

Activities of the Rehabilitation Division

Vocational Rehabilitation

The Rehabilitation Division of the National Insurance Institute (NII) assists entitled persons who have been dropped out of the labor market or lack employment experience to find jobs suitable for their professional skills and functional ability through vocational training and job placement. The rehabilitation officers, who are trained social workers, provide assistance by means of diagnostic services, occupational consulting and guidance to the insured throughout the entire rehabilitation process.

The main services provided by the Division are in-kind: assessment, guidance and counseling to select a profession, pre-training and vocational training, completion of education and higher education studies and job placement assistance for those having difficulty integrating into the labor force by themselves. Moreover, anyone participating in the rehabilitation process is entitled by law to financing for the expenses related to it: funding for diagnosis and studies, a rehabilitation allowance and travel expenses to and from the training site.

The population dealt with by the Rehabilitation Division is divided into three groups in accordance with the rehabilitation process stage¹: **new applicants, participants** (or **those undergoing rehabilitation**) and **those completing the rehabilitation program**. It should be noted that great effort is expended in identifying the appropriate population among entitled persons, in order to maximize the percentage of those finding employment at the end of the process.

1 A person undergoing rehabilitation may over the course of the year belong to more than one group.

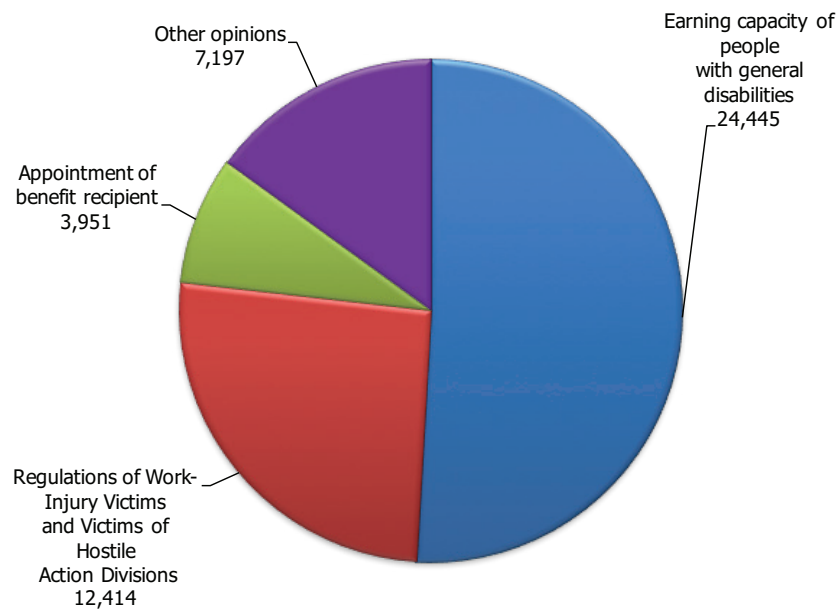
Additional Activities

Along with vocational rehabilitation, the Rehabilitation Division also deals with the following fields: provision of professional opinions to the Benefits Administration Divisions, for example concerning determination of level of earning capacity or appointment of a benefit recipient; assisting work injury victims and victims of hostile action to fully exercise their rights to financial benefits; support and guidance for widows/widowers at times of crisis and victims of hostile action for the rest of their lives.

Professional assessments

Rehabilitation Division employees provide professional assessments for the Benefits Administration Divisions in the following areas: determination of the level of disabled persons' earning capacity; appointment of a benefit recipient, determination of work injury victims' eligibility to have their degree of disability raised and determination of entitlement to capitalizations and entitlement of work injury victims and victims of hostile action to special benefits. Employees also provide opinions on matters outside the scope of the National Insurance Law. In 2016, rehabilitation employees wrote some 48 thousand different opinions, 51% of them concerning determination of the level of earning capacity of people with general disabilities (Figure 1).

Figure 1
Opinions Provided by Rehabilitation Employees, by Subject, 2016



Assistance in fully exercising monetary rights

The assistance is given to work injury victims and victims of hostile action who are entitled to monetary rights (such as a special allowance and special grants). In 2016, 4,914 people received such assistance and 1,238 of these cases were completed.

Assistance to widows/widowers and victims of hostile action

As social workers, Rehabilitation Division employees also assist widows/widowers in times of crisis and victims of hostile action for the rest of their lives. In 2016, a total of 45 widows, widowers and victims of hostile action were treated by the Division.

