



PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION
PABSEC

Doc. GA65/CC64/REP/25

SIXTHY-FIFTH PLENARY SESSION OF THE PABSEC GENERAL ASSEMBLY

COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL AND HUMANITARIAN POLICY

REPORT*

**“Current Strategies and Practices for Advancing Education and Employment
for People with Disabilities in the BSEC Member States”**

Rapporteur: Mr. Nazim MAVIS, member of the Committee (Türkiye)

** Text considered by the Sixty-Fourth Meeting of the Committee on Social and Humanitarian Policy on 14 May 2025 in Sinop (Türkiye) and adopted during the Additional Meeting on 17 June 2025 in Baku and approved by the Sixty-Fifth General Assembly in Baku on 19 June 2025*

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The development of a society can be judged relatively by its attitude towards people with disabilities. This relationship is reflected in strategies and practices for education and employment of people with disabilities, emphasizing the key principles of inclusion, equality and respect for human dignity. Maintaining inclusion in education systems and creating equal conditions for employment are necessary conditions for building resilient societies. Such an approach not only opens up new opportunities for people with disabilities but also contributes to the overall development of societies. This, in turn, creates a more cohesive future, where everyone can contribute to the common prosperity.

2. Often, unresolved issues in employment and education for people with disabilities become serious social and physical barriers that hinder their full participation in society and negatively affect their quality of life. These problems are felt particularly acute in societies experiencing military conflicts or economic crises. By prioritizing the needs of people with disabilities, societies can increase their resilience, promote social cohesion and pave the way for a more equitable future.

3. With the aim to evaluate the current strategies and practices related to the education and employment of people with disabilities, the PABSEC Committee on Social and Humanitarian Policy, has decided to discuss the issue of “Current Strategies and Practices for Advancing Education and Employment for People with Disabilities” as the main item of the agenda of its 64th Meeting.

4. Contributions for the Report were received from the national delegation of the Republic of Albania, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Bulgaria, the Hellenic Republic, Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Republic of Serbia, the Republic of Türkiye and Ukraine. Reference materials used for the preparation of the Report were obtained by the International Secretariat through the Internet from the websites of respective international organizations.

II. CURRENT STRATEGIES AND PRACTICES FOR ADVANCING EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

5. According to the global data, over 1.3 billion people, or approximately 16% of the world’s population, are living with some form of disability. In the Black Sea region, these figures are significantly higher due to the ongoing conflicts and wars in the area. Disabled individuals often face significant barriers that disproportionately affect their socioeconomic status, with many grappling with poverty and unemployment. This situation is further exacerbated for disabled women and children, who encounter compounded challenges due to existing inequalities. Understanding and addressing these interconnected issues within the strategies and practices is crucial for fostering equity and improving the overall well-being of people.

6. Effective strategies and practices for advancing the education and employment of individuals with disabilities are essential for states and societies as they promote inclusivity, equality, and economic growth. The integration of people with disabilities into the educational system allows for more efficient use of human capital and the discovery of hidden talents, which in turn contributes to the development of social potential. Moreover, providing employment opportunities for persons with disabilities not only promotes their economic independence, but also significantly strengthens the productive capacity of society. The inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour force contributes to overall productivity and stimulates socio-economic development. Thus, the effective integration of persons with disabilities into the labour market not only enriches individual lives but also creates a more sustainable and successful

economy. These strategies also promote social cohesion and help reduce stigma, creating a fairer society that values the contribution of all its members. Prioritizing the education and employment of individuals with disabilities aligns with broader human rights principles and stimulates national development, creating a pathway for a more just and prosperous future for everyone.

7. PABSEC has consistently demonstrated commitment to the well-being of individuals with disabilities, recognizing that they often face economic disparity and limited access to education and employment opportunities. In response to these challenges, the Assembly has adopted the enact specific legislation in various social spheres that ensure equal opportunities and promote social integration for individuals with disabilities. For instance, the report and recommendation “Improving Social, Economic and Civil Rights of People with Disabilities” (Rec 77/2004) emphasizes the essential role of national parliaments and governments in facilitating the full participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of society.

