



**Securing career paths for young persons with disabilities**  
**A Focus on the European Disability Employment Week,**  
**similar actions, and a perpetuation method proposal**

**103**

**A European methodological guide  
for sustaining the European Disability  
Employment Week**



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# INTRODUCTION



The objective of this guide is to propose a perpetuation method for the European Disability Employment Week (EDEW) and for similar actions held in European Member States. The perpetuation of these actions is an essential step in the contribution of securing career paths for persons with disabilities. Despite the global employment thematic of the EDEW, it is to be noted that this event falls within a broader scope, that of a European inclusive society where persons with disabilities enjoy full and equal citizenship. Indeed, employment access and maintenance are an indicator of a successful empowerment and social inclusion, which are amongst the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy.

## Context

Visible or invisible, disability affects 1 billion people worldwide (WHO 2019 figures), and more than 80 million people in Europe. Besides the permanent constraints it induces, disability also acts as an impediment to the rights of individuals, to their daily choices and restricts full citizenship enjoyment.

Beyond the problems of mobility, urban or cultural accessibility, there are numerous obstacles for persons with disabilities which act as brakes on individual freedom and social inclusion<sup>1</sup>. The European Union stresses the precarious situation of disabled persons, 30% of whom are threatened by poverty or social exclusion.

**The employment of persons with disabilities is therefore a pivot for a more inclusive Europe.**

While the right to work is an international inalienable right, the professional situation of persons with disabilities is alarming. In the European Union, the unemployment rate for persons with disabilities is twice as high as the overall unemployment rate<sup>2</sup>. As an answer to this issue, a European consortium was formed with **LADAPT** in France as the project coordinator, in partnership with **EASPD** in Belgium, **Fundación Emplea** in Spain and **Scuola Viva Onlus** in Italy. Together, the four of us successfully led the EU Erasmus+ funded project, DESC (Disability, Equality, Security Careers) between October 2014 and October 2017. The global objective of DESC was to strengthen access to employment for young persons with disabilities by identifying and disseminating good practices, by experimenting and capitalising innovative practices and by raising awareness through the launching of the European Disability Employment Week.

With the success of this first project, the same consortium decided to pursue with a second

project, “DESC 2 – Back to the ground”, from September 2017 to August 2020. DESC 2 consists in promoting the securing of career paths for young persons with disabilities by the mobilisation of supported employment strategies.

## Securing a career path : definition and European overview

DESC 1 defined the securement of career paths for persons with disabilities as the following: **the implementation of active employment policies, lifelong apprenticeship strategies, modern systems for social protection and adequate support in periods of unemployment.**

Hence, securing career paths for young persons with disabilities implies a multi-sectoral support in the aim of a good and sustainable integration in the labour market.

As per the 2019 Joint Employment Report published by the European Commission and the European Council, only 59.7% of persons with disabilities in the EU are economically active, compared to 82.2% of those without disabilities<sup>3</sup>. As the report highlights, these figures suggest significant barriers in the labour market’s accessibility for persons with disabilities. Unlike common beliefs, being in employment is not a victory in itself, but its maintenance is. The 59.7% persons with disabilities who have been able to pull through the arduous process of finding an employment, have to undergo a long haul in the securement of career paths. There is, therefore, a crucial need to disseminate the knowledge and the practices on securing career paths on all levels.

From an international, European and to national levels, the right of employment access and its sustainability for persons with disabilities have been established. The article 27 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)<sup>4</sup> or the European Union’s strengthened policies on the issue of employment for persons with disabilities paved way to more concerned national legislations.

The European Union’s Member States all perceive employment accessibility and securement as a crucial problem to be addressed. In addition to policy measures, countries also established legislative acts which generally include work stations accommodation as an integration process in the work place, thus, aiming the securement of employment<sup>5</sup>. A general trend can be noted, that of a perspective focusing on work ability rather than work disability<sup>6</sup>. It is in this very context of securing career paths for young persons with disabilities that three deliverables have been produced for the ERASMUS+ DESC 2 project.

<sup>3</sup> Eur-lex Law Portal, Draft Joint Employment Report, [Online] <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52018DC0761&from=EN>

<sup>4</sup> 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>

<sup>5</sup> European Journal of Work and Organisational Psychology, Disability and employment- overview and highlights,

[Online] <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/1359832X.2017.1387536>

<sup>6</sup> ANED, The labour market situation of disabled persons in European countries and implementation of employment policies:

a summary of evidence from country reports and research studies (2009).

[Online] <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.469.998&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

<sup>1</sup> Vie publique, European policy for persons with disabilities, [Online] <https://www.vie-publique.fr/eclairage/22059-la-politique-europeenne-legard-des-personnes-handicapees>

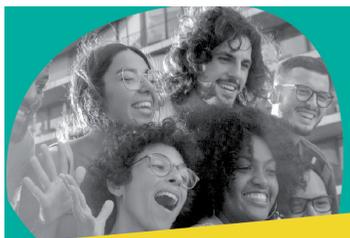
<sup>2</sup> EuCIE, Inclusive Enterprises in Europe, [Online] <https://www.eucie.org/inclusive-enterprises-europa/>

# CHAPTER 1. European Disability Employment Week (EDEW) and EDEW-like actions: an integrated European culture?



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

**IO1** Creation of a method for evaluating and supporting "career security and supported employment" for persons with disabilities, companies and service providers.



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.



Securing career paths for young persons with disabilities. A Focus on the European Disability Employment Week, similar actions, and a perpetuation method proposal

**IO3** A European methodological guide for sustaining the European Disability Employment Week



European Disability Employment Week, France



Before heading towards the proposal of a perpetuation method, it would be of utmost interest to analyse the current implementation of the European Disability Employment Week as well as similar actions outside the EDEW frame in European countries.

## A. European Disability Employment Week

### History and objective

Created in 1997 by the French association LADAPT, the Disability Employment Week (*Semaine pour l'emploi des personnes handicapées*) aims at a better integration of persons with disabilities in society, in particular, in the professional sphere. To achieve this, every year since 1997, a dedicated week is organised with several concrete actions in favour of the employment of persons with disabilities. On the one hand, there are employment initiatives to encourage interviews and interactions between jobseekers with disabilities and employers while on the other hand, there are awareness-raising initiatives to change mentalities and contribute to a more inclusive society. Even though it started on a small scale, the Disability Employment Week kept growing

with the increasing support of the different partners such as associations, service providers, employers, persons with disabilities, the media and finally, public authorities.

### From an associative initiative to an unmissable national event

For several years now, the EDEW is given the eminent patronage of the President of the French Republic, the European Parliament and the State Secretary to the Prime Minister in charge of persons with disabilities.

The French institutional partners for the EDEW are the Agefiph<sup>7</sup> and the FIPHFP<sup>8</sup>. The Agefiph manages the integration funds for persons with disabilities for the private sector while the FIPHFP, public establishment of an administrative nature,

<sup>7</sup> Agefiph: Association for the Management of the Fund for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities  
<sup>8</sup> FIPHFP: Funds for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities in the Public Service



## European Disability Employment Week (EDEW) and EDEW-like actions: an integrated European culture?

manages the integration funds for persons with disabilities in the public sector. In addition to the institutional partners, the EDEW has several national and media partnerships such as the France Randstad Group, part of the Randstad Group, a world leader in the human resources market, founded in the Netherlands in 1960<sup>9</sup>.

Another example is France TV, a leading French audio-visual group which, as a public television broadcaster, offers innovative and specific content<sup>10</sup>.

With over twenty national, regional or local partners every year, and under the high patronage of public authorities, the EDEW has become a recurrent event, on the 3rd week of November. For instance, as per the 2019 assessment led by the PRITH<sup>11</sup> in the Grand East region, 130 events were organised with 6.199 participants hence a 44% progress compared to EDEW 2018<sup>12</sup>.

Nowadays, the EDEW is embedded in the national agenda. Many companies (Groups, SMEs), public authorities, associations, NGOs organise their own actions and are proud to communicate on a large scale about it. The media also plans reports, articles or interviews for the third week of November.

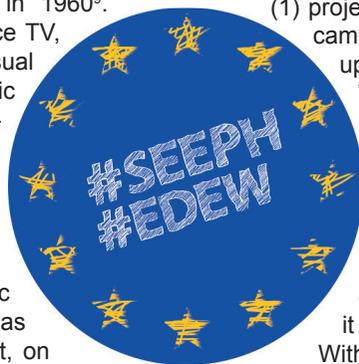
The EDEW is a dedicated moment in the year, to raise the issue of disability, professional integration, and social inclusion.

### From a national to European event?

With the advent of the ERASMUS+ DESC (1) project, a European communication campaign was held for the setting up of the Disability Employment Week on a European level. In 2015 was launched the European Disability Employment Week. The aim was to impulse it in the European project's partners' countries, so that the local, regional, national actors comprehend the idea and adapt it to their labour market.

Within the DESC (1) project, a total of 83 awareness-raising initiatives and 39 employment initiatives were organised in Belgium, Italy, Spain and France<sup>13</sup>.

For the project DESC 2, several EDEW conferences took place in different EU cities, in order to regroup various local actors to address the question of the sustainable inclusion of persons with disabilities in the professional sphere:



Exhibition in Rome, 2016

European Parliament, Brussels, 2014



### DESC 2 International Conference in Madrid

This EDEW international conference was held on the 5th December 2017 at the French Embassy in Madrid. Among the 50 participants present were persons with disabilities, Spanish associations, French and Spanish companies, international groups and French and Spanish government representatives. Some of the discussed themes were the strong inclusive employment initiatives in France and Spain, the challenges faced by employers for the inclusion of persons with disabilities and a testimony from the Paralympic champion Gema Hassen Bey.



