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School-to-Work Transition for Higher education students with disabilities
in Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Montenegro



**School-to-Work Transition for Higher education students with
disabilities in Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Montenegro
Trans2Work**

DEV 3.3.a

**Guidelines/Policy Actions for employers in
order to pursue transition of SwD to Work**

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Abbreviations

Term	Explanation
EU	European Union
EQOPP	Equal Opportunities for Students With Special Needs in Higher Education
EquiED	Equal Access for All-Strengthening the Social Dimension for a Stronger European Higher Education Area
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HE	Higher Education
NGO	Non-government Organization
PwD	Persons with Disabilities
SINC@HE	Support and Inclusion of SwDs at Higher Education in Montenegro
SwD	Students with Disabilities
UNESCO	United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



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1. Purpose of the Guidelines

During the last decade, European Union policies have been concerned with linking HE in the context of today's rapid socio-economic transformations. The questions were also raised in relation to the issue of the link between HE and the labor market at regional, national and local levels. Linking HE and training with employment is problematic in the EU countries as well. Therefore it takes higher place in the political agenda all over Europe.

The project under the name *“School to Work – Transition for higher education students with disabilities in Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Montenegro”* (acronym: Trans2Work project) is designed as complementary with the previously realized projects *“Equal Access for All-Strengthening the Social Dimension for a Stronger European Higher Education Area”* (EquiED) in Serbia and *“Support and Inclusion of SwDs at Higher Education in Montenegro”* (SINC@HE) in ME and *“Equal Opportunities for Students With Special Needs in Higher Education”* (EQOPP) in BiH. The aforementioned projects have been designed to improve the equal access, inclusion and support of prospective and current students with disability (SwD) at HEIs in Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Montenegro. Taken into consideration the specific objectives of these 3 projects, the present project is based on the assumption that SwD often experience limited access to postsecondary and higher education programs and this subsequently limits their access to the employment. Thus, Trans2Work connects the outcomes from the aforementioned projects and provides the next step in preparing SwD to response properly to labor market's requests.

The goal of the project is to improve the quality and relevance of school to work transition of HE SwD in Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Montenegro. Main objectives are: (a) to improve and prepare HEIs services to support SwD to their transition from HE to work following the EU policies, (b) to link Higher Education to “disability friendly” working environments, (c) to assimilate transition opportunities and skills with EU practices and policies and (d) to prepare employers to understand the needs of employees with disabilities in their coping with new jobs.

Employment is important for every person, including people with disabilities, because it provides different opportunities: learning and development, financial independence, achievement of positive valued social roles, the ability to choose and make life decisions and to obtain their rights. The right to education and employment inevitably raises the question of the transition from one context to another. The transition from school to work is a key point in the students' life, since it is related to their economic and psychosocial well-being and it determines their future. In this regard, the transition from school to work could also be considered as a transition to adulthood. Those who are marginalized and do not have the characteristics that are presumed as



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necessary by employers are exposed to different barriers regarding their employment and their career development. This could have extensive consequences on their lives and future. For persons with disabilities this kind of transition is often very challenging. One reason is the lack of support in this process. Therefore, it is documented that support services within the university environment could and should work on better preparation of students with disabilities for the transition from school to work and for a new life in the community. This means that the transition of students with disabilities from education to labor market has to necessarily involve all stakeholders, meaning students, universities and employers. Universities should provide more support to students with disabilities in order to prepare them for the challenges that they face during their searching for job. They also play important role in connecting students with employers and making them more competitive on the labor market. Employers should be sensitive to the fact that people with disabilities are able to communicate and perform work with the same quality in completing their tasks. The lack of awareness and lack of knowledge and experience results with prejudices, anxiety and hesitation related to employment of people with disabilities. The employers should understand why it is useful and good to employ highly educated PwD. Student themselves can support this process with their own engagement, motivation, self-education and work ethic.

Despite the fact that there are respectable backgrounds and some good commonly developed strategies, a lot of differences are present among partner countries regarding mobility and they cause certain difficulties. Then again, many cases of implementation of mentioned policies are still inefficient and not practically connected. A review of reports and literature focusing on the transition from HE to working life mentioned in three partner's countries shows the lack of research data and information. Generally, employers are skeptical about the possibility of hiring PwD and their concern relates to the ability of PwD to carry out their job responsibilities. An important factor of positive change in the attitude of employers is the level of education of PwD. However, statistical information that could make a clear picture of PwD position within the labor market is particularly difficult to achieve. This is partly due to the fact that partner countries do not carry out regular or consistent surveys on the employment situation of PwD at the HE level. In addition to this, a comparison of the situation with the EU level is much more complicated. Namely, each partner country has its own system for defining the population with disability.

The challenges that people with disabilities are facing in their everyday lives are not their private and separated from the rest of society. These are issues that could and should be communal. Doing in this way, everyone could be involved in finding collective solutions. This makes Trans2Work project mostly important.



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1.1. Target group

- **Who are the persons with disabilities?**

According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, disability occurs as a result of the interaction of people with impairment and barriers arising from their environment and the attitudes of the barriers that exist in the environment, and that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal footing with other people.

Disability, therefore, is not a characteristic of a person but a number of factors, many of which are created by the social environment. The complicated network creates negative social attitudes, cultural and physical barriers, including policies, laws, programs and services towards persons with disabilities and their competences. All those facts produce economic marginalization and social exclusion. People with disabilities were constantly discriminated during the past because of their physical, psychological or mental conditions. Attitudes towards people with disabilities range from complete uselessness and deprivation, through ignorance, tolerance, charity, specialties and integration to complete social respect.

The term “person with disability” (PwD) is used to apply to all persons with innate or acquired physical, sensory, intellectual or emotional disabilities which, in interaction with various attitudinal and environmental barriers, hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others, whether they can or cannot perform such activities with assistive technologies or support services. However, this minimum list of persons who may claim protection under the UN Convention does not exhaust the categories of the disabilities which fall within it nor intend to undermine or stand in the way of wider definition of disabilities under national law. Persons with disability are not defined by their condition; each person is a unique individual. But a good place to start is an understanding of types of disabilities and their impact.

- **Short description of disabilities’ types**

Persons with disabilities compose one of the most commonly vulnerable groups in each country. According to The World Health Organization (WHO), 10% of the world population that inhabits is persons with disabilities. The population of persons with disabilities is consisted of diverse groups, such as persons with intellectual disabilities, persons with physical disabilities, persons



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with learning disabilities; persons with sensory disabilities: persons with visual impairment, persons with hearing impairment - each of this group has its own peculiarities and differences. Unfortunately, a society is mostly unaware of these facts. In most cases the term Persons with Disabilities (PwD) is reserved for persons with physical disabilities, because they are most visible¹.

Persons with intellectual disabilities - Intellectual disability may affect both, intellectual functioning (reasoning, learning, problem solving) and adaptive behavior which covers a range of everyday social and practical skills. Some persons with intellectual difficulties need support and assistance of other people in all spheres of life while others require a minimum assistance.

The most important reason of promoting evaluation and classification of individuals with intellectual disability is to support their development, learning and qualitative participation in everyday life. The main goal is to provide support to people with intellectual disabilities so they can develop their potential as much as it is possible and to enable them to be active citizens in society. Namely, persons with intellectual disabilities are not usually considered as equal citizens of society. Person-centered planning and approach are seen as methods of encouraging the person as someone with capacities and gifts as well as support needs. The self-advocacy movement promotes the right of self-determination and self-direction by people with intellectually disabilities, which means allowing them to make decisions about their own lives. Quality education opens the door to employment of persons with intellectual disability.

Persons with physical disabilities - Physical disability affects a person's mobility or dexterity. A person with physical disability might need to use some sort of equipment for mobility, and require slight adaptations in the area for their better participation in society.

Many people with disabilities live their lives just like any other people. They are active in sports, watch movies, make shopping and practice a lot of other activities. They work hardly in order to support themselves and their families. However, they also need a support from their families, friends, society, and community on their way of inclusion into society. Giving them opportunity to be employed and treating them equally are the ways that could enable them to live life in its full capacity.

Persons with learning disabilities - Persons with learning disabilities might have reading, writing, spelling, reasoning, recalling and/or organizing

¹ There is also a specific categorisation of disabilities e.g in the field of employment. In the Republic of Serbia, this categorisation can be found in the Law on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities (The Official Gazette of RS, no 36/09, 32/13)



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difficulties. Learning disability is a lifelong issue. Therefore, a gap remains between an individual's potential and actual achievement. However, persons with learning disabilities could be successful during educational or working process, or in making relationships or reaching distinguished careers later in life if they got appropriate support and accurate intervention.

Society is in charge to ensure conditions in which persons with learning disabilities could achieve some results in accordance with their strengths and their weaknesses. The term "reasonable accommodations" refers to changes at a workplace that enable persons with learning disabilities to effectively perform the tasks related to their job. Accommodation can include variations at working place and assurance of proper equipment; communication at work; the tasks themselves; and the time and place that the work is done.

Persons with sensor impairments: persons with hearing impairment – For a person who is not able to hear was said that have hearing loss. Hearing loss may be mild, moderate, severe, or profound. It can affect one ear or both ears, and leads to difficulty in hearing voices or loud sounds. Some people wear amplifier to support their hearing. These persons also use sign language to communicate. They also read from lips and speak with certain problems. However, the most people with hearing disability practice a combination of both methods.

The term "persons with hearing impairment" is often used to describe people with some degree of hearing loss, from mild to profound, including those who are deaf and those who hardly heard. Many individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing prefer terms "deaf" and "hard of hearing," because they consider them politically correct. The term "hearing impaired" implies to a deficit or points out that something is wrong. "Deaf" usually refers to a severe hearing loss. "Hard of hearing" refers to a hearing condition with a chance of possible residual hearing by using an auditory device, such as a hearing aid or FM system. If a person use only hearing devices in order to communicate successfully, the result would not be always satisfactory. Because, communication involves at least two individuals: a talker who sends the message and a listener who receives the message.

With a flexible environment and a certain amount of assistance they can function independently and functionally, becoming excellent employees.

