to compensate for disadvantages that people with disabilities face in the labour market by providing them with assistance to work and carry out personal tasks as well as improving their integration into the working process.

How the project started

High unemployment is a pervasive problem in the Slovak economy and the government is committed to developing solutions, particularly by creating conditions conducive to employment and by addressing the social consequences of unemployment.

The state has a number of tools at its disposal to help people with health problems or disabilities to succeed in the open labour market. These active labour market measures are defined by Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services. Their aim is to facilitate access to employment for disadvantaged groups of job seekers, including those with disabilities. Financial assistance to employ a work assistant is one of these active labour market tools. This active measure is profitable for employers because they can receive up to 90% of monthly total labour costs for the services of a work assistant from the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family and for the worker because work assistants provide them with the support needed to fulfil their job responsibilities and daily living tasks without the assistance of co-workers.

Aims and objectives

The purpose of the measure is to help employees and self-employed people with disabilities carry out job-related and personal tasks during working hours. Assistance is also provided to job seekers with disabilities while they are participating in preparation for employment so that they can take care of personal tasks during training.

Intended beneficiaries

While the primary beneficiaries are job seekers, workers and self-employed people with health problems or disabilities, the scheme also benefits employers who want to employ workers with health problems or disabilities.

To be eligible for work assistance a person must be registered as having disability/invalid status under Act No. 461/2003 Coll. on Social Insurance, be involved in a job integration or employment preparation process, be employed and in need of assistance to carry out occupational or personal tasks or be self-employed and in need of assistance in carrying out some job functions.

Relevance to the needs of beneficiaries

A person with reduced work capacity, who is not able to carry out some required work tasks, can be provided with the services of a work assistant. A person with a disability can have a personal assistant to provide help with independence in social life and, at the same time, a work assistant to allow him or her to be independent and included in the working environment. An employer who hires a worker with a health problem or disability can apply to the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family for a financial contribution towards the costs of a work assistant. Equally, a self-employed person can ask for such a contribution. People who want to start their own business can also apply for financial assistance from the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. This contribution is not specifically for people with disabilities but they can also make use of it.

The chances of people with disabilities obtaining a third-level education in Slovakia are increasing, as accessibility is improving. This increases the level of education of people with disabilities, especially among young people who wish

to benefit from educational qualifications and, of course, to look for work in the open labour market. In Slovakia employers are still very cautious about employing people with disabilities because they still do not believe in their abilities. The option of having a work assistant therefore increases the opportunities for disabled people to become active in the open labour market, to get more qualified work, or to become self-employed.

Activities and processes

A work assistant is defined as an employee who provides assistance to carry out work and personal tasks during working hours for an employee or employees who have been deemed eligible as a person with a disability/invalid person under Act No. 461/2003 Coll. on Social Insurance. Work assistants can also provide assistance to a self-employed person, who has a recognised disability under the Social Insurance Act. A work assistant must be at least 18 years of age and have legal capacity; in other words, be able to enter into a contract.

According to Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services, an employer who has one or more employees with disabilities, or a self-employed person who is eligible, can apply for a financial contribution towards a work assistant. On the basis of a formal application the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family makes an agreement with the employer or self-employed person on the financial contribution which includes:

- the number of employees to whom a work assistant will provide support;
- the number of work assistants;
- the amount of the contribution and the duration of provision;
- the method of providing the contribution;
- the method of refunding the contribution, or part of it, if it is used in breach of agreed terms.

If the person is self-employed the contract for a work assistant is granted according to Act No. 40/1964 Coll. of the Civil Code, as amended. This agreement includes:

- the type and scope of activities which the work assistant will provide;
- the place of work;
- the working hours;
- the rights and obligations of the work assistant;
- the amount of remuneration and method of payment;
- the grounds for withdrawal.

For employers who want to apply for a contribution towards a work assistant it is preferable to have two or more employees who are supported by one work assistant.

Relationships with other service suppliers

The Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family distributes information material on the possibilities and employment benefits and professional social counselling available to people with health problems or disabilities to educational institutions, NGOs, employment support agencies and other organisations, including employers. During 2010 employees of the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family personally visited employers to get acquainted with their situation and needs. Agents also informed the employers about the range of active labour market measures, which included the

possibility of having a work assistant. 51,284 employers were contacted by email, phone or in person. In addition, meetings were organised where employers had an opportunity to provide information on job opportunities in their organisations.

Role of social partners

Even though the scheme is targeted at both employers and workers, there has been little formal involvement of the social partners in its development and implementation. The value of a work assistant scheme was identified by the NGO sector through experience gained by employing people with disabilities. It was initially promoted by disability NGOs to stakeholders and as a result the legislation was developed and adopted into practice. NGOs provide an alternative source of advice and guidance to the state system.

Connection to policy or legislation

The rules governing the work assistant scheme are defined in Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment services (section 59 – Contribution for the activities of a work assistant). The eligibility criteria are set out in Act No. 461/2003 Coll. on Social insurance. A self-employed person who is eligible negotiates an agreement on getting a work assistant under Act No. 40/1964 Coll. on Civil Code.

Inputs

Each employer who employs a person or persons with a disability, or a self-employed person, can apply for an allowance for a work assistant. If they do not have enough knowledge or information, they can ask the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family or an NGO for help with the application. This communication and administrative work can be done by one person. Each employee with a disability has different restrictions and needs, so there are no strict requirements concerning the qualifications of a work assistant. In general, a work assistant should be empathetic, polite and responsible.

An allowance is provided for up to 90% of the total monthly labour costs for the services of a work assistant. The contribution, which is provided monthly, ranges from a minimum of 41% (€412.41) to a maximum 90% (€905.29) of the total labour costs of the employee or the self-employed person.

Outputs and evaluation

In 2010, 334 positions for work assistants were recruited to provide assistance to 749 people with disabilities in Slovakia: 644 employees and 105 self-employed people. The duration of the assistance differed from case to case.

Table 16 shows the number of people who were provided with work assistance in the open labour market and the number of work assistants employed between 2008 and 2010. A breakdown by age of beneficiary was not available.

