|  |
| --- |
| **European Semester 2015/2016 country fiche on disability** |
| **Greece** | N:\Education&Social-Sciences&Law\Projects\Research_Data\0488_9406993_Mark-Priestley_ANED\ANED\2015\EU2020\2015 templates to complete\country_symbols_images\EL.jpg |
| Report prepared by: Eleni Strati, elenistrati@gmail.com  |
| With comparative data provided by the ANED core team |

The [Academic Network of European Disability experts](http://disability-europe.net/) (ANED) was established by the European Commission in 2008 to provide scientific support and advice for its disability policy Unit. In particular, the activities of the Network support the development of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 and practical implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People in the EU.

This country report has been prepared as input for the European Semester from a disability perspective.

*Note:*

*The statistics provided in October 2015 are based on the EU-SILC 2013. This is the most recent microdata available to researchers for analysis from Eurostat. This report may be updated as new data becomes available.*

 

**Table of contents**

[1 Summary of the overall situation and challenges 2](#_Toc453842107)

[2 Assessment of the situation of disabled people with respect to the Europe 2020 headline targets 4](#_Toc453842108)

[2.1 Strategic targets 4](#_Toc453842109)

[2.2 Employment data 6](#_Toc453842110)

[2.2.1 Unemployment 7](#_Toc453842111)

[2.2.2 Economic activity 10](#_Toc453842112)

[2.3 Education data 11](#_Toc453842113)

[2.3.1 Early school leavers 12](#_Toc453842114)

[2.3.2 Tertiary education 13](#_Toc453842115)

[2.4 Poverty and social exclusion data 15](#_Toc453842116)

[3 Description of the situation and trends in relation to each target area 19](#_Toc453842117)

[3.1 Employment 19](#_Toc453842118)

[3.2 Education 20](#_Toc453842119)

[3.3 Poverty and social inclusion 21](#_Toc453842120)

[4 Assessment of policies in place to meet the relevant headline targets 23](#_Toc453842121)

[4.1 Employment 23](#_Toc453842122)

[4.2 Education 24](#_Toc453842123)

[4.3 Poverty and social inclusion 25](#_Toc453842124)

[4.4 Synergies between developments in the different areas 27](#_Toc453842125)

[5 Review of the European Semester from a disability perspective 29](#_Toc453842126)

[5.1 Progress on disability-specific Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs) 29](#_Toc453842127)

[5.2 Progress on other CSRs from a disability perspective 29](#_Toc453842128)

[5.3 Assessment of disability issues in the Country Report (CR) 29](#_Toc453842129)

[6 Assessment of the structural funds ESIF 2014-2020 or other relevant funds in relation to disability challenges 31](#_Toc453842130)

[7 Recommendations 33](#_Toc453842131)

# Summary of the overall situation and challenges

This report provide insights into the situation of people with disabilities in Greece in the areas of employment, education and risk of poverty (EU2020 targets) discussing the main challenges as they emerge from evidence available mostly from the 2013 EU SILC data, since other national data/ research on disability is generally lacking, and policy responses in the framework of the European Semester Process.

The context of the economic crisis is key to understanding the main challenges, which also frames the capacity of national policy making to tackle them. Fiscal constraints mean that disability related programs and actions are almost exclusively employed within the ESIF 2014-2020 framework, which is due to start in November 2015. Additionally, there are binding requirements for extensive reforms across employment, education and social welfare according to the Memorandum of Understanding (August 2015), which are prioritised and will take place in the forthcoming period.

The assessment of policies in the current report is therefore more limited to a strategic planning level, rather than outcomes, although the efficacy of previous policy programs is also briefly discussed[[1]](#footnote-1). Similarly, the recommendations outlined at the end concern mostly the mainstreaming of disability issues in the expected consultation, implementation and monitoring processes foreseen in the NRP (2015) and the Partners’ Agreement for the Programming Period 2014-2020.

In brief, a critical finding in the 2013 EU SILC data concerns markedly high unemployment rates especially for younger age groups (16 up to 34), who are also at a considerably increased risk of poverty in comparison with people with disabilities aged over 65. At the same time, unemployment seems to lead to increased risk of poverty for disabled people, at double the rate in comparison with non-disabled people. The employment prospects of young people with disabilities are further compromised by low education levels and work skills, as data shows particularly low levels of graduation from primary and secondary education and low levels of completion of tertiary education for disabled people.

It is very welcome that issues of disability inequality are mainstreamed across the fields of employment, education and poverty (NRP 2015; Partnership Agreement) whilst the new National Strategic Framework for Social Inclusion 2015-2020 additionally refers to measures for improving access to quality health and social care services. Nevertheless, successful implementation will require overcoming deep rooted problems across the fields.

Active labour market policies, social entrepreneurship schemes and vocational training programs form core actions for tackling both unemployment and risk of poverty/social exclusion of disabled people nevertheless, plans are still lacking detail with respect to targets and ways of ensuring increased participation in such programs. The effectiveness of the social protection system is also questioned with implications for the social welfare review that is due (MoU 2015; NRP 2015), whilst the urgency of de-institutionalisation measures is put forward in the light of recent mobilisation and renewed UN recommendations to Greece with regards to malpractice and violation of rights in institutionalised care (November 2015).

Finally, in the field of education, the NRP (2015) pays due attention to ensuring equal access through disability specific measures, such as a renewed legislative framework and availability of accessible material and aids, whilst there should be further opportunities for evaluating and improving current practices in view of the forthcoming comprehensive reviews of the education system. Nevertheless, educational policy and programming has been characterised by slow progress with fundamental problems persisting year after year for pupils with disabilities. Similarly, the issue of low levels of completion of tertiary education by disabled students is little addressed in the NRP (2015), the NSFSI 2015-2020 or planned actions under the ESIF 2014-2020 programming period.

# Assessment of the situation of disabled people with respect to the Europe 2020 headline targets

## Strategic targets

Table 1: Europe 2020 and agreed national targets for the general population

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Europe 2020 targets | National targets**[[2]](#footnote-2)** |
| Employment | 75% of the 20-64 year-olds to be employed | 70% |
| Education | Reducing the rates of early school leaving below 10% | 9.7% |
| At least 40% of 30-34–year-olds completing third level education | 32% |
| Fighting poverty and social exclusion | At least 20 million fewer people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion | 450,000 |

Relevant disability targets from national strategies or sources:

Additional or specified targets relevant to disability are not included in the latest National Reform Program (2015) or the National Strategic Framework for Social Inclusion (2014).