Who is Eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation?

A person who has not yet reached retirement age and is one of the following is entitled to vocational rehabilitation:

Person with general disabilities

A resident of Israel who suffers from a physical, cognitive or psychological impairment, if he/she meets all the following conditions: (a) was determined in disability tests to have a degree of disability of at least 20%; (b) can no longer work in previous job or in another suitable job due to the impairment; (c) as a result of the impairment, needs and is suitable for vocational training and other rehabilitation services that will enable to return to previous or to other suitable job. The spouse of a disabled person who due to impairment is incapable of rehabilitation, and who permanently resides with the disabled person, is also entitled to rehabilitation.

Work injury victim

A person injured at work² who has been found to have at least 10% medical disability, and who as a result of the injury cannot perform his/her previous work or other suitable work, and needs special vocational training in order to return to his/her previous work. However, the NII is authorized to approve vocational rehabilitation for a work injury victim whose degree of disability is lower than 10%, if continued work at his/her previous workplace may be exceptionally dangerous to his/her health or safety.

2 Work injury: An accident which occurs at the time of and due to work, including an accident that happens on the way to and from work, or an occupational disease in accordance with the list of diseases defined in Work Injury Victims Regulations.

Widow/widower

Widows/widowers as defined by law, who receive a survivors' or dependents' pension and meet all the following conditions: (a) they have no occupation or are unable to support themselves from their occupation; (b) they are unable to continue working at their previous workplace due to the death of a spouse; (c) a rehabilitation worker has determined that they are suitable for vocational training/retraining, subject to their medical condition and education.

Victim of hostile action

A person wounded in a hostile action³, on condition that he/she was determined to have at least 20% medical disability⁴ and, as a result of the injury, is unable to work at his/her previous or another suitable job, or needs special vocational training in order to be able to return to his/her previous job. Members of bereaved families, as defined by law, (widow/widower, orphans and bereaved parents), whose relative/s died as a result of hostile action, are also entitled to vocational rehabilitation.

New Rehabilitation Applicants

In 2016, 8,409 people applied to the NII for vocational rehabilitation - 7% less than the number of applicants in 2015. The decrease arises mainly from a relative decrease in the number of young applicants (aged 18-29) from the General Disability Division. In 2016, as every year, most of the applicants belong to the General Disability Division (approximately 84%) and approximately 60% receive a monthly pension from the various Benefit Divisions.

Young adults in their twenties have the greatest potential for rehabilitation, as training or higher education will significantly increase their chances of finding employment, and, therefore, it is not surprising that 34% of rehabilitation applicants fall into this age group (Figure 2 above). The younger the age, the greater the percentage of people from the General Disability Division undergoing rehabilitation, as this group includes those disabled from birth who apply for rehabilitation in order to exercise their rights

3 Action of military or paramilitary forces or irregular forces of a country or organization hostile to Israel, or action performed to assist one of them, as their agent or on their behalf, and which was directed against Israel

4 Someone injured before 1996 is eligible for vocational rehabilitation if found to have medical disability of 10% or more.

