

Training and Employment of People with Disabilities

EPR Recommendations to service providers, employers and policy makers

- A diverse workforce facilitates creativity and helps a company better meet needs of all customers. Tailor-made, supportive HR practices benefit all employees.
- To ensure skills and VET meet the needs of the labour market good partnerships between employers and providers and regulators of education are essential. Often needs are regional/local so local partnerships or skills analyses are particularly important.
- Networks of employers active in promoting diversity and employing a diverse workforce, particularly at local level, can encourage and support new employers to decide to take on people with disabilities. Relationships are key and misunderstanding and prejudices can be broken down in such a safe environment.
- Networks for employers and partnership initiatives in the employment of people with disabilities can be promoted/supported by government.
- Individual person-centred learning pathways are necessary for successful training and education outcomes.
- Training programmes must support the development of soft and transversal skills.
- Access to support services for young people with disabilities in mainstream secondary education must be ensured; specialist VET providers can support access to mainstream education and training.
- Support for people in the transition from education to employment is particularly important.
- High standards in apprenticeships and other work-based learning programmes must be ensured to provide good quality learning experience and outcomes.
- The model of supported employment (see <http://www.euse.org> for more information) has proved to be very effective for people to access and remain in employment. The job coaches that work with employees must have sufficient support themselves.
- Customised employment, sometimes using "job carving" to create positions for people with higher levels of disabilities, can be very successful as a tool for sustainable mainstream labour market integration.
- Understanding the social model of disability can help change opinions on disability and in turn improve possibilities of people with disabilities to be accepted in mainstream work environments: the environment and society can be disabling and where this is the case, must be tackled.
- It is important that employers understand their obligations, such as providing reasonable accommodation to ensure people with disabilities have an accessible work environment, but also that they are aware of what services are available for them to support employees with disabilities.

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