8. With the aim to overcome the current issues related to the disabled population the governments developed a comprehensive national strategy to support and promote the rights, inclusion, and well-being of individuals with disabilities. This strategy aligns with international frameworks such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and focuses on the key areas. This work includes the adoption of necessary laws and regulations to protect the rights of persons with disabilities and eliminate discrimination against disabled and ensure their equal rights in all aspects of life.

9. An inclusive approach towards persons with disabilities is a critical factor in realising the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) emphasize the importance of ensuring that individuals with disabilities are not left behind in such areas as education and employment. While Goals 4 and 8 specifically focus on the need for inclusive education and sustainable economic growth, these objectives cannot be fully achieved without targeted strategies to remove the barriers preventing active participation by people with disabilities. This necessitates the creation of accessible learning environments, the provision of the tailored support systems, and the development of the policies that promote inclusive employment practices. Furthermore, explicit references in the SDGs to equal access to education (SDG 4.5), social inclusion (SDG 10.2) and the guiding principle of “leaving no one behind” mandate countries to adapt their policies and align their national programmes with the SDGs, ensuring that measures for people with disabilities are integral to these efforts.

10. The UN World Programme of Action (WPA) Concerning Disabled Persons aims to promote effective strategies for preventing disabilities, facilitating rehabilitation, and achieving the goals of “equality” and “full participation” of individuals with disabilities in social life and development. This entails ensuring that people with disabilities experience the same quality of life as the general population and share equally in the improvements in living conditions that stem from social and economic development.

11. It is important to analyse the situation of individuals with disabilities within the context of varying levels of economic and social development, as well as differing cultural traditions. It is also essential to recognize that people with disabilities do not form a homogeneous group. For instance, those with mental health conditions, cognitive impairments, visual, hearing, or speech disabilities, and individuals with limited mobility or chronic health issues encounter distinct barriers that require tailored approaches for resolution. The causes and consequences of disability can

differ significantly from one country to another, influenced by diverse socio-economic conditions and the measures implemented by governments to promote the well-being of their citizens.

12. In many BSEC Member States, achieving the objectives of strategies and practices for advancing education and employment hinges on economic and social development, the expansion of services, the redistribution of resources and income, and the enhancement of the overall standard of living. However, realizing these goals will require sustained efforts over an extended period, especially as the number of individuals with disabilities may continue to rise. Without effective interventions, the consequences of disability can create additional barriers to development. Therefore, it is imperative for all countries to incorporate urgent measures into their overall development plans that focus on disability prevention, rehabilitation, and the establishment of equal opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

13. Despite the applied strategies and practices persons with disabilities continue to encounter significant challenges in accessing education. In the education sphere, obstacles, such as limited access to inclusive schools, inadequate infrastructure, and a shortage of specialized professionals like special education teachers and therapists severely restrict learning opportunities. These barriers reduce participation in both general education and vocational training programmes, hindering people with disabilities from acquiring the skills and qualifications essential for future employment. National strategies aimed at promoting inclusive education focus on integrating individuals with disabilities into mainstream educational environments. Additionally, scholarships and financial assistance are offered to support students with disabilities in their pursuit of higher education, ensuring they have access to the same opportunities as their peers.

14. Enhancing education for children with disabilities requires the creation of inclusive and accessible learning environments. Assistive technologies, such as screen readers, speech-to-text software, and tactile materials, play a key role in enabling access to educational content. The implementation of individualized education plans developed collaboratively with families and specialists, ensures that educational goals are personalized, measurable, and achievable.

