

行政院及所屬各機關出國報告

(出國類別：考察)

德國及挪威復健輔具研發業務考察

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出國地區：德國、挪威

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主辦機關:

行政院衛生署

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內容摘要: 本次挪威及德國考察，主要蒐集先進國家輔具服務制度之資料，以為規劃建置我國輔具服務網絡之參考。本次考察分為兩大部分，在挪威部分，以考察該國之輔具服務制度為主；在德國考察部分，主要是參訪 REHAcare2000 國際輔具展。挪威輔具服務分為三級，分工分級後，展現良好的專業分工及行政效率。所有輔具由社會保險給付，由專業人員評估後，提出需求申請，由輔具中心集體採購提供實物。良好的資源回收制度，亦可使有限資源作最大應用，及兼顧環保需要。建議我國將資源加以整合，分級分工，建立制度化輔具服務制度。修改國內輔具補助流程，在購買前經專業人員評估處方，購買後再由專業人員確認是適用之輔具後，由社政單位審核補助。資源回收部分，應訂定相關辦法及建立制度，將尚可使用之輔具回收，經維修消毒後，循環使用，以使資源發揮最大的效用。參訪國際輔具展，可蒐集最新的輔具資訊，故建議鼓勵專業人員參加此類國際輔具展，以蒐集最新資訊，作為本土化輔具研發，及引進適用國人之輔具產品之參考。

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摘 要

本次挪威及德國考察，主要蒐集先進國家輔具服務制度之資料，以為規劃建置我國輔具服務網絡之參考。本次考察分為兩大部分，在挪威部分，以考察該國之輔具服務制度為主；在德國考察部分，主要是參訪 REHAcare2000 國際輔具展。

挪威輔具服務分為三級，分工分級後，展現良好的專業分工及行政效率。所有輔具由社會保險給付，由專業人員評估後，提出需求申請，由輔具中心集體採購提供實物。良好的資源回收制度，亦可使有限資源作最大應用，及兼顧環保需要。

建議我國將資源加以整合，分級分工，建立制度化輔具服務制度。修改國內輔具補助流程，在購買前經專業人員評估處方，購買後再由專業人員確認是適用之輔具後，由社政單位審核補助。資源回收部分，應訂定相關辦法及建立制度，將尚可使用之輔具回收，經維修消毒後，循環使用，以使資源發揮最大的效用。

參訪國際輔具展，可蒐集最新的輔具資訊，故建議鼓勵專業人員參加此類國際輔具展，以蒐集最新資訊，作為本土化輔具研發，及引進適用國人之輔具產品之參考。

壹、考察目的

隨著國人平均壽命延長人口老化，工商發達意外災害頻傳，因醫療科技進步，使嚴重傷病患者得以存活，但也因此遺留各種身心機能障礙，需要經由輔具協助，提升自我照顧能力，以發揮潛能回歸社會。

國內尚缺乏有效率之輔具服務制度，本次挪威及德國考察，主要蒐集先進國家輔具服務制度之資料，以為規劃建置我國輔具服務網絡之參考。

貳、考察過程

本次考察分為兩大部分，在挪威部分，以考察該國之輔具服務制度為主；在德國考察部分，主要是參訪 REHAcare2000 國際輔具展。

挪威輔具服務制度

一、挪威簡介

北歐四國之一，人口約 440 萬人，面積約 32 萬 4000 平方公里，人口密度 14.1 人／平方公里；行政區分 19 郡 (counties)，435 自治市 (municipalities)，首都位於奧斯陸。

挪威擁有完善的社會福利制度，社會保險已涵括國民大部分需求，內容如下，輔具補助即包括於復健補助範圍內：

- 老人年金、祝壽金、殘障年金
- 殘障後的基本補助及看護補助
- 復健補助 (rehabilitation benefits)
- 職災傷害補助
- 單親家庭補助
- 疾病、懷孕、收養、失業現金補助
- 疾病、懷孕醫療補助
- 喪葬補助金

二、參訪單位

1. SUITE (at Nesodden)
2. Sunnaas rehabilitation hospital (at Nesodden)
3. DELTA-CENTRE (at Oslo)
4. Assistive Technology Center ,Oslo (at Oslo)
5. National insurance administration (at Oslo)
6. Ministry of health and social affairs (at Oslo)

三、輔具服務分級制度

輔具服務分為三級，分工分級後，展現良好的服務輸送效率。

(一) 第一級 自治市健康服務 (municipal health service)

435 個自治市，依法提供居民需要的服務，即由當地醫療機構之專業人員，提供基層的服務；如需要輔具者，由專業人員評估，再向第二級郡輔具中心申請。

(二) 第二級 各郡輔具中心 (technical aids center in each county)

1979 至 1995 年，挪威政府陸續於 19 個郡，各設有一個 technical aids center (TAC)，為輔具資源中心，以就近提供輔具服務。TAC 負責提供其管轄之自治市所需的輔具，即為集體採購方式，提供實物（輔具），非提供現金補助。並提供地方基層，必要的諮詢服務。此規劃方式之優點如下：

1. 系統化處理輔具服務的各項事務（如器材選擇等）。
2. 使用者可獲得平等的資源分配，不會有地區性的差異。
3. 服務作業易於控管。
4. 有效率的運用經費。

TAC 為多專業之工作團隊，包含 15 到 17 種不同的專業人才，總員工數量因各地需求約 20 至 50 人之間，包含視障部門、聽障部門、資訊中心 (Communication-IT)、行動障礙部

門、語言障礙部門、專為聽障與視障人士翻譯部門、汽車評估與修改部門、負責採購，倉儲與維修調配的總務部門、行政管理部門。經由 TAC 之設立，可依照身心障礙者的不同需求提供個別化服務，並對政府所資助的輔具做有效率的管理與處置。

TAC 同時扮演協調、聯繫、服務與教育並重的角色，不僅負責部門間與各層級間身心障礙者之評估工作、促成輔具供應商與使用者間合作的橋樑，同時也盡力提升地方政府有關科技輔具方面的能力。經由 TAC，不論是在採購、儲存、分配給使用者的過程，或維修、運送與回收再利用的工作，皆可獲得高效率的規劃。一般通過申請的輔具，可以在 2 個星期以內送至使用者手中，若是必須由供貨廠商出貨，也可以在 5 週內送交到使用者手中。

(三) 第三級 國家級輔具中心 (national centers for IT, cars, deaf, blind)

負責處理較少見或複雜的問題，並提供第一級、第二級單位需要的諮詢服務。包含 national centers for IT, cars, deaf and blind, regional centers within health and special education。

1. SUITE

1992 年，Department Hospital and Social Security in Norway 委託 Sunnaas Hospital and School 成立 SUITE (Sunnaas IT-unit)，並自 1998 年起改為國家保險局之永久性服務機構，該單位為設立於醫院內之獨立單位，服務之責任區為全國，經濟來源由政府計劃支出，此國家級的輔具科來源由政府計劃支出，此國家級的輔具科技中心，由 8 人組成，包含 OT, ST, psychology, special/remedial education, civil engineering。主要負責工作如下：

- (1) 收集輔助科技相關之專業資訊，整合、應用與分享(傳播)。
- (2) SUITE 可直接與使用者接觸，或至使用者家中進行家訪等，為使用者、專業人員提供諮詢與解答。
- (3) 輔具現展展示與試用，如裝設有 ECU 之房間，可達到展示、評估與訓練之目的。
- (4) 與其他部會合作，如衛生、教育單位，使資源有效利用，並促進不同專業團隊之合作與互動。

2. THE DELTA CENTRE

1996 年，The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs 提出“DELTA”之四年期專案計畫，由國家保險局負責預算之掌控，全名為 DELtakelseilighet for alle，意旨 Participation and accessibility for everybody，主要工作著重於建築物、交通、工作場地與訓練、資訊與溝通科技等。該中心為 11 人共同組成之工作團隊，包含建築師、職能治療師、特教人員、物理治療師與社工等。

其工作目標為：

- (1) 使每個人皆可獲得與使用。
- (2) 使身心障礙者有更好的參與權。
- (3) 以全面性的觀點探討事物，包含居家、學校與工作的環境考量。

服務內容包括：

- (1) 建立本土與國際之專業網路

DELTA-NET <http://www.delta.oslo.no/deltanett>。

- (2) 協調不同專業間更好的合作模式。
- (3) 引導相關研究計畫。

(4) 依據通用設計原則 (universal design)，推動輔具及無障礙設施。

(5) 與各公共事務有關部門或單位共同合作。

此中心在公共行政系統中並無正式的责任劃分，他扮演多變的行動者，需要主動與各公共行政部門或研究發展單位合作，例如當地的勞工局、交通部、教育部、身心障礙者聯盟...等，以增進彼此間的互動，進而推廣更多的公共行政事務。

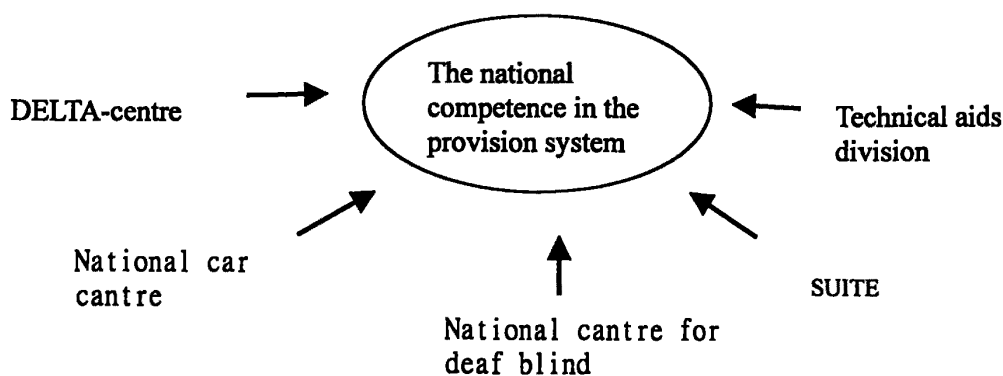
未來發展：

(1) 繼續評估與執行中心目前進行中的工作。

(2) The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs 即將成為本中心的雇主。

(3) 未來將以科技輔具的重要性為中心主要討論議題。

國家級輔具服務系統圖 National competence



四、挪威國家保險局 (National insurance Administration)

挪威輔具服務制度之經費來源，主要來自於國家保險局。國家保險局在各自治市設有辦公室，各郡設有輔具中心 (Technical Aids Centre, TAC)，以提供殘障者完善的經濟及輔具支持。

輔具服務系統提供項目包含：居家照護所需之輔具、18 歲以下訓練用輔具、運動與休閒用之特殊輔具、助聽器及翻譯服務、聽障及視障之隨侍服務、視障的導盲犬及秘書服務、資訊科技、教育用輔具。

所有自治區的輔具中心間建立有聯絡網 (Network of Contact Persons)，有專人負責各中心 (TAC) 之間以及與個別中心與當地專業團體之間的聯絡，國家保險局建構了兩個重要的措施，以確保此架構順利運轉：

(一) 標準化體制流程 (Standard Framework Procedure)：規範輔具中心 (TACs) 與自治區政府的合作模式。

(二) 主動式訓練計畫 (Active Training Programme)：由輔具中心 (TACs) 的人員經常性對聯絡人與自治區內的衛生與教育人員實施訓練課程，以確保這些人員對於輔具的知識能隨時更

新。

五、輔具服務輸送

挪威之輔具服務，只要備妥符合需求之文件證明，即可申請所需之輔具，所有輔具都是免費的，由國家保險機構提供費用。

個案申請輔具程序如下：

- (一) 一般常見的問題，由自治市直接提供服務，並向 TAC 申請輔具。
- (二) 較複雜罕見的問題，請使用者至區域級中心直接試用或請中心人員直接提供諮詢服務。
- (三) 所有輔具接由國家保險機構給付。

獲得輔具之標準如下：

- (一) 根據醫學診斷個案為恆久性障礙(二年以上)，且輔具為解決問題最適合的方法。
- (二) 考量”low-tech.” Solution 與 human resources 因素後，輔具為解決問題最適合的方法。
- (三) 在價格與功能性考量之間，以功能性考量為主，希望能不用到最貴的產品，則獲得相同的功能。

舉例而言，一位脊髓損傷的個案，如果需要輪椅，他可以透過

當地（郡或區域）醫院中的治療師，予以輪椅評估與建議，由當地治療師向郡立輔具中心（TAC）提出申請，經輔具中心審核同意後，由輔具中心寄發輪椅到個案處所，即可獲得適合的輪椅，其他輔具只要個案合乎需要，也是經由相同路徑獲得，而個案是不需要負擔任何費用。個案也可以直接經由郡立輔具中心（TAC）或國家級中心內的治療師直接評估，獲得相關的輔具。一般而言，大多數的輔具服務或評估在當地醫院或衛生所即可獲得解決，如果有特殊無法解決的困難，則會轉介至第二或第三階層（郡或國立中心），由上一階層的專業人員處理。

挪威地區所有輔助器具都不需收費，但是當個案不需要時，需將輔具交還給政府，經過整理清潔後，再交給適合的人使用，這是他們的回收制度，所有輔具都是由政府統一採購，分發至所有輔具中心，政府有專門的委員會決定採購的項目及價格，這樣可以降低成本，而經由專業人員認證的制度，亦可大大降低買錯輔具造成資源浪費的風險。

檢附挪威殘障白皮書（1998-2001年）原文。

德國 REHAcare2000 國際輔具展

REHACare 國際輔具展於 1977 年首次舉辦，當時共有 118 廠商/單位參展，12,812 名參觀者。截至 1999 年之展出，無論參展廠商或參觀者皆成 5 至 7 倍之成長，且成為世界最大之身心障礙者輔具展覽之一，並由每兩年舉辦一次，改為每年展出。

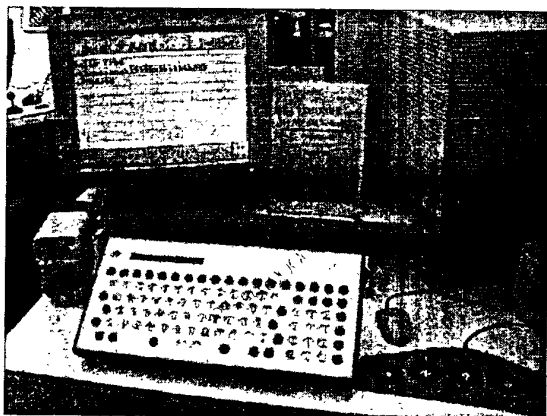
杜塞道夫 (Dusseldorf) 位於德國中北部，為 Nordrhein-Westfalen 省之省都。

本次輔具展於杜塞道夫之展覽館舉行，為國際最大復健輔具展，主要展出身心障礙者所需之復健、照護設備。有來自 24 個國家，650 個攤位參展，分五區、五個館展出，展覽內容包含身心障礙者所需之復健、設備、照護等；預計有 50,000 位參訪者。

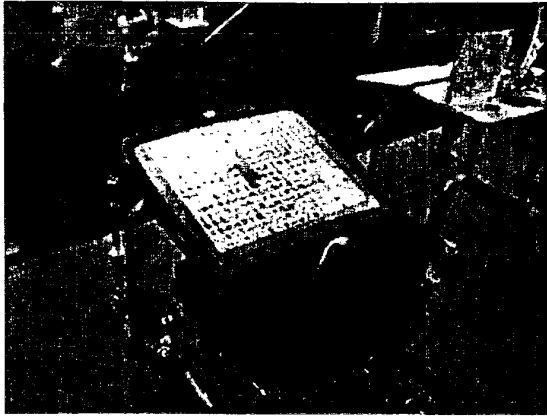
以下謹就展示中較具特色之輔產品加以介紹：

溝通輔具展示廳

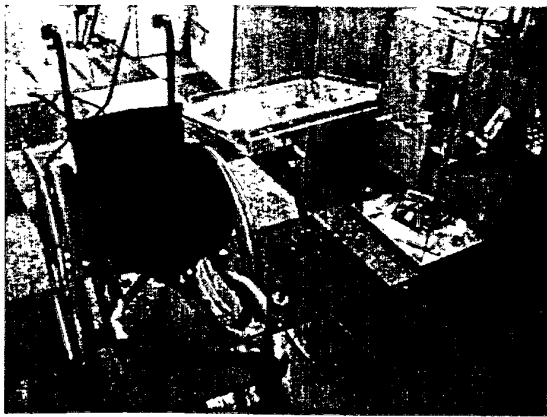
本區有專門為視障、聽障、及語障者所設計的溝通輔具。



圖一、為視障者所設計之簡易電腦輸入設備。除了將鍵盤設計為本國（德國）語言外，鍵盤上裝有洞洞板，以輔助使用者按到正確的按鍵。此外，亦有特殊設計的滑鼠，將上、下、左、右各個方向的滑鼠功能獨立在單一按鍵上，以協助精細動作不佳者，也可以無障礙的使用電腦。



圖二、為語障者所設計之特殊溝通版，在溝通版上有許多常用的名詞、動詞、受詞、與介係詞，使用者只要將要說的句子，以按壓按鍵方式組成句子，再按發音鍵，即可表達自己的意見。此外，此設計同時考量到使用者可能為多重障礙者，若使用者同時合併精細動作不協調之問題，此溝通板上的按鍵同時有依序閃燈的功能，當閃燈輪到使用者所需的按鍵時，使用者只要用頭點一下輪椅左上方獨立的單一按鍵，即可達到與按壓按鍵相同的成果。



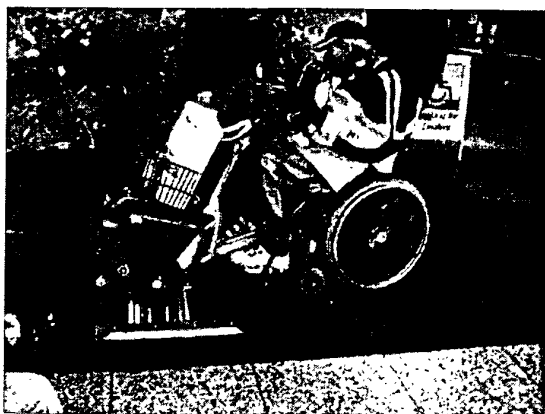
圖三、單一樞紐固定架，此固定架有多個關節，可以調整到不同的角度與高度，且只要以單一個樞紐即可將調整的角度與高度固定，方便而不佔空間，除了桌板外，亦可廣泛應用到溝通版及其他控制器的固定。

移動輔具展示廳

本廳展示的內容包括 vehicles, wheelchairs, wheelchair accessories 等移動輔具，並有多國家與廠商同時參展，新穎的展示內容令參觀者目不暇給。



