



CROATIA

Statement by

H. E. Ambassador Ivan Šimonović
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Croatia

at

the 17th session of the Conference of States Parties to the United Nations
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
General debate

New York, 13 June 2024

- Check against delivery -

Thank you Chair,

- It is a privilege to share the progress Croatia has made recently in implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- One of our notable achievements is the implementation of the **Personal Assistance Act** of 2023, which creates the personal assistance service as a state-provided social service, ensuring its sustainability and financial continuity.
- Consequently, the number of people entitled to personal assistants has increased by 11,000, significantly enhancing their social inclusion and preventing institutionalization, as well as providing support for children with developmental disabilities during their education.
- Furthermore, the **Inclusive Allowance Act** of 2024. provides a financial benefit for persons with disabilities and consolidates several benefits and allowances into a unified benefit.

Mr Chair,

- The **right to work** is a fundamental right guaranteed by our Constitution. Recently, we allocated 135 million euros to promote the employment of persons with disabilities, resulting in approximately 3,000 individuals being employed annually.

- Our active labour market measures, tailored to the needs of the most disadvantaged, provide larger and longer subsidies for persons with disabilities along with co-financing the education, training, workplace adaptation, and 75% of mandatory health insurance contributions for employers.
- We have also introduced a **holistic approach** tailored to the needs of persons with disabilities and are developing a project to improve their work capacity assessment, enhancing inclusion and retention in the workforce.
- Our commitment to enhancing the quality of life for persons with disabilities is also demonstrated by our early recognition and implementation of the EU initiative to introduce the **European Disability Card and European Parking Card**.
- Croatia is proud to be the first EU member state to implement this initiative, simplifying the process for persons with disabilities to exercise their mobility rights across Europe.
- Finally, Croatia remains steadfast in its dedication to promote, protect, and ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis. There is still a long way to go, but we are committed to achieving these goals in partnership with civil society through dialogue, mutual trust, and understanding.

Thank you