15. For adults with disabilities, educational strategies must emphasize lifelong learning. Remote learning platforms and modular courses allow individuals to learn at their own pace and convenience. Vocational training programs tailored to adult learners, including hands-on instruction, internships, and certification opportunities, provide practical skills that directly enhance employability. These programs often partner with specialized employment agencies.

16. While employment is a key pathway to economic stability, disabled individuals often experience discrimination during the hiring process, a lack of inclusive job opportunities, and workplace environments that are not accommodating. These barriers significantly contribute to the high unemployment rates among this demographic group. Governments and organizations must develop inclusive policies that promote equitable access to education, employment, and healthcare. This also includes implementing affirmative action programs, enhancing workplace accommodations, and ensuring accessible services.

17. The problems in employment sphere is compounded by societal prejudices, and a lack of inclusive employment policies. Many employers are hesitant to hire individuals with disabilities, often due to misconceptions about productivity and the extra cost. People with disabilities experience high unemployment rates and economic

insecurity, which not only limits their independence but also contributes to broader social exclusion. To challenge the prejudices against individuals with disabilities, it is crucial to organize awareness-raising campaigns, emphasizing that disability is not a limitation, but rather a natural aspect of human diversity. These campaigns should aim to foster empathy, and promote understanding, ultimately cultivating a more inclusive society that values the contributions of all individuals, regardless of their abilities.

18. Assistance to individuals with disabilities includes, among other things, the possibility of receiving education and vocational training. These measures are aimed at integrating persons with disabilities into society, supporting their independence and improving their quality of life. It is important that society recognizes the value and courage of people who have sacrificed their health for the country and provides them with decent conditions for life and the full realization of their potential. By allocating sufficient resources and creating comprehensive support frameworks, governments can empower disabled individuals affected by military actions to achieve economic independence and actively participate in rebuilding and developing their communities.

19. Greater responsibility for addressing the consequences of disability lies with governments. However, this does not absolve society, individuals, or organizations of their responsibilities. Governments take measures to ensure that individuals with disabilities, have the opportunity to achieve a standard of living comparable to that of their fellow citizens. Non-governmental organizations play a crucial role in supporting governments by identifying needs, proposing effective solutions, and offering services that complement governmental efforts. Equitable distribution of financial and material resources across all segments of the population is vital for improving economic opportunities for persons with disabilities. It is essential to involve individuals with disabilities in decision-making processes concerning policies and programs that impact their lives. Their insights and experiences are invaluable in shaping more effective solutions that address their unique needs and foster greater inclusion. Engaging disabled individuals in this process not only ensures that their voices are heard but also leads to the creation of more relevant and impactful initiatives.

20. It is important to stress that the parliaments play a crucial role in advancing the rights of persons with disabilities by enacting essential laws that foster equality and inclusion. Effective legislation not only creates a legal basis for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities but also aims to remove barriers that hinder their full participation in society. The development of new laws aimed at creating accessible digital platforms, together with the introduction of modern legal frameworks, makes it possible to effectively implement strategies and practices aimed at supporting people with disabilities. Such measures not only contribute to improving access to educational and labour resources but also help to shape public consciousness focused on respect and acceptance of diversity. As a result, a more inclusive environment is created in which every member of society, regardless of their capabilities, has an equal chance to realize their potential, which, in turn, enriches the communities and contributes to the sustainable development. Thus, the active participation of parliaments in the formation and adaptation of legislation is an integral part of the path to creating a fair and equal society.

Situation in the BSEC Member States

21. The National Employment and Skills Strategy 2023-2030 of *the Republic of Albania* and the related Action Plan have foreseen the provision of decent employment for women and men through the implementation of comprehensive labour market policies. This strategy aims to improve the living conditions of persons

with disabilities in various areas, including education and employment. The Employment Incentive Programs provide subsidies and support to employers who employ persons with disabilities, aiming to increase employment opportunities for this category.

