

Parliamentary Resolution on a Plan of Action on Disabled Persons' Affairs until 2014.

Under Temporary Provision XIII of the Act on the Affairs of Disabled People, No. 59/1992, *cf.* Act No. 152/2010, the Althingi resolves to approve the following Plan of Action on the Affairs of Disabled Persons' for the years 2012–2014.

The Plan of Action should take account of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other international human rights agreements to which Iceland is a party. Emphasis should be placed on human rights and the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of disability; 'disability' should be recognized as a concept undergoing evolution and change and it should be recognized that disability arises in the interaction between people with reduced function, their environment and attitudes which prevent full and active participation in society on an equal basis with others.

The Plan of Action should also take account of the developments that have taken place in services to the disabled, and emphasise focus on the individual, variety and the control by disabled people over their own lives.

The Plan of Action should form a framework for assessment of the situation and further planning on disabled persons' affairs, so playing an important role in collaboration between central and local government on the application and review of services for the disabled in Iceland.

I. Principal goals in disabled persons' affairs for 2012–2020.

Icelandic society should be based on respect for variety and the recognition of disabled people as part of the spectrum of humanity.

It should be ensured that disabled persons enjoy human rights and freedoms on the same basis as others and that they are guaranteed the support necessary to enjoy these rights. Disabled people should be ensured a standard of living equal to that of other citizens, and conditions should be created for them to live an independent life. To this end, steps should be taken to combat poverty and social exclusion. Disabled persons should benefit from all general measures taken by the government which are designed to promote equality, e.g. in the fields of housing, education, insurance and employment.

Policy on disabled people's affairs should take account of the international obligations that the Government of Iceland has undertaken, in particular the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Disabled persons should be involved in policy formulation and decision-making regarding their own affairs.

Obstacles, whether cognitive or material, which prevent disabled people from living independent lives based on their own decisions, should be removed.

Measures should be taken to ensure that disabled people, their federations and constituent bodies, should at all times be full participants in policy formulation and decision-making regarding disabled persons' affairs. The Ministry of Welfare should be responsible for gathering information from the local authorities on services to the disabled and for ensuring that methods of coordinated performance assessment are defined on the basis of legislation, policy on the affairs of disabled persons and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities so that services can be monitored and their outcomes assessed in terms of equality and human rights.

Disabled persons should enjoy full respect and receive the support they require to ensure independence and quality of life as a basis for functioning as fully-valid members of the community on the basis of their own abilities and strengths. This applies equally to children and adults.

II. Plan of Action on Disabled Persons' Affairs for 2012–2014.

A Plan of Action based the main goals defined in disabled persons' affairs should be drawn up for a three-year period, 2012–2014, taking into account the Temporary Provision XII of the Act on the Affairs of Disabled People, which states that a comprehensive review of the Act in the light of the revision of the Local Authorities' Social Services Act, No. 40/1991, is to be completed by the end of 2014. By the same date, a review of the state of disabled person's affairs following the transfer of responsibility from central to local government shall also be completed.

The Ministry of Welfare should be in overall charge of the implementation of the Plan of Action and should also monitor individual measures, while other ministries, regional service authorities, local authorities and, as appropriate, other parties, should be responsible for other individual measures and their review in accordance with assessment criteria defined for each measure. Consumers, interest groups and the business sector should be involved in comprehensive collaboration on the implementation of the policy so as to ensure the best possible utilisation of skills and experience.

The Plan of Action should be divided into eight categories, each covering three to eight projects with well-defined aims.

A. Access.

The Althingi resolves that easy access is one of the key concepts when discussing human rights and equality between all people in the community, whether this means access to buildings, information or means of communication.

B. Employment.

The Althingi resolves that participation on the employment market is a means of promoting the individual's financial independence and personal development and combating poverty.

C. Social protection/independent life.

The Althingi resolves that disabled persons shall be guaranteed human rights and conditions of life on the same basis as other citizens and that conditions be created for them to live independent lives. Efforts should be made to combat poverty and the social exclusion of disabled persons.

D. Health.

The Althingi resolves that disabled persons, both children and adults, shall be entitled to the best available health services, these being of a preventive, general or specialised nature, as appropriate.

E. Image and awareness-raising.

The Althingi resolves that public awareness needs to be raised regarding issues relating to disability and the status of disabled persons in the community. This is best done by having disabled persons take part in the community, e.g. in educational institutions, in the media and in workplaces.

F. Human rights.

The Althingi resolves that, since obstacles of many types exist in the environment and in the structure of society which prevent disabled persons from enjoying full human rights in Iceland, and as many disabled persons experience prejudice and ignorance regarding their disabilities, and may in addition have to face discrimination of more than one type, e.g. on grounds of age, gender, origin or sexual orientation, a serious response shall be made, this including compliance with international agreements which Iceland has signed and the adaptation of Icelandic legislation and practice accordingly.

G. Education.

The Althingi resolves that disabled persons shall enjoy real equal rights regarding education and shall be able to choose from a variety of educational options according to their interests and abilities.

