**Reply of the Republic of Slovenia with regard to the Human Rights Council resolution 43/7 entitled ''The right to work'', adopted by the Human Rights Council on 18 March 2020**

Slovenia is committed to the implementation and realisation of obligations adopted with the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Republic of Slovenia always prepares regulations in cooperation with persons with disabilities and respects the principle “Nothing about persons with disabilities without persons with disabilities”.

As democratic country governed by the rule of law, where special attention is paid to equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of persons with disabilities, which is written in the Constitution, Slovenia guarantees the right of persons with disabilities to special protection, which is a collection of various rights of persons with disabilities in the field of parental protection and family benefits, education, employment, health, disability insurance, social assistance, culture, sports and recreation, tax and other relief or exemptions, information and communication technology, the accessibility of the built environment and information, and all other fields which enable persons with disabilities to lead decent and equal life.

**Set of prerogatives also includes specific legislation in the field of employment of persons with disabilities, which has proven to be advanced and ensures the employment of persons with disabilities even in times of crisis, such as:**

* **Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons Act**

regulates the right to vocational rehabilitation and certain employment-related issues of persons with disabilities. In addition, this Act lays down other forms, measures and incentives regarding the employment of persons with disabilities and the method of financing. The purpose of the Act is to improve the employability of persons with disabilities and to establish conditions for their equivalent participation in the labour market by eliminating barriers and creating equal opportunities.

Let us introduce some specific provisions of the Act, which enable efficient employment of disabled workers even in times of crisis, which has already been proven during the economic recession, as well as now during the current situation:

- Quota system can identify the effectiveness at various levels: at the level of provision of information and raising awareness among employers with regard to work integration of persons with disability status, as well as the gradual growth of the number of employed persons with disabilities. We emphasise the importance and the stabilising nature of these effects particularly during times of crisis.

- In Slovenia, the quota system for employment of persons with disabilities stipulates that all employers in Slovenia which employ at least 20 employees are obliged to adhere to the quota system for employment of persons with disabilities. The number of subsidised employments is increasing every year, and employers are increasingly better informed and socially responsible, as indicated by data on the decrease in applications for proposed termination of employment contracts for persons with disabilities.

- The legislation allows the cofinancing of workplace adaptations for persons with disabilities to the extent of reasonable adaptations for both unemployed and employed persons with disabilities. The co-financing of workplace adaptations for unemployed persons with disabilities is carried out by the Disability Fund, and for employed persons by the Pension and Disability Insurance Institute. In both cases a workplace adaptation plan is required, which for unemployed persons with disabilities is drafted during the course of their employment rehabilitation, and for employed persons their employer is obliged to draft a plan in cooperation with the competent institutions.

* Recently adopted important **Act on Social Inclusion for Persons with Disability**

which regulates the position and rights of persons with severest disabilities which occurred prior to their reaching 18 years of age or during their regular schooling prior to their reaching 26 years of age. In comparison with the applicable legislation, the range of beneficiaries is wider, which means that, in addition to persons with moderate, severe and profound mental disabilities and persons with the severest physical disabilities, persons with autism spectrum disorder, who suffer from a severe form of unadjusted behavior which prevents them from leading an independent life and acquiring funds of subsistence, deafblind persons and persons with moderate to severe brain injury or damage will also be able to obtain the status of a person with disability.

* Government also adopted second **Action Programme for Persons with Disabilities**

**2014–2021** whose purpose is to protect, promote and guarantee full and equal enjoyment of human rights by persons with disabilities, and to promote the respect of their dignity. The programme comprises thirteen fundamental objectives with a total of 91 measures which comprehensively regulate all areas of life of persons with disabilities and fifth objective work and employment are of key social and economic importance for persons with disabilities in leading an independent life.

During the crisis Slovenia special attention is given to persons with disabilities especially now due to the fear of the spreading of COVID-19. Companies and employment centres for persons with disabilities, which employ over 6.000 persons with disabilities, are entitled to a special monthly crisis bonus for their employees. Parents of children with special needs and permanently unemployed persons with disabilities are receiving a solidarity supplement in the amount of 130 € to 300 €. New crisis measures for persons with disabilities were suggested in relation to part-time work and full payment. Greater activity regarding improvement of competitive advantage by enterprises employing persons with disabilities and employment centers for persons with disabilities was also proposed. Another new measure to offer to persons with disabilities is psychosocial assistance.

* Through some recent statistics data, we can show that our employment legislation in

advanced legislation for persons with disabilities, which is reflected in times like it was the previous economic recession as in the current COIVD-19 pandemic situation. Compared to the entire population, persons with disabilities in Slovenia were less at risk of losing employment. Currently there are even more employees than before the pandemic and it was similar during the economic recession.

Statistical employment data by cohesion regions – October 2020

Western Slovenia

In October 2020, out of 35,433 unemployed persons, as many as 46.6% were in need of additional activities for employability and 26.1% with the need for intensive in-depth support to return to the labor market. Out of 35,433 unemployed persons, 13,267 received cash social assistance, of which only 13.7% were directly employable, 51.4% needed additional activities and as many as 34.8% needed intensive in-depth support to return to the labor market. The target group consists mainly of persons assessed by the European Social found - ESF as persons in need of intensive in-depth support for returning to the labor market. **Among the recipients of cash social assistance, there are 1,452 persons with disabilities**, 173 Roma and 1,806 foreigners. **The share of recipients from all in the individual group of unemployed persons thus brings 36.4% for persons with disabilities,** 39.4% for the Roma and 35.9% for foreigners.

