

# Vocational Rehabilitation

## Activities of the Rehabilitation Division

### Vocational rehabilitation

The Rehabilitation Division of the National Insurance Institute (NII) assists eligible individuals who 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 counseling and guidance to the insured throughout the rehabilitation process.

The main assistance provided by the Division is in-kind services: diagnosis, guidance and counseling in choosing a profession, pre-training and vocational training, completing education and higher education studies, as well as job placement assistance for those having difficulty to integrate into work on their own. Rehabilitees are also entitled, by law, to financing of the expenses related to rehabilitation: diagnosis and tuition financing, and commuting travel costs to the place of rehabilitation financing and coverage. A rehabilitee may belong to more than one group.

The population treated in the Rehabilitation Department is divided into three groups according to its status in the rehabilitation process: **New applicants, participants (or rehabilitees) and graduates**. A great deal of effort is invested in locating the right population among the eligible, in order to maximize the rate of integration into work at the end of the process.

### Additional activities

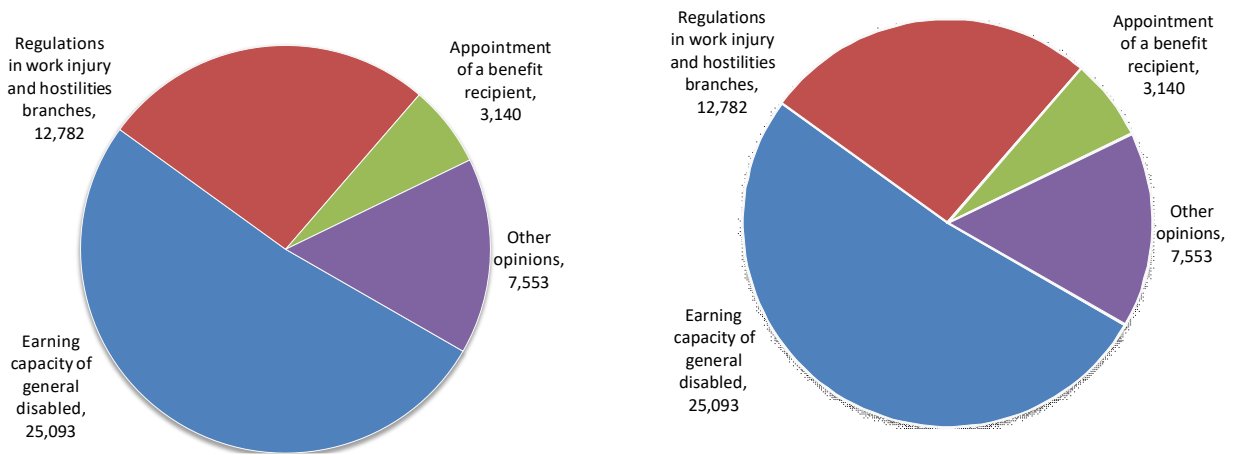
Besides professional rehabilitation, the Rehabilitation Department also deals with these areas: providing professional opinions to the Benefits Administration Divisions, for example regarding determining the level of earning capacity or the appointment of a benefit recipient; assistance to victims of work injury and hostile actions to fully exercise their rights to financial benefits; support and accompanying of widows or widowers in times of crisis and victims of hostile actions throughout life.

- **Professional opinions:** Employees of the Rehabilitation Division provide professional opinions to the Benefits Administration Divisions on these issues: determining the disabled's degree of earning capacity, appointing a benefit recipient, determining the entitlement of work injured to a higher degree of disability and determining the entitlement

to capitalization, and entitlement to special benefits for victims of work injury or hostile actions. These employees also provide an opinion outside the scope of the National Insurance Law. In 2018, the rehabilitation employees wrote about 49 thousand different opinions, 52% of them determining the level of earning capacity for people with general disabilities (Figure 1).

- **Assistance in taking up financial rights:** Assistance is given to the work injured and hostile action casualties who are entitled to financial rights (such as a special allowance and special grants). In 2018, 5,304 people received such assistance, and 1,177 of them completed treatment this year.
- **Assistance to widows/ widowers and hostile action casualties:** as social workers, Rehabilitation Division employees also support widows and widowers in times of crisis and victims of hostile actions throughout their lives. A total of 14 widows, widowers and hostile actions casualties were treated in the Division in 2018.

