




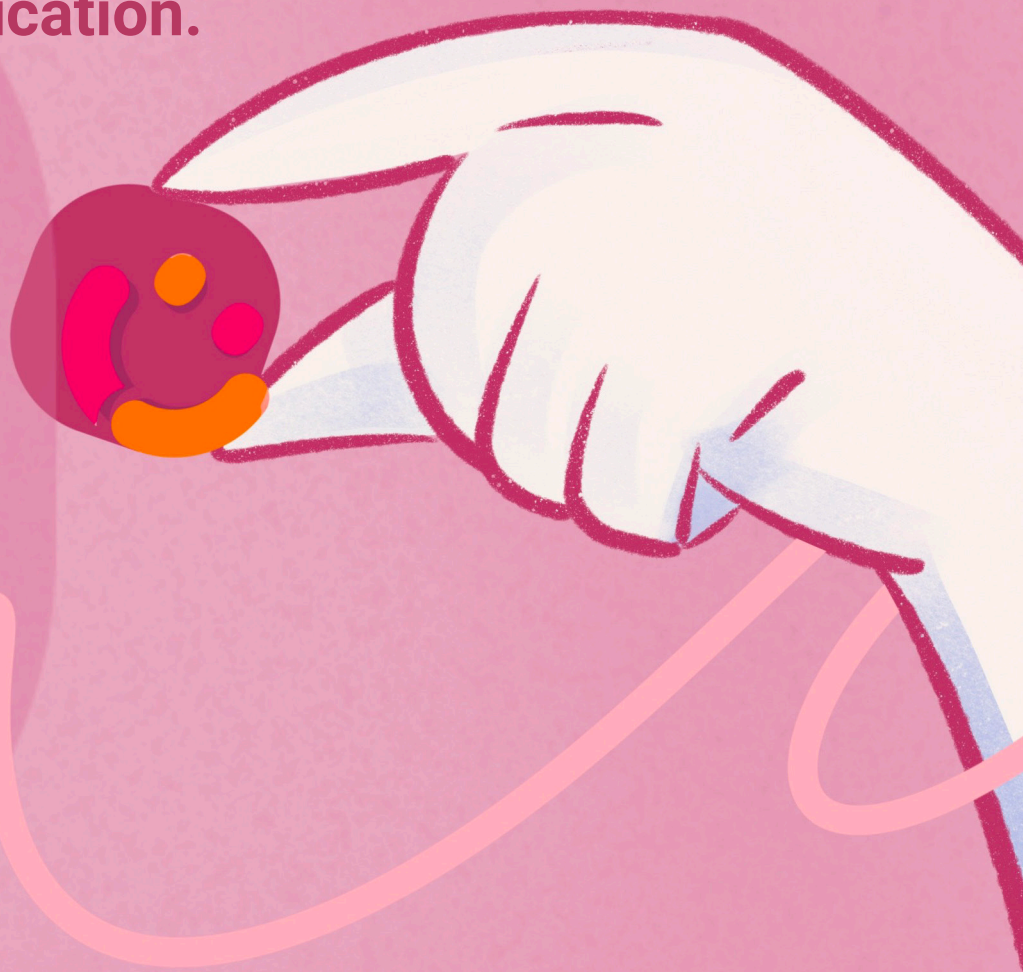
Guideline for Capacity Building of Talents with Disabilities



The background is a solid light pink color. It features several abstract, organic shapes and lines. A large, dark pink, rounded shape is positioned on the right side. A thick, light pink line starts from the left edge, curves upwards and then downwards, ending near the bottom right. Another thick, light pink line starts from the bottom right, loops back towards the center, and then continues towards the right edge. The overall aesthetic is clean and modern.

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**This toolkit is an integral part of the
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Welcome, Dear Reader!

You are holding the Guideline for capacity building of talents with disabilities of the project Career4All - Train The Trainer Academy. Before going any further, let us provide you with some information about our project.