**A note on the use of EU data**

Unless specified, the summary statistics presented in this report are drawn from 2013 EU-SILC micro data.[[3]](#footnote-3) The EU-SILC sample includes people living in private households and does not include people living in institutions. The proxy used to identify people with disabilities (impairments) is whether ‘for at least the past 6 months’ the respondent reports that they have been ‘limited because of a health problem in activities people usually do’.[[4]](#footnote-4) Responses to this question vary between countries and national data sources are added for comparison, where available.

Table 2: Self-reported ‘activity limitations’ as a proxy for impairment/disability (EU-SILC 2013)

Source: EUSILC UDB 2013 – version 2 of August 2015

It is relevant to observe that Greek estimates of impairment prevalence fall below the EU average for adults of working age, but above for older people, which may affect estimations of equality gaps.

In subsequent tables, these data are used as a proxy to estimate ‘disability’ equality in the main target areas for EU2020 – employment, education and poverty risk.[[5]](#footnote-5) The tables are presented by disaggregating the estimated proportion of people who report and do not report limitations for each indicator (e.g. among those who are employed, unemployed, at risk of poverty, etc.).

## Employment data

Table 3: Most recent employment data, aged 20-64

Source: EUSILC UDB 2013 – version 2 of August 2015

Table 4: Employment rate data, by age group

Source: EUSILC UDB 2013 – version 2 of August 2015

*\* In Greece there are fewer than 50 observations in the sample of people aged 16-24 who declare impairment/limitation. These data should be treated with caution.*

Table 5: Trends in employment by gender and disability (aged 20-64)

Source: EUSILC UDB 2013 – version 2 of August 2015 (and preceding UDBs)

The table above shows a comparison of national employment trends for disabled and non-disabled women and men, and compares this with the EU2020 headline indicator for the EU as a whole.

Alternative data on disability and employment provided by the national expert:

No national data is available for disability and employment.

### Unemployment

National administrative rules and definitions of ‘unemployment’ vary, and these may affect the way in which disabled people are categorised in different countries. The following tables compare national data with the EU2020 headline indicator for the EU.

Table 6: Most recent unemployment data, aged 20-64

Source: EUSILC UDB 2013 – version 2 of August 2015

Table 7: Unemployment rate data, by age group

Source: EUSILC UDB 2013 – version 2 of August 2015

*\* In Greece there are fewer than 50 observations in the sample of people aged 16-24 who declare impairment/limitation. These data should be treated with caution.*

Table 8: Trends in unemployment by gender and disability (aged 20-64)

Source: EUSILC UDB 2013 – version 2 of August 2015 (and preceding UDBs)

Fluctuations in gendered trends of unemployment for people with impairments at national level should be treated with some caution.

Alternative data on disability and unemployment from national sources:

No national data is available for disability and unemployment.

### Economic activity

Table 9: Most recent economic activty data, aged 20-64

Source: EUSILC UDB 2013 – version 2 of August 2015

Table 10: Activity rate data, by age group

Source: EUSILC UDB 2013 – version 2 of August 2015

*\* In Greece there are fewer than 50 observations in the sample of people aged 16-24 who declare impairment/limitation. These data should be treated with caution.*

Table 11: Trends in activity rates by gender and disability (aged 20-64)

Source: EUSILC UDB 2013 – version 2 of August 2015 (and preceding UDBs)

Alternative data on disability and economic activity provided by the national expert:

No national data is available for disability and economic activity.

## Education data

EU statistical comparisons are more limited concerning the education of young disabled women and men in the EU2020 target age groups. Data is available from EU-SILC (annually) as well as the Eurostat Labour Force Survey ad-hoc disability module (for 2011), but with low reliability for several countries on the key measures.[[6]](#footnote-6) Using a wider age range can improve reliability but estimations by gender remain indicative. EU trends are evident but administrative data may offer more reliable alternatives to identify national trends, where available.

### Early school leavers

The EU-SILC sample for the target age group (aged 18-24) includes the following number of people reporting activity ‘limitation’ (as a proxy for impairment/disability).

Table 12: EU-SILC sample size in the target age group 18-24 versus 18-29

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Age 18-24 | Age 18-29 |
|  | No activity ‘limitation’ | Activity ‘limitation’ | No activity ‘limitation’ | Activity ‘limitation’ |
| EU sample | 34,413 | 2,728 | 56,461 | 4,916 |
| National sample | 1,165 | 15\* | 1,867 | 37\* |

Source: EUSILC UDB 2013 – version 2 of August 2015

Table 13: Early school leavers aged 18-24 (indicative based on above sample size)

Source: EUSILC UDB 2013 – version 2 of August 2015

*\* In Greece there are fewer than 20 observations in the sample of people aged 18-24 who declare impairment/limitation. These data cannot be shown. There are also fewer than 50 observations in the sample of people aged 18-29 who declare impairment/limitation. These data should be treated with caution.*

Alternative data on disability and early school leavers provided by the national expert:

Latest available administrative data[[7]](#footnote-7) concerning the number of pupils with disabilities in mainstream and special education units at primary and secondary levels of education, as well as graduates, was included in the European Semester 2014, for the school year 2012-2013[[8]](#footnote-8). Data for the following school year (end of 2014) will be published by the National Statistical Service in November 2015.

### Tertiary education

The EU-SILC sample for the target age group (aged 30-34) includes the following number of people reporting activity ‘limitation’ (a proxy for impairment/disability) although the number of missing observations is larger than the number of observations for activity limitation.

Table 14: EU-SILC sample size for the target age group 30-34 versus 30-39

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Age 30-34 | Age 30-39 |
|  | No activity ‘limitation’ | Activity ‘limitation’ | No activity ‘limitation’ | Activity ‘limitation’ |
| EU sample | 23,851 | 2,866 | 50,496 | 6,732 |
| National sample | 1,016 | 38\* | 2,088 | 96 |

Source: EUSILC UDB 2013 – version 2 of August 2015

Table 15: Completion of tertiary or equivalent education (indicative based on above sample)

Source: EUSILC UDB 2013 – version 2 of August 2015

*\* In Greece there are fewer than 50 observations in the sample of people aged 30-34 who declare impairment/limitation. These data should be treated with caution.*

The survey sample is not sufficient to provide robust trend data disaggregated by gender in the narrow EU2020 target age group. In only 11 out of 28 Member States are there more than 50 observations in the sample for both women and for men in aged 30-34 who also declare impairment/limitation. In Greece there are fewer than 20 observations for women and for men.

The following table is indicative at the EU level but gender trends at the national level should be treated with caution. In all Member States except Austria the achievement of tertiary education was higher for women than for men in both groups.

Table 16: Trends in tertiary education by disability (aged 30-34)

Source: EUSILC UDB 2013 – version 2 of August 2015 (and preceding UDBs)

*See previous table notes. Fluctuations in the trend for people with impairments at national level should be treated with caution. An indicative 6-year trend line is shown for illustration but cannot be considered reliable on the basis of the Greek data.*

Alternative data on disability and tertiary education provided by the national expert:

Latest administrative data available exists for the academic year 2014-2015 for pupils with serious conditions,[[9]](#footnote-9) who entered tertiary education according to the provisions of L.3794/2009,[[10]](#footnote-10) reaching 1264 in total.