Figure 1: Opinions Provided by Rehabilitation Employees, by Topic, 2018



## Who is Eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation?

Those who have not yet reached retirement age and are one of the following are entitled to vocational rehabilitation:

- **Person with general disabilities:** A resident of Israel who suffers from physical, mental or cognitive impairment if all of the following conditions are met: (a) he was given a medical disability of at least 20% according to disability tests; (b) he can no longer engage in his previous work or other suitable work due to the impairment; (c) as a result of the impairment, he needs and suits vocational training and other rehabilitation services that will allow him to return to his previous job or other suitable work. In addition, the spouse of a disabled person who cannot be rehabilitated due to the impairment, and who lives with him regularly is entitled to rehabilitation.
- **Work injured:** Anyone who is injured at work<sup>1</sup> and has been granted at least 10% medical disability, and cannot work in his previous job or any other suitable job because of the injury, and needs special vocational training in order to return to his previous job. The NII may also approve vocational rehabilitation for those whose degree of disability is less than 10%, if continued work at the previous workplace could endanger their health or safety.
- **A widow or widower,** as define by the law, who receives a survivors' or dependents' pension and meet all the following condition: (a) they have no occupation or are unable to earn a living from their occupation; (b) they cannot continue working in their former workplace following the death of their spouse; (c) the rehabilitation worker has determined that they are suitable for vocational training/retraining, subject to their medical condition and education.
- **Victim of hostile actions:** A victim of a hostile actions<sup>2</sup>, with at least 20% medical disability<sup>3</sup>, who is unable, as a result of the injury, to work at his previous job or any other suitable work, or needs special professional training, in order to return to his previous job. In addition, members of bereaved families as defined by law (widow, widower, orphans, and bereaved parents), whose relative has died as a result of hostile actions, are entitled to vocational rehabilitation.

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<sup>1</sup> Was injured in an accident that occurred during work time, or due to work, including on the way to work and from work, or an occupational disease as defined in the Regulations.

<sup>2</sup> An operation by military or semi-military forces or irregular forces of a State or organization hostile to Israel, or an act carried out while assisting one of those, on their mission or on their behalf, and directed against Israel.

<sup>3</sup> Those injured before 1996 are eligible for vocational rehabilitation if their degree of medical disability is 10% or more.

## Rehabilitation Process

### New applicants

In 2018, 9,150 people applied to the NII for rehabilitation – an increase of 1.3% compared to 2017; most of them belonged to the General Disability Division (about 84%) and the minority to Work Injury Division (about 12%) (Table 1).

Young people in their 20’s have the highest potential for success in rehabilitation, because vocational training or higher education would significantly increase their chances of integration into a job, and therefore it is not surprising that 35% of those seeking rehabilitation are at these ages (Figure 2). The younger the age of rehabilitation, the higher the proportion of rehabilitees with general disability, because this group includes people with congenital disabilities seeking rehabilitation to realize their rights when they reach adulthood. In older ages, there is a larger share work-injury victims and widows/widowers joining the systems at a later age increases. Among all rehabilitees, the proportion of people with work-injuries increases as age increases, until retirement age.

One of the most influential factors in the success of rehabilitation is the motivation of the rehabilitee, and therefore those applying on their own initiative will likely have more motivation to succeed. In 2018, most of the applications were initiated by the rehabilitees: among all rehabilitation applicants, 73% applied for the first time, and 88% on their own initiative. Applications were initiated by rehabilitation workers in only 11% of cases – most of these applications belonged to the Survivors or Hostile Action Casualties Divisions (Table 1).