Persons with sensory impairments: persons with visual impairment - Visual impairment refers to some degree of sight loss and may range from unclear vision with reduced intensity and distance perception to a complete visual impairment. Many people have some type of visual problem at some periods of their lives.

Persons with visual impairment can perform several jobs. They could work as lawyers, artists, accountants, secretaries, customer service representatives,



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food service workers, factory labors, financial analysts, teachers, medical transcriptionists, day care workers, counselors, computer programmers, cooks, salespersons, etc. Today, an available assistive technology supports persons with visual impairment in acquiring various professions. Appropriate training, correct tools, an ability to present themselves properly together with employers' positive attitude and openness present a winning formula for success.

Visual impairment differs from person to person and every individual offer their own competences in performing work-related tasks. Some persons operate more visually; some might function more efficiently while using non-visual techniques. Many of them learned how to perform the essential functions of their jobs before they became visually impaired and will need to learn adaptive techniques to retain or return to employment. New employees who have been visually impaired for many years would be in position to exploit adaptive techniques in order to perform their duties effectively. The majority of persons with visual impairment would benefit from their readiness to adjust themselves to a new working environment in an competitive atmosphere.

1.2. The guidelines usage

The employment obtains an essential part in people's life. Therefore, the proper transition from higher education to labor market is most important process. Only a synergy of these three factors: university, employers and an individual, could influence the level of employability of all persons, including persons with disabilities. Project objectives are made in order to improve the process of transition from the faculty to the labor market for highly educated persons with disabilities. One of the goals of the project is to encourage employers to create positions for people with disabilities. There are assortments of approaches for achieving this goal. One of them is to create adequate guidelines in order to inform employers about persons with disabilities, making recommendations for the creation of an appropriate working environment with stimulating and supportive atmosphere. The guidelines also refer to procedures of hiring and redundancy of persons with disabilities.

In accordance to all mentioned above, the content of the guide is consisted of following parts: 1) Purpose of the Guidelines (Target Group, Using the Guideline and State of the Art), 2) The legal basis for the employment of persons with disabilities, 3) The institutions for the mediation in the process of transition and employment, 4) instructions of employment of persons with disabilities, 5) Inclusion of an employee within organization, 6) Redundancy, 7) Mentoring in the working organization, 8) Examples of good practices 9) Glossary. We sincerely hope that the content of the guide will serve to inform, empower and encourage employers to be actively engaged in the process of



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transition and employment of persons with disabilities.

1.3. State of Art

- **General adjustments and preparation of working environment**

Persons with diverse disabilities are faced with different kinds of barriers when they found a job. In a situation when a company is ready to employ a person with disabilities, it is necessary to assess working area in order to remove physical barriers. It is also important to make an analysis of working position that is supposed to be occupied by person with disabilities. The aspect of accessibility of working place to people with different types of disabilities should be considered. An analysis of the employing procedures needs to be done as well as assurance of optimal working conditions for person who is supposed to be employed. Nevertheless, the large population of people with disabilities is consisted of several groups (persons with physical disabilities, persons with sensor impairment, persons with intellectual disabilities, persons with learning disabilities and persons with multiple disabilities). Each of this group has its own characteristics which require specific and diverse adaptation of the working environment.

The process of the working environment modification usually involves physical and some other required changes such as technical and technological equipping of the working place, modifying resources of work, adjusting a schedule of working hours; using various modes of integration. All this need to be done in accordance with the possibilities and needs persons with disabilities. The modification process also understands professional assistance available to person with disabilities related to an introduction of a position or a workplace, counseling, training, monitoring, assistance services and support at the workplace, personal development methods and evaluation of efficiency.

What modern architecture has proposed today is an environment that is universally designed to increase the level of access for all populations where the subsequent adjustments to the individual level are minimal and require very little investment. Universally designed environment does not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where it is needed. But while this approach does not become standardized, companies should bear in mind that the design of the usual job and specified tasks for that position might constitute aggravating circumstances for persons with disabilities. The responsibility of adaptation and reasonable modification of the working environment is the task of the companies. According to the International United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, reasonable modification means appropriate essential changes and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden. It is



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important to ensure a working atmosphere where persons with disabilities could enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with others. This type of reasonable modification includes an appropriate equipment and personal assistance, but also significant space adjustments in the office building.

Companies also need to be aware of the fact that the most serious obstacle is the accessibility to the working environment. The process of elimination of this obstacle significantly facilitates employment of persons with disabilities, and brings multiple benefits to the company.

The most frequently mentioned benefits are: reduction of fluctuation and improvement of employee's productivity, reduction of training costs and inclusion of new employees. Direct and indirect benefits that are usually mentioned are as follows:

Table 1. Results of research: The Job Accommodation Network, 2016

Direct Benefits	%
Retaining of valued employee	90%
Increasing employee's productivity	73%
Eliminating costs associated with training of a new employee	61%
Increasing employee's attendance	56%
Increasing of a diversity of the company	40%
Saving compensation of workers and other insurance costs	38%
Hiring of a qualified person with a disability	13%
Promoting of an employee	9%
Indirect Benefits	%
Improving interactions with co-workers	64%
Increasing of company morality in general	63%
Increasing largely a productivity of a company	56%



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Increasing security of a working place	46%
Improving an interactions with customers	45%
Increasing generally a company attendance	40%
Increasing profitability	27%
Increasing a customer base	16%

The general benefits confirmed by previously made studies:

- a. development of organizational climate in which all stakeholders participate in an adjustment that would bring benefit to many people; not only those with disabilities, but also those with temporary poor health who require more accessible workplace,
- b. the reputation of a company itself, which should be recognized as a socially oriented towards vulnerable groups,
- c. saving money for later adjustment in a case when the state provides sources for renovation of a working environment,
- d. equality insurance of persons with disabilities in order to become quite common employees.

It is also important to emphasize that a half of the adjustment and adaptation does not cost company. For example, there is no need for additional investment, such as flexible work time, flexibility of the existing rules, a different arrangement of the offices, etc. The general conclusion of all previously done researches and practices is that the adaptation of the working place in accordance to the needs of persons with disabilities requires a low cost and a small investment with a large amount of concrete benefits for both, the company and the society. These low investments are financed by Government in all three partner countries so employers can count on that too.

- **Analysis of the Project research main results regarding experiences/opinions/attitudes of employers**

As part of the project “*School-to-Work Transition for Higher Education Students with Disabilities in Serbia, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Montenegro – Trans2Work*”, a survey of employers’ needs regarding the employment of persons with disabilities was undertaken in 2016. The sample included 426 employers. A total of 426 employers from RS (80.05%), BiH (10.56%) and MNE (9.39%) participated in the research. Within the entire sample, 221



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participants were male (51.88%) and 205 participants were female (48.12%). Concerning the sector in which participants traded, 20.89% was made of public sector employers, 61.27 % was comprised of private sector employers, 3.52 % were nonprofit or NGO employers while 14.32% participants had identified themselves as employers in other sector. As concerns participants' distribution based on the employment of PwD, 72.77% participants had EwD and 27.23% did not have EwD when data collection was undertaken. A total of 77 EwD from RS (50.65%), BiH (3.90%) and MNE (45.45%) participated in the research. Concerning participants type of disability that better describes their condition, 6.49% identified themselves as having a visual impairment, 3.9 % as having a hearing impairment, 1.3% as having a visual and hearing impairment 7.79% as having a visual and physical impairment, 2.6% as having a visual, hearing and physical impairment 64.94% as having a physical impairment 1.3% as having a learning impairment 1.3% as having a visual, physical and learning impairment 2.6% as having other impairments and 9.09% are not reported answers. Finally, concerning participants' current professional status, 33.77% participants worked in public sector, 31.17% worked in private sector 24.68% worked in nonprofit or NGO sector while 6.81% participants had identified themselves as employees in other sector, based on the sample and collected data.

Participants' views (SwD and Employees) concerning the issue of what the universities should do in order to facilitate the transition to employment of SwD based on the results statement: raising the awareness and sensitivity of the employers towards employees who may have a disability has the highest value, educate employers on issues concerning accessibility, assistive technologies, individualized support (trainings, working assistance, flexible working time and workplace), informing employers on the provided support services that person with disabilities might need during their employment, educate employers on issues concerning the obstacles a person with disabilities may encounter during their employment, improving the knowledge and skills of persons with disabilities through additional training and education and supporting the position of mentor during their first period at work.

Employers' views concerning the issue of what the universities should do in order to facilitate the transition to employment of SwD based on the results, the most import are: raising of awareness and sensitivity of employers towards employees who may have a disability, informing employers on the provided support service that PwD might need during their employment, educating employers on issue concerning the needs of PwD, educating employers on the potential obstacles a PwD might encounter during their job, supporting the position of a mentor during their first time at work and the least important is improving of the knowledge and scales of PwD through additional training and education.

The employers in all three countries are burdened with the economic crisis,



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lack of opportunities for new job creation, lack of demanded knowledge, skills and competences of the labor force, etc. This is something invariably characteristic for the overall labor market situation of the region, additionally aggravated by high unemployment rates, especially youth unemployment rates and a persistent structural mismatch between labor demand and supply. These challenges must not be neglected as they are reflected in the employers' response to this specific questionnaire and this specific topic. An employer, in case needed, should assign part of the job duties to a co-worker, make the work schedule more flexible, change the company policy and provide supervision so that the employee can do his/her job, in order to facilitate the employee with disability to do his/her work. National Employment Agencies in every country should be more involved in all the activities related to employment of people with disability, and to make a special program with additional budget for HE people with disability.

For example, in the National Employment Service of the Republic of Serbia, significant amounts are earmarked for fostering the employment of persons with disabilities. Each year, these funds are allocated within the state Fund for employment and vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities for inclusion of unemployed persons in the active labor market policy measures.