圖四、經由輪圈之特殊設計，此電動輪椅可橫向行走，在較為狹窄的空間內，即可藉由橫向行走，靠近床邊或桌邊。



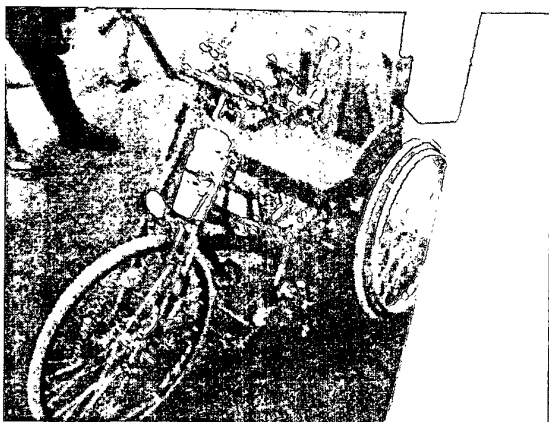
圖五、一般手動輪椅可在前面加裝動力輔助器，此輔助器是可拆卸的，用於長距離移動及體力較差之年長者。此外，地面之小滾輪為輪胎清潔機，進入會場之輪椅，需在此將輪胎清潔乾淨。



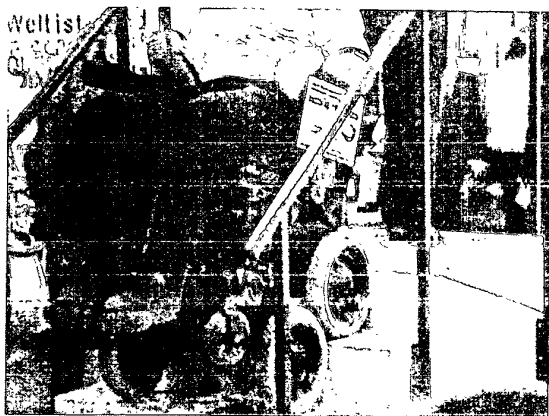
圖六、汽車改裝亦是主要展示項目之一，圖中之座椅可以向右 90 度旋轉，方便肢體障礙者上下車。



圖七、此改裝方向盤，中間加裝之環圈為油門，下壓即踩油門之動作，右下方突出把手為煞車裝置，此改裝方便下肢癱瘓者，甚至若上肢精細動作也不好者，亦可以操作之。



圖八、三輪式輪椅，提供給下肢癱瘓者更多選擇，可達到運動、訓練上肢肌力之成效，此外，亦有在前輪加裝動力輔助器，使休閒時更為省力與競速。



圖九、該輪椅為展覽場最搶眼的電動輪椅之一，藉由輪軸的交替，此輪椅可獨立上下樓梯、穿越障礙、下門檻等。



圖十、此輪椅的另一功能，藉由重力感測器，僅利用後輪即可平穩的站立，並可改變輪椅高度。

“Independent Living” 主題廳

“Independent Living”，為首次展出的主題廳，主要展出內容為：利用高科技方法，使重度障礙者之生活更加獨立。“Independent Living”主題廳內我們可以看到，中度障礙者僅需要利用簡易的聲控或按鈕控制器，這些遙控器主要利用紅外線控制原理，即可控制多樣的家庭器具，例如開門與窗戶，調整窗簾與床，開電視，接電話，啟動警報系統、電腦、升降梯、及空調系統等。



圖十一、聲控之環控系統，展示者正利用聲控裝置調整床的傾斜角度，另外尚可控制百葉窗、燈、音響及門等居家環境設備。



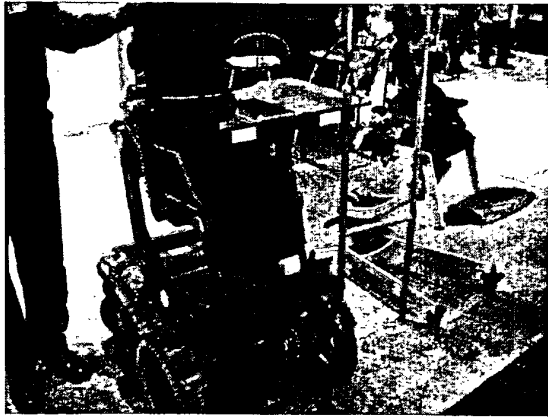
圖十二、為視障者設計之紅外線導盲杖，利用紅外線偵測，前方有障礙物時，導盲杖會以震動方式警示。

無障礙兒童輔具 (Kids unlimited)

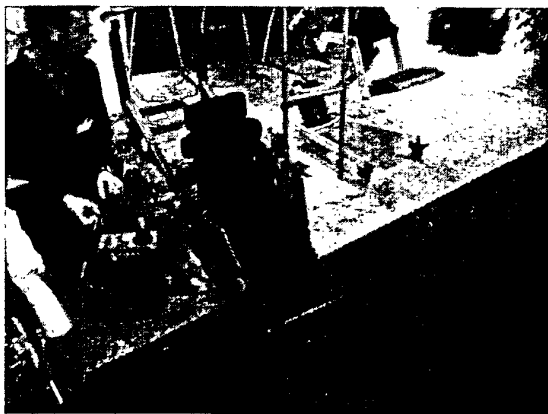
本次展出之兒童輔具展覽廳以“Barrier-free Living for Children”為主題，此次的焦點著重於現今科技改良與發展之新產品展示，使照顧者與身心障礙兒童皆可擁有無障礙的生活。根據統計，在德國有 3% 的身心障礙兒童，其中有 10% 為長期性的障礙。“Barrier-free Living for Children”之兒童輔具展覽廳內，我們看到參與展出的協會與公司，介紹如何使產品達到最大的效益，以及各式使日常生活更加無障礙的特殊設計，而此次的焦點著重於移動輔具之展出。



圖十三、改良式的兒童助行器，除造型可愛吸引兒童外，附於助行器上的鐵肢架是可調整的，圖中為一位參訪者，經由廠商現場調整後，開心適用的一景。



圖十四、兒童電動輪椅，此款電動輪椅可自如的升降高度，升至與一般人站立時同高，降至地面高度。



圖十五、電動輪椅可降至地面高度。此外，控制器位於桌板中間，使兒童易於操作，不移動時，可以 180 度翻轉（如上圖），使不占桌面空間。



圖十六、兒童電動輪椅，此款電動輪椅，同時兼具擺位、座面與靠背可傾斜功能。

參、考察心得及建議

挪威輔具服務分為三級，分工分級後，展現良好的專業分工及行政效率。所有輔具由社會保險給付，由專業人員評估後，提出需求申請，由輔具中心集體採購提供實物。此方式優點為，可系統化處理輔具服務的各項事務，使用者可獲得平等的資源分配，服務作業易於控管，有效運用經費。良好的資源回收制度，亦可使有限資源作最大應用，及兼顧環保需要。可供國內建立輔具服務制度之參考。

目前國科會、內政部、教育部、勞委會及衛生署皆進行身心障礙輔具之研發或補助，缺乏整合；為避免重復研發及提供完整性服務，建議將資源應以整合，明確分級分工，建立制度化輔具服務制度。

國內在輔具補助部分，係由民眾自行購買後，再持收據及醫師診斷書申請現金補助，因缺乏專業人員評估及處方，民眾往往購買到不適用的輔具，使用後造成二度傷害，或閒置不用，浪費福利資源。但以國內之資源及行政效率，效法挪威集體採購提供實物，恐有困難。故建議修改國內輔具補助流程，經專業人員評估處方，民眾持處方購買輔具，再經專業人員評估調整訓練，證明確為申請人

適用之輔具後，再由社政單位審核補助。

資源回收部分，應訂定相關辦法及建立制度，將尚可使用之輔具回收，經維修消毒後，循環使用，以使資源發揮最大的效用。

參訪國際輔具展，可蒐集最新的輔具資訊，故建議鼓勵專業人員參加此類國際輔具展，以蒐集最新資訊，作為本土化輔具研發，及引進適用國人之輔具產品之參考。

**The White Paper on People with Disabilities 1998-2001
Norway**

Participation and equality

(St. meld. no. 8, 1998-99)



SOSIAL- OG HELSEDEPARTEMENTET

Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

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Participation and equality

Recommendation of the Ministry for Health and Social Affairs of October 9th 1998, adapted by the Government the same day.

1 Introduction

With this document the Government presents a proposal for a revised Plan of Action for persons with disabilities for the period of 1998-2001. The White Paper is based on the Declaration of Voksenåsen, where among others it was declared that the Government will strengthen the conditions and rights of persons with disabilities, and that everyone, according to their own abilities, shall have the same opportunity to participate in societal activities.

When the Storting (the Norwegian Parliament) debated the White Paper St. meld. No. 34 (1996-97) Results and Experiences from the Government's Plan of Actions for persons with disabilities and the Way ahead, there was a broad political consensus that still a lot of unsolved problems remain in order to improve the conditions of persons with disabilities. The Plan of Action of the former Government ¹ was not sufficiently action oriented to meet these challenges. That is why the Government found it necessary to develop a more concrete Plan of Action for the development of a policy for persons with disabilities for the coming 3 years. The revised Plan of Action provides a binding guideline for the Government's and the Ministries' work towards improving the conditions for persons with disabilities. On the budget of the Ministry for Health and Social Affairs a proposal has been made for the year 1999 of reserving 114 million NOK for the implementation of the Plan of Action for Persons with Disabilities. This is an increase of 66 million NOK compared to what the Jagland Government suggested.

Of new initiatives we can mention:

a public committee to evaluate the rights of persons with disabilities in a broader context

establish by law the right to user controlled personal assistance managed by user

a special Plan of Action to increase employment for persons with disabilities

Plan of Actions for persons with disabilities at the universities and colleges.

If persons with disabilities shall have the opportunity to full participation and equalisation, the gap between the individual's abilities and society's demands must be bridged. This may happen through compensation of the individual's disability through *individual* measures or through *the change of society's demands*. The report differs from for instance the Norwegian report on elderly people, the plan for increase measures within mental health and the announced report on rehabilitation, in that it focuses on making the society more accessible

¹ The Government of Prime Minister Jagland has issued a Plan of Action for the period of 1998-2001. This plan was revised in 1998 by the Government of Prime Minister Bondevik and then presented for the first time as a White Paper.

for persons with disabilities with equal opportunities for participation as a long term objective. Apart from participation in relation to the physical environment, this demands increased activities within public information, product development and new technology, conditions during adolescence, research, culture, labour market, education, the pensions-, health- and social sectors and communication. A line has also been drawn towards The White Paper on the Equalisation of Living Conditions, that will be presented during the 1999 spring session, because this report will, among others, discuss the living conditions of persons with disabilities.

The Government will use the Plan of Action to continue its work to implement the UN Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. The rules highlight the Government's responsibility for surveying and evaluating the implementation of national plans and measures that concern equal opportunities for persons with disabilities.

The Plan of Action contains four main areas for action:

- an accessible society
- planning and user participation
- persons with disabilities' rights
- employment for persons with disabilities

The implementation of the plan should follow the *mainstreaming principle*. This implies that it is the societal institutions that should provide services that persons with disabilities can use on an equal basis as the population at large. The same institutions should, if needed, provide additional services in cases where mainstream services are not sufficient. In accordance with the mainstream principle the Government has chosen to place a large part of the planning within the ordinary activities of the ministries. The Plan of Action does not provide an in depth review of all the measures directed towards persons with disabilities. The consequences of the measures will be incorporated into the annual budget proposals for each Ministry. The Storting will be oriented on the implementation of the plan through an annual report in connection with the presentation of the state budget (St. prp. No 1).

Politics for persons with disabilities is by no means limited to social- and health policy – something that is illustrated by this Plan of Action. The Ministry for Health and Social Affairs still has a special responsibility for initiating and monitoring the politics for persons with disabilities across sectoral borders. The Ministry shall strengthen the principle of sectoral responsibility by assisting in the development of the knowledge basis, clarify overarching political objectives and assist in achieving a co-ordinated activity.

The needs for a current co-ordination between the Ministries in their work on the overall policy towards persons with disabilities are met through a special committee of state secretaries.

At an early stage the committee of state secretaries discussed the Plan of Action with the Norwegian State Council on Disability. The Norwegian State Council on Disability and the organisations has also been given the opportunity to comment an early draft version of the Plan of Action.

1.1 Background

The Plan of Action period 1998-2001 is the third Norwegian Plan of Action period since 1990. This revised plan is based on, and further strengthening, the former Government's Plan of Action.

The first two Plans of Action for 1990-93 and 1994-97 both focused upon adaptation of society for persons with disabilities. The Plan of Action type was chosen. Within the auspices of these Plans of Action a series of measures have been launched in fields where there were need for special initiatives, for instance the competence centres for small groups of persons with disabilities, relief systems, editing of dictionaries in sound and Braille, information and culture services for deaf people via adapted videos and ordinary writing, information technology for persons with disabilities, better access to public buildings, universities and colleges and the testing of daily newspapers for visually impaired people.

The Jagland Government's Plan of Action for 1998-2001 continued part of this work, but put more emphasis on a more systematic use of the steering measures available for societal shaping and development.

The revised Plan of Action for 1998-2001 is also a follow up of the Norwegian Storting's debate on The White Paper No 34 (1996-97) Results and Experiences from the Government's Plan of Actions and the way ahead. The White Paper No 34 (1996-97) presented and discussed the experiences from the work in the two previous plan periods. The conclusion was that the Plans of Action have contributed to important measures having been beneficial to more people, and that important measures are developed according to needs of persons with disabilities.

The White Paper No 34 (1996-97) also discussed the effects of the single measures having been used. This concerns measures like user participation and user control, information, use of earmarked funding and incitement funding, research and development work. It was emphasised that the Plans of Action themselves have been important tools. They have made it possible to utilise the other instruments as part of a holistic approach.

At the Norwegian Storting's debate on The White Paper No 34 (1996-97) the Social Affairs Committee expressed the following on the two previous Plan of Actions (viz. Conclusion S No 114 (1997-98):

"The Committee feels, that the two previous periods with Plan of Actions for persons with disabilities have contributed to make visible the living conditions of persons with disabilities. The Plan of Actions have also contributed to a better adaptation within several fields, even if the Committee believes there are still a lot of tasks to be done."

The Social Affairs Committee supported a proposal that the plan period 1998-2001 should have three main fields of action:

- an accessible society
- planning and user participation
- rights for persons with disabilities

The increased activity in these fields is discussed in the chapters 3,4 and 5.

A majority in the Social Affairs Committee agreed that an Plan of Action for increased employment should be included in the Government's Plan of Action for the period 1998-2001 (viz. Resolution S No 114 (1997-98)). The chapter 6 is discussing proposals for such a plan, and the Government thus wishes to focus on employment.

The chapter 7 is discussing measures for persons with disabilities within Norwegian development aid.

2 Basic values, objectives and challenges

2.1 Attitude to human and other values

The Government bases its view on human values on the attitude that all human beings are equally valuable and have the same value as human beings. Everyone should be ensured the same opportunity to participate in activities in society according to their own preconditions. The Government wants a society for all.

The Government wants to work actively for a warmer society where everybody feel responsible for taking care of each other. Such a society is dominated by respect for the individual, personal responsibility, care and consideration.

The Norwegian welfare society is built on conscious choices of values in a solidary society ensuring the individual his or her freedom and safety. The social welfare systems shall provide security against loss of income, and secure the individual aid and care when the need arises – notwithstanding age, income, place of residence, social background and ability. The Government will work for a societal development characterised by solid basic values, equality, and work for all.

The understanding of the notion of disability that this document is based on, is a disproportion between the abilities of the individual and the demands from the environment and society for functioning in areas that are important for establishing and maintain an independent and social existence. A conscious understanding of the notion of disability is important because it affects attitudes, language and which measures and solutions will be chosen.

This document is based on the assumptions that:

Persons with disabilities have the same basic needs as other persons. It is not the needs, but the solutions that are different

To meet the needs of persons with disabilities compensatory solutions are often needed

A society that is well adapted for all, will reduce the need for individual solutions.

2.2 Objectives

The objective is full participation and equality for persons with disabilities. This is in accordance with the motto of the UN international year for persons with disabilities and the UN Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.

As overall objective it is visionary, and underlines the close connection to the international policy for persons with disabilities. Based on the experiences after two plan periods there is still a reason for emphasising the long-term aspect of this objective.

During the plan period 1998-2001 actions will be taken to:

Ensure that society is shaped in a way that ensures equality between all citizens and provides all with the opportunity of creating and maintaining an independent and a social existence.

Ensure that politics for persons with disabilities makes public and private enterprises non-disabling. Initiatives must be shaped in a way that they assure co-ordination and wholeness, and build on a systematic use of measures.

2.3 Challenges

For many people it is difficult to imagine that the society is making demands to your abilities. But the shaping of a society includes a series of preconditions and demands. It concerns physical accessibility: the opportunity to move around outdoors, to enter and exit buildings and means of transport and to be able to hear and be heard at counters, for instance. Anyone, who has pushed a baby carriage or suffered from a temporary damage, has experienced the lack of physical accessibility in general.

Accessibility concerns much more than the physical. To be able to participate actively in society, it is necessary to have access to all services in society, like for instance all types of information and cultural- and organisational activities.

The consequences of a lack of adaptation are that many more people experience barriers in life than what the disability itself should lead to. To put it bluntly, society itself is disabling. A lack of adaptation creates demands for individual measures and special solutions.

Persons with disabilities do not constitute a homogenous group. This is illustrated by the fact that there were in 1998 approximately 100 organisations of persons with disabilities. It has been a practise to categorise persons with disabilities in five main groups: People with locomotive or mobility disabilities, people with visual disabilities, people with hearing disabilities, mentally persons with disabilities and people with hidden disabilities (e.g. diabetes, psychic problems, heart diseases, dyslexia, allergies). This is not an optimal categorisation, a/o because so many persons with disabilities have more than one disability, and therefore belong to more than one main group. The categorisation into main groups therefore is more to be used as a "reference list" for how we define disabilities. It can contribute to increasing understanding of what has to be done to make society more accessible for persons with disabilities.

The surveys of living conditions from the Statistics Norway's indicate that between 17 and 20 per cent of all citizens above 16 years of age have disabilities like reduced vision, reduced hearing, reduced ability to carry things, reduced mobility or reduced ability to work.

2.3.1 To live with a disability – different life situations

To have a child with disabilities

Most families with children with disabilities will have needs for measures and services in several of the fields mentioned below:

- medical assistance, locally and from specialist
 - psychosocial support
 - physiotherapy
 - assistive technology and toys
- special pedagogical assistance
- kindergarten and school services
 - financial support services

- transport
- relief
- support contacts

Furthermore the families must co-operate with a lot of authorities, like:

- the maternal and health care centre
- specialist health services (the habilitation service)
- the municipal health- and social service
- the kindergarten and school
- the social security office
- the dental services

In many instances a responsibility group is established for one disabled child, or the parents get a special contact person in the municipality office. A responsibility group is a group where various bodies having contact with the child participate, and where the objective is to co-ordinate the services provided. The experiences from the use of responsibility groups are not altogether positive, many parents feel that they still are left with a responsibility to co-ordinate. The situation demands an intensive work on getting acquainted with various regulations, make appointments and meet various services, keep an overview so that one service knows what the other is doing, and try to make them co-operate. It is easy to understand that many of those tasks that are mentioned above, should not at all be the parents' responsibility, and that they contribute to the difficulties in the family situation.