Figure 2: Vocational Rehabilitation Applicants, by Age and Division, 2018

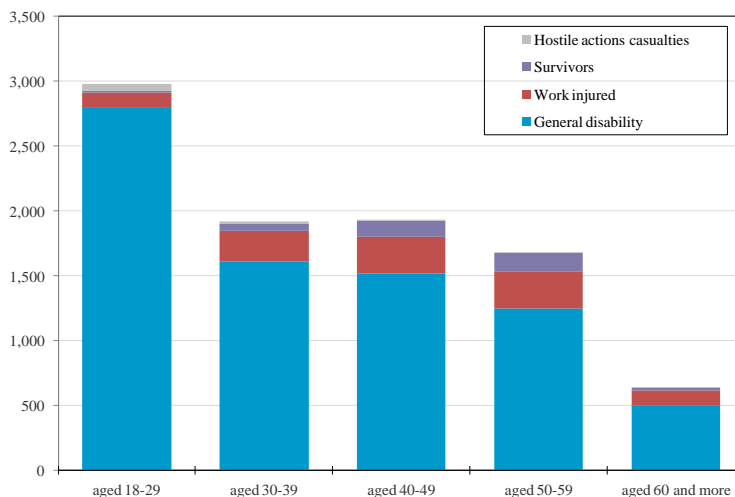


Table 1: Vocational Rehabilitation Applicants, by Division, Number of Applications and Initiator of Application (Absolute Numbers and Percentages), 2018

Number of applications / application initiator	Total, absolute numbers	Percentages				
		Total	General disability	Work injury	Survivors	Hostile actions casualties
<b>Total numbers</b>	<b>9,150</b>		<b>7,662</b>	<b>1,047</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>Percentages</b>		<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>First application</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,642</b>	<b>72.6</b>	<b>71.5</b>	<b>79.4</b>	<b>77.9</b>	<b>69.6</b>
Applicant	5,834	63.8	62.3	74.8	64.5	56.5
NII	643	7.0	7.2	4.1	11.8	12.0
Community entity	136	1.5	1.7	0.2	1.7	.
Other	29	0.3	0.3	0.3	.	1.1
<b>Repeated application</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,508</b>	<b>27.4</b>	<b>28.5</b>	<b>20.6</b>	<b>22.1</b>	<b>30.4</b>
Applicant	2,282	25.9	25.9	20.3	18.1	25.0
NII	158	1.7	1.7	0.3	4.0	5.4
Community entity	56	0.6	0.7	.	.	.
Other	12	0.1	0.1	0.1	.	.

### Rehabilitation stages

At the heart of the activity of the Rehabilitation Division is assisting with the integration into work. In the rehabilitation process, the applicant's suitability to the rehabilitation is assessed and the best plan is tailored to his needs, desires and abilities according to the opinion of the rehabilitation workers. Here are the primary stages in the process:

- **Diagnosis:** An examination of employment skills, including counseling and vocational guidance by rehabilitation workers, diagnostic institutes, or rehabilitation centers. The diagnosis is made according to the abilities of the applicant and the opinion of the rehabilitation workers.
- **Pre-training:** Acquiring work habits in rehabilitation centers, empowerment courses, completion of education (matriculation, psychometric tests, preparatory, etc.), in accordance with the diagnostic findings and as preparation for integration into vocational training or work.

- **Vocational training:** Training for those who are qualified to studying, through which they acquire a profession that will help them to integrate into work: studies in higher education institutions (universities and colleges) or in engineering or vocational schools (such as technician, secretariat, bookkeeping and cooking).
- **Job placement:** Assisting professionals or those who have completed vocational training in search of work appropriate to their abilities and profession, while accompanying and monitoring their integration into the workplace.

### Participants and programs

Those who started a rehabilitation program in 2018 and those who started rehabilitation in the past and have not yet completed it are considered within the rehabilitation process. In 2018, approximately 24,300 people participated in approximately 62,000 programs (Table 2). On average, 2.5 programs were opened for each participant.

The proportion of disability pension recipients varies among the types of programs: they accounted for 96% among those who were referred to another body, 84% in vocational training, and a smaller proportion in diagnosis and pre-training.

The State of Israel is one of the leading countries in the Western world in its proportion of academics, and their share is also high in rehabilitation programs. The number of participants in vocational training programs dropped in 2018 by 4.6% compared to 2017 (from 6,685 to 6,375), the number of higher education programs dropped by 3.6% (from 4,449 to 4,286), although their share among all programs increased from 65% to 67% between the two years (Figure 3).