H. Participation.

The Althingi resolves that disabled persons should be entitled to take full part in the social and economic life of the community. They shall be enabled to exercise their civil rights, have a choice regarding how they live and have full access to cultural activities, leisure occupations and entertainment.

III. Individual categories of the Plan of Action.

A. Access.

The Althingi resolves that ease of access is one of the key concepts in the discussion of human rights and equality of status in the community, whether this means access to buildings and other structures, access to information or access to means of communication. Homes, schools, workplaces, leisure and sports centres, shops, public buildings and other premises to which the public has access shall be accessible to all on the basis of 'universal design' in accordance with the legislation on building structures. The same shall apply to open spaces for the general public, such as planned outdoor areas, public parks and building structures in areas intended for outdoor recreation.

Information of relevance to the general public shall be in a form in which all people are able to understand it and make use of it; this may involve the use of signed language, subtitles, Braille and easily understood language. In order for this to be possible, all the latest technology shall be utilised, and sign language shall be used wherever possible.

A.1 The man-made environment.

Aim:	To ensure all people access to man-made environment.
Execution:	A survey should be made in each local government area of access issues as regards access to public buildings, traffic structures and other places open to the public. Following this, an improvement schedule should be drawn up where appropriate.
Responsibility:	The local authorities.
In collaboration with:	The Icelandic National Planning and the Iceland Construction Authority.
Period:	The survey to be complete by the end of 2012; the improvement schedule to be complete by the end of 2013.
Cost:	Within the framework.
Assessment criterion:	The proportion of local authorities that complete their surveys and draw up their schedules.

A.2 Public transport.

Aim: That everybody should be able to use public transport.
Execution: Local authorities that offer public transport services to earmark specific services on their main routes on which only buses that are accessible by disabled persons are to be used. These services to be advertised specially.
Responsibility: Local authorities.
In collaboration with: Ministry of the Interior.
Period: Project to begin in 2012 and run until the end of 2014.
Cost: Within the framework.
Assessment criterion: The proportion of disabled persons who are satisfied with public transport.

A.3 New building structures.

Aim: That 'universal design' be employed in the design of all structures.
Execution: 'Universal design' to be publicised specially to building officers, architects, engineers and other designers and local authority committees active in the sphere of planning and construction. 'Universal design' should also be publicised in the government ministries and the bodies under their control.
Responsibility: Ministry for the Environment.
In collaboration with: Local authorities.
Period: Publicity to take place in 2012 and 2013.
Cost: Within the framework.
Assessment criterion: The proportion of local authorities in which publicity work has gone ahead.

A.4 Transport service.

Aim: That a transport service should be available for disabled persons so as to enable them to take an active part in daily life.
Execution: A Plan of Action regarding transport services to be drawn up, in collaboration with disabled persons, and new methods developed in order to meet users' needs.
Responsibility: Regional service authorities.
In collaboration with: Association of Local Authorities in Iceland and disabled persons' interest groups.
Period: The Plan of Action to be complete in 2012; results to be assessed at the end of 2014.
Cost: To be assessed in the Plan of Action.
Assessment criterion: The proportion of users of the service who are satisfied with it.

A.5 Information.

Aim: That all disabled persons should have unobstructed access to information about their rights and the services available to them.
Execution: The local authorities and regional service authorities are to ensure that their home pages carry accessible information for disabled persons. The City of Reykjavík could be taken as a model in this respect, as it has made the necessary alterations to its website in order to receive certification. In this way, groups of disabled persons who are not able to make use of traditional presentations of information could use the

World Wide Web. Attention should also be given to providing information through counsellors at the appropriate places for those who are not able to use the World Wide Web.

Responsibility: Local authorities.
In collaboration with: Association of Local Authorities in Iceland and disabled persons' interest groups.
Period: By the end of 2013.
Cost:
Assessment criterion: Proportion of local authorities with certified web pages at the end of the period.

A.6 Educational institutions.

Aim: That all schools in the country be accessible to disabled pupils and their family members/supervisors.
Execution: A task force of specialists in the field of education and disabled persons' affairs is to draw up a frame of reference and guidelines for Icelandic schools, in collaboration with their users or their representatives. In this, it should be taken into account that both pupils and their parents may suffer from reduced functionality of many types for which allowance must be made so as to enable them to participate in the work of the school and its social and extra-mural activities.
Responsibility: Ministry of Education, Science and Culture.
In collaboration with: Local authorities, interest groups embracing disabled persons and their parents and state-run educational institutions.
Period: 2012–2014.
Cost:
Assessment criterion: Proportion of schools that have set themselves targets regarding access.

B. Employment.

The Althingi resolves that participation on the employment market is a means of promoting the individual's financial independence and personal development and combating poverty. Projects aimed at making workplaces more accessible, supporting disabled persons on the private sector labour market and increasing their access to the private sector labour market should be undertaken in order to raise their quality of life. Support for disabled persons on the labour market should consist of assistance based on knowledge and experience. The Icelandic Government should set itself the goal of ensuring that 85% of disabled persons of working age should have jobs or be involved in measures to increase their involvement, or in appropriate programmes of studies by the end of 2014.

