**Disability:IN Global Directory**

**Republic of Cyprus**

**Disability Definition**

“a person with disability” means the person who, according to the assessment by a special multidisciplinary committee, experiences any kind of impairment which cause permanent or long term physical or intellectual or mental restriction substantially reducing or excluding the possibility to find and maintain an appropriate employment.

Reference: [The Recruitment of Persons with Disabilities in the Wider Public Sector Law](http://www.dmsw.gov.cy/dmsw/dsid/dsid.nsf/dsipd92_en/dsipd92_en?OpenDocument&print#:~:text=%E2%80%9Ca%20person%20with%20disability%E2%80%9D%20means,to%20find%20and%20maintain%20an)

**Legislation**

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities together with the Optional Protocol, was ratified by the Republic of Cyprus in 2011, with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Related Matters (Ratification) Law of 2011 [Law 8 (III)/2011].

After ratification of the UNCRPD in Cyprus, all the relevant authorities are coordinated by the Department for Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance. The government primarily delivers services to people with disabilities. Also, the representative organisations of persons with disabilities, through governmental grants, deliver services to people with disabilities.

**The L127(1)/2000 law providing for Persons with Disabilities:** this Law provides in general for the protection of disabled people, including the safeguarding of equal rights and equal opportunities and the promotion of their social and economic integration. The Law also lays down the principal that the State should aim at ensuring that appropriate vocational rehabilitation measures are made available to all categories of disabled people. Specifically, it provides measures in the field of employment including recruitment, promotion in employment, vocational rehabilitation within the enterprise, measures in regard to communication and information etc.

**The Amending Law 57(1)/2004:** the Law prohibits any kind of discrimination, direct or indirect, as regards promotion, access to all types and all levels of vocational guidance, vocational training and professional experience etc. The Law also permits positive measures which aim at the prevention and counterbalancing of disadvantages related to disability.

**The Training and Education of Children with Disabilities Law (113(1)/1999):** it is clarified in article 29(c) that the School for the Blind will continue its services for the blind, irrespective of age, for their social integration, training and vocational rehabilitation.

Emphasis is placed on the education of almost all children with special needs within mainstream schools.

**Law L103(1)/2000 for the establishment of Special Fund for the Center for Vocational Rehabilitation of the Disabled:** In accordance with the Law a special fund has been established for the promotion of the vocational rehabilitation and employment of persons with disability with the Center and operation of certain programs and other activities within the frame of the general policy of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance. The Vocational Rehabilitation Center trains people with learning difficulties and disabled people to become professionally active and enter the work force.

**The 113(1)/1999 Special Education Law, the Mechanisms for Early Detection of Children with Special Needs and [185(I)2001] Regulations for Education and Training of Children with Special Needs[186(I)2001], which support the application of the Law:** The majority of children with special educational needs are educated within the mainstream classroom. Special educational provision is also given in Special Units at mainstream schools. These children are assigned to a mainstream class where they can attend integrated lessons and participate in celebratory or festive events. The educational and other needs of children in Primary Schools, and Special Units in Primary Schools and in Special Schools are being met through programmes for Special Education. Teachers of various specialties (teachers for intellectual, sentimental and other problems, teachers for the deaf, the blind, special gymnastics, music therapy, work therapy, speech therapy, educational psychology, audiology and physiotherapy), work to support and meet the educational needs of children with disabilities. Unless there are exceptional circumstances these services should be provided with all necessary adaptations and resources.

**The 113(1)/1999 Special Education Law, the Mechanisms for Early Detection of Children with Special Needs and [185(I)2001] Regulations for Education and Training of Children with Special Needs[186(I)2001], which support the application of the Law:** The majority of children with special educational needs are educated within the mainstream classroom. Special educational provision is also given in Special Units at mainstream schools. These children are assigned to a mainstream class where they can attend integrated lessons and participate in celebratory or festive events.

**Laws 113 (I)/1999 and Regulations for Education and Training of Children with Special Needs [186/2001]** set out the legal framework which makes it mandatory for every higher education institute to respond to the needs of every student with disabilities registered at the institution as regards to his/her education, examinations, housing, psychological support etc.

