

1. Activities of the Rehabilitation Division

The Rehabilitation Division of the National Insurance Institute (NII) assists entitled persons who have 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. Assistance is provided by rehabilitation officers who are trained social workers. They contribute diagnostic services, occupational counseling, 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 this 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.

Along with vocational rehabilitation, the Rehabilitation Division also deals with the following fields: provision of professional opinions to Benefits Administration Divisions, for example about determining level of earning capacity or appointment of a benefit recipient; assisting work injury victims and victims of terrorism to fully exercise their rights to financial benefits; and support and guidance for widows/widowers in crisis and victims of terrorism for the rest of their lives (see Section 6 below).

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

2. Who is Entitled to Vocational Rehabilitation?

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

Person with general disabilities

A resident of Israel suffering from physical, cognitive, or psychological impairment, if he/she meets all the following conditions: (a) was determined in disability tests to have a degree of medical 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 return to previous or other satisfactory job. The spouse of a disabled individual 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 determined to have at least 10% medical disability, and who due to the injury cannot work at his/her previous job or in another suitable job, and requires special vocational training in order to return to his/her previous job. However, the NII is authorized to approve vocational rehabilitation for a work injury victim whose disability level is lower than 10%, if continued work at his/her previous workplace may be exceptionally dangerous to his/her health or safety.

Widow/widower

A widow/widower as defined by law, who receives a survivors' or dependents' pension and who meets all the following conditions: (a) they lack a vocation or are unable to satisfactorily support themselves from their vocation; (b) they are unable to continue working in 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 medical condition and education.

2 Work-related injury: an accident occurring 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 occupational diseases defined in work injury victims' regulations.

Victims of terrorism

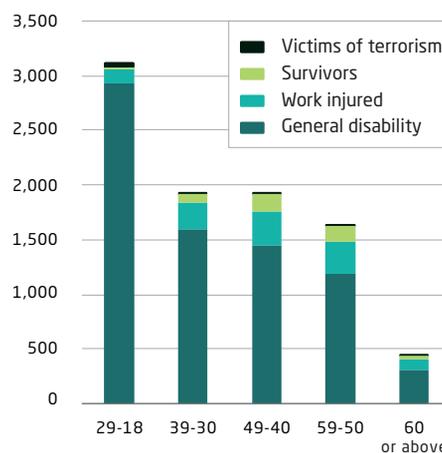
A person wounded in a terror attack³, on condition that he/she was determined to have at least 20% medical disability⁴, due to which he/she is unable to work at his/her previous or another suitable job, or he/she requires special vocational training in order to be able to return to his/her previous job. Members of bereaved families as defined by law (widow/widower, orphan, and bereaved parents), whose family member/s died as a result of hostile action, are also entitled to vocational rehabilitation.

3. New Rehabilitation Applicants

In 2015, 9,050 people applied to the NII for vocational rehabilitation - 7% less than the number of applicants in 2014. The decrease stems mainly from a relative decrease in the number of applicants aged 18-29 from the General Disability Division. This year, as in previous ones, most of the applicants belong to the General Disability Division (approximately 82%), and approximately 64% receive a monthly pension from the various Benefit Divisions.

Young adults in their twenties have the greatest potential for rehabilitation, because training or higher education will significantly further their chances of finding a job, and it is thus not surprising that 35% of rehabilitation applicants fall into this age group (Figure 1). Furthermore, a greater percentage of rehabilitation participants in the General Disability Division are younger, as this group includes those disabled from birth who apply for rehabilitation in order to exercise their rights upon reaching adulthood. At older ages, the share of the work injury victims and widows/widowers increases.

Figure 1
Vocational Rehabilitation Applicants by Age and Division, 2015



3 Action of military/paramilitary/irregular forces of a state or organization hostile to Israel, or an action carried out to assist one of them, as their agent, or on their behalf, and that was directed against Israel.

4 Someone injured before 1996 is entitled to vocational rehabilitation if determined to have medical disability of 10% or more.