Parents having a child with a disability, whether it is born with the disability or it is acquired at an early stage, whether it is visible or invisible, express a great need for assistance to handle the emotional reactions. They want to get opportunities to talk with professionals about psychological problems they experience and of questions on upbringing: setting limits, independence, emotional reactions and the child's relationship to other children. Many parents also express that they get much support from other parents or adults with the same diagnosis (peers).

To grow up with a disability

Young people with disabilities are often in a more complicated life situation than other young people. Their wish for independence and freedom to investigate the world as part of a liberation process can be more difficult to realise than for youth without disabilities.

Parents with disabilities

When we talk about families who have a member with disabilities, we easily believe that it is one of the children who are disabled. Little focus has been made on families where one or both of the parents have disabilities. These families often face prejudices and misconceptions in addition to the practical problems that are connected to their situation. Such families are often trying for the flexibility of the services, because standard solutions often do not satisfy their needs. Some parents may for instance have needs for assistance for looking after or taking care of their children. Other parents may need assistance only for some care tasks, but will have permanent needs for such assistance. It does not mean however, that they are not able to fulfil the role as parents.

Working age persons with disabilities

Those growing up with a disability face new problems when coming to working age. The differences between those inside and outside the labour market are great concerning the possibility to participate in society.

To become disabled in working age is a different transition for most people. You are forced to break with familiar patterns and routines, and most people will need support and assistance to adapt to the new situation. Many people experience a loss of identity and the familiar pattern of life. What one did as an obvious thing before, suddenly becomes an unsurpassable problem. The roles and the contacts inside the family become different. Leisure interests and being together with friends is not functioning in the same way anymore. The concern for the future is great, and previous plans have to be cancelled. The situation yields great mental problems, both for the person with disability himself and for the close family members. The longer the time that passes between the occurrence of the disability and the launching of rehabilitation measures, the greater the risk for an unsuccessful rehabilitation. Often this results in a permanent life on social security or additional problems in the labour market.

To get older with a disability

People with a disability must often work harder to perform the same results as persons without disabilities. This may lead to overload and withering down of the muscular- and skeleton system. Research findings seem to show that persons with disabilities are 2-3 times more at risk of having problems with increased age, than the population at large. This concerns both the physical matters, the relation to the environment and mental and social issues.

Immigrants with disabilities

The service apparatus is facing great challenges concerning immigrant families with disabled members. Tasks, which in Norway belongs to the service apparatus, are in some other countries performed by the family of the person with disability or other central people in the close environment. The information that is provided on various services in society, may be difficult to understand for immigrants with disabilities, because it is written in a way that might be difficult to understand even if you have learned Norwegian. The Norwegian society has a service apparatus and use of terms that some immigrants are not familiar with. This makes it even more difficult to present the services. The information is also not disseminated through the channels through which immigrants normally get their information.

Often it is necessary to use interpreters and specially adapted information to ensure that immigrants have the same access to services as Norwegians. It is important that immigrant families with disabled members are given opportunities to exchange experiences with others having the same cultural background and life situation.

The relationship of the service apparatus to persons with disabilities

What is special for people with disabilities is that many have needs for services from multiple sectors, during their lifetime. Not only does the services you need come from different sectors, but they are also provided by three levels of public administration: the municipality, the county administration and the state.

In varying degrees persons with disabilities may have needs for services from:

- the health and social services
- housing office, technical services
- specialist health services
- (re)habilitation team
- central for assistive technology
- social security office
- transport services
- labour market services
- competence centres for special pedagogy/PP services
- national and regional centres for special diagnosis groups

Disabilities are permanent. Some disabilities deteriorate during the lifetime, but for most people the question is to keep up the level of functioning. To be disabled does not only concern learning to live with and handle your life. Equally important it concerns the challenges of living in a society that is not particularly well adapted for persons with disabilities, and of receiving the various services you need, to work in a co-ordinated way.

Hidden disabilities

Many disabilities are hidden, i.e. it is impossible to observe that a person is disabled. So-called "hidden disabilities" cover a large and heterogeneous group, e.g. people with hearing disabilities, diabetes, reading disabilities, cognitive diseases, asthmatics and allergics, heart diseases and people with mental disabilities. In addition to the difficulties yielded by the disability itself, many people have problems because it is difficult to get understanding and acceptance for something that is not visible.

2.3.2 Summing up some important challenges

Needs for better physical adaptation of society

Norway has a lot to learn from countries, which have concentrated their activities for persons with disabilities towards society, and making it accessible in various fields. This is perhaps the greatest challenge we face in the plan period.

We have failed to make adaptation for persons with disabilities a natural part of societal planning. There must be a continuous planning process from the overall, long term societal planning to the concrete solutions. This line of thinking has over time been termed *universal design*. The objective of universal design is that all people should be able to use the same physical solutions, to a largest possible degree, whether it concerns buildings, out-door areas, transport facilities or household objects. If one included persons with disabilities already in the planning phase, adaptation need not cost so much extra. Here it is obviously great differences between improvement of existing environments and new constructions. Improvements and changes cost, but the more persons with disabilities' concerns are included during the planning, the more demands included in the concession terms, on purchases and development of new technology, the less needs there will be for improvements and changes afterwards.

A society that is adapted for persons with disabilities, both physically and in the way it meets the citizens, will be a good society for all citizens. A well adapted physical environment is to the benefit of children and parents of small children, older people and people with temporary dysfunctions, whether it concerns low-floor buses, good marking of public domains that e.g. are totally without stairs. The sports association that provides services where everybody can participate, and public services adapted to the needs of the individual user, contribute to the qualities that we wish should be typical for the Norwegian society.

Needs for better co-ordination of public services

The examples in 2.3.1 show that many persons with disabilities often have needs for assistance from more than one sector. Many have needs for services and/or adaptation from most sectors in large parts of their lives. The public service apparatus that is to take care of the welfare needs of the population has become very large. Division of tasks, specialisation and more professionalism dominates the services. The advantages of specialisation and sector divisions are manifold. But the development has also yielded that various sectors, levels of administration and professions often are responsible for a "part" of the user, something that often leads to lack of clarity in responsibility. The consequence is that many users have a feeling that they get lost in an over-complex system. Others state that they experience themselves as a kind of full-time co-ordinators with the responsibility to co-ordinate their own services.

It is a challenge to create a co-ordinated, binding and holistic development of the services as well as adaptation of society across departmental borders. This is both a professional and a political challenge. Co-ordinated services presuppose co-operation between the various bodies that provide the services in the municipalities, and between the various Governmental levels: municipalities, counties and the state. In order to facilitate co-operation on the local level, the Ministries with sector-wise responsibility have to co-operate.

Needs for a more adapted labour market

Persons with disabilities have a lower employment rate than people without disabilities. Employment yields a sense of belonging in a social society and has important effects on the individual's living conditions. For persons with disabilities who get more easily isolated in society than others, participation in the labour market is especially important. It is an objective that as many people restricted in their choice of occupation as possible shall receive employment training in the mainstream labour market.

If persons with disabilities are going to get and to keep employment, the measures must be comprehensive. Health- and social services, transport services, assistive technology and other adaptation, education and labour market initiatives are all elements that must be combined in order to get good results. It is a challenge to get the efforts from different governmental authorities to become mutually supportive.

3 An accessible society

3.1 Introduction

In the Plan of Action of 1990-1993 accessibility was given a wide definition in order to prove that the term might be used to describe persons with disabilities' access to society at large, not only the physical environment. The areas of action have been public information, physical environment, culture, training, outdoor life and sports, family and friends, local environment and food. This Plan of Action is based on the same understanding.

In this presentation it has as far as possible been marked out measures that are continued from earlier plan periods from new measures for the period of 1998-2001.

3.2 The UN Standard Rules

It is an objective that the UN Standard Rules for Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities will form the basis for public planning and shaping of measures and services.

3.2.1 Measures during the plan period

3.2.1.1 Hearings

It is planned to start off with the civil services. Hearings will be arranged on the UN Standard Rules to evaluate the implementation of these rules in Norway. The first hearing will be held on December 3rd 1998, which is the UN International Day for Persons with Disabilities.

3.2.1.2 Training programmes

A training programme and guidelines will be made on how the Rules may be used in public administration. The first part of the programme will be made ready for the December 1998 hearing.

3.3 Access to information

The two preceding plan periods have contained several projects on adaptation of information for people with reading difficulties. Projects have especially focused on their access to newspapers and public information via the Internet.

The Government Administration Services has developed a guide to adaptation of public information for visually impaired people via the Internet. The target group for the guide is information officers and those working on adaptation of public administration information. The guide also contains a description of the basic principles of public administration policy, and might thus also be useful for leaders.

The Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs has developed an IT Plan and has established a database on the Internet for professional communication and information in the field of special pedagogy.

The role of the television as an information channel, channel for public debate, education and entertainment is increasingly important. The lack of subtitling of news-, actuality-, and

debate programmes results in large difficulties in understanding what is being disseminated in these programmes for people with hearing disabilities.

As public broadcasting companies the Norwegian Broadcasting Co-operation, NRK and TV 2 have a responsibility to provide an adequate subtitling service for people with hearing disabilities. The introduction of digital television technology provides new openings for the development of better and more comprehensive services for persons with disabilities. In co-operation with organisations of people with hearing disabilities NRK has launched two development programmes for hard of hearing and deaf people.

3.3.1 Measures that are continued

3.3.1.1 Revision of the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs' Plan of Action for Information and Communication Technology

The National Centre for Educational Resources in 1997 developed a "Plan for ICT and persons with disabilities" implemented in 1998, and has also adapted the electronic "School Net" for users with disabilities. This will be followed up during the plan period.

3.3.1.2 Production and distribution of election information for people with reading disabilities

In connection with the 1997 general elections all election information that was produced by the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development was also electronically distributed by being laid out on the public administration's own Internet service ODIN. To disseminate information on the elections to as many voters needing specially adapted information because of reading disabilities as possible, the Ministry will continue the co-operation with the national organisations of people with reading disabilities on production and distribution of election information, as the Storting asked for in the Comment (Innst S No 114 (1997-98), Conclusion I.

3.3.1.3 Survey of reading conditions among deaf people

The Norwegian Association of the Deaf in 1998 received funding from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs to continue the project "Reading conditions among deaf people". The objective is to focus on how deaf people function in the information society. A picture will be provided of the situation for deaf people when it comes to offers of, access to and use of information through various media. The project will also suggest measures to improve access to information for deaf people. The project will be finished before the end of 2000.

3.3.2 Measures during the plan period

3.3.2.1 Interpreter project in the National Broadcast Association, NRK

This is a co-operation project between the organisations of people with hearing disabilities, NRK and Tandberg Television. A prototype for a digital receiver has been developed to make it possible for deaf people to introduce a deaf sign interpreter on the television screen. To survey the needs for mass production of decoders a user test of this new technology will be tested at the end of 1998 and during the beginning of 1999.

3.3.2.2 Subtitling project in NRK

This is a co-operation project between the organisations of people with hearing disabilities, NRK and SINTEF. The project, which will be finished during year 2000, will make it possible for deaf and hard of hearing people to have subtitled direct broadcastings via text television. The television programmes are subtitled directly with the aid of a speech sensor.

3.3.2.3 Project for improved access to public information for groups of persons with disabilities

There is no comprehensive policy for what types of information should be adapted for persons with disabilities. The Norwegian Central Information Service will during the first half of 1999 launch a development project to establish principles for adaptation of public information. The project will also evaluate which preconditions should be present for the information to reach all the target groups.

3.3.2.4 More active use of the Internet

The Ministry of Labour and Government Administration is working towards a more active civil administration use of the Internet as a channel for communication information and services to the public, as was required by the Storting in Recommendation (Innst S No 114 (1997-98), Resolution I. The ambition is that from the year 2000 all public documents should be published on the World Wide Web in one or several ordinary text formats (html, Word, pdf etc.). Thus persons with disabilities with IT knowledge will have easier access to public information.

3.3.2.5 Adaptation of software for people with visual- and reading disabilities

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs is planning to establish a secretariat during the plan period. One of the tasks for this secretariat will be to survey the demand for adaptation of software for people with visual- and reading disabilities.

3.4 Local environment, housing and public buildings

Insufficient access to housing, buildings and local environment is a large problem for many persons with disabilities. The Law on Planning and Building contains a series of regulations aimed at ensuring the objective of access to new buildings. A/o the Technical regulations in the Law on Planning and Building specifies demands both to the planning solutions and communication roads for buildings to be useable for people restricted in movement and orientation abilities.

Persons with disabilities constitute a prioritised target group for the Norwegian State Housing Bank's loan and funding services. Through various loan and funding services the bank finances measures to improve the accessibility in existing housing/blocks of flats and surroundings, a/o lifts and special kitchen equipment. Persons with disabilities with low incomes may be granted cheap loans and funding to buy their own housing, and living support to ensure that living expenses can be met. The bank provides funding for the building of multiple generation houses for persons with disabilities. Anyone building multiple generation standard houses may achieve larger loans.

In the plan period 1990-93 the Norwegian State Council on Disability implemented a large information campaign called "Persons with disabilities in Action". The objective of the campaign was to provide the municipalities with new knowledge about persons with disabilities and their living conditions, as a basis for new actions to improve the conditions for persons with disabilities in the individual municipalities.

3.4.1 Measures during the plan period

3.4.1.1 Survey of improved accessibility and development of a special Plan of Action

The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development will during 2000 survey the needs for improving general accessibility. During the plan period a draft Plan of Action will be developed for the improvement, including which types of buildings are in most need for improvement and how to achieve results in a quickest possible way.

3.4.1.2 Improved access for persons with disabilities to public buildings – Plan of Action

The Directorate of Public Construction and Property has made a detailed survey of the accessibility to their aggregate number of buildings and the needs for necessary improvements with a view for access for persons with disabilities. The Directorate of Public Construction and Property will, based on this survey, develop a new and updated Plan of Action for accessibility to their aggregate number of buildings.

3.4.1.3 Information to reduce dispensations from accessibility requirements

The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development will, through information and recommendations work towards a lesser use from the part of the municipalities of the possibility to have dispensation from the demands to accessibility in the planning- and building legislation, and that the counties and municipalities to a larger degree satisfy the demands for accessibility when building new houses.

3.4.1.4 A special regulation on demands for improving buildings?

The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development will before the end of 2000 evaluate whether there are needs for making regulations that makes it possible to demand improvement of existing buildings when this is necessary because of vital considerations of health, environment, security or accessibility.

3.4.1.5 More housing with multiple generation standard

It is an objective to increase the number of houses with multiple generation standard. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development will therefore during 1999 initiate a co-operation project between the building industry and persons with disabilities' organisations to increase the knowledge of and interest for multiple generations standards, and at the same time information about the advantages of such standards will be produced. The means used by the Norwegian State Housing Bank will be evaluated in this connection.

3.4.1.6 Evaluation of the loan and funding services for persons with disabilities of the Norwegian State Housing Bank

The personal loan- and funding services of the Norwegian State Housing Bank for persons with disabilities will be evaluated before the end of year 2000.

3.4.1.7 Project: "A society for all"

"A society for all" is a continuation and follow up of "Persons with disabilities in action". The project, which was launched in 1998 and will be finished in 2001, is a co-operation project between several Ministries and the organisations of persons with disabilities. The target group is key persons in the municipalities as well as persons with disabilities themselves. The objective is to adapt conditions for ensuring persons with disabilities real influence on their own lives, both concerning individual services and the possibility for a general adaptation in the local environments. The project will disseminate knowledge on user participation and co-operation, develop tools for this work and contribute to the creation of local arenas for, and a culture of, user participation. The project will develop an information- and training package consisting of television programmes, written information leaflet and special Internet pages. A CD-ROM will be produced with an overview of the field of assistive technology and what regulations are relevant for this.

3.4.1.8 Access to conference rooms and hotels that are used by the Ministries

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs will in 1999 make an initiative to ask all Ministries to ask for and utilise conference rooms and hotels that are accessible for persons with disabilities, when planning meetings and conferences etc. A project from an earlier Plan of Action period called "Travelling and outdoor life in the county of Nordland" has developed a system of criteria for how to evaluate accessibility. The Ministry will base itself on the "Nordland Model".

3.5 Education

It is an overall educational political objective to ensure that all pupils are offered equivalent education. The education shall ensure children and young people a part in a social, professional and cultural community and simultaneously yield a potential for growth based on different abilities and differences. Pupils that are in need of special adaptation, or have legal rights, may enjoy an education service that is individually adapted.

Adapted and equivalent education is an overall principle that should be the basis of all activities in kindergartens, schools and other pedagogic institutions. Within higher education the principle of equal rights to education is the rule to which all institutions must confer. Notwithstanding background, abilities and disabilities, everybody should, concerning education, meet challenges according to their aptitudes. This demand an individual adaptation based on centrally decided study programmes within the various fields of education, where the objective is to develop a best possible pedagogical offer.

The ability and possibility for communication with others is basic to be able to function in society. In this Plan of Action measures for people with language and speech disorders are emphasised.

Pupils with special needs for education in primary- and lower secondary school has the right to adapted education. An increasing number of pupils with disabilities get study competence and want to take a higher education. To meet this development measures connected to higher education will be made.

3.5.1 Measures that will be continued

3.5.1.1 Improved access to universities/colleges

The system of allocating 5% of the maintenance funding for universities and colleges for adaptation for disabled students will be continued.

3.5.1.2 EU project "Second Chance through distance education"

The objective is to improve access to secondary education for adult persons with disabilities. The project, which was launched in 1997 and will be finished in 1999, includes a/o adaptation of "Examen Philosophicum" (a preliminary university course) as distance education for disabled students. The Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs supports the national implementation. The Norwegian Study Association for Persons with disabilities and the Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Persons with disabilities are responsible for the project.

3.5.1.3 Production of textbooks (on tape and Braille) for blind and visually impaired people

The National Centre for Educational Resources (NLS) has initiated a new model for production and lending of tape recorded books based on demands and user control, of authorised textbooks to L-97 for pupils with reading and writing difficulties. NLS is co-operating with the competence centres in the visual sector; to ensure that the models encompass production of tape-recorded books for visually impaired pupils. The pupils may order the tape-recorded books in either of the two official Norwegian language versions. The development and production of tape recorded books for visually impaired pupils and trainees, and for pupils and trainees with reading and writing difficulties in upper secondary education, is monitored by the National Centre for Education Resources. The production of Braille will be increased to ensure that the Braille users have good access to authorised textbooks.

3.5.1.4 Sign language training

Measures during this period follow up measures during the previous plan period, a/o there is a focus on education in sign language in upper secondary education and training services for parents who already have some knowledge in sign language.

3.5.1.5 In-service training

Up-grading courses in special education for teachers and instructors in secondary education is to be continued.

3.5.1.6 The Central User's Forum

The Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs will continue the management of the Central User Forum in co-operation with the users' organisations. The Forum is user

controlled and is to be an arena for mutual dialogue and exchange of information between the users and the Ministries. The users here have a possibility for entering the decision-making process at an early stage in the field of training services for children, young people and adults with special needs.