Figure 2
Vocational Rehabilitation Applicants, by Age and Division, 2016

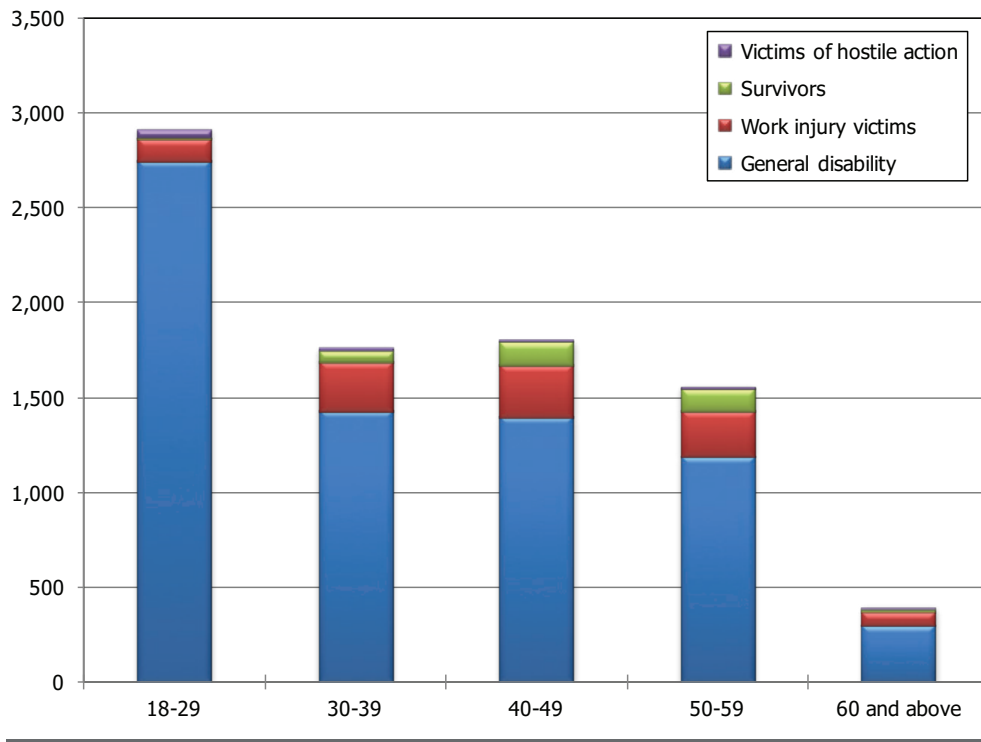


Table 1
Vocational Rehabilitation Applicants by Division, Number of Applications and Initiator of Application (Absolute Numbers and Percentages), 2016

Number of applications	Application initiator	Total		General disability	Work injury victims	Survivors	Victims of hostile action
		Absolute numbers	%				
Total	Numbers	8,409		7,050	957	321	81
	Percentages		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
First application	Total	6,083	72%	71%	80%	85%	64%
	The applicant	5,197	62%	60%	73%	63%	62%
	NII officers	696	8%	8%	6%	17%	2%
	Party in the community	155	2%	2%	1%	4%	.
	Other	35	0%	0%	1%	1%	.
Repeat application	Total	2,326	28%	29%	20%	15%	36%
	The applicant	2,078	25%	26%	19%	14%	31%
	NII officers	163	2%	2%	1%	0%	4%
	Party in the community	68	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
	Other	17	0%	0%	0%	.	.

upon reaching adulthood. At older ages, the share of work injury victims and widows/widowers, who join the ranks of those entitled to the benefit at an older age, increases.

One of the most influential factors in rehabilitative success is the motivation of the person undergoing rehabilitation, and it is therefore reasonable to assume that those who apply at their own initiative will have higher motivation to succeed in the process than those who applied at the NII's initiative. In 2016, some 84% of the rehabilitation applicants were general disability pension recipients and the rest were recipients of benefits for work injury victims, victims of hostile action and survivors (Table 1). In most cases, the person undergoing rehabilitation initiates the application: for 72% of rehabilitation applicants in 2016, this was their first application; 85% of them applied on their own initiative. In only 11.5% of cases, rehabilitation officers initiated the application for insured persons - most of whom belonged to the Survivors' or Victims of Hostile Action Divisions.

The Rehabilitation Process

The Rehabilitation Division's main activity is assistance in labor market integration. In the rehabilitation process the applicant's suitability for rehabilitation is examined, and he is found the most suitable program for his needs, desires and abilities, based on a professional opinion issued by the rehabilitation officers. The following are the most prominent phases in the process:

- **Assessment** – Examination of the applicant's occupational skills, including vocational guidance and counseling from rehabilitation officers, diagnostic institutes or rehabilitation centers. Assessment is carried out in accordance with the insured's abilities and the rehabilitation officer's opinion.
- **Pre-training** – Imparting work habits at rehabilitation centers, empowerment courses, completion of education (matriculation certificate, psychometric test, preparatory program, etc.), in accordance with the occupational assessment findings and as preparation for integration into vocational training or employment.
- **Vocational training** – Training for those with occupational skills suitable for studies, through which they will acquire a vocation which will assist them in finding a job: studies at institutions of higher education (universities and colleges), practical engineering schools or vocational courses (such as for technicians, secretaries, bookkeepers and cooks).
- **Job placement** – Assistance to those who have an occupation, or have completed vocational training, in seeking an employment suited to their abilities and acquired vocation, while guiding and tracking their integration at their workplace.

Participants and Programs

Participants in the rehabilitation process include those who started a rehabilitation program this year and those who started rehabilitation in the past but have not yet completed it. In 2016 some 23.3 thousand insured persons participated in approximately 58 thousand different programs (Table 2). On average, 2.5 programs were opened for each participant, one of which was the assessment for the program.