Handycafé in Valencia, 2016

### DESC 2 International Conference in Rome

This international conference was held on the 26th November 2018 at the French embassy in Rome. Among the 60 participants were members from the Italian and French government, international groups, French and Italian companies, Italian actors linked to the professional integration of persons with disabilities and finally, but most importantly, persons with disabilities.



Jobdating, Brussels, 2015



EDEW Conference, Madrid, 2017

During the conference, there were testimonies from persons with disabilities, speakers addressing the support towards employment and its maintenance, followed by debates.

<sup>9</sup> European Disability Week, Randstad, [Online] <http://www.semaine-emploi-handicap.com/randstad>

<sup>10</sup> European Disability Week, France television, [Online] <http://www.semaine-emploi-handicap.com/france-television>

<sup>11</sup> PRITH: Regional Plans for the Professional Integration of Disabled Workers

<sup>12</sup> Agefiph, 2019 EDEW Review for Big East Region.

<sup>13</sup> [Online] [https://www.agefiph.fr/sites/default/files/medias/fichiers/2020-01/BILAN%20SEEPH%202019%20PRITH%20GRAND%20EST\\_0.pdf](https://www.agefiph.fr/sites/default/files/medias/fichiers/2020-01/BILAN%20SEEPH%202019%20PRITH%20GRAND%20EST_0.pdf)

Guide DESC 1 on EDEW Erasmus+ project DESC (1), Guide to the European Disability Employment Week,

[Online] [https://www.ladapt.net/sites/default/files/atoms/document/guideseeph\\_gb\\_2017\\_02.pdf](https://www.ladapt.net/sites/default/files/atoms/document/guideseeph_gb_2017_02.pdf)

# CHAPTER 1.



## European Disability Employment Week (EDEW) and EDEW-like actions: an integrated European culture?



EDEW Conference, Rome, 2018

**When asked how to make the EDEW financially sustainable, the work group leans towards the development of multi-annual partnerships with companies, and working with other associations and public authorities to mutualise the costs.**

### DESC 2 International Conference in Liège



EDEW Conference, Liège, 2018

Held on the 25th June 2018 in Liège, the international conference's central theme was the "Development of inclusive practices at the workplace".

Organised as part of the Walloon EDEW at the Cité Miroir, there were 120 participants present, including policy-makers

and employers. The policy-makers were from employment, inclusion and financial units.

During the conference, international and local practices were presented in the aim to discuss on how these can be contextualised and adopted in the Walloon setting. Amongst the practices discussed were supported employment

followed by a set of testimonies from employers' representatives. This EDEW event was jointly organised with the AVIQ, a Walloon public agency, which created the framework of the EDEW in Wallonia through the registration of activities of regional organisations in the aim to promote the employment of persons with disabilities.

The EDEW occurred at a regional level, but there are currently undergoing discussions of the development of the EDEW in the region of Brussels.



EDEW Conference, Liège, 2018

### EDEW regional conference in Alicante

The EDEW regional conference was held on the 21st November 2019 at the Provincial Archaeological Museum of Alicante. Among the 54 participants were service providers, local and regional authorities as well as other social entities. The central theme of the conference was "Social Innovation and European projects. Disabilities and employment in Spain: the need for developing new models apart from sheltered workshops". Several European projects, with a social innovation orientation, were presented under the International Collaboration Forum slot. During this forum, DESC 2 was presented as an innovative project to be referred to in the employment sector for persons with disabilities.



EDEW Conference, Alicante, 2019

EDEW Conference, Alicante, 2019



In addition, DESC 2 was part of the central topics in the "Networking with the expert" activity with exchanges, between a group of 10 people, on securing career paths for young persons with disabilities and its problems and challenges. A positive feedback was received on DESC 2, with for instance, the COCEMFE (Spanish confederation of persons with disabilities), present in each Spanish region, who showed a deep interest in the methodology.

### Case studies : France and Belgium

#### Case study : overview of the 2019 EDEW in France

It shall be interesting to have a look over some of the 100+ actions which took place in different regions in France for the 2019 EDEW.

#### Public Employers' Committee on Cognitive Disability and Compensation



behind this activity is to get a second formal interview.

Organised by the FIPHFP, the committee of public employers' objective is to provide key responses for better understanding and better management methods, for instance, in terms of technical aids, for persons suffering from cognitive disabilities<sup>14</sup>.

### • Drawing competition "Handicap at work"

Organised by the University Hospital Centre of Reunion Island in the Indian Ocean (department of France), the aim of this competition is to raise awareness on the hospital's disability policy but also to reaffirm the hospital's commitment to the employment of persons with disabilities. The selected drawings were exhibited at the hospital during the EDEW<sup>15</sup>.

### • Job dating

Organised by the Agefiph and the FIPHFP, in the Auvergne Rhône-Alpes region, the job dating session consisted of a series of time-limited interviews to allow recruiters and candidates to meet in order to get to know each other's expectations<sup>16</sup>. A prior match-making work is done by a service provider, to make sure both candidates and recruiters will get appropriate exchanges. The aim

### • My difference makes the difference

This departmental job forum was organised by CAP Emploi (a structure for the support of persons with disabilities in job hunting and securement of career paths), in Lorraine located in the East region of France. The job forum was solely dedicated to the recruitment of persons with disabilities. Among the participants were recruiters, training organisations and several partners aiming at the advancement of professional integration. During the forum, there were workshops dedicated to coaching, self-image and the demonstration of accommodation materials.

### • Case study : Overview of the 2019 EDEW in Wallonia

• A dialogue oriented event was held on the 22nd November 2019 by the AVIQ. Over fifty human resources officers were gathered during this event to discover the role of training centres, consulting services (specialised by the type of disability), supported employment job coaches' and vocational integration officers from the AVIQ regional

offices. It was also an opportunity to review current legislations and support in favour of the reintegration of a worker with disability in the workplace and employment maintenance.

• **Seminar** for Human resources managers, prevention services, subsidised services (...) on the reintegration of persons with disabilities after absence due to health issues<sup>17</sup>.

• **Workshop** on the accommodation concept at the work place<sup>18</sup>.

• **Information session** on the recruitment process in public employment and awareness-raising on the creation of activities at the CFISPA CaMeC19.

• **Brainstorming session** on the professional integration of persons with disabilities<sup>20</sup>.

• **Awareness-raising session** for the employees of the Yara Tertre in collaboration with the non-profit association Passe-Muraille Mons<sup>21</sup>.

• **Employment forum** and job-day<sup>22</sup>

### EDEW comparative case studies

The European Disability Employment Week seems to have been largely integrated in the

French culture, in particular when it comes to public authorities and actors concerned for the securing of career paths for persons with disabilities (employers, persons with disabilities, service providers...). The impact on a larger scale of the population is yet to be measured but is as crucial as sustaining the EDEW, because the inclusion of persons with disabilities concerns the civil society as a whole. In Belgium, more precisely, in Wallonia, the EDEW has started to be picked up by members of the public sector, such as the AVIQ. The fact that there are undergoing discussions towards its expansion to another region (Brussels) demonstrates a paving of



12 15 Ibid.  
16 Ibid.  
17 AVIQ, EDEW: activities in Wallonia,  
[Online] <https://www.aviq.be/handicap/actualites/agenda/2019/fichiers/calendrierSEEPH-2019.pdf>  
18 Ibid.

19 Ibid.  
20 Ibid.  
21 Ibid.  
22 Ibid.

# CHAPTER 1.



DuoDay, 2019

**DuoDay**

## I. EDEW-like actions in France

### ● Duo-Day

Of Irish origin, the DuoDay was imported in France in 2015 and became a national trend in 2017. Supported by a large number of associations, local authorities, business leaders, employees and the government, this initiative aims at overcoming the prejudices on disabilities<sup>23</sup> by matching one person with disabilities with a person from a receiving structure for the discovery of a professional activity through participation and exchanges<sup>24</sup>.

### ● Awards

There are several awards ceremonies organised by different actors throughout the year in order to give public recognition to employers who are working towards inclusion and to promote career securement for persons with disabilities. Several examples can be taken: Handi-Network with Women in Adapted Companies Trophies, Handitech Trophy, Handi-Responsible with the Gesat Trophies, the APAJH trophies, the KLESIA prize, the OCIRP prize, the Light of inclusive company trophy, the F Gold Handicap trophy...

# European Disability Employment Week (EDEW) and EDEW-like actions: an integrated European culture?



Bus Handi Talents

### ● The Handi-talents Bus

Since 2016, the Handi-talents bus, born during one of LADAPT's (association) hackathons, driven by an adapted company (employing 80% of persons with disabilities) travels around business areas to meet SMEs, provide them with information, advice and support to promote the employment of persons with disabilities<sup>25</sup>.

### ● Job-dating

Job dating between employers and persons with disabilities has become a common trend even outside the European Disability Employment Week.



Job Dating

### ● Inclusiv'Day Handicap Insertion Forum

The Handicap Insertion Forum claims to be the meeting place for inclusive enterprises and social innovations. It is dedicated to companies and sheltered companies and thought as a meeting point to do business in a CSR way. It is comprised of around 70 conferences and workshops relevant to the employment sector for persons with disabilities.



Salon Inclusive Day 2019

### ● Manifesto for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the economic life

In November 2019, over a hundred companies signed the Charter of operational commitments in the aim of concretising a volunteerist approach in favour of the employment of persons with disabilities<sup>26</sup>.

the path towards an EDEW expansion step. Despite these positive progress for the two mentioned European countries, it has been noticed that EDEW is not yet a common practice in most European countries. Hence, the importance of establishing and disseminating a perpetuation method.