Overall, 46735 students succeeded in entering university through the national examination process that same school year.[[11]](#footnote-11) Note that the quota scheme would have allowed around 2300 students with disability to enter university (i.e. quota not filled). Please note that latest data for the school year 2015-2016 are not yet available as applications of candidates with disabilities are now being processed.[[12]](#footnote-12)

No further data is available with regards to the number of students attending or completing tertiary education overall, which may also include students with disabilities who would have entered through national examinations.

## Poverty and social exclusion data

EU SILC data provides indicators of the key risks for people with disabilities. In addition to household risks of low work intensity, there are risks of low income (after social transfers), and material deprivation. These three measures are combined in the overall estimate of risk. The risks for older people do not include work intensity (Eurostat refers to the age group 0-59 for this measure). The survey does not distinguish ‘activity limitation’ (the proxy for impairment/disability) for children under the age of 16. Relevant data provided by the national expert is added where available.

Table 17: People living in household poverty and exclusion by disability and risk (aged 16-59)

Source: EUSILC UDB 2013 – version 2 of August 2015

\*The Greek data for **relative** financial poverty risk (below 60% median household income after social transfers) must be considered in context of the crisis and against a 2010 baseline of 40.2%

Table 18: People living in household poverty and exclusion by disability and gender (aged 16+)

Source: EUSILC UDB 2013 – version 2 of August 2015

Table 19: Overall risk of household poverty or exclusion by disability and age (aged 16+)

Source: EUSILC UDB 2013 – version 2 of August 2015

Table 20: Trends in household risk of poverty and exclusion by disability and age (EU-SILC 2013)

Source: EUSILC UDB 2013 – version 2 of August 2015 (and previous UDB)

Note the previous table comment, overall changes in national household income may impact on changes in **relative** income after social transfers.

Alternative data on disability and risk of poverty or social exclusion provided by the national expert:

SILC data analysis by the National Statistical Service for the same year (2013)[[13]](#footnote-13) does not disaggregate results by disability (in contrast for instance with ethnicity). Nevertheless, there are a couple of issues to highlight in the national data available concerning risk of poverty which will be discussed later in the relevant sections.

Firstly, with reference to the methodological note by the ANED core team regarding the *relative financial poverty risk* (defined as below 60% median household income after social transfers) in the case of Greece, it is explained that if the risk of poverty was examined in a stable time line, for instance under economic conditions in 2008 (prior to the economic crisis), the population at risk of poverty for 2013 would be estimated at 48%, instead of 22.1%.[[14]](#footnote-14)

A further note concerns the increased vulnerability of children to poverty in Greece, especially since the EU SILC data does not include disability data for children aged up to 15 years old. The risk of child poverty in Greece is 25.5% which is 3.4% greater than that of the rest of the population.[[15]](#footnote-15) Finally, data is available from the National Statistical Service (2013)[[16]](#footnote-16) regarding the population living in public social care institutions. In particular, a total of 3178 people resided in social care institutions in 2013, including 1690 people in institutions for people with disabilities (20 units) , 476 people in disability rehabilitation units (6 units in total), while another 480 people lived in “other” public social care institutions. It is estimated by contrast that 8685 people received non-residential social care services.

# Description of the situation and trends in relation to each target area

## Employment

With regards to employment and disability, a first remark is that the majority of people experiencing disability in the context of EU SILC data (self-reported activity limitation) are older than working age. The reported **prevalence of impairment among those aged over 65** is 60.6%, in contrast to people aged 16-64 (11%). That is furthermore a noticeably smaller percentage in comparison to the EU average of people with disabilities in working age (19%). This may be an artefact of self-reporting (i.e. a lack of reporting disability for younger adults).

Unemployment figures are overall considerably higher for people with disabilities in the country in comparison to the EU. It is important here to take into account the context of **high unemployment** in general in Greece. Indicatively the employment rate of the non-disabled population in Greece is just 53.8% in contrast with the EU average at 71.4%.

The exceptionally high unemployment rates in comparison with the rest of EU seem to affect mostly people with ‘moderate’ disability and younger people. Thus, on average in the EU 56% of people with moderate limitations are employed in comparison with 33.7% at a national level, whereas the gap is not as great in the case of people with severe limitations (28.6% versus 23% respectively).

As for younger people (16-24) with disabilities, although it is noted that data for the specific age group should be treated with caution,[[17]](#footnote-17) there are indications that the unemployment rate for younger people with disabilities could be very high, if we consider that the unemployment rate for younger non-disabled people (16-24) reached 67.4% in 2013.

Further factors that potentially affect the employment prospects of young disabled people, as will be discussed later on, are that youth employment programs have not been specifically targeted at people with disabilities; graduation rates from secondary education, which in itself may include students with disabilities up to the age of 22, are very low, while access to tertiary education also remains at low levels. Also, it should be noted that people with disabilities at an older age may well have benefited from policies employed in the past regarding quota placement in the public sector,[[18]](#footnote-18) thus achieving better employment rates the highest being 41.8% for the age group 45-54.

Still, in comparison with EU average employment rates, national rates remain markedly low across age groups, with the gap ranging from 13 to 32.9 percentage points (for the age group 24-35).

Women with disabilities have also been more affected by increasing unemployment over the years, as the unemployment rate for that group increased from 23.9% (2010) to 42.2% (2013). The respective figures for men also evidence upward trends in unemployment, as 14.8% of men with disabilities were unemployed in 2010 in comparison to 34.9% in 2013. The impact of the economic recession has been quite evidently a crucial factor in rising unemployment, against a background of rather weak/ ineffective employment policies for disability, which will be discussed in the relevant sector below.

## Education

Unfortunately no concrete conclusions can be made on the basis of EU SILC data available for Greece for early school leavers, since less than 20 few cases of people with activity limitation are included in the sample of those aged 18-29 (i.e. those who may have benefited from most recent educational reforms since 2008). Nevertheless, national administration data evidences an exceptionally low number of pupils with disabilities who graduate from primary and secondary education, whilst some qualitative data exists to gain a better understanding of the main challenges in compulsory education of pupils with disabilities.