3.5.2 Measures during the plan period

Plan of Actions for persons with disabilities in the field of education

3.5.2.1 Plan of Action

The Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs will during the autumn of 1998 develop a complete list of measures towards persons with disabilities within the Ministry's area of responsibility. Several of the measures will be an implementation of The White Paper (St meld No 23 (1997-98) On education of children, young people and adults with special needs and the Innst S No 228 (1997-1998).

3.5.2.2 Plans of Action for persons with disabilities at the universities and colleges

All colleges and universities with public support are required to develop Plan of Actions for disabled students during 1999. The institutions will consult the users during this process.

3.5.2.3 Contact person for persons with disabilities at all educational institutions

Before the end of 1999 a permanent contact person at all higher educational institutions shall be appointed, to provide students with information on how the educational institution and syllabus are adapted for various groups of persons with disabilities.

3.5.2.4 Information plan on apprenticeship training

During the plan period an information plan will be developed to increase the knowledge of apprenticeship training in the establishments and support facilities for persons with disabilities.

Secondary and higher education

3.5.2.5 Towards qualifications for higher education and vocational qualifications for youth with disabilities

The Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs has during 1998 initiated a project that will continue for three educational years. The main objective of the project is to improve the possibilities of young persons with disabilities to complete upper secondary education to achieve qualifications for higher education and vocational qualifications, as pupils in mainstream classes. The users are represented through the Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Persons with disabilities in a monitoring group for the project.

Research, documentation and development work

3.5.2.6 Research on the use of special pedagogical measures for adults in the municipalities

The project, which will continue from 1998 to year 2000, will analyse special pedagogical measures as an element in municipal habilitation and rehabilitation measures for adults with rights according to §5.2 in the Education Act. The project is implemented by the research institution Møreforskning, initiated by the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs.

3.5.2.7 User controlled project on the development and testing of new models of education for people with aphasia

During the training phase people suffering from aphasia may need a training facility on a broad basis. In 1998 a project will be initiated that a/o will look at organisation and models in the education of people suffering from aphasia. Furthermore the project will study possible types of professional staff recruitment of stand-in and alternative personnel. The project will have a one-year duration.

3.5.2.8 Financing of studies

The question of scholarships to students that are belated in their education because of disabilities will be discussed during 1999.

3.5.2.9 Adapted language tests in Norwegian for adult disabled immigrants

Adapted Norwegian language tests for adult disabled immigrants will be developed during 1999. The Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs has assigned this task to the Norwegian Language Test at the University of Bergen.

3.5.2.10 Network for adults with reading and writing difficulties – project

Improved co-ordination and co-operation between actors and providers working with adults with reading and writing difficulties is important. The main objective for the network is professional development and dissemination of knowledge. The Government's resource centre for adult education is assigned by the Ministry for Education, Research and Church Affairs to have the responsibility for the co-operation of the project. The network was established in 1998.

Development of teaching material

3.5.2.11 The demand for adapted study material

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs will, in co-operation with the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs, initiate a report to survey the needs of disabled students and employees to adapted study material. The report, which should be completed during 1999, will be used as a basis for improved production of such material.

3.5.2.12 Educational resources for deaf children

The National Centre will implement the development and production of educational material for deaf pupils in primary and lower secondary school for Educational Resources.

3.5.2.13 Baptising and confirmation training material for deaf, blind and visually impaired children and young people

During the plan period baptising and confirmation training material for deaf, blind and visually impaired children and young people will be developed.

Sign language

3.5.2.14 Development of a sign language dictionary and improved network training in sign language

Two user controlled measures will be implemented, one on the development of a sign language dictionary, and one on continuation of network training in sign language for relatives of deaf children. These measures will be completed by the end of the plan period.

3.5.2.15 Improved training of interpreters for deaf people

The Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs will establish a college level training for hearing people which is to yield communicative knowledge in practical sign language. The training will be on a level that qualifies for entering professional education demanding sign language skills, and for education qualifying teachers for education of deaf or strongly hard of hearing people.

3.5.2.16 Improved organisation of the interpretation service for deaf people

On the background of the Storting resolution, viz. Resolution Innst S No 228 (1997-98), the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs will follow up the question of organisation of the interpretation services for deaf people on various education levels.

3.5.2.17 Adult education for deaf people with multiple disabilities

From 1999 funding will be provided for a project on short term adapted adult training in a sign language environment for deaf people with additional multiple disabilities. Staff personnel from the municipal services will be supervised in their follow-up of the individual participant in his/her local environment.

Development of competence for professional staff

3.5.2.18 Programme to increase competence

During 1999 a practise-oriented competence-raising programme will be launched for the Educational-Psychological service and school managers on behavioural disorders, reading and writing difficulties and outward-oriented advisory work. This is a continuation of The White Paper St meld No 23 (1997-98) On training for children, young people and adults with special needs.

3.6 Transport and communications

The transport system shall be adapted in a way that people with disabilities to a largest possible degree are able to utilise mainstream transport-, postal- and telecommunication services.

In addition some special services are important to continue rendering:

- The exemption from all postal charges for literature for the blind, inside Norway and from and to Norway
- The system of financial support for telephone access for people with impaired hearing (up to 150 free units quarterly for users connected to the text telephony service)
- The system of compensation to visually impaired people for calls to the Directory inquiry service through the setting of fixed prices of Norwegian Kroner 2,50 for each call.

The Ministry for Transport and Communications acknowledges the need for more specialised and tailored transport services for various users groups, in addition to mainstream systems, e.g. parking regulations for persons with disabilities. The main political focus is nevertheless adaptation of mainstream systems so that persons with disabilities may make use of the general services in the sector. The Ministry furthermore wishes to enlist the competence of persons with disabilities, a/o through regular contact meetings with relevant organisations.

It is a vital challenge to contribute to increased knowledge and awareness on accessibility matters on all administrative levels of the public sector. It is also important to ensure that this consideration is an integral part of the general plan and investment activity within the transport and communications sector.

In 1997 the Ministry of Transport and Communications published a Plan of Action including measures of particular relevance to persons with disabilities in the transport sector.

3.6.1 Measures during the plan period

3.6.1.1 Comprehensive transport plan

During the spring of 2000 the Ministry of Transport and Communications and the Ministry of Fisheries will present a comprehensive national plan for the transport sector. Questions concerning transport for disabled people are among the items that are dealt with in the plan process.

3.6.1.2 Support R&D work on persons with disabilities' use of telecommunication

Telenor's license to supply telecommunications infrastructure and access to voice telephony issued by the Ministry of Transport and Communications includes a condition to provide adequate research and development concerning persons with disabilities, the elderly and other users with needs for specially adapted telecommunication services.

3.6.1.3 Development of accessible transport services

The Ministry of Transport and Communications will give priority to applications from the counties, aimed at developing public transport in line with the needs of disabled people within the scope of the Ministry's Trial Scheme for Public Transport.

3.6.1.4 Adaptation of accessibility for persons with disabilities to the means of transport buses and railways

Taking as a point of departure the legislation where legal basis exists for demanding accessibility, the Ministry will evaluate what kind of measures should be used to achieve this. In the first instance the work will focus on the means of transport buses and railways, including tramways and metro. A proposal for measures is development of guidelines, suggested standard to be used in allocation of concessions, etc. For example the Ministry of Transport and Communications has asked the Norwegian Railways BA to ensure that when purchasing new rolling stock persons with disabilities should be taken into consideration.

3.6.1.5 Requirements for the approval of licensed for transport for persons with disabilities

Adaptations of technical requirements for the approval of taxis licensed for people with mobility handicaps (in addition to ordinary passenger transport) are in course of preparation.

3.7 Culture and leisure

The Government will, in the field of culture and leisure, try to adapt a development ensuring experience and participation for the individual – as a basis for understanding, development and life quality. It is an objective that persons with disabilities shall have real possibilities to take part in cultural life in the broad sense on the same level as others.

In the field of culture and leisure the UN Standard Rules are supplemented with special rules, Numbers 10 and 11, stating that the Governments should ensure that persons with disabilities are included and may participate in cultural activities on the same basis as all others. The Governments are to implement measures to ensure that people with disabilities get the same possibilities for leisure and cultural activities. These challenges are a central part of the basis for the Government's policy in this field.

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs will co-operate with the interest organisations of persons with disabilities to ensure the quality of the measures for persons with disabilities. The main part of the culture- and leisure activities takes place, and are based on, the local societies – managed by municipalities as well as voluntary organisations. The Government will as much as possible try to adapt the work of the municipalities and voluntary organisations to provide equal services in the fields of culture and leisure.

The main objective of the sports policy is sports for all. The Ministry of Cultural Affairs will, based on this, work to ensure that as many as possible will be able to exercise sports in their environments, according to their abilities, wishes and needs. The co-operation with organised sports is a central part of this work.

Organised leisure activities and contact with people of the same age are two important arenas for the development of social intelligence and social competence with children. Disabled children often have a different pattern of activities than other children. This may have as a consequence lesser participation in organised leisure activities, like sports clubs, school bands, scouts etc.

Disabled youth has on average a somewhat lesser level of activities concerning leisure activities as training in sports clubs, meetings or training in organisations or associations and after-school jobs.

3.7.1 Measures that are continued

3.7.1.1 Equal opportunities for participation in sports and physical activities

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs is working to ensure persons with disabilities possibilities to participate in sports and physical activities, by supporting sports events for different groups of persons with disabilities and funding for the counties' courses and conferences on adaptation of activities.

3.7.1.2 Sign language interpretation of theatre performances

The support to sign language interpretation of theatre performances will be continued.

3.7.1.3 Health and culture

Health and culture is a pilot programme on a co-operative basis between the Ministry of Social and Health affairs, the Norwegian Council for Cultural Affairs, the National Concerts, the municipalities and the counties. Pilot projects are launched to gather experiences that can be documented on how culture can be utilised in work on prevention, health – promotion and rehabilitation. The objective is to increase the self-esteem and the ability to accomplish for groups with chronic diseases and persons with disabilities, as well as to increase the participation in local society for people in general.

3.7.2 Measures during the plan period

3.7.2.1 Increased accessibility to buildings of culture and sports facilities

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs has regulations for donations of funding that require that all new buildings and facilities are made accessible for persons with disabilities. The Ministry also has its own funding arrangement for supporting the reconstruction of older buildings and facilities in order to adapt them to the demands of persons with disabilities. Changing regulations in the legislation on planning and building puts new demands for such buildings and facilities, making it necessary to change the current information material. This work will be completed during the spring of 1999.

3.7.2.2 The project "Sports for all"

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs supports a three year project launched by the Norwegian Olympic Committee and Confederation of Sports to integrate persons with disabilities in Norwegian sports by giving the individual associations the responsibility to provide their own

facilities. The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs and the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs finance through their mainstream budget lines a partial project in the period 1998-2000 concerning development and transfer of competence.

3.7.2.3 Cultural participation for children and young people with sensory disabilities

Projects on the off-school leisure time facility as an area for cultural activities. The objective is to create improved social competence and belonging within a framework of common experiences.

3.7.2.4 Deaf theatre/sign language theatre

During the plan period a three-year pilot project will be launched with sign language theatre aiming at establishing increased access to theatres for deaf and hard of hearing people.

3.7.2.5 Touring activities – better access for persons with disabilities to cultural events

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs will improve the access for persons with disabilities to cultural events through an increase of the touring activities of the central cultural institutions and emphasis on necessary adaptation.

3.7.2.6 Make the new Culture Net Norway accessible for all

The Ministry of Cultural Affairs has launched a four-year project to co-ordinate the dissemination of Norwegian culture in electronic format, Culture Net Norway. The project will go on for the duration of the plan period. All four sectoral nets – archives, libraries, museums and art – that are to be parts of the Culture Net Norway, will be accessible for all via Internet before the end of the Millennium.

3.7.2.7 Mainstream leisure activities – adaptation for disabled children and young persons with disabilities

The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs will ensure that mainstream leisure activities for children and young people are adapted so that they will be accessible for children and young persons with disabilities.

Among others the Ministry will base itself on a survey of the possibilities for children and young persons with disabilities to participate in leisure activities in the nine largest cities. This survey was made in co-operation between the Ministry and the Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Persons with disabilities.

3.8 Product development and new technology

The Government will ensure access to information and communication technology for persons with disabilities. The technological development has had and will have great importance for many groups of persons with disabilities. IT has e.g. provided people with mobility disabilities with communication problems with the possibility to have an independent life.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry has for several years worked to stimulate the development of assistive technology in Norway. An evaluation of the activities in the Norwegian network for health technology during the period 1992 to 1996, implemented by the "Rogalandsforskning" research centre, proves that the enterprises in the field of assistive technology for persons with disabilities has had a positive development during this period. The answers gathered from 23 enterprises show a/o that:

- The number of employees has risen from 18-26 persons for each enterprise, i.e. 44% growth
- the turnover of assistive technology has increased with 76% (to about 230 million Norwegian Kroner)
- the turnover of medical equipment has increased with 70%
- the export is almost trebled in the period from 1992 to 1996.

There is a vast potential for further growth and development in the branch. A special funding arrangement exists for Norwegian producers of assistive technology/medical technical equipment (the FUNK system). The FUNK system was started during the first plan period and was co-financed by the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs. The system was continued during the second plan period. From 1999 measures to stimulate increased production of assistive technology are integrated in the general work to encourage the development of business activity in the health sector.

3.8.1 Measures that will be continued

3.8.1.1 Stimulate increased production of assistive technology in Norway

The initiatives towards the branch producing assistive technology will continue during this plan period.

3.8.1.2 Adapting accessibility for persons with disabilities travelling in Norway

A co-operation has been established between the travel operators, the user organisations and the relevant Ministries to improve access for persons with disabilities travelling in Norway. This work will be continued during the plan period.

3.8.2 Measures during the plan period

3.8.2.1 Increased focus on universal design/access for all in the implementing bodies (The Research Council of Norway and the Norwegian Industrial and Regional Development Fund)

The Ministry of Trade and Industry will ensure that universal design will be one of the criteria that the implementing bodies will emphasise.

3.8.2.2 The Ministry of Trade and Industry will evaluate how to ensure to a greatest possible degree access for all through legislation, concessions etc.

3.8.2.3 Survey the total market for assistive technology in the prime level health service

The Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs have during a 4-year period financed a pilot project in the Health Region 4 in innovative assistance in the health sector. The project will be continued as a national programme in a 5-year period from

1998. One of the tasks is to survey the market for prime level health services in general and assistive technology in particular.

3.8.2.4 Stimulate the users and health staff to engage in product development in co-operation with trade and industry

To ensure that trade and industry develop good solutions it is important that persons with disabilities participate in development projects as councillors, both in general and in connection to testing and trials. The Ministry of Trade and Industry will discuss this with the organisations of persons with disabilities and make guidelines for how the co-operation can be organised.

3.9 Pensions, health and social services

People with disabilities constitute an important target group for the mainstream activities in the pensions-, health- and social sectors.

From 1998 measures from earlier Plan of Action periods have been made permanent.

This concerns the competence centre for rear and lesser-known diagnosis groups, the SUITE (Sunnaas IT-unit) and the information secretariat for IT.

The National Insurance Administration has taken over the responsibility for the SUITE. The SUITE will still provide services for children, young people and adults with mobility disabilities and/or head damages from the whole country.

The Information Secretariat for IT, which has the task of co-ordinating information and other activities concerning IT for persons with disabilities, are concentrated in the DELTA Centre. The DELTA Centre (Norw. acronym for participation and access for all) is a 4-year project under the auspices of the National Insurance Administration. IT will contribute to increased access for persons with disabilities by stimulating development of assistive and ergonomic technology and a more adapted environment.

The competence centres for smaller and less known diagnosis groups will be developed further during the Plan of Action period. The work is administered by a co-ordination unit for national services for small and less known groups of persons with disabilities in the Council Secretariats service and individual health and social tasks etc.

Peer support in persons with disabilities' organisations was tested as a measure during the first two four-year periods of the Government's Plan of Actions for persons with disabilities. Peer support is different types of contact and supporting work between persons with disabilities experiencing similar situations and needs. The arrangement has been evaluated and deemed very useful. From 1998 the arrangement was made permanent. About a quarter of the funding will be used for peer support in connection to the labour market/rehabilitation, viz. Chapter 6.

Personal assistance managed by user is an alternative to practical and personal assistance for persons with severe disabilities who are in need for assistance in daily life, both inside and outside their homes. The user him- or herself has the role of team leader and takes a greater responsibility for organisation and content according to his or her needs. Within the amount

of hours granted by a municipal decree, the user can him- or herself decide who they want as assistant(s), what the assistant(s) should do, where the assistance is to be given and at what time the user needs the assistance. The service provision shall be part of the total municipal care services, and be connected to the person – not to the place of dwelling.

Since 1994 earmarked funding has been provided via the Government budget to stimulate municipalities that try out the new arrangement. In 1998 stimulation funding was given to 190 municipalities (excluding parts of towns) divided among all the counties, to in total 303 named users. In addition many municipalities have launched the arrangement notwithstanding the stimulation funding.

Evaluation reports from the Resource Centre for Care Services (1997) and the research centre *Østlandsforskning* (1997 and 1998) illustrate very positive responses both from users and municipalities.

The Storting has during its discussions of the Welfare Report and the budgetary proposals of the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs for 1997 and 1998 been concerned that the arrangement with personal assistance should be made a permanent municipal service. The Storting Committee on Social Affairs stated in its Recommendation Innst S No 114 (1997-98):

“The Committee will ask the Government to evaluate how personal assistants managed by the user may be a permanent offer to the user. The Committee feels that the Government should consider whether the arrangement with personal assistants should be established by law”.

3.9.1 Measures that are continued

3.9.1.1 Personal assistance managed by the user

In 1999 funding will be given for personal assistants for new users and continuation for those municipalities that already practise the arrangement.

3.9.1.2 Competence building on assistive information technology

Continuation of the project Northern Norway IT unit (NONITE). The main objective is to establish permanent co-operation networks to contribute to increased dissemination and use of IT based assistive technology for children and young people, including Lapp speakers, with disabilities.

3.9.1.3 Tutors in rehabilitation

The Norwegian Board of Health plans to develop five professional guidelines on rehabilitation of different groups of persons with disabilities. These are to contribute to the work in the primary and the specialist health services. These guidelines are produced:

- Guidelines for rehabilitation of stroke patients
- Guidelines for rehabilitation of children and young people

These guidelines will be produced:

- Rehabilitation of people with sensory impairments
- Rehabilitation of people with progrediating neurological diseases
- Rehabilitation of people with lung diseases

3.9.1.4 Awareness raising of young immigrants with disabilities

The project has been launched by the Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Persons with disabilities and will ensure increased awareness on the situation of this group in Norwegian society. The project addresses public services, organisations and networks of immigrants and refugees, and persons with disabilities' organisations. The project aims at utilising resource persons with culture and language competence to assist in contact making, dissemination of information and establishing contacts in the networks of immigrants and refugees.

3.9.1.5 Project for awareness raising and engagement in the many immigrant organisations concerning older immigrants with disabilities

The project is sponsored by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and will be implemented by the Norwegian Peoples' Aid and is meant to be concluded in 1999.