**Law L103(1)/2000 for the establishment of Special Fund for the Center for Vocational Rehabilitation of the Disabled:** The Vocational Rehabilitation Center trains people with learning difficulties and disabled people to become professionally active and enter the work force.

In September 2017 the Council of Ministers approved the implementation of the Supported Living Programmes Scheme via the Project “Operation of new houses/programmes for supported living in the community for persons with disabilities” which was funded by the European Social Fund for the programming period 2014-2020 with the amount of €2.8 million.

Reference: [Euroblind.org](https://www.euroblind.org/convention/article-24/cyprus)

**Employer Requirements**

The Recruitment of Persons with Disabilities in the Wider Public Sector (Special Provisions) Law 2009 (N.146(I)/2009) provides for a 10% quota to employ PWDs in the public sector. The quota was raised from 7 to 10% during the crisis. However, this target has mostly not been met due to problems in the implementation of the legislation, namely a lack of adequate infrastructure and reasonable accommodation.

The Law is problematic as it does not apply to the private sector. The UN Concluding Observations (2017) recommended that *‘the private sector is also covered by a quota system’* (paragraph 54). However, during the European Economic and Social Committee Study Group Visit in 2019 in Cyprus21 the representatives of the private sector (i.e. Cyprus Employers and Industrialists Federation and Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry) were not favourable to this extension.

Reference: [The Recruitment of Persons with Disabilities in the Wider Public Sector Law](http://www.dmsw.gov.cy/dmsw/dsid/dsid.nsf/dsipd92_en/dsipd92_en?OpenDocument&print)

**Accessibility Requirements**

An important development was the enactment in July 2000 of “The Law providing for Persons with Disabilities”. This Law provides in general for the protection of disabled persons, including the safeguarding of equal rights and equal opportunities and the promotion of their social and economic integrations. Specifically it provides: for the specific measures in the field of employment (including recruitment, promotion in employment, vocational rehabilitation within the enterprise); for special protection in cases of termination of employment; for equal treatment in the provision of goods services and facilities; specific measures in regard to transportation, communication and information. Moreover, the law provides for the establishment of the Rehabilitation Council, (an advisory body) a number of executive committees, as well as for the establishment of a Fund aiming at the social and vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities.

Accessibility is a major challenge. The poor transportation network, the absence of appropriate sidewalks and the absence of easy access to buildings are some indicative barriers that prevent people with disabilities from their right to a full participation in the workplace.

In order to establish common accessibility standards the EU adopted two directives:

* the **European accessibility act**(2019), defining **minimum** **accessibility requirements for key products and services**
* the public sector **web accessibility directive**(2016), defining standards to make digital products and services **more accessible to all users**

Reference: [European Blind Union](https://www.euroblind.org/convention/article-27/cyprus#:~:text=This%20Law%20provides%20in%20general,their%20social%20and%20economic%20integrations.)

Reference: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/accessibility-goods-services/>

**Insights**

In Cyprus, 19.2% of the population has reported to have a disability.

Data from EU-SILC indicate an employment rate for persons with disabilities in Cyprus of 49.7 % in 2018, compared to 75.2 % for other persons and approximately -1.1 points below the EU27 average - resulting in an estimated disability employment gap of approximately 25 percentage points

Reference: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/disability-eu-facts-figures/>

**Supplier Diversity**

Not available at this time.

**Talent Sourcing Resources**

[Cyprus Confederation of Organisations of the Disabled](http://www.kysoa.org.cy/)

**Additional Resources**

[Law on Persons with Disabilities](https://extranet.who.int/mindbank/item/2367) (Greek)

[Disability Rights Mission Report](https://www.eesc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/files/disability_rights_-_mission_report_from_country_visit_to_cyprus.docx)

**References**

[Euroblind.org](https://www.euroblind.org/convention/article-24/cyprus)

[Europa.eu](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/disability-eu-facts-figures/)

[European Semester 2020-2021 Country Fiche on Disability Equality - Cyprus](https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=23930&langId=en)