Table 3 presents the distribution of participants in rehabilitation programs according to their main disability<sup>4</sup> and their medical disability degree. It is likely that those with lower degree of medical disability are more independent and able to integrate into work on their own, and the higher the degree of disabilities, the less likely they are to find work in the free market. It is therefore not surprising that 40.9% of participants in rehabilitation in 2018 had a medical disability of 40%-59%; this is the population that gains the most benefit out of vocational rehabilitation. Among those with low medical disability (10%-19%), the proportion of people suffering from locomotor problems, most of whom are victims of work injury (people with general disabilities and same degree of disability are ineligible for rehabilitation). Among those with higher disability, the proportion of people suffering from internal, neurological and locomotor problems is greater, most of them from the General Disability Division.

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<sup>4</sup> An impairment with the highest degree of medical disability degree among a person's impairments.

Table 2: Vocational Rehabilitation Programs and Participants, by Division and Type of Program (Absolute Numbers and Percentages), 2018

Program type	Total		Branch			
	Absolute numbers	%	General disability	Work injury	Survivors	Hostile actions casualties
<b>Total programs</b>						
Absolute numbers	62,158		51,247	7,596	2,120	1,195
Percentages		100.0	82.4	12.2	3.4	1.9
<b>Diagnostic test for the program</b>						
<b>Total programs</b>	<b>25,105</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>81.8</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>1.4</b>
Internal evaluation of eligibility	11,446	100.0	84.5	12.3	2.8	0.5
Internal diagnostics for programs	8,800	100.0	82.8	12.0	3.7	1.5
External evaluation	4,859	100.0	73.8	20.1	2.9	3.2
<b>Pre-training</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,822</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>78.3</b>	<b>15.4</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>1.9</b>
Completion of education	1,993	100.0	80.1	13.5	4.1	2.4
Acquiring work habits	2,829	100.0	77.1	16.8	4.6	1.5
<b>Vocational training</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,532</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>84.4</b>	<b>8.6</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.6</b>
Vocational course	2,089	100.0	77.6	13.6	7.2	1.5
Academic studies	4,286	100.0	86.3	7.2	2.1	4.4
Additional payments for higher education	1,052	100.0	85.4	4.8	1.9	8.0
Creation of studying conditions	1,105	100.0	88.7	8.6	2.5	0.2
<b>Job placement</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,341</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>81.1</b>	<b>13.7</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>1.4</b>
Preparation for placement	5,495	100.0	81.0	13.7	4.0	1.3
Assistance in placement	2,349	100.0	81.9	13.5	3.2	1.4
Guidance after placement	1,497	100.0	80.2	14.4	3.9	1.5
<b>Take-up of rights</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Referral to another body</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>808</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>96.0</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>.</b>
Work in "Hameshakem"	673	100.0	95.7	2.7	0.7	0.9
Community body	135	100.0	97.8	0.7	1.5	.
<b>Follow up and maintenance</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,524</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>84.20</b>	<b>10.00</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>2.40</b>
<b>Total participants</b>						
Absolute numbers	24,317	100.0	19,892	3,039	774	612
Percentages		100.0	81.8	12.5	3.2	2.5

Figure 3: Higher Education Programs and their Percentage of All Vocational Training Programs (Absolute Numbers and Percentages), 2007-2018

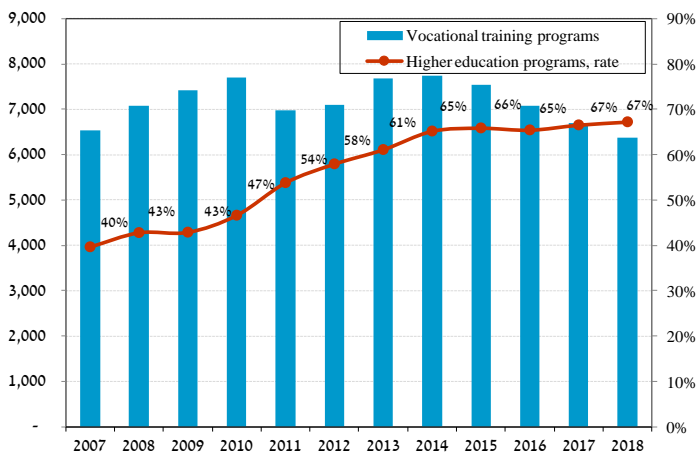


Table 3: Vocational Rehabilitation Participants, by Degree of Medical Disability and Main Impairment (Absolute Numbers and Percentages), 2018

