



## Equal opportunities and securing of career paths for young persons with disabilities in Europe. Back to the ground

IO2

Creation of a method for evaluating and measuring the impact of environmental action in terms of career security and supported employment for the person's environment: family and colleagues.



# TABLE OF CONTENTS



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**Introduction**....4-5

**Chapter 1.** General overview on disability and employment....6 -19

**Chapter 2.** Context of the project....20-25

**Chapter 3.** Impact assessment methodological guidelines....26-33

**Chapter 4.** Proposal of questionnaires for each target group.  
An adaptable tool....34-35

**Bibliography**....36

**Annex**....37-40

**Partners**....41



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# INTRODUCTION



With over a billion of persons affected by disability worldwide<sup>1</sup>, measures have been taken on all levels (international, regional, national and local) to ensure the rights of persons with disabilities in all sectors, in particular, the employment sector.

It is undeniable that nowadays, employment has become the main factor enabling a healthy social integration whether through the form of financial stability or through the access of the different social spheres (culture, travels, employee status progression...). However, employment access (and maintenance) is proven to be more difficult for persons with disabilities who are exposed to discrimination, prejudices (inability to work) etc. (see chapter 1).

Despite the different policies in favour of the employment of persons with disabilities, such as Article 27 of the UNCRPD<sup>2</sup> or the European Disability Strategy<sup>3</sup> for a more inclusive labour market, the unemployment rate for persons with disabilities is twice as high as the overall unemployment rate<sup>4</sup> in the European Union.

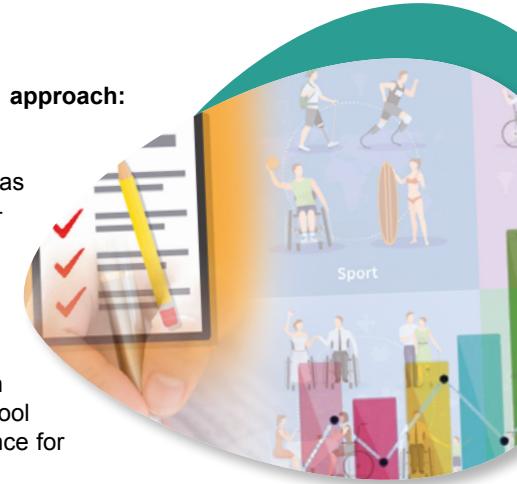
## ● Supported Employment Approach: a solution to the securing of career paths for persons with disabilities

Amongst the many existing solutions to combat stereotypes and ensure the employment and career security of persons with disabilities is the supported employment approach, which is slowly becoming a popular means of labour market integration, even if it varies from country to country. With the creation of the European Union for Supported Employment (EUSE) in 1993, this concept started to be officially promoted in the EU. As per the EUSE and based on article 7 of the UNCRPD, supported employment is “a method of working with people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups to access and maintain employment through providing appropriate and ongoing support. Therefore, it is an individual-orientated method to promote labour market participation of this target group”<sup>5</sup>



## ● Evaluation of the supported employment approach: a necessity for securing career paths

Even if the supported employment approach has proven to be successful for a wide number of workers with disabilities across the EU, it is crucial to conduct regular evaluations of the said approach, in order to confirm the good practices to disseminate but also to detect the factors affecting the career securement of the worker with disabilities. The aim is to improve this approach year after year in order for it to become a solid tool and guarantee the employment and its maintenance for persons with disabilities.



## ● EU DESC projects: towards equal opportunities and career securement for young persons with disabilities

Two Erasmus+ funded projects, DESC 1 (2015-2017) and DESC 2 (2017-2020)<sup>6</sup> have been conducted to also gather good practices and elaborate an evaluation method to ensure equal opportunities and career securement for young persons with disabilities.

The employment integration of persons with disabilities is the first step towards a more inclusive society. Therefore, it is important to address the effects of securing career paths to the immediate environment of persons with disabilities.

This particular guide will, hence, focus its evaluation method on two targets: colleagues and family. These two target groups, being in the close circle of the worker with disabilities, are crucial in an evaluation method process in order to collect their perceptions on the supported employment impact such as awareness-raising, comprehension of disabilities at the work place, social integration etc.

The first chapter of this guide gives a general overview of the European context for persons with disabilities in the employment sector. A focus is made, in the second chapter, on the context of the two DESC projects and prepare the ground for the evaluation method proposed in the third chapter. Finally, a fourth chapter presents an evaluation tool proposal to be adapted as per particular contexts.

1 World Health Organisation 2019 figures

2 UNCRPD, Work and Employment Article 27, [Online] <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/article-27-work-and-employment.html>

3 The European Disability Strategy 2010-2020: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1484>

4 EuCIE, Inclusive Enterprises in Europe, [Online] <https://www.eucie.org/inclusive-enterprises-europe/>

5 EUSE, European Supported Employment Toolkit [Online] <https://www.euse.org/content/supported-employment-toolkit/EUSE-Toolkit-2010.pdf>

# CHAPTER 1 General overview on disability and employment



Employment is central to the ability of persons with disabilities to maintain a decent standard of living for themselves and for their families, and is an important factor influencing their opportunities to fully participate in society. Work is a defining feature of human existence and in many societies the ability to work is viewed as one of the most important ways in which people can make their individual contributions to their communities. However, despite existing national, regional and international laws, and despite the activities of international bodies and Disabled Peoples' Organizations (DPOs), persons with disabilities throughout the world too often continue to be denied the right to work and statistics indicate that the rates of unemployment, underemployment and economic inactivity among persons with disabilities tend to be much higher than those of other workers.

Many persons with disabilities do not have access to the same educational and training opportunities as their non-disabled peers. Youth with disabilities, for example, are frequently additionally disadvantaged in their search for work and mainstream employment because they have not had access to education or vocational training, or because teaching staff are not appropriately trained, or because appropriate facilities are not available. Lacking educational qualifications and training in marketable skills put them at

a competitive disadvantage in their search for decent jobs.

