

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES FACING VULNERABLE CATEGORIES OF CITIZENS IN MUNICIPALITIES IN THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

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Abstract

The Republic of North Macedonia (RNM), by ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2011, has joined the efforts of the international community to create and implement national policies that promote the rights of persons with disabilities, combat all forms of discrimination and build an inclusive society.

European experiences show that although the rights of persons with disabilities are being promoted, especially in terms of accessibility, persons with disabilities still face significant barriers in accessing healthcare, education, employment and social needs and services. Persons with disabilities have a higher risk of poverty and social exclusion compared to persons without disabilities and are more likely to face the need for social services.

Hence, the paper focuses on analyzing the situation in the domain of social services for vulnerable categories of citizens in several municipalities in the Republic of North Macedonia (Stumica, Kocani, Kumanovo and Delcevo), to determine the problems and challenges faced by these people. The general objective of the research is to contribute to the social inclusion of disadvantaged groups, improve the quality of life, as well as encourage social cohesion at the local level by promoting the localization of the 2030 Agenda and its goals, in particular, the principle of "Leaving No One Behind" - LNOB at the municipal level. The specific objectives of the research relate to identifying the problems and needs for social services and the inclusion in the social life of vulnerable groups of citizens, identifying their attitudes towards overcoming problems and improving the services they receive; identifying a database of existing measures and services; and developing recommendations for creating policies and measures. The research methodology is field research conducted using a questionnaire, a focus group with representatives of vulnerable categories of citizens and institutions that are responsible for the protection and exercise of the rights of this category of citizens, as well as an analysis of legal and regulatory acts and other documents relevant to the research. The research sample is targeted, since it is a target group that is not approached randomly, but based on previously obtained data about them. The results of the research showed that on average about 49.2% of people with disabilities need help in the implementation of certain activities. In addition, people with disabilities feel forgotten by the community and need to talk to a professional about their problems are more numerous among men. 1/3 of the respondents expressed a need for a personal assistant. A high percentage of the respondents are not familiar with the existence of day centers and social clubs for people with disabilities. About half of the respondents need to use a social club, which they would use but do not know that it exists. One third of the respondents need rehabilitation and reintegration. This indicates that the Municipalities and other competent institutions for the protection of persons with disabilities should focus on providing measures and funds for the improvement of social services and meeting social needs.

Keywords: social services, persons with disabilities, rehabilitation, needs

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1. INTRODUCTION

The problems faced by persons with disabilities are: social exclusion, insufficient financial resources for treatment or payment for rehabilitation treatments, work training, independence, etc. Insufficient access to accessible information for persons with disabilities, as well as insufficient access to services, especially services in the home and community, as well as services of non-family care. Persons with disabilities are very little included in education and the labor market. Persons with disabilities often do not have sufficient knowledge about social rights and access to social services, education and health, and are mostly dependent on assistance from the state. They complain of social exclusion. A major problem is the lack of financial resources for treatment or payment for rehabilitation, job training, independence, etc. Experience so far clearly shows that people with intellectual disabilities and their families are not informed and have insufficient support in exercising their legal rights. Because of this problem, they are prevented from being included in the regular flows of the community. Persons with intellectual disabilities receive incomplete and poor-quality information from inadequate sources, so it takes a long time to realize their basic rights (education, employment, income generation, use of social and health care, etc.). Persons with intellectual disabilities who are users of the services of the Rehabilitation and Reintegration Center, after they come home, do not have any activities and obligations. Parents are no longer able to provide quality free time for their children due to their age and the obligations they have. Their brothers/sisters have their own obligations, the users do not have friends with whom they can be part of the current events in the city. In addition, people with disabilities need multiple categories of social services such as: Individual specialized services, Innovative services (sports-recreational, cultural and social services). (J.Denkova Social Mapping Results Report: "LNOB social mapping and evidence-based policymaking in the municipality of Kumanovo", Municipality of Kumanovo/ Center for European Citizens Initiative, 2024). In addition, the main problem in all municipalities where the research was conducted (Stumica, Kocani, Kumanovo and Delchevo), is that a large percentage of people with disabilities do not have access to public facilities and spaces in buildings: People with physical disabilities (people who use mobility aids and people who use wheelchairs) have problems with access to some of the facilities (outpatient clinics, hospitals, shops, markets, cultural institutions, departments of ministries and other administrative bodies, administrative facilities under the jurisdiction of the municipality, sports and recreational facilities, schools, etc.), as well as inside buildings (lack of elevators, existence of infrastructure barriers, lack of adapted toilets, etc.). Blind and visually impaired people have accessibility problems due to poorly marked stairwells and physical barriers. The spaces around and inside buildings are not sufficiently lit.

In all surveys, the main goal was to determine the level and form of vulnerability at the local level, with a main emphasis on the specific objectives of the survey relate to identifying the problems and needs for social services and inclusion in the social life of vulnerable groups of citizens, identifying their attitudes towards overcoming the problems and improving the services they receive, identifying a database of existing measures and services; and developing recommendations for creating policies and measures. (Ananiev J. Social Mapping Results Report: LNOB social mapping and evidence-based policy making in the municipality of Delchevo, Center for European Citizens Initiative, 2024).