B.1 Participation in employment in the private sector.

Aim: To enhance and reinforce collaboration with parties in the private sector on the employment of disabled persons.
Execution: a. A collaborative working group to be set up, with representatives of the social partners, the Directorate of Labour and disabled persons. The group is to identify clear goals and methods to ensure, amongst other things, that disabled people can work with special support in the private sector.

b. A project to be started up in which ten companies will participate under the title “Social Responsibility” and in which disabled people will be given an opportunity to participate in the labour market.

Responsibility: Directorate of Labour.
In collaboration with: Regional service authorities/local authorities and disabled persons’ interest groups.
Period: The project to begin in 2012, with pre-defined stages extending to the end of 2014.
Cost: One full-time-equivalent position for one year, total ISK 8 million.
Assessment criterion: The number of companies that participate in the project.

B.2 Employment with support.

Aim: That disabled persons receive support in jobs in the private sector.
Execution: A broad variety of opportunities to be on offer to disabled people on the labour market, these to be followed up with individually-tailored schedules or contracts. Managers and co-workers to receive guidance when a disabled person begins work in the company.
Responsibility: Directorate of Labour.
In collaboration with: Regional service authorities/local authorities, regional labour exchanges and interested parties.
Period: Permanent.
Cost: Within the framework.
Assessment criterion: An assessment of the situation to be made at the beginning of 2014, noting the number of disabled persons active, with support, in private-sector employment.

B.3 Measures to increase involvement.

Aim: That disabled persons who are unemployed should have the opportunity to participate in measures to increase involvement to the same extent as non-disabled people.
Execution: Disabled people who are unemployed are to receive invitations to participate in measures to increase their involvement, these to run for at least four hours per day, five days a week, and to be given the opportunity to tackle tasks appropriate to their age and ability.
Responsibility: Directorate of Labour.
In collaboration with: Regional service authorities/local authorities and disabled people’s interest groups.
Period: 2012–2014.
Cost: Within the framework.
Assessment criterion: An assessment of the situation to be made at the end of 2014, noting the number of disabled people taking part in measures to increase their involvement.

B.4 Innovative and entrepreneurial activities.

Aim: To increase innovative and entrepreneurial activities among disabled people.
Execution: Conditions are to be created for disabled people to work at innovative projects; one way of doing this is to establish experimental workshops around the country. Special entrepreneurial grants to be made available each year.

Responsibility: Directorate of Labour.
In collaboration with: Regional service authorities/local authorities, interested parties and the Innovation Centre Iceland.
Period: 2012–2014.
Cost: Three full-time-equivalent positions and entrepreneurial grants for three years, total ISK 30 million.
Assessment criterion: That three workshops should be in operation by the end of 2014.

B.5 Software and technology industries.

Aim: To increase participation by disabled people in the software and technology industries.
Execution: Collaboration to be set up with software houses and technology companies. The aim being to have ten disabled people included each year in work on their projects.
Responsibility: Directorate of Labour.
In collaboration with: Regional service authorities/local authorities and interest groups.
Period: 2012–2014.
Cost: Within the framework.
Assessment criterion: The number of individuals who take part in projects during 2014.

C. Independent life.

The Althingi resolves that disabled persons should be ensured a standard of living equal to that of other citizens, and that conditions should be created for them to live an independent life. Measures should be taken to combat poverty and the social exclusion of disabled persons. Disabled persons are to have the same right as other citizens to maintain their human dignity and enjoy autonomy, equality and solidarity, and shall not be subjected to discrimination. Disabled persons are to benefit from all ordinary governmental actions aimed at promoting equality, e.g. in the spheres of housing, education, insurance and employment. Services for disabled persons are to be aimed at increasing their independence and enhancing their quality of life. They are to be comprehensive, flexible and individually-tailored, covering all aspects of life and based on the aim of enabling people to live an independent life.

C.1 Personal assistance services.

Aim: That personal assistance services be available to disabled people if they wish to use it.
Execution: The idea is that disabled persons engage assistants whom they themselves choose, compiling a job description that is compatible with the lifestyle and demands of the individual concerned, the aim being that disabled persons should be able to be in control of their own lives for the most part. Personal assistance services should be provided for in legislation, following a period of development, *cf.* Temporary Provision IV in the Act of the Affairs of Disabled People.
Responsibility: Ministry of Welfare.
In collaboration with: Users, local authorities, disabled persons' interest groups and trade unions.
Cost: Within the framework.
Assessment criterion: Proportion of disabled users receiving personal assistance services.

C.2 Choice of services.