Main impairment	Total		Degree of medical disability (%)					
	Absolute numbers	Percent	No disability*	10-19	20-39	40-59	60-79	80-100
<b>Total (numbers)</b>	<b>24,317</b>		<b>1,308</b>	<b>996</b>	<b>4,701</b>	<b>9,956</b>	<b>4,177</b>	<b>3,179</b>
<b>Percentages</b>		<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Mental or retardation	6,333	26.0	0.0	5.8	20.2	44.7	16.9	5.1
Internal	4,996	20.6	0.0	11.1	20.2	21.5	24.7	23.7
Urogenital	703	2.9	0.0	1.7	2.4	2.0	4.2	6.4
Neurological	3,146	12.9	0.0	3.9	14.0	9.1	18.4	24.3
Locomotor	3,971	16.3	0.0	23.5	25.8	14.0	17.2	12.9
Sight	1,070	4.4	0.0	1.1	2.1	1.7	3.6	20.0
Hearing	949	3.9	0.0	1.4	2.9	2.3	10.9	3.5
Other**	3,149	13.0	100.0	51.5	12.4	4.8	4.2	4.2

\* Eligibility for rehabilitation in Hostile Actions and Survivors Divisions is not necessarily the result of the rehabilitee's medical condition.

\*\* Including rehabilitees with no impairment.



### Rehabilitation graduates

The success of the vocational rehabilitation depends, among other things, on the motivation of the applicants to be rehabilitated, so that integration into the labor market is not possible if the rehabilitee has no interest in it.

In 2018, 9,112 people finished the process and among them: 3,897 had completed at least one preparation program to working in the free market, 74% were able to integrate into work (Table 4). 47% of those who successfully integrated into work were entitled to a monthly disability pension from General Disability or Work Injured Divisions – a clear proof of the central role of the Rehabilitation Division in integrating disabled people into the workforce. The rehabilitation process was terminated for 57% (5,215 people); usually (in 67% of cases) because they were found unsuitable for the program.

Table 4: Rehabilitation Graduates, by Division and Outcome (Absolute Numbers and Percentages), 2018

Outcome	Total		Branch			
	Absolute numbers	%	General disability	Work injury	Survivors	Hostile actions casualties
<b>Total numbers</b>	<b>9,112</b>		<b>7,341</b>	<b>1,060</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>400</b>
<b>Percentages</b>		<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Integrated into work	2,898	31.8	32.9	30.5	39.2	10.0
Completed pre-training	319	3.5	3.8	2.5	2.9	0.3
Completed vocational training	510	5.6	5.7	4.0	12.9	1.8
Completed placement assistance	170	1.9	1.9	2.1	1.6	.
Termination of treatment	5,215	57.2	55.6	60.9	43.4	88.0

In 2018, graduates had to spend an average of two years and 7 months in rehabilitation process. However, the duration of the process varies and is influenced by many factors, including the number of programs in which the rehabilitee took part, the type of training and the medical condition. For example, those who belong to the General Disability Division have completed the program within two years and 7 months, in comparison with participants from the Work Injury Division who completed the program in two years and four months on average. The gap stems in part from the work habits of the latter and their degree of independence. Another factor is the degree of medical disability: for those with a medical disability of more than 65%, the average time required is about 3.5 months longer than for those with a medical disability of below 40% – two years and 10 months compared to two years and 6.5 months.

There is no doubt that the age of applicants has a decisive influence on the chances of completing the process – about a third of the graduates are between 18 and 29 years old (Figure 4). Among the people who remained in the process since 2017 or applied in 2018, about 14,000 individuals were still in treatment by the end of 2018 (Figure 5).

