



How can EU policies increase the participation of persons with disabilities in the labour market?

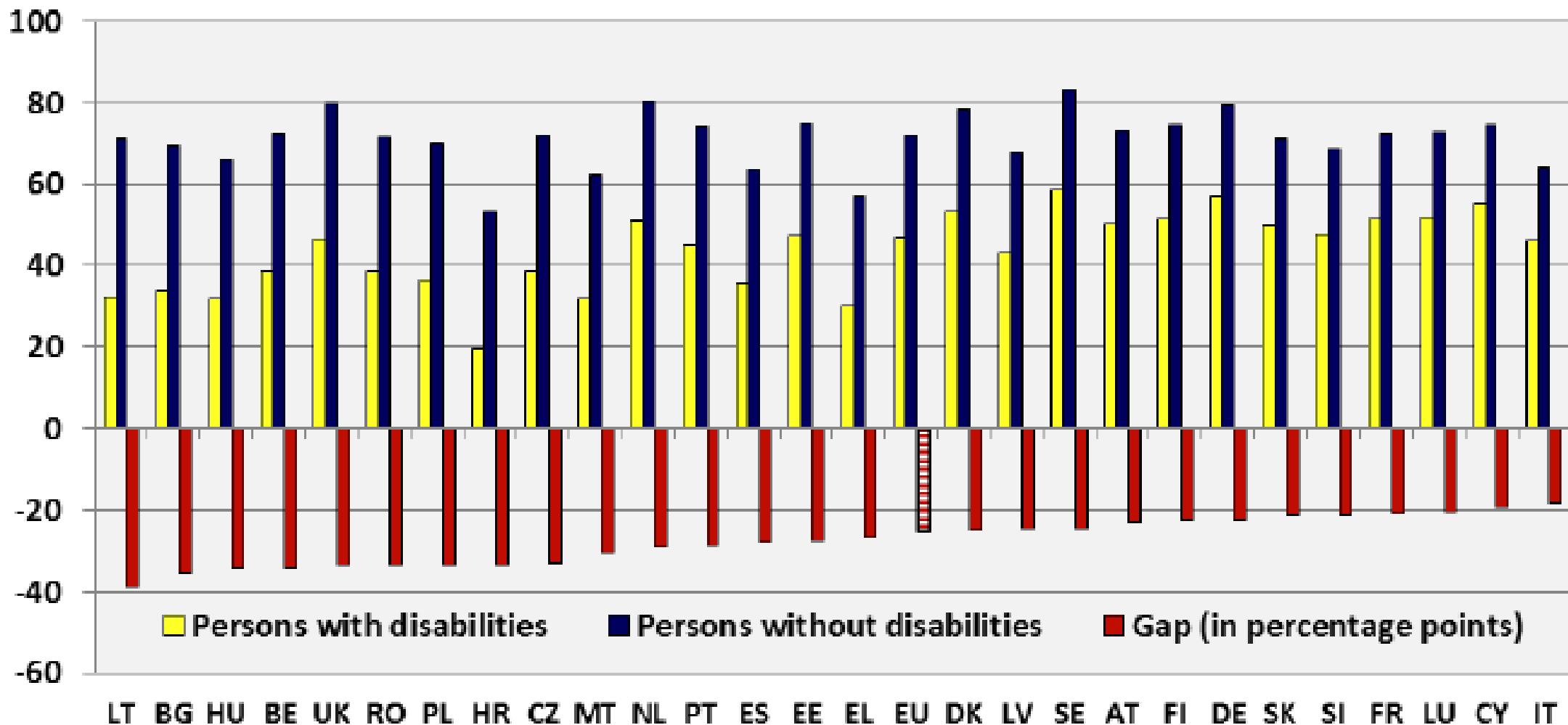
Erzsebet Foldesi – EDF Board member
Brussels, 10 December 2014



Access to Employment – Facts & Figures

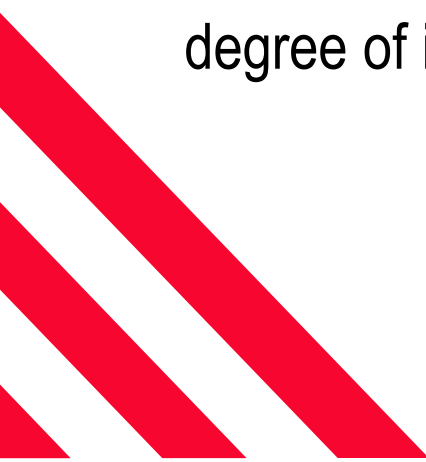
- **Fundamental right**
 - Independence, social and economic integration
 - Adequate standard of living, quality of life
- **EU 2020 increase of employment as a priority by 2020**
 - 75 % employment
- **EU-SILC, 2011**
 - ~ **25 % difference** in rates of employment for persons with and without disabilities in EU
 - **employment rate of persons with disabilities is lower than 50%**
 - employment rate of women with disabilities is lower than men with disabilities (44%, 51%)
 - ~ **30 % lower than the Europe 2020 target of 75 %** for employment of persons with disabilities
 - **age, type of disability and degree** also affect the extent of involvement of persons with disabilities in the labour market.