The survey generated data on the socio-economic status of different categories of persons with disabilities, men and women, boys and girls, and on the needs of social service providers. The results allowed for an assessment of the quality and effectiveness of current social services that will help the municipality, the Center for Social Work, the Employment Agency, the Health Fund, the Pension and Disability Insurance Fund, and non-governmental

organizations to take action and offer services based on the recommendations of the social mapping.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology is based on the analysis of secondary data, analysis of documents adopted by municipalities that contain data or measures for persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups. Documents and databases of relevant institutions responsible for the care and improvement of the lives of persons with disabilities (the Center for Social Work, the Pension and Disability Insurance Fund, the Employment Agency, the Health Insurance Fund, the Red Cross, and associations for persons with disabilities) were analyzed. In addition, field research was conducted through surveys in municipalities, including cities and villages. The questionnaire aims to reflect the attitudes and perceptions of people with disabilities in various areas using the principles of the NLOB. Municipalities, associations of persons with disabilities and the Center for Social Work shared an updated contact database for persons with disabilities. Field research in all municipalities (Stumica, Kocani, Kumanovo and Delchevo) in the Republic of North Macedonia was conducted using a survey questionnaire, which is divided thematically, according to the five LNOB risk factors. The analysis of this paper refers only to the results of one risk factor: social services, identifying problems and needs for social services and inclusion in the social life of vulnerable groups of citizens. In all the mentioned municipalities, 120 respondents were surveyed, except in the municipality of Delchevo, where 70 respondents were surveyed, which included adults with disabilities and parents/guardians of persons with disabilities. The research sample is targeted, since it is a target group that is being researched and the respondents are not approached randomly, but based on previously obtained data about them. Only a structure of respondents was made based on the type of disability, so that the sample could approximately reflect the percentage of different types of disabilities. The list of potential respondents was made through data collection by the mentioned municipalities, as well as by the organizations responsible for persons with disabilities. The data processing was done by determining the frequency of responses for each question, expressed in number of responses and percentages, and by crossing two questions where the independent variables are gender, type of disability, age and place of residence, depending on the validity of these independent variables in determining their impact on the matter covered by the question. (Ananiev.J. Social Mapping Results Report: Social Mapping of Adults and Children with Disability in the Municipality of Strumica, Center for European Citizens Initiative, 2022). During all the research in the municipalities, two focus groups were conducted, one with representatives of institutions that are stakeholders at the local level - representatives of public institutions and non-governmental organizations, and the other with adults with disabilities and parents/guardians of persons with disabilities. The focus groups aimed to examine in more depth the issues that are the focus of this research and to open new sub-questions, to detect problems and to provide recommendations for overcoming them.

3. RESEARCH RESULTS

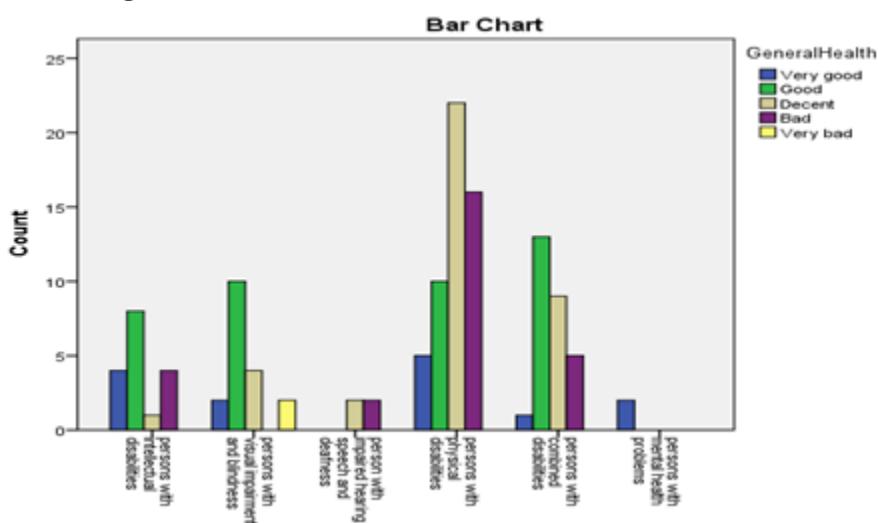
3.1.Necessary social services for people with disabilities

The results of the research relating to the analysis of social needs are almost identical in all the listed municipalities, in the analysis of the paper, results from a research in the municipality of Kumanovo are presented as an example. (Denkova J. Social Mapping Results

Report: " LNOB social mapping and evidence-based policymaking in the municipality of Kumanovo", Center for European Citizens Initiative, 2024).

When analyzing the health status of people with disabilities, about 9% of people with disabilities are completely immobile, 25.4% are partially immobile or can use a wheelchair, which represents a high percentage of people at risk. 23.7% of people with disabilities assess their health status as poor and 31.1% as fair. The percentage of people with poor health is high, which indicates the need to take action to improve the health status of people with disabilities. A correlation test was conducted between the "type of disability" and the "health status assessment", which determined that the most numerous are people with physical disabilities, followed by people with intellectual disabilities who assess their health status as poor, which is shown in diagram number 1, shown below.

Diagram No.1



A correlation test was conducted between "gender" and "health status assessment", and gender balance was determined in terms of assessing health status as poor. Regarding the question of the causes of disability, 42.6% of people with disabilities have had the disability since birth, 22% acquired it as a result of illness, and 18.9% as a result of an injury, traffic accident, or injury at home.