22. In Albania, there are several specific programs to support employment, especially for people with disabilities and young people. The Employment Promotion Program aims to support the employment of people with disabilities and young people through subsidies to employers who hire them; Self-Employment Program provides support for individuals who want to set up their own businesses, including training and financing; Vocational Training Programs - Courses and trainings are offered to improve the professional skills of individuals and prepare them for the labour market.

23. Individuals with disabilities in Albania face several key challenges in the field of employment. Persons with disabilities often face discrimination and stigmatization in the workplace, which can hinder their employment opportunities. Many workplaces are not equipped with appropriate infrastructure for persons with disabilities, including physical and technological access. There is a lack of training and support programs to help persons with disabilities develop their professional skills and integrate into the labour market. These challenges require continuous efforts by the government, non-governmental organizations, and society to create a more equal and supportive environment for persons with disabilities.

24. The National Strategy for the Social Protection of Persons with Disabilities of ***the Republic of Azerbaijan*** is focused on inclusive education and accessible working environments. In 2018, Azerbaijan introduced a State Program for Improving the Conditions of People with Disabilities, outlining concrete measures to enhance their quality of life, education, and employment opportunities. Azerbaijan is making significant progress in the field of inclusive education. Special classes for children with disabilities are integrated into mainstream schools. Teachers are provided with training in inclusive teaching methods to facilitate effective interaction with students with special needs. Specialized educational programs and materials are adapted for children with different types of disabilities.

25. Employment remains a crucial aspect of Azerbaijan's strategy for integrating people with disabilities into society. The government introduces initiatives that provide incentives for employers hiring people with disabilities, including tax benefits and funding for workplace adaptations. Azerbaijan actively encourages entrepreneurship among people with disabilities through grants and advisory services. Professional training courses are offered to help individuals acquire in-demand skills, significantly increasing their employment prospects. Regular initiatives to educate society about the rights and potential of people with disabilities, foster a more inclusive environment.

26. Azerbaijan actively participates in international initiatives and programs dedicated to protecting the rights of people with disabilities. The country collaborates with organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNESCO, enabling it to adopt best practices and experiences from other countries to enhance its own programs. Azerbaijan demonstrates active efforts and progress in the areas of education and employment for people with disabilities. The combined efforts of the government, society, and international partners will lead to significant changes and improvements in the quality of life for people with disabilities in Azerbaijan and the BSEC region.

27. Every year projects, programmes and measures for employment of unemployed persons, including unemployed persons with disabilities are included in the National Employment Action Plan of *the Republic of Bulgaria*. Disabled people benefit from job placement services in the primary labour market and can participate in all training and employment programmes, projects and measures. Specialised job recruiters work with unemployed individuals with disabilities. They take an individual approach, providing appropriate employment services tailored to their specific needs, health, education and qualifications.

28. The state encourages the employers to hire unemployed persons with permanent disabilities by providing funds for wages, social and health insurance contributions. The measure is granted by the State Aid Scheme for the employment of unemployed disabled persons. The National Programme for Employment of Persons with Disabilities, coordinated by the Agency for Individuals with Disabilities in support of employers, including fulfilment of their quota obligations, aims to create conditions for the employment of people with permanent disabilities. On an annual basis, the programme enables employers to apply for funding on a project basis, with subsidies for activities that provide access to existing or new jobs for people with permanent disabilities of working age; for adaptation and equipment of workplaces according to the needs of the employee's illness; for qualification and retraining, respectively for training and professional development.

29. The Agency for People with Disabilities has a statutory commitment to develop and fund programmes and measures to stimulate economic initiative in the best interests of people with disabilities, including the annual funding of specific projects of specialised enterprises and coops of disabled people with an economic and social focus to increase their productivity and competitiveness and to build appropriate workplace conditions. Specialised enterprises and coops of disabled people and occupational medicine resorts are reimbursed 50 % of the insurance contributions due for persons employed under labour law. The funds are used for investment, improvement and social integration of people with permanent disabilities and the support staff assisting them.