“If I fail, I try again, and again, and again. If YOU fail, are you going to try again? The human spirit can handle much worse than we realize. It matters HOW you are going to FINISH. Are you going to finish strong?” – Nick Vujicic

“When everyone else says you can’t, determination says, YES YOU CAN.” – Robert M. Hensel

In every country in the world, the number of inhabitants with a disability varies between 10 and 18% of the population, which means that 1 in 7 people has or will have a disability at some point in their lives (World Bank). Even though we live in the 21st century with numerous technological advances and the development of the world in many aspects, people with disabilities, who represent such a large part of society, are still often isolated, segregated, and marginalized. They usually do not have equal access to information, communication, education, work and inclusion. Systemic stigmatization and prejudice also exacerbate this situation. Unfortunately, society still has no idea how it can contribute to enabling more equal opportunities due to a lack of experience and awareness around inclusion.

It is, therefore, imperative that non-governmental organizations join forces and work towards raising awareness through their activities and in partnership with other stakeholders such as the corporate, government and academic sectors to provide more support for the community of people with disabilities.

The Guideline for capacity building of talents with disabilities is part of the Career4All Train The Trainer Academy project and aims first and foremost to **raise awareness among its readers and anyone who wants to understand more about disability inclusion and how meaningful outcomes and positive impact can be achieved step by step.**

Career4All Train The Trainer Academy is a project implemented by 3 European partners: Soziale Zukunft Verein zur Förderung der Integration behinderter Menschen (Austria), Social Future Foundation (Bulgaria) and Jamba Hungary Foundation (Hungary), all of them part of the JAMBA - Careers for All project and network. The underlying mission of the consortium organizations is to support people with disabilities to develop soft and vocational skills and, as a next step, to help them find secure and inclusive employment.

Career4All Train The Trainer Academy is a natural extension of our core mission and activities, with which we develop a unified methodology, materials and training programme for trainers who will gain the necessary knowledge and skills to empower individuals with disabilities through accessible training, career guidance and build a bridge between them and businesses so that they can find inclusive employment. The program and the materials produced will be tested in the framework of international training and capacity building (Train The Trainer Academy) and local practical activities (Mentoring program between trained trainers/mentors and mentees) in the three European countries.



Within the project, as final deliverables, the consortium is also developing a unified toolkit for the program, as well as a guideline for companies. These materials remain available for organizations/institutions/companies and anyone else who might wish to implement a similar program at local or national level in a European Union country.

Aims and objectives

Main objectives

The primary purpose of Career4All Train The Trainer Academy is to collaboratively develop an innovative training methodology and implement it in the partner countries, to enhance the capacity of social and education professionals, volunteer youth workers/activists and HR specialists in Austria, Bulgaria & Hungary. Our idea is to train trainers who will gain the necessary knowledge and skills to empower PwD by implementing a set of accessible training courses. We use the term “trainer” and “mentor” interchangeably.

These trainers can then provide career guidance to young people with disabilities and chronic illnesses, women with disabilities, migrants with disabilities and mothers of children with disabilities (collectively, PwD). Through this project, we aim to promote equity purposefully, support equal access to vocational qualification programmes and create more opportunities for career development and social inclusion. In addition, trained trainers will build a bridge between businesses and candidates with disabilities and support PwD in finding accessible employment.

The objectives of this project are:

- Share up-to-date data regarding the current challenges unemployed PwD of working age in Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria face when trying to find a job and enter the primary labour market. Reflect on the data and find repeating patterns. Develop an international methodology for successful and inclusive career guidance for PwD, including one toolkit and two guidelines (one for capacity building of talents with disabilities and one for inclusive communication and recruitment methodologies) as the basis for the trainers. The originally produced English materials will be translated into German, Hungarian, and Bulgarian to provide accessibility and allow local implementation
- Equip 18 trainers between 18 and 45 years of age (6 trainers per country) with the needed know-how so they can promote diversity, equity and inclusion and inclusive recruitment in the workplace on the one hand and on the other hand - to equip them with the needed skills so they can support PwD with career guidance
- Match trained trainers (6 trainers per country) with mentees with disabilities between 18 and 29 years of age (6 PwD per country) and conduct hands-on activities for PwD by practically applying the gained theoretical knowledge.