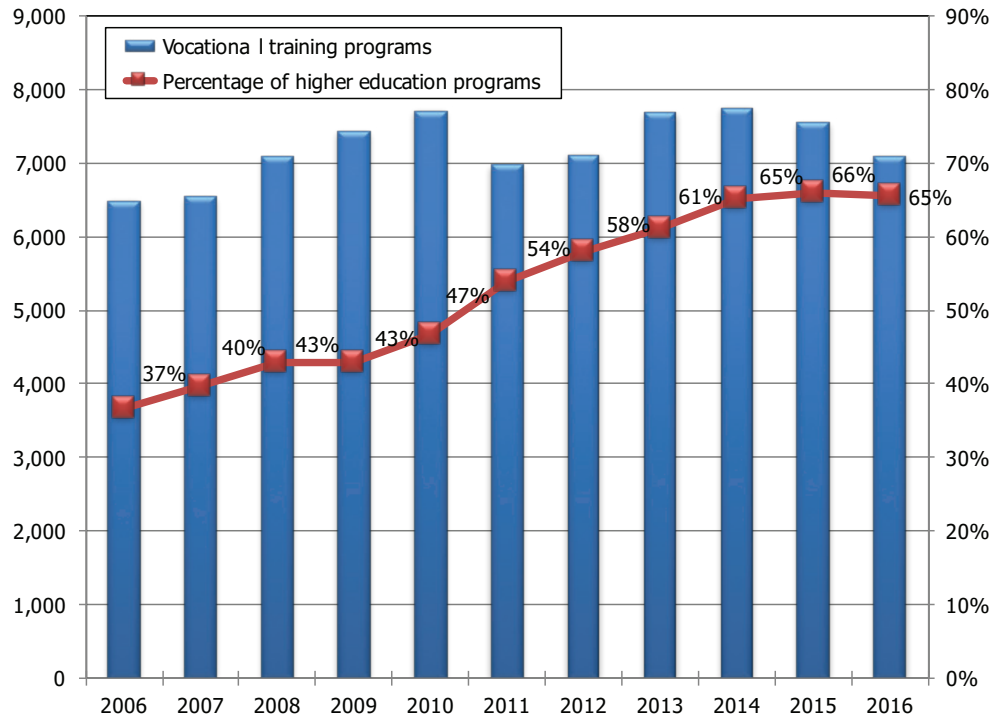
Table 2

Vocational Rehabilitation Programs and Participants, by Division and Type of Program (Absolute Numbers and Percentages), 2016

Program type		Total		Division			
		Absolute numbers	%	General disability	Work injury victims	Survivors	Victims of hostile action
Total programs	Absolute numbers	57,986		47,872	6,819	2,061	1,234
	Percentages		100%	83%	12%	4%	2%
Assessment	Total	22,554	100%	81%	14%	3%	2%
	Internal evaluation of eligibility	10,412	100%	83%	13%	3%	1%
	Internal diagnosis for programs	7,710	100%	83%	11%	4%	2%
	External evaluation	4,432	100%	74%	19%	3%	4%
Pre-training	Total	3,428	100%	81%	13%	4%	2%
	Completion of education	2,539	100%	80%	13%	5%	2%
	Imparting work habits	889	100%	83%	11%	3%	3%
Vocational training	Total	9,572	100%	85%	8%	3%	3%
	Vocational course	2,445	100%	76%	14%	9%	1%
	Higher education	4,631	100%	87%	6%	2%	5%
	Additional payments for higher education	1,441	100%	88%	5%	1%	6%
	Creation of conditions for studies	1,055	100%	89%	9%	2%	.
Job placement	Total	8,088	100%	82%	14%	3%	1%
	Preparation for placement	5,091	100%	81%	14%	4%	1%
	Placement assistance	2,318	100%	83%	13%	3%	2%
	Guidance after placement	679	100%	84%	11%	3%	2%
Referral to another party	Total	784	100%	97%	2%	.	1%
	Work at "Hameshakem"	568	100%	97%	3%	.	0%
	Party in the community	216	100%	98%	0%	0%	1%
Tracking and maintenance		13,560	100%	83%	11%	4%	2%
Total participants	Absolute numbers	23,320		18,890	2,981	820	629
	Percentages		100%	81%	13%	4%	3%

Figure 3

Higher Education Programs and their Percentage of the Total Vocational Training Programs (Absolute Numbers and Percentages), 2006-2016



The State of Israel is one of the leading countries in the Western world in terms of share of people with academic education, who are therefore highly represented in rehabilitation programs too. In the last decade the numbers of participants in vocational training programs grew by 8.4% (from 6,527 in 2007 to 7,076 in 2016) and among those the number of higher education programs grew from 40% to 65% over those years (Table 3). This increase also reflects a decrease in the number of non-academic training programs.