In all three countries where the survey was undertaken, persons with disabilities have an unfavorable position at the labor market. Unstable economic situation, lack of new jobs, lack of high-quality labor force, high unemployment rate and structural disparity of supply and demand are some of the aggravating factors in their employment. The chances of becoming employed are additionally decreased by the level of disability degree of their invalidity, the possibility for vocational rehabilitation, poorer motivation, low educational level, outdated knowledge, (in) accessibility of the workplace and environment, employers' prejudices. Survey results indicate that there is still insufficient willingness of employers to commit more actively to solving the problem of employment of persons with disabilities and that the prejudices and stereotypes about the capabilities, knowledge and skills of persons with disabilities are still very pronounced. Despite the existing concept of positive discrimination in the sphere of employment, the promotional and stimulating legal provisions, and the programs of subsidized, supported employment and vocational rehabilitation, a large number of employers are still reluctant to hire persons with disabilities, believing that they should be transferred from the open labor market to work in protected conditions. An encouraging fact that can be drawn from the conducted survey is that the largest share of interviewed employers believes that employment of persons with disabilities is a good way to fulfill socially responsible behavior and that it contributes to the company's positive image. Interviewed employers who have workers with disabilities considered them as good, loyal and motivated to perform their tasks successfully. Moreover, it is encouraging to see that employers who



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have employees with disabilities are aware of the need to provide workplace accessibility, work assistants and mentors and of undertaking activities aimed at enhancing the skills, knowledge and capacities of employees with disabilities their disabled employees. The survey results also underlined the need to develop additional measures, sustainable services and support that will be available to employers who intend to hire persons with disabilities, such as hiring a work assistant and workplace assistance, introduction of flexible working hours, development of guidelines for accessible work places, organization of e-learning seminars, webinars, on-the-job training programs adapted for persons with disabilities. The Government of all 3 partner countries provides funds for adaptation of workplace, so additional funds from employer are not needed. Employer can create a fund for adaptation of working environment, for example for adaptation of entrances, building elevators or toilet adaptation. On the other hand, support services are also needed for graduate students with disabilities in their job search process and in the further education programs. One of the objectives of the Trans2Work project is to raise the capacities of university career centers for supporting students with disabilities in their transition from education into the labor market and to establish the role of career guides – mentors to act as a link between higher education and employment.

2. The legal basis for the employment of persons with disabilities

Benchmarking transition and employment policy should offer assessment of the initiatives in regional, national and international level that could be adopted in partner countries in order to facilitate the transition of IwD from HE into the labor market. It is clear that most of the legislation that is needed to be adopted in partner countries is in line with EU policies. Current legislative should be improved, especially the part that refers to mechanisms that are made to ensure implementation of those laws. There should also be a concrete encouragement by the government for the employers who employ PwD. This encouragement should not only be in terms of some tax benefits but also as a help with practical problems they can face when hiring PwD (like need for special equipment that can enable PwD to perform better on the job etc). On the other hand, SWOT analysis as well as recommendations also point out that all of them have a greater significance because through research and benchmarking does not explicitly recognize such a number of indicators and that the SWOT analysis and conclusion correlate with the real situation in the field of higher education and employment of persons with disabilities in all three countries (see more: Report DEV 1.3; 2016).

Thus, the authorities of all three countries have adopted various laws dealing with persons with disabilities in different areas. Their quality and application in



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practice is still questionable. The following are the laws in different areas of exercising the rights to all three countries:

1. Law on employment and unemployment insurance (The Official Gazette of RS, no. 36/09, 88/10 and 38/15)
2. Law on professional rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities (The Official Gazette of RS, no 36/09, 32/13)
3. National Employment strategy 2011-2020 („The Official Gazette of RS”, no, 37/2011)
4. National Employment Action plan 2016 („The Official Gazette of RS”, no 92/16)
5. Framework Law on Primary and Secondary Education (The Official Gazette of BiH, br. 18/03).
6. Framework Law on Higher Education in BiH (The Official Gazette of BiH, 59/07).
7. Framework Law on Vocational Education and Training in BiH (The Official Gazette of BiH, 63/08)
8. Family Act of Republic of Serbia (The Official Gazette of RS, 54/02, 41/08)
9. Rulebook on the right to orthopedic and other devices (The Official Gazette of RS 42/09, 51/09, 64/09, 101/09, 02/10, 10/10, 73/10, 101/10, 17/11, 42/11).
10. Rulebook on minimum conditions for the Rules on minimum conditions for the commencement of the health institution in RS
11. Rulebook on detailed terms of space, equipment and personnel for the establishment and performance of health services in health institutions (The Official Gazette of FBiH 26/12).
12. The right to social protection in Bosnia and Herzegovina, OSCE, 2012.
13. Rulebook on the manner of and criteria for the implementation of active employment policy measures („The Official Gazette of RS” no.12/12, 20/13, 69/14, 102/15, 5/17)
14. Rulebook on the manner of monitoring and proofing of fulfillment of the obligation to employ persons with disabilities („The Official Gazette of RS” no 33/10, 48/10, 113/13, 101/16)
15. Rulebook on the manners, costs and criteria for the assessment of work ability and possibility of finding retaining employment of persons with disabilities (The Official Gazette of RS, 36/10, 97/13)
16. Rulebook on the Conditions, Criteria and Standards for the Implementation of Measures and Activities of Professional Rehabilitation (The Official Gazette of RS, 112/09)
17. The right to social protection in Republic of Serbia (The Official Gazette of RS, 37/12).
18. Law on Social Protection, Protection of Civil War Victims and Families with Children in FBiH, The Official Gazette of FBiH 36/99, 54/04, 42/06



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19. The Law on Amendments to the Law on Social Protection of Brčko District (The Official Gazette of Brčko district, 4/04)
20. Law on Employment (The Official Gazette of RS, no.54/05 and 64/06)
21. Law on Social Protection of Brčko District, (The Official Gazette of Brčko district, 1/03)
22. Law on Rights of Veterans, Disabled Veterans and Families of Patriotic War Veterans in RS (The Official Gazette of RS, 134/11, 09/12 and 40/12)
23. Law on Health Care (The Official Gazette of FBiH, br. 29/97)
24. Health Insurance Act in RS (The Official Gazette of RS, br.18/99, 51/01, 70/01, 51/03, 57/03, 17/08, 01/09, 01/09, 106/09)
25. Law on Health Insurance of the Brcko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina (The Official Gazette of Brčko district, no. 1/02 7/02 19/07 2/08 i 34/08)
26. Law on Health Protection of FBiH (The Official Gazette of FBiH 46/10)
27. Law on Health Care (The Official Gazette of RS 106/09)
28. Law on Secondary Education (The Official Gazette of RS, 74/08, 106/09 and 104/11)
29. The Law on Higher Education in RS (The Official Gazette of RS, 73/10 and 104/11)
30. Adult Education Act (The Official Gazette of RS, 59/09)
31. Labour Law of the Federation of BiH (The Official Gazette of FBiH, 43/99 and 32/00)
32. Labor Law - revised text (The Official Gazette of RS 55/07)
33. The Law on Vocational Rehabilitation, Training and Employment of Disabled in RS (The Official Gazette of RS 54/09)
34. Law on professional rehabilitation, training and employment of persons with disabilities (The Official Gazette of FBiH 34/10)
35. Law on Mediation in Employment and Social Security of unemployed persons FBiH (The Official Gazette of FBiH 41/01)
36. The Law on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities (The Official Gazette of Montenegro, 49/2008, 73/2010 and 39/2011).
37. The Law on Prohibition of Discrimination of Persons with Disabilities (The Official Gazette of Montenegro, 39/2011)
38. Report of the Employment Service for 2015
39. Report of the Fund for Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities in 2015.

These laws allow employers to ensure the rights of persons with disabilities, and also to recognize benefits by providing opportunities for the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities. These laws create a presumption for better planning, organizing and implementing transition from educational



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institutions to the labor market of people with disabilities.

3. The institutions for mediation in the process of transition and employment

Employment is hardly available for SwD than for the rest of the population, and in addition, SwD are more exposed and treated of long-term unemployment. These are just some of the reasons which point out to strengthen the links between educational institutions and the labor market in the process of transition to the employment of SwD.

The term transition refers to passing from one condition/context to another. Many important transitions occur throughout each person's life, and many of them are associated with predictable life events, such as beginning preschool, leaving elementary school, and entering middle adulthood. One of the most critical transition periods for person with disabilities is the transition from school to labor market. The transition from school to work is a key point in the students' lives, since it is related to their economic and psychosocial well-being which determines their future. For persons with disabilities this kind of transition can be very difficult. One reason is the lack of support for people with disabilities in the process of transition from school to work. The synergy of all three sectors: universities, employers and students can increase the level of welfare of all including students with disabilities.

The transition from education to labor is very complex and demanding process that has profound impacts primarily on SwD and subsequently at universities and organizations that offer jobs. If the society and the labor market have not been positioned in front of university requirements to modernize curricula and study programs from the point of transition, the universities themselves need to take the necessary steps in this direction. If the transition is examined widely from the period between education and employment, it will have a great opportunity to be involved in the curriculum mechanisms that will enable SwD to get the best possible education in the applicable professional purposes, but also enable them to have a positive experience with the process of transition. Closing the gap between the educational institutions and employers, universities are not only helping the SwD, labor market and the society, but also have the opportunity to further strengthen its influence on employers and portray itself as a trusted service to the vulnerable part of the population.

The right to work and employment of persons with disabilities is one of the fundamental human rights and the impossibility of the realization of this right is discrimination. Employers who employ people with disabilities stand out:



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people with disabilities as employees are highly committed, focused and hardworking and therefore often serve as a model for other workers (see more in Perin and Baralja, 2015). In order to realize this right of people with disabilities it is necessary to provide appropriate services to support the process of transition from educational institutions to the labor market.

One of the services of this kind are career centers/offices to support students in higher education institutions. The mentors obtain a key role in these centers. Mentor for the career information of students with disabilities within the Career Centre/Office operates within the framework of a job description of the counselor for career information, applying different strategies and procedures:

a) ensuring the accessibility and transparency of information on career guidance and counseling for students with disabilities; b) establishing and maintaining communication with all relevant stakeholders who are important for the career development and counseling of students with disabilities (all relevant institutions within the university, the relevant institutions of the community, employers, etc.); c) collecting and providing information on the system of support and assistance for daily functioning and independence of people with disabilities; d) training students and graduates with disabilities to assess and plan personal and professional development; e) informing students and graduates with disabilities on services of the career guiding and counseling with focus on preparation for the work practice/internship and employment;) setting up, updating and monitoring the information on web portal related to the work practice/internship, and employment of persons with disabilities; g) monitoring the changes in the relevant legislative.