Project impact

The project's main objective relates to the needs of beneficiaries, which is the project's target group. We aim to build the necessary capacity, knowledge and skills in a group of trainers who, in turn, can support PwD in acquiring specific soft skills, assisting with career guidance and the job application process. The ultimate goal is to successfully prepare mentees for a future work environment. On the other hand, upon completion of the training, the trainers will be able to conduct training for employers that will help raise awareness in the corporate sector on the topic of D&I, successful communication and inclusion of people with disabilities in the job market. Jamba uses empowerment-based solutions and actively seeks the opportunity to connect all stakeholders to support the learning and inclusion process of both main target groups.

The primary mission of the three organizations is to support PwD to build key skills and professional competencies and to facilitate their employment. The activities described above are the essential and central focus of the three project partners. Each project partner has expertise in this particular area of activity, with the difference that each partner is an expert for the country in which it operates. Through the three-way exchange, the individuals and organizations from each country will achieve a new and inclusive approach to career guidance for young PwD, engaging young people in inclusion.

General overview and demographic characteristics

Austria

The legal definition of disability referred to by the Austrian Social Affairs Ministry is regulated by the Austrian Disability Employment Act: "the effect of a non-temporary physical, mental or psychological impairment or an impairment of the senses which makes participation in the life of society, particularly in normal working life, difficult. Non-temporary means a period which is more than (or expected to be more than) six months.". The terminology used to refer to the group of PwD in Austria in German is - Menschen mit Behinderungen und chronischen Erkrankungen. In English it translates as 'People with disabilities and chronic illnesses'.

According to a micro census survey carried out in 2015 by Statistics Austria on behalf of the Ministry of Social Affairs, "18.4% of the resident population over the age of 15 in private households in Austria have – according to their own statement – a permanent disability. This is reported as around 1.3 million people. In this survey, "the most common permanent disabilities" reported were "problems with mobility" which signifies a "projected total of around 1 million persons, or about 14.1% of the Austrian population over the age of 15 in private households".

In Austria, the Arbeitsmarktservice (AMS) reported the unemployed people with disabilities as 13,134 at the end of August 2022 (AMS-Übersicht Aktuell - August 2022).



Also, in a broader category, the same report refers to 59,565 unemployed people with health-related constraints, bringing the total to 72,699 PwD according to our criteria. Current numbers may show a relative improvement in the employment of PwD compared with the previous post-pandemic figures in 2020 and 2021. However, the number of people registered as unemployed (incl. training participants) with health restrictions had almost doubled between 2009-2018 from around 44k to 84k (AMS, August 2019 Spezialthema).

Bulgaria

According to data from the information system of the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD), at the end of 2019 the number of PwD in Bulgaria was about 753 204 people. This is about 10% of the country's population, comparable to their share in 2009, when it was just over 9%.

The comparative analysis of the data on PwD, based on two empirical sociological surveys, shows that in terms of their age structure there is an aging trend - in 2020 the share of people over the age of 60 in this group is 62%, i.e. 12 p.p. higher than in the previous survey. In all other age groups, the share of PwD in 2009 is (more or less) higher than in 2020.

People with permanent disabilities of working age (16-64 years) are over 227 thousand (according to NSI, 2019), of whom 173 200 are economically inactive and 49 800 are in employment.

Hungary

Of the various terms - disability, impairment, reduced capacity for work - that we use in Hungary, the one most closely associated with the world of work is the term 'person with reduced capacity for work'. This term is approached from the perspective of how the condition of the individual affects his or her employment, and it is to this term that the legal regulation of the employment of people with disabilities can be linked.

According to the labour market survey conducted by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office in 2015, there are 680,713 people of working age (19-64) with a disability, which is 11.3% of the total working age population in Hungary.

In terms of employment, 21% of PwD are employed in Hungary, but according to a European survey, 72% of PwD have no health problems that limit their daily activities and 75% do not need assistance in their daily activities.