Table 3 presents the distribution of rehabilitation program participants according to their main impairment⁵ and degree of medical disability. It is reasonable to assume that those with low degrees of medical disability are more independent and can find employment by themselves, and that as the degree of disability rises the likelihood of finding a job in the open market subsides. It is therefore not surprising that 37% of rehabilitation participants in 2016 have a 40-59% degree of medical disability, since as regards degree of disability this is the population to which vocational rehabilitation can make the greatest contribution. Among rehabilitation participants with low degrees of

⁵ The impairment with the highest degree of medical disability out of all the person's impairments.

Table 3

Vocational Rehabilitation Participants, by Degree of Medical Disability and Main Impairment (Absolute Numbers and Percentages), 2016

Main impairment	Total		Degree of medical disability (%)					
	Absolute numbers	%	No disability*	10-19	20-39	40-59	60-79	80-100
Total	Numbers	23,320	1,358	1,050	5,165	8,612	4,122	3,013
	Percentages	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Mental disability	6,041	26%	0%	7%	26%	44%	16%	5%
Internal	4,761	20%	0%	10%	20%	21%	25%	25%
Urogenital	620	3%	0%	1%	2%	2%	4%	6%
Neurological	3,084	13%	0%	8%	13%	10%	17%	24%
Locomotor	4,312	18%	0%	66%	24%	15%	17%	13%
Sight	1,052	5%	0%	2%	2%	2%	4%	20%
Hearing	998	4%	0%	3%	3%	2%	13%	4%
Other **	2,452	11%	100%	3%	9%	4%	4%	3%

* Entitlement to rehabilitation in the Hostile Action and Survivors' Divisions is not necessarily linked to the rehabilitation participant's medical condition.

** Includes rehabilitation participants with no impairment.

medical disability (10%-19%), those suffering from locomotor problems is prominent, and most of this group belong to the Work Injury Victims Division (people with such degree of general disabilities are not entitled to rehabilitation). Among those with higher degrees of disability a large proportion suffer from internal, neurological and locomotor problems and come mostly from the General Disability Division.

End of the Rehabilitation Process

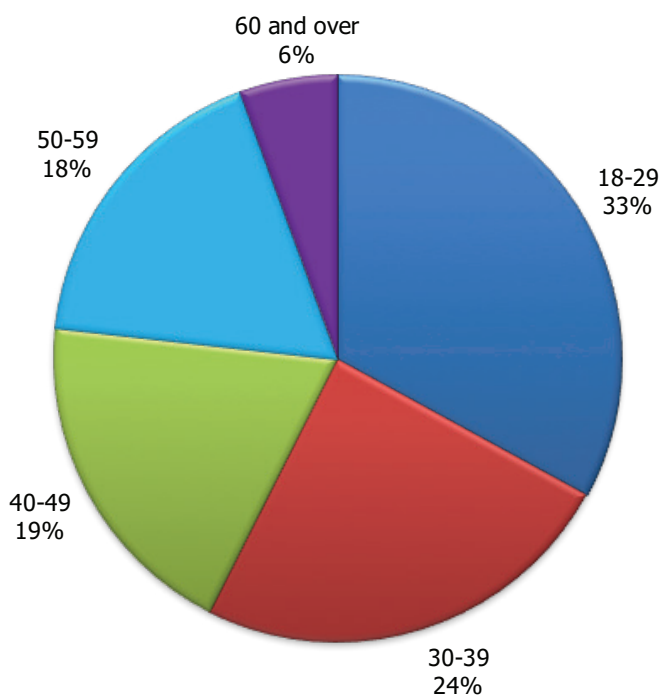
The success of vocational rehabilitation depends, inter alia, on the motivation of those seeking rehabilitation, and thus acceptance into the job market is not possible if the rehabilitation participant is not interested in working.