Table 16: *Beneficiaries of work assistance and the number of work assistants employed between 2008 and 2010*

Year	Newly formed jobs for work assistants (WA)	Employees with disabilities		Self-employed people with disabilities		Total number of people with disabilities
		WA	Employees	WA	Self-employed people	
2010	334	230	644	104	105	749
2009	254	200	531	54	54	585
2008	172	156	538	16	15	553

The work assistant scheme is potentially very important for students with health problems or disabilities who, as a result of current policies, have had the opportunity to attend third-level education and have obtained a higher qualification. The scheme augments the greater opportunity for success in the open labour market provided by higher education with the availability of the services of a work assistant.

Good practice in active inclusion

This national scheme combines a number of the pillars of active inclusion. The work assistant scheme can be made available to people during the work preparation and job seeking phase and provides access to personal services during the working day. In combination with the other employment and education support services which are available it acts as a basis for joined up services.

Contact details

Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family
sluzby.zamestnanosti@upsvar.sk

Content

Skill-building (including VET and further education)	✓
Job placement (such as supported employment)	✓
Self-employment	✓
Activation	✓
Condition relevant (including mental health difficulties)	✓
Other:	

Approach

Proactive: reaching out to the target groups	✓
Focus on an individual pathways approach (open employment as the goal)	✓
Targeting the individual and the community (including parents and employers)	✓
Empowerment processes (e.g. decision-making, self-advocacy)	✓
Partnership, networking and links (to other agencies and private companies) that assist in achieving the goals	✓
Links to national policy or programmes	✓
Training and support for staff	
Social partner involvement	✓
Monitoring and measurement (i.e. data on output, impact or cost effectiveness and individual benefits)	✓
Regional or local sphere of activity	✓
De-institutionalised and community focused	✓

References:

Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family: <http://www.upsvar.sk/>;

Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family: The evaluation of active labor market measures in 2010. Available at: http://www.upsvar.sk/statistiky/aktivne-opatrenia-tp-statistiky/aktivne-opatrenia-trhu-prace-2010.html?page_id=13325;

Petrecová, E. 2008. Work assistant. Available at:

http://www.nrozp-mosty.sk/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=112:pracovn%C3%BD-asistent

Case study 3: Profesia

Nowadays the most common way to search for a job is through the internet. The internet brings many opportunities for both job seekers and employers. The biggest and best known internet HR provider in Slovakia is Profesia s.r.o. Profesia s.r.o. operates the website www.profesia.sk and also provides other services in the employment area. Profesia provides services to its clients (employers who are searching for employees) and also to job seekers. It has cooperated with the Slovak Disability Council, an umbrella organisation of people with different types of disabilities. This cooperation has brought many important changes and has increased the possibilities for disabled job seekers in Slovakia.

How the project started

In 2006 the Slovak Disability Council implemented a major project, the main goal of which was to help reduce and prevent long-term unemployment among people with disabilities and to strengthen an integrated approach by all stakeholders in removing the barriers to equal opportunities in the labour market. The final conference held as part of the project included contributions from many experts, employers, and representatives of universities, all of whom gave presentations on the opportunities available to people with disabilities and the ways that various actors in the labour market could cooperate to help people with health problems or disabilities to be successful in the labour market. This final conference was attended by representatives of Profesia s.r.o. They liked the project and the activities within the project, met the organisers, and began the collaboration with SDC.

Aims and objectives

The original aim of the collaborative exercise was to expand the services provided by Profesia s.r.o. to another group of people – people with disabilities. The Slovak Disability Council knew what they needed and Profesia had the tools to meet these needs. Currently, this cooperation aims at increasing awareness around the employment of people with disabilities amongst employers and amongst job seekers. Disabled job seekers are defined as people registered according to Act No. 461/2003 Coll. on Social insurance as amended.

Intended beneficiaries

Profesia s.r.o. provides a service on their website to employers who would like to employ people with disabilities but are anxious about having an employee with a health problem or disability, or do not trust in the abilities of such employees. Employers who want to meet the requirements of their own corporate policy, or Slovak law, in relation to employing people with disabilities, but do not know where to recruit them or what will be involved can review the CVs of job seekers on the Profesia website. From the job seeker's perspective the website provides an opportunity to be explicit on their CV that they have a disability, knowing that the employers who will be reviewing it will respond positively. Employers can then choose from these CVs the person that they think is best suited to the position available. The services provided by Profesia can benefit everyone. There is no restriction on age, gender or other characteristics. All people who would like to have their CVs posted on the website can do so themselves. Also, each employer that wants to have an account on the website can create it themselves and they only need to pay for the account.

Relevance to the needs of beneficiaries

Profesia s.r.o., as the most popular service provider in the employment field, provides possibilities for both employers and job seekers. Disabled people, especially those who are young, use the website to search for jobs. This website is used mainly by young people because older people tend not to have the PC skills to search for a job on the internet. Users of this service present themselves through their CVs as this is the very first contact that potential employers have with job seekers.

Activities and processes

The services that are provided to job seekers are free of charge. The prospective employees are able to:

- search for job offers according to their requirements;
- create ‘job agents’ on the website, who will send them details of job vacancies by email;
- add their CVs to the database of CVs.

Employers can take advantage of the following services:

- publishing their job vacancies on the website;
- accessing the database of CVs of job seekers on the website;
- publishing their logos on the website;
- being included in a list of clients on the website;
- accessing other types of publishing and advertising information.

Job seekers can ‘hang’ their CVs on the website and clients (potential employers) can buy a website account. From the CVs presented on the website, employers can select the candidate that best suits their requirements and contact that person to invite them to interview for the position. People can choose whether or not they want to show their disability status on their CVs. It is their choice, rather than being a requirement. According to Act No. 428/2002 on the protection of the personal data, job seekers with disabilities are not allowed to disclose the type of disability that they have on their CVs. This prohibition has proved to be problematic because employers cannot ascertain in advance if the particular position offered is suitable or not for the individual. Employers now have to interview candidates to see if they are suited to the position. Experience has shown that prior disclosure of the type of disability, or type of impairment, can save time for both parties.

