

ENIL Personal Assistance Survey

Country/region: Latvia

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PART 1: KEY INFORMATION ABOUT PERSONAL ASSISTANCE

LEGISLATION/POLICY	
Is there legislation covering personal assistance (PA)?	Yes Legislation: Employment and social policy. The law comes under the Ministry of Welfare. For the project execution at local level, local municipality social services are involved and the States Commission.
Is PA currently provided on a pilot basis?	NO
What is the total number of registered PA users in the country?	~6000 PA users (14.11.2014)
Has this number increased, decreased or stagnated (eg due to waiting lists) in the last 5 years?	Increased
Does everyone, regardless of type of impairment, have access to PA?	YES
Does everyone, regardless of age, have access to PA?	YES
Are there restrictions on what PA can be used for?	YES Assistant service shall be determined taking into account the following criteria (hours a week together, but not exceeding 40 hours per week):

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gainfully employed – 15h; • Studying -10h (only the school year or during the session);* • Regularly attend day care centers -10h; • Regular (at least twice a week) engage in various activities outside the house: for route – 10h + support for activities – 10h; • Regular (at least once in a week) receiving treatment services -20h; • occasionally engage in various activities – 10h;
CHANGES IN LEGISLATION/POLICY	
Have there been any changes in legislation/policy restricting the use of PA in the last 5 years?	NO
Have any other limitations been introduced that prevent/restrict PA use in the last 5 years?	NO
If negative changes/restrictions have taken place in the last 5 years, what were the reasons (eg structural, financial etc.)?	
ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENTS	
Who carries out eligibility assessments for PA?	Local municipality social services
How often are assessments repeated?	Once per year
Is there a specific assessment tool that is used?	YES
FUNDING	
How are PA services funded?	Both state and regionally/locally: YES

	State gives money to Local municipality
Is PA a means tested service?	NO
What is the maximum number of PA hours per day/week that can be approved?	Maximum number of PA hours per week are 40.
What is the hourly rate that is funded?	2,16 EUR
Are direct payments/personal budgets available for funding PA?	YES/NO
What is the total number of direct payments/personal budget holders in the country?	
Are family members allowed to be paid as PAs?	YES
PROVIDERS AND SUPPORT	
Is there a choice of providers of PA services?	YES
If PA can be provided by user-cooperatives, do they have to be accredited?	YES/NO
Are PA users provided with training on how to manage their assistance?	NO
Are people with intellectual disabilities allowed to manage their own assistance?	YES/NO
Are support services such as peer support/peer counselling/IL training provided by user organisations funded by the state or the local authority?	NO

PART 2: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

<p>Please provide background information about the introduction of PA into legislation/policy (which actors were involved in advocating for PA, was there inspiration drawn from a certain country, which public stakeholders were needed to set it up, which challenges arose in the process of developing the legislation/policy, what resources were needed)?</p>	<p>The work started in 2006 when Latvia approved the Council of Europe Disability Action plan 2006 – 2015 and its implementation at the State level. Some non-governmental organizations “started to fight” for personal assistance to be given to people with disabilities. The Cabinet of Ministers during 2012 reviewed the informative report “About disability statutory provisions and implementation options for 2013 - 2015”. The Ministry of Welfare was asked to submit a draft law “Amendments to the Disability Law” for the 24th august 2012 to the Cabinet of Ministers. A discussion with persons with disabilities interest’s representatives and social services about implementation of the assistant service also took place. It should be pointed out that many non-governmental organizations that were representing disabled people interests, including People with disabilities and their friends “APEIRONS” and Latvian people with disabilities Cooperation Organization “SUSTENTO”, proposed the priority of service to persons with disabilities, who are studying, attending school, working or attending day-care centers or an evaluation of social activities. Latvia ratified on January 3, 2010 the United Nations Convention “About People with disability rights” that entered into force March 31,2010. In addition, Latvia on June 3rd 2010 ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention, giving people with disabilities the right to submit an application to the UN Committee in case of violations of the rights of persons with disabilities.</p>
<p>Are there any current challenges in implementing the PA legislation/policy?</p>	
<p>Has the legislation/policy on PA led to empowerment of disabled people, setting up of CILs or cooperatives etc.?</p>	No
<p>Is PA used in the process of de-institutionalisation (to help people leave institutional care)?</p>	Yes, but it is personal decision. In many cases it is not enough with hours which is given for PA.

Was any research carried out in the country on the costs of PA? If yes, please provide links or attachments.	No (Do not have information)
If family members are allowed to work as PAs, is this considered problematic or beneficial?	Beneficial.