Overall, problems identified in previous reports persist in the education of pupils with disabilities at primary and secondary education. The Annual Equality Report published by the Ombudsman (2014)[[19]](#footnote-19) continues to highlight that, specific measures such as parallel support and integration classes in mainstream schools are not always available to pupils especially in secondary education, as well as in more remote areas (e.g. islands). Furthermore, as a concluding remark (p. 19) it is emphasised that, “the lack of permanent specialised teaching staff, the placement of temporary staff in the middle of the school year and the great delays in the proper functioning of special schools at the beginning of each school year continue to characterise the educational provision to pupils with disabilities in comparison with their non-disabled peers”. The severity of these problems is also continuously put forward by the disability movement in the country.[[20]](#footnote-20)

With regards to completion of tertiary education, EU SILC data shows a great gap between disabled (17.2%) and non-disabled (34.5%) people on a national level, whilst the difference remains significant in comparison to the EU average of people with disabilities who compete tertiary education (26.8%). That is despite national legislation providing access to university without national exams at a 5% quota scheme (L.3794/2009) indicating that problems exist mainly with respect to the level of accessibility within universities and support available during the studies, although very little data is available to evidence these shortcomings.

Some insight can be gained from a discrimination case investigated by the Ombudsman in 2014[[21]](#footnote-21) which showcased the legal discretion of universities to allow or deny access to disabled candidates on the basis of their perceived capacity to participate due to impairment- meaning that there has been little thought paid, let alone actions, to accessibility provisions or reasonable accommodation of needs.

Another case which demonstrates “severe lack of familiarity” (p.12) with the concept of reasonable accommodation and the relevant legislative framework for disability equality (Equal Treatment Law 3304/2005; UNCRPD Ratification Law 3699/2008) was the explicit exclusion of people with mental health problems in a call for candidates at the Public Employment Service (OAED) Vocational School for people with disabilities (provides courses at tertiary level) for the school year 2014-2015.

The limited progress in terms of disability equality in the field of educational policy will be further discussed in the relevant section below.

## Poverty and social inclusion

EU SILC data available for Greece regarding disability and risk of poverty can be seen to confirm the finding that the negative impact of the economic crisis has been greater for people of working age, and especially those 16-24, as it has mainly involved persistently high unemployment rates.

Indicatively, young people with disabilities (16-24) are at a **double risk of poverty** in comparison to people with disabilities aged over 65, figures being 54.4% and 26.3% respectively. Disability seems also in itself to negatively affect the ability of low work intensity households to cope: Disabled people are much more likely to live in households with low work intensity – 40% compared to 17% - and lack of work is the key determinant of poverty for working age adults..

When comparing disabled and non-disabled households with low income, it is actually the case that the former have a slightly lower risk of poverty (by 1%) making the case that disposable income (through employment or a pension) is crucial for meeting the extra costs of disability and thus keeping households above the threshold of poverty.

It should also be noted that the convergence of the poverty risk between households with disabled members and those with non-disabled members owes to the fact that the median national income, on which the relative financial risk of poverty is calculated, has dramatically decreased in the context of austerity measures and labour reforms, and this is very well demonstrated by the example discussed before (i.e. if the risk of poverty was examined in a stable time line, for instance under economic conditions in 2008, the population at risk of poverty in 2013 would be estimated at 48%, instead of 22.1%).[[22]](#footnote-22) Thus, while disability benefits and pensions have been protected to some extent, significant reductions of wages and higher pension rates have taken place. From a disability perspective, this also highlights the important role that the social security system plays in protecting disabled individuals against poverty.

It is especially important to consider in these respects two more disability groups which are not included in the EU SILC data, namely children, who are in general facing a greater risk of poverty in comparison to the adult population in Greece (although no data exists for disabled children in specific), as well as people living in institutions which as footnoted by the National Statistical Service “are evidently poor” (National Statistics Press Release Poverty Risk (2015) p.2).

# Assessment of policies in place to meet the relevant headline targets

## Employment

As discussed earlier, the target population of employment policies for disability slightly exceeds 10%, a percentage which is significant both in terms of achieving equality as much as in the context of achieving the EU2020 target of having 70% of people aged 20-54 in employment. Overall, the national employment rates of disabled people in Greece have decreased significantly in the last five years of the economic crisis, whilst people with disabilities up to 34 years old present a main challenge as they face double unemployment rates in comparison with their peers in EU in average.

High youth unemployment in the country has indeed constituted a major priority in the country[[23]](#footnote-23) however youth labour policies implemented so far (Programming Period 2007-2014) have not specifically addressed disability. Similarly, unemployed people with disabilities have only just been included in a call for applications under the *five month employment scheme at local authorities* launched end of August 2015 for 19100 unemployed individuals[[24]](#footnote-24) the third call of this kind this year. Disabled individuals were not targeted in the previous two calls (32,433 placements in April 2015[[25]](#footnote-25) and 2,417 in July 2015).[[26]](#footnote-26) Although people with disabilities can indeed apply to “mainstream” programs as they target the long-term unemployed, omission of disability among other social priority criteria (such as family status, or length of unemployment), especially in the current context of high unemployment, means that in practice these programs cannot ensure access to employment opportunities for people with disabilities collectively.

Indeed, the participation rate of people with disabilities has been very low even in active labour policies designed specifically for “socially vulnerable groups” in the programming period 2007-2014[[27]](#footnote-27) as the intermediate evaluations (ESF Operational Program Human Resources) have evidenced.[[28]](#footnote-28) It is very welcome indeed that this is acknowledged in the National Reform Program (2015) when discussing “measures targeted to vulnerable population groups” as part of planned labour reforms. In specific, it is mentioned that “*the Ministry of Labour shall ensure that the proportion of people with disabilities in employment programmes will be increased for the forthcoming time”*. (NRP 2015, p. 48)

However, the NRP does not include any targets or specific measures of how this can be achieved, nor does it make any reference or connections with actions planned under the new programming period. It is in addition necessary to monitor how such programs will impact on employment/unemployment rates of people with disabilities and to what extent, which has been missing so far.

The National Strategic Framework for Social Inclusion (2015 p. 69) complementing the NRF 2015, adds emphasis to improving access to lifelong learning programs, active labour policies and social entrepreneurship programs which will form part of the main actions under the new funding period. Under the same strategic priority of a “labour market without exclusions”, further sets of measures, relevant to disability specifically, include securing access to basic community based services, home help services and promoting de-institutionalisation. It is particularly welcome that on a strategic planning level at least, specific actions addressing wider disability obstacles in accessing employment have become more prominent in an interconnected employment/ social inclusion policy framework.

A positive new development in that direction is for instance recent legislation (Art. 13 Law 4331/2015)[[29]](#footnote-29) which secures continuity of disability welfare benefits provision whilst participating in ALP programs, including Social Entrepreneurship and Vocational Training schemes.

## Education

In the field of education of pupils with disabilities, very little progress has been made in terms of improving the policy framework and implementing reforms which have been rather overdue.[[30]](#footnote-30) There remain commitments to a renewed legislative framework for special education, which will convert Special Education School Units into Support Centres as well as the production of accessible educational and teaching aids, and the use of ICT for supporting individual needs (NRP 2015, p. 31).