To better evaluate the integration of the objective of the EDEW in European countries, it shall now be interesting to see if outside the EDEW formal frame, similar actions have been adopted throughout the year on a local and national level.

## B. Actions similar but outside the European Disability Employment Week

This section will give a brief overview on the recurrent annual actions similar to those held during the EDEW. The focus will be made on the four European countries of the DESC 2 project.



DuoDay, 2019

23 Press release (Secretary State to the Prime Minister), 2019 DuoDay Review [Online] <https://handicap.gouv.fr/presse/dossiers-de-presse/article/bilan-duoday-2019>

24 Ibid.

25 LADAPT, Handi-talents Bus, [Online] <https://toute-la-veille-acteurs-sante.fr/files/2016/11/Pr%C3%A9sentation-bus-handitalents.pdf>

26 Cheops National Council, Signature of the Manifesto for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the economic life, [Online] <https://uriz.fr/cjRY>

27 Forlì-Cesena Province, [Online] <http://web.provincia.fc.it/>



### II. EDEW-like actions in Italy

#### The Quality logo

In the province of Forlì-Cesena in the Emilia Romagna Region in Italy, a special logo, designed through a students' competition, is awarded to companies who have adopted good practices in terms of employment disabilities policies.

This local action, shared by the social partners, aims to encourage social responsibilities of companies, guarantee the protection of persons with disabilities, and facilitate their access to employment. The logo quality attribution is supervised and processed by the Provincial Authority. In order to obtain the quality logo, an application has to be submitted during two specific schedule sessions (March and September). Regular checks are done in the companies who have been granted this quality logo<sup>27</sup>.

#### Career Day or Diversity Day

Organised by the People Agency since 2007, Career Day for persons with disabilities was held in Milan, Turin, Verona and Rome in 2019. The aim of the Diversity Day is to facilitate the employment of persons with disabilities through the development of skills wanted for the labour market. A colla-

borative work is elaborated with the beneficiaries, companies, institutions, universities and the media to promote inclusion through the recognition of merit, emergence of talent, skills and work performance<sup>28</sup>.

#### Disability Manager: A Master of specialisation.

Even if this action is not directly related to EDEW-like actions, it is essential and very interesting to focus on this initiative of the University of Florence and which, in the long term, will impact the career securement of persons with disabilities. The first level Master in Disability Management at the University of Florence has been launched in January 2020. The course lasts one year. This training program, elaborated conjointly with the Associazione Abilitando, specialises in the acquisition of the necessary skills in the field disability in the social, educational, legal or professional sphere. Among the aims, are the facilitation of operations in different areas and the ability to dialogue with technicians from other sectors and other business and social realities, all the while focusing on the person with disabilities and the enhancement of their skills and competences that grow and change over time. The tools provided are cultural and technical knowledge of the various disabilities, as-

essment tools, ICF (International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health), IT and technological aids. In addition, the training also focuses and gives an overview of the organisational dynamics, engagement and conflict management, effective communication, networking and fundraising process within the company<sup>29</sup>.

### III. EDEW-like actions in Belgium

#### Duo-Day

Adopted in 2010 in Belgium<sup>30</sup>, the DuoDay operation usually dedicated during the month of May, regrouped the participation of 500 companies in 2019<sup>31</sup>. Other than the awareness-raising and the removal of professional integration obstacles for persons with disabilities, the DuoDay in Belgium allows employers to welcome persons with disabilities for an internship between 1 to 20 days<sup>32</sup>. The Belgium service provider, DiversiCom, actively participated in the DuoDay operation as a facilitator between job seekers with disabilities and employers. 49 internships were acquired through this service provider during the DuoDay<sup>33</sup>. For the 2018 DuoDay, 13 among the 24 trainees obtained a longer professional experience or continued/resumed a qualifying training during the year<sup>34</sup>.

### IV. EDEW-like actions in Spain

#### Employment Fairs for persons with disabilities

- **12th Job Fair for Persons with Disabilities and 5th Employment Activation Forum:** The Madrid Employment Fair was organised on the 27th and 28th March 2019 on a regional level with the presence of international companies and other entities offering job opportunities. It was organised by Madrid's Regional Government, Ministry of Economy, Employment and Finance with the collaboration of the Ministry of Social and Family Policies.
- **7th Fair of Employment and Disability in Barcelona:** Organised on the 4th and 5th June 2019 by DisJob, a leading Employment portal in Recruitment and Selection of Talent with persons with disabilities, this fair aims at an increase of persons with disabilities in any selection process in order to normalise their inclusion in companies. Among the 2500 participants were international companies and high profiles from the business and political sphere.
- **The Valencia Employment Fair** was organised on the 7th November 2019 by the Chamber of Commerce of Valencia, with the support of the Regional Government of Valencia and the Spanish Government. This

28 Diversity Day Italy, [Online] <http://diversityday.it/chi-siamo/>

29 Disabilcom, Disability Manager: A Master of specialisation

[Online] <https://www.disabili.com/lavoro/articoli-lavoro/disability-manager-un-master-di-specializzazione>

30 Morbihan State Services, DuoDay May 2019 [Online] <http://www.morbihan.gouv.fr/Actualites/Actus/DuoDay-le-16-mai-2019-une-personne-en-situation-de-handicap-partage-la-journee-d-un-professionnel>

31 Brussels Commerce Chamber and Business Union, DuoDay May 2019.

[Online] <https://www.becci.be/2019/06/28/duoday-2019-integration-professionnelle-de-personnes-en-situation-de-handicap-avance%E2%80%89>

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid.



fair proposed several activities, like interviews, to those seeking employment, including persons with disabilities.

### ● Congress

• **The 3rd National Congress on Entrepreneurship, Employment and Disability “Advancing to a full inclusion”** was held at the Miguel Hernández University of Elche, Alicante, on April 4th and 5th, 2019. The aim is to constitute a discussion forum on employment and entrepreneurship between persons with disabilities and public administrations, companies and associations. The opening conference addressed the European employment situation and prospects of persons with disabilities and the challenges faced by Spain for labour inclusion. Among the participants were representatives of the Social Welfare and Employment of the Autonomous Communities departments, Human Resources, universities’ employment and disability care services, associations, persons with disabilities etc.

• **The 5th Congress on qualified employment, self-employment and entrepreneurship of persons with disabilities** was held on the 14th and 15th March 2019 in Madrid by the prestigious Rey Juan Carlos University. The objective is to offer a discussion forum between public administrations, disability associations, business communities and entrepreneurs with disabilities in order to issue proposals for improvement and promotion of qualified employment and

entrepreneurship policies for persons with disabilities. Some examples of the discussions which took place are the analysis of current regulations, positive as well as obstructive factors in order to issue proposals in favour of the employment and self-employment of persons with disabilities. Proposals were also issued on social entrepreneurship, public policies etc.

### ● C. EDEW and EDEW-like actions: towards an integrated European culture?

From a global European perspective, it can be stated that a strong awareness-raising campaign on the social inclusion of persons with disabilities is very present on the European level. To attest this, we have on the one hand, the numerous EDEW and EDEW-like actions listed beforehand. On the other hand, EU funded projects in favour of persons with disabilities can be found in several countries. For instance, in Bulgaria<sup>35</sup>, the Equal Opportunities operation, with a €4 million budget, aims at awareness-raising and the facilitation of employment access for vulnerable people<sup>36</sup>

Even if the EDEW event as such is not yet integrated in the European culture, the different European operations through calls for proposals, civil society’s initiatives (EDEW-like actions) and the progressive change of

national legislations in favour of persons with disabilities are preparing the ground for the introduction and perpetuation of the EDEW as an integrated part of national events in European countries.

### Importance of a perpetuation method for EDEW

In the European Union, the implementation of the UNCRPD, is also done through a European Disability Strategy for the empowerment of persons with disabilities at a multi-sectoral level, including employment. The 2010-2020 European disability strategy is drawing to a close and its evaluation is currently under process<sup>37</sup>.

Despite encouraging improvements, the route towards a fully inclusive society is yet to be achieved. The European Disability Employment Week is an example of a tool contributing concretely to the realisation of the EU’s targets in terms of sustainable employment for persons with disabilities.

As described throughout the guide, the EDEW’s primary objective is the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the professional sphere, hence, representing a step towards a more inclusive society. A dedicated week with awareness-raising and recruitment actions is organised with the collaboration of different actors of the civil society. **But the EDEW is even more important because finally, it is not just a matter of an annual reunion, but is also a matter of disseminating and encouraging the seizing of EDEW actions throughout the year, so that the annual reunion also acts as an evaluation of what has been achieved in the past year and what should be done in the months to come.**

ating and encouraging the seizing of EDEW actions throughout the year, so that the annual reunion also acts as an evaluation of what has been achieved in the past year and what should be done in the months to come.

The implementation of the EDEW in the described concept, will in the long run, demystify disabilities, change recruiters and colleagues’ perspectives on the matter, and finally normalise the professional inclusion of persons with disabilities. A solid professional integration of a person with disabilities is a battle won in the struggle towards empowerment and social inclusion.

It is therefore of primary importance for European countries to seize this EDEW tool for its implementation and sustainability. The next part of this guide offers a method proposal for the implementation and perpetuation of the EDEW.