Aim:	That disabled persons should have a choice regarding types of service and how services are provided.
Execution:	Before services are provided, an individually-based assessment should be made of the need for services in collaboration with the user and an individually-based schedule should be drawn up in full consultation with the person who is to make use of the service (the user). The schedule should be comprehensive, flexible and individually-tailored and should cover all aspects of daily life. Personal assistance services should be one of the types of service available in accordance with the policy of enabling disabled people to live an independent life.
Responsibility:	Regional service authorities.
In collaboration with:	Users of the services.
Period:	Project to begin in 2012 and to run on a permanent basis; personal assistance services to be adopted in phases.
Cost:	Within the framework.
Assessment criterion:	The proportion of users of the services who have individually-tailored schedules detailing the services they are to receive.

C.3 Continuity and security in services.

Aim:	To increase continuity and security in services to disabled persons.
Execution:	Once an individual/child in a family has been diagnosed disabled, the individual/family is to be offered a contact person who will be attached to them for as long as they wish and consider necessary. Local Authorities' Social Service shall appoint the contact person/professional in consultation with the user of the service.
Responsibility:	Regional service authorities.
In collaboration with:	Local authorities and the State Diagnostic and Counselling Centre.
Period:	Project to be initiated in 2012 and run on a permanent basis.
Cost:	Within the framework.
Assessment criterion:	The proportion of users of the services in each of the service regions who have been allocated a contact person.

C.4 Access to services.

Aim:	To ensure that services to the disabled in their homes meet the needs in each service region, the aim being to eliminate waiting-lists in a systematic way.
Execution:	Schedules to be drawn up in each local government area on how to meet the need for services so as to minimise the wait for services, resulting in maximum waiting times of twelve months, <i>cf.</i> the Regulation No. 1054/2010, on services to disabled persons in their homes.
Responsibility:	Regional service authorities.
In collaboration with:	Local authorities.
Period:	Schedules to be complete by the end of 2012. Assessment of results to be made at the end of 2014.
Cost:	Cost estimate to be ready by the end of 2012.
Assessment criterion:	The number of service regions that have completed their schedules in 2012. The proportion of individuals whose problems are dealt with within twelve months.

C.5 Prosthetics/technical solutions.

- Aim:** That disabled persons should have the opportunity to use contemporary technology and technical solutions when they are provided with services.
- Execution:** The Prosthetics Centre and those who work in collaboration with it to hold publicity demonstrations for service users and the staff of the local authorities to show them the technical solutions available.
- Responsibility:** The Prosthetics Centre of Icelandic Health Insurance.
- In collaboration with:** The National Institute for the Blind, Visually Impaired and Deafblind, the National Hearing and Speech Institute, the Communication Centre for The Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the State Diagnostic and Counselling Centre and the Icelandic Library for the Blind.
- Period:** 2012–2013.
- Cost:** Within the framework.
- Assessment criterion:** Proportion of staff of the regional services who have received training/instruction.

C.6 Flexible working procedures in services to the disabled.

- Aim:** To increase flexibility in the working procedures used in providing services to the disabled.
- Execution:** Experimental projects to be set up in two service regions in collaboration with the trade unions and aimed at changing attitudes and working procedures in services to disabled people. Assessment surveys of user satisfaction with the services to be made at the beginning and at the end of the project.
- Responsibility:** Association of Local Authorities in Iceland.
- In collaboration with:** Regional service authorities, trade unions and service users.
- Period:** 2012–2014.
- Cost:** A 75% position for three years: ISK 6 million per year, total ISK 18 million.
- Assessment criterion:** User satisfaction with the service.

C.7 Choice of place of residence.

- Aim:** That disabled persons should have, to the same extent as others, the right to choose where they live, in accordance with their wishes and needs.
- Execution:** A varied range of types of housing should be available; a schedule should be drawn up to ensure this. All housing should meet the requirements of the Regulation No. 1054/2010, on services to disabled people in their homes, as regards minimum sizes of private areas and accessibility. Attention should be given to methods of making loans at attractive terms available to disabled persons for the purchase of housing, and of offering grants and/or loans for the conversion of occupant-owned premises, and also for conversion of premises occupied by families with disabled children.
- Responsibility:** Regional service authorities.
- In collaboration with:** Housing Financing Fund and the Ministry of Welfare.
- Period:** 2012–2014.
- Cost:** Cost analysis to be completed in 2013.

Assessment criterion: Proportion of service areas in which schedules have been drawn up during 2012.

C.8 Housing design.

Aim: That the entire domestic environment of disabled persons meet the general guidelines laid down regarding disabled people's homes under the Regulation No. 1054/2010, on services to disabled people in their homes.

Execution: Schedules to be drawn up in each service region in collaboration with the local authorities, interest groups and users, based on the current regulations. Premises which do not meet the above requirements, e.g. where rooms are shared, to be phased out in stages. Allocations to the Local Authorities' Equalization Fund in order to meet the cost of housing improvements.

Responsibility: Regional service authorities.

In collaboration with: The Local Authorities' Equalization Fund.

Period: Schedules to be complete by the end of 2012; assessment of the situation to be carried out during 2013.

Cost: Estimate of the need for extra funding to be complete during 2014.