Needs and challenges of the group of people with disabilities

Austria

Finding work can be tough for everyone, and even more so for PwD. While their number in the workforce has been rising in many countries, in part due to changing attitudes and improved legislations, PwD are still more likely to be out of work than a person who is not. Despite the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, talents with disabilities are frequently denied the right to work on an equal basis with others. International Labour Organization (ILOSTAT) data shows how employment prospects for PwD vary around the world. Their inclusion in the workforce is also tied to their inclusion in society, and still is a problem worldwide, including developed countries. In Austria, the labour participation rate is lower among PwD than among those without disabilities, too. ILOSTAT data also illustrates how women with disabilities face bigger barriers to finding employment. In two-thirds of the high-income nations for which information is available, women with disabilities have a higher unemployment rate than their male counterparts.

Covid-19 has additionally accelerated and exacerbated the unemployment problem, where chances of remote working are not equally distributed across sectors. Despite state measures and incentives, unemployment figures have risen dramatically in Austria like in other parts of the world during the Covid period. According to the Arbeitsmarktservice numbers (Spezial Thema Covid-19, March 2020), the number of unemployed people surged only in two weeks from 310,516 on 15 March to 504,345 as of the end of March 2020. Compared with the same period of March 2019, this denoted an increase of about 200 thousand.

In 2020, an average of 409,639 persons were registered as unemployed including training participants (+108,312 or +35.9% compared to the previous year). At the end of September 2021, this number had decreased to 338,514. PwD made up 24.6% of this total unemployed (and training participants) compared with a share of 23.2% in 2020, showing that the initial improvement for PwD has not been proportional. However, as of the latest reports in 2022, the ratio of PwD to the total pool of unemployed people (including training participants) has favorably dropped to 22.5%.

We fear that PwD are affected even more during hard times. Crises are periods that exhibit vulnerability of these less-included groups more vividly, and their unemployment and lagging behind both in skills and jobs, can also cause them suffer mentally and psychologically, not only physically. We see a need for top-down policies such as mandatory hiring to be complemented by innovative bottom-up approaches, where PwD can feel included beyond a policy goal and because of their abilities.

Although social, health and economic policies in Austria are much more developed than in other Eastern European countries, PwD continue to be isolated, segregated and discriminated against in various situations.



The Austrian umbrella organization, the “representative body for 1.3 million people with disabilities”, Behindertenrat, describes the first prerequisite in Austria as the education system, as it still does not provide inclusive education “neither in the Austrian legislation nor in practice” **lacking clear adherence to an “inclusive education system for everyone”**.

Currently, children with disabilities are entitled to special educational support only if they are granted “special educational needs (SEN)” status. The provision of SEN is based on “the medical model of disability” concentrating on the impairment. Children who are not able to follow the curriculum do not have the “opportunity to attend Secondary Level II schools - general and vocational high schools after finishing compulsory education” as the appropriate legal framework is absent”. Moreover, that “inclusive education” is not required in general high schools, also does not bode well with UN CRPD standards (Article 24).

Behindertenrat also underlines that the use and teaching of Austrian Sign Language is not sufficiently used and taught at school. Due to the “lack of interpreters and instructors proficient in sign language” as well as the absence of Austrian sign language materials, not enough bimodal bilingual lessons can be delivered. Similarly, Braille teaching materials for visually impaired people are not sufficiently prepared and put in practice.

Overall, in light of the challenges expressed by the representatives of PwD like Behindertenrat, it appears that the education, content and professionals at special schools are equipped with necessary pedagogical knowledge and training to teach young PwD, yet the curriculum is not necessarily adapted to the dynamically changing labour market and its needs.

At the university level, there are numerous conditions that differ from one to another. Still, a unified system or resources to facilitate and provide equal opportunities for PwD is not prevalent in the tertiary education sector: “It is left to the individual universities and higher education institutions to take measures, either on their own initiative or via projects.”

After completing their education, young PwD leave educational institutions unprepared and uncompetitive in the labour market. It is not only about specific vocational skills, but also the essential digital, data and technical skills that need to be added to their knowledge. These are the basics that every employer will expect from them in the future.