Table 1

Vocational Rehabilitation Applicants by Division, Number of Applications and Initiator of Application (Absolute Numbers and Percentages), 2015

Number of Applications	Application Initiator	Total		General disability	Work injury victims	Survivors	Victims of terrorism
		Absolute numbers	Percentages				
Total	Numbers	9,050		7,468	1,088	407	87
	Percentages		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
First application	Total	6,472	72%	70%	79%	79%	74%
	The applicant	5,443	60%	58%	74%	56%	59%
	NII officers	844	9%	9%	4%	23%	15%
	Party in the community	185	2%	2%	1%	0%	.
Repeat application	Total	2,578	28%	30%	21%	21%	26%
	The applicant	2,288	25%	26%	21%	15%	24%
	NII officers	166	2%	2%	1%	5%	2%
	Party in the community	124	1%	2%	.	0%	.

One of the most influential factors in rehabilitative success is the motivation of the person undergoing the process: it is reasonable that someone who applies at his own initiative will be more highly motivated to succeed in the process than someone who applied at the NII's initiative. In most cases, application is made on the initiative of the person undergoing rehabilitation: for 72% of rehabilitation applicants in 2015, this was their first application, and 83% of them applied on their own initiative. In only 11% of cases, rehabilitation officers initiated the application for insured persons – most of whom were individuals from the Survivors' or Victims of Terrorism Divisions (Table 1).

4. The Rehabilitation Process

The Rehabilitation Division's activity focuses on 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 workers. The following are the most prominent phases in the process:

- **Assessment** – Examination of the applicant's occupational skills. This includes vocational counseling and direction provided by rehabilitation officers, diagnostic

institutes, or rehabilitation centers. Assessment is carried out in accordance with the applicant's abilities and in accordance with the rehabilitation officer's report.

- **Pre-training** – Imparting work habits at rehabilitation centers, empowerment courses, completion of education (matriculation certificate, psychometric exam, preparatory program, etc.), in accordance with the occupational assessment findings, and as preparation for integration into vocational training or work.
- **Vocational training** – Training for those with occupational abilities suitable for studies, through which they will acquire a vocation that 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 a vocation, or have completed vocational training, to seek a job 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 2015 approximately 23.7 thousand insured persons participated in approximately 58.5 thousand different programs (Table 2). On average, 2.5 programs were opened for each participant, one of which was assessment for the program.

The State of Israel is among the leaders of the Western world in respect of percentage of the population with academic degrees, and the percentage is also high in rehabilitation programs. In the last decade the number of participants in vocational training programs grew by 16% (from 6,476 to 7,536), while the percentage of higher education program participants grew by 78% (Figure 2). This rise also reflects a decline in the number of non-academic training programs.

Table 3 presents the distribution of rehabilitation program participants according to 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 jobs 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 36% of rehabilitation participants

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

Table 2

Vocational Rehabilitation Programs and Participants, by Division and Type of Program (Absolute Numbers and Percentages), 2015

Program type		Total		Division			
		Absolute numbers	Percentages	General disability	Work injury victims	Survivors	Victims of terrorism
Total programs	Absolute numbers	58,592		48,118	7,075	2,173	1,226
	Percentages		100%	82%	12%	4%	2%
Diagnosis for program	Total	22,742	100%	81%	14%	3%	2%
	Internal evaluation of eligibility	10,988	100%	83%	13%	3%	1%
	Internal diagnosis for programs	7,375	100%	82%	13%	4%	1%
	External evaluation	4,379	100%	76%	18%	3%	4%
Pre training	Total	3,707	100%	78%	13%	5%	3%
	Completion of education	2,619	100%	79%	13%	6%	2%
	Imparting work habits	1,088	100%	77%	13%	4%	6%
Vocational training	Total	10,739	100%	85%	9%	4%	3%
	Vocational course	2,571	100%	74%	14%	11%	1%
	Higher education	4,965	100%	88%	7%	2%	4%
	Additional payments for higher education	1,730	100%	88%	5%	1%	5%
	Creation of conditions for studies	1,473	100%	90%	8%	2%	0%
Job placement	Total	7,584	100%	81%	15%	3%	1%
	Preparation for placement	4,570	100%	79%	16%	4%	1%
	Placement assistance	1,990	100%	83%	13%	3%	1%
	Guidance after placement	1,024	100%	82%	13%	3%	1%
Referral to another party	Total	577	100%	95%	4%	0%	0%
	Work at "Hameshakem"	395	100%	94%	6%	.	0%
	Party in the community	182	100%	98%	1%	1%	1%
Tracking and maintenance		13,243	100%	83%	11%	4%	2%
Total people	Absolute numbers	23,676		19,074	3,063	864	675
	Percentages		100%	81%	13%	4%	3%