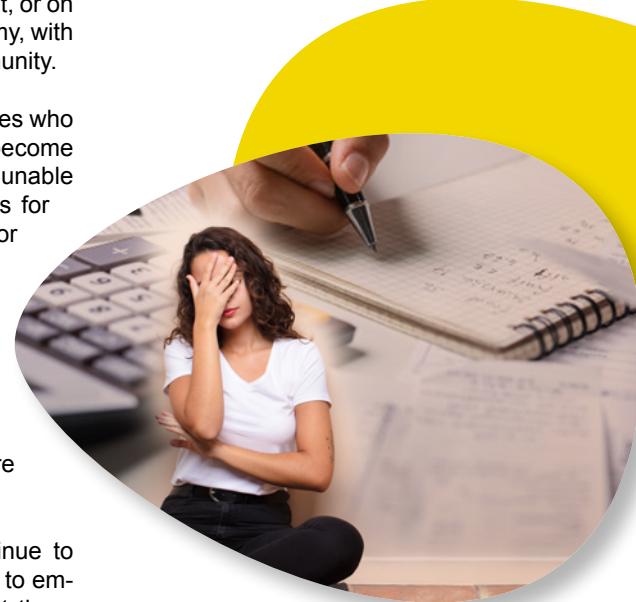
There may be stereotypes that persons with disabilities are not intelligent and are slow to learn. These same stereotypes and prejudices that can contribute to exclusion from education and vocational training may also create additional barriers in terms of employment, as prejudices and stigma among many employers, co-workers and the general public worsen an already difficult position. In addition, persons with disabilities face barriers in the form of inaccessibility of information and of the physical environment, including transportation, housing and workplaces. Employers also often assume that the costs of implementing reasonable accommodation for employees with disabilities (for example, accessibility features or flexible working schedules) are prohibitively expensive. Barriers to accessing financing can also hinder the ability of persons with disabilities to engage in self-employment.



Discouraged by discriminatory barriers and mistaken assumptions about their capacity to work, and in some cases fearing a loss of benefits, many persons with disabilities withdraw from an active search for employment and jobs, and rely either on disability benefits in countries where these exist, or on low-value work in the informal economy, with support from their families and community.

In many cases, persons with disabilities who are unable to support themselves, become financially trapped in a poverty cycle, unable to meet even their most basic needs for food, water, clothing, and shelter, or indeed raise a family as they would wish. In some countries employment provides a means of accessing the health insurance needed to obtain health care services. Where persons with disabilities are unable to obtain employment in such countries, their access to health care services may also be restricted.

While persons with disabilities continue to face significant challenges in relation to employment, it is important to note that there have been improvements in many countries. It is essential to build on these and to maintain this positive momentum.



# CHAPTER 1.



## General overview on disability and employment

### ● Legal Framework

Every individual has the fundamental right to work. This right is essential for realising other human rights and constitutes an inseparable and inherent part of human dignity. It contributes at the same time to the survival of the individual and to that of his or her family and, insofar as work is freely chosen or accepted, to his or her development and recognition within the community. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, December 2006) has been the first Convention to introduce the social model of disability and changed the direction of how individuals with disabilities are included into the workplace. The UNCRPD does not create new rights. Rather, it takes existing rights and interprets them in the context of persons with disabilities.



In terms of work and employment, Article 27 of the UNCRPD requires that State parties recognise the right of persons with disabilities to work on an equal basis with others, including their right to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible. Article 27<sup>7</sup> sets out measures through which State parties can safeguard and promote the realisation of the right to work, including for those who acquire a disability in the course of employment.

### ● Why laws are needed to respect the rights of persons with disabilities?

An increasing number of States prohibit discrimination on the ground of disability, particularly in the field of employment, either through comprehensive laws applying to different groups in the population as a whole or through disability-specific laws. This reflects the increasing acknowledgement that disability is frequently used as a reason for excluding persons with disabilities and to deny them equal employment opportunities, where this is not justified in the given circumstances.

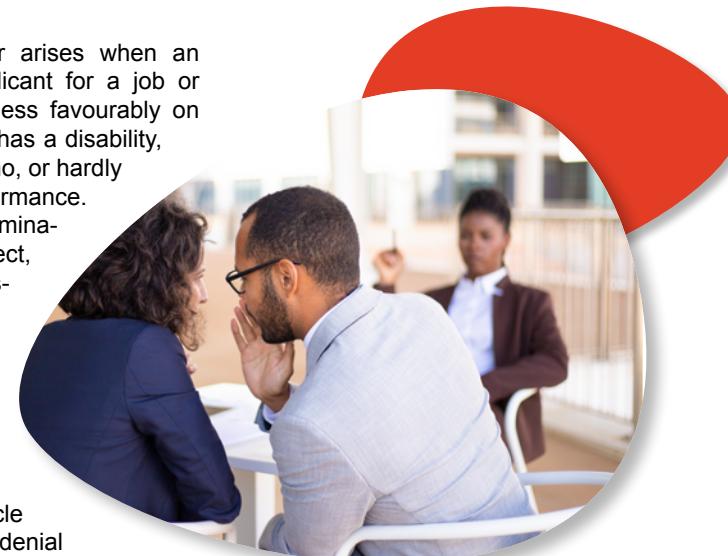
The objective of such laws is to combat the exclusion of and the denial of equal opportunities to people because of particular characteristics such as disability, and to

increase the participation rates of persons with disabilities in employment and other sectors of society.

By making disability a protected ground, the law extends protects against discriminatory behaviour and punishes those who violate the non-discrimination norm.

### ● Discrimination

Discriminatory behaviour arises when an employer treats an applicant for a job or employee adversely or less favourably on the grounds that he/she has a disability, where the disability has no, or hardly any, effect on job performance. Various forms of discrimination exist, including direct, indirect and multiple discrimination. However, significantly Article 5 of the UNCRPD<sup>8</sup> prohibits discrimination in every form and makes no distinction between forms of discrimination. Additionally, under Article 2 of the UNCRPD<sup>9</sup> the denial of reasonable accommodation is explicitly recognized as a form of discrimination.





**Direct discrimination** occurs when a person is treated less favourably than another similarly situated person because of a particular characteristic protected by non-discrimination law, such as race, sex or disability.

**Indirect discrimination** occurs when an apparently neutral situation, regulation or practice in fact results in unequal treatment of persons with certain characteristics. It occurs when the same condition, treatment or criterion applies to everyone, but has a disproportionately harsh impact on some persons on the basis of certain characteristics. The intention to discriminate is not a prerequisite for indirect discrimination to have occurred.

Under Article 6 of the UNCRPD<sup>10</sup>, the term **multiple-discrimination** refers to the experiences of exclusion which are deeply affected by the multiple dimensions of an individual's identity. For example, persons with disabilities generally experience higher rates of unemployment and underemployment than non-disabled persons. However, women with disabilities experience higher rates of unemployment than men with disabilities because of the discrimination they also face as women in the workplace.