Another element of the cooperation between the Slovak Disability Council and Profesia s.r.o. is that the Slovak Disability Council provides Profesia with information about changes in employment legislation. Profesia then publishes this information on its website so that it is accessible to job seekers and employers.

Since 2010, Profesia has organised an annual job fair called ‘Profesia days’ which is the biggest job fair in Slovakia. It focuses on unemployed people in general, including graduates of secondary schools and universities from all over Slovakia. It is a place where job seekers can meet directly with employers, personal and educational agencies, state organisations, NGOs and other organisations that specialise in employment. In 2010 more than 10,000 people attended the job fair and more than 60 national and international employers attended to present the vacancies in their organisations. In 2011, there were more than 18,000 visitors and more than 70 employers at the event. During the job fair there are different types of seminars, discussions, and consultations on employment issues. In addition, the Slovak Disability Council offers counselling and activities which are aimed at increasing employment opportunities for people with disabilities. Experts from the member organisations of the Slovak Disability Council with experience in the area of employment for people with health problems or disabilities provide information about employment opportunities for people with disabilities and about the activities of NGOs in this area. Employers are also interested in the information provided. At the last job fair the Slovak Disability Council organised a panel discussion on successful examples of employment of people with disabilities and projects aimed at increasing the ability of people with disabilities. In 2010, the Slovak Disability Council also organised a discussion on the UNCRPD.

One product of the cooperation between the SDC and Profesia are instructional videos for people with hearing impairments who have difficulty understanding complex text. The aim of the videos is to provide job seekers who have restricted hearing with the same opportunities that are available on the website in a form that is intelligible for them.⁵

Profesia also cooperates with employers by running an ‘HR club’ which is open to company HR experts. Profesia distributes a magazine on employment issues to the members of the HR club. The magazine also includes information provided by experts from the SDC on employing people.

Relationships with other service suppliers

Both partners also have relationships with other service providers. The SDC, for example, cooperates with its member organisations, private and state institutions and other NGOs dealing with the issue of disability and employment.

Role of social partners

The Profesia approach is aimed at making it easy for employers that are motivated to employ job seekers with health problems or disabilities to identify suitable candidates by creating an online market for those interested in employment and disability. Employer and labour organisations have not been involved in the process of creating these services and it does not engage with employer or union representative organisations in updating the site.

It operates as a matching service for people with disabilities and potential employers. Services provided by Profesia can be provided individually or as a part of tailored ‘service packages’. Services provided to clients are charged.

Connection to policy or legislation

This project supports the Slovak quota system under which employers with more than 20 employees are required to employ a certain proportion of people with disabilities (under Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services). A disabled/invalid person is defined by Act No. 461/2003 Coll. on Social insurance. Profesia has to operate according to Act No. 428/2002 Coll. on the protection of personal data, as amended, and Act No. 618/2003 Coll. on copyright and rights related to copyright.

Inputs

In 2011, 107,176 job offers were published on the portal Profesia.sk. In 2011 there was annual growth in jobs of 22% compared to 2010. In the longer run, the number of job offers is still not at the pre-crisis level of 2008. In October 2011, the number of job offers published on the Profesia.sk portal was at 88% of the level reached in October 2008.

In 2011 nearly 99,000 CVs of job seekers were added to a database and more than 55,000 job seekers updated their CVs.

Outputs and evaluation

From 2008 until the end of June 2011, 2,217 disabled people aged between 16 and 35 years published their CVs on Profesia’s website. Most CVs were published in 2008 and 2010. On average each of those CVs was viewed by three companies in 2009. In 2010, the CVs of disabled job seekers were viewed by four companies on average.

Disabled job seekers usually search for full-time jobs rather than part-time jobs, and very few search for self-employment opportunities (see Table 17). There were no data on the proportion of participants who actually obtained employment.

⁵ The videos are available at <https://www.profesia.sk/cms/dokumenty-na-stranke/video-prezentacie/43127>

Table 17: CVs of disabled job seekers aged 16–35 years by type of employment sought (%)

	2008	2009	2010	2011
Full time	64.86	62.89	61.90	58.29
Part time	28.36	30.29	32.21	35.81
Self-employment	6.78	6.82	5.89	5.90

More men than women with disabilities have used the site to search for work. In 2011 57% of disabled job seekers who used the website were men and 43% were women. The overall number of CVs uploaded in 2011 dropped substantially compared with previous years.

Table 18: CVs of disabled job seekers aged 16–35 by gender

	2008	2009	2010	2011
Men	352	304	347	220
Women	307	251	259	177

Many of the disabled job seekers in the 16–35 age group have secondary education with graduation exams (44%), 24% have secondary education without graduation exams, while 10% have a second grade university degree (see Table 19).

Table 19: CVs of disabled job seekers aged 16–35 by education (%)

	2008	2009	2010	2011
Basic education	4.25	3.06	5.61	4.79
Post-secondary	3.95	3.06	2.97	3.53
Secondary without graduation	22.46	22.88	25.58	23.68
Secondary with graduation	42.95	46.13	46.53	41.56
Student at secondary school	3.34	3.96	2.15	5.54
Student at university	7.44	6.13	4.29	4.28
University 1st degree	3.95	6.13	3.80	6.30
University 2nd degree	11.23	7.93	8.75	10.33
University 3rd degree	0.46	0.72	0.33	0.00

Good practice in active inclusion

While the project is relatively narrowly focused on an inclusive labour market measure, it is worthy of note because of the private–third sector partnership that underpins it and the fact that it utilises the internet, which has become increasingly important as a job search tool, particularly for younger people making the transition from education to work for whom it is second nature. The internet can also be made very accessible to people with disabilities. Profesia is the largest and best-known mainstream web portal provider and has developed a range of various kinds of assistance and opportunities for people with disabilities based on an inclusive approach. This has been made possible thanks to advice from experts from third sector organisations who are very familiar with the needs of this disadvantaged group of job seekers. This cooperation is an example of good practice in linking the non-profit sector and the business sector with the aim of developing specific and transparent examples of support in the area of the employment of disabled people.

