

Hbieb ta' L-Agenzija Sapport

Re: Reaction to report on the Economic Dimensions of Independent Supported Living for People with Disability (Francis Ripard)

Important aspects to consider:

1. Main aim is the promotion of Human Development so as to improve welfare of persons with disability. It will be fruitful before starting anything to study in detail all data concerned. Such data should be collected as even in the report it states clearly that exact data do not exist or are inaccurate. One needs to take consideration the demographic, economic and social considerations as services will depend on the demands after study of profiles of persons with disability, their families in term of economic characteristics as well as type of impairment which is an important variable. Then only, one will be in a position to consider all possibilities. One must bear in mind that average age of those disabled is 45 years having 26%- 60± years of age and one third are subject to progressive conditions.
2. Will the potential costs and benefits be shared? If yes how? One have to access the costs and benefits derived from the resources presently devoted towards persons with disability. Better to see best practices in European Countries. It is better for MALTA to follow Developments and best practices in this regard.
3. A **Disability Ombudsman** to supervise the rights of persons with disability and assist them in legal action is necessary and a positive step to suggest.
4. We need to work on attitudes towards the concept of disability with deep concern to overcome prejudice and stereotyping.
5. As already mentioned accurate data is to be collected. Monitoring and enforcement of policies is not costly but would act as a supportive measure.
6. We need to safeguard the issue that is a dilemma to parents/guardian. Conflict is present when saving for a disabled person to leave enough funds after their demise. Means testing at present may appear unfair and bias.
7. Positive sanctions could be done in providing awards to companies i/c/w employment of the disabled as means of encouragement.
8. More in depth study of the Agenzija Sapport living scheme to persons with disability who have challenging behaviour. Resource team available for consultation to offer long life planning and support groups. Home help care services to be noted.
9. Specialized Centres for registration for people with disability showing specific jobs should be noted.

10. Problem of long working hours is an additional strain. As suggested, compensations should be made available to employment firms. Working from home may lead to further isolation.

The main concern of disabled people is that movements towards any form of employment will threaten their benefit status.

A PILOT SCHEME CAN START ON A PILOT BASIS WITH CONSTANT MONITORING AND REVIEWAL as long as those participating are let to put their lives back with dignity.