The key role of a career development centre and a mentor is in linking the university to the labor market and making connections with employers. In this sense, employers can also contact the career development centre at the university if they need information about the number and availability of (graduate) students with disabilities to perform the practice of service or employment. Role of the career development centre is important in providing the educational services to employers too.

However, educational services and information can be provided by employment agencies, funds for vocational rehabilitation and employment, associations of persons dealing with the exercise of rights of persons with disabilities, etc. Employment agencies and funds for vocational rehabilitation and employment can provide the best information in regards to regular and special incentives, active and passive measures of active labor market policy, tax benefits, the possibilities of obtaining money for the education of persons with disabilities, co-financing the costs of adapting the workplace, and so on. It is always good to note that employers can contact various associations, the department in the municipality/region that deals with these issues, ministers, policy makers, and so on. All these subjects can help in the process of



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transition from educational institutions to the labor market. It is inevitable to involve the people with disabilities in the whole process.

According to the survey results of the employers in three partner countries, there are no many differences among them (Report DEV 1.3; 2016). The most important reasons for employing PwD are their motivation, loyalty and work ethics. The competencies of PwD are highly valued, but slightly less than the former ones. These findings could indicate that HEIs should modify their practice (i.e. introduce student internship programs for SwD) in order to improve competencies of SwD. The situation of persons with disabilities in the labor market in the region, whose main characteristics are of high general unemployment, high youth unemployment rate, a high percentage of long-term unemployment, the deficit of jobs, it is even worse considering all the barriers they face in their daily and professional life. Position on the labor market of vulnerable groups determines personal characteristics, the complexity of disability, the degree of rehabilitation, motivation, educational level, existing skills and resources, accessibility of the environment.

However, well organized and quality development of the education system is a key condition for the development of the whole society, which implies an inclusive approach, professional teams for additional support and the introduction of teaching assistants, affirmative measures for enrollment in secondary schools and colleges, customized textbooks and the application of assistive devices, individual approach and individual educational plan. In this sense, the role of higher education institutions (as well as other educational institutions) represents the development of skills, knowledge and abilities, or the competencies required in the modern labor market.

Regarding the opinion of the employers about what HEIs could do in order to improve transition of SwD from education to labor market, it could be said that employers think that it is "pretty much everything". Employers see HEIs as the key factor that could facilitate and promote transition process by improving competences of SwD (both formal and soft skills), educating employers on needs of PwD, and supporting the role of a mentor. It could be done by organizing student internship programs, workshops, e-learning courses, seminars or/and webinars for employers etc. HEIs should not decrease criteria for SwD, but rather ensure necessary conditions that would enable SwD to acquire knowledge and skills at the level of any other student. As for employers' requirements regarding system support, specifically that from the part of HE institutions, the employers invariably emphasize that in the first place the awareness and sensitivity of employers should be raised towards employees who may have a disability, while also informing employers on the provided support service that PwD might need during their employment. In addition to that, employers should be educated on the issues concerning the needs of PwD as well as on the potential obstacles PwD might encounter during their job. This is the role that should jointly be taken by all stakeholders



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in the transition of SwD from education to work, including in the first place the cooperation between education institutions and the labor market institutions, significantly supported by the efforts of organizations supporting PwD in all areas. The results show that the employers do not dispose with sufficient conscience of PwD efficiency in the role of employees. This fact can be the consequence of prejudices about PwD but is also caused by the insufficient level of employer's awareness about the working ability of PwD, specifically in stimulated and adapted environment. This can be a reason that mostly employers prefer to pay penalties instead to employ PwD.

There is a need to support SwD but there are also employers who employ or want to hire PwD. To meet their needs, it is necessary to: at an early stage of transition provide adequate assistance to SwD who are looking for work in order to overcome existing barriers; ensure the early development of skills and knowledge, as well as the availability of jobs in order to increase employability of SwD; provide that the transition from education to employment is easier and it is not subject to the risks; educate employers on the way to better understand PwD and to better comprehend what it means to recruit PwD; establish a centralized system which will comprehensively displays information of interest to the PwD, employers but also for institutions and centers of employment; services provided in the process of education and the transition should be adapted to individual needs; connect employers who do not yet employ PwD with employers who took advantage of this opportunity to share information and providing support; provide seasonal jobs, employment over the summer for the SwD to acquire the necessary experience and knowledge; to give recognition to leading employers in the labor market who employ PwD to encourage employers and others to similar activities; make brochures and guidelines for employers to help them in more efficiently PwD employment.

4. Steps to employment of persons with disabilities

Employment of persons with disabilities should be viewed through the perspective of quality human resources that could and should be used for the entire business development organization, not only as an obligation imposed by law for some employers. Precisely one of the main goals of the leadership team of the organization and the sector of human resources is to create sustainability of the work collective. It is therefore important to choose the most competent people for a position, regardless of the particular specificity, and provide power to the vacant workplace to reach all the potentially interested candidates.

Research shows that people with disabilities are loyal workers, less frequently absent from work and linger in one workplace longer. In addition, their



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presence often raises morale in the organization, motivating other employees to stand up and show more initiative (Živić et al., 2009). Especially in times of economic turmoil and socio-economic uncertainties, in the national and international community, the organization needs motivated and reliable people who will be willing to stay with the organization and are committed to achieving objectives. In fact, most would be achieved if persons with disabilities are viewed as any other person, job applicants or employees.

The only difference for people with disabilities is that they may be required e.g. different organized office space, different times in order to successfully complete a particular job, a different way of communicating. This is certainly not the reason that people with disabilities should not be employed. Each employee has some features that set it apart from the rest and why it is necessary to make some adjustments of his daily activities or even relationship with her/him, for example, sudden illness, very strong extroversion/introversion, excessive impulsiveness and the like. On the other hand, every employee has characteristics that make him/her as valuable member of the working collectives in terms of contribution to the working atmosphere and the results of the organization. In this way should be considered persons with disabilities and to honor in them the knowledge, skills and attributes that can contribute to the daily functioning and progress of the organization.

Each work unit should nurture and promote universal values, such as honesty, freedom, unity, tolerance, responsibility, truthfulness, love, altruism, diversity, and so on. In addition, the human rights approach should be promoted in the organization. The human rights approach to disability builds on the social approach by acknowledging persons with disabilities as subjects of rights and the state and others as having responsibilities to respect these persons. It treats the barriers in society as discriminatory and provides avenues for persons with disabilities to complain when they are faced with such barriers. A rights-based approach to disability is not driven by compassion, but by dignity and freedom. It seeks ways to respect, support and celebrate human diversity by creating the conditions that allow meaningful participation by a wide range of persons, including persons with disabilities. Instead of focusing on persons with disabilities as passive objects of charitable acts, it seeks to assist people to help themselves so that they can participate in society, in education, at the workplace, in political and cultural life and defend their rights through accessing justice. Under this model, persons with disabilities have rights and instruments that can empower them to claim their rights. They have tools to be in control of their lives and fully participate on equal terms with others. The human rights approach provides that persons with disabilities are closely involved in policymaking by law. A person with a disability has the right to employment, also, in accordance with their competence.

The organization should develop employment policy in order to provide equal



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employment opportunities and non-discrimination in hiring, promotion and advancement of development and training. The purpose of this procedure is to take positive action to prevent, not only acts of discrimination on account of disability, but also conditions that may lead to a discriminatory effect. This will enable the employer to ensure that there is no direct or indirect discrimination. The document should contain all policies, procedures and rules for managers and staff employment that serve as a way of ensuring that decisions on recruitment, selection, training and promotion are passed on objective and professional criteria. The adoption of a formal policy will ensure that non-discrimination becomes a process that is normatively rooted within the organization.

To make the employment process of persons with disabilities held in accordance with human rights, the following describes three important steps: a) job description, b) the recruitment of candidates and c) the selection of candidates.

a) JOB DESCRIPTION

Job description (tasks, required competencies and characteristics of the applicants) is a first formal step in the process of human resource management. Thus, in the context of systematization of jobs, a set of tasks and job duties that should be performed by one person is formed. Also, the characteristics, knowledge and skills that a person should possess to successfully perform the tasks within a work place are defined. In summary, the analysis and job description should pay particular attention to (see more in Matković and Naninović, n.d): a) general information about the job (working hours, necessary qualification, working environment, etc.); b) job description; c) ability to perform the job requirements; d) the desirable characteristics/features, and e) conditions and ability to adapt the workplace.

Also, during the job analysis, it is necessary to know (Matković and Naninović, n.d): a) the job analysis goal is to support a person with disability to find a suitable job; b) persons with disabilities can also significantly help in the analysis of operations and improvement of performance; c) the employer creates the workplace and provides the conditions and environment to do the job; d) the employer may get support and advice in the analysis of jobs knowing how to create adapted working place, working environment and assistive technology; e) the achievement of the set legal targets/quotas is ensured; f) analysis of the job can be an introduction/beginning of work experience (practice) as well as an introduction to the analysis of the required "on the job training"; g) jobs offered to persons with disabilities should not be offered out of charity, but as a result of a thorough analysis of the job. Table 2 shows an example of a job description.

Table 2: Job description (taken from: Matković and Naninović, n.d):



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Position	Responsibilities	Main assignments	Features
Office manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Business management - Finance management - Managing people and managing customer relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Definition of programs/activities/plans - Define your budget - Conflict Management - Customer relationship management - Writing reports - Reporting - Leadership and meeting management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good communication skills - Good skills of written expression - Developed interpersonal skills - Respect of deadlines - The tendency to work in teams - Ability to work independently - Skills management - Computer literacy - Ability to work under pressure

After the analysis of the work environment has been made and the description has been done, the second step follows and that is the recruitment of candidates.

a) THE RECRUITMENT OF THE CANDIDATES

Recruitment aims to attract high quality candidates for the job and involves the process of creating and presenting the identity/image of the employer, decide on the recruitment channels and selection of modes of employment with respect to a specific position. Enlistment, or coming to the set of candidates from which the best is chosen by the application of different methods is very important and often quite complex task. It is important to attract a sufficient number of candidates in order to make a good selection. Also, it is necessary to properly focus on the recruitment process in order to attract candidates with appropriate competence. As a measure of positive action, the employers themselves can set as goal that the recruitment process attracts as many qualified people with disabilities. To ensure that qualified individuals with disabilities participate in the contest several channels of recruitment can be selected, and they include: employment bureau, fund for vocational rehabilitation and employment, employment agencies, job portal, associations of persons with disabilities, etc.