<sup>35</sup> ANED, Country report Living independently and being included in the community- Bulgaria, [Online] <https://www.disability-europe.net/country/bulgaria>

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> European Commission, European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, [Online] <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1484&langId=en>



## A. Methodology

A step by step methodology has been elaborated for the implementation and perpetuation of the EDEW in European countries. This methodology has been established after an in-depth analysis of the EDEW in France, currently, the most advanced European country in this field. The methodology has also been analysed and validated by the actors who are directly concerned with the organisation of the EDEW (a list has been established in the Contributions part of the guide). Finally, the feedback collected from our European partners, who organised the EDEW in their countries, also contributed in shaping the methodology proposed. The analysis has been based on the different steps, the good practices and also the different challenges observed.

### STEP 1 : Initiate the European Disability Employment Week

Introducing the EDEW in the aim of sustaining this event needs to be initiated by an actor of the civil society, and preferably, one with a particular interest in employment and disabilities. In a country where the EDEW has never been introduced, the profile of the initiator will greatly impact the following step, that is the network expansion process. If the initiator is related to the question of employ

ment and disabilities, the latter will have a legitimate position when approaching other actors to request participation and expansion.

The initiator has the important mission of organising the very first EDEW event and to set sail with as much actors as possible. As stated earlier in the guide (see page 14), in some countries, the ground is already prepared for the introduction of the EDEW (awareness-raising actions, favourable legislations adopted for employment of persons with disabilities...). In this case, the initiator may use the different factors adopted to support and further legitimate his initiative. For countries who are still making their way towards the demystification of disabilities and are trying to break the barriers and tags which limit the access to the employment of persons with disabilities, the initiator's role is even more determinant and necessary. In this case, the initiator needs to use the

EDEW even more as an awareness-raising campaign targeted at the society as a whole.

The initiator has to be motivated, determined and prepared to face the different obstacles when introducing the EDEW. If the EDEW is a newly introduced concept, resistance will always be part of the game, for instance, in the form of closed mind-sets and scepticism of some actors. The very first aim of the initiator is to be able to organise and launch the first event. Then, **its results should be put forward**. Figures have a strong impact and are crucial during the first years when EDEW is being established. This is further developed in the Communication section.

The different actions to be organised in the EDEW can be inspired from countries which implement the EDEW annually. **Some concrete existing examples of these actions can be found in the first part of the guide as well as the DESC 1 deliverable "European Disability Employment Week"**. Emphasis has been put on the importance of leading and launching the very first event. Achieving to establish a first EDEW with a large impact cannot be done alone. Therefore, the second and crucial step to be taken by the initiator is the network expansion step.

### STEP 2 : Network Expansion

This step will be decisive in the sustainability of the EDEW. It is very important for the initiator not to monopolise the organisation of the event for this may impact its viability. The more actors involved in establishing the EDEW, the more guarantee we have for this event's perpetuation. The initiator should seek the emergence of a common responsibility for the EDEW's continuity. A strategy needs to be conceived for the solicitation of other actors: most of the targeted actors should be of significant added value. Relevant actors involved in the employment and disabilities sectors are to be addressed.





Examples of such types of actors are as follow:

#### a) Public bodies and structures

It is imperative that public bodies, directly concerned with the employment and disabilities' causes, be integrated in the EDEW organisation crew. For instance, a governmental employment agency will have a keen interest on an employment event like the EDEW, because it will serve their objectives. One example which can be taken is that of a specialised public service which provides the necessary support to recruiters as well as persons with disabilities for orientation and professional integration. This type of public service exists, for instance, in France with the 'CAP Emploi' or in Belgium with the AVIQ. Since the EDEW, in many cases, is still unknown, organisations may be hesitant to engage themselves through an official (and financial) partnership. Other types of involvement can be obtained as a first start, for instance, a rent-free location or the presence of an elect.

Actors working on managing dedicated funds for persons with disabilities, whether private or public, are of strategic interest for network expansion, because of their direct links between recruiters and disabled workers. They are experts in the obstacles to be apprehended for persons with disabilities who are either looking for employment or seeking to maintain current work positions. In addition, with their key knowledge and relations with the public / private sector, they

are legitimate to express the queries, needs and worries of recruiting companies.

Likewise, there are also private companies, working in Human Resources services for temporary and permanent jobs, that have the same role of integrating disabled workers in the labour market.

#### b) Recruiters

Recruiters are a key factor in the planning of the EDEW. The EDEW event needs to attract as many recruiters as possible, in order to raise their awareness on the different possibilities that exist to support them for the integration of persons with disabilities in their companies: to better the comprehension of recruiters on this complex matter, financial help for recruitment, to adapt the working place if needed, support for management, such as training offers, assistance for the different administrative procedures.

When approaching recruiters for the EDEW, the initiator must intent to establish a partnership with them because their engagement is of absolute necessity and is a warranty for the EDEW's success. The partnership must benefit both parties: the initiator will benefit from the network, financials, influence of the recruiter; the recruiter will benefit from the expertise and knowledge of the initiator.

Even if the primary objective of the EDEW is to raise awareness as much as possible, the

pragmatic dimension of meetings potentially leading to hiring, is also very important to acquire a legitimacy and convince disbelievers that the employment of persons with disabilities is possible.

#### c) Associations

Associations specialised in the support of persons with disabilities are of utmost importance because firstly, they are activists and volunteers in the said sector and their motivation to form part of an event like the EDEW will be a vital tool in the achievement of their objectives. Secondly, associations are in direct contact with one of the targets of the EDEW, that is persons with disabilities, and the initiator will need them to mobilise and motivate a maximum of them.

In addition, the participation of associations is an added value because not only do they have the function of professional integration of persons with disabilities, but they also work for their social inclusion, which is one of EDEW's global objective.

It shall also be interesting to extend the network and associative partnerships beyond the disability sector. Indeed, the benefits and initiatives developed for workers with disabilities can benefit a large number of persons who suffer from long-term unemployment or who are vulnerable. This would help broaden the inclusive dimension of the approach, and avoid too great a stigmatisation of persons with disabilities.

#### d) Politics

Politics are one of the most important support to implement EDEW in a sustainable way. They have the capacity to gather the above-mentioned actors in order to work on a common direction at:

##### • A national level

It is a must for the initiator to involve, in the EDEW annual events, political personalities linked to disabilities and employment. When the public power will finally consider the EDEW as a vital annual event not to be missed, the path towards sustaining the EDEW would be already half achieved.

The fact that public authorities attend this event and communicate on it will not only raise awareness on the society as a whole, but will also attract more participants. A second step towards sustainability when it comes to public authorities is to ensure the transmission of the EDEW culture for every change of government until the event becomes recurrent enough for public powers to automatically involve themselves in its organisation. Therefore, naturally taking the lead when it comes to organise this event year after year. This will create a sense of responsibility and a will to perpetrate this event which might end up, in the long term, into a multiannual political vision.

It is, therefore, very essential to involve politics in the organisation and participation of the EDEW in order to secure the career



### STEP 3 : Communication

To set up an efficient communication plan, organisers first have to identify the targets groups to be reached and involved. Depending on the organiser's communication culture and habits, this work can either be done internally, or by using a provider. The financial aspect will also have to be taken into account.

**The media** are on the very top of the list because they will relay the organiser's information to a larger audience. It is crucial to develop and maintain good media relations. To do so, the organisers can mandate a specialised agency to write press releases, press files and organise media briefing or dedicated events.

The organising structure must be clearly identified, as expert in the field of professional integration and/or service provider for persons with disabilities. At least one spokesperson must be identified and prepared to answer to journalists. This person will have to schedule their agenda accordingly, in order to make themselves available for interviews which are usually requested on the same or the very next day.

**The organisers** will have to be represented in both general and specialised media (media in the fields of: disability, employment / recruitment, HR, economy, social...).

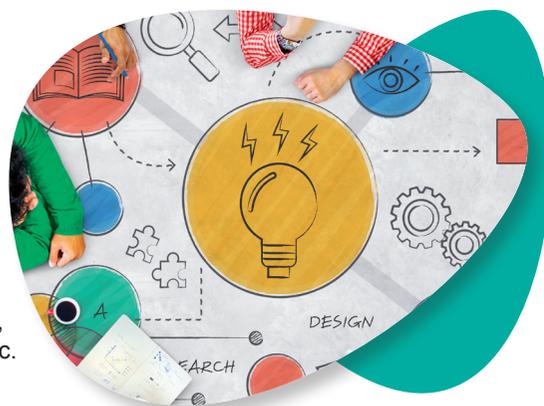
**The general public** is another important group. The EDEW intends to make people change their perceptions on persons with disabilities. This target can be reached through, as mentioned before, the general media, but also through the use of social media. Facebook is, for example, a great tool to get in touch with people directly. Twitter is used a lot by journalists, politics, and in a professional context. On LinkedIn, the target will also be workers, professionals, especially human resources employees and recruiters. Furthermore, the platform offers the opportunity to create or be part of groups of interest, hence, giving the opportunity to reach a precise targeted audience.

**Companies** are indispensable in launching and promoting the EDEW and must be embarked in the project. To do so, the organisers should insist on the communication and image benefits which a partnership based on the EDEW can represent for the

company, but also on the different aids, such as: support of the organising structure (social provider, association...) during the hiring process of a person with disabilities, awareness-raising and training courses for the employees (colleagues, managers of a disabled worker, etc.), help on how to apply for some public grant in order to accommodate the workplace...

Companies with an international and/or European scope should be even more solici-





### Step 4 : Innovation

A part of the EDEW success consists in creating and enhancing innovative actions several of which have been listed in part I and also in the DESC 1 deliverable “European Disability Employment Week”. Indeed, in order to mobilise and retain a high number of participants, the organisers have to live up to the expectations of persons with disabilities, recruiters etc. One of the ways to do so, is to work with a maximum of organisers working directly in the field (such as integration structures, associations, trade unions, companies, chambers of commerce...).