3.9.1.6 The DELTA Centre

Continue the "Centre for assistive technology and adaptation of the environment for persons with disabilities", a four-year project that started in 1997. The DELTA Centre also has an important role as a disseminator of information. The National Insurance Administration is responsible for the project. The steering committee is led by a representative of the persons with disabilities' organisations.

3.9.1.7 Training houses outside institutions

The target groups are persons with mobility disabilities from all over the country who live in institutions or think about moving into institutions. The objective is that the disabled person should be able to live alone or with his or her family. Test will be made to check which assistive measures and assistive technology is necessary to achieve an optimal degree of independence in the person's own house. The experiences gained during the training stay will be the basis for the adaptation of houses in the municipality of residence, purchase of assistive technology and services to be offered. The municipality of residence will be offered guidance. The project encompasses two houses in Oslo and will be prolonged until the year 2000. The Ministry will evaluate if there is a need to establish similar services in other parts of the country.

3.9.1.8 Cognitive rehabilitation

The "KreSS project" (cognitive rehabilitation, Sunnaas Hospital) is a project co-financed by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and the City of Oslo. The unit provides services to persons having got cognitive impairments. The tasks of the unit are a/o rehabilitation and building up and dissemination of competence in co-operation with people with cognitive impairments and their relatives. The KreSS produces a broad range of information material and arranges courses for users and professional staff from all over the country. The project will last for the duration of the plan period.

3.9.2 Measures during the plan period

Personal assistance managed by the users

3.9.2.1 Establishing by law the arrangement of personal assistance managed by the user

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs has announced in its budgetary proposal for 1999 that a legislation bill will be presented that the municipalities get an obligation to establish the arrangement of personal assistant in the same way as other social services. The establishment by law will take place by changing the law on social services § 4-2 a. This change will be made official from January 1st, 2000.

3.9.2.2 Information film and brochure

An information film and a new brochure on personal assistance managed by users will be produced in 1999.

3.9.2.3 Conferences and courses

In 1999 regional conferences will be organised on personal assistance managed by users, for users, relatives, assistants, municipal staff and local politicians. A manager course for users will also be arranged.

Development of knowledge and competence

3.9.2.4 The competence centre for deaf-blind people (for people born or having become deaf-blind)

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs will establish a national competence system for deaf-blind based on the existing competence centres for people born deaf-blind from January 1st, 1999. This will be a supporting system for the municipalities and counties and provide individual services.

3.9.2.5 Competence network for people with partial/total loss of hearing

During 1999 a proposal will be made for organisation of rehabilitation for people with partial/total loss of hearing. The objective is to improve co-ordination of the existing bodies having responsibility for this target group.

3.9.2.6 Hearing assistants

The Norwegian Association of the Deaf will in 1998 launch a three-year project aiming at achieving a standardised hearing assistant service in all municipalities. Hearing assistants are hard of hearing people being educated in providing advice and guidance to other people with hearing disabilities, especially in the use and maintenance of hearing aids and other types of assistive technology. More hearing assistants will be educated and routines for co-operation

between hearing aid centres and local hearing aid contacts will be developed in the field of using the service.

3.9.2.7 Co-ordinated services for hard-of-hearing

The Norwegian hearing assistance services are experienced as fragmented by the users and professionals. The division of responsibilities and tasks among bodies and levels is vague and partly confusing, resulting in difficulties in co-operation and rehabilitation of people with hearing disabilities. During the Plan of Action period the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs will evaluate the organisation of the resources on county and municipality level, and make proposals to ensure a more co-ordinated rehabilitation service. This will be implemented in close co-operation with the user organisations and various professional groups.

3.9.2.8 Conference for the interpretation services for deaf people

The conference will be arranged during autumn 1998 by the Norwegian Deaf Association with participation from the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and the Public Pensions Administration. The conference is aiming at achieving a co-ordinated approach to the interpretation services both concerning recruitment, education, rights, organisation, dissemination, reimbursements and appeal systems. The results of the conference will be used by the Ministries future work with the same objectives.

3.9.2.9 Establish a national action for the groups ADHD, Tourette syndrome and narcolepsia

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs will establish this national competence unit as a permanent service from 1999.

3.9.2.10 Survey, collection and dissemination of information on immigrants with disabilities

The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Administration and the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs are funding a project to systematise existing knowledge on the situation for immigrants with disabilities. The main objective is to develop information material and disseminate among them information on values, on Norwegian policy towards persons with disabilities and on the welfare and other services. The project will be finished in 1999.

3.9.2.11 Competence on problems of immigrant policy

From 1999 a bi-annual pilot project will be implemented with the objective of strengthening the competence of the Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Persons with disabilities in the field of problems on immigrant policy and create a basis for networking activities concerning immigrants with disabilities.

3.9.2.12 Information services for immigrant families with disabled children at the Frambu institution from 1999

Reports from earlier sessions at the Frambu institution for Pakistani families prove that such information services for groups with the same linguistic and cultural backgrounds are

important to assist the families in handling daily life. The Frambu institution will in addition provide increased knowledge to service personnel through offering courses.

3.9.2.13 Project: To get older with disability

The project will yield knowledge on getting older for people being born disabled, or having at an early stage become disabled. Problems of becoming old at an early stage, becoming wearied down, social and medical conditions and special needs towards other older people will be part of this project. The project will evaluate possible measures, which may have preventive effects, and be the basis for increased competence and dissemination of information.

3.9.2.14 Establish a permanent competence network on autism

The programme for the development of competence for autistics started in 1993 as a 5-year development programme. An evaluation of the programme concludes that a positive development of competence has been achieved in the counties. From 1999 the programme for development of competence on autism will be continued as a permanent competence network in a co-operation between the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs. The network will provide services to people with autism countrywide. The competence network will report to the Ministries through plans, annual reports and cost statements.

3.9.2.15 Testing of post-graduate training for dental staff in public and private enterprises in rare medical conditions

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs will during the plan period provide funding for testing of courses developed by the Institute for Odontology at the University in Oslo. The courses have as objective to increase the knowledge of oral medical conditions for people with rare disabilities.

Health

3.9.2.17 Plan of Action for prevention of asthmatics, allergies and in-door climatic diseases 1998-2002

The plan mainly deals with primary prevention measures. Some of the measures are directed towards people who already are ill because of a/o food allergies. Today's labelling regulations on foodstuffs, being based on international recommendations, are not satisfactory for allergic people. In the Plan of Action for prevention of asthmatics, allergies and in-door climatic diseases the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs will propose to develop guidelines for improved specification on voluntary basis, information on labelling of foodstuffs, develop information on diet counselling, information on labelling to consumers with food allergies and – intolerance, and secure adequate competence of analysis concerning food allergic. The Ministry will furthermore propose general regulations for production, imports and presentation of cosmetics and body treatment products, with guidelines for declaration of the chemical contents of the products. Material will also be produced for people with reading disabilities.

3.9.2.18 Assistance telephone for people with tinnitus and morbus meniere from 1999

The objective of the assistance telephone is to make it possible for people suffering from tinnitus and morbus meniere to get information, practical advice and psychological support as soon as possible. The project will be administered by the Norwegian Association of the Hard of Hearing with funding from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and continue for the duration of the plan period.

3.9.2.19 Text telephones for deaf and people with speaking disabilities in hospitals

Deaf people and people with speaking disabilities are today dependent on speaking via a transmission central when they want to contact a doctor. When staying in hospitals they have no possibility to contact relatives and others outside the hospital. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs will during 1999 develop a recommendation for purchasing transportable text telephones for patients/relatives in hospitals.

3.9.2.20 Establishing interpretation services for deaf sign language users staying in hospitals

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs will in 1999 disseminate a circular to hospitals encouraging them to acquire deaf sign interpreters for users of deaf sign language when staying in hospitals.

3.9.2.21 Discussion- and self-help groups

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs has given the Norwegian Study Association for Persons with disabilities the task of developing a system to prevent mental diseases among people with disabilities. The work started in 1998 and will be completed in 1999.

3.9.2.22 Adaptation for people with mobility orientation disabilities in doctors' offices and physiotherapy premises

Many offices of medical doctors and physiotherapists are inaccessible for people with mobility and orientation disabilities. With the introduction of the Norwegian permanent doctors reform many doctors will continue to practice in the same premises as before. If these are not satisfactory concerning accessibility, the municipality should agree with the doctors on how to improve the access. The Ministry will, in connection with information about the permanent doctors reform, in 1999 encourage the municipalities to make demands to proper access when they enter agreements with permanent doctor's agreements with doctors that are to open practice or move their practice within the municipality.

Social

3.9.2.23 The model of responsibility groups – guidelines for the municipalities

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs will during 1999 develop guidelines for the municipalities on the use of responsibility groups or other types of good practice like e.g. contact persons.

3.9.2.24 Relief and support services for deaf people- stimulating measures

During 1999 stimulating measures will be implemented to make the municipalities to utilise the training package in sign language from the Norwegian State Institution for Distance Education. One of the objectives is to establish relief services for deaf people where staff is available who are able to use sign language.

3.9.2.25 Better relief services

During 1998, based on a request of the parliamentary Social Committee, a survey will be made of how many receive relief services and what kind of services they are offered. Based on the survey an evaluation will be made in 1999 on what can be done to improve the relief services for families taking care of persons with disabilities.

3.9.2.26 Paid care

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs will implement a three-year project with paid care for families with disabled members below 18 years of age in some municipalities.

3.9.2.27 Following up of report on use of violence against women with disabilities

In 1999 the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs will disseminate information to a/o the police and develop documentation for women with disabilities in order to prevent and provide information about where to get assistance.

3.9.2.28 "Green care" – employment training and activity services

Regional agricultural authorities and the health- and social service in some municipalities have in some counties combined to establish services in employment training and activities to a/o persons with developmental, and persons with mental disabilities in connection to farming. The establishment of these projects is a/o financed with rural development funds, which are administered by the regional agricultural authorities. The municipalities fund the management of the projects. These daytime service were established mainly in smaller agricultural municipalities where it is difficult to establish other good services. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs wants to develop this co-operative model further.

3.9.2.29 Receivers of basic level pensions with particularly difficult living conditions

An analysis of a living conditions survey among recipients of a basic benefit (if the disability involves significant extra expenses) from the National Insurance Scheme Fund proved, that a tenth of people in the ages from 16-67 years have particularly difficult living conditions. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs is in 1998 surveying this group in depth. Based on results from the survey alternative measures will be tried during the plan period for monitoring persons with disabilities having, or at risk of getting, difficult living conditions. The Ministry will also consider other measures that may be presented in The White Paper on levelling of living conditions.

Pensions

3.9.2.30 Access to the Social Security Offices

Funding has been allocated in the state budget for 1999 to improve access to the Social Security Offices. Allocation of funds will happen on the basis of a survey of the demands and will be seen in connection to the regional work with service declarations.

3.9.2.31 User participation in the Social Security services

The Social Security Services shall on an annual basis implement a nation-wide user survey. In addition the regional social security offices shall systematise responses from the users in their own counties. The service shall also establish users' committees in the counties. A common mandate for these will be completed during 1998.

3.9.2.32 Improve the social security support for users of hearing aid apparatuses

People below 18 years of age do not have to co-pay for digital hearing aid apparatuses from 1999.

3.9.2.33 Raised age limit for care allowances under the National Insurance Scheme

From 1999 the age limit for children with disabilities and seriously ill children, where parents are entitled to care allowances, will be raised from 16 to 18 years.

3.10 Adolescence and family

The conditions in the family are important for the individual and for society. The Government therefore wants to strengthen the families' situation.

In Chapter 2 in this White Paper, special challenges are a/o mentioned that are faced by families with disabled children or parents. Parents having children with disabilities should feel greater security for society to assist and support.

The Government will present a White Paper on kindergartens in 1999. The situation for children with disabilities will be mentioned therein.

The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs is currently evaluating the guidelines for procedures in handling adoption applications. The evaluation also includes the criteria for acceptance of adoption applicants. In today's regulations for the investigation and acceptance of adoptive homes in cases of foreign adoptions, demands are a/o made for adoptive parents to have good physical and mental health. This demand is made with a view for the adoption to be for the benefit for the child, also for children having special needs, which for a long time will demand extra commitment on the part of the adoptive parents.

The demands for good health have been suggested continued in the new guidelines for adoption, but suggestions have been made to this demand should be a bit varied. This can be done by emphasising that the adoptive parents should constitute a unity of care. One should evaluate whether a disability may influence the applicants' collective ability to provide the

child with enough care and security, over a long period. In other words, by emphasising the parents as a care unit it will be easier for persons with disabilities to adopt.

3.10.1 Measures that are continued

3.10.1.1 Further development of the magazine "Young"

The objective is to create a permanent information organ for secondary school pupils, and ensure that targeted information on the situation of children and young people with disabilities is part of the magazine's profile.

3.10.2 Measures during the plan period

3.10.2.1 Survey of the thoughts and wishes of young people with disabilities as to growing up

A three-year project at the NOVA from 1998, financed by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, will collect information on the adolescence of young people with disabilities, what they expect of their future and what kind of possible barriers they envisage concerning their plans and wishes.

3.10.2.2 Courses in living together for parents of children with disabilities

The Centre for Life together at the institution of Modum Bath has, in co-operation with persons with disabilities' organisations, launched a course on living together. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs is from 1998 funding an enquete and the further development of this service. The objective is to establish courses on living together for parents of children with various types of disabilities. The project will last for the duration of the plan period.

3.10.2.3 The situation for children with disabilities in kindergartens – evaluation

The situation for children with disabilities in kindergartens will be evaluated as a part of the implementation of the direct payment system. (*Trans.: A newly introduced system in Norway where parents are given direct financial support so that they can choose which type of services they want for their children*).

3.10.2.4 Develop, during 1999, proper information and guidance to those responsible for admittance to, and management of, the kindergartens

The objective is to secure the rights of children with disabilities.

3.10.2.5 Increase the dissemination of knowledge and competence to employees within the child care department, to prepare them to meet the needs of users with disabilities in a best possible way

3.10.2.6 Facilitate the dissemination of electronic information to children and young people

The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs will in co-operation with other Ministries evaluate how to facilitate the dissemination of electronic information to children and young people.

3.11 Research

The White Paper St meld 34 (1996-97) Results and Experiences from the Government's Plan of Actions for persons with disabilities and the way ahead emphasises that there is a need for more research on persons with disabilities. The majority of the Parliamentary Social Committee pointed out that research for persons with disabilities is important within all fields of society, and that so far this has been noticed to a small degree. The Committee asked the Research Council of Norway to consider conditions of persons with disabilities' as part of all their research fields. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs has on this background asked the Research Council of Norway to follow up on this.

3.11.1 Measures that are continued

3.11.1.1 Research for people with disabilities

Research for persons with disabilities is included in a subprogram as part of the research programme Welfare and Society (1995-99) in the Research Council of Norway. It is a major objective that the development of knowledge should be action oriented for the assistance of public policy, users and users' organisations. The main topic is: Living conditions – how the situation of persons with disabilities has developed compared to the population at large. Life cycles – how is the situation of persons with disabilities during various phases of life and questions concerning the transition between different phases of life. Daily life and social framework – especially how the assistance services function and what effect persons with disabilities have on these. At the termination of the programme the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs will take an initiative to further develop the research commitment for persons with disabilities.

3.11.1.2 Housing and living conditions

At the initiative of the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development a research programme has been launched on "Housing and living conditions", managed by the Research Council of Norway (1997-2000). A central part of the programme is housing and living conditions for persons with disabilities, and questions connected to housing for this group that may be included in the programme. It concerns a/o the question of accessibility, financing of housing for persons with disabilities and analyses of the housing- and living conditions for persons with disabilities.

3.11.2 Measures during the plan period

3.11.2.1 The life situation for mentally handicapped people at the end of the millennium

A new three-year programme from 1999 managed by the Research Council of Norway. Ten years after the termination of the Health Care for Persons with Mental Handicaps (HVPU), there is a need for new knowledge on the situation both for mentally handicapped persons who were, and those who were not, registered in the HVPU. The programme is funded by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs.

3.11.2.2 Increased efforts on IT for persons with disabilities

The Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs will during the plan period give more efforts on IT for persons with disabilities, under the auspices of the Research Council of Norway. The objective is that these initiatives shall yield increased access to new technology for persons with disabilities, and in that way increase the access to society. The initiatives will within the following fields: More focus on universal design, assistive technology/tools that ensure access to existing IT solutions, language technology, measures to integrate persons with disabilities in the labour market, based on existing and newly developed IT assistive technology.

3.11.2.3 Implementing a new Chapter 6 A in the Law on Social Services

In connection with the new Chapter 6A in the Law on Social Services: Rights to and Limitation and Control of use of Force and Power etc. towards Certain Persons with Mental Handicaps, initiatives are taken for several research projects managed by the Research Council of Norway and financed by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs:

- questions of legal protection concerning legislation
- status of knowledge concerning various theoretical perspectives and scientific methods in therapeutical environments for mentally handicapped persons
- research project on causal relations between behavioural problems among mentally handicapped persons and their social and environmental conditions.

4 Planning of society and user participation

4.1 Background

It is possible to increase the accessibility of persons with disabilities in the widest meaning through systematic and co-ordinated planning. Municipal and regional planning processes may be used to ensure that political objectives are made concrete through action. In this way, the consideration of persons with disabilities' interests may be incorporated in the general way of thinking, and user participation of a good quality may take place.

The Government's objective is that all planning, regulations and guidelines shall take persons with disabilities' interests into consideration.

4.2 User participation

There must be a conscious dividing line between user participation and user control.

User participation means that those who are affected by a decision, or are the consumers of services, are able to participate in the process before decisions are made. *User control* means that the user representatives are in majority in those decision-making bodies. This chapter deals with user participation.

User participation is a basic principle in the Government's work for persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities should participate in the shaping of the society. Increased participation from persons with disabilities is necessary to secure the rights and needs of persons with disabilities.

4.3 The priority area "Planning and user participation"

The priority area "Planning and user participation" in the Government Plan of Action for Persons with disabilities 1998-2001 aims at making the consideration of persons with disabilities a condition for all municipal and regional planning. This implies that overarching political and societal objectives on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the decision that all planning is based on, and that the objectives are developed into concrete activities on the various planning levels within the relevant sectors.

The municipal plans are producing the frameworks and strategies for the work within each municipality in sectors that are important for all citizens, including persons with disabilities. For instance the municipal plan will draw up the overarching objectives of the municipality on accessibility, while the plans for living quarters, plans for open-air areas, development of city centres, schools and so on may specify targets and means to implement them. In addition the e.g. regulation plans will secure the practical implementation of intentions on accessibility. User participation is particularly important at the development of main priorities and initiative in all relevant fields in the final municipal plan.

User participation is important also in counties and the various sectoral county plans. Sector plans on county level on e.g. transport and health has a direct influence on the development, while the county plan provides guidelines that the municipalities are to follow up.

The Law on Planning and Building is to an increasing degree used as a basis for the formal, practical and administrative parts of the planning processes in counties and municipalities. It is also used in planning of other sectors that area planning, e.g. in health- and social planning. The law is clear in its demands for user participation in the whole planning process up to political decision making. It is important that persons with disabilities and their organisations are more involved in these fields.