The **denial of reasonable accommodation** is also a form of discrimination. An impairment can sometimes affect an individual's ability to carry out a job in the usual or accustomed manner. The obligation to make reasonable accommodation, or provide the right to be accommodated, is often found in modern disability non-discrimination law. The law should define closely what is meant by reasonable accommodation, so that misinterpretation is avoided and employers clearly understand what they must do. The UNCRPD makes clear that the failure to provide reasonable accommodation itself amounts to discrimination. Reasonable accommodation should already be provided for in the recruitment phase. When a person with a disability is a successful job applicant, the employer must provide reasonable accommodation, in the form of appropriate modifications or adjustments, if required to facilitate performance of the essential activities of the job. In most cases the person with a disability will be able to give advice to the employer on what is needed. It is also important to protect the privacy of the person requesting reasonable accommodation. If necessary, employers should also seek advice from government agencies or organisations which represent or provide services to persons with disabilities.

### ● Reasonable accommodation

Reasonable accommodation means necessary and appropriate modifications and adjustments which do not impose a disproportionate or undue burden, as needed in a particular case, to ensure for persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human and fundamental freedoms. It is necessary to address the individual aspect of reasonable accommodation (which is different from accessibility, affirmative action and universal design). Reasonable accommodation is the outcome of discussion or negotiation between the concerned employee and the employer.



### ● Examples of reasonable accommodation

#### ■ Changing recruitment and selection procedures

For example, providing a sign language interpreter for a deaf person, or ensuring that the medical assessor is familiar with a person's particular disability and how it relates to the job requirements.



# CHAPTER 1.



## General overview on disability and employment

### Modifying work premises for the individual needs of the person with disabilities

For example, making ramps, modifying toilets, providing flashing lights to alert people with a hearing impairment. This is to be distinguished from accessibility, which is something general, applicable to all persons.

### Changes to job design, work schedules or other work practices

For example, changing certain duties among staff, providing regular meal breaks for a person with diabetes, or providing a quiet workspace.

### Modifying workplace equipment and providing supportive technology

For example, lowering a workbench or providing an enlarged computer screen or screen-readers.

### Providing training or other assistance

For example, induction programmes for staff with a disability and co-workers, a mentor or support person for a person with an intellectual disability, inclusion of staff with a disability in all mainstream training.

### Role of Trade Unions, Employer Federations and Civil Society

Widespread consultation with trade unions,

employer federations and civil society prior to the revision or drafting of laws designed to promote the rights of persons with disabilities will enable policymakers to profit from the expertise that exists in the community.



For example, many of the obligations resulting from a law or policy to promote the employment of person with disabilities fall on employers. It is therefore of particular importance to ascertain the opinion of employers prior to adopting or amending the

law or policy. Furthermore, trade unions may be able to provide valuable insights into the problems and effective policies that already exist if they are already actively involved in the promotion of the employment of persons with disabilities. Lastly, support from the majority of the disability community is essential for the success of any eventual policy. Requests for public comment on any law regarding persons with disabilities will enrich the debate and strengthen the application of the policy after it comes into force.

### Facilitating Employment for Persons with Disabilities

Beyond legislation, implementation of the right of persons with disabilities to work can be pursued through a number of approaches, including through policy formation, specific programmes, inclusive and accessible financial services, ensuring accessibility, and awareness-raising.

### Supported Employment, the methodology

Supported Employment Services are a model for employment and recruitment to enable persons with disabilities to secure and maintain a job in the open labour market. This model provides a range of support to employers and persons with disabilities, through job coaches. There are a wide variety of ways in which supported employment may be provided including individual placements,

small work teams, mobile work crews and small business arrangements. These services have provided great social and psychological benefits for workers. Cross-national comparisons are very difficult, and each country has to choose the approach that works best.

### The range of possible supports include:

- Individual Needs Assessment
- Vocational Profiling and Career Planning
- Individual Employment Plan
- Job Sourcing and Job Matching
- On-the-Job Support and Coaching, which supports persons with disabilities in their work-places, and gives advice to employers and co-workers on the inclusion of persons with disabilities
- Advice and support to employers
- Follow-up support and mentoring for both employers and employees.



# CHAPTER 1.



## General overview on disability and employment

### Employment solutions

One strong belief is that we need more action, more operations and a stronger focus on credible, practical and scalable employment solutions for youth with disabilities. Some lessons and solutions are emerging – but not enough is being done with sufficient rigor and at scale to shift the needle for young person with disabilities seeking productive work.

Many of the world's leading institutions have each emphasized the need for countries to pay more attention to areas of education, skills development, employment, and information and communications technology for youth with disabilities. It is time now to build on those calls and promote inclusive, full and productive employment allowing persons with disabilities to fully access the job market.

We are working hard to identify solutions. Strength is needed to help to find solutions for youth employment for all youth of all abilities.



### An inclusive employer

If someone is looking to change jobs, pushing for a promotion, trying to build a career in a new sector or get back into the workplace, then an inclusive employer that offers a disability-friendly working environment is an attractive proposition.

The disability should not be a barrier when it comes to personal career and knowing about inclusive employment and what should look for is an important part of the job hunt. Thus, what should a person expect from an inclusive employer when looking for that new role?

### Right to equality in the workplace

According to disability charity, persons with disability are twice as likely to be unemployed as non-disabled people. But, despite the potential barriers, support and guidance is readily available to get – and keep – the person in work. The first place to start is to know your rights when it comes to work and employment. Most laws against discrimination can be used to enforce your right to



equality in the workforce. They cover areas from the initial job application and interview to salary, promotion and dismissal, as well as retirement and can also be applied if you become disabled while already in employment. Employers must make “reasonable adjustments” in the workplace to ensure equality to their employees and to guarantee that everyone could successfully fulfil their role.

### The benefits of creating an inclusive workplace

Research has demonstrated that getting more persons with disabilities into work, could boost the economy of a country within few years. Furthermore, the value of a diverse and inclusive workforce is so much more than financial – to both the employees and their employer. As representatives of organisations seeking to create inclusive workplaces, Inclusive Employers believe that embracing diversity enables employers to recruit the right candidates and retain their staff.