Assessment criterion: Reduction of homes in which rooms are shared.

C.9 Comprehensive services for disabled children and their families.

Aim: That all disabled children should grow up in a family.

Execution: Children of all ages to receive comprehensive services. A schedule to be drawn up for each child, covering how social, school and leisure activity services are to be brought into play in accordance with the child's age, disability and needs and those of its family.

Responsibility: Regional service authorities.

In collaboration with: Local authorities, schools, after-school care centres and the State Diagnostic and Counselling Centre.

Period: Permanent.

Cost: Within the framework, but finance may be needed for relocating parts of services.

Assessment criterion: The proportion of disabled children in each service region for whom a comprehensive schedule has been made for 2013 and 2014.

D. Health.

The Althingi resolves that disabled persons, both children and adults shall be entitled to the best available health services, these being of a preventive, general or specialised nature, as appropriate. Disabled persons are to have access to the health services on the same basis as other citizens. The health services must shoulder their responsibilities towards individuals who have special health-care requirements in connection with their disabilities, irrespective of their sex and their disability type.

D.1 Primary healthcare.

Aim: To develop the primary healthcare as the basic source of health services to meet the needs of disabled persons.

Execution: A review of the role of the primary health clinics to take account of the needs of the disabled. More staff with many-faceted professional

training to be taken on in order to meet the needs of disabled people and people with chronic diseases.

Responsibility: Ministry of Welfare.
In collaboration with: Healthcare centres.
Period: Review to be complete and proposals submitted, by the end of 2013.
Cost: Within the framework.
Assessment criterion: Inclusion of more types of professional within the primary healthcare.

D.2 Psychiatric services.

Aim: That disabled persons receive the psychiatric services best suited to the needs of each individual.
Execution: Psychiatric services to be delivered to a greater extent in the individual's immediate environment by means of community psychiatric teams involving the social services, primary healthcare and specialist's services. Psychiatric health service programmes to be drawn up in each of the service regions. It is vital that cognitive therapy (conversation) services with recognised professionals be available to users independent of their economic standing.
Responsibility: Ministry of Welfare.
In collaboration with: Landspítali (National Hospital), the Akureyri Hospital, the primary healthcare and the regional service authorities.
Period: Psychiatric health service programmes to be drawn up in each of the service regions. Project to begin in 2012 and be complete in 2014.
Cost: Production of the programme is within the framework.
Assessment criterion: Proportion of service regions in which cognitive therapy, conversation-based treatment, teams have been set up.

D.3 Training and rehabilitation.

Aim: That disabled persons be ensured access to the necessary training, e.g. physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy, in accordance with their needs, irrespective of their financial standing.
Execution: A task force of professionals and users to be set up to prepare proposals on:
a. maximum share of the costs of training and rehabilitation and
b. greater accessibility of regular sessions of training and rehabilitation for the disabled.
Responsibility: Ministry of Welfare.
In collaboration with: Primary healthcare, rehabilitation centres and professionals in the field of rehabilitation and training.
Period: Proposals to be ready by the end of 2012.
Cost: Preparation of proposals is within the framework.
Assessment criterion: That approved rules be in existence, together with projections on the share of the cost of training and rehabilitation to be borne by disabled persons.

D.4 Special problems.

Aim: To develop mechanisms to tackle disabled persons' special problems relating to serious illnesses, lifestyle and violence.
Execution: Two task forces to be appointed:

- a. One to make a survey of the treatment responses available and to make proposals on improvements in cases where serious lifestyle problems are combined with disability, or where serious illness is combined with disability.
- b. The other to make proposals on ways of reducing violence against disabled people in society and proposals on measures to support those who experience violence. Particular consideration to be given to the fact that disabled children tend to be at greater risk than non-disabled children of experiencing violence.

Responsibility: Directorate of Health.
 In collaboration with: The primary healthcare, the social services, disabled persons' interest groups, Stígamót (the Reception Centre for Victims of Rape and Sexual Abuse) and comparable organisations.
 Period: The task forces to be established in 2012 and to work throughout 2013.
 Cost: Within the framework.
 Assessment criterion: That proposals be ready not later than the end of 2013.

D.5 Regular health checks.

Aim: That individuals who have special health-care needs related to their disabilities be offered regular health checks at least once a year.
 Execution: Disabled persons to have access to a permanent GP (general practitioner) in order to ensure continuity in the service. In addition, the primary healthcare is to take the initiative on meeting the needs of individuals with special requirements in the course of their preventive work, e.g. as regards maternity and infant monitoring and preventive measures, including sexual health issues. Special attention also to be given to making information and preventive measures, and also screening and anti-allergic measure, accessible to disabled persons.
 Responsibility: Primary healthcare centres.
 In collaboration with: Users and the regional service authorities.
 Period: All disabled persons to be assigned a permanent GP by the end of 2013.
 Cost: Within the framework.
 Assessment criterion: The proportion of disabled persons with special needs in each of the service regions who are under regular monitoring.