Contact details

Slovak Disability Council
 Director: Anna Reháková
 rehakova@nrozp.sk, sekretariat@nrozp.sk
 Profesia s.r.o.
 Zuzana Kaňuchová
 kanuchova@profesia.sk

Content

Skill building (including VET and further education)
 Job Placement (such as supported employment)
 Self-employment
 Activation
 Condition relevant (including mental health difficulties) ✓
 Other:

Approach

Proactive: reaching out to the target groups ✓
 Focus on an individual pathways approach (open employment as the goal)
 Targeting the individual and the community (including parents and employers) ✓
 Empowerment processes (e.g. decision-making, self-advocacy) ✓
 Partnership, networking and links (to other agencies and private companies) that assist in achieving the goals ✓
 Links to national policy or programmes ✓
 Training and support for staff
 Social partner involvement
 Monitoring and measurement (i.e. data on output, impact or cost effectiveness and individual benefits) ✓
 Regional or local sphere of activity
 De-institutionalised and community focused ✓

Case study 4: Integra

Programmes or initiatives in Slovakia that are successful in placing people with mental health problems in the open labour market are extremely rare. Employers' attitudes to people with mental health disabilities are very negative and they are not considered to be viable employees. Job seekers with mental health difficulties are less likely to gain access to existing activation measures for employing disadvantaged people. Integra o.z. is one of a very small number of organisations that is successful in this area. Integra o.z. operates in the regions of Michalovce and Sobrance in the east of Slovakia. It is an NGO which provides a complex model of social and health services to people with mental health problems and also deals with the issue of employment.

How the project started

With the reform of the psychiatric care system in Slovakia in 1991 it became clear that the Michalovce region lacked many necessary community services. Neither the Ministry of Health nor any other state organisation took the initiative to develop these services, so in 1994 local activists established the organisation Integra o.z. as a voluntary organisation. This was the beginning of effecting reform from the bottom.

Integra o.z. provides its services according to the Californian-functional model of services, which is based on the needs of users. Their needs can be met by individual plans. This innovation was also successfully added to the National Mental Health Programme in 2005.

Aims and objectives

The main objective of Integra is to support people with mental health problems to live with dignity, to find ways to realise their own potential in the community, and to make full use of community services. As an NGO, Integra works to integrate people with mental health problems in Michalovce. They do this in cooperation with mental health support organisations, relatives, and national, regional and local government.

The principles underpinning the Integra programme are:

- individualisation;
- help to self-help;
- providing new, previously non-existent services;
- support for developing organisations for people with mental health problems and their relatives;
- the equal cooperation of users of services, experts and representatives of society;
- changing society;
- sustainability of needed changes;
- using knowledge from research in neuroscience, sociotherapy and psychotherapy;
- providing community services to as many people as possible;
- prevention of mental distress;
- removing the stigma associated with mental illness.

Intended beneficiaries

Integra's target group are mainly adults with severe mental health problems living in the Michalovce and Sobrance regions. In this region more than 400 people need community services. Integra provides services for over 80 people.

Relevance to the needs of beneficiaries

As job seekers, people with mental health problems are a disadvantaged group. The community-based services provided by Integra help people to explore their skills and abilities, and to gain confidence and independence. It is a safe environment where clients can develop work habits before they start searching for employment. Case managers help them on their way to become independent and active members of society.

Activities and processes

To fulfil its main objective, Integra provides the following services:

- Supported housing
- Occupational therapy centre (including vocational training)
- Supported employment
- Case management
- Psychiatric medical prevention and care office.

The occupational therapy centre is a place where clients regain the work and social abilities that they have lost due to their illness. The aim of this social service is not to employ, but to help the individual to recover their work abilities and to become familiar with a daily routine. This is important later when they begin looking for a job. Activities in the rehabilitation centre are focused on rebuilding social and work habits, and on restoring the highest attainable degree of personal development and physical performance.

Many of the clients are aware that in a region with a high rate of unemployment, it is not very likely that they will find work. Nevertheless, some continue to try. This supported employment service aims to help prepare them to return to the normal work environment.

All employees in the NGO (health workers, social workers, therapists) work with clients according to the principles of case management. This means that they work with clients in partnership and they support clients in achieving their life goals. Their role is to find appropriate services to help clients meet their needs. This happens in active collaboration with clients. The case manager is a key person not only for the client, but also for the whole system of providing services. He/she coordinates the work of a team which comprises different professionals (including a psychiatrist, social worker, therapist, health worker). The case manager is also responsible for creating, developing, implementing and evaluating a care plan. People with mental health problems need highly professional care. This is why case managers are required to have experience in taking care of people with a long history of mental health problems. They have to know about the side effects of taking drugs, about available community services, etc. Usually nurses, social workers and therapists take on the role of case managers. Doctors and psychologists provide consultations to other team members. The whole Integra team meets weekly.

The case manager helps clients to draw up individual development plans. Consultations between a client and a case manager are tailored according to the client's needs. A client has the right to choose his/her case manager from the employees of Integra. This case manager provides the client with help and support mainly in dealing with official matters, in financial management, and in training on practical, everyday skills. The relationship between the case manager and client should be confidential and based on partnership.

If a client wants to find a job, the case manager helps him/her with writing the documents, preparing for the interview and contacting employers.

One of the aims of Integra with regard to the employment of people with mental health problems is to inform the public about mental health and about the abilities of people with mental health problems. Integra primarily uses local newspapers and TV stations to do this.

Relationships with other service suppliers

When an individual needs help which is not available from the staff of the organisation, it is dependent on cooperation with other organisations at all levels – local, regional, national and international. Cooperation on an international level was the only cooperation during Integra's development period because there were no partners at the other levels that would help in developing community services. From the very beginning the management of Integra has cooperated very closely with similar institutions abroad. Exchange of information is provided not only at the expert level (level of management of Integra) but also on the level of clients during their international exchange programmes or sport events abroad.

At present Integra cooperates with organisations of people with mental health problems, the national, regional and local government, the Department of Social Affairs of Self-Governing Regions, the Municipal office in Michalovce, the psychiatric hospital in Michalovce and the department of psychiatry at the UPJŠ Faculty Hospital in Košice.