The priority area is administered by the Ministry of the Environment that is the professionally responsible Ministry of planning, and administers the planning part of the Law on Planning and Building. The measures in the Plan of Action for Persons with Disabilities 1998-2001 are co-ordinated with the measures that are presented in The White Paper St Meld No 29 (1996-97) Regional planning and regional policy.

4.3.1. Measures during the plan period:

Public guidelines

4.3.1.1 Circular on the needs of people with disabilities on area planning during spring 1999

A circular providing guidelines for how area planning should take into consideration persons with disabilities needs for accessibility shall be ready during the spring of 1999. Through the possibility to protest, plans that do not take the necessary considerations may be interrupted by public authorities.

4.3.1.2 Evaluate changes in the Law on Planning and Building and national political guidelines

The work on evaluating national political guidelines and changes in the Law on Planning and Building to ensure the interests of persons with disabilities has started. The results of this evaluation will be presented during 1999.

Education and training

4.3.1.3 Education and training

Work is done to ensure that knowledge on planning for persons with disabilities is incorporated into the basic education at the colleges. Three of the 13 universities and high schools that teach in planning, are already doing this. The Ministry of the Environment is partly financing this work.

The educational institutions will implement tests of pedagogical methods to include knowledge on planning for persons with disabilities in the education. The objective is that planning for persons with disabilities and universal design shall become an integrated part of the basic education. This work is co-ordinated with the initiative of the Norwegian State Housing Bank to increase knowledge on accessibility for persons with disabilities to technical education in secondary schools, colleges and universities.

In addition work will be done to established postgraduate courses, and special courses to increase the competence of planners in counties and municipalities will be introduced.

Development project: Planning in practise and participation

There is a need for increased knowledge to implement good planning processes where the consideration for accessibility and persons with disabilities are taken care of. This concerns factual knowledge on what measures should be implemented as well as how user participation may yield the best possible results. A/o it is important to acquire more knowledge on:

- How mainstream participation processes in municipalities and counties may be planned and adapted to include the inputs of participating persons with disabilities
- What objectives and overall demands should be the basis of planning and development of measures in different sectors
- Which specific demands to quality should be made for adaptation for persons with disabilities, and practical examples of this
- How consideration for persons with disabilities can be made in the general design of physical measures – “universal design”
- How to increase participation and make it more effective and rational for users and public authorities.

4.3.1.4 Research and development project

During the plan period research and development projects will be implemented that aim at answering some of the above mentioned questions.

The research will span several sectors in the municipalities and counties, but the main emphasis will be put on projects with plans where it is possible to achieve increased accessibility for persons with disabilities. As a part of the research and development programme contacts between the various projects will be organised.

4.3.1.5 Evaluation of user participation

A programme will be instigated to monitor and measure the development of user participation in the planning processes in counties and municipalities and the effect of the work on including the consideration for persons with disabilities' interests in the planning.

Information

Persons with disabilities' organisations will be important co-operation partners concerning the information work in the priority field. The Ministry of the Environment will e.g. include accessibility for persons with disabilities in their ordinary information material and in their conferences.

International experiences, especially from Europe and USA, concerning accessibility and planning will be used. Furthermore information will be gathered on the work on accessibility and planning in the Nordic countries through the Nordic Council on Handicap Policy and direct contact with authorities on central level, institutions and relevant projects in each individual country. Furthermore, contacts and experiences from the HELIOS II co-operation in Europe will be followed up. Of particular interest in this connection is work going on in England, but also singular projects in other European countries. The professional

development, particularly in the USA, concerning methods and practical inclusion of persons with disabilities' concerns in the planning and design ("universal design") will be monitored.

4.3.1.6 Information on the ODIN

Information on activities and results will be continuously be laid out on the Government Internet server, the ODIN.

4.3.1.7 Revision of guidelines for area planning

The guidelines of the Ministry of the Environment on area planning shall have incorporated accessibility for persons with disabilities before the end of 1999.

4.3.1.8 Accessibility as a topic for scientific conferences

The topic of accessibility for persons with disabilities will be included in the general scientific conferences that the Ministry of the Environment is arranging on a regular basis. Planning for persons with disabilities will also be included as a topic in other general and special conferences.

5 Rights of persons with disabilities

5.1 Background and assessments

Norway has for the whole post-war period performed a vast development of public services. The core of the welfare state is the responsibility of public authorities to ensure education, health and social services. What has characterised Norwegian social policy in later years has been the fundamental principle that the whole population, or everyone belonging to a category of the population, is included in the welfare services. Especially the Public Pensions Act has played a vital part in ensuring persons with disabilities a worthy and independent life with possibilities for active participation. Important measures are a/o. pension systems for those excluded from the labour market, assistive technology, reading assistants and secretaries and support for acquiring cars. Another example of what has played a vital part to ensure welfare for persons with disabilities is the law on kindergartens. It ensures a/o children with disabilities priority in the intakes for the kindergartens and obliges the municipalities to provide special pedagogical services.

No. 15 of the "UN Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities" concerns legislation and demands that the states take a responsibility to provide a legal basis for measures aiming at fulfilling the objective of full participation and equalisation for people with disabilities. A main question is whether persons with disabilities are sufficiently secured through the ordinary legislation or whether there is a need for special individual rights in any field.

The Government shall, during the spring of 1999, present a White Paper on Plan of Action for human rights. In this plan persons with disabilities will also be mentioned.

At the evaluation of The White Paper No. 34 (1996-97) Results and Experiences from the Government Plan of Actions for persons with disabilities and the way ahead, the Social Committee agreed to the suggestions in the former Jagland Government's plan of an evaluation of Norwegian legislation to consider whether persons with disabilities' rights are sufficiently taken care of.

The Government feels that an evaluation of legally based rights should be viewed in the light of other possible solutions. The Government will therefore establish a public commission to regard the rights of persons with disabilities in a broader perspective. The commission should include people from different professions and places in society, including persons with disabilities' organisations.

At the evaluation of The White Paper No 34 (1996-97) the Social Committee remarked that less than half of the municipalities had their own particular plans for persons with disabilities and commented the following:

"The Committee thus feels that this point should be followed up in a more committed way in the coming Plan of Action, alternatively through a demand towards all municipalities."

The committee also felt that it is recommendable that all municipalities establish councils for persons with disabilities.

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs is currently working on new guidelines for the establishment and running of such councils. The guidelines will be available before the summer of 1999.

The Government regards it as natural that these two questions are more thoroughly discussed by the above-mentioned commission.

For the individual person with disabilities it might be a problem to acquire correct and sufficient information on rights and services in various fields of society. Through a project within the Plan of Action the Government wants to observe how such user guidance can be strengthened.

5.1.1 Measures during the plan period:

5.1.1.1 Public committees

There will be established a public commission to review the rights of persons with disabilities in a broader sense, in order to evaluate different strategies and measures to improve possibilities for participation and equalisation in the Norwegian society by persons with disabilities.

5.1.1.2 Project strengthening of user guidance

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs will finance a 3-years project from 1999. The project will be a project for strengthening user guidance for persons with disabilities in some parts of the country. The user guidance will a/o deal with persons with disabilities' rights in various fields of society, as on public pensions, health and social services.

6 Plan of Action for increased employment among persons with disabilities

6.1 Background and main objective

As part of the discussions on the Welfare Report the Norwegian Storting asked the Government to take the initiative to prepare an Plan of Action for increasing employment among persons with disabilities.

In the comment (*Innst. S No 114 (1997-98)*) to The White Paper (*St meld 34 (1996-97)*) the majority of the Social Committee in the Storting stated that such an Plan of Action should form part of the Government's plan of action for the disabled in the period 1998-2001.

It is the objective of the Government that as many persons with disabilities as possible shall have the opportunity to participate in the labour market. Persons with disabilities constitute an important labour resource.

Employment yields a sense of belonging to a community and social environment and has important consequences for the individual's income and living conditions. For persons with disabilities there is greater danger than for others to become isolated in the society, and participation in the labour market is a particularly important value for this group.

A financial policy that stimulates high demand in society and a labour market policy that provides an effective and functioning labour market are important preconditions for persons with disabilities to enter employment. A well functioning labour market is characterised by the fact that vacancies are quickly occupied without any pressure on salary- and price levels. At the same time it should contribute to a high employment level and ensure adaptation for groups having problems with entering or are in danger of being forced out of the labour market.

The basic idea underlying the development of the Plan of Action for increased employment for persons with disabilities has been that the various authorities' measures should be mutually supporting. Health and social services, transport services, assistive technology and other adaptive measures, education and labour market activities are all elements to be combined in order to yield a good result.

6.2 Persons with disabilities' situation concerning participation in the labour market

6.2.1 Persons with disabilities and employment

The favourable development in the in the labour market since 1993 produced an increase in the number of employed people to more than 184 000 in 1997. The employment frequency, i.e. the percentage of the population in employment, is 72,5% in 1997, higher than ever before.

There is no regularly updated survey of the employment level of persons with disabilities as a group. Data on living conditions prove that the percentage of employed persons with disabilities aged 16-66 years old was 43 per cent in 1987 and 37 per cent in 1995. In comparison the employment rate among people without disabilities was 78 per cent in 1987 and 76 per cent in 1995. A lower level of employment in 1995 than in 1987 must a/o be

regarded in view of the general situation in the labour market. Data on living conditions in the county of Nordland illustrate a higher percentage of employed persons with disabilities, with 53 per cent in 1995. The differences in employment levels between the two surveys may have been caused by different definitions of persons with disabilities.

Both surveys prove that persons with disabilities have slightly lower level of employment than people without disabilities do. One should still note that the survey made in Nordland proved that among people below 40 years of age persons with disabilities showed an equal employment rate with people without disabilities. In the group aged between 40 and 66 years old the employment rate among persons with disabilities decreased, while for people without disabilities the rate increased. There may be several reasons for this. Researchers point to the fact that firstly, the percentage with disabilities increase with higher age because many disabilities occur during a lifetime. Secondly it may seem that persons with disabilities to a larger degree are excluded from the labour market when they get older. The lack of sufficient data collected over time may also have the effect that some of those effects that the surveys based on average level data illustrate, are based on differences between various generations that are living at the same time, and not developmental trends connected to the individual.

The Government regards it as important to raise the level of knowledge on persons with disabilities as a group in the labour market. The same question has also been raised on Nordic level. The sector group on labour market policy in the Nordic Council on Handicap Issues has initiated a survey of accessible statistics and reports on the situation of persons with disabilities concerning employment in the various member states. This may lead to the development of better survey methods. Additional surveys besides the labour market surveys may yield useful knowledge. The Ministry of Labour and Government Administration will initiate an additional survey to the Labour Market survey, viz. comments in point 6.4.3, measures in point 6.4.3.15.

6.2.2. Registered people restricted in choice of occupation in the Norwegian Directorate of Labour

In order to register persons with disabilities that are not able to get employment on their own it is important that the individual disabled persons register as employed at the employment exchange.

A person is registered as unemployed and restricted in choice of occupation, with needs for special assistance, if he/she has physical, psychic or social disabilities that reduces his/her possibilities to get employment. If the disability does not reduce the possibility to get employment, the person will be registered as ordinary unemployed.

The number of registered people restricted in their choice of employment in the Norwegian Directorate of Labour has somewhat increased following the decision to place the responsibility for labour oriented rehabilitation at the Norwegian Directorate of Labour. In 1994 48 700 people were registered on average as persons restricted in their choice of occupation, and of these 37 200 were under rehabilitation training. The comparative numbers for 1997 were 53 400 registered persons restricted in their choice of occupation and 40 400 persons having rehabilitation training. The percentage of persons restricted in their choice of occupation under rehabilitation was thus more than 75 per cent. In addition to the rehabilitation measures professional assistance is given to many enterprises through the Norwegian Directorate of Labour. A shift of focus from economical support to assistance in

adaptation and practical assistance is in accordance with evaluations that proved that enterprises in reality have a demand for this type of assistance.

The two largest diagnosis groups among people restricted in choice of occupation that are registered in the Norwegian Directorate of Labour are illnesses in joints, musculature and skeleton, and psychic disabilities. More than half the people restricted in choice of occupation have one of these diagnoses as their main diagnosis. For about 10 per cent no known illness is recorded, while 5 per cent have the diagnosis social misadaptation.

The Norwegian Directorate of Labour only to a small degree base their work on which diagnosis or disability the person restricted in choice of occupation has. First and foremost it is their level of functioning in connection to the demands of the labour market they focus upon.

People restricted in choice of occupation who apply for work have access to the full range of services from the Norwegian Directorate of Labour. They have priority as applicants in the way that they have access to more services than ordinary applicants for work. Many people restricted in choice of occupation have the right to rehabilitation pensions according to the law on public pensions. In 1997 there were about 19 600 people under rehabilitation training who were entitled to pensions according to the law on public pensions. About 14 500 of these followed ordinary education as part of their rehabilitation training. In addition there were 20 800 people undergoing employment rehabilitation training. Of these 1 500 people were undergoing mainstream labour market training and 19 300 special labour market training for people restricted in choice of occupation.

The measures for persons with disabilities are an integrated part of the labour market policy. The Norwegian Directorate of Labour has competence in qualification and dissemination of job applicants for the mainstream labour market, and knowledge of what is demanded in knowledge and competence in the labour market. A close connection between the labour market and people having employment rehabilitation training was one of the intentions when the responsibility for employment rehabilitation training was concentrated in the Norwegian Directorate of Labour in 1994. This has led to an increased number of people having completed their rehabilitation in the mainstream labour market, and that more people have maintained their connection to the mainstream labour market after completed rehabilitation training as well.

6.2.3 Employment exchange and change from rehabilitation training to other solutions

An important objective in the rehabilitation work is that as many as possible of those completing the employment rehabilitation-training pass on to active solutions. With the term active solutions is meant work, combined solutions with employment and pensions, or completing rehabilitation training without finding employment at the time of the discharge (ready for employment exchange). Active solutions also encompass a smaller number of people following self-financed education. Persons with disabilities discharged from rehabilitation deemed ready for labour exchange, are registered as ordinary job applicants and get labour exchange assistance from the Norwegian Directorate of Labour. The table illustrates the development in what persons with disabilities achieved when discharged from rehabilitation. The results from the rehabilitation work have shown a positive development.

	Percentage discharged for employment solutions	Percentage discharged as ready for employment	Percentage referred back to insurance- or social administration for medical or social reasons	Percentage referred back to the Insurance Administration for disability pensioning	Other reasons for discharge	Sum
1994*	20,8	14,9	17,0	8,3	39,0	100
1995	26,6	16,0	18,2	12,1	27,1	100
1996	28,2	15,5	18,5	13,1	24,7	100
1997	30,9	16,2	19,0	14,5	19,4	100

- Numbers for 1994 are somewhat uncertain because a new coding system was introduced this year.
Source: Arbeidsdirektoratet

In 1997 about 30 000 people were discharged from rehabilitation training. Of these 13 900 in total were discharge for active solutions. This constitutes a percentage of 47 per cent of those having completed their rehabilitation training. The percentage of people restricted in choice of occupation discharged for active solutions has increased during this period.

Some people restricted in choice of occupation are either referred back to the health- or social administration for further treatment or to the Insurance Administration with a view for disability pensioning. It is a rule that rehabilitation should be considered before disability pension is granted, and an evaluation of ability to work is consequently a part of the rehabilitation measures. This means that the Norwegian Directorate of Labour has the task of evaluating the labour ability for people including those with a very uncertain ability for participating in the labour market. That some people restricted in choice of occupation are referred back to the pension administration with a view for disability pensioning is thus part of the system.

Furthermore, many people restricted in choice of occupation have health problems. It has been proved that early intervention after reporting ill may yield good rehabilitation results. At the same time there is some danger for deterioration of the illness so that some people are referred back to the health services for treatment. It is furthermore natural for some groups that the health condition is varying over time. On one side it is preferable that as few people as possible go back from employment rehabilitation to other types of pension support. On the other side a certain degree of referring back might exactly illustrate that many get the possibility to try rehabilitation.

6.3 Integration of persons with disabilities in the labour market and rehabilitation to employment – today's situation.

6.3.1 User participation

An important basis for being motivated for rehabilitation is that you believe in the measures to be carried out, and that this is something you yourself feel as important and meaningful.

These are conditions that are best fulfilled if the individual person has influence on the rehabilitation process.

The Norwegian Directorate of Labour emphasises to signalise expectations according to those norms and demands that are confronting you at school and in the labour market. According to this much work is done to develop methods and ways to work that may support the job applicant as a user. The service should as much as possible be a tutor for the individual, and inform and guide him or her on the rights, obligations and alternatives the job applicant is confronted with. The disabled person himself shall, within the existing frames - a/o. through laws, regulations and target groups for the individual measures, plan the completion of the rehabilitation training. The employment exchange will assist in working out the rehabilitation plan.

6.3.2 Development of competence in the Norwegian Directorate of Labour

Persons with disabilities are a heterogeneous group, and this should be reflected in the working methods of the service. Recently the service has done much in developing group-based methods and ways to work that may assist the support of the job applicant's role as active user. The objective is that the development of rehabilitation plans should be done through group activities. The idea is that others in a similar situation should be able often to provide valuable advice according to a peering principle. This does not exclude that those who so wish, or need individual guidance should not receive the kind of assistance they mostly need. Those who need individual guidance shall receive it.

6.3.3 The rehabilitation process – clarification, qualification, employment training and exchange

From 1994 onwards all active measures within employment rehabilitation training are gathered in the Norwegian Directorate of Labour, while the social security office is responsible for early surveillance of people reporting ill and a more clearly defined role as guiding instance.

The social security office shall evaluate whether the applicant is satisfying the conditions for employment rehabilitation training, that is if the applicant has had his or her ability to work reduced through illness, damage or disability and whether the applicant's possibility to chose occupation or work place has been seriously reduced. When these conditions are met, the social security office provides rehabilitation money for a limited period while awaiting the launching of possible rehabilitation measures. This sharing of tasks and responsibility demands a large degree of co-operation between the services.

The evaluation of the responsibility reform in 1994 proves that the co-operation between the Norwegian Directorate of Labour and the social security offices in well functioning. It may however seem that the social security offices wish that some more people were given the opportunity to try rehabilitation that what is deemed necessary and appropriate by the Norwegian Directorate of Labour. This is because of the different tasks and roles of the services. While the social security office evaluate the remaining ability to work and the potential of rehabilitation based on medical considerations, the Norwegian Directorate of Labour base themselves upon what measures are necessary and the relation to the labour market. Common instructions are made for the procedures between the services that a/o. are meant to ensure mutual contact before the users are transferred between the services.

It is important that that the rehabilitation resources are used in an effective way so that as many people as possible receive targeted and co-ordinated rehabilitation training directed at the labour market.

In their first encounter with the Norwegian Directorate of Labour people restricted in choice of occupation are informed of the labour market, which services the Norwegian Directorate of Labour can provide and what is expected of the individual in the way of own initiatives. An evaluation is also made of the person restricted in choice of occupation can be referred to mainstream employment without carrying through a more extensive rehabilitation training. People restricted in choice of occupation will receive guidance on occupation and education according to their individual needs. Based on information and guidance the person restricted in choice of occupation produce a plan for the rehabilitation – also known as an Plan of Action, on the condition that direct labour exchange is not possible.