Figure 4: Rehabilitation Graduates Who Found Employment, by Age, 2018

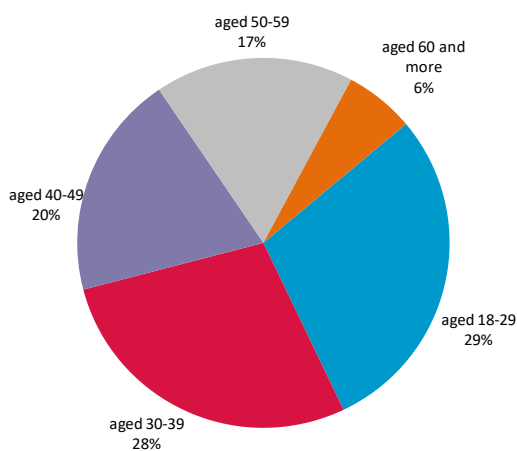
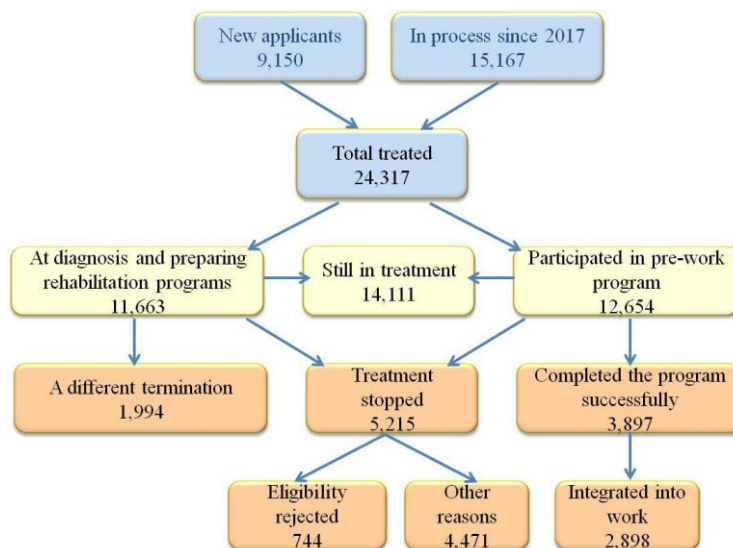


Figure 5: Population in Vocational Rehabilitation, by Stage of Process, 2018



## Scope of payments

In 2018, as part of the vocational rehabilitation, approximately NIS 244 million was paid to 14,007 different people<sup>5</sup>, in comparison with NIS 246 million in 2017 – an average of approximately NIS 17.5 thousand per rehabilitee (Table 5). About 70% of the annual expenditure were paid to people from the General Disability Division (similar to 2017), even though they accounted for about 82% of all rehabilitees. This gap is due to the presence of beneficiaries of benefits from other divisions. About 47% of the payments were allocated to tuition fees for 86% of participants, and about a third to rehabilitation allowances (Table 6).

- **Rehabilitation allowance:** A monthly subsistence allowance at the level of a full disability pension, paid during the studying period to those who are not entitled to a general disability pension or work disability pension, provided they study at least 16 hours per week (approximately NIS 75.8 million).
- **Travel:** Payment for travel by public transport to the place of training/diagnosis, or earner's mobility benefit supplement for those receiving a partial mobility benefit. For those with a medical disability of 65% or more who do not have a vehicle or driver's license, the NII provides transportation services (about NIS 8.3 million).
- **Tuition:** Participation in academic tuition fees or training costs, up to the maximum amount stipulated in the Rehabilitation Division's guidelines (approximately NIS 119.5 million).
- **Tutoring and accessibility services:** Tutoring assistance as needed and according to the extent of school hours, as well as translation into sign language, transcription and reading aloud for those in need (about NIS 10.3 million).
- **Rent:** Participation in rent or payment to dormitories for vocational training participants located over 40 km away from their permanent residence, according to their study program (approximately NIS 12.7 million).
- **Equipment:** Assistance in the purchase of essential and necessary equipment for rehabilitation (computer, keyboard adapted for the blind, books, educational equipment and more) (approximately NIS 257,000).
- **Other expenses:** Payments as part of the full exercise of financial rights, mainly for victims of hostile actions and work injuries, as well as participation in living expenses (per diem) subject to the regulations (about NIS 28 million).