E. Image and awareness-raising.

The Althingi resolves that public awareness needs to be raised regarding issues relating to disability and the status of disabled persons in the community. Disabled persons should be visible in the community, e.g. in educational institutions, in the media and in workplaces. At the same time, disabled people should be made more aware of their rights so as to be able to exercise them. General awareness must be raised, in the community at large and among disabled people, regarding their rights and the need to consult the users of services, and steps must be taken to increase involvement and social participation on the part of the disabled. Disabled persons and their organisations should be involved in planning action on changing their image and raising public awareness.

E.1 Ideology and 'discourse'.

- Aim:** To raise public awareness regarding the status of disabled persons and to change the way the community regards disabilities.
- Execution:** A coordinated campaign to be launched to direct public attention to the status of disabled persons. An 'image campaign' to be organised in which the main emphasis is on human rights and greater participation by disabled people in the community.
- Responsibility:** Ministry of Welfare/The Ministry's supervision unit for the rights of disabled persons.
- In collaboration with:** Disabled persons' interest groups.
- Period:** 2012–2014.
- Cost:** Within the framework.
- Assessment criterion:** Measurements showing changes in attitudes towards disabled people.

E.2 Incentive awards for the media.

- Aim:** To make disabled people more visible (conspicuous) in the media and instigate professional and illuminating discussion on the status and rights of disabled people in the community.
- Execution:** The Ministry's supervision unit for the rights of disabled persons to appoint a panel to select and reward the medium that excels in discussing disabled persons' affairs in a professional way, covering their participation, access issues and rights.
- Responsibility:** Ministry of Welfare/The Ministry's supervision unit for the rights of disabled persons.
- In collaboration with:** Disabled persons' interest groups.
- Period:** 2012–2014.
- Cost:** Within the framework.
- Assessment criterion:** The granting of an incentive award during the period.

E.3 Awareness-raising aimed at the staff and elected representatives of the local authorities.

- Aim:** To increase knowledge of disabled persons' issues and understanding of diversity within the community.
- Execution:** Educational material to be compiled for elected representatives and for the staff of the social services, with organised courses held in all service regions of the local authorities' social services.
- Responsibility:** Ministry of Welfare/The Ministry's supervision unit for the rights of disabled persons.
- In collaboration with:** Interest groups and the Association of Local Authorities in Iceland.
- Period:** 2012–2014.
- Cost:** Within the framework.
- Criteria:** The proportion of elected representatives in the local authorities, on the one hand, and of the staff of the social services, on the other, who have attended courses during the period.

E.4 Knowledge of healthcare practitioners.

- Aim:** To increase healthcare practitioners' knowledge of disabled persons' issues and their understanding of diversity within the community.
- Execution:** A wide-ranging programme of awareness-raising to be drawn up for healthcare practitioners regarding disabled persons' issues, including the nature of disabilities and approaches in services to the disabled and

their health problems and health-related needs. A task force to be appointed, consisting of representatives of professional groups; representatives of disabled persons to be involved in the design of the material. Use of the materials to be organised within each health-care jurisdiction.

- Responsibility: Ministry of Welfare/The Ministry's supervision unit for the rights of disabled persons.
- In collaboration with: Directorate of Health.
- Period: Materials to be produced by the end of 2013. Work on implementation to begin in 2014.
- Cost: ISK 2 million for the production of materials.
- Assessment criterion: The proportion of primary healthcare centres in which the awareness-raising materials have been used by the end of 2014.

E.5 Education of healthcare professionals.

- Aim: To enhance the skills of healthcare practitioners in caring for disabled people, and their understanding of their affairs.
- Execution: The training of healthcare professionals to be reviewed on the basis of contemporary attitudes and moral standards regarding disabled persons' issues, taking account of the ideology regarding disability that stresses social circumstances, the right to live an independent life and human rights. Teaching regarding disability-related health issues to be introduced in the training of all healthcare professionals.
- Responsibility: Ministry of Education, Science and Culture.
- In collaboration with: Educational institutions involved in teaching the field of health science.
- Period: 2012–2015.¹
- Cost: Within the framework.
- Assessment criterion: Syllabus review to be completed by the end of 2014.

E.6 Awareness-raising for employers in the private and public sectors.

- Aim: That employers should be well aware of the status and abilities of disabled persons.
- Execution: Implementation of a programme of awareness-raising directed at employers in both the public and the private sectors. Emphasis to be placed on the status and abilities of disabled persons and the importance of taking their interests into account at all times when taking decisions within companies, institutions and Government ministries.
- Responsibility: Ministry of Welfare/The Ministry's supervision unit for the rights of disabled persons.
- In collaboration with: Interest groups, the Directorate of Labour and the Association of Local Authorities in Iceland.
- Period: By the end of 2012.
- Cost: Within the framework.
- Assessment criterion: A larger proportion of disabled people on the labour market.

¹ In accordance with the time-frame laid down by the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture for the review of senior school syllabuses.