Employers should make an extra effort to create their job advertisement and attract more qualified persons, including persons with disabilities. This is most often accomplished by a declaration that the organization has developed a policy of equality and equal opportunities in the recruitment process. It is important to emphasize in the advertisement of the key competencies and the description of the tasks for that job, which are the necessary conditions, what



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are the expectations of employees at the workplace, etc. in order for the person themselves to adequately assess whether to apply or how well they meet the conditions and needs of the workplace. The principle of non-discrimination should be respected throughout the recruitment process, to ensure the maximum benefits of the employer and equal opportunities for all candidates. Accordingly, it is important to ensure that the advertisement comes to people with disabilities, and it is necessary to pay attention to communication accessibility for people with disabilities. Given that different people prefer different channels for receiving and sharing information, it is important to include more media communication in the advertising of an open labor position.

Possible channels of advertising job advertisement are: a) radio advertising - voice messaging allows people who have visual impairment to hear an advertisement on the radio; b) Internet advertising - facilitates the exchange of information especially for people with hearing impairment. Persons with visual impairments can, with the help of a special reader, monitor the entire content on the website; c) advertising in newspapers - the newspaper can reach persons with hearing impairments, persons with physical disabilities and the like which further provides a permanent record, and thus gives more freedom in analyzing advertisement.

Additionally, in order to provide greater approach to the total population of persons with disabilities, it is desirable and necessary to follow certain standards that facilitate communication, for example, for persons with hearing impairments a sign language interpreter might be included, as a small video within the advertisement for the job. This diversity can be an extremely important tool for the employment of persons with disabilities. Regardless of which recruitment channel is selected it is important to point out in the advertisement that people with disabilities are invited to apply for the vacancy. Application forms should also be accessible for all people. Forms need to be inspected to ensure that these are available in alternative formats. Required formats will depend on the needs of the individual, personal preferences and access to technology and can include large writing in print, audio, email, Braille alphabet, compact disc (CD) and the like. Alternative entrance format should require the application of the same information as the standard. In accordance with the policy of equal opportunities in employment it is important that organizations highlight that the application form is available in alternative formats and provide a contact through which the data sheet can be accessed. Also, candidates should be given a chance, by answering questions, to indicate whether they have any special requirements for adjustment of conditions for realization of the interview. In this way, persons with disabilities can make sure they get an equal chance in the selection process. One of effective ways for advertising vacancies for PWD and recruiting persons with disabilities is offered by (national) employment agencies. For example, the



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NES Serbia has special staffs who are sensitized for work with PWD and who could do high-quality selection of candidates for the advertised vacancies.

a) THE SELECTION OF CANDIDATES

Professional selection is a professional process of selecting candidates based on an assessment of competence of candidates in relation to the job requirements (Matković and Naninović, n.d). It is based on the application of scientifically based and objective instruments, and other standard procedures. Selection done by the employer carries out independently is usually based on data collected on the candidate from the documents of the candidates and realized interviews, with possible trial work. This choice is not a professional selection process and is based largely on subjective assessment of the employer. However, this procedure is the most common in practice.

The criteria for entering the shortlist of candidates should not discriminate against applicants with disabilities. All who participate in the selection process need to understand that the application of persons with disabilities must be treated fairly, whether it is delivered in standard or alternate format. It is necessary to analyze whether it is possible to make adjustments so that persons with disabilities are working as efficiently as others. During the selection process individual applications should be assessed and decide, taking into account the order of priority criteria. If there are too many candidates who meet the primary criterion, a second selection criterion is required, according to importance, on which you should pay attention not to be discriminatory and the like.

The interview is the first direct meeting with the candidates for the job, including with people with disabilities who would like to get a job in the organization. In this sense, this activity leaves plenty of room to make mistakes, as in the communication of persons with disabilities, as well as in assessing whether a particular person with a disability is adequate for an open position in a specific organization. Interviewers should avoid assumptions about the abilities of persons with disabilities, should be objective and impartial, informed regarding the conduct of interviews with people with disabilities. Also, employers should consider how to ensure equal opportunities for persons with disabilities participating in the selection process. So, when it comes to organizing the interview, one should try to make a reasonable accommodation when necessary (see more in Marinković and Naninović, n.d. and Živčić et al, 2009). For example, a building with multiple floors should have a lift. The buildings that have stairs should have a ramp. Toilets available for persons with disabilities should be on the same floor where the interview is being held. In case that there is no ramp and no elevator, the interview should be organized on the ground floor. When it



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comes to persons with hearing impairment, you can provide or authorize the presence of sign language interpreters and during the interview the interviewer should look and interact with a person with hearing impairment, and not with an escort/interpreter. If the applicant is a person with visual impairment, the interviewer should not exclude/limit non-verbal communication and whispering or question in Braille. If it is a person with intellectual disabilities interview could be conducted in a one on one as opposed to a panel interview. Interview questions would need to be short and clear. The interviewer should be patient and try to get an answer.

Communication with the candidate who has a disability

Person who conduct interviews should be familiar with the issues related to disabilities and equal opportunities at the policy level of employment of persons with disabilities. Also, it would be useful for person who do the interviewing how to properly communicate with candidates with disabilities. First of all, if the persons who conduct the interview do not want to harm or insult the person they are talking to and want to achieve ease of communication, the next few precautions can help with that:

- offer assistance if it appears that the caller/interlocutors assistance is required (do not insist and do not offend if help is rejected);
- in communication with persons with disabilities, the person should have the proper attention (it is correct to say person with disabilities, not invalid person). The right way to address them is to use the phrase that combines the word "person" with their particular disability, e.g. *person with dystrophy*, rather than *dystrophic person*;
- any assistive devices, such as wheelchairs, crutches, guide dogs and the like should be respected as personal property or the PWD's accompanying equipment. Do not use them, lean against them or move them unless explicitly permitted to do so. If you wish to offer assistance to a person with disabilities, you should always ask first, wait for the answer, and then, if assistance is accepted, patiently listen and follow the instructions;
- if the person who conducts the interview does not know how to react in a certain situation - they should ask (and thus does not show ignorance but rather the desire to respect the person they are communicating with);
- listen carefully and feel free to ask to be repeated if a person from the organization did not understand what the interviewee/participant communicated;
- speak clearly looking at the person you are communicating with face to face, if possible at the same level (sit if the caller/interviewee sits or is much lower than the interviewer);
- ask whether something said needs to be repeated when in a situation where there is not a clear belief that person with certain disabilities



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understood what was said;

- respect personal space of the interviewee/informant (carts and other supplies belong in the personal space);
- avoid questions about his/her disability, unless they are the topic of the conversation or are not important to do the job;
- be patient;
- have respect;
- do not feel sorry;
- show respect to the person with a faint, unaffected smile;
- bear in mind that the person you are talking to is probably tense, perhaps even frightened and that it is up to you to help them with your attitude and empathy;
- show your empathy;
- do nothing else while you are having the interview;
- talk loud and clear, with no filler words, and look for verbal and nonverbal signs of the person you are talking to, to make sure that they understand you;
- address the interviewee by their name;
- be aware that persons with disabilities often need more time for some activities.

The interview and other selection procedures should be objective and impartial. The aim of the person that asks the questions during the interview is to choose the best person for the job. Therefore, it should be taken into consideration not to miss the potential candidates with disabilities. We should not allow personal prejudices and misunderstandings about disability stand in the way of a good interview. It is important that persons with disabilities have a fair opportunity to present their capabilities and potential during the interview.

5. Inclusion of the employee in the organization

Once when organization successfully modifies the practice of recruitment and employment of persons with disabilities and after they brought the person into the organization, it is necessary to enable a successful involvement in the organization of the new employee. All employees should have the same opportunities and the conditions to adequately participate and contribute to the progress and success of the organization, and it seems that quality inclusion and integration of employees in the new work environment is a key. Integration requires a lot of effort and that process imposes an additional burden on persons with disabilities. Therefore, the introduction and integration of persons with disabilities in the company must be carried systematically and in collaboration with other colleagues, taking care that persons with disabilities



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feel safe and belonging.

The leadership of the organization plays a very important role in the integration process. Open and effective communication as well as clear channels for feedback from an employee, represent a significant tool to prevent potential problems of integration and discrimination. Educational access to other employees also can help to eliminate many fears and prejudices that may take place. Other employees need to know (and it should be told to them) that there are standards of appropriate behavior and that they are expected to comply with these standards in the workplace, but for the benefit of all need, there has to be enough place for mistakes as well and opportunities for new learning. Diversity and inclusion are more successfully cultivated in an open work environment where mistakes are used for learning and not for targeting and shaming people.

The inclusion of employees with disabilities in the company includes the following (with an expectation that previously have been made the necessary adjustments in the working area as well as work task):

- a. introduction to the colleagues and to the direct collaborators,
- b. introduction to the leaders,
- c. exploring the company, as well as introduction with general information that may be helpful,
- d. exploring the workplace and introduction to the tasks. Leaders should communicate clear expectations from the employee which were previously adjusted to the abilities and skills of people,
- e. introducing people how the company evaluates work performance, and these evaluations should be in accordance with information about expectations,
- f. assigning a mentor and meet with him,
- g. in case that person with disabilities need additional training, clearly present the objectives of the training and how the training will be conducted,
- h. show a clear interest in feedback from the new employees if there is necessary additional adaptations and modifications,
- i. respect announced.

Successful recruitment and successfully implemented inclusion process in the company will lead to a clear demonstration of the values of equality and justice in the company, the company will be a good example for their employees to accept a person with disabilities, increase the cohesiveness of the team in which people with disabilities work, and motivate other employees to provide an additional contribution to the achievements of the organization.

Some of these behaviors are good examples how to ensure a successful inclusion process of persons with disabilities in the company.