In fact, the NRP 2015 pays extensive attention to issues in primary and secondary education, a lot of which are equally relevant to disability, such as:

* Adoption of a national strategic policy framework for early school leaving (ESL) which also “focuses especially on socially vulnerable groups” (p. 28-29).
* Development of the “Digital School” with comprehensive digital services and enriched educational material (p.29).
* Apprenticeship programmes for Technical Education Graduates[[31]](#footnote-31) (p. 30)
* CPD for teachers, including themes such as social inequalities (p. 30).
* Implementing educational activities with emphasis on culture and supporting the inclusion of students from vulnerable groups in Primary schools (p. 32).

By contrast, no specific reference is made to disability as regards reforms to higher education, thus entirely leaving out the issue of accessibility of universities and support available to students with disabilities. On the one hand, a comprehensive review is expected to take place for improving the quality of higher education with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders, a process which has not yet started, and is expected to involve “progressive implementation” (p. 32). On the other hand, specifically as it regards ensuring equal access to higher education (NRP 2015, p. 32), the NRP does not put forward any specific plans, as policies already adopted seem to be considered adequate in supporting student participation of “disadvantaged individuals”.

A recent positive policy development should be mentioned regarding the abolition of the discretion of universities to decide on which cases an impairment is considered to be an obstacle to studying a specific subject (Article 7 Ν. 4283/2014). It remains however for universities to routinely ensure accessibility and reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities.

There are finally plans for increasing participation in lifelong learning opportunities specifically from “under-represented groups” (NRP 2015 p.32) and reforming the VET system so as to improve the quality and relevance to the labour market, although no specific measures are mentioned regarding disability and accessibility.

## Poverty and social inclusion

As discussed in the descriptive part earlier, the social security system has played a critical role in safeguarding disabled members in households with low income against poverty, particularly where people aged over 65 are involved. This is not however equally true for disabled people in households with low work intensity, or for younger people aged 16-24, who would be eligible for a welfare disability benefit, but not a disability pension (i.e. have a comparably lower disposable income).

Thus, even though policies relating to disability pensions may be considered effective, especially as they have been protected to some extent, disability benefits have very limited potential in substituting income gained from employment.

This is also evidenced by Nat.Stat (2015)[[32]](#footnote-32) which notes that social benefits (including disability benefits, unemployment and child benefits) decrease the risk of poverty by 3.9% whilst pensions (including disability pensions) by 26.2%.[[33]](#footnote-33)

Furthermore, expenditure for disability benefits was estimated at 1.3% of GDP in 2012 (remaining relatively stable in the previous years before the crisis), in contrast with 2.1% EU average.[[34]](#footnote-34)

Any assessment of the effectiveness of disability benefit policies, which will also practically form part of a social welfare review that is due according to the requirements of the MoU III and the NRP (2015), should also consider the level of services available for meeting support and access needs on a national or local level. Where these are not provided, (e.g. adequate level of health and social care services), or obstacles in the environment persist (e.g. transport, adaptations in the workplace or at school) they translate into extra costs for individuals. In that case it is a question of whether disability benefits are adequate to compensate for those extra costs as well as provide disposable income for younger people with disabilities. Unfortunately no research data is available to provide an immediate answer to that, nevertheless, the inadequacy of disability benefits in these respects has formed a large part of the disability movement lobbying especially since the beginning of the economic crisis up to this day.[[35]](#footnote-35)

In terms of future priorities and strategies, it is welcome that the new National Strategic Framework for Social Inclusion (2014) addresses disability and poverty/social exclusion in a wider context of enabling access to services and the labour market. People with disabilities are acknowledged to be among social groups at increased risk of poverty and social exclusion, while further distinctions are made concerning chronic illness, people in need of assistance for daily tasks and people living in institutions (p. 39). Disability targeted actions include widening provision of community based services, promoting de-institutionalisation (e.g. widening implementation of supported living shelters schemes for adults and children with disabilities (p.91), ensuring access to special education, including nursing tasks in home help service provision, as well as promoting participation of people with disabilities in specifically designed VET schemes, active labour programs, and social entrepreneurship schemes.

It is important to highlight the urgency of de-institutionalisation measures in the light of repeated UN recommendations (2012;[[36]](#footnote-36) 2015)[[37]](#footnote-37) pointing to serious violations of rights, which have been so far little (if at all) addressed by the state. In specific, the latest recommendations of the UN Human Rights Committee (2015, p.2, Recommendation 9) about persons with disabilities *“notes with concern the discrimination faced by persons with disabilities, in particular with regard to access to education, employment and health services...”,* and makes reference to *“...reports indicating the continuing widespread use of such measures (physical restraint), including the use of enclosed restraint beds (cages/net beds) and systematic sedation as a means to restrain patients with intellectual disabilities, including children, in institutions. (arts. 2, 7, 9, 10 and 24)”*

Similar recommendations had been made by the UN Committee of the Rights of Child (2012) in response to the respective report prepared by the Greek Ombudsman for Children’s Rights,[[38]](#footnote-38) which had pointed out that:

“*Many institutions for children with disabilities and chronic illnesses continue to essentially operate as asylums, isolated from the social fabric, with outdated care systems and inadequate coverage of the medical, therapeutic and educational needs of their guests, and some times use unacceptable methods for the children's constraint and confinement for prevention purposes* (p.12)

The report had also pointed out the state’s failure to comply with the UN Guidelines for alternative care, or the content of Recommendation 2005 (5) of the Council of Europe on the rights of children living in institutions, or the Recommendation CM/Rec (2010) 2 for de-institutionalization and community living of children with disabilities” (p. 12).

The persistent failure of the state to take action was brought forward to the Supreme Court of Civil and Penal Law on 13th November 2015 by the Representative of the Hellenic Observatory for the Helsinki Conventions,[[39]](#footnote-39) quoting UN Recommendations as well as using up-to-date evidence collected by an activist group “Zero Tolerance” which on 4th November 2015 carried out a 4 - day symbolic occupation at the institution of Lechaina, demanding immediate government intervention for improving the living conditions of the residents and taking measures for de-institutionalisation. It is worth noting that the specific institution had been under investigation for violation of human rights by the Greek Ombudsman for Children’s Rights in 2011[[40]](#footnote-40) and had also been covered by the BBC.[[41]](#footnote-41)

## Synergies between developments in the different areas

It may be useful to restate here that the main disability strategies and policy priorities for the forthcoming years are included in the NRP 2015 and the National Strategic Framework for Social Inclusion 2015-2020, which are consistently aligned with specific strands of actions under the national ESIF 2014-2020 approved program. In addressing the EU2020 targets, the guiding principle of “active inclusion[[42]](#footnote-42)” is particularly prominent in these documents where it concerns disability, thus creating clear and well designed synergies between employment, education and combating poverty/social exclusion, on a strategic level at least, as just briefly described in the previous section.