To perpetuate the EDEW, the event cannot be repetitive in terms of content or it will become obsolete over the years. Hence, the need for the creation of new actions and technologies. As mentioned before, the

ted in order to initiate actions in countries where they are established. The exchanges can be in several forms: financial, sponsors, supply of rooms, equipment, manpower, success stories etc. All forms of partnerships are welcomed.

**Politics and elected officials** are a specific target group. They have an impact on all the other ones as their agenda and area of interest are scrutinised. Their involvement in the EDEW and their presence is, therefore, very important, and will impact on the success and the sustainability of the event. To reach them, it is necessary to be fully aware of the governmental and legislative evolutions regarding employment and disabilities in order for the organisers to be able to adjust the scope of a dedicated event, or an annual thematic. For instance, if a government is working on a law dedicated to the status of persons with autism in employment, it would be appropriate to launch a study on the professional integration of persons with autism in the open labour market, and to communicate on its results during the EDEW.

EDEW must also adapt its content in accordance to the current national events/situations, like legislative evolutions.

One example of the way to proceed is to gather around the table all concerned actors (such as persons with disability, recruiters, politics, representative associations, public bodies & structures...) in order to discuss and build together innovative actions which satisfy each one of them. This will ensure the success and the durability of the EDEW.



### Step 5 : Lobbying

When the initiator goes through the organisation of the EDEW, a whole process of lobbying awaits him at every step described above. Lobbying can be defined as “*an activity which consists in carrying out interventions which should influence directly or indirectly any process of elaboration, application or interpretation of legislative measures, standards, rules and, more generally, any action or decision taken by the leading public authorities*”<sup>38</sup>.

The importance of lobbying, for the implementation and perpetuation of the EDEW, is of key interest. The initiator and the orga-

nising crew have to approach each targeted actor with a well-defined strategy (the reasons and advantages for joining the EDEW, what will they benefit from, list of those who have already rallied for the event, the impacts expected, the media coverage...).





The organiser must also base his arguments on frameworks texts such as the European strategy, the Amsterdam Treaty (article 13), the UNCRPD etc, in order to further legitimate the EDEW cause and to explain the necessity of perpetuating this event. **When lobbying various actors, the aim is not only to rally them to the EDEW, but to also have them as promoters for further network expansion.**



### Step 6 : Perpetuation evaluation

After each EDEW event, it is a must to produce an analysis on the following points in order to establish a **progress and impact report** of the event from one year to another:

- Eminent patronage: personalities involved,
- European, national and local partners (companies, associations, public bodies, medias...),
- Nature and number of actions, evolution of the organised actions, return on the innovative actions integrated,
- Total value of the communication plan (web, TV, radio, print media, pamphlets...), campaign visibility,
- Specific themes addressed,
- Reports on the contents and exchanges on the different conferences held,
- Feedback from companies, service providers, persons with disabilities involved, on the impact of the EDEW event.

For instance, the numbers of: employment actions, companies involved, interviews, persons with disabilities employed (since when and with which type of contract), awareness raising actions, speakers involved, audience (profile).

Get the companies' return on the difficulties faced or accomplished integration. The different positive practices that is to be continued, and the different factors to be reconsidered for the next edition.

To sustain the EDEW, it is necessary to elaborate a common framework (actions, campaigns etc. i.e the DESC 1 "Guide to EDEW") which can be modifiable and adopted by countries with different context situations.

It should be reminded that EDEW actions in France were first carried out by an association. Its endeavour through the years led to a national trend, with actors from different levels contributing to the EDEW's continuity. Hence, the perpetuation of the EDEW, is that of an annual high point where issues of employment access and maintenance are addressed through a context analysis of the progress made throughout the year.

It should therefore be concluded that before making the EDEW a sustainable European event, time is needed for the EDEW to take root as an annual event. In addition, the organisers must remain vigilant at every step of the sustainable process described previously in order to make the EDEW event a sustainable national then a European trend.

### ● B. Observation of the EDEW implementation in several EU countries: Challenges and Tips

#### Partners' feedback

It shall be interesting to have an overview of the different challenges faced by the European partners when implementing the EDEW. Some tips have been given to ensure a smooth EDEW implementation.

#### Types of organisation

Some challenges faced by the leading organiser may differ in terms of the organisation's size, capacity and the impact's scale. Smaller organisations, like our partner in Italy, may have difficulties in reaching a larger population. This should be more perceived

as a strength rather than a weakness since the organisation will be able to have a stronger impact and an in-depth knowledge of the local or regional employment access conundrums for persons with disabilities. On the other hand, bigger organisations have to face another challenge: that of not monopolising the event (for, as explained before, it may impact its sustainability) and involving as much actors as possible even if they are financially able to implement the EDEW alone.





**Tips:** When of local or regional scope, the organiser should aim at reaching eminent local and regional actors and integrating them in the EDEW process. Those very same actors may act like a bridge towards the EDEW's extension to a national level.

### Involvement of public authorities

Emphasis was put upon the need to involve public authorities in the organisation of the EDEW to assure its sustainability. When the EDEW was organised by our partner in Spain, it has been observed that even if public authorities were attracted and keen to be involved in this European initiative, it was very difficult to obtain long-term commitments from them.

**Tips:** in order to reach and build gradual commitments from public institutions, it is recommended, especially for organisation with a low influence impact, to lobby with larger movements or organisations which are not only well-known to public authorities but who can have a say in matters of disability and employment. Our Spanish partner gave the example of the ONCE movement, through which, local and regional government connections can be made. Another example to be taken is that of the French case where partnerships have been established with Pôle Emploi & Cap Emploi, which also act as solid bridges to mobilise all the stakeholders.

### Administrative structures

As per our Belgian partner's feedback, the federal (or the regional) structure in some countries may prove complicated for the organiser to launch the EDEW at a national level since there are enormous differences in terms of practices and mind-sets in the different regions.

**Tips:** It would be interesting for the organisation to call upon a meeting or conference



targeting different actors from the other regions who might be potential organisers. The first step would be to sensitise them on the EDEW initiative, share the implementation methodology and cooperate with them in designing their regions' first EDEW's objectives and actions. If this initiative is a success, the EDEW will be organised in several regions, for a specific week of the year, and this will gradually have a major media impact and be hopefully recognised at a national level then.

### Financial sustainability

As the Spanish and Belgian partners' underlined, public funding is more likely to achieve financial sustainability.

This would be an ideal method. However, there are also other means to reach financial sustainability, and the French case can be taken where the EDEW implementation and its financial sustainability are achieved through private partnerships. An even better strategy would be having both public and private funding to secure even further the

financial sustainability of the EDEW.

**Tips:** To ensure financial sustainability, a multi-annual partnership can be sought. This will not only ensure the continuity of the EDEW for the editions to come but will also give the organisers and the partners a thorough visibility on the contents, themes and objectives of the next EDEWs.

Furthermore, a dedicated team must be available throughout the year to identify additional partners, define the partnership structure, to make sure that both parties respect their contractual obligations and also to follow-up with other existing partnerships.

### Concluding statement

Launching the EDEW, with the aim of sustaining the event over the years, requires a methodological strategy involving a maximum of actors of the civil society. As highlighted before, the EDEW needs to become an unmissable annual event and its organisation must be of collective responsibility. The EDEW, even if organised during a specific week of the year, has long-term effects throughout the year, hence contributing concretely in a more inclusive society.



After the overview given on concrete EDEW actions and a methodology for the launch and perpetuation of the EDEW, it shall be interesting to have a look on what is being done, besides the EDEW, in some European countries to secure the career paths of persons with disabilities. This situational analysis is also encouraged when preparing to launch an EDEW in order to target relevant actions during the event. This analysis has been based on legislations, surveys and literary tools and aims to give a glimpse of the career securement context and progress in some EU countries.

## A. A brief analysis of the European context for the securing of career paths for persons with disabilities

As mentioned in the guide, securing career paths for young persons with disabilities implies a multi-sectoral initiative and support on the following: active employment policies implementation, lifelong apprenticeship strategies, modern systems of social protection,

adequate support in periods of unemployment etc.

### 1. Securing career paths for persons with disabilities: the quota obligation system and reasonable accommodation approach

The quota system approach is the obligation for companies to hire a minimum percentage of persons with disabilities. Several countries like Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia Spain and Poland implemented the quota system<sup>39</sup>.

The obligation for reasonable accommodation, under the EU's Employment Equality Directive<sup>40</sup>, aims at redefining the place of persons with disabilities in the labour market, promoting professional integration<sup>41</sup> and career paths securement. This obligation is also stated in Article 5 of the UNCRPD to which all EU Member States are parties. The said article describes reasonable accommo-

dation as practical adjustments, such as technical solutions, awareness raising or training measures, in order to allow the person with disabilities to exercise employment "on an equal basis". However, the adjustments must not be of disproportionate burden to the organisation<sup>42</sup>.

Hence, both the quota system and the reasonable accommodation obligation have been established to better the chances of integration and career maintenance of a person with disabilities. A focus will be made on two European countries to analyse and evaluate the impacts of these two measures on the securing of career paths.

### Case studies France and Spain

#### Case study 1. France

#### Legislative innovation

The French Decree n° 2006-501, which is currently undergoing amendments, offers the possibility for persons with disabilities to

keep the materials delivered for the adaptation of their work in stations in the public service. The survey led by Aude Lejeune in "Working with a handicap"<sup>43</sup>, proved that the lack of readjustments of work stations is a common cause for employee's work desertion. The decree's amendment is an important key to support the securing of career paths as the person with disabilities will be already equipped for a next contract. There is, however, one stain on this innovative amendment. Its limitation to the public service crosses out this solution to numerous persons with disabilities in the private sector.