In formulating the sub-measure, we also proceed from the ESF data that out of 79,841 registered unemployed persons, at the end of October 2020:

• 44.3% are long-term unemployed,

• 48.0% are women,

• 35.5% older than 50 years or older,

• 28.8% have primary school or lower education.

Eastern Slovenia

In October 2020, out of 47,501 unemployed persons, as many as 44.5% were in need of additional activities for employability and 37.7% with the need for intensive in-depth support to return to the labor market. Out of 47,501 unemployed persons, 21,652 received cash social assistance, of which only 9.0% were directly employable, 45.3% needed additional activities and as many as 45.6% needed intensive in-depth support to return to the labor market. The target group consists mainly of persons assessed by the ESF as persons in need of intensive in-depth support for returning to the labor market. **Among the recipients of cash social assistance, there are 3,242 persons with disabilities**, 2,009 Roma and 1,523 foreigners. **The share of recipients from all in the individual group of unemployed persons thus brings 33.7% for persons with disabilities**, 91.4% for the Roma and 44.7% for foreigners.

In formulating the sub-measure, we also proceed from the ESF data that out of 47,501 registered unemployed persons, at the end of October 2020:

• 47.8% are long-term unemployed,

• 52.5% are women,

• 36.4% older than 50 years or older,

• 30.9% have primary school or lower education.

Slovenian employment data – October 2020

**In October 2020, out of 83,654 unemployed persons, as many as 45.5% were in need of additional activities for employability and 32.6% with the need for intensive in-depth support to return to the labor market.** Out of 83,654 unemployed persons, 34,923 received cash social assistance, of which only 10.8% were directly employable, 47.6% needed additional activities and as many as 41.5% needed intensive in-depth support to return to the labor market. The target group consists mainly of persons assessed by the ESF as persons in need of intensive in-depth support for returning to the labor market. Among the recipients of cash social assistance**, there are 4,694 persons with disabilities**, 2,182 Roma and 3,333 foreigners. **The share of recipients from all in the individual group of unemployed persons thus yields 38.2% for persons with disabilities**, 91.2% for the Roma and 39.0% for foreigners.

In formulating the sub-measure, we also proceed from the ESF data that out of 83,654 registered unemployed persons, at the end of October 2020:

• 46.1% are long-term unemployed,

• 50.5% are women,

• 35.9% older than 50 years or older,

• 30.4% of them have primary school or lower education.

**Recent employment data of persons with disabilities compared to the previous years:**

At the end of 2019, there were 12,989 unemployed persons with disabilities (17.2% of all unemployed people), and at the end of October 2020 there were 12,285 (14.6% of all unemployed people). Unemployment of persons with disabilities in October 2020 compared to the end of 2019:

General unemployment increased by 11% and the number of unemployed persons with disabilities decreased by 5.4%. In 2019, 2,875 unemployed persons with disabilities were employed, and by the end of October 2020, there were 2,550 employment of persons with disabilities. There are 153 companies for persons with disabilities in Slovenia (4.8% more than in 2018). At the end of 2019 companies for persons with disabilities employed 5,944 persons with disabilities (0.5% more than in 2018, the number of all employees increased by 1%). The share of persons with disabilities among all employees is increasing by October 2020 by 50.84%. Therefore, it is increasing compare to the previous year, which was 50.7%.

**In recent years, Slovenia has implemented several projects from the field of employment and accessibility of persons with disabilities, and let us present some of our good practices:**

2014 saw the commencement of the “We can do it” project to promote equality and combat discrimination of persons with disabilities, particularly in the field of employment, which concluded at the end of 2015. The objectives of the “We can do it” project were to raise the awareness of Slovenian society of the issues of disability and to better inform persons with disabilities of their rights; to make the built environment and information more accessible; to provide better opportunities for persons with disabilities to lead independent lives and their inclusion in society; to provide better opportunities for the employment of persons with disabilities, prevent discrimination and eliminate stereotypes regarding disability in the open labour market.

In 2017, preparations commenced for the “Development and Transition of Young People with Special Needs to the Labour Market” project. At the level of the entire public tender, the inclusion of 2,100 persons from the target group of young people with special needs in transition projects is foreseen between 2018 and 2021. The transition from school to work is an important and frequently a difficult step for each adolescent. Adolescents face numerous physiological and social problems brought by adolescence. If the transition from school to work is not simple for an average adolescent, it is all the more difficult for an adolescent with disability or physical, psychological or social impairment. The purposes of the project are to apply a comprehensive approach and systematic project contents to provide greater social inclusion of young people with special needs and contribute to the formation of a uniform support environment as an interface between school and the labour market for the fully-fledged entry of the target group in the labour market. The cooperation of all experts and institutions which significantly influence the quality of their lives is of key importance for young people. Parents will be included

In 2017, a project with the objective to raise the quality of mobility of vulnerable groups with the use of advanced technologies was also prepared. The project will also bring better quality of life for other vulnerable groups such as elderly persons and families with children who use wheelchairs, and temporarily injured children. The title of the project is “Facilitating multimodal mobility for persons with various disabilities”. This is a multiannual task which will run until 2022. The long-term purpose of this project is to raise the quality of life for persons with various disabilities by implementing operational solutions in selected areas in Slovenia, which facilitate accessibility and safe movement in multimodal transport. Safe routes must be suitably planned and this is the positive approach to enable persons with disabilities to access to all premises, including their workplace.

Slovenia will continue with activities to achieve even greater success from the field of employment of persons with disabilities. Therefore, we are aware of importance to improve our employment regulations, especially in the directions of synchronizing with European legislation and harmonizing with UN CRPD implementation and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.