F. Human rights.

The Althingi resolves that, since obstacles of many types exist in the environment and in the structure of society which prevent disabled persons from enjoying full human rights to the same extent as non-disabled in Iceland, and as many disabled persons experience prejudice and ignorance regarding their disabilities, and may in addition have to face discrimination of more than one type, e.g. on grounds of age, gender, origin or sexual orientation, a serious response shall be made, this including compliance with international agreements which Iceland has signed and the adaptation of Icelandic legislation and practice for this purpose.

F.1 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Aim:	To ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
Execution:	A collaborative committee of staff of various ministries to be appointed to prepare the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The ministries are to examine legislation in the areas under their purview and propose amendments to bring it into line with the convention. The Icelandic translation of the convention to be revised at the same time.
Responsibility:	Ministry of the Interior.
In collaboration with:	Other ministries.
Period:	The revision of the translation to be complete in April 2012. Draft legislation to be submitted to the Althingi during its 2012–2013 session.
Cost:	Wages of an employee of the committee for one year (ISK 8 million), in addition to the cost of the translation revision (ISK 2 million); total ISK 10 million.
Assessment criterion:	Draft legislation on the ratification of the convention to be presented not later than in the spring session of parliament in 2013.

F.2 Prejudice and social exclusion.

Aim:	To combat prejudice and the social exclusion of disabled persons.
Execution:	A collaborative workgroup to be appointed consisting of representatives of the ministries, local authorities and disabled people, together with representatives of universities in Iceland who have worked on studies of the status of minorities in Iceland. This group to be commissioned with examining and analysing the available studies and making proposals on how they can be utilised in working against prejudice and social exclusion through legislative amendments, the provision of services and the changing of attitudes.
Responsibility:	Ministry of Welfare.
In collaboration with:	Other ministries, the Association of Local Authorities in Iceland and the academic community.
Cost:	The workgroup to submit its final report by the end of 2013. Wages of the project director in a 50% position for one year (total ISK 4 million).
Assessment criterion:	Proposals for amendment made in the group's report.

F.3 Empowerment and consultation with users.

- Aim:** To increase empowerment and user consultation in services to disabled persons.
- Execution:** Two service regions/local authorities to be invited by advertisement to participate in a three-year experimental project, to involve a specific user group, based on the methodologies of empowerment and user consultation. The experience gathered in the experimental project regarding user-controlled personal assistance should also be utilised in this project. Goals should be set regarding the outcome, and the results should be compared with a control group in which the methodology has not been deliberately implemented. Specialists from the academic community, foreign and Icelandic, should be brought in to work on the project, e.g. through teaching and support.
- Responsibility:** Ministry of Welfare.
- In collaboration with:** Association of Local Authorities in Iceland.
- Period:** 2012–2014.
- Cost:** ISK 20 million.
- Assessment criterion:** Outcome of a comparison between the experimental group and the control group.

F.4 Unpaid caregivers.

- Aim:** That participation of unpaid caregivers in the lives of disabled persons be made visible and appreciated at its true value.
- Execution:** When individual schedules are drawn up, the part played by unpaid supporters/relatives should at all times be identified and noted in the overall programme.
- Responsibility:** Ministry of Welfare.
- In collaboration with:** Association of Local Authorities in Iceland.
- Period:** Project to begin in 2012 and to be permanent.
- Cost:** Within the framework.
- Assessment criterion:** Number of registrations/hours of unpaid support work.

F.5 Survey of the health of disabled persons.

- Aim:** To obtain a clear picture of the health of disabled persons in Iceland.
- Execution:** A study to be made of the health of disabled persons in Iceland.
- Responsibility:** Directorate of Health.
- In collaboration with:** Ministry of Welfare and the academic community.
- Period:** Preparations to go ahead in 2012, the study in 2013.
- Cost:** ISK 10 million.
- Assessment criterion:** Study to be complete by the end of 2013.

G. Education.

The Althingi resolves that disabled persons shall enjoy real equal rights regarding education and shall be able to choose from a variety of educational options according to their interests and abilities. Services for disabled pupils should continue to be available to them throughout all levels of the educational system in order to ensure continuity in services. Disabled persons should be ensured the right to retraining and continuing education on an equal basis with other people.

G.1 Continuity between levels in the educational system.

- Aim:** To increase collaboration between the social services and the school system by integrating disabled pupils' services and studies and ensuring that this integration continues throughout their school life.
- Execution:** A plan to be drawn up well in advance in collaboration with the institution, pre-school, junior school, senior school or university, which the pupil/student is planning to enter so that the institution can be prepared when studies begin. This applies, amongst other things, to obtaining the necessary prosthetics, special measures for learning, teaching materials and personal assistance during school hours.
- Responsibility:** The local authorities' educational offices.
- In collaboration with:** Local authorities' social services, pre-schools, junior schools, senior schools and universities.
- Period:** The local authorities are to start drawing up individual schedules for children starting kindergarten (pre-school) in 2012, at the same time preparing schedules for those pupils who are already in study courses. Schedules to be complete for all pupils in kindergartens and junior schools by the end of 2013.
- Cost:** Within the framework.
- Assessment criterion:** Number of schedules prepared by the end of 2014.