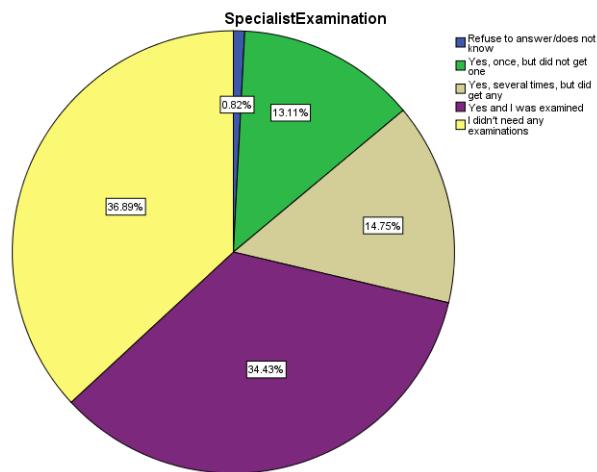
Respondents were asked on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest, how satisfied or how they feel about:

- Personal relationships with other people
- Do you feel safe
- How satisfied are you with your life overall
- Do you feel forgotten by the community
- Are you treated well when receiving health care and services

Of the respondents, 5 or 58.2% rate their relationships with other people as good, 5 or 54.1% rate their feelings of safety, 3 or 34.4% rate their satisfaction with their own lives, 5 or 36.9% rate their feelings of being forgotten by the community, and 5 or 51.6% rate their feelings of being treated well when receiving health services and care. From these results, it can be concluded that the respondents' biggest problem is the lack of care shown towards them by the community. For the same questions, a correlation test was conducted between the "genders", with the score of 5 for relationships with other people as good being balanced between the genders, and both genders also gave an equal score of 5 for the feeling of safety. When asked how satisfied they are with their own lives, more than twice as many male respondents responded with a score of 3 as female respondents. Also, more than twice as

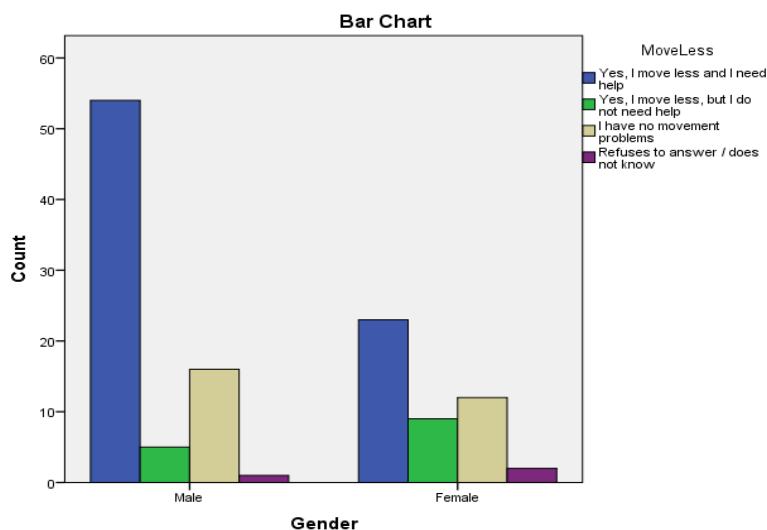
many male respondents with a score of 5 stated that they feel forgotten by the community. Male respondents are more numerous and in assessing good behavior when receiving health services, there is a greater number of men than women who rate the services with a 5. From these results, it can be concluded that among the male and female respondents, men have a greater problem with the lack of care shown towards them by the community. In terms of receiving a medical examination in the last 12 months, 11.5% of people with disabilities were in a situation where they failed to receive a general health examination from their primary care physician once or several times, and 27.9% failed to receive a specialist examination once or several times, image no. 2.

Image 2



The data shows the relatively weak system of primary and secondary healthcare for people with disabilities. About 63.1% have mobility problems and need help, and 11.5% have mobility problems but do not need help. A correlation test was conducted between "gender" and "mobility problems", and it was determined that a higher number of male respondents have mobility problems requiring help, diagram number 3.

Diagram number 3



A correlation test was conducted between "age" and "movement problems", and it was determined that the largest number of respondents were aged 51-60, followed by people aged 41-50 who had mobility problems requiring assistance. This is a serious indicator of the exclusion of adults with disabilities and their support needs. 32% of people with disabilities

live within 2 kilometers of a clinic, but have difficulty getting there because they cannot move, i.e. have a mobility problem. A correlation test was conducted between "place of residence, "city, village" and "proximity to the ambulance", and it was determined that of people with disabilities living in cities, 30% of them live near an ambulance, but have trouble getting there because they cannot move, and of people with disabilities living in villages, 60% have the same problem. Considering that some of those who live further away also have a problem, it can be concluded that accessibility to healthcare services is a risk factor for a large proportion of adults with disabilities. The problem of distance to the clinic is increasing, considering that 28.7% of adults with disabilities needed to visit a doctor once a month in the last 12 months, and 15.6% of people with disabilities needed to visit a doctor once a week. A correlation test was conducted between "gender" and "physician needs" and "gender" and "patronage service", and it was determined that there is a gender balance in relation to these two services. In terms of patronage service, 22.1% of adults with disabilities need patronage service from a medical professional, more precisely, about 10.7% have received it once or several times, 5.7% need it but do not know about this service, and 5.7% were refused to receive such service. In terms of patronage service, 22.1% of adults with disabilities need patronage service from a medical professional, more precisely, about 10.7% have received it once or several times, 5.7% need it but do not know about this service, and 5.7% were refused to receive such service.