in 2015 have 40-59% 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 medical disability (10%-19%), those suffering from motor problems are prominent, and most of this group belong to the Work Injury Victims Division. Among those with higher degrees of disability a large proportion suffer from internal, neurological and sensory problems and come mostly from the General Disability Division.

Figure 2

Higher Education Programs and their Percentage of the Total Vocational Training Programs (absolute numbers and percentages), 2006-2015

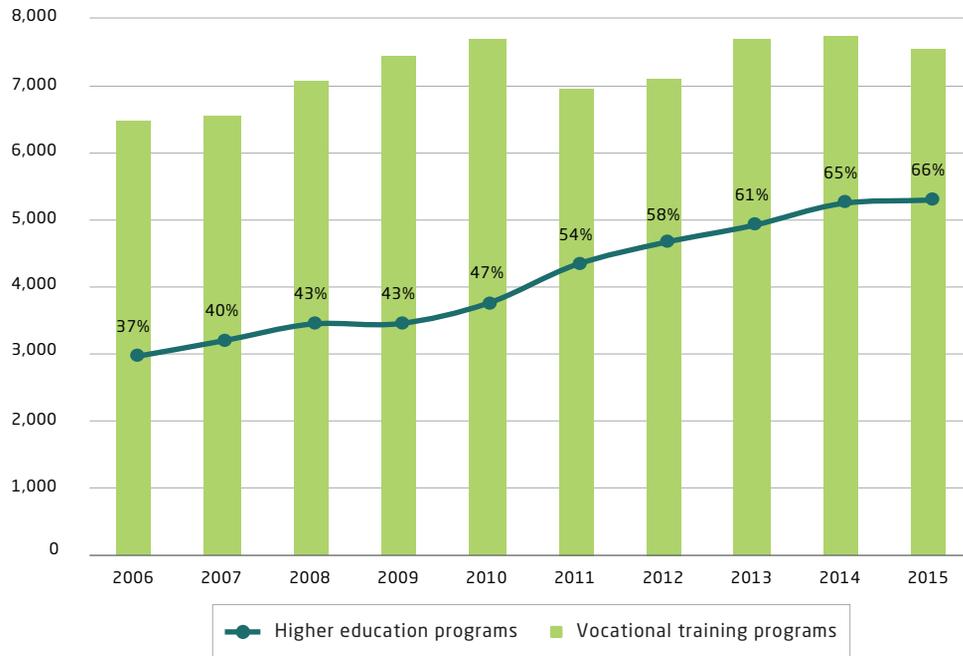


Table 3

Participants in Vocational Rehabilitation Programs by Degree of Medical Disability and Main Impairment (Absolute Numbers and Percentages), 2015

Main Impairment	Total		Degree of medical disability					
	Absolute numbers	%	No disability*	10-19	20-39	40-59	60-79	80-100
Total – numbers	23,676		1,204	1,425	5,412	8,510	4,066	3,059
Percentages		100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Mental disability	6,365	27%	0%	9%	28%	45%	18%	5%
Internal	4,836	20%	0%	10%	20%	22%	24%	25%
Urogenital	672	3%	0%	1%	2%	2%	4%	6%
Neurological	3,076	13%	0%	8%	12%	10%	18%	25%
Locomotor	4,375	18%	0%	65%	23%	14%	16%	12%
Sight	1,109	5%	0%	2%	2%	2%	4%	20%
Hearing	1,028	4%	0%	2%	3%	2%	13%	4%
Other**	2,215	9%	100%	3%	9%	3%	3%	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.

