



Technology in employment. A step towards inclusion

4 December | Online



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EDF – European Disability Forum

Who we are

- Independent NGO that represents around 100 million persons with disabilities within the European Union
- EDF has more than 100 active members





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EDF – European Disability Forum

What we do

- We monitor European policy and support our members
- We advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities working closely with the European institutions and agencies
- We work towards the implementation of the UNCRPD



Employment context



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Employment context

- Employment rates for persons with disabilities are considerably lower than their counterparts
- Strong gender and working time components (both between and within groups)
- Only 20% of women with disabilities are in full-time employment compared to 29% of men with disabilities



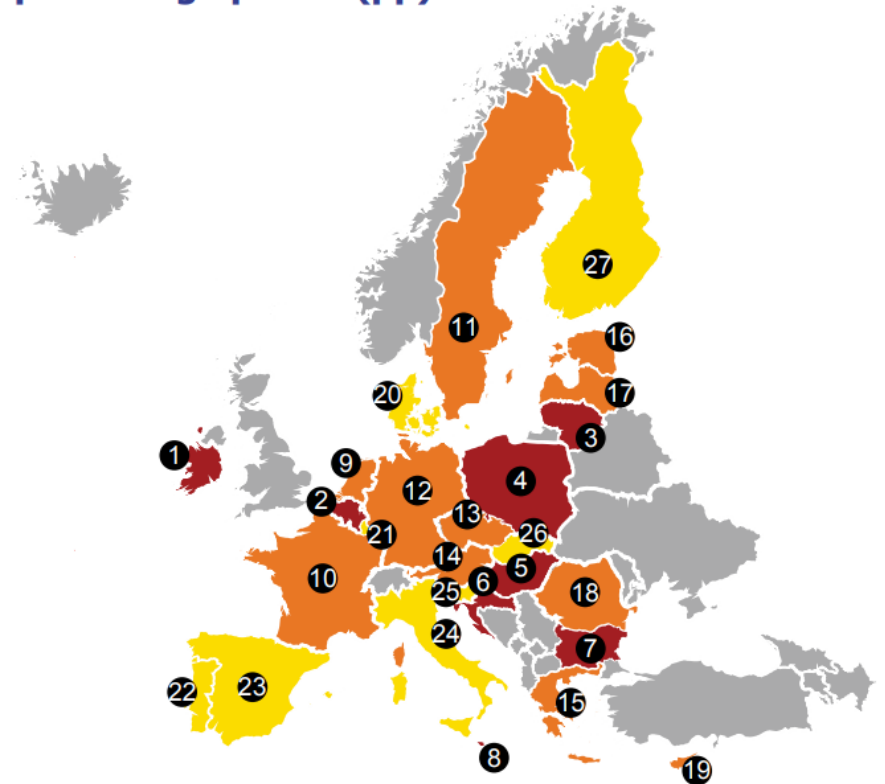
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Employment context

- The European average employment gap stands at around 24 percentage points
- Despite having a high activity rate among persons with disabilities (71.7% to 62% EU average), Latvia's employment gap is only slightly below the EU average at 20.8 pps

Disability employment gap different EU Member States in percentage points (pp)





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DATA Project

European Research on Digital Skills, Accommodation and Technological Assistance for Employment





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The DATA project

- Funded by Google.org
- Carried out at national and European level
- 26 Member States, excluding Luxembourg, and the UK
- Mapped the policy that foster the employment of persons with disabilities
- Analysed the digital and technological components of the labour market



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Why?

- Lack of data on digital and technological components
- Hard to compare research and studies from different countries due to different approaches
- Need to gather good practices and case studies to help all stakeholders involved
- Nudge tech companies, public authorities and OPDs to work together on these topics



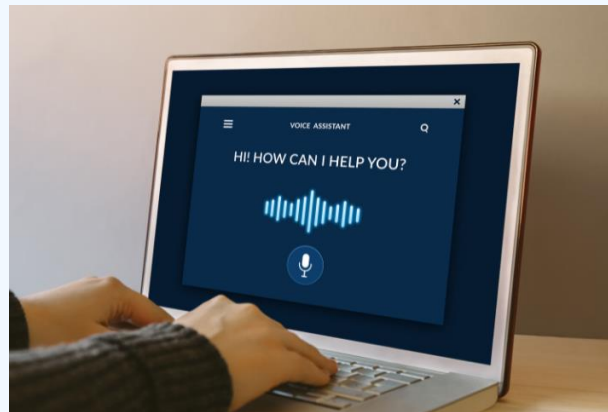
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Main topics of the research



Digital
skills



Assistive
Technology



Reasonable
accommodation



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Methodology

National research was carried out by experts that worked on:

- Qualitative and quantitative analyses of the 4 main stakeholders' point of view
 - Persons with disabilities, through personal testimonies
 - Employers, via a questionnaire
 - Interviewed OPDs
 - Public authorities, through the current legislation and the socio-economic context



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Questionnaire

- 565 employers were interviewed:
 - 20 in Latvia
 - 30% Public Administration
 - 25% Wholesale and retail trade
 - Small, medium and large organisations
 - 50% has less than 200 employees (half, less than 50)
 - Percentage of employees with disabilities
 - 83% have less than 1% of employees with disabilities



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Results

Public support

- Employers tend to have scarce knowledge on public support
- 1 in 2 knows programs for the employment of persons with disabilities
1 out of 4 knows programs that support the acquisition of assistive technology and reasonable accommodation (40% in Latvia)
- This ratio lowers to 1 in 5 when internships are considered (35% in Latvia)



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Results

Human Resources

- 1 in 4 has internal policy that foresees the employment inclusion of persons with disabilities (0% in Latvia)
- 81% does not have codified guidelines for the acquisition of assistive technology (95% in Latvia)
- 70% does not have defined procedures regarding RAs (95% in Latvia).
The percentage rises to 75% when the whole recruiting process is concerned (85% in Latvia)



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Results

Digital skills

- 40% (20% in Latvia) considers the lack of digital skills as a burden when hiring persons with disabilities
 - Insufficient experience with candidates with disabilities (consider candidates with disabilities for more low-tech roles)
 - Only 1 in 2 (1 in 4 in Latvia) offer training on digital skills and almost none of those tailors training to the needs of employees with disabilities



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Results

Assistive Technology

- There is a scarce understanding of what assistive technology means
 - 3 in 4 do not know their employees use assistive technology (both with and without disabilities). Almost none in Latvia
 - The procedures for the acquisition of assistive technology are deemed long, convoluted and bureaucratic. The same applies to accessing subsidies



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Results

Reasonable Accommodation

- Reasonable accommodation is considered expensive and difficult to implement
- However, after the initial financial effort, some employers noted a positive impact in the medium-long term (social and economic pov)
- In some countries businesses' premises are still in old buildings. Granting physical accessibility is indeed complicate (tele-working)



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Results OPD

- Organisations of Persons with Disabilities play a crucial role in developing learning activities and piloting projects on digital skills, filling the void left by employers and the public authorities
- In many countries, Organisations of Persons with Disabilities step in as facilitators between technology producers and end users



Thanks!