Regarding the question of services, 4.9% of people with disabilities did not receive the necessary health services. Among people with disabilities who responded that they did not receive the necessary health services, they most miss the patronage service and transportation to the health facility, table no. 1.

Table no. 1. Which services do not deliver to you

	Number	Percentag e
Patronage service	1	16.7
Transportation for persons with disabilities to a health facility	1	16.7
Other	2	33.3
Patronage service and others	1	16.7
Delivery of the necessary medicines and transportation for the disabled	1	16.7
Total	6	100.0

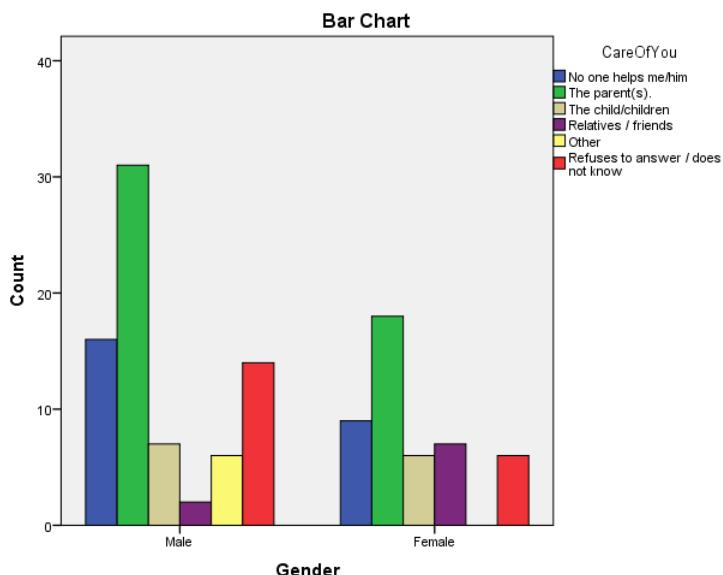
Respondents were offered multiple answers to the question "Which of the following devices and aids do you think would make your life easier and should be provided to you?" and most adults with disabilities responded that they needed a smart bracelet for measuring blood pressure, a wheelchair with toilet adaptation, and time orientation products. About 20.5% of adults with disabilities do not have help at home, and most of them, 40.2%, are helped by their parents, and the help of children to their parents is 10.7%. The number of adults with disabilities who receive help at home from people outside the family is very small, table no. 2

Table no. 2. Who takes care of you/the person during the day?

	Number	Percentag e
No one helps me/him	25	20.5
Parents	49	40.2
The child/children	13	10.7
Relatives / friends	9	7.4
Other	6	4.9
Refuses to answer / doesn't know	20	16.4
Total	122	100.0

A correlation test was conducted between "gender" and "care for people with disabilities" and both genders are mostly helped by their parents, with a higher number of males receiving this assistance, diagram no. 4.

Diagram no. 4



Caring for people with disabilities contributes to a large number of parents not finding or terminating employment, or their ability to engage in additional activities is reduced, table no. 3.

Table No. 3. For parents only. How does it affect your professional life?

	Number	Percentag e
I / my husband / my wife to remain unemployed	9	18.0
I / my husband / wife to quit work	1	2.0
I work / work man / woman part-time	2	4.0

Cannot perform additional activities (field work, etc.)	14	28.0
It doesn't affect		
He влияе	18	36.0
Refuses to answer / doesn't know	16	12.0
Total	50	100.0

On average, about 49.2% of people with disabilities need help daily, once a week or once a month, in carrying out certain activities. They most need help with grocery shopping and moving outside the home, once a week mostly for grocery shopping and washing clothes, and once a month, most need help with going to the doctor and to the bank. If the results are analyzed collectively, they most need help with grocery shopping and cleaning at home, table no. 4.

Table No. 4

Do you and how often do you need help for the following daily activities?	I need help every day /%	I need help at least once a week / %	I need help at least once a month / %	I don't need help / %	Refuses to answer / doesn't know / %
1. Grocery shopping	21,3	27,9	/	49,2	1,6
2. Cleaning in the home	17,2	27,9	4,9	50	/
3. Buying medicines	15,6	13,9	16,4	54,1	/
4. Going to the bank	15,6	11,5	27,0	45,1	8
5. Washing clothes	13,9	15,6	4,1	66,4	/
6. Going to the doctor	17,2	15,6	7,4	59,8	/
7. Movement outside the home (walk)	18,9	17,2	/	63,9	/
8. Making meetings with friends / relatives	15,6	6,6	8,2	69,7	/

A correlation test was conducted between "needs" and "city and village". When analyzing the needs, for all needs and in both environments, people with disabilities most often need help weekly, followed by daily needs. They most often need cleaning once a week in both cities and villages. People from cities need more help with grocery shopping for daily, weekly and monthly shopping. Also, respondents from cities have greater needs in terms of movement outside the home, shopping, washing clothes, going to the doctor and to the bank.