A recent policy development within that framework has been legislation (Law 4331/2015)[[43]](#footnote-43) whereby people with disabilities participating in employment or vocational training schemes (usually through co-funded ESF projects) retain disability welfare benefits.

Bridging the gap between vocational education and the labour market is furthermore attempted in renewed legislation regulating special vocational training units (secondary education), which foresees apprenticeship schemes and attainment of vocational rights upon graduation. It is imperative that pupils with disabilities are not left behind from such schemes, which are currently prioritised mostly for mainstream vocational education (please see section 5.3 for further discussion).

Increasing completion of tertiary education of disabled students as key to improving employment prospects and decreasing risk of poverty/social exclusion is perhaps the least discussed theme across the national reform and action plans.

# Review of the European Semester from a disability perspective

## Progress on disability-specific Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs)

There are no disability – specific CSRs for Greece.

## Progress on other CSRs from a disability perspective

There are no CSRs for Greece.

## Assessment of disability issues in the Country Report (CR)

The Staff Working Document produced for Greece in 2015 concerns specifically an “*Assessment of the Social Impact of the new Stability Support Programme for Greece*” as the Economic Adjustment Programme and the new Memorandum of Understanding (19th August 2015) apply. In the same framework another document was communicated by the Commission with regards to enabling effective use of EU funds for generating jobs and growth,[[44]](#footnote-44) which is perhaps more suitable to discuss in the relevant section below.

There is no specific reference to disability within that SWD, however some of the major reforms envisaged in the fields of employment, education and social welfare have the potential to address disability equality gaps and risk of poverty/social exclusion, provided that insight into disability issues will inform the relevant policy making mechanisms.

Indicatively, reforming the Public Employment Service (p. 15) is planned to include a national telephone enquiry service, which could potentially improve access to and accessibility of information and communication regarding employment programs for instance. However, that would be inadequate in terms of ensuring accessibility of information for different impairment groups and across employment services (e.g. physical infrastructure, website, print information, consultancy programs, vocational training schemes and so on). In order to ensure increased participation of disabled people in ALPs – which forms a priority in the NRP (2015), the issue of accessibility of information and communication should be mainstreamed in the redesign of infrastructure and services as a whole.

Similarly, “modernisation of education” is seen as crucial for the future growth of the economy, whilst plans target specifically “education evaluation, governance of higher education and efficiency and autonomy of schools” (p. 14). From a disability perspective, this should address monitoring/ evaluation of equal access to education (a priority for NRP 2015) and successful inclusion in mainstream classes. Parameters to consider could be for instance physical accessibility, teaching support and technical aids available, as well as plans for improving educational achievement for pupils with disabilities which evidence suggests is extremely low (relevant data outlined under section 2.3.1). In principle, these have formed part of the national reform program in education so far, but there has not been an evaluation of progress of implementation of issues relevant to disability.

Equally important in the field of vocational education is the reform adopted in Law 4186/2013,[[45]](#footnote-45) which introduces apprenticeship schemes across all units of vocational (secondary) education, including equally special educational units. In the Third Memorandum of Understanding specific actions are outlined for the successful implementation of such plans, requiring that by 2016-2017 such schemes are available for “all vocational education (EPAS and IEK)[[46]](#footnote-46) students” and “at least 33% of all technical secondary education (EPAL) students”. Unless addressed in future relevant actions, students with disabilities attending vocational education but within special educational units will be excluded from such schemes even though they are equally included in the respective Law (4186/2013 art. 28).

There is finally a review of the social welfare benefit system due which is expected to lead to a social protection system which will target “scarce resources at those in most need” (MoU p. 17). From a disability perspective, as discussed in the relevant sections above, specific attention should be paid so as to protect young disabled people who are at a double risk of poverty compared to disabled people over 65, most probably due to ineligibility for a disability pension and inadequacy of disability benefits as disposable income; secondly, disabled members in households with low work intensity, who are also at a much greater risk of poverty (40%) in comparison with households with non-disabled members with low work intensity (17%) and finally households with disabled children and people living in institutions, which are not included in the EU statistics, but are in greater risk of poverty.

# Assessment of the structural funds ESIF 2014-2020 or other relevant funds in relation to disability challenges

The approved Partners’ Agreement for the Programming Period 2014-2020 embodies national strategies for the EU 2020 targets and it is very welcome that it targets disability explicitly addressing most of the main challenges identified across the EU2020 thematic goals. Presumably this owes a lot to the introduction of conditionalities for non-discrimination on the grounds of disability and ensuring accessibility, in the new EU Regulations (1303/2013).

Additionally, actions under ESIF 2014-2020 which are soon due to start are also closely aligned with disability specific strategies and measures in the NRP (2015) and the NSFSI (2014). Finally, the recent EC Communication (2015) “A New Start for Jobs and Growth in Greece” further helps to gain a better understanding of the potential of EU fund investments in improving the situation of people with disabilities in the areas of employment, education and combating poverty.

According to the new strategy for the programming period 2014-2020, Employment and Education actions will run under a single operational program of 2.1 billion euros (ESF and Youth Employment initiative – YEI),[[47]](#footnote-47) while around 20% of ESF funds will become available for the thematic goal of combating poverty through social inclusion.[[48]](#footnote-48) More targeted actions for disability are rather included under the latter thematic goal, however disability issues are also mainstreamed across employment and education actions. Indicatively, the main actions which address disability are as follows:

**Access to employment**: “Mainstream” ALPs form the crux of this strand of actions, as emphasis is particularly given to those who are long-term unemployed, low-work intensity households and younger people with low skills (p.18), whereas employment programs addressing people with disabilities in particular are rather included under the thematic goal of promoting social inclusion. There is however explicit reference to young people with disability in outlining plans for those not in employment, education or training (p. 100). “More than 100 000 young people are expected to benefit from schemes supported by the YEI providing apprenticeships, traineeships and vocational training and promoting entrepreneurship” according to the EC Com (2015, p. 7). Given existing evidence of exceptionally low employment rates for younger people with disabilities and increased (double) risk of poverty in comparison with older age disability groups, it is imperative to ensure increased participation rates of this group, by targeting/prioritising disability, as well as to monitor and measure the impact of such measures on the employment rates for that group.