The employment gap between persons with and without disabilities, 2011



Data source: EU SILK 2011


DISCIT Project findings

- **Reaffirms that type and degree of disability** also affect the extent of involvement of persons with disabilities in the labour market.
 - National **social services** aiming at interacting with the mainstream labour market and assist persons with disabilities to find and keep a job, usually **excludes persons with severe intellectual disabilities** from these benefits.
 - Persons with severe intellectual disabilities are out of the regular labour market,
 - Sheltered employment is the only option
 - Countries continue using a **medical model of disability**, putting the focus on the degree of impairment (mildly-disabled vs. severely-disabled).
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EU legislation

- **Employment Equality Directive** (EU Council Directive 2000/78/EC), establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation
- **EDF proposal:**
 - The directive **should be revised in the light of the UN CRPD**, especially in interpreting the **lack of provision of reasonable accommodation** as an act of discrimination
 - Equal Treatment Directive - scope of the Directive is limited to the field of Employment -
- **Regulation on State Aids** No 800/2008 (the general block exemption regulation)
 - allows Member States to encourage, through economic incentives, the employment of persons with disabilities
- **EDF proposal:**
 - Awareness should be raised about the regulation and adequate implementation should be monitored

EU legislation

- **CRPD - article 27**
 - the right to work, on an equal basis with others
 - equal opportunities and equal remuneration for work of equal value
 - reasonable accommodation
 - (etc.)
 - **Effective implementation of Article 27 is closely linked with other important articles: Accessibility (9), Community living (19), Education (24).....!**
 - **EDF proposal**
 - EU Guidance on reasonable accommodation in the field of employment, for uniform interpretation of the RA and with best practices in different member states
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Policies supporting increase in employment

European Disability Strategy (under midterm revision in 2015)

- **EDF proposal**

- Speedy adoption of important awaited EU legislation for persons with disabilities:
 - Accessibility Act
 - Council Directive implementing the principle of **equal treatment** between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.
- Need of mainstreaming the rights of persons with disabilities within different policy areas
- The crisis and austerity measures have aggravated the living conditions and the enjoyment of Human Rights of persons with disabilities
 - Disability-related services and benefits should be exempted from any budgetary cut

Policies supporting increase in employment

- **The Europe 2020 Strategy (under midterm revision in 2015)**
 - The Europe 2020 Strategy's Headline targets on increase of employment rate (both of people with and without disabilities) to 75%
- **EDF Proposals:**
 - To analyze the **European Semester process** for more coherence between EU macroeconomic policies and objectives of inclusion and poverty reduction
 - With more mainstream people with disabilities in the reform of the **European Semester process.**
 - **Country Specific Recommendations** should include persons with disabilities as a priority target group when trying to increase employment(&reduce poverty)
 - Monitoring the employment rate of pwd with a specific indicator and including information **in the Annual Growth Survey** when defining the priorities for reforms in the EU countries, National Reform programs and Country Specific Recommendations

Policies supporting increase in employment

- **The Europe 2020 Strategy (under midterm revision in 2015)**
- Specific strategy for the employment, social inclusion and poverty reduction of persons with disabilities, with dedicated sub-targets, on the model of the Youth Guarantee.



Policies indirectly supporting increase in employment

- **EDF Proposals:**

Mainstreaming

- Recent public consultation of the **Commission's impact assessment guidelines** to include a systematic and mandatory disability impact assessment in line with the UN CRPD

Accessibility

- European Act on Accessibility
- EURES portal must be fully accessible following WCAG 2.0 level AA

Free movement within EU

- To enable pwd to work in EU member states there is a need for coordination of social security systems among EU Member States to ensure portability of social security benefits, including personal assistance

Policies supporting increase in employment

- **The EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL AND INVESTMENT FUNDS** should be used to:
 - To improve employment of women and men with disabilities , incl., young persons with disabilities (reduces poverty as well)
 - Promote retention of jobs for persons with disabilities (e.g. by training)
 - Involvement of organisations representing persons with disabilities in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of these funds
 - Ensuring access to the funds for these organisations by supporting them with technical assistance



Policies indirectly supporting increase in employment

- **Horizon 2020 Work programmes 2016-2017**
 - Universal design should be mainstreamed in EU-funded research;
 - Selection and award criteria should also include references to accessibility and design for all to avoid the creation of new barriers for persons with disabilities;
 - EU funding rules should allow for additional funding to cover disability-related costs, and should also require that all information and communication is accessible for persons with disabilities.



AWARENESS RAISING

- **Raising awareness on**
 - Potentials and values that persons with disabilities bring to an employer
 - Stereotypes,
 - Importance of accessibility (universal design, complex accessibility)
 - Importance of reasonable accommodation
- **EDF Proposal**
 - Awareness raising campaigns to raise awareness on our potentials and values





THANKS FOR LISTENING

Erzsebet Foldesi – EDF Board member

DISCIT seminar

PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AT WORK: THE INVISIBLE WORKERS?

10 December 2014, European Parliament, Room ASP 1E1