For some people restricted in choice of occupation information and guidance is not sufficient for producing a rehabilitation plan. Because of uncertain preconditions it might be necessary for some people to clarify further the situation and possibilities. This can be done at the job office, possibly with the assistance of the employment advice offices, or at the Centre for employment rehabilitation. In addition external activity tests and clarification, e.g. in the Phase 1 if the labour market enterprises and the activity employment preparation training.

The Norwegian Directorate of Labour disposes a wide range of activities. It is important that the whole range is fully utilised, and that it is flexible enough to be adapted to the needs of people restricted in choice of occupation. Many people restricted in choice of occupation will have several measures linked to each other. The main objective is to get back to the labour market, in an ordinary salaried job. At the same time the Norwegian Directorate of Labour is also responsible for permanent measures for people who are not able to meet the demands of the labour market. It is important that this group also receives services according to their demands.

Surveys prove that persons with disabilities in general have a lower level of education compared to the population in general. Through e.g. mainstream education or labour market training courses people restricted in choice of occupation may acquire competence in demand from the labour market. In 1997 16 750 people on average were qualified through rehabilitation activities, of those 14 500 followed mainstream education.

For people with chonical diseases medical treatment and employment activities must follow a parallel level. For many the demands and expectations following an employment rehabilitation training will be felt as impossible. The transformation from a situation as pensioner to a rehabilitation-training situation will be too big for some people. There is a special need for activities towards groups suffering from psychic diseases and muscular/ skeleton diseases.

It is an objective that as many people restricted in choice of occupation as possible shall receive employment training within the mainstream labour market. Employers in the mainstream labour market may accept people restricted in choice of occupation as trainees or they may receive financial compensation to cover salary expenses or other costs connected to accepting people restricted in choice of occupation. Alternatively they may receive professional guidance and support from an adapter assisting the person restricted in choice of

occupation at the work place through the measure Assisted Employment. Even if the main objective is employment training in the mainstream labour market, training in sheltered employment may in some cases be more feasible. In 1997 less than 14 000 people receive employment training.

For people unable to profit from the time limited measures under the Norwegian Directorate of Labour, permanent activities and work places are established. The Norwegian Directorate of Labour gives financial support to the various work places in the labour co-operation enterprises and to Phase 3 in the labour market enterprises. In 1997 7 800 people restricted in choice of occupation were placed in these activities.

The regulations for labour market activities are evaluated on a regular basis to ensure a better adaptation to the needs of the users. Emphasis is also made on regular evaluation of the measures with a view for making existing activities as useful as tool as possible for the rehabilitation work.

In addition to the arrangements within the Norwegian Directorate of Labour compensatory measures combining employment and pensions be a good solution for many people. In the recent years several changes in the Law on public pensions have been made to make this more attractive and flexible for the disability pensioners without removing the entitlement to a disability pension. A/o. it was in 1997 evaluated to increase the income level that disability pensioners may receive without a revaluation of the degree of disability, from half the level of the official basic pension income to the full level.

In The White Paper of the equalisation of living conditions, which will be presented during the spring of 1999, the disability pension system will be evaluated. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs will then evaluate the need for further measures to stimulate the combined pension/work arrangements.

6.3.4 Reform 94

As was earlier mentioned, qualification through education is important to give persons with disabilities the necessary qualifications to get employment. With the introduction of Reform 94 all people having completed primary and lower secondary school from the spring of 1994, are entitled to 3 years of upper secondary education leading to qualification for higher education, vocational qualifications or documented practical competence. Applicants who, in accordance with the Education Act, have the right to expert assessment have particular needs for a special foundation course, have the right to admission to such a course. Pupils who, in accordance with the Education Act, have the right to special education shall, as far as possible, be granted an additional two years of upper secondary education when this is found necessary according to expert assessment. Pupils who either do not, or are unable to benefit satisfactorily from ordinary education have the right to special education.

A principle in the Reform 94 is that it "shall be developed in a way that gives as many as possible in the age groups the opportunity to make use of the mainstream services even if they have different abilities and aptitudes". (Parliamentary report No. 33, 1991-92). The evaluation of the Reform 94 proves that there are too many pupils with a need for specially adapted education following upper secondary education in special classes (*Møreforskning* 1998). The research proves that furthermore, pupils with need of specially adapted education have a lesser progress and more dropping out than among the majority of pupils. Furthermore

this group of pupils is mainly to be observed in a very limited number of areas of studies, and the choice of study is dominated by traditional sex roles (*Møreforskning* 1997, 1998). On this background, it is now necessary to implement measures to ensure that pupils/trainees with disabilities to a larger degree complete upper secondary education as pupils in mainstream classes. One will also study what is influencing the choice of area of study of these young people. This is among others the background for the research and development project "Towards qualifications for higher education and vocational qualifications for youth with disabilities" that the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs has launched as a measure within the framework of the Plan of Action, viz. 3.5.2.5. The project will continue for 3 educational years (4 calendar years) in three counties.

6.3.5 Following up persons with disabilities and people reporting ill and prevention of exclusion

The social security service is responsible for the following up of people reporting ill and rehabilitation pension recipients. The objective is a quicker return to the labour market and avoid transfer to more permanent support services.

The employer of the person reporting ill has a duty according to the law on public pensions, if asked by the social security office to make a report in possible measures at the work place that would make it possible for the person to return to work. The social security office can provide sickness benefit during activating or employment training for up to 12 weeks, so-called "active sick report", with a possibility for prolongation if the employment training or other forms of internal enterprise rehabilitation is necessary for the person reporting ill to keep his or her job.

The same is the case according to the law on public pensions for activating/employment training at your own employer for people receiving rehabilitation benefits. For a period rehabilitation benefit can be given during employment training even if the beneficiary is not receiving medical treatment, when this is necessary and feasible for the person concerned to return to employment. If more extensive rehabilitation is proved necessary, then the case will be transferred to the Norwegian Directorate of Labour.

Employers have an independent responsibility according to the law on labour environment to implement necessary measures as far as possible for the person restricted in choice of occupation to get or keep a fitting job within the enterprise, viz. the law on working environment §13. Rehabilitation more often than not takes place without public assistance, by e.g. internal adaptation/new placements, possibly in co-operation with the health service of the enterprise.

In Parliamentary report (Innst S No 114 (1997-98) the parliamentary Social Committee, and in The White Paper (Innst O No 27 (1997-98) a majority of the parliamentary municipality committee asked for a survey on a/o the question of including an anti-discrimination clause on disability in the § 55 A of the law on working environment, and on whether the § 13 should be changed. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development has studied this question thoroughly, viz. Parliamentary proposal (Ot prp No 67 (1996-97) On law on changes to the law of February 4th 1997 on labour protection and labour environment etc. The Ministry has concluded that the regulation of the obligations of employers in the § 13 in today's law on labour protection is extensive enough. Still, a need for information on the obligations and rights for internal training in the enterprises has been discovered. To assist in

meeting the demand for information in the enterprises the Directorate for work place inspection in co-operation with the Norwegian Directorate of Labour developed a guide to § 13 in the law on working environment. The guide was published in 1997 and deals with demands in the law on working environments for adaptation for employees restricted in choice of occupation, among others responsibility and obligations for the employer and methods to be followed towards people restricted in their choice of occupation with needs for special adaptation.

Support for internal training in the enterprises from the Norwegian Directorate of Labour is only given if there is a need for more extensive internal measures in the enterprises. The measures are directed towards the individual enterprises and consist of assistance from the employment exchange office through professional support, perhaps combined with financial support.

The employment service, which is a free advisory service within the Norwegian Directorate of Labour, may advise in internal rehabilitation in the enterprises on a system level. The service is directed towards ordinary enterprises aiming at reducing exclusion from the labour market. Besides informing about various public support services, the service assists the enterprises in a/o advising on how to organise prevention of absence because of sickness and internal rehabilitation in enterprises.

6.3.6 Transport

In the spring of 1997 the Ministry of Transport and Communication produced a set of recommended guidelines for the county based door-to-door transport (special transport services). The Ministry has furthermore invited the counties to do trials on extended transport services where transport in connection with employment and education for persons with disabilities is given priority. The guidelines should, according to the Ministry of Transport and Communication, be allowed to have effect for a while and then the trials should be finished and evaluated before a final position on the policy in this field is made.

It should also be mentioned that the general policy for a better transport service for persons with disabilities would also be important for transport to the work places.

6.3.7 Co-operation between the services

Co-operation between different services and actors is a necessary precondition for success concerning rehabilitation and employment. The relationship between the rehabilitation service's/the municipality's responsibility for motivation and enablement measures in general in connection with rehabilitation, and in connection to returning to employment in particular, and the responsibility of the Norwegian Directorate of Labour to adapt for participation in the labour market, will be discussed in The White Paper on rehabilitation.

The Insurance Administration, the social security service and the health services must in addition to this assist persons with disabilities in coping with everyday life, including evaluating what could be one to assist the individual towards the labour market. For people with health problems an early clarification of expectations for rehabilitation and employment is important for increasing the individual motivation and abilities to cope. This will also be more thoroughly discussed in The White Paper on rehabilitation.

In 1997 the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and the then Ministry of Local Government and Labour Affairs disseminated a circular on establishment of co-operation forums and collaboration between people with needs for assistance from different services in order to get employment or education. The municipalities were then encouraged to take initiatives to establish a co-operation forum on leadership level a/o between the health and social services in the municipality, the Insurance Administration and the Norwegian Directorate of Labour. Other relevant services, a/o the education authorities, may be involved. The Forum is to provide an overview of people with needs for assistance from multiple instances, evaluate co-operation routines and discuss questions on priorities. Practical routines and questions on co-operation should be incorporated in the local co-operation agreements.

It is a principle of the circular that cross-sectoral co-operation should be based on division of responsibility between the services and that active co-operation will build on this sharing of responsibility. Practically, this means that disabled applicants for work will have their needs for assistance covered by that service which is responsible for a professional or service field, and for this reason has established the best competence for providing correct assistance.

Responses from the Norwegian Directorate of Labour on the contact with traditional co-operation partners within public civil service, like social security offices and public pensions administrations, seem to prove that the co-operation functions well in most places. It is important that the forum for co-operation is utilised as a framework and point of departure for co-operation with other bodies as well.

During the parliamentary debate on the plan for the strengthening of psychic health (Parliamentary proposal St prp No 63 (1997-98)) it was decided to ask the Government to initiate concrete measures to ensure binding co-operation between the Norwegian Directorate of Labour, and between the municipalities and counties. Such measures will be discussed in the announced parliamentary report on rehabilitation.

6.4 Plan of Action for increasing employment for persons with disabilities – measures for the period 1998-2001

6.4.1 Main activities in the plan period

The Government will keep up its activities to ensure that persons with disabilities can acquire and stay on in employment. Persons with disabilities themselves, the user organisations and the social partners should be engaged and consulted. The forum for integration of people restricted in their choice of occupation should be utilised as a forum for information and discussions, and it should be a mutual advisory body for the authorities, persons with disabilities' organisations and the employers' and labour organisations.

A basic principle should be to organise the labour market in a way that ensures that disability does not lead to restrictions in the choice of occupation. The social partners should be engaged in a targeted work on health, environment and safety. Technical and organisational conditions that provide a basis for adaptation should be utilised.

Another principle is prevention to avoid that restrictions in choice of occupation are developed. Early intervention to avoid exclusion should be stimulated, a/o through activation during the period of sickness leave where it is possible and feasible. The authorities will

continue to provide guidance and support for the employers needing assistance for internal rehabilitation measures within the enterprises. The main part of the activities must be initiated by the labour market itself in order to be most effective.

The next principle is to support people restricted in their choice of occupation when applying for work so that they may re-enter employment or, if they are newcomers to the labour market, to get employment. A low unemployment rate and full employment, that is a labour market utilising and exploiting the resources of those people who can and are willing to work, is an important objective. The Government will base itself on the active labour market policy both for people restricted in their choice of occupation and for ordinary work applicants.

This means that the whole spectre of services that the Norwegian Directorate of Labour has developed on information, guidance, clarification and exchange services, shall be used towards people restricted in their choice of occupation. In addition the Government keep on its strong prioritisation of measures for people restricted in their choice of occupation when applying for work by earmarking money for special labour market initiatives in a specific budget line.

The challenges will be to use and develop further the competence, services and initiatives. At the same time it must be ensured that the services are shaped in a way that they are feasible for people with different restrictions in choice of occupation and degrees of disability.

The Government proposes in the 1999 budget that 6,69 billion Kroner are earmarked for support and initiatives towards job applicants restricted in their choice of occupation, viz. chapter 1592 Special labour market initiatives for people restricted in their choice of occupation and chapter 2543 Support for employment rehabilitation. Provision is made for about 40 000 special jobs. In addition comes information-, guidance-, clarification-, and following up and exchange measures, viz. chapter 1590 the Norwegian Directorate of Labour.

During a rehabilitation process some time must be used for clarification purposes, and there will be some waiting time between the measures. Therefore it will be a target that at least three quarters of the people restricted in their choice of occupation will be undergoing training at any time.

The Government has in its proposal for the 1999 state budget drawn up strategies and objectives for the labour market policy towards people restricted in their choice of occupation. The main objectives are referred to above.

In addition to these main activities, some concrete measures are planned during the plan period that will highlight parts of the initiatives that need to be strengthened. These measures will only constitute a small part of the total measures, but may create a basis for correct qualitative changes.

6.4.2 Measures that are continued

Focus on user participation – the actors' perspective

As related under point 6.3.2 the Norwegian Directorate of Labour has to an increasing degree made use of group methods in its assistance for individuals restricted in their choice of occupation. In 1997 the administration established a resource office with competence in-

group guidance in each county. These resource offices shall, in co-operation with the labour exchange office in the county concerned, educate the employment offices in group methods.

6.4.2.1 Group guidance should be accessible as a service offer at all job offices at the end of 1998.

6.4.2.2 Evaluate group guidance as a method in labour market initiatives

Initiatives have been made to develop the group methods used in group guidance in the labour market initiatives as well. The Norwegian Directorate of Labour supports a two-year project that will test group-based methods in the labour market enterprises and in employment training. At the same time it is planned to develop the initiatives according to the principles of the actors' perspective. This is a two-year project and will be finished in 1999.

6.4.2.3 The Internet service is developed

In the job seeking process the Norwegian Directorate of Labour to an increasing degree emphasises the use of Internet as a source of information on vacancies. Information inputs are provided on a suitable number of vacancies that may be searched for. Some special rehabilitation services are also announced on the Internet. This has facilitated the access to this part of the administration's services for many persons with disabilities. The service is being developed and will thus be able to reach more people during the plan period.

More flexible service solutions through combination of work and pensions.

6.4.2.4 To provide disability pensioners better opportunities for increased participation in the labour market one has during a trial period allowed the granting of disability pension at a lower degree of disability than 50%

It is assumed that the person concerned already has received a disability pension and is in a concrete job situation. Based on the experiences it will be evaluated whether to make this a permanent arrangement.

Increased measures for people with mental disabilities

6.4.2.5 The project "My future"

The Norwegian Directorate of Labour supports a new project - "My future" - that is aiming at assisting people with permanent and serious psychic diseases trying to approach the labour market. The project encompasses two labour co-operatives in the county of Telemark, and includes obligatory co-operation between various services.

Increased efforts towards physical adaptation of work places for persons with disabilities

The National Insurance Administration is responsible for the financing and dissemination of assistive technology.

The employers are responsible, according to the law on work environment, for the adaptation of the work place for employees restricted in choice of occupation. When the solution is assistive technology, the employer is obligated to finance such with up to one half of the basic

public pensions level. Any amount higher than this is covered by the National Insurance Administration.

For people restricted in their choice of occupation who are undergoing employment rehabilitation, the Norwegian Directorate of Labour is responsible for clarification of needs and adaptation. The administration is also responsible for referring to and co-ordinating the various services responsible for reporting, financing, dissemination and training in the use of assistive technology, thereby enabling people restricted in their choice of occupation to find the correct support service. In addition the administration is responsible for integrating the needs for assistive technology and adaptation in the Plan of Action for each individual, as well as motivate the person restricted in their choice of occupation into using assistive technology in the daily work life.

Correct use of assistive technology involves a large potential for including persons with disabilities into the labour market.

6.4.2.6 Measures to improve the use of assistive technology in the rehabilitation work

The Norwegian Directorate of Labour shall make an internal evaluation in order to find as feasible as possible organisation of this type of competence within the administration. The Norwegian Directorate of Labour has in addition started a co-operation with the National Insurance Administration to increase the knowledge in this field, and to improve the co-operation on technical and ergonomic initiatives on local level.

Trial with assistants for strongly physically persons with disabilities

As a following up of the Welfare Report the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs in 1997 started a triennial pilot project with functional assistants. The objective is to get more persons with disabilities with physical disabilities into mainstream employment.

Functional assistants have as their task to practically assist people with strong physical disabilities during working hours. This may concern fetching or moving of working materials, copying, transport between meeting venues and work place, assistance during meals, visits to the toilet, dressing and undressing etc. The functional assistant shall not execute the work-related tasks of the disabled employee.

The employer and the employee co-operate at the engaging of the functional assistant, but it is the employee who controls the assistant. For practical reasons the physically disabled person's employer has the employer responsibility. This arrangement presupposes that the work place is adapted as much as possible in beforehand.

6.4.2.7 The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs shall co-operate with the organisations of persons with disabilities and the social partners on how the functional assistant service may best be organised and financed in the future

Utilise the technological possibilities

The labour market is constantly changing. New work places and -tasks are created while others disappear. Quick changes in the labour market, a/o as a result of technological

development, may become an additional burden in the shape of increased demands for formal education, competence and ability to change flexibly. On the other side the development provides new possibilities for persons with disabilities. IT and new technology makes it possible for persons with disabilities to find new types of jobs and tasks previously inaccessible.

6.4.2.8 Co-operation project on IT and possibilities for adaptation of distance employment

The labour market authorities are co-operating with the Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Persons with disabilities on the project "FunkWork". The objective of the project is to make use of the possibilities that are opened with information technology. This concerns a/o the establishment of home work places or other feasible adaptation of the work situation. SINTEF IFIM has got the task of evaluating the project. The project is triennial.

The peering support system and work

Peering support is an organised collaboration between people in the same situation, where the collaboration itself has as its objective that experiences should be exchanged in a way that the parts concerned may utilise in their everyday life, like for instance during employment rehabilitation training or during work.

The peering support is normally based on the fact that one partner in the collaboration has more experience in being employed or undergoing employment rehabilitation training with a disability. The peering support is based on voluntary participation. The idea is not that somebody should be paid for this work, but that actual expenses will be covered.

Countrywide organisations for persons with disabilities can apply for support for peering support. The funding system from the budget of the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs is permanent from 1998, and about a quarter of the money should be used for peering support in connection to rehabilitation and employment. Peering support in connection to employment rehabilitation training and employment is a follow up of proposals in the Welfare Report.