**Investing in Education and training:** Goals include broadening access to pre-school education/ eliminating discrimination (p. 107) and reducing early school leaving especially for individuals from “vulnerable social groups”. There is further reference to supporting implementation of apprenticeships in secondary vocational education (p.109) and improving the quality of tertiary education and equal access for disabled individuals.[[49]](#footnote-49) More specifically, disability targeted actions are included in the NSFSI (2015-2020) as discussed in the section 4.2. It is also important to note that around 280million Euros will be available from EU funds which can be used for “the construction and renovation of schools, universities and early childhood and care services” (EC COM (2015) 400 p. 7), providing opportunities for restoring/improving accessibility of infrastructure at all levels of education.

**Promoting Social Inclusion and Combating Poverty and Discrimination:** This thematic goal incudes active labour policies for specific social groups as well as “quality support services” for enabling access to employment, especially social care and employment support services (p. 103). According to the EC COM (2015, p.6) it is estimated that 10000 disabled people will benefit from ESF funds in 2014-2020.

Furthermore, funding social entrepreneurship forms a distinct strand of actions, with specific reference being made to the programming of actions for social care service provision as well as creating a network for supporting start-ups. The NSFSI (2014, p.73 footnote 104) notes that approximately 12000 people belonging to “vulnerable” social groups will benefit from these schemes, while it is predicted that 2000 social enterprises will be established.

In the new programming period funds (EUR 280 million) are also made available from the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived for combating poverty “in the form of providing basic necessities (such as food, shoes and hygiene products) as well as by helping with social inclusion” (EC COM (2015) 400, p. 7).

Further actions are planned for combating discrimination, including on the grounds of disability (p.104) through cultural and awareness raising initiatives, and for improving access and quality of health and social care services especially for those in poverty.

# Recommendations

The recommendations outlined here aim to address the main challenges for disabled people across the areas of employment, education and risk of poverty, as evidenced by available statistical data (EU SILC 2013) and in relation to policy gaps identified in analysing policy priorities and measures from a disability perspective in the context of the European Semester Process, namely the NRP (2015), the NSFSI 2015-2020, the Partnership Agreement 2014-2020 and EC Staff Working Documents (2015).

**Employment**:

* Ensure that disability is mainstreamed in **youth** employment policies and schemes. Set targets, collect data and monitor impact on employment rates for that group.
* Increase participation of disabled people in targeted ALPs and Social Entrepreneurship Calls. Measures should include improving the accessibility of the Public Employment Service and related support services, and making funding available for reasonable accommodation of workplaces/ training centres on an ongoing basis (for instance for participants in ESF programs or for businesses/ employers).
* Include disability in national data collection on employment/ unemployment.

**Education:**

* Ensure use of EU funds to improve accessibility of mainstream school environments.[[50]](#footnote-50)
* Timely placement of teaching staff in special schools, making parallel support and inclusion classes available to all: This can only be ensured by including this expenditure under the annual state budget (Recommendation by the Ombudsman Annual Equality Report 2014).
* Conduct evaluation studies which address the content/ experience of inclusive and special education (as opposed to having only quantitative studies of staff placement or percentage of funds absorbed).
* The renewed legislative framework should include national guidelines on implementing inclusive education, in respect of UNCRPD principles and international best practices.
* Establish/ enhance the role of accessibility units in tertiary education: learn from existing good practices nationally and internationally, involve disabled students/ communities.

