



# *LAW AS A TOOL FOR SOCIAL CHANGE*

*STOCKHOLM, MAY 2018*

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# *STRONG LEGISLATION, WEAK ENFORCEMENT*

## *Legal Framework on Accessibility:*

- ❖ **Urban Development Act** and Regulation 4 on Accessible Built Environment: requirement to ensure accessibility of the environment; responsibility spread among local and national authorities, as well as private investors
- ❖ **Law on Integration of Disabled People:** separate chapter on accessibility of the built environment
- ❖ **Anti-Discrimination Act:** construction and maintenance of built environment impeding access of disabled persons to public places shall be considered direct discrimination.

# *Enforcement Mechanism*

- Accessibility checks are not assigned to a special institution
- Sanctions are weak and not applied
- Fines are not paid
- Generally it

**DOES NOT WORK!**

# *Anti-Discrimination Act*

## Anti-Discrimination Commission:

- Rule on whether actually discrimination is practiced
- just recommend to stop discrimination
- No compensations for the petitioner;
- Impose a fine the offender;



Court of Justice  
– full fledged  
trial

# *Civic Action*

❖ Direct (protests)

❖ Court Cases





*I don't belong here*





# *Action on!*



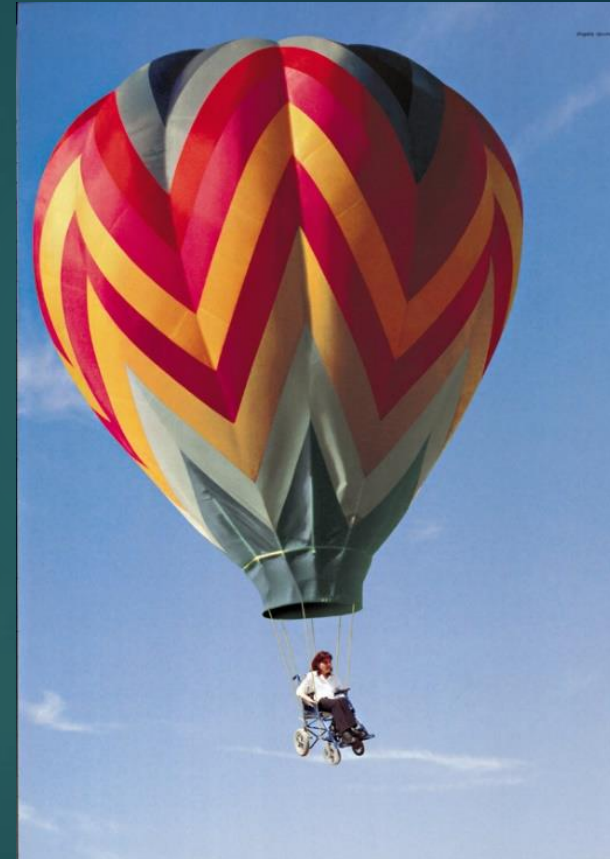
# *Discrimination in Education – the case of success*

- ▶ 2005 – a Coalition of NGOs filed a case against the Ministry of Education on the grounds of the Anti-Discrimination Act
- ▶ Ministry failed to prove that there are mechanisms and resources to accommodate the needs of disabled students in mainstream schools
- ▶ 2010 – Regulation on Integrated Education of Children with Special Needs was passed
- ▶ 2017 – provisions on inclusive education included in the Public Education Act



# *Vanya vs. Sofia Subway and Local Government*

- ▶ Filed on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2005
- ▶ Against the Municipality and the Metropolitan Subway Operator
- ▶ Claimed compensation for damages incurred as a result of inaccessible subway in Sofia €2.000
- ▶ Submitted invoices for taxi transport



# Case Won!

- ▶ Final ruling dated 7<sup>th</sup> June 2007
- ▶ Confirmed discrimination
- ▶ Awarded damages – €500



## *Issues Remained:*

- Accessibility of the subway is 'on' and 'off';
- Enforcement mechanisms – non-existent or toothless;
- Low level of awareness on the part of professionals and larger public;
- Disabled people not active;
- Most importantly:

**NO RESPECT FOR THE LAW AND COURT RULINGS**





НЕ УЪРЕЖДАЙ ПРАВИЛАТА

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Фамилия:  
Издадена на:  
Срок на валидност:

Електронна Синя зона  
София  
Карта №

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