An inclusive recruitment and retention policy can not only increase the number of quality applicants, but also creates a skilled and knowledgeable workforce that reflects the diversity of the customers or community

an organisation serves. Loyalty among a workforce is also key to an organisation's success, and by recognising the diverse lifestyles, needs and priorities amongst their staff, employers can get the very best out of their employees.

*“Organisations who create an inclusive, disability-friendly work environment are able to recruit and retain the widest talent pool possible making them more representative of society.”*



# CHAPTER 1.



## General overview on disability and employment

### How to identify an inclusive employer?

While all employers have to follow national employment rules, some employers seem to go further by proactively encouraging person with disabilities to apply. As part of the job hunt, research on organisations that consider themselves as inclusive could be a good strategy. Moreover, websites and job offer which explicitly refer to inclusive environment and/or equal opportunities are also useful indicator. However, even if the organisation does not define itself as 'inclusive employer', it must follow employment laws and ensure inclusiveness for their employees.

### Workplace assistance

What additional assistance should an employer provide to support the person in new job? 'Reasonable adjustments' play a key role in removing workplace barriers for staff with both visible and non-visible disabilities, but what does that actually mean? The rules states that as an employee, she/he has the right to reasonable adjustments to the workplace or routine to enable she/he to successfully fulfil the new role. These adjustments must be included in the recruitment process to allow candidates to be

considered on an equal basis and to continue to work as team members. They should also be available if the person is already in the position when they became disabled. Many organisations have HR processes already in place to provide the adequate assistance, but may need to speak with the employer to agree what the needs are so to fulfil the requirements of her/his job.

#### Examples of reasonable adjustments that can be asked:

- **Adapted equipment**, such as chairs, keyboards or voice-activated software
- **Changes to the work environment**, such as lowering desks or modifying entrances
- **Flexible working** – including working from home, later start times to allow for travel, compressed working hours or going part-time
- **Additional training**, interpreter support, relevant training for colleagues



«Reasonable» applies to actions that are possible on an individual basis. However, everyone has the legal right to have the tools needed to do her/his job.

### How to help new employer to help you?

Supporting employers to recruit more persons with disabilities is essential to enhance diversity and inclusion in the workplace. However, there is still a lack of awareness within some organisations about disability. People do not realise that there are so many hidden disabilities or that anyone could become disabled tomorrow. Working together with the employer also means to be able to raise awareness toward these issues. Many needed adjustments are not expensive and are likely to be balanced by an increased productivity.



### Strategies for creating an inclusive workplace for persons with disabilities

Persons with disabilities are gradually joining the labour market. They bring with them diverse ways of doing things, new thoughts and new life experiences. As a result, they offer a different perspective on the workplace, which today must meet the needs of a diverse clientele. However, they are seldom in positions of responsibility.

Now more than ever, any organisation that wants to realise the full potential of its employees should take steps to create a safe and inclusive workplace where persons with disabilities are employed and can realise their full potential. There are few facts that employers, executives and managers can use:

#### Emphasize the business case for diversity and inclusion.

There are many reasons why workplaces need to change, but one of the most important is that society is changing. As a result, companies need diverse leaders who reflect the changing marketplace. Leaders must be trained to be inclusive.

# CHAPTER 1.



## General overview on disability and employment

### • **Recognise prejudice.**

No matter how well-prepared persons with disabilities are, they will not have the opportunity, unless managers allow them to get it. Companies can take measures to make this happen. For instance, within the supervisors who select the candidates could take place a selector familiar to the issue of disability and employment. For sure the candidate who participates will feel more engaged and better positioned for job opportunities.

### • **Practice inclusive leadership**

Leaders need to create a safe team environment where all employees can speak up, be heard and feel welcome. It should be established an Inclusive Team selected for their passion and commitment to inclusion. They should embrace the input of employees whose backgrounds or expertise differ from their own, and foster collaboration among diverse staff, ask questions of all members of the team, facilitate constructive arguments, give actionable feedback, and act upon the advice of various employees. In addition, leaders can make persons with disabilities feel valued and included by prizes authenticity over conformity and operating from an understanding that a range of presentation and communication styles can succeed in the workplace. To show respect to persons

with disabilities, they should be invited to follow the Inclusive Team, be involved in the strategic plans and be listened by the Group on their needs and will.

### • **Provide sponsorship programs.**

Programs that accelerate the progress of persons with disabilities who help them in their job, not just in their first weeks or months on the job, but over the long haul, should be encouraged.

### • **Hold leaders accountable.**

Make sure that inclusion is a core value of the organisation — not just something you do to “check a box”, to measure progress against the diversity and inclusion goals.

To get workplace diversity and a concrete inclusion and participation, it is needed to build up a culture where everyone feels valued and heard. As in DESC1 we gave the basis to reach such a goal, DESC2 goes directly in the daily life, evaluating and measuring the impact on health, culture and environment at least, and the families and the service providers. All in all, it is stimulating persons with disabilities at work that make the differences, they are heard and valued and contribute to the performance as well.



# CHAPTER 2. Context of the project



**Securing career paths towards inclusion in the open labour market**

A EUROPEAN GUIDE INCLUDING PROMISING PRACTICES FOR PROFESSIONALS ON SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT AND TRANSITION TO THE OPEN LABOUR MARKET FOR YOUNG PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

RÉFÉRENTIEL DE FORMATION

**Sécurisation des parcours professionnels et emploi accompagné**

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

Guide to

**European Disability Employment Week**

Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

In light of the economic crisis Europe was undergoing in 2014, it was observed that access to employment for young persons with disabilities was even more difficult. This is how the first Erasmus+ DESC<sup>11</sup> project was born. The DESC 1 project was, above all, aiming to identify models of good practices in the field of securing professional career paths. Therefore, three deliverables were produced and disseminated in the hope of giving young persons with disabilities better access to services securing career paths such as the training of staffs.

Following the Erasmus+ DESC 1 (2014-2017) project, came the Erasmus+ DESC 2<sup>12</sup> project to concretely implement the orientations, methods and recommendations of the first project. The various recommendations revolve around career security, supported employment and other inclusive methodologies and act as the operational implementation formulated in DESC 1. DESC 2 offers a methodology and a tool proposal to measure and evaluate the service and its impact on career security.

DESC 2 promotes the securing of career paths for young persons with disabilities through the mobilisation of supported employment and other inclusive strategies in order to obtain a sustainable inclusion in the ordinary workplace. In the context of this project, the sustainable inclusion approach is based on the creation and use of a close network alongside with and for the persons with disabilities.