30. The National Strategy of the *Hellenic Republic* for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2024-2030, entitled "A Greece with all, for all", is a milestone project that aims at the full inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of the social, economic, political and cultural life of the country. The Strategy, based on the principles of social justice and social cohesion, calls for action and coordinates all Ministries, their supervised bodies and Local Authorities, for the universal implementation of the envisaged actions. Synergies are developed with other national strategies and action plans, such as the National Strategy for Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction and the National Recovery and Resilience Plan "Greece 2.0", as well as with international and European policies, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

31. In Greece, the provision of free education at all levels by the state to all citizens is a key principle of the Greek Constitution. Moreover, the fundamental law regarding education of students with disabilities, states that the education of students with disabilities should primarily take place within mainstream school settings. More specifically, pupils with Special Education Needs may receive education in the following mainstream settings: a) Classes within mainstream schools, supported by the class teacher, who in turn is supported by the Coordinators of Educational Matters and the Centres for Interdisciplinary Assessment, Counselling and Support. b) Classes within mainstream schools, with support by qualified special education teachers.

32. In recent years, Greece has made considerable progress in addressing the right of children with disabilities, for equal access to an inclusive, quality education. Consequently, several targets have been achieved as part of the process of increasing the capacity of schools to respond to the diverse needs of students at all levels of the educational system. The main challenges the Greek educational system is called upon to address in terms of providing equal access to education for all students, have been elaborated in detail in the concluding observations of the relevant UN Committees on the Rights of the Child and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

33. In the **Republic of Moldova** Law no. 60/2012 on the social inclusion of persons with disabilities regulates the rights of persons with disabilities with a view to their social inclusion, guaranteeing the possibility of their participation in all areas without discrimination, at a level identical with other members of society, based on respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms. It ensures the right to education, social protection, medical assistance, rehabilitation, work, public life, physical environment, transport, information technologies and systems, communication and other utilities and services to which the general public has access. In this case, the right to work of persons with disabilities is guaranteed, and their inclusion in the workplace is achieved in accordance with the law.

34. Another strategic document in this context is the Inclusive Education Development Program for 2024-2027, approved by Government Decision in 2023, which aims at promoting access to quality education for all, including people with disabilities, vulnerable groups and refugee children. The program provides for measures such as integrating students with special educational needs into general and vocational- technical education, developing support mechanisms for out-of-school children and those at risk of school dropout, promoting learner-centred education and ensuring a school environment that supports students' well-being.

35. Also, in 2023, the Republican Centre for Psycho-pedagogical Assistance was created, which provides methodological assistance, monitors the activity of educational support services, develops methodologies and recommendations for school inclusion, manages databases on children at risk, and collaborates with various institutions and organisations to promote inclusive education. The National Employment Agency directs unemployed people with disabilities to the Vocational Rehabilitation Service. The service aims to restore, recover or compensate for impaired body functions and the work capacity of people with disabilities and is carried out in accordance with the recommendations from the Individual Rehabilitation and Social Inclusion Program for people with disabilities, developed by the National Council for Determining Disability and Work Capacity.

36. **Romania** adopted Law on the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, according to which Romania has assumed the adherence to the principles of the Convention in all areas of the life of persons with disabilities. The National Strategy for Rights of Persons with Disabilities "An equitable Romania" (2022–2027) aims to ensure the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities, based on freedom of decision, in all areas of life and an accessible and resilient environment. The Strategy continues and develops the approach of implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to ensure the framework for the full and equal exercise of all fundamental human rights and freedoms by all persons with disabilities.

37. The general objective is to ensure the opportunity for persons with disabilities to implement and develop skills and abilities and the creative and productive potential in a freely chosen occupation and an inclusive, accessible, adapted workplace. The

national legal framework is represented by the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with disabilities. The Law envisages measures regarding the reasonable adaptation to the workplace by modifying and/or adapting the work schedule in accordance with the functional potential of the disabled person, purchasing assistive equipment, devices and technologies and other similar measures.