5. 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.

Table 4

Persons who Ended Rehabilitation Treatment by Division and Outcome (Absolute Numbers and Percentages) 2015

Outcome	Total		Branch			
	Absolute numbers	%	General disability	Work injury victims	Survivors	Victims of terrorism
Total	Absolute numbers	10,294	8,153	1,439	398	304
	Percent	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Found a job	3,020	29%	29%	27%	43%	21%
Completed pre- training	671	7%	7%	4%	7%	3%
Completed vocational training	636	6%	6%	5%	12%	2%
Placement assistance completed	152	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%
Treatment discontinued	5,815	56%	56%	63%	37%	73%

Figure 3

Vocational Treatment Graduates Who Found Work, by Age, 2015

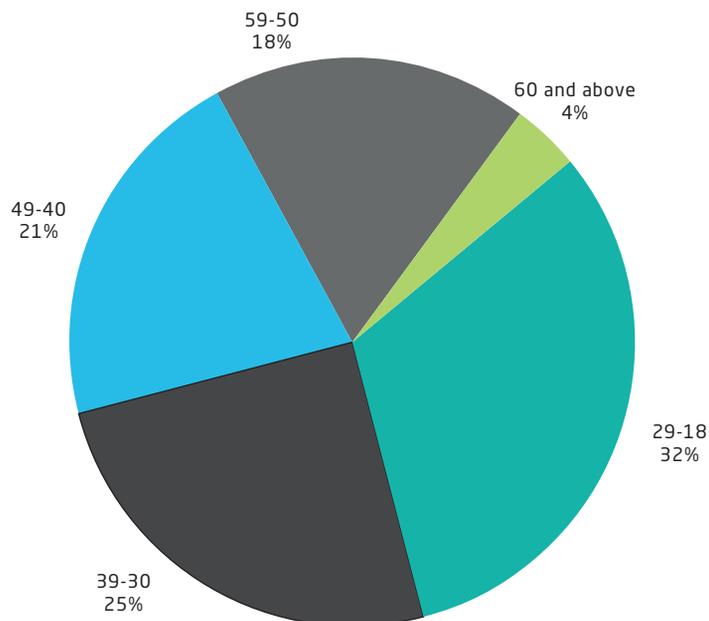
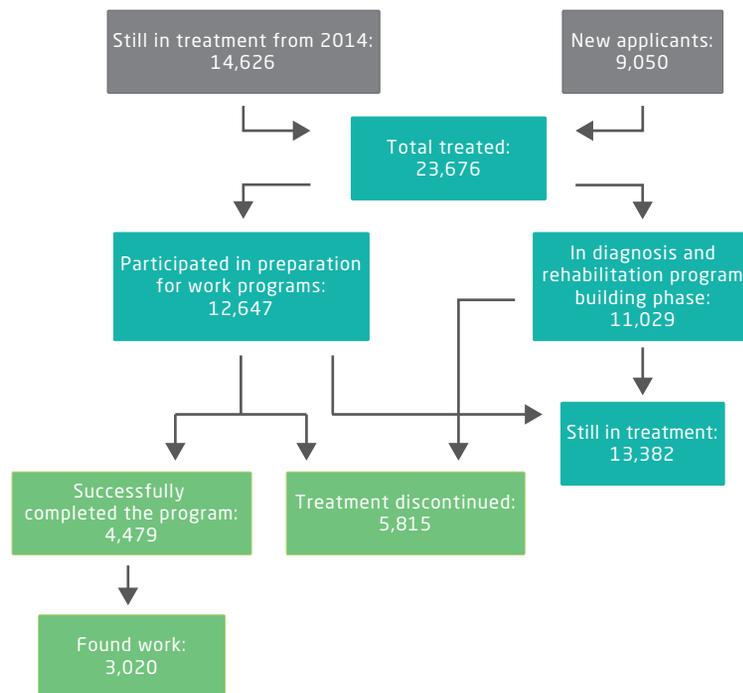