The network includes the skills from the close environment of the person with disabilities. ‘Environment’ refer to the actors orbiting around each of us including health

services, housing services, culture and citizenship. The implementation of the DESC 2 methodology along with the person with disabilities, strongly impacts these actors, especially when it comes to a closer environment with colleagues, co-workers and families.

## ● EVALUATION AND MEASUREMENT OF THE IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

In view of the DESC 2 project’s objectives, a second deliverable has been developed: the **creation of a method for evaluating and measuring the impact of environmental action in terms of securing career paths and supported employment for the immediate environment of the person with disabilities: colleague and family**.

Securing careers and supported employment do not only revolve around persons with disabilities, employers and companies, but it is also about creating and stabilising an operational framework to deal with the problems that persons with disabilities will have in their environment, such as housing, or close actors like colleagues and families.

To complement the first deliverable produced in the context of DESC 2, this second guide has been created to support organisations wanting to develop an inclusive approach to employment. All stakeholders involved in the global process of career securement have been involved in order to constitute an effective network around persons with disabilities. Measurements and impacts of the inclusive approach have been carried out alongside families and colleagues, the close environment of the person with disabilities.

<sup>11</sup> See Annex.

<sup>12</sup> DESC 2: «Equal opportunities and securing of career paths for young persons with disabilities in Europe. Back to the ground” 2017-202

# CHAPTER 2.



## Context of the project

### PROJECT PROCESS AND ADAPTATION TO THE GROUND

After an in-depth analysis of the background of the DESC 2 project, its objectives and this second deliverable, it is now interesting to have a detailed overview of the process which has been followed to produce this guide. It should be noted that the process started from groundwork, involving feedbacks which shaped the constant improvements and adaptations made before the final proposal.

### FIRST FIELD-TEST

As explained in the first guide, after lengthy and constructive debates on the methodology application's technique, a first model of the plan was reached: carrying out a round of questionnaires to the project's specified target groups. A first step was to send the questionnaires to the targets of the first deliverable who were persons with disabilities, service providers or similar structures and employers. They were sent to each partner country, hence a total of 4 countries (Italy, Belgium, France and Spain).



Even if the questionnaires were delivered with an explanatory guide on how it should be used, this first trial received very few responses. The feedbacks gotten highlighted the length and complexity of the questionnaires.

#### From this several conclusions were drawn:

- 1. Even if the initial questionnaires were designed to obtain considerable enriching information, they have proven to be too long and complicated, in particular for persons with disabilities. Therefore, there is a need for remodel.

- 2. There is a need for country-adaptation of the questionnaires since the reality differs for each country and the implementation of supported employment or similar inclusive methodologies vary from country to country.

Despite the fact that the target groups differ from the first deliverable to the second, this feedback proved to be crucial for the next step. It should be reminded that even if the targets differ, the methodology and tool applied were the same.

### REFORMULATION AND FINAL METHODOLOGY

With this field-test and feedback in mind, the consortium of the DESC 2 project decided to generate a more explicit, simple and adaptable questionnaire for each target group.

As previously mentioned, stakeholders in the field of health, housing, culture and citizenship are perceived as the environmental actors of the life of the person with disabilities. But it was later realised that these actors are not directly implicated in support or inclusion strategies which are central to the DESC 2 project. The consortium therefore decided to focus on two closer actors which can be impacted by our methodology, that is colleagues and families. They are more relevant in the daily life of the person with disabilities. With

these target groups and the field-test feedback in mind, two set of questionnaires were created.

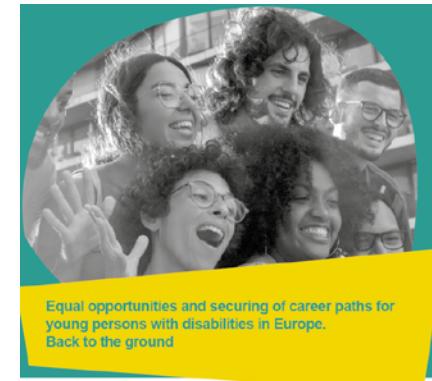
The questionnaires were shortened to no more than 20-25 questions, with more Likert scales and multiple choices questions and less open-ended questions. Since supported employment isn't implemented in the same way in all partners' countries, there has been a reaffirmation on the fact that assessment should focus on the impact of any type of support in the employment of persons with disabilities. Hence, all questionnaires would therefore be divided into the following topics, depending on the target group: general information, out-of-work matters, knowledge and awareness, quality of working life.

Therefore, within the DESC 2 project, the consortium produced a proper methodological guide based on the field-test, feedbacks, and the professional expertise of the partners. This methodology is adaptable to each country's reality and to the needs of the different stakeholders. The next chapter (Chapter 3) will give a detailed overview on the methodological approach. As for the evaluation tool, a set of reshaped questionnaires for the two targets is proposed in the last chapter of this guide. The questionnaires have been reshaped and perfected in accordance with the feedbacks received during the field-test.

# CHAPTER 2.



## Context of the project



Equal opportunities and securing of career paths for young persons with disabilities in Europe.  
Back to the ground

**IO2** Creation of a method for evaluating and measuring the impact of environmental action in terms of career security and supported employment for the person's environment: family and colleagues.



# CHAPTER 3. Impact assessment methodological guidelines



This guide will take you through 5 steps to measure the impact assessment of inclusive employment:



## Step 1: Explain the context.

Understand the overall approach to measuring the impact



## Step 2: Know your target groups.

Define and understand the categories and roles of the different respondents



## Step 3: Deploy the questionnaires.

Develop a plan that will help you to identify how to address the different target groups



**Step 4: Collect and manage your data**  
through effectively deploying data collection tools, ensuring the data you collect is secure, and selecting the right software



**Step 5: Use the data you collect to**  
effectively analyse and learn from your data so as to improve your intervention in the employment of persons with disabilities

## Step 1: Context



### • What is impact assessment?

An **impact assessment** is the analysis of the impact that a project, program or policy has on a target group.

The “**impact**” is the difference between what would happen with the action and what would happen without it<sup>13</sup>.

### • Why should we do it?

Doing an impact assessment can be quite useful, not only for the employers or the organisation, but also to improve the working conditions of employees and also to enhance the organisation's diversity.

Here are some reasons why an impact assessment can be useful:

**Fundraising:** the results of the impact assessment can be used to **attract new funders**.

→ In your case, it can also help to **develop or establish policies** regarding the employment of persons with disabilities within the organisation.