If the employee is a person with intellectual disabilities:



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- a. provide support assistants and supervisors,
- b. provide continuous training,
- c. ensure the audio recordings or software that will remind the employee that should perform certain tasks,
- d. flexible working time/job sharing,
- e. notes and audio recordings of the meetings,
- f. get to know the person so that you can engage them in different social or organizational events that they will be favored with,
- g. when you are with a person being sure, calm and soothing,
- h. if a crisis happens, ask them to tell you the best way how to help or previously find information about the best behavior during the potential crises and ways of responding to them,
- i. provide assistance in crowded and noisy environments or high stress situations.

If an employee has a physical disability:

- a. move furniture and other objects in the room to make free space for a wheelchair, scooter or other mobility assistance. Avoid reliance on these technical assistance,
- b. if you need to have a long conversation with a person in a wheelchair, sit so you can make eye contact with the person you are talking to,
- c. you need to know your workspace. Be aware of what is available and what is not for people who use mobility assistance,
- d. push someone in a wheelchair only when the person is required,
- e. give directions that include distance and physical obstacles (example: you can provide location and mentioned steps contained therein, sidewalk or a steep hill),
- f. make the building and other organizations to be physically available,
- g. provide them with flexible working hours,
- h. offer them the option of working from home, using computers and the Internet, but do not prevent to come if they want,
- i. ensure that personal workspace of the persons with disabilities can be easily changed,
- j. ensure their auxiliaries (holder of books and documents, voice recognition software, thrower page, custom keyboard).

If an employee has learning disabilities:

- a. documentation and information should be prepared in a variety of colors or in a form that the person most suited,
- b. prepare audio files documents and try to keep the person tasks and other information orally, rather than send in writing (voice message),
- c. offer and provide assistance if person needs,
- d. be patient when the person needs more time to process information



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and answers.

If the employee has hearing or visual impairments:

- a. provide interpreters of sign language and if it is possible, make learning sign language for people from the collective,
- b. engage attention of the person on yourself before you speak,
- c. speak loudly and calmly so that the interpreter of sign language can translate your words to the person that can't hear and give the person time to respond. If a person can read from the lips turn your face to the person when you speak and emphasize words as you pronounce. Speak normally and keep your hands and other objects away from the lips,
- d. speak clearly, slowly and directly to the person, not to the interpreter,
- e. do not yell,
- f. write notes and use gestures in discussions one-on-one,
- g. do not assume that people know sign language or that can read lips. Ask.
- h. reduce background noise that disturbs the silence (e.g. tapping a pencil or paper jam) because the amplifier is a very sensitive to the noise in the environment,
- i. speak in a quiet environment or move to somewhere else in order to facilitate communication,
- j. consider captioning, i.e. software that converts sound into text,
- k. furnish room with visual signs and alarms.

If the employee has hearing or visual impairments:

- a. introduce yourself and the person who is with you,
- b. if you have already met, explain the context of your previous dating,
- c. if you talk to a group, name the person you are speaking,
- d. speak in a normal tone,
- e. be clear if you move from one place to another or if the conversation is ended,
- f. clean the space from the obstacles,
- g. describe the environment to the person created the idea and feeling environment. For example, say "The chair is 2-3 steps to the right of you," or "In front of you there are some obstacles on the left side",
- h. when you offer a person help during the walk, call the person to take your arm and walk half a step ahead of her. Then listen to what the person says and ask for further instructions,
- i. if you think that is appropriate, offer the person that you read the information to them,
- j. guide dogs are "working dogs": speech or interaction with the dog is distracting and inappropriate and may be perceived as a barbaric act,



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- k. plan ahead to ensure that you have enough time to prepare alternative forms of printed material (e.g. Braille, large letters, audio tapes or digital formats),
- l. turn up the lights more and insert it correctly.

Therefore, after employment it is very important to ensure a quality induction on the job. It is important to establish the formal induction process prior to the new employee commencing. Building the useful induction program can take time, and the quality of the induction will correlate with the amount of effort, time and money attributed to the process. However, as high turnover rates for new employees have been proven to be linked to their experiences of the induction process, it could be good investment. Although generally responsibility for planning and reviewing an induction program will likely rest with the new employee's manager and the HR department, particularly in larger organizations, many different employees and departments are likely to be involved in its delivery and will have varying degrees of contact with the new employee (see more at: AiGroup – HR Resource Centre, <https://www.aigroup.com.au>). For employers who have no experience with persons with disabilities it is useful to contact professional services that could provide more information and advice as well as to introduce employees to work. In case when there is an employee who has a disability that affects communication skills, it is useful to organize a course or seminar on alternative possibilities of communication for the supervised and co-workers. When companies organize seminars, professional support can also be provided by the associations of persons with disabilities.

6. Redundancy

Termination of employment can be implemented for two reasons: 1) release of the employee from the employer and 2) getting a resignation from an employee. The reasons for the dismissal of employees may be different, but the most common are: dissatisfaction with work performance, breach of work duties, violation of work ethics and cessation of the need for certain positions (redundancy), disagreement with the policies or practices of the company, and so on. On the other hand, an employee may quit because: a chance for getting a new job, continuing discrimination in the workplace, lack of opportunities for professional development, poor working conditions, lack of benefits, low income, etc.

There is a prejudice among the employers that the persons with disabilities in situations that result in termination of employment are harder to release (Živić et al., 2009). However, the employer is entitled to dismiss a person who does not comply with the agreed labor standards, in violation of labor discipline, procedures, organization, and the like. Each (disciplinary) measure taken by



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the employer, as well as the release should be defined in advance on clearly defined criteria and the same for all employees. However, what we must ensure is an honest attitude towards people with disabilities, as well as with all other employees. If it comes to a situation where it is necessary to fire an employee due to non-compliance of labor standards, it would be good to follow the following procedure (Živić et al., 2009), which will be known in advance to employees: a) inform the employee that he does not meet labor standards, explain to him why it was recorded and how it can be corrected; b) present the employee specific goals for improving performance and period in which to fulfill them; c) notify employees that, if there is no fulfillment of the agreed goals, his/her employment may be terminated; d) give the employee a chance to improve their work, giving him regular feedback on his/her work performance and the necessary support in the period that the employee is given for the improvement of performance, e) after the expiry of the agreed period, make a clear overview and assessment to improve operational performance of employees. It is very important to keep a record of the process, document the communication with an employee and make a written description of expected and achieved improvement of performance. Therefore it will be clear what is asked from the person is improvement and it will enable to avoid possible problems in the future. In a situation where an employee for some reason wants to quit, it is desirable to arrange a final interview, in order to find out the reasons for dismissal and eventually try to positively resolve the situation to the satisfaction of all. The truth is that no one wants to lose good and well-trained employees. It is very expensive and has a negative impact on other employees. It is important to clarify the reasons for leaving the job and if it is possible to make further efforts to improve conditions in this regard. Be sure to ask the employee for his opinion on how to improve working conditions in the future.

To avoid the risk of being discriminatory, an employer must consider making “reasonable adjustments” so employees are not at a disadvantage in a redundancy process because of disability. Risk of discrimination tends to be in two key areas: the criteria an employer uses to select employees for redundancy and how an employer manages the redundancy process.

An employer should check the redundancy selection criteria it is intending to use including (ACAS, 2015): a) absence - consider whether it might be a ‘reasonable adjustment’ to disregard some or all of an employee’s disability-related absence, or use another period of time; b) working hours - avoid simply selecting part-time staff or those with other flexible working arrangements. They could include employees who work part-time or flexibly because of their disability or because they care for someone with a disability; c) job performance - scoring of this factor might need a ‘reasonable adjustment’ to take into account an employee’s disability. For example, an employee’s stroke has slowed the speed at which they work, and their score



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may need to be adjusted upwards.

An employer should ensure it scores comparable periods and can clearly show that adjusting a score upwards is proportionate, appropriate and necessary so an employee is not at a disadvantage because of disability.

An employer should be careful in managing a redundancy process in areas including (ACAS, 2015): a) communication - make sure an employee with disabilities is not disadvantaged in getting or understanding information about the redundancy process. For example, the employee's disability may mean they need information in Braille, and audio format or Easy Read, or have the process explained to them verbally; b) tests for alternative roles - make "reasonable adjustments" to suitable alternative roles so employees with disabilities feel they can apply, and to an interview or assessment process for employees with disabilities applying for an alternative role in a restructuring of the organization.

In some circumstances, it has been ruled by a court to be reasonable for an employer to transfer a employee with disabilities to a suitable vacancy at the same level, a lower position or slightly higher position, if the employee can show they are capable and qualified for the job; c) offering an alternative role - make sure the new role does not include tasks the employee could not do, or would struggle with, because of their disability – unless a 'reasonable adjustment' would remove a disadvantage. However, an employer does not have to create a vacancy for a employee with disabilities.

7. Mentoring in the working organization

Mentoring should be an integral part of the development of the work organization. Mentoring² can play a key role in ensuring that persons with disabilities achieve work objectives, have access to opportunities for professional development and advancement, and to provide an objective appraisal and constructive guidance. Mentoring is a relationship in which the mentor, through support, advice, friendship and constructive example helps another person to achieve their work and life goals. Mentoring is a relationship built on trust.

A mentor is an experienced employee, who knows the job, expectations of employees, rights of persons with disabilities, has the capability to

² For example, in the National Employment Service of the Republic of Serbia there is program offered to employers who wants to hire PWD. This is *Reimbursement of the costs of professional assistance for PWD employed under special conditions – workplace assistance*: an employer who hires, on an open-ended contract, a person with disabilities who requires professional support at the workplace, is entitled to a reimbursement of the costs of the wage for the person hire to provide such support to the newly employed PWD, during the period in which such support is provided.



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communicate with other colleagues, has counseling skills, and so on. Usually it is the person most respected by other colleagues in the workplace because of the competence held by the openness to others. Mentor cooperates with employees, management of the company, operating assistant and the like. He is a mediator and facilitator for both the employed persons (with disabilities), and to colleagues and superiors. He is the first person to contact in the company when there are some problems. Mentor, therefore, participates in different activities and has different roles in the company, but the most important are: participation in the recruitment and admission of employees, the introduction of the working environment to the employees, working with other employees, monitoring and evaluation of performance and professional development of employees. Therefore, mentor should possess the knowledge and skills necessary for the realization of these tasks. It is therefore necessary to enable the opportunity for continuous professional development for the mentor.