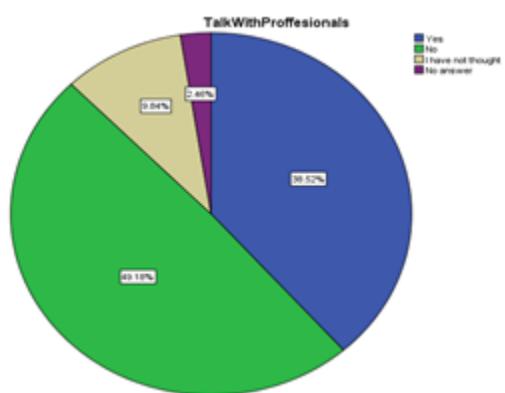
Persons with disabilities were asked: If your health condition seriously deteriorates or you have fragile health and cannot leave your home to perform daily activities such as shopping or obtaining essential medicines and paying monthly bills, do you have anyone you can turn to for help and support? From Table 5, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents would turn to family members they live with and children who do not live with them. The percentage of people with disabilities who would seek support from relatives, friends and local community stakeholders is very small. These responses correspond to the perception of the respondents that a large part of them feel forgotten by the community.

Table No. 5

	Number	Percentag e
My family members who live with me	43	63.2
To my children, even though they don't live with me	6	8.8
To the relatives	4	5.9
There is no answer	15	22.1
Total	68	100.0

38% of people with disabilities need to talk to a professional about their problems, of which the number is higher among men, image no. 5

Image no. 5



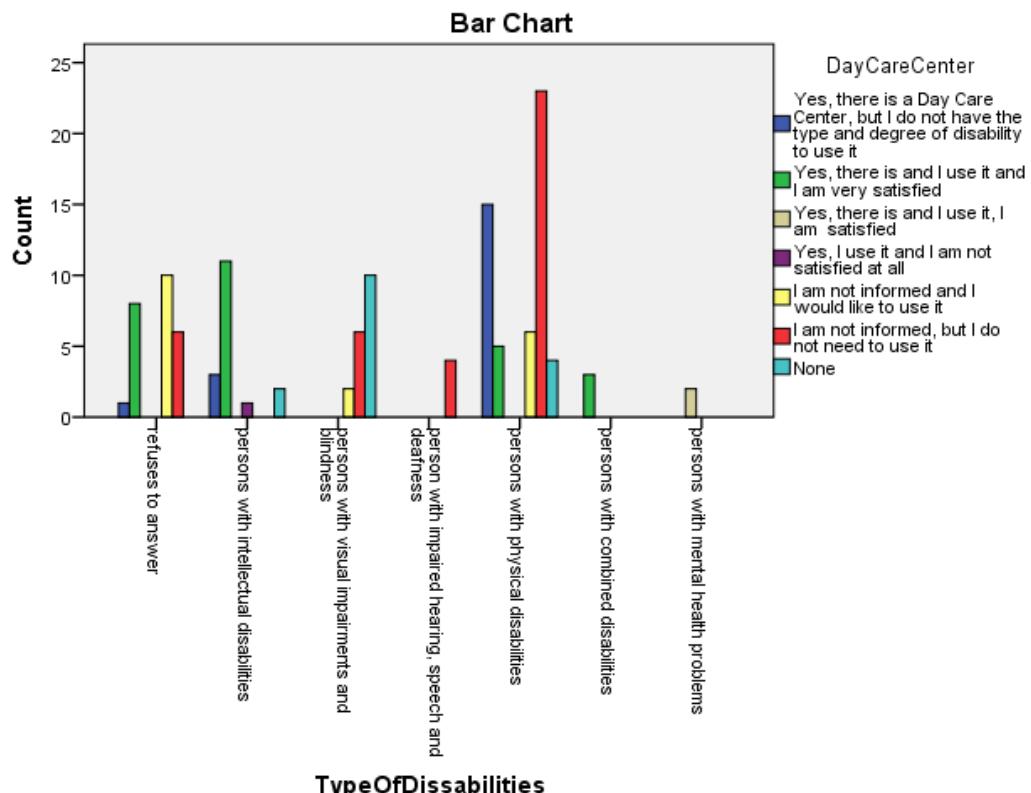
50% of people with disabilities do not need a security system "alarm" to be able to call a health service if they feel unwell. Most likely, they do not understand the meaning of the alarm, because 50% stated that they do not need it, and 50% have no opinion. About 8.2% of the respondents answered that they used a personal assistant, and about 3.3% answered that they needed it, but were not informed. 70% of those who used this service are satisfied with it, and 31.5 stated that they would use such assistance, if it were available to them.

3.2.Services needed in the local community

In all municipalities there are associations, clubs of people with disabilities (hearing, vision, physical disabilities, invalids). In addition, only in the municipality of Kumanovo and the municipality of Delčevo there is a Day Center for people with intellectual disabilities for people up to 18 years of age and a Day Center for Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Adults with Moderate and Severe Intellectual Disabilities for people over 18 years of age. Regarding the question of whether there is and whether you visit a day center for people with

disabilities, about 23.7% of the respondents use it and are satisfied, and about 14.8% would use it, but do not know that this type of service exists. The results show that people with intellectual disabilities and people with physical disabilities used the Day Center the most, diagram no.6.

Diagram no.6



When asked whether they know that a rehabilitation and reintegration center for people with intellectual disabilities will start operating in their municipality, only 12.3% answered that they are familiar with it. According to the type of disability, the most numerous are people with intellectual disabilities. According to the place of residence, city, village, people from cities are more numerous, who use the services of the Center. In terms of gender representation, men are more numerous than women.