Role of social partners

Providing services is based on individual access. Because Integra provides its services in quite a small town, employers in this area know about its activities. Employers are regularly invited to different cultural, educational and other activities organised by Integra. They are also informed about the abilities of the target group.

Connection to policy or legislation

Integra operates according to the National Mental Health Programme, Act No. 448/2008 Coll. on Social services and Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services.

Inputs

In 2011 there were nine employees in Integra providing services:

- 1 psychiatrist
- 1 psychologist
- 1 nurse
- 3 social workers
- 2 work therapists
- 1 director (+economist)

Those experts providing social services to clients are paid from the budget of Košice Self-Governing Region. Other activities (for example rehabilitation camps, etc.) are paid from grants.

Outputs and evaluation

During the past three years the organisation has been successful in placing six of its clients in the open labour market: three in part-time administrative positions and three in other positions. Ten clients work part time in a sheltered workshop.

The cooperation with the Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family over the past four years appears to have been successful. Between two and four clients have been successfully employed in activation work every six months. The intention of this is to help job seekers maintain their working habits. It takes place for at least ten hours per week and 40 hours per month (section 52 of Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services).

Activation activity may be carried out in the form of minor community services performed for a municipality, or voluntary work.

Good practice in active inclusion

For people with mental health problems the idea of independent living often seems to be impossible. As a consequence of their illness they have good and bad periods. They need complex services to recover and to become active in society. Integra provides the much-needed complex community-based services. These services offer clients the opportunity to be more self confident, more resilient and better prepared for work and for independent living. The Integra project combines access to therapeutic health and social services, including supported housing, with supported employment services. It operates a case management approach which is driven by an individual assessment of need. Where needs are identified which cannot be delivered from within the organisation's own resources, they are sourced through Integra's partners and network.

Contact details

Jana Húrová, Integra o.z.

Email: jankahurova@gmail.com, integrami@gmail.com

<http://www.integradz.sk/>

Content

Skill building (including VET and further education)	✓
Job Placement (such as supported employment)	✓
Self employment	
Activation	✓
Condition relevant (including mental health difficulties)	✓
Other:	

Approach

Proactive: reaching out to the target groups	✓
Focus on an individual pathways approach (open employment as the goal)	✓
Targeting the individual and the community (including parents and employers)	✓
Empowerment processes (e.g. decision-making, self-advocacy)	✓
Partnership, networking and links (to other agencies and private companies) that assist in achieving the goals	✓
Links to national policy or programmes	✓
Training and support for staff	✓
Social partner involvement	✓
Monitoring and measurement (i.e. data on output, impact or cost effectiveness and individual benefits)	✓
Regional or local sphere of activity	✓
De-institutionalised and community focused	✓

Future policy directions and plans

The present Slovak government included the goal of establishing a network of integrated care for children with disabilities in its Memorandum (2010). This was in effect the re-introduction of a system of coordinated care of all relevant sectors operated between the years 1988 and 1999. One main function of the network was to serve as a solid basis for the successful transition of young people with health problems or disabilities from formal education to subsequent life phases, including work. As a result of rapid and recurrent political changes this goal has yet to be initiated and requires further political attention. There are a number of elements which need to be addressed in any further debate on the issue.

First, there is an urgent need to complete the transformation of the education system in Slovakia and to regulate for the obligatory development of a transitional occupational plan for every pupil/student with a health problem or disability by school career consultants in cooperation with labour offices and employers. Second, there is a need to embed into common practice the principle of partnership between the various stakeholders who are involved in supporting the employment of young people with and without health problems. These stakeholders include municipalities, the regions, employers, civic organisations and labour offices. Although the current employment services legislation contains some regulations for establishing partnerships among various stakeholders (such as municipalities, the regions, non-profit organisations, foundations, banks) this legal instrument has been only rarely applied to support the employment of people with disabilities.

Third, the need to maintain a balance between mainstream employment solutions and access to appropriate specialised services targeted explicitly at supporting young people with health problems or disabilities is a challenge. Such a balance is required to avoid a situation where employers are reluctant to employ young people with disabilities because they are over-protected in labour relations and working conditions. Fourth, it is necessary to interlink disability-related provisions operating at the boundaries of different sectoral policies, such as social insurance, employment services and direct payments, in order to build a more comprehensive disability policy, and one that is oriented towards employment and social inclusion.

Particular attention should be paid to the system of accident insurance which, under the present legal rules, offers employers the potential to use rehabilitation and requalification programmes for employees with disabilities. Unfortunately, up to now the programmes have not been fully utilised. There is a need to re-evaluate the unintended impacts of disability pensions on the real chances of their recipients for integration into the labour market, especially in a time of economic crisis.

Finally, there is a need to improve the availability and quality of all disability-related data, including their disaggregation according to age and type of disability.

Conclusions and key messages

Research has traditionally attempted to identify and explain the reasons for the very poor employment situation of people with disabilities, including those who are young, in Slovakia. Ten years ago the main reasons identified were that employers were apprehensive about the work capabilities of people with disabilities and were also concerned that they would be frequently absent from work. Employers were also concerned about the limited financial incentives to adapt the workplace to meet the needs of employees with disabilities. A lack of interest in working on the side of people with disabilities, and the bureaucracy involved in employing people with disabilities, were also factors in this (Pavlíková, Kondášová, 2002).

According to research findings from 2006, people with disabilities perceived the fears of employers around engaging them in work, and the generally complicated situation in relation to disability and employment, to be the main barriers to employment (Repková, 2006).

Although many initiatives have been introduced to support and promote the participation of people with disabilities in the open labour market, many of the same reasons identified for the unfavourable employment situation of young people with disabilities still operate and some new challenges have arisen as a result of the new social and economic conditions that have emerged. First, it is essential to move towards inclusive labour participation rather than the traditional emphasis on protected labour participation. In Slovakia, the term 'inclusive labour participation' is not officially constituted and embedded into inclusion and employment policies. The boundaries between protected and inclusive labour approaches are blurred. Open labour market employers (inclusive employers) are provided with public subsidies (incentives) to set up a sheltered, individualised workplace, operating within an open company to support the employment of a person with a disability according to his/her individual needs. Despite the terminology applied these instruments can serve as important incentives for the employment of people with disabilities in the open (inclusive) labour market. On the other hand, a portion of public subsidies is provided to establish or run sheltered workshops within a completely sheltered environment, where most or all of the employees are people with disabilities, and mainly those with intellectual disabilities.