### Quota and reasonable accommodation in France

In France, employers from public or private sectors with more than 20 employees have the obligation to respect a 6% disabled quota system. Its non-respect is sanctioned with a financial annual contribution to the Agefiph<sup>44</sup> or the FIPHFP<sup>45</sup>, the two bodies which manage the funds for professional integration of persons with disabilities.

39 ANED, The Labour market situation of disabled persons in European countries and implementation of employment policies: a summary of evidence from country reports and research studies (2009).

[Online] <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.469.998&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

40 European Commission, Reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities,

[Online] <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1473>

41 Lejeune Aude et al., Handicap and reasonable accommodation at work!, 2017

[Online] [http://www.gip-recherche-justice.fr/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Lejeune-al\\_note-de-synthe%CC%80se.pdf](http://www.gip-recherche-justice.fr/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Lejeune-al_note-de-synthe%CC%80se.pdf)

42 European Commission, Reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities,

[Online] <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1473>

43 Aude, Lejeune, Working with a handicap. Ideal of inclusion and inequality confronted to law, Savaïr/Agir, vol. 47, no. 1, 2019,

[Online] <https://doi.org/10.3917/sava.047.0053>

44 Agefiph: Association for the Management of the Fund for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities

45 FIPHFP: Funds for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities in the Public Service



The fact that a penalty system is established for employers not respecting the quota system has both cons and pros. On the one hand, it might indeed encourage employment, but on the other hand, this system also represents a risk to the securement of employment scheme. Some employers might find it less burdening paying a fine rather than investing in the change of culture of the company, in awareness-raising, and in employing a person with disabilities along with all the procedures and accommodations it may require. Furthermore, in France, the Labour law of August 2016 recognises inaptitude as a legitimate cause for contract termination. From a legal viewpoint, the employer must first try to reclassify the position of the employee and resort to dismissal as a last option only, but in practice, work position reclassification is rare and based on Aude Lejeune's 2019 survey, 95% of declarations of inaptitude by employers for workers with disabilities lead to dismissals<sup>46</sup>.

Despite the well-intentioned legislations put

into place, loopholes can be detected and put at risk the securing of employment for persons with disabilities. As Anne Revillard highlights in "Handicap and Employment", disability policies, just like gender equality policies, cannot work effectively on a sectoral basis if the objective set is inclusion and equality. Employment policies for persons with disabilities are co-related and co-dependent to other disability policies. For instance, as long as the education system is not sufficiently inclusive, as long as public space and transport remain largely inaccessible, the effectiveness of the employment policies will only be limited<sup>47</sup>.

### Case Study 2 : Spain

#### Quota and reasonable accommodation in Spain

In Spain, companies with an average of 50 or more employees (since at least a year) are in the obligation to follow the obligation of employing 2% of workers with disabilities

as per the General Law on Rights of Persons with Disabilities and their Social Integration<sup>48</sup>. Unlike French law, Spanish law precise the degree of the handicap for this quota, which must be equal to or higher than 33%.

There are exceptions to the rule which partially or totally exempt employers from this quota obligation. Requests for exemptions, which are valid for three years, are submitted to the Spanish Public State Employment Service under two circumstances. Firstly, when no suitable or interested workers with disabilities were found for the job offer. Secondly, when productive, organisation, technical or economic factors act as obstacles for the employment of persons with disabilities<sup>49</sup>. If the employer wants to renew his exemption status after the three years granted, the latter will have to adopt at least one of the 4 following measures<sup>50</sup>:

- "Holding a commercial or civil contract with a special employment centre, or a self-employed person with disabilities, to supply raw

materials, machinery, equipment or other goods necessary for the normal development of the activity of the company that opts for this option;

- Holding a commercial or civil contract with a special employment centre, or a self-employed person with disabilities, for the provision of external services and accessories to normal activities of the company;

- The realisation of donations and sponsorship activities, always monetary, for the development of employment activities and job creation for persons with disabilities, where the beneficiary of such collaborative actions is a foundation or an association of public utility whose purpose is, among others, vocational training, job placement or job creation for persons with disabilities that allows job placement for those persons and finally their integration into the labour market;

- The establishment of a work enclave, af-

<sup>46</sup> Aude, Lejeune, Working with a handicap. Ideal of inclusion and inequality confronted to law, Savoir/Agir, vol. 47, no. 1, 2019, [Online] <https://doi.org/10.3917/sava.047.0053>

<sup>47</sup> Anne, Revillard. Handicap et travail. Presses de Sciences Po, 2019, [Online] <https://www.cairn.info/handicap-et-travail--9782724624458.htm>

<sup>48</sup> Official Journal of the State, Royal Legislative Decree 1/2013, of 29 November, approving the consolidated text of the General Act on the Rights and Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities [Online] <https://www.boe.es/eli/es/rdlg/2013/11/29/1>

<sup>49</sup> European Equality Law Network, Spain General Law on rights of persons with disabilities and their social inclusion [Online] <https://www.equalitylaw.eu/component/edocman/es-19-disability-law>

<sup>50</sup> Mariscal & Abogados Asociados, Hiring disabled workers in mandatory in Spain [Online] <https://www.mariscal-abogados.com/hiring-disabled-workers-is-mandatory-in-spain/>  
51 Ibid.



ter signing the corresponding contract with a special employment centre, in accordance with the provisions of Royal Decree 290/2004 (20 February 2004), which regulates work enclaves as a measure to promote employment of persons with disabilities<sup>51</sup>.

As for reasonable accommodation in Spain, employers have to take appropriate adaptation measures for the worker with disabilities unless the measures taken could be a disproportionate burden on the employer.

The UN periodic report published in May 2019<sup>52</sup> underlines the problem of accessibility in Spain. As per the report, only 0.6% of buildings in the public sector are accessible and measures taken for universal accessibility, for instance in private companies, are insufficient and ineffective<sup>53</sup>. However, despite an unemployment rate of 26% for persons with disabilities (twice as high as the national average), the public employment service's data in 2019 highlights an increase of 13% in the employment of persons with disabilities<sup>54</sup>.

In Spain, the exemption system can have

a heavy impact on the lack of securing of career paths for persons with disabilities. However, a positive methodical approach over a long run can be noted by compelling employers to adopt at least one method in favour of securing career paths of persons with disabilities at each exemption renewal demand. Nevertheless, it is unfortunate that this practice is not imposed from the very first request of exemption (and not for a renewal) and secondly that the period of exemption is as long as three years. A lesser period would have compelled employers to adopt the good practices in favour of employment for persons with disabilities at a quicker rate.

### Challenges of the quota and reasonable accommodation approach

Two European cases were taken as examples in order to evaluate the possible impact of the quota and reasonable accommodation obligations on the securement of career paths for persons with disabilities. There are several difficulties to be taken into account for this case study analysis. For both countries, surveys and scientific data were very limited and not based on a representa-

tive target group sample. Even if the quota and reasonable approach is integrated in the legislative systems of both countries, its impact cannot be measured for the mentioned reason but also because Spain adopted a methodical approach which requires a few years for proper impact evaluation. The risks mentioned, about employers preferring to pay a fine instead of disrupting the company's habits, cannot be evaluated either. However, Aude Lejeune's survey, on workers with disabilities dropping out of the professional sphere because of the lack of employers' interest and motivation for accommodation, proves that the well intentioned legislations need to be monitored and reinforced. Furthermore, there is a high probability that employers stop making further efforts once the percentage of the quota is attained, thus impacting employment of persons with disabilities.

### 2. Securing career paths for persons with disabilities: the financial support approach

Besides the legislative arsenal on both the European level and the EU Member States,

most countries have adopted the financial support approach for the securing of career paths for persons with disabilities.

On the European level, the political discourse is accompanied by European funding programmes to incite Member States, be it local or national actors, to seize the opportunity to better policies, good practices and instate awareness-raising on the social inclusion of persons with disabilities, particularly for employment access and employment maintenance.

A focus on two European countries on the matter will give an overview of the integration of this approach.

### Case studies France and Belgium

#### Case study 1 : France

In France, persons with disabilities have to go through a requisite step which opens access to the numerous financial aids established in their regards. It is the request for official status as "Recognition as worker with disabilities status". This request, a twelve pages' document, passes through

<sup>52</sup> United Nations, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities [Online] <https://uriz.fr/ciia>

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> United Nations Geneva, Committee on the rights of persons with disabilities reviews the report of Spain [Online] [https://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news\\_media.nsf/\(httpNew\\_sByYear\\_en\)/3D9BC540FA2EE7A3C12583C2004DB4FE?OpenDocument](https://www.unog.ch/unog/website/news_media.nsf/(httpNew_sByYear_en)/3D9BC540FA2EE7A3C12583C2004DB4FE?OpenDocument)



several examinations before reaching the Commission on the Rights and Autonomy of Disabled Persons for the final decision. As per the statistics of the departmental board of Val-de-Marne, it can take up to 8 months for the final decision<sup>55</sup>. Some cases, qualified as “urgent”, can benefit a shorter timeframe. Recruitment or risk of loss of employment is among the urgent cases.

Once the status of worker with disabilities is acquired, several financial aids are available for the access and the maintenance of employment for persons with disabilities. In France, it can be divided in two target groups: financial support for workers with disabilities and financial support for employers recruiting worker with disabilities.

### Financial support for workers with disabilities

- Human aid to compensate for disability in order to promote the worker’s autonomy in his professional life. This aid is limited to €4.000<sup>56</sup>.