Figure 4
Population in Vocational Rehabilitation by Stage of Process, 2015



In 2015, treatment ended for approximately 10 thousand people: 4,479 of them had completed at least one of the programs preparing for work in the open market, and 67% of them succeeded in getting a job. Forty six percent of those who found work were concurrently entitled to a monthly disability pension from the General Disability Division or Work-Injury Division. 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 5,815 people (63.5%) the rehabilitation process was discontinued, generally because they were found unsuitable.

Those who completed the rehabilitation process in 2015 required an average of 2 years and 3 months to do so. However, the process is not of fixed length, and is affected 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 2.3 years, while those from the Work-Injury Division completed it in 1.9 years. The gap stems, among other things, from participants' work habits and levels of independence. Another example is the degree of medical disability: those with a degree of medical disability higher than 65% required on average approximately 20% longer than those with a degree of disability lower than 40% - 2.5 years compared with 2.1 years.

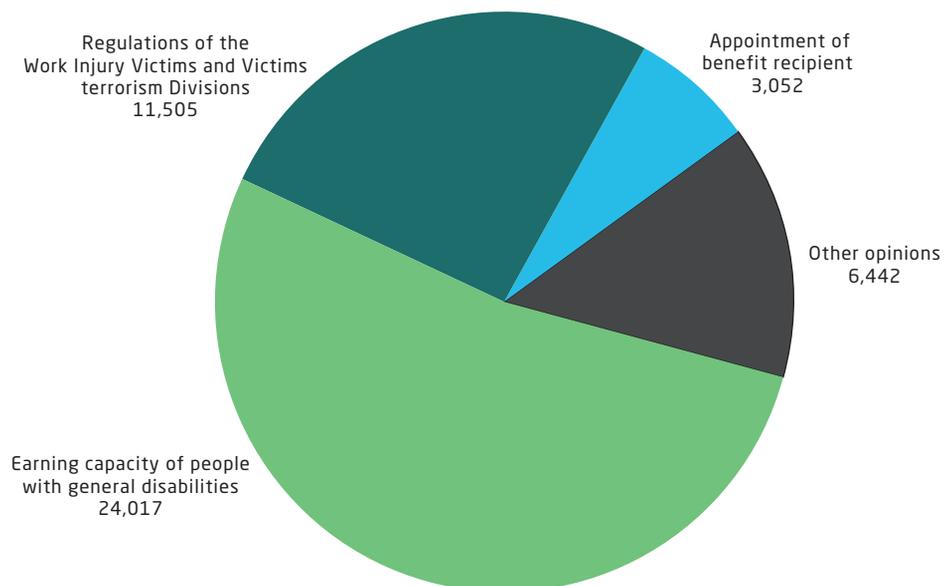
Undoubtedly, the age distribution of those seeking rehabilitation has a decisive influence on the age distribution of those completing the programs. (Figure 3). This year unlike previously, it can be seen that the effort to integrate rehabilitation participants in employment has borne fruit: the age distribution of those who found work is identical to the distribution of the new applicants, apparently as a result of the change which was made in the work placement process and enlistment of specialist placement companies (Figure 1). Of all the people who remained in treatment from 2014 or applied in 2015, approximately 13,000 remained in the Division's care at the end of 2015 (Figure 4).