Of the services of the Rehabilitation and Reintegration Center, respondents are most in need of the motor development service 17.2%. Then, only 5.7% are interested in developing work skills, professional rehabilitation-orientation, table no. 6. This indicates the need to develop this service through forms of training for retraining and additional training, educational workshops, round tables, etc.

Table no. 6

	Број	Процент
Acquiring cultural and hygienic habits	1	.8
Motor development	21	17.2

Developing work skills, professional rehabilitation-orientation	7	5.7
Computer Integration - Computer Training and Work	1	.8
Refuses to answer/no	92	75.4
Total	122	100.0

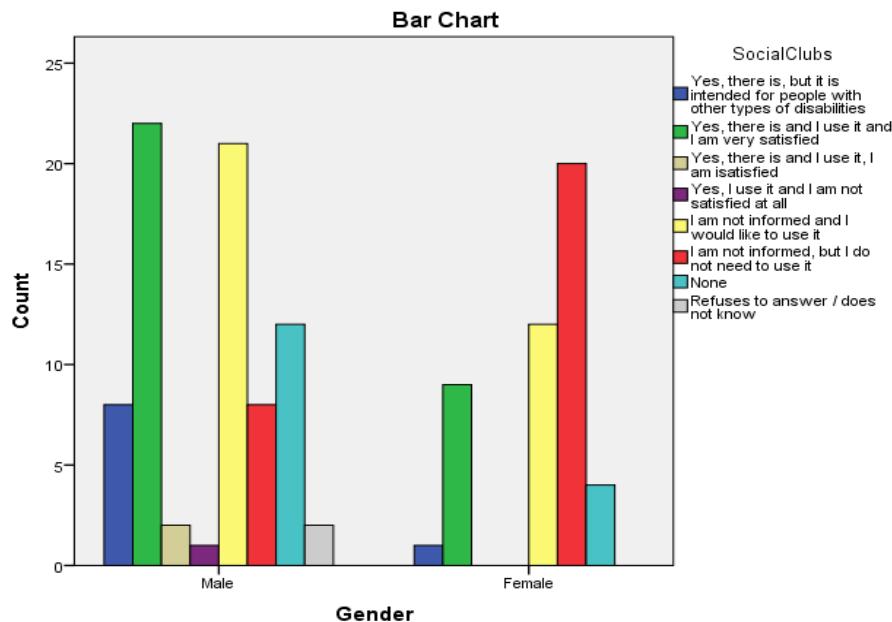
In terms of gender perspective, the number of female persons in need of the services of the rehabilitation and reintegration center is higher, table no. 7

Table No 7

	They refuse to answer	Acquiring cultural and hygienic habits	Motor development	Developing work skills, professional rehabilitation-orientation	Computer Integration - Computer Training and Work	
Gender	men	61	0	11	3	76
	women	31	1	10	4	46
Total		92	1	21	7	122

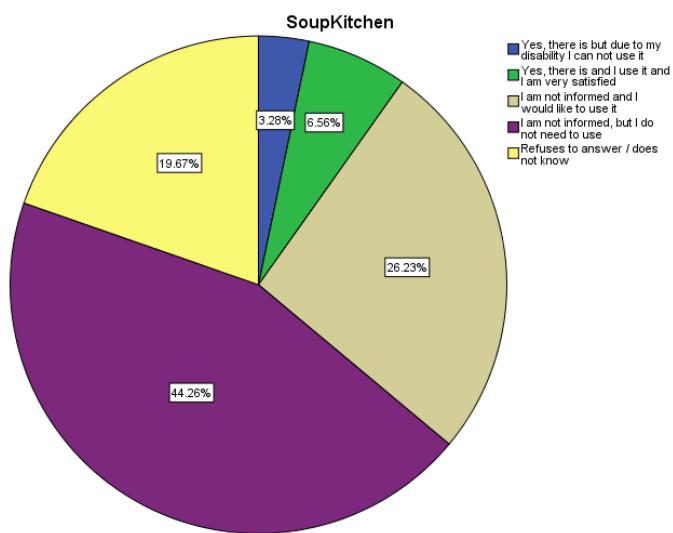
Regarding the use of social clubs/associations of people with disabilities that provide socializing, entertainment and recreation, 27% stated that they use them and are satisfied with them, and 27% would use them, but do not know that this type of service exists. These data indicate that about half of the respondents have a need for this type of service in the local community. A correlation test was conducted between "gender" and "use of social clubs", with these clubs being used more by men, and there is also a higher number of men who would use them but do not know that they exist. A higher percentage of women are not interested in using these clubs. This indicates a need to inform, motivate and encourage women to be more involved in social life, diagram no.7.