38. At the same time, the Law stipulates assisted employment that facilitates work in regular jobs on the competitive labour market and involves providing job-search and workplace support, transport, assistive technologies, training, specialization and adaptation of tasks by the potential of the person with a disability. The Government of Romania is implementing two projects concerning integrating people with disabilities into the labour market by promoting entrepreneurship, financing, supporting and monitoring the development of inclusive businesses, as well as developing an innovative system to increase access to the labour market for people with disabilities.

39. The national legislation that directly or indirectly regulates issues in the field of employment of persons with disabilities in *the Republic of Serbia* is the Law on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities, the Law on Employment and Unemployment Insurance, and the Law on Social Entrepreneurship. The employment policy in the Republic of Serbia is created considering the guidelines and recommendations of the European employment policy, indicators of the state and identified key needs and challenges of the national labour market and ongoing reform processes.

40. In the Action Plan (2024-2026) for the implementation of the Employment Strategy in the Republic of Serbia, unemployed persons with disabilities are registered with the National Employment Service. Within all active employment policy measures, unemployed persons with disabilities are singled out as a special target group of beneficiaries of the measures, and in the case of employment (Subsidy for employment of unemployed persons from the hard-to-employ category) or self-employment (Subsidy for self-employment), the amounts are increased, if they are persons with disabilities.

41. The main challenges in the field of education and employment for persons with disabilities in Serbia is the lack of data on the position of persons with disabilities in the labour market. The single methodological principles and a single code of codes for entering data into the Unified Database of the Central Register of Mandatory Social Insurance, data on employed persons with disabilities is not complete, because a certain number of employers do not enter this data into the register. Another challenge is the insufficient number of publicly recognised organisers of adult education activities and accredited training programmes that are adapted to persons with disabilities.

42. *The Republic of Türkiye's* fundamental perspective on disability is to ensure that disabled individuals actively, independently and equally participate in social life without being discriminated. While the international basis of Türkiye's disability policy is the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (ECPD), the national basis is the Constitution and the Law on Persons with Disabilities. This UN ECPD (2006) was ratified by Türkiye in 2009, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention was ratified in 2015.

43. In order to set forth the legal, institutional and practical actions that need to be taken in the field of disability in Türkiye by 2030, the 2030 Barrier-Free Vision was introduced in 2021. The Vision sets forth "building an inclusive society where individuals with disabilities can realize their potential" and has determined 31 goals

and 107 action areas in the areas of inclusive and accessible society, protection of rights and justice, health and well-being, inclusive education, economic security. The “Disability Rights National Action Plan” was issued on 2 December 2022.

44. In the Disability Rights National Action Plan, activities have been determined to achieve the goals of supporting the culture of living together in the policy area of inclusive education and ensuring the participation of children with special needs in all levels of education together with their peers, strengthening the evaluation, guidance and monitoring system for children with special needs, taking measures for transition to secondary education, vocational training, higher education, employment and lifelong learning environments for individuals with disabilities.

45. In 2024, the Government of *Ukraine* approved the National Strategy for the Development of Inclusive Education until 2029 and approved an operational plan of measures for its implementation in 2024-2026. The National Strategy envisages the introduction of a single system of effective state policy to ensure that each person receives quality education in accordance with their individual needs, overcoming challenges related to martial law, security, forced displacement of citizens, destruction of educational infrastructure, and an increase in the number of people with special educational needs.

46. The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine has approved the Procedure for the Formation and Conditions of Operation of Special Classes in General Secondary Education Institutions. The operation of special classes in accordance with the new Procedure will ensure that persons with disabilities receive education in general secondary education institutions at their place of residence with the creation of special conditions that take into account their individual needs and will allow students with disabilities to socialize in a general education environment.