Financial subsidies to support sheltered workshops or workplaces and to cover the related running costs, which are the most popular types of disability employment support provisions in Slovakia, are seldom provided to young people with disabilities to help them make the transition from a protected to a completely open labour market environment (which was the original idea of the employment services system for this target group). Instead, employment services are regarded as permanently sheltered working arrangements within a permanently protected work environment. Therefore the national authorities, including the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family and the National Union of Employers, have launched a wider debate around the justification for the permanent protection of work, including work conditions, for people with disabilities. They highlight a need to maintain a balance between extra protection, on the one hand, and an equalisation of the conditions for all, to prevent employers from avoiding employing people with disabilities because of the additional burdens involved.

The strong protection for people with disabilities in employment and labour relations is presently cited by employers as one of the main reasons why the majority of people with disabilities are outside the regular labour market and are highly dependent on social benefits, and why they occupy a higher number of part-time jobs than before, resulting in a lower income.

The increasing prevalence of mental health and behavioural problems among young people presents a crucial challenge to achieving an inclusive labour market in Slovakia, as these young people acquire a disability status early in life and thus experience all the labour market complications associated with such a status. As previous research findings indicate (Hanzelová et al., 2007) employers report that mental health problems are regarded as the most serious complication in relation to offering employment and are not considered to be compatible with the requirements and regimes of regular work.

Under the present legislation in Slovakia a person with a disability can receive a disability pension in parallel with unlimited income from a job. Experts believe that this arrangement needs to be reconsidered. Disability pensions are very often considered as the main income source for people with disabilities to cover their living costs, and are regarded as 'guaranteed'. Therefore, there is a lack of effective pressure on relevant institutions to deal with employment issues faced by people with disabilities, particularly as unemployment in general is rising as a result of the economic crisis.

This may also explain why such a developed and diversified system of supportive employment services has been so poorly utilised, particularly in relation to young people with health problems or disabilities.

Finally, it can be argued that the recognition of young people with health problems or disabilities as a special target group for active inclusion and employment policies should be prioritised so as to prevent them from experiencing poor living conditions and income poverty across the life span. Without a specific focus the situation of young people with disabilities will not improve and the majority of them will remain excluded from the regular, open and flexible labour market and at risk of poverty and social exclusion in spite of the growing public expenditure on disability benefits and programmes.

Bibliography

Hanzelová, E., Kostolná, Z. and Reichová, D. (2007), *Občania so zdravotným postihnutím v optike postojov a názorov zamestnávateľov*. [People with visual disabilities and attitudes of employers]. IVPR, Bratislava.

Hanzelová, E., Brichtová, L. and Repková, K. (2010), *Report on the employment of disabled people in European countries*. Available at:

<http://www.disability-europe.net/content/aned/media/SK-%20ANED%202009%20Employment%20Report%20Final.pdf>

Kľúčové oblasti (2008), (Kľúčové oblasti a akčné plány štátnej politiky vo vzťahu k deťom a mládeži v Slovenskej republike na roky 2008–2013). Available at:

http://www.minedu.sk/data/USERDATA/DeTiMladez/KMAT/2008/20080326_klucove_oblasti.pdf

Kondášová, A. and Pavlíková, E. (2002), *Analýza doterajších skúseností subjektov vstupujúcich do procesu zamestnávania osôb so zdravotným postihnutím*. [Analysis of current experience of authorities involved with the employment of people with disabilities]. VÚPSVaR, Bratislava.

Kostolná, Z., Hanzelová, E., Reichová, D. and Repková, K. (2006), *Nevidiaci a slabozrakí ľudia na trhu práce a v prístupe k celoživotnému vzdelávaniu*. [Blind and visually impaired people in the labour market and in the access to lifelong learning]. IVPR, Bratislava.

Majtánová, V. (2011) *The Early Invalidities*. Working paper prepared on a request. Unpublished material. The Social insurance fund, Bratislava.

Národná (2008), (Národná Správa o Stratégiách Sociálnej Ochrany a Sociálnej Inklúzie Na Roky 2008 – 2010), available at <http://www.socialnainkluzia.gov.sk/si/print.php?SMC=1&id=169>

Národný program (2010–2014), (Národný program reforiem Slovenskej republiky 2011–2014), available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nrp/nrp_slovakia_sk.pdf

Programové vyhlásenie (2010), (Programové vyhlásenie vlády Slovenskej republiky na obdobie rokov 2010–2014), available at: http://www.vlada.gov.sk/data/files/18_programove-vyhlasenie-2010.pdf

Repková, K. (1999), *Zdravotné postihnutie – obraz z galérie nášho poznania* [The disability – a picture from gallery of our mind]. EPOS, Bratislava.

Repková, K. (2005), *Lack of social dialogue on employment of people with disabilities*. Available at:

<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2005/10/feature/sk0510103f.htm>.

Repková, K. (2006), *Životné podmienky rodín so zdravotne postihnutým členom*. [Living conditions of families with a disabled member]. SŠPR, Bratislava.

Repková, K. (2011), *Flash survey with social partners on employing young people with disabilities*. Unpublished material. IVPR, Bratislava.