**Learning & improving:** the results of the impact assessment can be used to **improve activities**, thus enhancing the results for participants.

→ For instance, it can help to improve the management of staff when it comes to working with persons with disabilities.

**Marketing and Awareness-raising:** the results of the impact assessment can prove to be powerful data to **promote the organisation and inclusive employment practices**.

→ For instance, employing persons with disabilities and showing the social and economic benefits it has can help to promote the diversity of the organisation and make it **more visible and attractive**.

→ For instance, the collected statistics could be shared with employers, authorities or shareholders to **highlight the performance and relevance of the system**.

**Collaboration:** the results of the impact assessment can finally also be **shared with other organisations**. Then it can help to establish a **cooperation** between organisations and enable an **exchange** of best practices (on the topic of the employment of persons with disabilities – for instance on support methods).

### • Who will do it?

Several actors can use the given method to conduct an impact assessment. For examples: service providers or companies (that are involved or not in supported employment), public bodies, etc.

<sup>13</sup>Ridout, K. (2016). SIM GUIDES 7 Steps to Effective Impact Measurement.  
[https://www.undp.org/content/dam/ukraine/docs/DG/socinnov/7%20Steps%20to%20Effective%20Impact%20Measurement\\_v3\\_13.12.16%281%29.pdf](https://www.undp.org/content/dam/ukraine/docs/DG/socinnov/7%20Steps%20to%20Effective%20Impact%20Measurement_v3_13.12.16%281%29.pdf)

# CHAPTER 3.



## Impact assessment methodological guidelines

### How will it be conducted?

The means proposed by the DESC2 project is a questionnaire aimed at 2 target groups:

- Families
- Co-workers

There are different ways of measuring the impact: for instance, an evaluation that is to be **conducted twice** (once before the employment of persons with disabilities and a second time one year after the beginning of the intervention).

### Step 2: Know your target groups



The target is the public to which the message or product is directed. In this case, we find 5 different targets in two groups, on the one hand there are the **key actors** and on the other hand the **environment**.

**The environment is made up of the:**



#### Families.

Every family is different and there is no single definition of family. It can still be said that the family is the **most relevant reference and support** for the vast majority of people. Its role is essential in the process of care, upbringing and education of children, it is the most appropriate environment

for people to develop in an integral manner, learn to socialize and express and receive affection and love.

#### Co-workers.

By having a friend with a disability in the workplace, there is much more respect for differences, and each employee is encouraged to see their own virtues, contributing to a real awareness in society, consolidating an inclusive culture and building more humane organisations. They are used to working with persons with disabilities and really know what their needs and abilities are, in terms of employment.

### Step 3: Deploying the questionnaires



#### How to use the questionnaires?

You will find, in the next section, the questionnaires that you can use and adapt. Depending on your working environment, they can be deployed in a variety of ways. Keep in mind that the way you deploy your questionnaire will have an impact on the rate and quality of answers.

- **Online** questionnaire: they work best for target groups that do not have time to meet in person, such as employers.
- **Paper** questionnaire: they work best for target groups that benefit from a personal contact, such as families.

- **Semi-structured interview:** they work best for target groups that need support in answering the questionnaire, such as persons with disabilities.

This part develops some tips for the most sensitive situation: the semi-structured interview. Interviewers can apply these to any of the target groups and help to develop the scenario<sup>14</sup>.

**With these tips you will get better results, as they will help you to:**

- Work in a **person-centered way**
- Treat service users with **dignity and respect**
- Build **trusting relationships** with service users
- Communicate **effectively and openly**

This part is divided into two: on the one hand there are the practical aspects of the interview and on the other hand the behaviour of the interviewer. Each part should be adapted according to the group being addressed.

#### Practical aspects

1. Identify **any local legal and regulatory requirements**, resources and appropriate case studies to be shared.
2. Agree **how the questionnaire is going to be completed** by the facilitators.

3. Establish **how any specific participants' requirements are going to be met** e.g. sensory impairments.

4. Check **practical arrangements**: layout of room, presentation requirements, materials and refreshments. Ensure that participants' individual requirements that arise on the day are met as far as practicable.

#### Structuring the Interview Session

- Introducing the session – Greeting
- Facilitating the session
- Gathering Information
- Supplying information
- Closing the session

#### Behaviour and communication aspects

##### 1. To have an empathetic attitude

- Basic acceptance
- Good listener
- Responding with understanding
- Enables a flow of talking
- Treating people as equals
- Understandable language
- Working in collaboration
- Checking understanding
- Appropriate communication

##### 2. Assertive Communication

- Clear** – state the reason why  
**Direct** – that this is part of the overall assessment  
**Precise** – when this might be

<sup>14</sup> To develop this part, we used the output of a European project – TOPHOUSE - approved by the European Commission, and in which materials were created on 'how to prepare an interview' with leading European partners and experts.

# CHAPTER 3.



## Impact assessment methodological guidelines

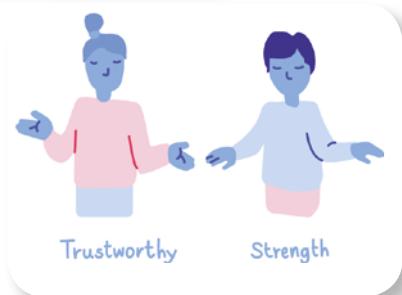
**Specific** - what will happen

**Positive** - this is an essential part of the assessment so you can make sure you have enough information about them to do a quality assessment.

### 3. Body language

Non-verbal communication has to be adapted depending on the target group.

For example, if you deal with persons with disabilities or their families you can be more informal and relaxed, always trying to understand and support them at all moments.



However, if you deal with the employer, your attitude may be more formal.

#### 4. Use gestures sparingly

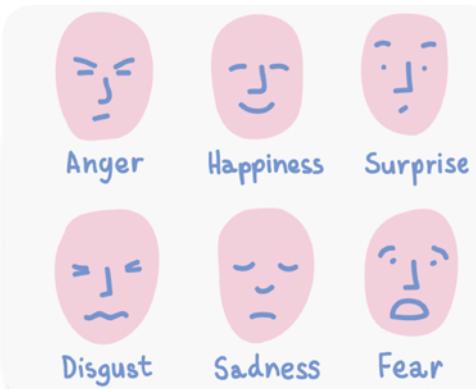
Using hand gestures can be an effective way of emphasising what you are saying, but this should not be overdone.