47. Thus, the Law of Ukraine “On Amendments to Certain Laws of Ukraine on the Protection of Social, Labour and Other Rights of Individuals, Including During Martial Law, and Simplifying the Accounting of Jobs for Persons with Disabilities” introduced an updated mechanism for calculating administrative and economic sanctions, which provides for an automated regime using data from the State Register of Compulsory State Social Insurance and the Centralized Data Bank on Disability Issues to identify enterprises, institutions and organizations, including enterprises, organizations of public associations of persons with disabilities.

III. INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK AND EXPERIENCE

International Labour Organization (ILO)

48. The protection and promotion of the rights of people with disabilities is supported by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol, which was adopted on 13 December 2006. The ILO's standards encourage countries to implement national policies that focus on the employment of people with disabilities, including providing reasonable accommodations, ensuring equal access to job training, and eliminating workplace discrimination. The ILO's Convention No159 on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons), adopted in 1983, emphasizes the need for governments to implement policies and programs that provide vocational training, rehabilitation, and employment opportunities for people with disabilities. It also calls for the development of anti-discrimination policies in the workplace. The ILO's Global Business and Disability Network is an initiative, which connects businesses and organizations worldwide to share best practices, raise awareness about disability

issues, and promote inclusive employment. It helps employers create accessible workplaces and integrate people with disabilities into the labour market.

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

49. UNICEF has been a leader in ensuring that children with disabilities have access to quality education, healthcare, and protection from abuse and neglect. UNICEF's work focuses on children's rights, with a particular emphasis on inclusive education and safeguarding children with disabilities from marginalization. UNICEF works to promote inclusive education systems, ensuring that children with disabilities can access mainstream education with appropriate support. This includes providing resources for teacher training, curriculum adaptation, and assistive technology to make education more accessible. UNICEF works on raising awareness and combating social stigma about children with disabilities. Through campaigns, they aim to change societal attitudes and advocate for the implementation of inclusive policies.

World Bank (WB)

50. The World Bank plays a critical role in supporting the economic empowerment of people with disabilities, focusing on integrating them into economic development and poverty reduction programs. The World Bank funds a variety of projects aimed at improving the livelihoods of people with disabilities through inclusive education and employment initiatives. The World Bank has invested in the disability-inclusive development agenda, which ensures that projects funded by the bank integrate accessibility and inclusivity. It supports programs aimed at increasing financial independence and economic participation for people with disabilities. The World Bank supports initiatives that help people with disabilities gain access to education and employment, especially in developing countries, by focusing on skills training, job creation, and economic inclusion.

European Union (EU)

51. The European Union's Disability Strategy 2021-2030 aims to empower people with disabilities to enjoy their rights on an equal basis. Key actions include funding research on assistive technologies, promoting accessible digital services, and enhancing cross-border cooperation in education and employment. The European Commission supports member states through funding instruments like the European Social Fund (ESF) and Horizon Europe. The Strategy identifies the mechanisms needed to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Disability-related indicators developed by the European Commission have shown an existing clear gap between people with disability and the rest of the population.

Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)

52. The BSEC Economic Agenda Towards a sustainable future of the wider Black Sea area outlines a comprehensive strategy to promote inclusivity and sustainable development, with a strong focus on improving education and employment prospects for individuals with disabilities across the Black Sea region. Goal 14: Higher Standards in Education and Training: focuses on Encouraging adaptation of the educational systems in the BSEC Member States to the current global challenges with a view to increase sustainable growth and the establishment of knowledge-based societies, inter alia, through the exchange of information and experiences; facilitating the adaptation of the BSEC countries' education systems, teachers, and students to the digital era, to better respond to current global needs and eventual future challenges, with a special focus on strengthening and exchanging good practices on digital skills at all levels of education; promoting the development and implementation of

information educational technologies and modern teaching methods, including distance learning, to ensure the continuity of the educational system. These goals collectively contribute to inclusive growth and education accessibility across the BSEC Member States.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

53. Advancing education for individuals with disabilities plays a crucial role in fostering their social inclusion and personal growth. Access to quality education creates pathways to new opportunities, empowering individuals with disabilities to acquire essential skills for thriving in the workforce. Tailored learning programs and specialized courses facilitate a personalized approach that considers each person's unique needs, boosting self-confidence and enriching overall quality of life. Furthermore, education serves as a powerful tool for dismantling stereotypes and biases, ultimately promoting a more inclusive society.