In 2016 treatment ended for approximately 9,200 people: 3,960 of them had completed at least one of the programs preparing for work in the open market, and 72% of them succeeded in finding employment. 44% of those who found work were concurrently entitled to a monthly disability pension from the General Disability or Work Injury Victims Divisions (Table 4). This data highlights the fact that the Rehabilitation Division of the NII is a major factor in integrating disabled people in the job market. For 5,234 people (56%) the rehabilitation process was discontinued, generally because they were found unsuitable.

Table 4
Persons who Ended Rehabilitation Process, by Division and Outcome
(Absolute Numbers and Percentages), 2016

Outcome	Total		Division			
	Absolute numbers	%	General disability	Work injury victims	Survivors	Victims of hostile action
Total	9,202		7,305	1,201	326	370
Percentages		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Found employment	2,852	31%	32%	29%	42%	11%
Completed pre-training	416	5%	5%	4%	5%	1%
Completed vocational training	571	6%	6%	5%	13%	2%
Placement assistance completed	129	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%
Treatment discontinued	5,234	57%	56%	61%	39%	86%

Figure 4
Vocational Treatment Graduates Who Found Employment, by Age, 2016

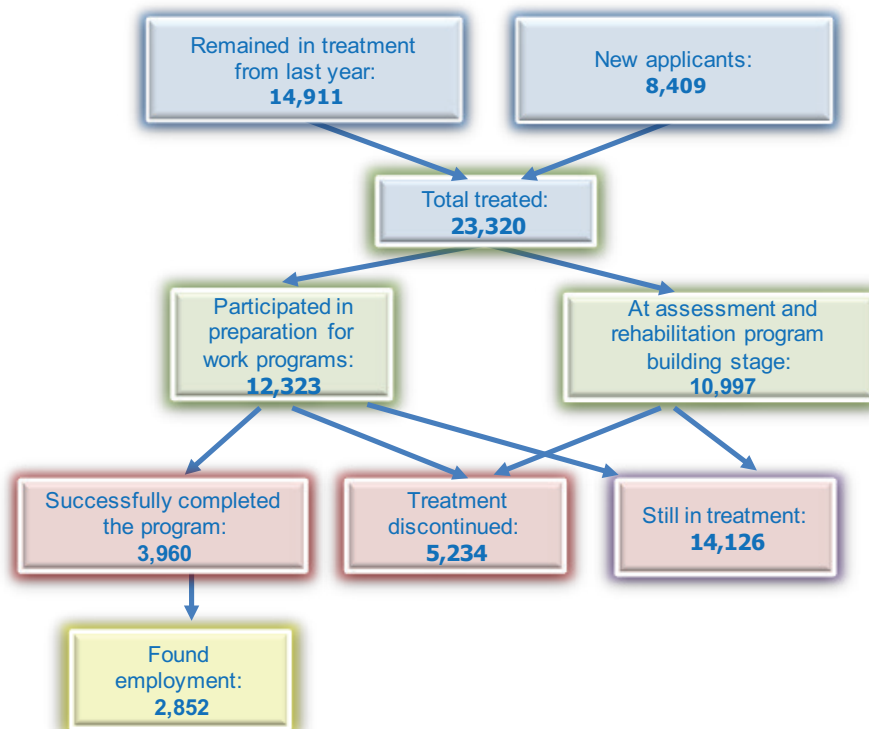


Those who completed the rehabilitation process in 2016 required an average of two and a half years to do so. However, the process is not of fixed length and is influenced by many factors, including the number of programs in which the participant takes part,

type of training and medical condition. For example, those belonging to the General Disability Division completed the program on average in 2.5 years, while those from the Work Injury Division completed it in two years and two months. The gap arises, inter alia, from participants' work habits and level of independence. Another example is the degree of medical disability: those with a degree of medical disability higher than 65% required, on average, approximately 22% longer than those with a degree of medical disability lower than 40% - 2.8 years compared with 2.4 years.

Undoubtedly the age of rehabilitation applicants has a decisive influence on the chances of completing the program – about a third of those completing the program were aged 18-29 (Figure 4). This year, continuing last year's trend, it can be seen that the effort to integrate rehabilitation participants in employment has borne fruit: the age distribution of those who found employment is identical to the distribution of new applicants, apparently as a result of the change which was made in the job placement process and enlistment of specialist placement companies (Figure 1). Of all the people who remained in treatment from 2015 or applied in 2016, approximately 14 thousand remained in the Division's care at the end of 2016. (Figure 5).

