

Memo for CabinetRehabilitation and Placement of Disabled Persons

It is considered that suitable provisions should be made for the rehabilitation and placement of disabled persons. It is intended to launch a scheme under which persons, who are substantially handicapped by any disability in obtaining or keeping employment or in undertaking work on their own account, will be enabled to settle down as useful citizens in a gainful occupation. It is considered that such a scheme must be based on adequate legal provisions. Accordingly, the draft Bill which is attached to this Memo has been prepared to provide the necessary framework.

2. It is proposed that persons who will be considered to be disabled persons in accordance with a specific definition will be registered as such. Registration will be effected after the nature and degree of disability and the functional and intellectual ability of a person are established by an occupational health officer.
3. This registration will afford a disabled person a reasonable assurance of his being a person capable of entering into and keeping employment, or of undertaking work on his own account. To achieve this end, efforts will be made to provide the necessary vocational guidance and training indicated for the rehabilitation of the disabled person. It is proposed to enable the Minister of Labour, Employment and Welfare to defray or contribute to the cost of vocational training and industrial rehabilitation.
4. For the success of the scheme it will be necessary to ensure that suitable opportunities for the employment of disabled persons will be available. For this purpose it is proposed that employers having not less than 20 employees will be bound to employ a quota of registered disabled persons. It is proposed that the Minister will also have the power to establish a lower figure in order to increase the opportunities for the employment of disabled persons.
5. The quota applicable to each place of employment will be a number based on a standard percentage of the total number of employees in the establishment. The standard percentage will be fixed by the Minister in consultation with the Resettlement Advisory Committee, which is to be set up under the proposed legislation. The Minister may also fix a special percentage to take into account peculiar circumstances in any trade or industry.
6. In order to ensure the availability of opportunities, it is also proposed that the Minister, in consultation with the Disablement Resettlement Advisory Committee, will be empowered to designate classes of employment which appear to afford specially suitable opportunities for the employment of disabled persons, to be reserved for such persons. However, provisions will be made for justified exceptions, such as in the event of the non-availability of registered persons suitable for an employment.
7. The functions of the proposed Disablement Resettlement Advisory Committee will include efforts:
  - (a) to afford disabled persons an equal opportunity with persons not handicapped by disablement to obtain and keep employment;

/(b) to promote ..

- (b) to promote opportunities for disabled persons to obtain and keep employment;
  - (c) to overcome any discrimination against such persons on account of their disablement; and
  - (d) to make employers aware of the residual abilities and work capacities of disabled persons.
8. Honourable Ministers are invited to agree to the proposed scheme, and to the Draft Bill.

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19.10.68.

L-Arkivj Nazzjonali ta' Malta