54. The employment of individuals with disabilities is equally important. Work not only fosters financial independence but also nurtures a sense of belonging within the community. By establishing inclusive workplaces and tailored employment programs, people with disabilities are empowered to make meaningful contributions to the economy while honing their professional skills. Employers who welcome individuals with disabilities not only support their potential but also cultivate diverse and innovative teams, enriching the overall work environment.

55. Advancing education and employment prospects for people with disabilities brings numerous social and economic advantages. Engaging in educational and vocational programs decreases reliance on government support, resulting in significant savings for public budgets. Additionally, empowering people with disabilities to pursue their educational and career aspirations, fosters a society where everyone has the opportunity to achieve their dreams, irrespective of physical or mental challenges. This approach not only transforms individual lives but also enriches society as a whole, promoting equity and fairness for all.

56. The significance of strategies and practices for advancing education and employment for people with disabilities cannot be overstated, as they play a crucial role in enhancing both personal fulfilment and the overall prosperity of society. Inclusive educational and job opportunities empower individuals with disabilities to develop their skills and talents, allowing them to make substantial contributions to the economy and social life. This, in turn, fosters a more equitable and diverse society that values individuality and a range of perspectives. Therefore, investing in the education and employment of people with disabilities is strategically vital for achieving sustainable development, social cohesion, and the well-being of all members of a society.

57. The urgency to mobilize governments and parliaments to advance the education and employment of people with disabilities is increasingly critical in the pursuit of an inclusive society. Comprehensive legislative strategies must be developed and reinforced to eliminate the barriers that individuals with disabilities encounter in education and the workforce. This includes funding for adaptive educational programs, creating inclusive workplaces, and providing support for employers who hire individuals with disabilities. Mobilizing government efforts not only facilitates greater access to education and employment but also influence public opinion, fostering a culture of acceptance and respect for the rights of people with disabilities. Collaborative actions at the governmental and parliamentary levels are essential to

ensuring that every individual has the opportunity to realize their possible talent and affirm their identity within society.

58. It is essential to acknowledge that people with disabilities play a crucial role in the development and strengthening of society, contributing significantly to diversity and innovation. Their unique life experiences and perspectives enrich social environment, ensuring that a variety of viewpoints and needs are considered. When provided with access to education and employment, people with disabilities not only fulfil their potential but also become active contributors to economic and cultural life. This engagement not only enhances the community but also fosters social justice and raises awareness of the importance of inclusion. By accepting and supporting individuals with disabilities, society cultivates an atmosphere of mutual assistance and respect, which strengthens social bonds and promotes sustainable social progress. Therefore, the role of people with disabilities in societal development is invaluable and fundamental to creating a fairer and more harmonious world.

59. The attention that the BSEC Member States pay to the needs of people with disabilities in the formulation of strategies and practices or advancing education and employment is essential for fostering an inclusive society. These policies must be tailored to address the unique needs of disabled and eliminate existing barriers, thereby ensuring equal access to educational institutions and the labour market. Implementing inclusive educational strategies not only guarantees quality education for individuals with disabilities but also fosters respect and understanding within the wider community. Furthermore, supporting the employment of people with disabilities enhances their financial independence while simultaneously driving economic growth and social development. Ultimately, prioritizing disability issues in state policies represents a significant step toward creating a more equitable world, where every individual, regardless of their challenges, has the opportunity to realize their potential and contribute meaningfully for the benefit of all.