6. Other activities of the Rehabilitation Division

Professional assessments

Rehabilitation Division employees provide professional assessments for the Divisions of the Benefits Administration in the following areas: determination of disabled persons' earning capacity; appointment of a benefit recipient; determination of work-injury victims' requests to have their degree of disability raised and determination of entitlement to capitalizations;

Figure 5
Opinions provided, by subject, 2015



entitlement of work-injury victims and victims of terrorism to special benefits. Employees also provide opinions on matters outside the scope of the National Insurance Law. In 2015, rehabilitation workers wrote approximately 45 thousand different opinions, 53% of them concerning determination of the level of earning capacity of people with general disabilities (Figure 5).

Assistance in fully exercising monetary rights

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 2015, 4,777 people received such assistance, and 1,296 of these cases were completed.

Assistance to widows/widowers and victims of terrorism

As social workers, Rehabilitation Division employees also assist widows/widowers in times of crisis, after experiencing terrorism and for the rest of their lives. In 2015, 61 people – widows/widowers and terrorism victims - were treated.

7. 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, 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.
- **Transport:** Payment for public transportation to 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.
- **Tuition fees:** Participation in academic tuition fees or cost of training, up to the maximum amount set by the Rehabilitation Division guidelines.
- **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.
- **Rent:** Participation in rent or dormitory fees for those participating in vocational training at a distance of more than 40 km from their permanent place of residence, in accordance with their study program.

- **Equipment:** Assistance in purchasing vital equipment necessary for rehabilitation (computer, customized keyboards for the blind, books, school supplies, etc.)
- **Other expenses:** Payments as part of the full exercise of monetary rights, mainly for victims of terrorism and work-injury victims, as well as participation in subsistence expenses (board and lodging), subject to regulations.

In 2015, some NIS 281 million was paid to 13,129 different people⁶ for vocational rehabilitation (Table 5) - an average of approximately NIS 21.5 thousand per rehabilitation participant.

Table 5 shows that in 2015 approximately 71% of the annual expenditure was paid to rehabilitation participants from the General Disability Division (compared with 69% in 2014 , although they represent approximately 81% of the number of rehabilitation participants – because of the benefits to which they are entitled in other Divisions. Approximately 44% of the payments are for tuition fees (for approximately 88% of the participants) and approximately one-third for rehabilitation allowances (Table 6).

Table 5
Expenditure on Vocational Rehabilitation by Division,
2015 Prices (thousands of NIS), 2011-2015

Year	Total	General disability	Work injury-victims	Survivors	Victims of terrorism
2011	203,023	125,096	24,135	12,013	41,779
2012	242,383	162,017	26,483	11,796	42,087
2013	248,498	169,281	26,784	10,168	42,266
2014	267,090	185,168	26,707	10,233	44,982
2015	281,262	199,976	29,513	8,086	43,687

According to the law, someone who is found suitable for 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. As in previous years, in 2015 approximately 32% received a supplement to their full disability pension (rehabilitation allowance) as part of their participation in rehabilitation programs (Figure 6). In 59% of the cases the NII participated in transport expenses to the study location. Twenty percent of tuition fee recipients do not receive other payments – it can be assumed that most of them receive full pensions.

6 Not including payments for special allowances and capitalizations.

Table 6

Ancillary Payments for Vocational Rehabilitation by Division and Number of Recipients (thousands of NIS and percentages), 2015

	Total		Tuition fees	Rehabilitation benefit	Transport	Rent	Tutoring	Other expenses*
Total expenditure	281,262	100%	44%	32%	6%	5%	4%	9%
General disability	199,976	100%	49%	31%	7%	8%	5%	0%
Work-injury victims	29,513	100%	36%	56%	6%	1%	1%	0%
Survivors	8,086	100%	41%	50%	8%	0%	1%	0%
Victims of terrorism	43,687	100%	27%	11%	0%	0%	0%	61%
Total recipients	13,129		11,602	4,802	8,784	1,448	1,077	1,402

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

Figure 6

Additional payments to those receiving tuition, 2015