Persons with disabilities, like all other employees have a need and desire for professional development and cognition of something new and they should be included in the training that is provided to all employees. Also, in situations where they show initiative and motivation additionally, it is necessary to provide them with additional forms of training and development. Availability and suitability of specific forms of training to persons with disabilities is essential for the development of their self-esteem, work performance and career development. Continuous training of persons with disabilities is important for being able to be promoted to higher positions, in accordance with their competence and regardless of disabilities. As in all other areas dealing with employees with disabilities, and the questions of personal development and advancement one should apply the same settings as for other employees. What is different is how the particular person with disability is approached, taking into account the specificities of the disability. Information about the possibilities of development and progress should be clear and, if necessary, adaptively communicated to employees with disabilities. The entire process of the role of mentor is of great value.

A mentor can be a person who is employed in the department for development of human resources in this role. In some cases it may be useful for a person to have another person with disability as a mentor, because the person has progressed on a career scale and, on the other hand, has the experience of people with disabilities in the company. However, just because they are both persons with disabilities does not mean they will be able to better connect life experience, but in the case when the mentoring system includes a person who does not have a disability. For this reason, all the mentors, whether they are with disabilities or not, must receive training on the rights of persons with disabilities and the exercise of rights before they become mentors. Peer-tutoring is a type of mentoring in a situation where the



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person is entrusted to take care of the other. This system may include monitoring and assistance by experienced people while learning about the job, as well as providing someone to assist the employee, if there is a difficulty in the performance of their tasks. It is always helpful for people with disabilities to know where to turn if there is any difficulty or problem. However, one should be careful with this kind of mentoring and support of the given type should be monitored regularly, so as not to create excessive dependence on colleagues who were entrusted with mentoring.

Professional networking is an important complement to mentoring. Professional networking is the act of connecting and interacting with individuals who share certain interests, perspectives, or experiences in common. While professional networking is not a new concept, technological advances have increased the ease with which individuals can identify and interact with others of common interests or experiences, not just locally, but nationally and globally. As a result, more people are utilizing Internet based social networks to exchange ideas, share knowledge, and make new professional and personal contacts relevant to their career and personal goals and interests. Professional networking using the Internet is commonly referred to as social networking or using social media.

Although the primary goal of mentoring is to support another person, a person with disabilities, mentors too benefit from the entire process. Some of these advantages are (according to Pardini, 2006; <http://www.askearn.org/wp-content/uploads/docs/wmp.pdf>): personal and professional satisfaction for helping another person; recognition from his colleagues and superiors for investing their own time and expertise; enhancement of personal interpersonal skills; gaining a deeper understanding of the experience of other employees.

8. Examples of good practice

Due to good practice and positive experiences still allow us to learn, expand their knowledge and create new opportunities for themselves and others, below are examples of good practice in countries where the project is implemented.

The Law on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities in Serbia, passed in 2009, is the key document that opens the possibilities for wider inclusion of persons with disabilities in the open labor market and it has contributed to awareness rising about their work capabilities



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and the fundamental right to work. Moreover, it has contributed to institutional capacity building and sensitization of employers to issues in the field of PWD employment and labor.

The innovations introduced by this Law include: broader definition of disability, in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; new concept of assessment of PWD work capabilities; introduction of quotas for employment of PWD; new active labor market measures and programs; foundation of the separate Budget Fund for employment and vocational rehabilitation of PWD.

It is fair to say that the quota system, as a solution prescribed by the law, has yielded very quick results, considering that in the previous years there were 200-300 persons with disabilities employed annually from the National Employment Service's registry, whereas this number has been increasing almost continuously since the adoption of the law.

Based on the intensified information/promotion activities, there has been increased interest among employers in this period for using the subsidies for employment of disadvantaged persons in newly created jobs, as well as excellent implementation of the Public Works scheme.

Tisa Automotive company, founded in March 2014 in Senta, is one of the most important joint, Serbian-Hungarian investments. Main activities of Tisa Automotive industry is the production of cable harnesses for the automotive industry. The company has recently developed into one of the largest employers in the region Tisa in Vojvodina, and by the beginning of next year it will employ more than 700 employees.

Recognition for the employer who hired the highest number of people with disabilities National Employment Service granted to the company TISZA AUTOMOTIVE from Senta, which in 2016 hired 12 persons with disabilities from the NES evidence and thus made a significant contribution to the employment of persons with disabilities. The said company employed the largest number of people with disabilities using mediation services in employment, *without* the financial support of the NES. The company whose business is the manufacture of electrical and electronic equipment for motor vehicles was established in 2014.

Director of the company Barna Akos expressed his satisfaction and gratitude for the award and stressed that in the future Tisza Automotive will try to give people with disabilities more opportunities:

"Employment of Persons with Disabilities has proceeded according to plan. We managed to achieve this goal due to good cooperation with the NES Kikinda branch office. We had a request, we received an offer and necessary information and eventually hired people with disabilities with great help and support of the National Employment Service. Our plans depend largely on the



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customer, but what I can say for sure is that next year we will, until April 1, to hire another 200 people" said Barna Akos.

Tisza Automotive Ltd. is employing 13 people with disabilities. Since all employees has assessment of working ability in first degree of difficulties and obstacles in their work, people with disabilities perform administrative tasks in the office, work on selective waste collection in storage, sanitary maintenance of the facility, and folding cable bundles on the production line.

Since we are talking about people with specific 1st degree of difficulties and obstacles in their work, and that people with physical disabilities deployed to work on administrative tasks, there are no barriers to their work and there was no need to purchase additional equipment or adjustment of resources for work or working hours. The employment of persons with disability flowed along with the increase in the number of other employees in the company. Their integration into the collective took place without any obstacles.

The company **PLODOVI PAK** doo from Kovin, established in 2014, engages in vocational rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities. The core activity of the company is conducted under the program approved by the Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs.³ The company currently has 21 employees, of which 13 are persons with disabilities. The persons with disabilities employed in our company are assessed to have work capacity degrees I and II and their jobs include fruit and vegetable sorting, packing and storage. The company's management supports the idea of employing persons with disabilities, since it wishes to give a chance to everybody who is willing to work, who feels the need to be useful in the society, to integrate themselves in the society and revive the confidence in their capabilities. The company aspires to being a part of the socially responsible community.

The company also employs a team of professionals who work with the persons with disabilities. In cooperation with the National Employment Service, depending on the requirements of a specific job, the professional team recruits new workers. In the beginning, the professional workers interview the interested candidates, then they review the provided documents and analyze, based on the medical evaluation, whether a candidate is

³ Enterprise for vocational rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities is a legal entity which employs and conducts vocational rehabilitation of persons with disabilities in accordance with the Law on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities (Article 35, *Official Gazette of RS*, No. 36/2009 and 32/2013)



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capable of performing certain tasks without any negative effects on their health while doing so. At PLODOVI PAK, the workplace integration counselor conducts the preparation of each newly recruited worker, introduces them to the other staff members, acquaints them with the company rules, and determines the employee's working habits and prior work experience.

The vocational assistance counselor is responsible for developing and strengthening the worker's motivation, both for performing tasks and for adopting new knowledge and skills, developing the right attitude towards work and adapting to the work environment.

The practical training instructor continually monitors the work of persons with disabilities, proposes the changes to the professional team that he/she considers necessary, if any, in order to ensure the success of the adaptation and vocational rehabilitation process.

Persons with disabilities are continually monitored at the workplace, in order to analyze the successfulness of their performance of tasks and, if needed, to make adjustments in line with their capabilities. The adjustments primarily refer to the time needed for performing certain operations, to making shorter but more frequent breaks during the day, to the technical conditions of a particular workplace, as well as to the tools and equipment for work. Every task is divided into operations, in order to facilitate the work of persons with disabilities. Good communication and motivation of persons with disabilities is a prerequisite that the professional team aspires to ensure, in order to develop the employees' sense of belonging to the team, and to experience the workplace as a stimulating environment for further development and personal fulfillment of every individual, so that the work engagement of persons with disabilities does not become solely a means for their economic independence but also a precondition for adequate participation in the social life at large.

National Museum of Uzice hired Miss Marina Kotarac to perform professional archaeological supervision during the execution of earthworks (excavation) during construction of the building for small arms ammunition Uzici in Uzice, Western Serbia. The construction of the plant is performing by investor: Fighting complex systems DOO from Belgrade.

Marina is an archaeologist by the Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade, Department of archeology. She is working in the field, as well as supervision during construction of the plant weapons, traveling to the field every second day (depending on needs), and following excavations. In case some archaeological remains are found, she is obligated to stop the construction works and report the findings. She has finished elementary and high school in Pozega, Western Serbia, and later Faculty of Philosophy in Belgrade. She suffers from hip dysplasia from birth. She is not allowed to perform any hard physical work. She has the official judgment of the National Employment Agency of the Republic of Serbia that she holds the first degree of



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difficulty and obstacles for work.

She is not selected for this job as a person with disability, but just because of her expertise. Working daily in the field, she performs easy walking and site visits. If she follows excavations, there is a chair to sit and rest. The only barrier can be steep and slippery terrain, but for now there were no problems of that kind. She has quickly adapted to the environment. The necessary equipment was agreed with director of the museum (boots, camera, compass...), and site work contractor provided me with fluorescent (protective) vest. In consultation with director of the Museum and supervisor at the site, the working hours have been agreed in advance. The other workers in the field get to know who she is and why she is there, and are very correct.

The workers in the field are not fully aware that Marina is a person with disability, since it is not easily recognized, and nobody explicitly didn't tell them. The workers in the administration management of the National Museum in Uzice, were very kind and in polite way, trying not to hurt her, asked Marina to provide the official statement on her disability for the company documentation.