- Technical assistance aid for disability compensation. This aid finances the technical means needed to achieve professional autonomy. It can be instruments, equipment, adapted technical systems or specifically designed for disability compensation. The aid is limited to €5.000<sup>57</sup>.

- Disability-related travel aid. This aid is granted for the travel expenses related to home-workplace journeys. The aid is limited to €5.000<sup>58</sup>.

### Financial support for companies recruiting workers with disabilities

Private sector employers subject to the 6% quota obligation system can benefit financial aid for the following:

- Aid for the reception, integration and professional evolution of workers with disabilities. The aid is limited to €3.000 maximum and can be renewed for the same employee in case of evolution or professional mobility<sup>59</sup>.
- Aid to assist the adaptation of work situations. The amount of the aid is assessed

according to each situation for strict compensation of the handicap. It is renewable in case of specific changes<sup>60</sup>.

- Aid to find solutions for employment maintenance because the disability might induce inaptitude for the work position. The amount of this financial aid €2.000 and non-renewable<sup>61</sup>.

- Aid for employing workers with disabilities through an apprenticeship contract limited to €3.000 maximum or through a professional training contract limited to €4.000. This aid isn’t renewable for the same person but can be extended<sup>62</sup>.

- Employment aid assistance for workers with disabilities. The aim of this scheme is to compensate for the consequences of the disability on the professional activity. It is assessed on the perennial costs incurred on the employer due to the disability<sup>63</sup>. This trimester aid is granted for a renewable period of three years. For a full time worker with disability, the aid is €5.434 or €10.818<sup>64</sup>.

- Aid to pay training courses in the context of job maintenance. This aid is renewable and the cost varies upon the courses prices.

### Case study 2 : Belgium

In Belgium, there is also the necessity for official recognition of the disabilities of a person in order for the latter to be eligible for financial aids. The procedure is done online thanks to the electronic identity card of the person. Once connected on the website, the person gets an overview of all allocations and measures he can apply for. The application is electronically sent to the Directorate General for Persons with Disabilities<sup>65</sup>. The concerned authority is legally bound to respect a 6 months’ limit period in his decision-making process<sup>66</sup>. As per the January 2020 statistics produced by the Belgium Directorate General for Persons with Disabilities, decisions are given on an average of 5.7 months. 69% of decisions are taken before the time limit<sup>67</sup>. For persons with a stable medical condition, the status is given for life.

55 Val-de-Marne Department, Ten things to know on the disability status request process [Online] <https://www.valdemarne.fr/vivre-en-val-de-marne/informations/10-choses-a-savoir-sur-le-traitement-de-votre-dossier-apres-depot-a-la-mdph> 47

Agefiph, Human aid to compensate for disability [Online] <https://www.agefiph.fr/aides-handicap/aide-humaine-la-compensation-du-handicap>

56 Agefiph, Technical assistance aid for disability compensation [Online] <https://www.agefiph.fr/aides-handicap/aide-technique-la-compensation-du-handicap>

57 Agefiph, Disability-related travel aid [Online] <https://www.agefiph.fr/aides-handicap/aide-aux-deplacements-en-compensation-du-handicap>

58 French Public Service, Aid for the employment of persons with disabilities [Online] <https://www.service-public.fr/professionnels-entreprises/vosdroits/F15204>

59 French Public Service, Aid for the employment of persons with disabilities [Online] <https://www.service-public.fr/professionnels-entreprises/vosdroits/F15204>

60 Ibid.

62 Ibid.

63 Ibid.

64 Ibid.

65 General Directorate for persons with disabilities, Disability recognition procedure

[Online] <https://handicap.belgium.be/fr/reconnaissance-handicap/procedure-reconnaissance.htm>

66 General Directorate for persons with disabilities, Requests processing time

[Online] <https://handicap.belgium.be/fr/chiffres/delais-de-traitement.htm>

67 Ibid.



It shall now be interesting to view the different financial aids impacting the integration and securing of career paths for persons with disabilities in Belgium. The following aids are managed by the PHARE service which is an Administrative Directorate of the Brussels French-speaking Public Service (French Community Commission).

The **income replacement aid** is entitled to persons between 21 and 65 who can't work because of their disabilities but also those who work but who earn only 1/3 or less of what a healthy person can earn in the labour market<sup>68</sup>. Based on the extent of the disabilities, the annual amount ranges from €5.373 to €10.891<sup>69</sup>.

The **insertion bonus** intervenes in the employer's charges and remuneration in order to compensate for the loss of performance of the worker due to his disabilities. Intended for private companies and in certain conditions public employers, the insertion bonus aims at promoting the professional integration of persons with disabilities in an ordina-

ry circuit or an adapted work company<sup>70</sup>. For permanent contract or a fixed term contract which is more than 3 months, the bonus is calculated in terms of the loss of performance and cannot exceed 50% of the wage cost. As for a fixed-term contract of less than 3 months, the bonus is a lump sum equalled to 30% of the salary cost<sup>71</sup>.

The **tutoring bonus** is linked to the appointment of a tutor in the company. The tutor can benefit up to €250 per month for a period of 6 months. Appointed by the employer in concertation with the disabled worker, the tutor's mission is to guide and accompany the newly hired worker with disabilities. He has to draw up a monthly report for the first three months, then every three months<sup>72</sup>.

The **inclusion awareness bonus** aims at promoting the integration of the worker with disabilities at the work-place with the colleagues through awareness-raising trainings and specific trainings linked to the disabilities of the newly hired worker. The amount of this bonus is limited to €1.000 and is non-

renewable<sup>73</sup>.

The **work accommodation aid** is either granted to the employer or to the worker to cover the real costs incurred for the adaptation of the workstation due to the disability. The aim of this aid is to encourage the employment of persons with disabilities, to promote the worker's access to a better-suited position or maintain employment of a newly disabled worker<sup>74</sup>.

The **additional travel costs aid** aims to cover, under certain conditions, the additional costs incurred because of the disability of the worker<sup>75</sup>.

### Challenges of the financial support approach

The case studies of these two European countries are rather interesting. We can notice two different ways of organising and managing aids. In Belgium, the PHARE service, under the guardianship of the Minister of the French-speaking Government of

Brussels in charge of Policy for Assistance to the Disabled is the only one service which manages the mentioned financial aids. In France, it's two different bodies, Agefiph and FIPHP, for two sectors (private and public). Furthermore, those two bodies, which contribute to the financing of several aids, also get their funds through the penalties paid by employers who do not respect the quota system. This might be problematic because once employers respect the 6% quota, the financial resources of these two bodies will be impacted, hence, the possibility of an impact on the financial aids.

In Belgium, the disability status is acquired for life when it's medically proven that the disability is stable, and this law also came into force in France in January 2020<sup>76</sup>. This life-long recognition will positively impact career securement as the procedures being quite lengthy (especially in France) sometimes discourage persons with disabilities to go through it again for renewal.

68 General Directorate for persons with disabilities, Income replacement aid

[Online] <https://handicap.belgium.be/fr/nos-services/allocation-replacement-revenu.htm>

69 Legal World Wolters Kluwer, Increase of Income replacement aid

[Online] <https://legalworld.wolterskluwer.be/fr/nouvelles/moniteur/l-allocation-de-replacement-de-revenus-pour-les-personnes-handicapees-augmentera-1er-juillet-2019-et-au-1er-janvier-2020/>

70 PHARE, Employment in the ordinary sector

[Online] <https://phare.irisnet.be/activite/C3%A9s-de-jour/emploi/dans-le-milieu-ordinaire/#adaptation>

71 Ibid.

72 Ibid.

73 Ibid.

74 Ibid.

75 Ibid.

76 Press release (Secretary State to the Prime Minister), Opening of lifelong rights for persons with disabilities

[Online] <https://handicap.gouv.fr/presse/communiqués-de-presse/article/ouverture-de-droits-a-vie-pour-les-personnes-handicapees>

77 EUSE, European Supported Employment Toolkit

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

78 Ibid.



### 3. Securing career paths for persons with disabilities: the supported employment approach

The supported employment concept started to be officially promoted by the EU in 1993 with the creation of the European Union for Supported Employment (EUSE). According to the EUSE and based on article 27 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>77</sup>.

The supported employment concept follows a “place-train-maintain”<sup>78</sup> process ranging from information, vocational profiling, job finding, employer engagement to ongoing job support<sup>79</sup>. When the worker with disability is employed, a support and/or training is provided by a job coach involving the whole work environment and the challenges it generates.

The development of the supported employment approach varies from country to country. The ERASMUS+ DESC 1 project deliverable “*Securing career paths towards inclusion in the open labour market*” thoroughly analysed the context in Europe. Hence, it shall now be interesting to see, through one case study, how this concept, which has proven to be efficient in some countries, is paving its way to the national system.

#### Case study : Spain

A particular context can be observed in Spain where a total of € 358,202,698.5 is allocated by the Ministry of Employment and Social Security with only 1.3% for inclusive employment companies and 98.7% for exclusive employment companies<sup>80</sup>. Inclusive employment companies represent 95% of the labour market while exclusive employment companies represent only 5% of the labour market. The financial incentives being largely directed to only exclusive companies, representing a very small percentage on the labour market, this directly contributes to lack of increasing employment of persons with disabilities.

Faced with this problematic, members of the civil society, specifically the Fundación Emplea, came up with a proposal solution to governmental authorities: the creation of a Supported Employment Labour Contract which will not only normalise the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the labour market but will also guarantee a qualitative approach with follow-ups. Opened to the public or private sector, this aid will support open-ended or fixed term contracts and offer on-the-job trainings. Employers using the supported employment option can either solicit external support services or hire their own support staff. In average, support services in Spain for a full-time employer with disabilities cost €350 per month during the first 6 months and decreases to €250-150 per month for the rest of the contract, in accordance to the needs of the worker having special difficulties in labour insertion.