<sup>5</sup> Excluding payments for special benefits and capitalization paid to victims of work injury.

Table 5: Expenditure on Vocational Training, by Division (2018 Prices, Thousands NIS), 2014-2018

Year	Total	General disability	Work injury	Survivors	Hostile actions casualties
2014	278,199	194,220	29,206	9,038	45,735
2015	282,065	200,974	29,361	8,126	43,603
2016*	254,962	173,767	24,717	7,198	49,279
2017	246,058	173,108	24,109	6,094	42,747
2018	244,292	169,777	25,104	6,235	43,176

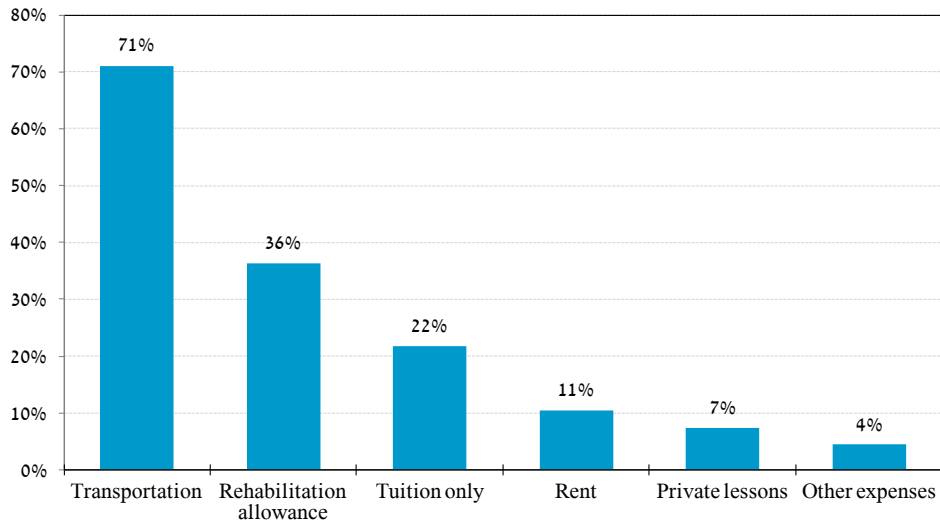
\* The decrease in expenditure between 2015, 2016 and 2017 is the result of the policy change from January 2016 to those who do not meet the eligibility criteria for the rehabilitation program that is longer than 12 months.

Table 6: Recipients of Auxiliary Payments, by Branch and Type of Payment (Thousand NIS and Percentages), 2018

	Total		Tuition (%)	Rehabilitation allowance	Transportation (%)	Rent (%)	Tutoring (%)	Other expenses (%)*
	Thousands NIS	Percentages						
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>244,292</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>46.9</b>	<b>29.8</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>11.1</b>
General disability	169,777	100.0	53.5	29.2	4.0	7.4	5.8	0.2
Work injury	25,104	100.0	39.2	54.6	3.4	1.1	1.6	0.1
Survivors	6,235	100.0	43.9	51.0	4.0	0.1	0.7	0.3
Hostile action casualties	43,176	100.0	28.3	10.8	0.2	0.1	0.0	60.5
<b>Total recipients</b>	<b>14,007</b>		<b>12,053</b>	<b>4,879</b>	<b>9,583</b>	<b>1,358</b>	<b>938</b>	<b>1,412</b>

\* Not all of those eligible for a different payment have participated in a vocational rehabilitation program.

Figure 6: Additional Rehabilitation Payments to Tuition Recipients\*, 2018



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

Those who qualify for completion of education or vocational training are legally entitled to more auxiliary payments than those who do not study (including tutoring, equipment, travel and rent) and may sometimes be eligible for several payments in parallel. As in previous years, approximately 30% of rehabilitees received a full disability pension (rehabilitation allowance) in 2018 as part of their participation in rehabilitation programs (Figure 6). In 71% of cases, the NII participated in the travel expenses to school. 22% of tuition recipients did not receive additional payments, probably because most of them receive full pensions.