Slovak Constitution; available at

<http://www.zbierka.sk/Default.aspx?sid=15&PredpisID=12045&FileName=92-z460&Rocnik=1992&AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1>

Zákon o peňažných príspevkoch na kompenzáciu ťažkého zdravotného postihnutia (Act No. 447/2008 Coll. on direct payments for compensation of severe disability), available at http://www.upsvar-tv.sk/zakony/soc/447_2008.pdf

Zákon o sociálnom poistení (Act No. 461/2003 Coll. on Social insurance as amended;

<http://www.zbierka.sk/zz/predpisy/default.aspx?PredpisID=17466&FileName=03-z461&Rocnik=2003>

Zákon o sociálnych službách (Act No. 448/2008 on social services, as amended), available at

http://www.upsvar-zv.sk/zakony/448_2008.pdf

Zákon o službách zamestnanosti (Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment services as amended), available at

<http://www.zbierka.sk/zz/predpisy/default.aspx?PredpisID=17633&FileName=04-z005&Rocnik=2004>

Zákon o výchove a vzdelávaní/Školský zákon (Act No. 245/2008 Coll. on Education/School Act), available at

http://www.uips.sk/sub/uips.sk/images/PKvs/z245_2008.pdf

Zákon o zdravotnom poistení (Act No. 580/2004 on health insurance, as amended), available at

http://jaspi.justice.gov.sk/jaspiw1/htm_zak/jaspiw_mini_zak_zobraz_clanok1.asp?kotva=k1&skupina=1

Annex 1: Flash survey with social partners on active inclusion policies for young people with disabilities

Representatives of employers

Q1: Do employers recognise young school leavers in the 15–24 year age group, who have disabilities, as a group with special employment needs?

Q2: What special policies and measures, beyond the obligations arising from the Labour Code or the legislation on Employment Services, have been put in place by employers for this group of potential employees?

Q3: Do employers recognise young school leavers in the 25–34 year age group, who have disabilities, as a group with special employment needs?

Q4: What special policies and measures, beyond obligations arising from the Labour Code or the legislation on Employment Services, have been adopted by employers for this group of potential employees?

Q5: What mechanisms do employers apply to promote these types of policies?

Representatives of the trade unions

Q1: Do trade unions recognise young school leavers in the 15–24 year age group, who have disabilities, as a group with special employment needs?

Q2: What special policies and measures, beyond obligations arising from the Labour Code or the legislation on Employment Services, have been adopted by trade unions for this group of potential employees?

Q3: Do trade unions recognise young school leavers in the 25–34 year age group, who have disabilities, as a group with special employment needs?

Q4: What special policies and measures, beyond obligations arising from the Labour Code or the legislation on Employment Services, have been adopted by trade unions for this group of potential employees?

Q5: What mechanisms do trade unions apply to promote these types of policies?

Q6: Do trade unions maintain any special statistics (a register) in relation to employees with disabilities, particularly in relation to young people.

Annex 2: Legislation and programmes relevant to the active inclusion of young people with health problems and disabilities

Table A1: Policy and legal framework for young people with disabilities or health problems

Policy area	Title of legislation/policy	Date	Responsible authority	Purpose	Intended beneficiaries	Short description
Support for adequate income	Act No.461/2003 Coll. on social insurance, as amended	1 January 2004	Social insurance company	To compensate for the consequences of working capacity declining	Young people becoming invalid/disabled as dependent children, aged at least 18, not entitled to disability pension; self/employees becoming invalid/disabled during their working age	Early invalidity/disability pension from youth and regular disability pension are provided to compensate for the consequences of reduced working capacity.
	Act No.461/2003 Coll. on social insurance, as amended	1 January 2004	Social insurance company	To compensate for loss of income during unemployment	Insured persons who paid contributions into the unemployment fund for at least two of the three years before registering on the Register of job seekers	Unemployment benefits are provided to unemployed persons on the Register of job seekers. Benefits are provided for a maximum of six months. People with a reduction in working capacity of more than 70% ('full' disability pension recipients) are not entitled because they are not obliged to pay contributions to the unemployment fund.
	Act No.447/2008 Coll. on cash benefits for compensation of severe disability, as amended	1 January 2004	Local state administration (Office for Labour, Social Affairs and Family)	To compensate for the social consequences resulting from severe disability	People acquiring a status of severe disabled person, which means reaching at least 50% of functional impairment in comparison to non-disabled persons, regardless of their age	Cash benefits are provided to compensate for the social consequences of severe disability in four areas: mobility and orientation; communication; I/ADL dependency on help of other people; disability-related increased living costs (e.g. for special diet, running a car, hygiene needs).
Inclusive labour market	Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on employment services, as amended	1 February 2004	Local state administration (Office for Labour, Social Affairs and Family)	To support labour inclusion of job seekers with disabilities	People acquiring the status of a disadvantaged job seeker because of a reduction in their working capacity	Within the employment services for disabled people various obligations and supportive measures are stated, including: employment quotas; a separate register for job seekers with disabilities; financial subsidies for employers; financial subsidies for people with disabilities; other supported employment services.
Access to quality services	Act No.448/2008 Coll. on social services, as amended	1 January 2004	Regional and local self governments (regions, municipalities)	To help persons with their I/ADL needs	People reaching at least 2nd level of care dependency (requiring at least two hours of help per day)	People in need of care are provided with various social services (e.g. in care homes, sheltered homes, rehabilitation centres) which are not specifically related to their employment needs.
	Act on 580/2004 Coll. on health insurance, as amended	1 January 2005	Health insurance company	To protect the income of people with disabilities	People acquiring the status of people with disabilities (more than a 40% reduction in working capacity) or the status of people with severe disabilities (at least 50% functional impairment)	Limited fees for medicines; decreased rate of payments of compulsory health insurance
Lifelong learning	Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on employment services, as amended	1 February 2004	Local state administration (Office for Labour, Social Affairs and Family)	Preparing people with disabilities for their job	Job seekers with disabilities	Training for a job and preparation for a job by helping to adapt for a role

Policy area	Title of legislation/policy	Date	Responsible authority	Purpose	Intended beneficiaries	Short description
Lifelong learning	Act No. 568/2009 Coll. on Lifelong learning	1 February 2010	Educational institutions of the LLL (high schools, legal entities established for education, entrepreneurs)	To ensure continuity of education after finishing formal education	No limitations	Accreditation of the education programmes, rules for recognition of LLL educational results, informational system of the LLL, evaluation and monitoring of the LLL needs.