Company ALTI d.o.o. Cacak is one of the leading distributors and manufacturers of computers, consumer goods and communication technologies in the region. Companies do business with more than 2500 corporate clients across three countries, through the four distribution centers and more than 105 retail stores. The goal of Company business is to satisfy the user's needs while investing daily in new technological solutions that help them accomplish and achieve more in their environment. **Alti marks its business domain in the field of corporate sales, retail sales, wholesale as well as online sales.**

Retail sales are done through three chain stores: WinWin, Emmi and Pc Practic. Our case study is Marija Milovanovic who works in the sector WinWin. This part of the Company hold more than 20 000 products in more than 95 categories: IT equipment, supplies & accessories, office supplies and furniture, AV equipment, white goods, small home appliances, video surveillance and many other products for the office or home.

Marija Milovanovic is 34 years old, married and has two children, graduated at the Faculty of Economics in NIS. Marija is person with disability third category - with physical impairment of the lower limbs. Every day must traveling by bus 30 km to the workplace, because she lives in Banja Trepca. Travel is a big problem for her, because the bus is not adapted for people with disabilities. Especially problem is in the winter period and when it rains. She works as Main cashier for checks in the sector of the bookkeeping. Every day is in contacts with the shops leaders, banks and customers, which are emitted checks. Equipment for the job there was no need special arrangements. The problem is a long and difficult sitting and moving through the offices and floors. Honestly speaking, the movement in the building, where she works no to much serious obstacles. Marija got a job on the recommendation Ana Dojcilovic, Clark of the National Employment Service Cacak. Till now she works in the Company WIN WIN four years and is very respected and valued worker. As a total she has eight years of work experience. It can be concluded that she is pleased



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with working conditions and personal incomes, but often have to work longer than regular working hours. This is a very complicate because of her return from work to the home. In the workplace is well accepted by colleagues that she works with. The process of adjusting to the workplace has passed without complications. For now, there is no possibility for advancement in the profession.

Company USPON d.o.o Cacak, for computer engineering, was founded in 2001 with business headquarters in Cacak. The main business is the manufacture and distribution of computer equipment. The company initially worked intensively on defining production and market strategy, which is aimed at high-visibility companies and "quality" as its motto operations. The strategic concept is the production of computers, computer subassemblies and implementation of complex information systems. Production is based on components of high reliability in the world renowned manufacturers. **Ivan Borisavljevic** was born in the city's family, 33 years ago. He chose the economic high school because other practical occupations were not available for him. He graduated as the best student of the generation. He enrolled to study at the Faculty of Organizational Sciences in Belgrade, Financial Management. He completed his studies in record time, with average 8,6 and became an engineer organization. After that he was trying to get a job but without success, due to problems with vision. As person with visual impairment, he could not get a driver's license. This requirement was in every attempt as one of the conditions for getting a job. After such an experience he began to work as a volunteer in a small company, "PEHAR UP" in Cacak. This is a workshop that employs only persons with disabilities. They buy ready-made cups and texts engraved on them, and applications per customer request.

Here he got first gained experience and learned a business operating procedures that are necessary for all types of finishing and selling goods. First of all, he learned how to make business correspondence and preparation of supporting documentation for the process of the production and sales of finished products. Therefore, Ivan believes that such small workshops are excellent preparatory stage for entry the people with disabilities into world of work. At this stage of his life Ivan realized that employers look at people with disabilities as persons "lower level", regardless of the level of education and other personal characteristics.

After four years of work experience in the workshop "PEHAR UP" he applied on the advertisement in the Company USPON, and was selected among several candidates. Today he works for more than two years on the workplace Seller technical goods. At work he is very much appreciated and there are conditions for career advancement. Ivan is well accepted by colleagues, management companies and customers. Now he wants to further educate and continue studies, because he believes that it will make further progress in the profession.

During the last decade, IT companies occupy an important place in the market of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Due to the specifics of their business, those jobs



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are more than adequate for the employment of people with disabilities who have a passion and desire to learn and to deal with IT solutions. However, "**Mistral Technologies**" is one of the only a few companies in this sector that have been opened the doors for people with disabilities. Currently they employ two persons with disabilities. "Mistral Technologies" is an IT company based in Sarajevo that develops exceptional solutions for web and mobile devices using the latest technology.

Recruitment of people with disabilities as well as their employment was not specifically targeted or planned. After recruitment, received applications and selection process, both persons have become an integral part of the team thanks to their indisputable skills, excellence and knowledge. Today, they greatly contribute to the improvement of the company and to the working conditions of all employees, as well as the fantastic atmosphere specific to the "Mistral Technologies". Both persons, employed at „Mistral Technologies“, have a physical disability and according to this, there were less demand adjustment of the position and space. This adaptation required additional agreement with the owner of the business place to allow them to use appropriate additional lifts that have not been used previously and greater flexibility of working hours, so that these employees can work at their homes during the two days in the week if they prefer so. "Mistral Technologies" is a company that highly values and supports teamwork and individual growth, excellence, diversity and creativity. Openness to the community, changes and innovations and the orientation towards their employees resulted in the employment of persons with disabilities, which enhance their company with excellent talents, their employees became more sensible for differences among them and the community got the opportunity to grow through their activities because "IT indeed offers solutions for life".

"**CM Ltd.**" from Vitez is the largest drugstore retailed in BiH. It has been operating successfully for 13 years in more than 50 cities in BiH, throughout 72 outlets. Tendency of growth and advancement was marked primarily by beauty care for women, but also man. Despite the global and domestic economic crisis and market instability, CM increases its operations each year. CM is a socially-responsible company which had realized a number of projects for the welfare of the BH society in its previous activities. In the same manner the Company started co-operating with the Association "Life with the Down Syndrome". This cooperation resulted with the employment of persons with Down syndrome. The employee and "CM Ltd." signed contract in September last year and this is the first employment contract ever that a person with Down syndrome has signed with employer in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The employee is a merchant by profession and she has been



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employed at that workplace in the municipality of Bihać, a city in the Northwestern part of the country. She works on regular basis and with usual responsibilities and so far there was no need for specific changes or adjustments of the work place and position. Since beginning the staff in the company has a positive attitude toward the idea of employing persons with disabilities and they accepted the new employee without any problems. Positive acceptance nationwide was additional motivation to the employer to be confident about the decision they had made.

It is interesting that for many years, "CM Ltd." has a recognizable slogan "We choose for you". In their commitment to the employees, customers and the society in which they operate, "CM Ltd." made a choice to move the borders and put an example of the socially responsible company.

9. Glossary

Assessment

Assessment refers to the ways professionals systematically collect and use information about a person's level of achievement and/or development in different areas of their experience (www.inclusive-education-in-action.org).

Barriers

Obstacles that prevent accessing a full range of opportunities limit their participation in society. Disability is often considered to be due to 'disabling barriers' which can be addressed by designing enabling, accessible environments. Barriers can be due to attitudes, language, culture, organization of support services, power relations and structures within society (www.inclusive-education-in-action.org).

Discrimination

Discrimination on the basis of disability, according to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities means any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability which has the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing with others, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field. It includes all forms of discrimination, including denial of reasonable accommodation (UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006).

Accessibility

Accessibility means that people with disabilities should be able to ensure equal opportunity to use all the resources of the society. Accessibility refers to everything that enables independent living and active participation in all



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aspects of life. Important elements of accessibility are: accessibility of the built environment (for example: schools, hospitals, cultural institutions, post offices, banks), transport accessibility, accessibility of information and modes of communication, including information and communication technologies, accessibility of services and other services provided to the public, the accessibility of structures and functions of the society (equal opportunities for education, employment, political participation and the general equal opportunities for an active and productive life) (Živić et al., 2009).

Equal opportunities

The same chances to take part in activities, access services, etc. with no barriers to equal life prospects for individuals (www.inclusive-education-in-action.org).

Inclusion

Inclusion can be seen as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all children, youth and adults through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing and eliminating exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision that covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children (UNESCO, 2009).

Marginalization

Barely provided for or able to access services or participate in society. Generally understood as a social process by which vulnerable groups are moved out of the mainstream to a powerless position in society (www.inclusive-education-in-action.org).

Participation

Taking a part in, or sharing decisions about one's own life and community – a fundamental right of citizenship (www.inclusive-education-in-action.org).

Social cohesion

This is a multi-faceted concept. Dimensions include: material conditions such as employment, income, health, housing and education; social order and respect for others; relationships between individuals and communities; inclusion in society and equal access to opportunities/life chances. The promotion of social cohesion is intended to build more inclusive societies by giving everyone the chance to have access to fundamental rights and employment, to enjoy the benefits of economic growth with equity and social justice and thereby play a full role in society (www.inclusive-education-in-action.org).



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Social exclusion

The European Commission defines social exclusion as: *'a process whereby certain individuals are pushed to the edge of society and prevented from participating fully by virtue of their poverty, or lack of basic competencies and lifelong learning opportunities, or as a result of discrimination. This distances them from job, income and education opportunities as well as social and community networks and activities. They have little access to power and decision-making bodies and thus often feeling powerless and unable to take control over the decisions that affect their day to day lives.'* Social exclusion may result from rootless and migration; rural exodus; dispersed families; disorganized urbanization; rupture of traditional society and higher levels of education required to gain employment, amongst other things (Acedo et al., 2008).

Social inclusion

Social inclusion is a process which ensures that those at risk of poverty and social exclusion gain the opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life and to enjoy a standard of living and well-being that is considered normal in the society in which they live. It ensures that they have greater participation in decision-making which affects their lives and access to their fundamental rights (www.inclusive-education-in-action.org).

Workplace adjustment

Workplace adjustment represents changes in the work process or the work environment of persons with disabilities with the aim of putting people with disabilities on an equal footing with other employees. Workplace adjustment includes, but is not limited to the adjustment of the physical environment, acquisition or adjustment of equipment, adjusting the schedule of working hours, adjusting tasks ensure adequate training and use of other modes of inclusion in the workplace (Živić et al., 2009).

Reasonable accommodation

Reasonable accommodation, according to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities means necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure that persons with disabilities along with others have equal all human rights and fundamental freedoms (UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006).

Communication

According to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, *communication* involves languages, display of text, Braille, tactile



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communication, large print, accessible multimedia as well as written, audio, oral, reading and augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, including access to information and communication technology (UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006).

Employability

The term means the ability of an individual to get a job (Živić et al., 2009).

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