Diagram no.7



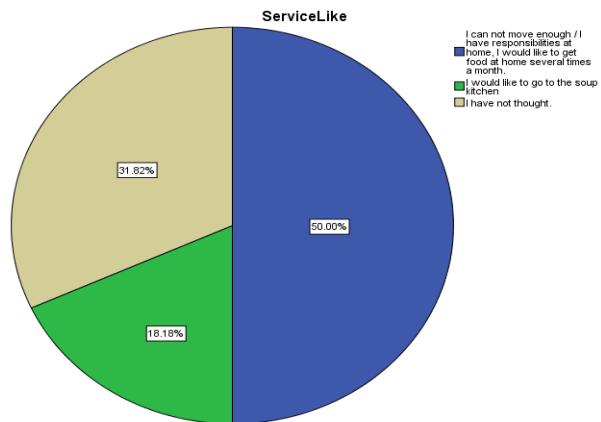
In all municipalities there is a soup kitchen intended for people at social risk. The results showed that about 26.2% of people with disabilities are not informed that there is a soup kitchen, but would like to use it. Also, the percentage of people who are not informed, but do not want to use it is high, 44.3%. This indicates the need for greater information of citizens about this type of service, image no. 8

Image no. 8



The majority of respondents want to use the services of the soup kitchen by bringing food home several times a month, image no. 9

Image no. 9



54% of people with disabilities need organized transportation to the most frequently visited places, table no. 8. A correlation test was conducted between "city and village" and "organized transportation", with people from cities having a greater need to use organized transportation, and in terms of gender, men have a greater need for organized transportation.

Table no. 8. Does you/the person need organized transportation to the most frequently visited locations?

	Number	Percentag e
Yes	66	54.1
No	51	41.8
Refuses to answer / doesn't know	15	4.1
Total	122	100.0

Municipalities and the state are taking measures to reduce the social risk of certain vulnerable groups. A small proportion of persons with disabilities need accommodation in an institution or group home. Day care as a form of occasional day care was expressed as a need by 23.8% of respondents. Persons with disabilities need a greater connection with the municipality and about half emphasize the need for a visit from a social worker to be able to inform the municipality about their problems. The greatest need of persons with disabilities is food packages and financial assistance for the purchase of medicines. This is another indicator of the existence of a high level of poverty among persons with disabilities. 31.1% of respondents need access to information in simple and understandable language, and 9% of respondents need information in sign language. 30.3% of respondents need psychosocial counseling, and a high percentage, more than half, need legal assistance. This indicates an increase in the awareness of persons with disabilities about the possibilities and ways of informing, and obtaining legal assistance to exercise their rights that are due to them in accordance with the Law. 10.1% need self-help groups for parents. 27% need help and care at home, and 33.6% need personal assistance. Also, 30.3% of persons with disabilities need family care. One third of the respondents need rehabilitation and reintegration. This indicates the Municipality's direction towards providing funds for persons for care and care at home and as personal assistants. Also, existing day centers should find ways and opportunities for

quality provision of rehabilitation and reintegration services. The respondents do not need Halfway Centers for accommodation.

3.3. How accessible are the facilities in the municipality?

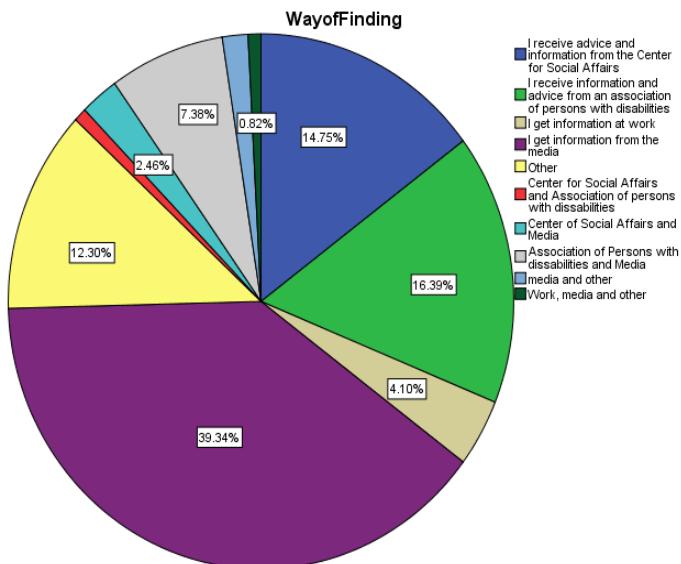
Table 9 below presents the responses of adults with disabilities and parents/children with disabilities regarding the level of accessibility of certain public facilities in the municipality. Considering that this is a question that was asked to everyone, and some people with disabilities (such as people with hearing and speech impairments and intellectual disabilities) do not have a problem with physical accessibility, the problem with accessibility is even greater in reality.

Table no. 9. How accessible are the following objects and locations to the person?

	Type of service	He/she doesn't know	Completely	Partially	No
1	The municipal building	0,8%	40,2%	17,2%	41,8%
2	General Hospital Facilities	0,8%	36,9%	17,2%	45,1%
3	Bus station	0,8%	36,9%	12,3%	50,0%
4	Mail	0,8%	41,8%	17,2%	40,2%
5	Facilities of ministries / administrative bodies	0,8%	40,2%	17,2%	41,8%
6	Park	0,8%	40,2%	10,7%	48,4%
7	Train station	0,8%	21,3%	13,9%	63,9%
8	Religious buildings (churches / mosques)	0,8%	45,1%	12,3%	41,8%
9	Library	0,8%	41,8%	15,6%	41,8%
10	Parking spaces	0,8%	36,1%	11,5%	51,6%
11	Schools / Kindergartens	0,8%	44,3%	16,4%	38,5%
12	Center for social work	0,8%	38,5%	15,6%	45,1%
13	Sports facilities (halls, swimming pools, courts)	2,5%	36,9%	17,2%	43,4%
14	Cultural facilities (theaters, cinemas)	0,8%	32,0%	13,9%	53,3%
15	Markets	8%	43,4%	15,6%	40,2%
16	Garbage containers	8%	46,7%	10,7%	41,8%
17	City transport (bus)	8%	45,1%	17,2%	36,9%

Regarding the issue of information about available services and the rights of persons with disabilities, the largest percentage, 39.3%, is informed by the media, followed by associations of persons with disabilities, 16.4%, and the Center for Social Affairs, 14.8%, image no. 10.