**Risk of Poverty/ Social Exclusion**

* Include the dimension of disability in national statistics of poverty and material deprivation. Conduct research into the living conditions of households with disabled members, the extra costs resulting from disability and the adequacy of disability benefits/ pensions as disposable income.
* Any rationalisation of resources in light of the welfare review due, needs to be based on needs assessment (rather than diagnosis alone) taking into account the needs that result from impairment in relation to the environment i.e. adopt a definition of disability which is more closely aligned with the UNCRPD.
* Use of EU funds to promote independent living schemes and targeted support services,[[51]](#footnote-51) as well as create policy frameworks and quality monitoring systems for the regulation/ evaluation of such schemes, e. g. personal assistance schemes. UN Human Rights Committee 2015 Recommendation 10: “The State party should take immediate measures to abolish the use of enclosed restraint beds and systematic sedation in psychiatric and related institutions. Furthermore, the State party should establish an independent monitoring and reporting system, and ensure that abuses are effectively investigated and prosecuted and that redress is provided to the victims and their families.”
* Take actions for progressive de-institutionalisation with parallel community based services and permanent closure of institutionalised settings.[[52]](#footnote-52)
1. References to previous ANED reports are footnoted for more details, so as to avoid duplication. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/targets_en.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. EUSILC UDB 2013 – version 2 of August 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The SILC survey questions are contained in the Minimum European Health Module (MEHM) [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics\_explained/index.php/Glossary:Minimum\_European\_Health\_Module\_(MEHM)](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/Glossary%3AMinimum_European_Health_Module_%28MEHM%29). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The methodology is further explained in the annual statistical reports of ANED, available at <http://www.disability-europe.net/theme/statistical-indicators>. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. For the LFS AHM data see, Early school leavers <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=hlth_de010&lang=en> and tertiary educational attainment <http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=hlth_de020&lang=en>. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Nat. Stat.(2014) *Pupils with special educational needs in primary and secondary education 2012-2013* <http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/PAGE-themes?p_param=A1404&r_param=SED41&y_param=2012_00&mytabs=0>. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. In the school year 2012-2013 a total of 10360 pupils with disabilities received education or vocational training up to secondary level. The great majority of them (8464) attended primary and secondary schools regulated by the Ministry of Education (this can include mainstream, integrated or special education units), as opposed to welfare establishments (1517) or other vocational training units (379), where there is no clear distinction between primary and secondary levels of education. Data for pupils with disabilities who **graduated** the same school year, showed however that only145 pupils graduated from primary education and 19 from secondary education. (Nat. Stat.2014 *Pupils with special educational needs in primary and secondary education 2012-2013* Tables 7 and 8). [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. “Candidates with serious conditions” is the term used in the respective legislation (L.3794/2009) which provides for the entrance of candidates with disabilities and chronic conditions to tertiary education without exams at a 5% quota. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Ministry of Education (Announcement 15-10-2014) *Results for entrance to university by candidates with severe conditions (5%) 2013* <http://edu.klimaka.gr/anakoinoseis-panellhnies/panellhnies/1077-apotelesmata-eisagwghs-ypopshfiwn-sovares-pathhseis-5-panelladikes.html>. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. <http://sep4u.gr/wp-content/uploads/eis_aei_2015.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Application deadline 15th September 2015 <http://www.minedu.gov.gr/home/dioikitika-eggrafa/93-eggrafa-eksetaseon-ypopsifion-me-sobares-pathiseis/14066-14-09-15-2015>. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. National Statistics Press Release Poverty Risk (2015) <http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/BUCKET/A0802/PressReleases/A0802_SFA10_DT_AN_00_2014_01_F_GR.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. National Statistics Press Release Poverty Risk (2015) p.8. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. National Statistics Press Release Poverty Risk (2015) p.3. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. <http://www.statistics.gr/statistics/-/publication/SHE27/->. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. 100% unemployment rate- Less than 50 observations in the EU SILC sample. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Please also note public sector placements are permanent contracts. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. <http://www.synigoros.gr/resources/docs/ee2014-12-diakriseis.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. <http://esaea.gr/pressoffice/announcements/2731-diamartyria-me-polla-minymata-gia-tin-eidiki-ekpaideysi>. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. <http://www.synigoros.gr/resources/docs/ee2014-12-diakriseis.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. National Statistics Press Release Poverty Risk (2015) p.8. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. The *Action Plan for the Creation of New Job Placements and Support for Unemployment 2013-2015* by the Ministry of Work, Social Security and Welfare captured 12 actions in total half of which targeted young people, specifically age groups 15-24, 25-29 and up to 35. Actions were funded and implemented through structural funds 2007-2013 and ESIF 2014-2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. <http://www.esfhellas.gr/el/Pages/NewsFS.aspx?item=183>. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. <http://www.esfhellas.gr/el/Pages/NewsFS.aspx?item=167>. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. <http://www.esfhellas.gr/el/Pages/NewsFS.aspx?item=179>. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. The National Reform Program (2015) sums up the implementation of such schemes, targeting 2300 unemployed persons with disabilities (subsidy of insurance contributions to employers) plus 800 New Self-Employed over a three year period within the 2007-2014 programming period. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Relevant data is included in the 2013 ANED country report, showing in brief that 9% of all beneficiaries of ALPs belonged to “vulnerable social groups”, in contrast with the target of 15%, whilst it is not clear what proportion of these groups were disabled people. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Implementation law published 29th September 2015 <http://esaea.gr/legal-framework/circulars/2719-30-09-2015-gnostopoiisi-diataxeon-toy-n-4331-2015>. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. See for instance ANED (2013) and (2014) EU2020 Country Reports: Input to the European Semester. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Law 4186/2013: The policy framework equally includes special secondary education units, including special vocational workshops, which provide vocational rights upon graduation. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. National Statistics Press Release Poverty Risk (2015) p. 4 <http://www.statistics.gr/portal/page/portal/ESYE/BUCKET/A0802/PressReleases/A0802_SFA10_DT_AN_00_2014_01_F_GR.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Nat. Stat. (2015) p. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. SWD (2015) 162 “*Assessment of the Social Impact of the new Stability Support Programme for Greece*” Table A.3 p. 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. <http://esaea.gr/press-office/press-releases/2748-diakiryxi-e-s-a-mea-gia-tin-4i-noembrioy-gia-tin-axioprepeia-tin-koinoniki-prostasia-tin-isotita-ti-dikaiosyni>. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. UN Committee on the Rights of Child (2012) *Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 44 of the Convention* available at <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/co/CRC_C_GRC_CO_2-3.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. UN Human Rights Committee (2015) *Concluding observations on the second periodic report of Greece* available at <http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CCPR/Shared%20Documents/GRC/CCPR_C_GRC_CO_2_22220_E.docx>. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. The Greek Ombudsman (2012) *Parallel Report of the Greek Ombudsman to the UN CRC* available at <http://www.synigoros.gr/resources/parallel-report-un--3.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Supreme Court Protocol Number 8213/13-11-2015 published at <http://booksjournal.gr/blog/item/1579>. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. The Greek Ombudsman (2011) *About the Conditions at the Institution of Lechaina* <http://www.synigoros.gr/?i=childrens-rights.el.files.46883>. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. BBC World Service 14 November 2014 “The disabled children locked up in cages” by Chloe Hadjimatheou <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-30038753>. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. NSFSI 2015-2020 (p. 42) makes specific reference to the concept of “active inclusion of vulnerable social groups/ groups excluded from the labour market” as discussed and shaped in the EC COM 79 (2000) and 369 (2008) documents. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. Law 4331/2015 *Measures for the relief of PwD, the simplification of the Disability Certification Centres and Related issues* <http://www.esaea.gr/legal-framework/laws/2620-n-4331-2015-metra-gia-tin-anakoyfisi-ton-atomon-me-anapiria-amea-tin-aplopoiisi-tis-leitoyrgias-ton-kentron-pistopoiisis-anapirias-ke-p-a-katapolemisi-tis-eisforodiafygis-kai-synafi-asfalistika-zitimata-kai-alles-diataxeis>. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. E.C. *A New Start for Jobs and Growth in Greece* Brussels, 15.7.2015 COM(2015) 400 final. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Law 4186/2013 *Reform of Secondary Education* <http://edu.klimaka.gr/nomothesia/fek/2204-fek-193-2013-n4186-anadiarthrwsh-devterobathmias-ekpaidevshs.html>. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Public and Private Vocational training Schools for people over 18 years old. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. General Secretariat of EU and other funds (April 2014) Consultation day for the Operational Program “Human Resources Development, Education and Lifelong Learning 2014-2020” <http://www.esfhellas.gr/el/Pages/NewsFS.aspx?item=117>. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. General Secretariat of EU and other funds (December 2013) Thematic Workshop “Promoting social Inclusion and Combating Poverty in the period 2014-2020” available at <http://www.esfhellas.gr/el/Pages/NewsFS.aspx?item=98>. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. General Secretariat of EU and other funds (December 2013) Thematic Workshop “Promoting social Inclusion and Combating Poverty in the period 2014-2020” available at <http://www.esfhellas.gr/el/Pages/NewsFS.aspx?item=98>. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. NCDP Press Release 4212/22-10-2014 The recommendations of the disability movement to the regional operational programs in Attica, Western Greece, Eastern Macedonia and Thrace. <http://www.esamea.gr/pressoffice/press-releases/1180-oi-protaseis-toy-anapirikoy-kinimatos-sta-perifereiaka-epixeirisiaka-programmata-attiki-d-ellada-an-makedonia-thraki>. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Press Release 4212/22-10-2014 The recommendations of the disability movement to the regional operational programs in Attica, Western Greece, Eastern Macedonia and Thrace. <http://www.esamea.gr/pressoffice/press-releases/1180-oi-protaseis-toy-anapirikoy-kinimatos-sta-perifereiaka-epixeirisiaka-programmata-attiki-d-ellada-an-makedonia-thraki>. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. A set of specific actions are put forward by the disability activist group “Zero Tolerance” (https://www.facebook.com/mideniki.anoxi/) which led mobilisation on the issue of de-institutionalisation on 4th November 2015 initially by a 4 - day symbolic occupation at the institution of Lechaina, demanding immediate government intervention for improving the living conditions of disabled children and adults living there and abolishment of institutionalised care. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)