Figure 5
Population in Vocational Rehabilitation, by Stage of Process, 2016



Total Payments

As part of vocational rehabilitation, the NII also makes the following payments:

- **Rehabilitation allowance:** A monthly subsistence benefit at the level of a full disability pension, which is paid during the period of studies to those who are not entitled to a general disability or work disability pension, on condition that they study at least 20 hours per week (approximately NIS 76.5 million in 2016).
- **Transport:** Payment for public transportation to the place of training/assessment, or earner's mobility benefit supplement for those receiving a partial mobility benefit. For those with a degree of medical disability of 65% or higher, who do not have a vehicle or driver's license, the NII provides transport (approximately NIS 8.8 million in 2016).
- **Tuition fees:** Participation in academic tuition fees or cost of training, up to the maximum amount set by the Rehabilitation Division guidelines (approximately NIS 109 million in 2016).
- **Tutoring and accessibility services:** Tutoring assistance as needed in accordance with the total number of study hours, as well as translation into sign language, transcription and reading aloud for those needing it (approximately NIS 10 million in 2016).
- **Rent:** Participation in rent or dormitory fees for those attending vocational training at a distance of more than 40 km from their permanent place of residence, in accordance with their study program (approximately NIS 12.5 million in 2016).
- **Equipment:** Assistance in purchasing vital equipment necessary for rehabilitation (computer, customized keyboard for the blind, books, school supplies, etc.; approximately NIS 220 thousand in 2016).
- **Other expenses:** Payments as part of the full exercise of monetary rights, mainly for victims of hostile action and work injury victims, as well as participation in living expenses (board and lodging), subject to regulations (approximately NIS 25 million in 2016).

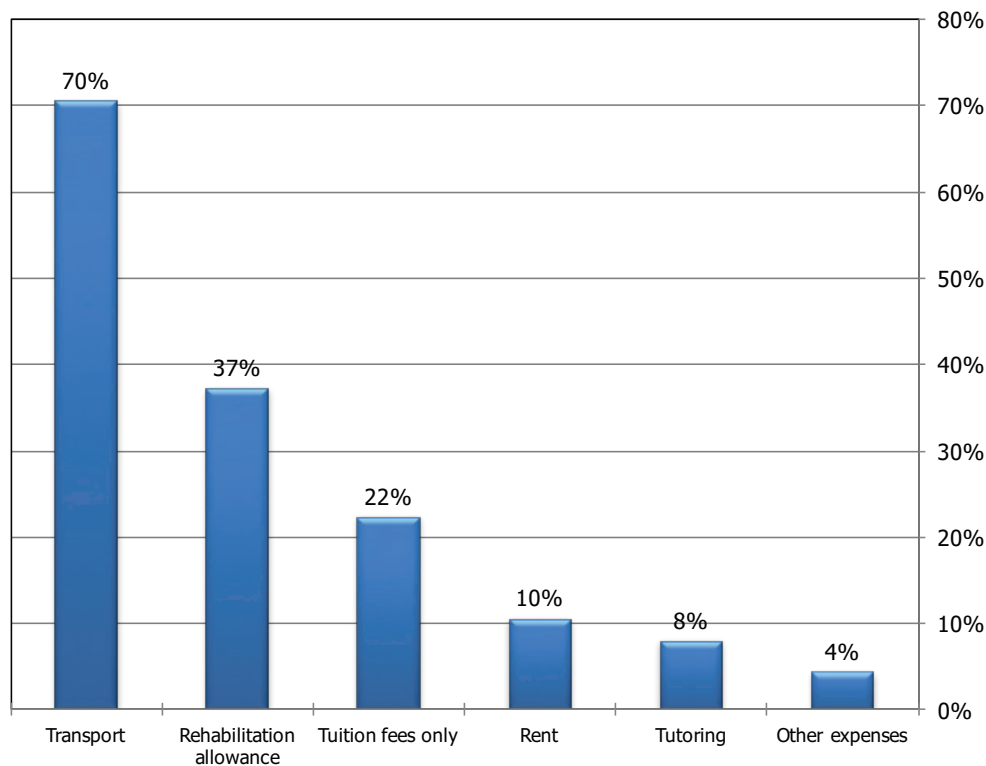
In total, in 2016 some NIS 242 million was paid to 12,579 different insurees⁶ for vocational rehabilitation – an average of approximately NIS 19.2 thousand per rehabilitation participant (Table 5). Approximately 68% of the total annual expenditure was paid to rehabilitation participants from the General Disability Division (compared with 70.5% in 2015) although they represent approximately 81% of the number of