Image no. 10



Regarding the question "How satisfied are you with the advisory and information role of the Center for Social Affairs?", the respondents answered on a scale of 1 to 5, with the highest percentage 49.2% rating it with the lowest score 1, and only 8.2% with a score of 5. Also, the highest percentage 38.5% gave the lowest score 1 for the advisory and information role of the associations/unions of persons with disabilities. This indicates low trust in the relevant institutions responsible for persons with disabilities. This is also detected as a problem that needs to be considered from all aspects.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on data and results obtained during the analysis of documents, questionnaire and focus group for vulnerable categories of citizens on the territory of the municipalities (Kocani, Strumica, Kumanovo and Delchevo) we can conclude that the most vulnerable category of citizens are people with disabilities, including people with severe physical disabilities and intellectual disabilities.

In terms of the type of disability, people with severe physical disabilities and people with intellectual disabilities have poor health, of which a higher percentage are male

People with disabilities, who have not received the necessary health services, most lack the patronage service and transportation to the health facility.

People with disabilities have the following needs as the most pronounced: a smart bracelet for measuring blood pressure, a wheelchair with toilet adaptation and products for time orientation.

People with disabilities believe that they are forgotten by the community, express dissatisfaction with both health services and the overall care provided by the community, the advisory and informational role of the Center for Social Affairs and the advisory and informational role of associations/unions of people with disabilities.

Persons with disabilities need a greater connection with the municipality, the need for a visit from a social worker to inform the municipality about their problems, the need for access to information in simple and understandable language, the need for psychosocial counseling and more than half need legal assistance.

More than 50% of persons with disabilities need organized transportation.

Day centers for persons with disabilities are used by persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with physical disabilities, and males and persons living in cities are more numerous. Of the services of the Rehabilitation and Reintegration Center, respondents most need the motor development service, then the development of work skills, professional rehabilitation-orientation.

The focus of the Center is professional rehabilitation in the direction of providing services in the form of retraining, retraining, and further education, so that everyone can develop their abilities according to their affinities and desires.

It is necessary to assess the needs for support of families of people with disabilities. The need to organize educational and informative workshops, through the presentation of good examples for parents of people with intellectual disabilities to understand the importance of their children's independence, to help their children in the process of their rehabilitation and reintegration.

Physical activity is also necessary for people with disabilities without or with simple aids; New methods of physiotherapy - kinesitherapy, acupressure, sensorimotor stimulation with aids, devices and equipment, Pilates, yoga, Adapted sports, Inclusion through sports.

4.1. Recommendations for interventions to support the most vulnerable groups, through municipal measures

In addition to the above recommendations, additional suggestions and recommendations are imposed that strictly apply to the Municipalities where the research was conducted. Thus, the need for the Center for Social Affairs and other organizations responsible for persons with disabilities to organize advisory and educational workshops for parents, family members and persons with disabilities to improve their social life is considered particularly important.

To find ways to provide funds through donations and subsidies, so that people with disabilities can receive the funds they need to function and improve their quality of life (wheelchairs, adapted toilets, blood pressure monitors, etc.). Another very important measure is for all municipalities to take measures to popularize the work of the soup kitchen among people with disabilities in order to increase the number of beneficiaries, especially to include the most difficult social cases of people with disabilities. Municipalities to take measures to organize transportation for people with the most severe forms of physical disability, so that they can reach the most frequently visited places. Also, municipalities should undertake activities to open a group home for joint living of persons with similar disabilities. The need for coordination and communication of municipalities with the Centers for Social Affairs and organizations for persons with disabilities to prepare complete records of persons with disabilities is very important. The indicator of low trust in institutions by persons with disabilities raises the issue of municipalities finding ways to strengthen trust in institutions, through campaigns, education of persons with disabilities about the legal possibilities for their protection and presentation of positive examples of persons with disabilities who have exercised their rights through institutions. The municipality and organizations for people with disabilities should take measures to open social clubs.

A higher percentage of women are not interested in using social clubs. This indicates the need to organize informational and motivational events to encourage women to become more involved in social life.

In particular, the Municipalities, the Center for Social Affairs and other relevant institutions should undertake activities to strengthen the trust in institutions by women, through educational workshops and other forms of information and education about the importance, opportunities and benefits they can receive. Organizations/unions of persons with disabilities

should strengthen their capacities in protecting the rights of persons with disabilities. The Municipalities, the Center for Social Affairs and organizations of persons with disabilities should take measures to adequately and comprehensively inform persons with disabilities about the rights arising from the national and local social protection system. The Municipalities should organize round tables with representatives of persons with disabilities to amend the regulations on financial assistance, increase the benefits for social services, introduce subsidies and exempt from costs for persons with disabilities. Municipalities and other institutions responsible for persons with disabilities, through donations, projects from domestic and international organizations, and the private sector, should provide funds for opening a group home for persons with disabilities when they are left alone after the death of their parents, and a day center for physical therapy for persons with disabilities with a team of mentor doctors.

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