#### 5. Avoid physical signs of uncertainty

These include scratching the back of your head or your nose, as well as crossing your arms, which is a sign of defensiveness.

#### 6. Be intentional with your facial expressions

Practice a friendly facial expression, as it will lend warmth to everything you say. Don't forget that facial expressions are not only important when speaking, but also when listening, as they show that you are interested. Positive gestures and facial expressions form part of a successful interview technique.



#### 7. Maintain eye contact

Making eye contact is a sign of being interested and open, while a wandering gaze signifies that you are insecure or not paying attention.

#### 8. Speak at a steady pace

Speaking clearly with appropriate pauses is the best way to get your message across. If you are prone to mumble, then you should practice it beforehand.

### Step 4: Collecting and managing data

#### • Deploying data collection tools:

##### → There might be a need to train staff in responsibly collecting high quality data

For instance, training staff involved in assisting persons with intellectual disabilities in filling in the questionnaire. Indeed, persons with intellectual disabilities might need support when it comes to filling in the questionnaire.

**BE CAREFUL:** this support cannot be provided by the employer or a direct co-worker since the respondent might not feel comfortable answering some of the questions in their presence. A solution, for instance, could be sending out a person from the impact assessment team who will be neutral, involved and bound by

confidentiality.

→ Piloting tools for relevance/effectiveness

For instance, making sure that the context and the questions are clearly understood by the respondents.

You must be ready to answer their questions regarding not only the context but also the way the data will be used.

• Data quality and security: making sure the information collected will be in a safe place



You need to reassure the respondents and tell them that the data will be collected and analysed in an anonymous way: there is some personal data that might not be relevant in the analysis of the questionnaire –any information regarding the gender, the age, the specific health issue of the respondent, etc. – basically any information out of which you will not draw any useful conclusion as part of the assessment.

• Choosing software: what software will be used to gather data?

On this topic, we would recommend you to use the Excel software as it is an easily accessible tool, which might not need any special training. If needed, it is quite easy to find information and tutorials online. (for instance on YouTube but also on the support office of Excel [here](#)).<sup>15</sup>



### Step 5: Using the data



- Learning from the data: selecting tool for analysis, displaying the data and interpreting it, etc.

Here again, we recommend you use **Excel** as a tool to not only **collect the data** but also **analyse it** and **display it**. Excel offers easy and quick ways of displaying data in a concise and clear manner – with charts and graphs for instance.

Displaying the data in a clear way will be very useful as it will enable you to see what are the key results and key points shown by the analysis.

#### How to use the data collected?

It can be shown to different stakeholders depending on the results we have and what we want to show, prove or emphasise.

Here are **some examples** of the situations when data can be used and by which target groups:

#### CO-WORKERS



- When data can be used as an opportunity for learning

The data can be used to show if there is a **need in training/awareness-raising sessions** on how to collaborate with persons with disabilities.



#### FAMILIES



- When data can be used as an opportunity for learning

Families can use the data so as to learn more on **how to support their relatives** with an ID – for instance transition towards employment how to communicate with service providers, developing a communications network with employers.



# CHAPTER 4 ■ Proposal of questionnaires for each target group. An adaptable tool.

## A. Target group 1: Families

### Questionnaire :

#### General information

1. How are you related to the person with disabilities? .....

2. Does this person live at your home?

Yes  No

#### Out of work matters

Since the employment of your kin,

3. Do you consider his/her access to health services improved?

Absolutely yes  Quite absolutely  Not really  Not at all

4. Do you consider his/her access to social services improved?

Absolutely yes  Quite absolutely  Not really  Not at all

5. Do you consider his/her access to and practice of arts and culture improved?

Absolutely yes  Quite absolutely  Not really  Not at all

6. Do you consider his/her access to and practice of sporting activities improved?

Absolutely yes  Quite absolutely  Not really  Not at all

7. Do you consider his/her access to citizenship improved?

Absolutely yes  Quite absolutely  Not really  Not at all

8. Do you consider his/her social life improved?

Absolutely yes  Quite absolutely  Not really  Not at all

9. Do you consider his/her knowledge regarding their rights improved?

Absolutely yes  Quite absolutely  Not really  Not at all

10. As a family caregiver, do you feel the need to be supported in some moments?

Absolutely yes  Quite absolutely  Not really  Not at all

11. In which way did securing career paths bring changes on your family life?

.....  
.....  
.....

## B. Target group 2: Colleagues

This questionnaire is targeted to the colleagues working closely with the person with disabilities (in the same service for instance)

### Questionnaire :

#### General information

1. Are you at the/a:

same hierarchy level  higher hierarchy level  lower hierarchy level

#### Knowledge and Awareness

2. Do you think that your awareness towards disability raised since the hiring of your coworker with disabilities in your company?

absolutely yes  quite absolutely  not really  not at all

3. Does working with a person with disability impact the way you behave and interact with people in your daily life?

absolutely yes  quite absolutely  not really  not at all

4. Are you familiar with the support service providers may offer for companies hiring persons with disabilities?

very familiar  quite familiar  averagely familiar  not familiar

#### Quality of working life

5. How would you evaluate your department's workload?

light  reasonable  quite heavy  very heavy

6. Is there a good cooperation between you and your co-worker with disabilities?

absolutely yes  quite absolutely  not really  not at all

7. Are you satisfied with the communication within your team?

absolutely yes  quite absolutely  not really  not at all

8. Do you often help your colleague with disabilities in the acquisition of new skills and/

or sharing of knowledge?

absolutely yes  quite absolutely  not really  not at all

9. When needed, are you supported and helped by your co-worker with disabilities?

absolutely yes  quite absolutely  not really  not at all

10. Do you feel that there is a sense of belongingness in your team?

absolutely yes  quite absolutely  not really  not at all

11. Do you think that your colleague with disabilities contributes successfully in the team's problem-solvings?

absolutely yes  quite absolutely  not really  not at all

12. Does the management of your organisation contributes to better the health and well-being of the personnel, in particular, of colleagues with disabilities?

absolutely yes  quite absolutely  not really  not at all

13. Are you aware of the different tasks which can be expected from your colleague with disabilities?

absolutely yes  quite absolutely  not really  not at all

14. Have you noticed any unequal treatment or discrimination towards your colleague with disabilities?

absolutely yes  quite absolutely  not really  not at all

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## UNCRPD

● 7

1. States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities. States Parties shall safeguard and promote the realization of the right to work, including for those who acquire a disability during the course of employment, by taking appropriate steps, including through legislation, to, inter alia:

- a) Prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability with regard to all matters concerning all forms of employment, including conditions of recruitment, hiring and employment, continuance of employment, career advancement and safe and healthy working conditions;
- b) Protect the rights of persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others, to just and favourable conditions of work, including equal opportunities and equal remuneration for work of equal value, safe and healthy working conditions, including protection from harassment, and the redress of grievances;
- c) Ensure that persons with disabilities are able to exercise their labour and trade union rights on an equal basis with others;
- d) Enable persons with disabilities to have effective access to general technical and vocational guidance programmes, placement services and vocational and continuing training;
- e) Promote employment opportunities and career advancement for persons with disabilities in the labour market, as well as assistance in finding, obtaining, maintaining and returning to employment;
- f) Promote opportunities for self-employment, entrepreneurship, the development of cooperatives and starting one's own business;
- g) Employ persons with disabilities in the public sector;

- h) Promote the employment of persons with disabilities in the private sector through appropriate policies and measures, which may include affirmative action programmes, incentives and other measures;



- i) Ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities in the workplace;
- j) Promote the acquisition by persons with disabilities of work experience in the open labour market;
- k) Promote vocational and professional rehabilitation, job retention and return-to-work programmes for persons with disabilities.

2. States Parties shall ensure that persons with disabilities are not held in slavery or in servitude, and are protected, on an equal basis with others, from forced or compulsory labour.

8

1. States Parties recognize that all persons are equal before and under the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law.

2. States Parties shall prohibit all discrimination on the basis of disability and guarantee to persons with disabilities equal and effective legal protection against discrimination on all grounds.

3. In order to promote equality and eliminate discrimination, States Parties shall take all appropriate steps to ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided.

4. Specific measures which are necessary to accelerate or achieve de facto equality of persons with disabilities shall not be considered discrimination under the terms of the present Convention.

9

For the purposes of the present Convention:

“Communication” includes languages, display of text, Braille, tactile communication, large print, accessible multimedia as well as written, audio, plain-language, human-reader and augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, including accessible information and communication technology;

“Language” includes spoken and signed languages and other forms of non-spoken languages;

“Discrimination on the basis of disability” means any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability which has the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal basis with others, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field. It includes all forms of discrimination, including denial of reasonable accommodation;

“Reasonable accommodation” means necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms; “Universal design” means the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. “Universal design” shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed.

10

States Parties undertake to ensure and promote the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all persons with disabilities without discrimination of any kind on the basis of disability. To this end, States Parties undertake:

- a) To adopt all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention;
- b) To take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices that constitute discrimination against persons with disabilities;
- c) To take into account the protection and promotion of the human rights of persons with disabilities in all policies and programmes;
- d) To refrain from engaging in any act or practice that is inconsistent with the present Convention and to ensure that public authorities and institutions act in conformity with the present Convention;
- e) To take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability by any person, organization or private enterprise;

# THE DESC 2 PARTNERS



- f) To undertake or promote research and development of universally designed goods, services, equipment and facilities, as defined in article 2 of the present Convention, which should require the minimum possible adaptation and the least cost to meet the specific needs of a person with disabilities, to promote their availability and use, and to promote universal design in the development of standards and guidelines;
  - g) To undertake or promote research and development of, and to promote the availability and use of new technologies, including information and communications technologies, mobility aids, devices and assistive technologies, suitable for persons with disabilities, giving priority to technologies at an affordable cost;
  - h) To provide accessible information to persons with disabilities about mobility aids, devices and assistive technologies, including new technologies, as well as other forms of assistance, support services and facilities;
  - i) To promote the training of professionals and staff working with persons with disabilities in the rights recognized in the present Convention so as to better provide the assistance and services guaranteed by those rights.
2. With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, each State Party undertakes to take measures to the maximum of its available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international cooperation, with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of these rights, without prejudice to those obligations contained in the present Convention that are immediately applicable according to international law.
3. In the development and implementation of legislation and policies to implement the present Convention, and in other decision-making processes concerning issues relating to persons with disabilities, States Parties shall closely consult with and actively involve persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, through their representative organizations.
4. Nothing in the present Convention shall affect any provisions which are more conducive to the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities and which may be contained in the law of a State Party or international law in force for that State. There shall be no restriction upon or derogation from any of the human rights and fundamental freedoms recognized or existing in any State Party to the present Convention pursuant to law, conventions, regulation or custom on the pretext that the present Convention does not recognize such rights or freedoms or that it recognizes them to a lesser extent.
5. The provisions of the present Convention shall extend to all parts of federal States without any limitations or exceptions.



**The European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities** is a non-profit European umbrella organization, established in 1996, and currently representing over 17,000 social and health services for persons with disabilities. EASPD advocates effective and high-quality disability-related services in the field of education, employment and individualised support, in line with the UN CRPD principles, which could bring benefits not only to persons with disabilities, but to society as a whole.  
Web: [www.easpd.eu](http://www.easpd.eu)  
Contact: [timothy.ghilain@easpd.eu](mailto:timothy.ghilain@easpd.eu)



LADAPT is a French non-profit association created in 1929. With a hundred or so establishments and services, LADAPT has supported, trained, inserted, educated and cared for more than 19,000 people of all ages and with all types of disabilities in 2019. Strengthened by its ambitious associative project, «living together, equal and different», LADAPT works daily for a more inclusive society and greater autonomy for persons with disabilities.

Web: [www.ladapt.net](http://www.ladapt.net)  
Contact: [europe@ladapt.net](mailto:europe@ladapt.net)



**Fundación Emplea** is a non-profit foundation created in 2008 that aims at enhancing the methodology of Supported Employment and innovation in employment programs for vulnerable groups.  
Web: [www.fundacionemplea.org](http://www.fundacionemplea.org)  
Contact: [fundacion@fundacionemplea.org](mailto:fundacion@fundacionemplea.org)



**Scuola Viva** is a Centre accredited with the Regional Health Service that provides rehabilitation and training activities in semi-residential, outpatient and home care systems. Since 1975 it creates opportunities for persons with disabilities, supporting their families as well, with tailor-made projects for the development of their autonomy, personal potentialities, development of social relationships and with concrete chances of realization, whatever their existential conditions are.  
Web: [www.scuolaviva.org](http://www.scuolaviva.org)  
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