Furthermore, follow-ups of the employer and the employee by a supported employment service will be guaranteed in order to ensure the success of labour inclusion. This Supported Employment Labour Contract will also guarantee sustainable incentives and

aids to the employer. For example, each person with disabilities hired will lead to the social security employee tax exemption for the employer. A 50% grant for the salary of a worker with disabilities (limited to 3 years), and a €6 000 corporation tax exemption for open-ended contracts. In order to encourage employers to adopt this type of supported employment contract, the Labour Inspectorate and the Public Employment Service will be involved

### 4. Securing career paths for persons with disabilities: the controversial concept of part-time work

As per the Eurostat’s report “Disability statistics – employment patterns”, persons with disabilities in the EU, are more likely to be employed part-time (26%) compared to persons without disabilities (18%)<sup>81</sup>. For instance, in the Czech Republic, Romania or Slovakia, the choice or imposition of part-time due to disabilities were three to five times higher than those working part-time without disabilities<sup>82</sup>.

<sup>81</sup> Eurostat, Disability statistics – employment pattern  
[Online] <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/pdfscache/34421.pdf>

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> INSEE, Activity, employment and unemployment in 2017 and in long series  
[Online] <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3541412>

<sup>84</sup> Anne, Revillard. Handicap et travail. Presses de Sciences Po, 2019,  
[Online] <https://www.cairn.info/handicap-et-travail--9782724624458.htm>



A French labour survey in 2017 underlined that out of the 33,4% persons with disabilities working part-time, 31,4% stated that they couldn't find a full-time employment and were imposed a part-time work schedule<sup>85</sup>. The French sociologist Anne Revillard associates working part-time to the fragile relationship persons with disabilities have with employment<sup>84</sup>. While part-time can be seen as part of the accommodation process, specially, for a number of disabled workers with health issues, it can also be perceived as a major integration and progression obstacle for some. Indeed, career progression adds to the numerous factors for employment maintenance. In France, career progression for persons with disabilities has been overlooked during the different agreements acted for the securing of careers compared to gender equality where monitoring mechanism was set up for follow ups<sup>85</sup>. Furthermore, part-time implies a lower salary which inevitably impacts the life of the person with disabilities, hence, on the long run, impact on employment maintenance.

Compared to workers without disabilities, those with disabilities are largely under-re-

presented when it comes to executive and managerial positions<sup>86</sup>, thus, enhancing a glass ceiling problematic which needs to be taken in consideration. An example of a key solution to this problem is inclusive education, a concept analysed in the following section.

## B. Inclusive education: the path towards EDEW sustainability and career securement

Figures and statistics from different European countries have been put forward to highlight the alarming numbers of persons with disabilities who are in unemployment. A situational review of the different legislations, aids, actions, gave an overview of the different means offered to encourage employment access and employment maintenance.

However, one crucial element, the groundwork of career securement, has to be addressed: inclusive education in favour of persons with disabilities. Article 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons

with Disabilities recognises the fundamental right of persons with disabilities to education and “an inclusive education system at all levels and lifelong learning”<sup>87</sup>. However, it is an undeniable fact, that the access to this right is denied to many persons with disabilities whether in the form of school drop-outs, of involuntary exclusions from schools and universities due to barriers or in the form of family obstacle (unwillingness to admit their children with disabilities to schools).

Education is believed to be the path towards employment and financial stability. As per the Eurostat's 2018 survey, the employment rate for graduates, aged between 20-34 in the EU with a tertiary level education, is at 85.5%<sup>88</sup>. Through the endorsement of the European pillar of social rights, the EU reaffirmed the importance of inclusive education in European policies<sup>89</sup>. It shall be interesting to have an overview of the situation of inclusive education in European countries before analysing the consequences of the lack of inclusive education on career securement for young persons with disabilities.

### 1. Inclusive education in European countries

The two pioneering European countries which started to carry out an educational inclusion policy are Sweden since 1960 and Italy since 1977<sup>90</sup>.

As per a survey carried out by the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education<sup>91</sup>, three types of inclusive education approach have been noticed in the EU<sup>92</sup>.

I) The **one-track approach**, that is, the integration of pupils with special needs in ordinary schools and the resort to specialised establishments in an exceptional way. The schools are provided with a large number of services as support. Among the countries which adopted this approach are Italy, Spain, Greece, Portugal, Sweden, Norway<sup>93</sup>

II) The **two-track approach**, that is, the integration of pupils in specialised schools or classes depending on the nature and gravity of their disabilities, but also a resort to or-

85 Ibid.

86 Ibid.

87 United Nations, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

[Online] <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRPD/Pages/ConventionRightsPersonsWithDisabilities.aspx#24>

88 Eurostat, EU employment rate for recent tertiary graduates

[Online] <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/DDN-20190704-1>

89 European Commission, Education and Training: Inclusive education

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91 Hélène Beaucher, The schooling of pupils with disabilities in Europe, Crid, 2012

[Online] <https://www.firah.org/fr/notice/269/la-scolarisation-des-l-ves-en-situation-de-handicap-en-europe.html>

92 European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, Who we are [Online] <https://www.european-agency.org/about-us/who-we-are>

93 Hélène Beaucher, The schooling of pupils with disabilities in Europe, Crid, 2012

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94 Hélène Beaucher, The schooling of pupils with disabilities in Europe, Crid, 2012

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Véronique Pueyo and France Bleu Isère – France Bleu, Chloé, quadriplegic and aphasic, launches an online funding pot for a special needs assistant for her studies at the Grenoble Political Institute

[Online] [scolarisation-des-l-ves-en-situation-de-handicap-en-europe.html](https://www.firah.org/fr/notice/269/la-scolarisation-des-l-ves-en-situation-de-handicap-en-europe.html)

95 Ibid.



dinary schooling. However, it has been noticed that only a handful of pupils integrate ordinary schooling in this approach. The examples of countries concerned are Belgium, Switzerland, Holland, Germany etc<sup>94</sup>.

III) The **multi-track approach**, that is, the implementation of open and diverse techniques adapted in regard of the disability. Countries like France, Austria, Finland, Denmark, Poland etc. have adopted this flexible system where professionals are consulted at the different levels of decision-making for the pupils with disabilities<sup>95</sup>.

### 2. Consequences of a lack or weak inclusive education system on career securing for persons with disabilities

#### Case study : Chloe from France

Chloe is a 21 years old student who, due to oxygen deprivation at birth, became quadriplegic and aphasic. Despite her heavy disabilities and her inability to speak, Chloe, with her full intellectual capacities, struggled through the whole schooling process until she graduated from high school with honours. Throughout her primary and secondary education, Chloe benefitted from the aid of a special needs assistant, whose salary is disbursed by the State.

After obtaining her high school diploma with distinction, Chloe registered for the competitive entrance examination to the prestigious French Institute of Political Studies, Sciences Po Grenoble. The aim of the latter is to acquire a renowned university degree even if, due to her disabilities, her courses will last 10 years instead of 5. However, after passing her entrance examinations, Chloe had to face a colossal obstacle: she couldn't benefit from a special needs assistant for her tertiary education.

Chloe is able to attend first year classes thanks to the contribution of the Institute to maintain her special needs assistant but she will now have to find a solution for the 9 following years. She would like to appeal to First lady Brigitte Macron and also opened an online funding pot.

**Chloe's testimonies in February 2020:** The above story and testimonies of Chloe have been collected and published by France Bleu<sup>96</sup>.

"I do not want to stop my studies because of the State's oversights : I am the proof that the system doesn't work for persons with heavy disabilities like myself".

### Analysis on the consequences of lack of inclusive education for the employment of persons with disabilities

This guide previously introduced the concept of glass ceiling with the denial of executive and managerial positions for persons with disabilities.

Though there are several obstacles which maintain the barriers to career progression, one the main obstacle, is the lack or weak inclusive education in European countries. The case of Chloe, previously elaborated, is an ideal example of a young person with disabilities who cannot access tertiary education on an equal level with young persons without disabilities. Based on her excellent grades throughout her primary and secondary education, and based on her successful entrance to a very competitive examination for tertiary education, it can be deduced that Chloe is smart, determined and is very likely to obtain her Master degree diploma with flying colours. She will have therefore won the first round of career securing by being equally armed (degree-wise) like the other contestants, when looking for employment. Her excellent academic path would have increased her chances, for instance during the EDEW events, to find qualified job offers. This is a first step towards

breaking the glass-ceiling and be eligible for executive and managerial positions, hence, sustaining career paths.

However, if Chloe is forced to drop out and put a term to her tertiary education because she lost her right to a special needs' assistant, the path towards employment will very likely be frustrating for the latter. Not only would she have to settle for a lower position with only a high school diploma, but she would be less armed for the battle of career progression.

During previously mentioned surveys (Aude Lejeune), it was highlighted that some persons with disabilities decide to put a term to employment and lose faith in the employment system because of the different obstacles at their workplace.

### Concluding statement

In a nutshell, securing career paths and sustaining the EDEW has to pass through a prerequisite step, that of inclusive education, of enabling access to education to persons with disabilities. If persons without disabilities have a higher chance of scoring a gratifying professional career with a good educational background, then, the removal of obstacles to education is an equal rights

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# THE DESC 2 PARTNERS



IMPROVING SERVICES  
IMPROVING LIVES

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)



[www.ladapt.net](http://www.ladapt.net)

**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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