6 Not including payments for special allowances and capitalizations.

Table 5
Expenditure on Vocational Rehabilitation, by Division
(2016 Prices, Thousands of NIS), 2012-2016

Year	Total	General disability	Work injury victims	Survivors	Victims of hostile action
2012	241,057	161,130	26,338	11,731	41,857
2013	247,138	168,354	26,637	10,112	42,034
2014	265,627	184,154	26,560	10,177	44,736
2015	271,354	191,389	26,638	10,010	43,317
2016	242,278	164,684	22,331	8,733	46,530

Figure 6
Additional Payments to Tuition Fee Recipients*, 2016



* Columns total exceeds 100% since a recipient may be entitled simultaneously to several payments.

rehabilitation participants. This gap arises from the benefits to which they are entitled in the other Divisions. Approximately 45% of the payments are for tuition fees (for 88.5% of the participants) and approximately one-third for rehabilitation allowances (Table 6).

Table 6

Ancillary Payments for Vocational Rehabilitation, by Division and Number of Recipients (Thousands of NIS and Percentages), 2016

	Total		Tuition fees	Rehabilitation allowance	Transport	Rent	Tutoring	Other expenses*
Total expenditure	242,278	100%	45%	32%	4%	5%	4%	10%
General disability	164,684	100%	51%	31%	4%	8%	6%	0%
Work injury victims	22,331	100%	36%	58%	4%	1%	2%	0%
Survivors	8,733	100%	40%	54%	5%	0%	0%	0%
Victims of hostile action	46,530	100%	28%	11%	0%	0%	0%	60%
Total recipients	12,579		10,996	4,428	8,395	1,260	934	1,292

* Not all those entitled to other payments participated in a vocational rehabilitation program.

According to the law, someone who is found suitable for further education or vocational training is entitled to a greater number of ancillary payments (including tutoring, equipment, transport and rent, and sometimes more than one payment) than someone who is not studying, and may sometimes be eligible simultaneously for several ancillary payments. As in previous years, in 2016 approximately 37% of rehabilitation participants received a supplement to their full disability pension (rehabilitation allowance) as part of their participation in rehabilitation programs (Figure 6). In 70% of the cases the NII participated in transport expenses to the study location. 22% of tuition fee recipients do not receive additional payments, apparently because most of them receive full pensions.

Appendix: Figure Data

Figure 1 Data

Opinions Provided by Rehabilitation Officers, by Subject, 2016

	Absolute Numbers
Earning capacity of people with general disabilities	24,445
Regulations of the Work Injury Victims and Victims of Hostile Action Divisions	12,414
Appointment of benefit recipient	3,951
Other opinions	7,197

Figure 2 Data

Vocational Rehabilitation Applicants, by Age and Division, 2016

Age	General disability	Work injury victims	Survivors	Victims of hostile action
18-29	2740	122	10	39
30-39	1430	256	58	14
40-49	1396	270	123	10
50-59	1186	237	118	13
60 or above	298	72	12	5

Figure 3 Data

Higher Education Programs and their Percentage of the Total Vocational Training Programs (Absolute Numbers and Percentages), 2006-2016

Year	Vocational training programs	Percentage of higher education programs
2006	6,476	37%
2007	6,527	40%
2008	7,072	43%
2009	7,423	43%
2010	7,698	47%
2011	6,966	54%
2012	7,096	58%
2013	7,680	61%
2014	7,738	65%
2015	7,536	66%
2016	7,076	65%

Figure 4 Data

Vocational Treatment Graduates Who Found Employment, by Age, 2016

Age group	Found employment
18-29	940
30-39	698
40-49	551
50-59	504
60 and above	159

Figure 5 Data

Population in Vocational Rehabilitation, by Stage of Process, 2016

New applicants: 8,409

Still in treatment from last year: 14,911

Total treated: 23,320

In diagnosis and rehabilitation program building phase: 10,997

Participated in preparation for work programs: 12,323

Still in treatment: 14,126

Treatment discontinued: 5,234

Successfully completed program: 3,960

Found employment: 2,852

Figure 6 Data

Additional Payments to Tuition Fee Recipients, 2016

	Percentages
Transport	70%
Rehabilitation allowance	37%
Tuition fees only	22%
Rent	10%
Tutoring	8%
Other expenses	4%