6.4.3 Initiatives during the plan period

Increased access to assistance from the Norwegian Directorate of Labour

The Norwegian Directorate of Labour shall provide individual service. To ensure that persons with disabilities benefit from the assistance of the administration, it is a precondition that it is easy accessible. The administration's outward contact with the public is therefore dependent on physical accessibility to job offices and service institutions.

6.4.3.1 The Norwegian Directorate of Labour shall survey the physical accessibility of job offices and other service institutions during 1998.

The information will then be systematised and evaluated, and a plan for implementation of necessary measures for improvement will be produced. In the evaluations the experiences of persons with disabilities will be incorporated.

Better targeting and quality of information towards the users of the services of the Norwegian Directorate of Labour

Based on discussions in the Forum for integration of people restricted in their choice of occupation in the labour market a project has been completed to survey the demand for information and –barriers among people restricted in choice of occupation, representatives and employers. On this background, proposals will be made for information measures that could improve the integration of more people restricted in choice of occupation/persons with disabilities in the labour market.

6.4.3.2 Targeted information towards the user groups of the Norwegian Directorate of Labour

During the plan period the Norwegian Directorate of Labour will remove earlier information material and exchange it with material more targeted towards the user groups of the administration. The purpose is to satisfy the demand for information in the different phases of the application and rehabilitation processes. The information material will be produced with a view for meeting the demands of all job applicants, that is people restricted in choice of occupation as well as ordinary job applicants. The administration shall also evaluate the needs for more specific information directed towards target groups. An information brochure on labour market measures for people restricted in choice of occupation might be feasible. This work will commence in 1999. The organisations will be consulted during this process.

6.4.3.3 Information project

An initiative has been taken to launch an information project under the auspices of the Confederation of Norwegian Business and Industry, NHO.

6.4.3.4 Develop and adapt materiel and information for visually impaired people

The Norwegian Blind Union will establish a job club for visually impaired people. The purpose is to gather experience on how the job-club material functions for this group. On this basis the labour administration will ensure adaptation of the material to ensure that visually impaired people may participate in ordinary job clubs. In connection to this project it will be investigated how visually impaired people may best acquire information on the labour market. The Norwegian Directorate of Labour is supporting the project. This materiel is now being produced.

Increase the focus on recruitment of persons with disabilities in the public administration

6.4.3.5 Collect and evaluate information on recruitment to the public administration

In 1996 the regulations in the civil servants code were changed to make it easier for persons with disabilities to be employed in the public administration. The employer may choose to employ a qualified disabled applicant in stead of the overall best-qualified applicant. The Ministry of Labour and Government Administration has in 1998 asked the Ministries with affiliated services to report on recruited and employed persons with disabilities/persons restricted in their choice of occupation in 1997. After having evaluated the reports, the Ministry has concluded that by the reporting for the next year they will ask for additional

information. The objective is to get a better overview of public employment of persons with disabilities.

6.4.3.6 The Ministry of Labour and Government Administration will within 01.02.1999 send a letter to the Ministries and affiliated services providing extensive and detailed information on all financial support services on the employment of persons with disabilities

Such information may yield increased awareness on the situation of persons with disabilities, and at the same time in is focusing upon the advantages connected to employment of persons with disabilities.

6.4.3.7 Produce an information leaflet aimed at public administration

The Ministry of Labour and Government Administration shall in co-operation with the Ministries produce an information leaflet for public employers and representatives, with information on the situation of persons with disabilities, the UN Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, and information on various economic and other conditions connected to the employment of persons with disabilities. The information leaflet is planned being finished by July 1st 1999.

Measures for young persons with disabilities in the transition between school and employment

The transition phase from school to employment is a critical one. The OSKAR project (Norw. acronym for transition school-employment for people with disabilities) proved that the lack of adaptation to the labour market for young persons with disabilities to a certain degree may be the result of the absence of coherence between the information and training they get in secondary school, and the existing possibilities for work. Only to a limited extent were there a systematic co-operation between the Norwegian Directorate of Labour, the school, the National Insurance Administration and the distribution centres for assistive technology etc., with a purpose of facilitating the transition between school and employment as much as possible, and with a view of starting the employment planning while the juvenile is still at school. The project proved furthermore, that many young persons with disabilities, who receive the necessary support and assistance, have the ability to participate in the labour market and may be integrated in ordinary work.

Young persons with disabilities have different needs for assistance. Targeted guidance and choice of feasible labour market initiatives will continue to utilise the whole spectre of measures. Assisted employment has proved to be a useful measure also for young people. Further support will be given to this measure following its development. When feasible, it will be evaluated to combine assisted employment with schooling. However it is necessary to evaluate on a concrete basis when during the transition period, it is most feasible to concentrate the measures.

6.4.3.8 Parallel assistance from the services, development of routines and co-operation solutions

Following a letter from the director of education in the county of Hordaland, the Directorate for Labour has initiated a co-operation to concretise routines for co-operation and monitoring

between the education- and employment authorities. The co-operation is to commence while the disabled person is still undergoing education. The objective is to find combined solutions at the transition between school and employment. In that connection routines will be developed concerning the distribution of responsibility and tasks between the co-operating services. The Directorate for Labour is aiming at using the experiences from Hordaland as a basis for similar co-operation in other counties.

6.4.3.9 The responsibility for co-ordination after completed education in the municipalities

Many persons with disabilities have a need for assistance from multiple services. The Government believes that the responsibility for co-ordinating such a demand for assistance should continue to rest with the education authorities while persons with disabilities still are under education. Following completed education questions concerning rehabilitation and employment may in certain cases be solved on a bilateral basis between the Norwegian Directorate of Labours and the education authorities, viz. the above discussion. In many cases there will be a need for measures to be taken by multiple services, not the least from the health- and social sector. Such assistance may be necessary during the whole lifetime. There is a time limit for the rehabilitation and thus the assistance of the employment office. Because of this the Government believes that the responsibility for co-ordination after the completed education should rest with the municipality. The municipalities have already been asked to take the initiative and leadership of so-called Forums for co-operation, viz. earlier reference to the establishment of co-operating forums.

Increased efforts for people with mental diseases

People with mental illnesses often have a problem with participating in the labour market. Many will still be able to continue their work with the aid of treatment or time limited support measures. The Government in 1998 presented an financially obligating escalation plan to improve the services towards people with mental diseases, viz. Parliamentary proposal No. 63 (1997-98) On an escalation plan on mental health 1999-2006. Efforts in the field of employment to get more people into work is also a central point in the work for better health protection. In the above mentioned parliamentary proposal, to which the Storting mainly agreed, the Government announced an increase of 2000 special work places to insure that 4000 more people with mental diseases will be offered labour market services at the end of the plan period for the mental health initiative.

Rehabilitation to employment for this group often demands extensive efforts. The needs for labour market measures may not be evaluated separately from the strengthening of treatment-, post-treatment monitoring-, and activity measures in the municipalities. Improved services in these fields is a condition for more people to be able to make use of the services from the Norwegian Directorate of Labour and complete rehabilitation, either simultaneously or later. To ensure that the increased efforts should yield good results, it is important that the escalation of the services outside the Norwegian Directorate of Labour happen on a parallel level with the extension of the labour market measures.

6.4.3.10 More special work places for people with mental diseases

6.4.3.11 Evaluate the needs for new measures towards people with chronic diseases and varying ability to work

In addition to the creation of more special work places for people with mental diseases, the Ministry of Labour and Government Administration is evaluating the demand for new types of measures for people with chronic diseases that vary over time. The Storting has, in addition, at its deliberations over Parliamentary proposal 63 (1997-98) On an escalation plan on mental health 1999-2006, asked the Government to present a case on how to ensure good and flexible employment for people with mental diseases, viz. conclusion V.

A research project has also been initiated to evaluate what kind of services the Norwegian Directorate of Labour is offering people with mental diseases.

Measures for people with motoric disabilities - project

People with strong motoric disabilities is a group of persons with disabilities who score very badly on many surveys on living conditions, a/o concerning work (viz. *Nordlandsforskning* 1997). In the Government's Plan of Action for 1993-1997) one of the measures was a co-operation between the Norwegian Directorate of Labour and the Sunnaas Hospital towards the target group people with strong physical disabilities. The project was not completed. Now an initiative has been made to realise a similar project through a co-operation between the regional hospital in the county of Tromsø and the Norwegian Directorate of Labour where a/o focus will be made on young persons with disabilities in the transition between school and employment.

6.4.3.12 Develop and test models for employment assistance for people with strong motoric disabilities, integrating employment and medical rehabilitation through co-ordination in time and place

The focus should be on individual users and their need for employment assistance. A main objective is to increase the salaried employment participation of the target group and increase the user's awareness of his/her potential in the labour market.

To begin with there will be established a steering group where a/o local user representatives are represented. Relevant user organisations will be contacted early in the surveying phase for the collection of wishes and viewpoints of the users. The project is supported by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and the Labour market authorities.

Establishment of private enterprises

People restricted in their choice of occupation may today have the establishment of a private enterprise acknowledged as a rehabilitation measure, and keep the rehabilitation money, on the condition that the person concerned has been granted an establishment grant from the county. These grants are in high demand, and even if people restricted in their choice of occupation is one of the prioritised group when distributing the grants, this connection between granting and acknowledgement as rehabilitation measure may be unfortunate. On the other side the direct support may improve the condition for a successful establishment.

6.4.3.13 Evaluation of the system of establishment during employment rehabilitation

The Ministry of Labour and Government Administration shall evaluate changes in the regulations that may facilitate the establishment of their own work places for people restricted in their choice of occupation with good ideas for projects. Still there must be a condition that the projects are given a commercially professional evaluation concerning long-term profitability and permanence.

Research

There is a need for more knowledge in the field of rehabilitation.

6.4.3.14 Evaluation of the effects of the rehabilitation reform

The Ministry of Labour and Government Administration has given the SNF-Bergen the task of making a quantitative analysis, which may yield information on the effects of the rehabilitation reform. The research is a/o aiming at surveying whether there has been changes in the recruitment for rehabilitation, how the progression within rehabilitation before and after the reform has been, and the long term prospects of for people restricted in their choice of occupation after the rehabilitation is completed. The project will be finished in 1999.

Additional survey to the Labour survey (AKU)

One way of getting additional knowledge on the situation in the labour market for persons with disabilities as a group, is to order additional surveys to the Labour survey. Such a survey on people restricted in their choice of occupation was made in the 1st quarter of 1995.

6.4.3.15 Increase the knowledge on persons with disabilities' situation in the labour market

The Ministry of Labour and Government Administration will ensure an additional survey to the AKU on the situation of persons with disabilities in the labour market. The additional questions will be posed to everyone notwithstanding their connection to the labour market, and the answers will be analysed according to central variables in the quarterly AKU survey. The objective is a/o to see whether there are systematic connections between disability and other variables concerning employment, and in which ways the situation for persons with disabilities possibly deviate from the situation of other peoples' in working age.

7 Norwegian Developmental Assistance

7.1 Objectives

Consideration for persons with disabilities must be a universal principle for all countries irrespective of their developmental status. It is therefore one of the objectives for Norwegian developmental policy to ensure that persons with disabilities' needs and rights are met, for example through the UN Standard Rules, in the partner countries to which Norway gives priority in bilateral development co-operation. This is also an important part of human rights policy. Through the development co-operation work will be done to improve the situation for persons with disabilities and to ensure that their rights are promoted in fields like public services, health care, education, employment, organisations, culture and participation.

In order to incorporate these considerations more firmly into Norwegian development co-operation, more strategic efforts will be made to highlight the situation of persons with disabilities and measures to improve their situation.

In keeping with the principle that development assistance must be directed towards the poorest, Norway will focus on promoting, developing and implement methods for the mobilisation of the population to participate in all parts of the development process. Persons with disabilities and their organisations are important members of this target group, and particular consideration will be given to create measures that will have an impact on persons with disabilities.

7.2 Target areas

The Norwegian development assistance efforts for persons with may be divided into three main categories:

In the UN Norway seeks to promote the establishment of internationally accepted and obligatory norms, rules and guidelines that can help secure the rights of persons with disabilities

In the UN and other international organisations Norway supports efforts to improve conditions of persons with disabilities

Through bilateral development assistance concrete efforts are made to improve the situation of persons with disabilities.

In 1997/98 an overview was made of the experiences of Norwegian development assistance efforts towards improving persons with disabilities' conditions in the period 1985-1995. Based on this report and a seminar attended by representatives of a broad range of institutions in April 1998, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and NORAD (the Norwegian Agency for Development Co-operation) will continue to highlight, structure and strengthen the efforts for persons with disabilities.

7.2.1 Measures that are being followed up

7.2.1.1 Follow-up of the 1995 Copenhagen summit

In co-operation with the Ministries, the recommendations of the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995 will be followed up. The Plan of Action will be a key document and serve as a guideline for the development assistance to persons with disabilities.

The follow-up of the 20/20 initiative, which purpose is to ensure basic social services for all, is important in this context. An international conference to follow up this initiative was organised in Vietnam in October 1998 and was itself a follow-up of a conference held in Norway in 1996.

7.2.1.2 Provision of economic support to the UN special Rapporteur for the UN's Standard Rules for persons with disabilities

7.2.1.3 Further development of the co-operation in the Atlas Alliance.

The co-operation in the Atlas Alliance between the Norwegian Association for People with Mental Handicaps, the Norwegian Handicap Association and the Norwegian Heart and Lung Association is to be developed through NORAD.

7.2.1.4 Encourage more organisations of persons with disabilities to co-operate within the framework of the Atlas Alliance, including the smaller organisations.

Encourage smaller organisations that are engaged in developing assistance to contact the Atlas Alliance or one of the major Norwegian NGOs.

7.2.1.5 Continuation of co-operation with international organisations on development assistance

The most important organisation will continue to be the ILO, UNICEF and WHO, but other organisations, like UNESCO, are also suitable co-operation partners. The co-operation will cover education, training, health care and participation in the local community. Norway will seek to ensure that the UN Standard Rules to a larger extent will be used as a tool for planning and implementation of such multilateral measures.

7.2.1.6 Development of organisations of persons with disabilities

Support for the development of organisations of persons with disabilities will continue to be provided as part of the support for democracy building under the Central and Eastern European Co-operation Programme.

7.2.1.7 Provision of humanitarian assistance – land mine casualties

Norway will continue to provide humanitarian assistance targeted at disabilities resulting from landmine injuries. This constitutes an important part of Norwegian humanitarian efforts to follow up the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention, and covers activities such as physical rehabilitation, aids, access, social integration, training and awareness-raising concerning the risks posed by mines.

7.2.1.8 Support for international co-ordination on the efforts on behalf of persons with disabilities

7.2.1.9 Continuation of the support for the production of prostheses for victims of war injuries by the Red Cross system.

7.2.2 Measures during the plan period

7.2.2.1 Participation in the preparations for the special session in the General Assembly in 2000 on implementation of the social summit (Copenhagen plus 5)

7.2.2.2 Provision of economic support to individual countries so that they can implement the UN Standard Rules for persons with disabilities

Assistance in developing public sector programmes in for example health care, education and other sectors in Norway's partner countries will improve the possibilities for giving priority to measures for persons with disabilities. This applies especially to basic social services. Using funds provided by NORAD, the Norwegian State Council on Disability has initiated co-operation with authorities in Uganda, and Norway will seek to implement similar measures in other countries.

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs

Recommends:

Recommendation from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs of October 9th 1998 on Plan of Action for Persons with Disabilities 1998-2001 is submitted to the Storting.

Annex 1

UN Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities.

This is a short presentation of the 22 rules. A complete version may be ordered from the United Nations.

RULE 1 – Awareness-raising

States should take action to raise awareness in society about persons with disabilities, their rights, their needs, their potential and their contribution.

RULE 2 – Medical care

- States should ensure the provision of effective medical care to persons with disabilities

RULE 3 – Rehabilitation

States should ensure the provision of rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities in order for them to reach and sustain their optimum level of independence and functioning.

RULE 4 – Support services

States should ensure the development and supply of support services, including assistive devices for persons with disabilities, to assist them to increase their level of independence in their daily living and to exercise their rights.

RULE 5 – Accessibility

States should recognise the overall importance of accessibility in the process of the equalisation of opportunities in all spheres of society. For persons with disabilities of any kind, States should (a) introduce programmes of action to make the physical environment accessible; and (b) undertake measures to provide access to information and communication.

RULE 6 – Education

States should recognise the principle of equal primary, secondary and tertiary educational opportunities for children, youth and adults with disabilities, in integrated settings. They should ensure that the education of persons with disabilities is an integral part of the educational system.

RULE 7 – Employment

States should recognise the principle that persons with disabilities must be empowered to exercise their human rights, particularly in the field of employment. In both rural and urban areas they must have equal opportunities for productive and gainful employment in the labour market.

RULE 8 – Income maintenance and social security

States are responsible for the provision of social security and income maintenance for persons with disabilities.

RULE 9 – Family life and personal integrity

States should promote the full participation of persons with disabilities in family life. They should promote their right to personal integrity and ensure that laws do not discriminate against persons with disabilities with respect to sexual relationships, marriage and parenthood.

RULE 10 – Culture

States will ensure that persons with disabilities are integrated into and can participate in cultural activities on an equal basis.

RULE 11 – Recreation and sports

States will take measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have equal opportunities for recreations and sports.

RULE 12 – Religion

States will encourage measures for equal participation for persons with disabilities in the religious life of their communities.

RULE 13 – Information and research

States assume the ultimate responsibility for the collection and dissemination of information on the living conditions of persons with disabilities and promote comprehensive research on all aspects, including obstacles that affect the lives of persons with disabilities.

RULE 14 – Policy-making and planning

States will ensure that disability aspects are included in all relevant policy-making and national planning.

RULE 15 – Legislation

States have a responsibility to create the legal bases for measures to achieve the objectives of full participation and equality for persons with disabilities.

RULE 16 – Economic policies

States have the financial responsibility for national programmes and measures to create equal opportunities for persons with disabilities.

RULE 17 – Co-ordination of work

States are responsible for the establishment and strengthening of national co-ordinating committees, or similar bodies, to serve as a national focal point on disability matters.

RULE 18 – Organisations of persons with disabilities

States should recognise the right of the organisations of persons with disabilities to represent persons with disabilities at national, regional and local levels. States should also recognise the advisory role of organisations of persons with disabilities in decision-making on disability matters.

RULE 19 – Personnel training

States are responsible for ensuring the adequate training of personnel, at all levels, involved in the planning and provision of programmes and services concerning persons with disabilities.

RULE 20 – National monitoring and evaluation of disability programmes in the implementation of the Rules

States are responsible for the continuous monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of national programmes and services concerning the equalisation of opportunities for persons with disabilities.

RULE 21 – Technical and economic co-operation

States, both industrialised and developing, have the responsibility to co-operate in and take measures for the improvement of the living conditions of persons with disabilities in development countries.

RULE 22 – International co-operation

States will participate actively in international co-operation concerning policies for the equalisation of opportunities for persons with disabilities.