

## ILO CONVENTION NUMBER 159 CONCERNING VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AND EMPLOYMENT (DISABLED PERSONS)

This Convention was ratified in 1990 and entered into force in Australia on 7 August 1991. It took precedence over Convention Number 111 as the more recent ILO instrument.

The introductory section of the Convention states that, after the International Year of Disabled Persons, it 'is appropriate to adopt new international standards on the subject which take account, in particular, of the need to ensure equality of opportunity and treatment to all categories of disabled persons, in both rural and urban areas, for employment and integration into the community . . . '.

Article 1 says that 'each Member shall consider the purpose of vocational rehabilitation as being to enable a disabled person to secure, retain and advance in suitable employment and thereby to further such person's integration or reintegration into society'. Article 2 binds members to ' . . . formulate, implement, and periodically review a national policy on vocational rehabilitation and employment of disabled persons ', and Article 3 states that signatories should ensure that appropriate measures are 'made available to all categories of disabled persons ', and that there should be promotion of 'employment opportunities for disabled persons in the open labour market '. Article 4 specifies that the guiding principle for national policy should be 'equal opportunity between disabled workers and workers generally '. It also states that 'Special positive measures aimed at effective equality of opportunity and treatment between disabled workers and other workers shall not be regarded as discriminating against other workers '.

Article 6 of the Convention obliges Members to ' . . . by laws or regulations or by any other methods consistent with national conditions and practice, take such steps as may be necessary to give effect ' to the above-cited Articles. Article 7 obliges Member States to take measures to ensure that 'competent authorities ' provide and evaluate 'vocational guidance, vocational training, placement, employment and other related services to enable disabled persons to secure, retain and advance in employment; existing services for workers generally shall, wherever possible, and appropriate, be used with necessary adaptations '. Article 9 states that Members ' . . . shall aim at ensuring the training and availability of rehabilitation counsellors and other suitable qualified staff responsible for the vocational guidance, vocational training, placement and employment of disabled persons '.