Table A2: Programmes and interventions for young people with disabilities or health problems

Policy area	Title of programme	Type of intervention	Eligibility criteria	Funder	Purpose	Service providers	Short description
Support for adequate Income	Social insurance	Early disability/invalidity pension	Reaching the age of at least 18 years; disability/invalidity status before a job; no entitlement for disability/invalidity pension	Social insurance company	To compensate for a reduction in working capacities	Social insurance company	Providing early invalidity/disability pension based on an application; often young people cannot remain registered as job seekers for long at labour offices.
	Social insurance	Disability/invalidity pension	Minimum length of time of paying contributions to invalidity pension fund according to the applicant's age	Social insurance company	To compensate for a reduction in working capacity	Social insurance company	Providing invalidity/disability pension based on an application; parallel income from a job is possible.
	Social insurance	Unemployment benefit	A minimum of two years of paying contributions to unemployment fund in the three years before registering as job seeker	Social insurance company	To compensate for income loss during an unemployment situation	Social insurance company	Unemployment benefits are provided to unemployed people registered on the Register of job seekers. Benefits are provided for a maximum of six months. People with a reduced working capacity of more than 70% ('full' disability pension recipients) are not entitled because they are not obliged to pay contributions to the unemployment fund.
	Compensation for severe disability	Cash benefit for a personal assistant	Reaching age of six years; status of person with severe disability; I/ADL dependency	State	To support the independence and self determination of a person with severe disability, and to provide assistance with all living activities, activation	Local state administration (Office for Labour, Social Affairs and Family)	Monthly cash benefit which is means and needs tested, provided directly to person with disability. Social assistants are mainly people who are not related to the claimant. The disabled person chooses his/her assistants and the assistance is provided based on contract between a disabled person and his/her assistant/s.
	Health insurance	Decreased contribution rate for compulsory health insurance	Acquiring the status of invalid, disabled person or severely disabled person	Health insurance company	To protect the income of disabled people	Health insurance company	Basic rate of compulsory health insurance contribution of disabled people is half that of non-disabled people.

Active inclusion of young people with disabilities or health problems

Policy area	Title of programme	Type of intervention	Eligibility criteria	Funder	Purpose	Service providers	Short description
Support for adequate Income	Health insurance	Limited fees for medicines	Acquiring the status of invalid/ disabled person or severely disabled person	Health insurance company	To protect the income of disabled people	Health insurance company	There is a limited monthly fee (supplements) for necessary medicines for disabled people.
Inclusive labour market	Active employment measures	Contribution/ subsidy for establishing sheltered workshop or sheltered workplace	Quotas of at least 50% of all employees being recognised as persons with disabilities; SMEs running for at least two years; bigger companies for at least two years	State	To prepare disabled people for the open labour market, to overcome difficulties associated with getting a job in the open labour market	Local state administration (Office for Labour, Social Affairs and Family)	The subsidy to set up a sheltered workshop or an individual workplace is different for employers of Bratislava region and for other Slovakian regions; an application for the subsidy must contain a project proposal to run sheltered employment.
	Active employment measures	Contribution/ subsidy to maintain a person with disability in a job	Quotas of at least 25% of all employees being recognised as persons with disabilities	State	To support maintaining employees with disabilities in their job	Local state administration (Office for Labour, Social Affairs and Family)	The subsidy is provided based on a contract between employer and Office for Labour, Social Affairs and Family; the rate of the subsidy depends on the employee's disability level.
	Active employment measures	Contribution/ subsidy for person with disability to become self-employed	Status of person with disability for at least three months during the period of unemployment, performing self-employment in a sheltered workshop or workplace for at least two years	State	To support the self-employment of people with disabilities	Local state administration (Office for Labour, Social Affairs and Family)	The subsidy rate depends on the average unemployment rate in the district the person lives in; there is an obligation to attend a training course on self-employment.
	Active employment measures	Contribution/ subsidy for assistance at work	Employees or self-employed people with a disability status; job assistant must have minimum age of 18	State	To help to a disabled employee or a disabled self-employed person to perform his/her job and to meet his/her personal needs during work time	Local state administration (Office for Labour, Social Affairs and Family)	The subsidy is provided by Office for Labour, Social Affairs and Family to self-employed or working people with disabilities; an application is necessary; the rate of the subsidy reaches 41–90% of the total job value.
	Active employment measures	Contribution/ subsidy to cover operating costs of the sheltered workshop or sheltered workplace and for reimbursement of costs for employees' transport	Employer with a status of sheltered workshop or workplace	State	To sustain the running of sheltered workshops or workplaces	Local state administration (Office for Labour, Social Affairs and Family)	The subsidy for running a sheltered workshop or workplace is provided to cover ordinary running costs or costs for transporting employees to and from the place of work; the subsidy is provided quarterly as a reimbursement of proven costs.

Policy area	Title of programme	Type of intervention	Eligibility criteria	Funder	Purpose	Service providers	Short description
Access to quality services	Social services	Home for social services	Care requirements of at least the 3rd level of dependency	Regional governments	To provide comprehensive I/ADL care, social rehabilitation, including education for young people	Regional governments	Residential social services are in some cases provided in combination with an education and a job rehabilitation programme (to prepare young people with disabilities for their future job or to return them to the job after an accident or a serious illness)
	Health insurance	Decreased contribution rate for paying a compulsory health insurance	Acquiring the status of invalid/ disabled person or severely disabled person	Health insurance company	To protect the income of disabled people	Health insurance company	The basic rate of compulsory health insurance contribution of disabled people is half of that for non-disabled people.
	Health insurance	Limited fees for medicines	Acquiring the status of invalid/ disabled person or severely disabled person	Health insurance company	To protect the income of disabled people	Health insurance company	There is a limited monthly fee (supplements) for necessary medicines for disabled people.
Lifelong learning	Active employment measures	Training for a person with disability for his/her job	Acquiring the status of a disabled job seeker or employee	State	Preparing people with disabilities for their job	Health insurance company	Training to enable people with disabilities who do not have the necessary qualifications for a job to gain work skills; helping employees with a disability to adapt to their workplace; providing work assistance; training or adaptation is provided in specialised training centres, or in sheltered workshops/workplaces, or at employers' premises.