G.2 Variety in study courses on offer.

- Aim:** To increase variety in study options in the vocational departments of upper senior and tertiary (university) levels of education so as to enable every individual to find appropriate courses of study.
- Execution:** A work group to be appointed to make proposals on how the aim is to be achieved. The group should consist of specialists in education and disabilities, and also young disabled people..
- Responsibility:** Ministry of Education, Science and Culture.
- In collaboration with:** The academic community, disabled persons' interest groups, the Ministry of Welfare, the Social Insurance Administration and the Directorate of Labour.
- Period:** 2012–2014.
- Cost:** Within the framework.
- Assessment criterion:** That proposals on financing for two projects be ready by the end of the period.

G.3 Grants to disabled students.

- Aim:** To give disabled people greater access to financial support for retraining and continuing education courses.
- Execution:** A continuing education fund to be established within the Social Insurance Administration, with the same role as the vocational and continuing education funds of the pension funds and trade unions. Grants to be made from this fund to recipients of disability pensions who do not qualify for grants from the corresponding funds run by the pension funds and trade unions so as to put them on an equal footing with others when it comes to retraining and continuing education.
- Responsibility:** Ministry of Welfare.
- In collaboration with:** Social Insurance Administration.

Period: Provisions on a continuing education fund to be introduced in legislation no later than the end of 2013.

Cost:

Assessment criterion: That legislative amendments shall have been made, and schedules approved, in 2014.

H. Participation.

The Althingi resolves that disabled persons should have the opportunity to take full part in the social and economic life of the community. They shall be enabled to exercise their civil rights, have a choice regarding how they spend their lives and have full access to cultural activities, leisure occupations and entertainment. Priority should be given to removing obstacles that the individual encounters in daily life. Services to disabled people should enhance their ability to live independent lives.

H.1 User influence and participation.

Aim: That disabled persons be enabled to influence, and participate in, the structure and implementation of services and other issues covering their interests in the local government areas in which they live.

Execution: A five-man user council to be set up in each of the service regions to act in an advisory capacity to the regional service authority on policy formulation in disabled persons' affairs in the region. The user councils should consist of disabled persons' representatives. The regional service authorities would then carry out all work on policy on disabled persons' affairs in collaboration with these councils, which would also be able to examine matters on their own initiative.

Responsibility: Association of Local Authorities in Iceland.

In collaboration with: Ministry of Welfare.

Period: All regional service authorities to have established disabled persons' councils by the end of 2012.

Cost: Costs in connection with users' assistants, total ISK 10 million.

Assessment criterion: The number of matters referred to the user councils in each region.

H.2 Visibility of disabled persons.

Aim: That disabled persons bring the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to the attention of the general public.

Execution: The experimental project "Ambassadors" is to be supported and established securely while work proceeds on the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. An agreement to be made with Fjölmennt on support for the project. Publicity schedules to be presented each year.

Responsibility: Ministry of Welfare.

In collaboration with: Ministry of the Interior and disabled persons' interest groups.

Period: Project to begin in 2012 and to be reviewed a year later.

Cost: ISK 3 million per year, total ISK 9 million.

Assessment criterion: The number of meetings of the "Ambassadors" during the period 2012–2014.

H.3 Disabled parents.

- Aim:** To ensure disabled parents support in helping their children with tasks connected with their schooling. That disabled parents be enabled to support their own children in their studies.
- Execution:** A workgroup to be set up, comprising representatives of the ministries, local authorities and disabled persons, or their organisations, to examine procedures and collaboration between the schools, social services and health services in order to provide this support.
- Responsibility:** Ministry of Welfare.
- In collaboration with:** Association of Local Authorities in Iceland, Ministry of Education, Science and Culture and disabled persons' interest groups.
- Period:** Workgroup to be set up in 2012, submitting its proposals in spring 2013.
- Cost:** Within the framework.
- Assessment criterion:** That approved proposals be finalised by the end of 2013.

H.4 Social life of disabled children and young people.

- Aim:** To end social exclusion of disabled children and young people.
- Execution:** Leisure-time (out of school) activities should be on offer for disabled children and young people of junior (to age 16) and senior school age (up to 20) after the end of the school day, during school holidays and during the summer, corresponding to their wishes and abilities. Such offers should be integrated with ordinary activities offered for children and young people of the same age. Emphasis should be placed on the value of summer camp activities suitable for this group.
- Responsibility:** Local authorities.
- In collaboration with:** Disabled persons' interest groups.
- Period:** The local authorities are to draw up their schedules during 2012 and put them into practice in 2013.
- Cost:** Within the framework for 2012; further cost estimate to be drawn up at the end of the year.
- Assessment criterion:** That fewer disabled children suffer social isolation in 2014 than in 2011.

Approved by the Althingi on 11 June 2012.