In Austria sheltered workshops exist as a substitute for employment in the regular labour market. Still, they are considered segregating because workers with disabilities are typically not adequately employed there and receive lower wages. In addition, they lack independent social security and employment protection which usually applies to workers without disabilities. Once PwD start work in sheltered workshops, they almost cannot find a job in the open job market afterwards. Last but not least, they stay isolated and have the opportunity to communicate mainly with other PwD. This isolation hinders them from having social contacts outside the sheltered workshops,



finding new friends and feeling included in society. That way they continue staying invisible for the rest of society.

Of course, PwD also can seek employment in the open labour market. As already mentioned, the first big hurdle in applying is the lack of key knowledge and skills. The application process is also very unfavorable for them, as the normal channels through which they apply for jobs are often job portals/platforms. But due to the lack of experience and awareness, once the representatives of human resource departments find out that the applicant has a disability, he/she is often automatically rejected. Interestingly, even in large recruitment agencies, many recruiters with years of experience still lack experience in recruiting PwD, which again puts barriers and complicates the job search process.

While all companies in Austria with more than 25 employees are obliged to employ PwD, they still prefer to pay the monthly penalty instead of actually hiring individual with disability because of the following reasons:

- They don't know how to reach the disability community and find the right talent
- Lack of experience in communication, recruitment, employment and inclusion of PwD
- Companies prefer not to invest time and financial resources in human resources training and adaptation in the workplace, because this requires resources that may not currently be available
- The belief that PwD can't perform their duties well and see them as a burden rather than a valuable addition to the team
- It is simply easier to pay the fines, which are not that high anyway, than to make so many changes

Even if they find work, it is still less common for employees with health restrictions to earn equal to their non-disabled counterparts. They tend to make less, which directly impacts their standard of living. Although the income gap can be attributed to the fact that many people with disabilities or chronic illnesses work part-time, their lower monthly income constrains them. It exposes them to a higher risk of falling into poverty.

Last but not least, comes the topic of unemployment, especially if prolonged, it has a significant impact on the future labour market development opportunities for PwD. Unfortunately, longer periods of unemployment may force talents into the informal economy.

PwD face greater difficulties in finding jobs in the formal economy, which typically provides a more secure and stable income. Informal workers normally are not covered by labour legislation or social security and PwD who have informal jobs are in an even more vulnerable position (ILOSTAT).



Bulgaria

Bulgaria was part of the communist regime until 1989. That influenced most of the perception, prejudices and overall attitude towards the community of PwD.

The previous political regime had created the “Specialized Enterprises” program, where people with the same kind of disability or health restrictions were grouped together to work on various projects under one “roof”. Their facilities consisted of one big building, where the work projects were executed, as well as a small number of buildings, where the workers lived. These premises are situated in the outskirts of the big cities and regional centers of the country. The premises and the whole strategy of the program functions to this day, albeit with limited efficiency.

The educational system was also built in the same manner. Two or three specialized schools for each group of children, based on their major type of impairment. They consist of primary and middle school grades of education and are also functioning to this day. They deliver specialized classes for functional development, specialized self-care, orientation and mobility and more tailored classes for enhancing the child’s abilities with their individual state.

In 2004, the integrated education of children with disabilities act was implemented, laying the foundation of the end of these segregating practices. Each student with special educational needs has a Resource teacher available for them in every school, providing the tuition for specialized self-development, as well as specialized educational materials when needed.

The result is PwD are supported with their educational process until graduation from middle school. Afterwards – there is no implemented framework for further skills and career development.

Universities are left to their own mechanisms and policies for supporting the needs of these students, which in reality means that graduates are mostly not prepared adequately for the competencies they studied for.

Foreign languages, soft skills, communication skills and specialized skills for the needs of the labour market are not adequately trained and result in people from the target groups to be deficient in them, thus lowering their chances for career opportunities.

Although there is an implemented quota system for the employers to have a certain percentage of employees with disabilities – the fines for it are small and have the opposite result of helping the inclusion of these people in the labour market.



Hungary

There are two main challenges PwD in Hungary need to face concerning their employment situation.

First of all, there is no overlap between the expectations of PwD and the labour market. The education system is one of the main areas of discrimination against PwD. In this context, their below-average competitiveness is gradually developed from the moment they enter the education system.

Within the framework of the segregated form of education that still prevails in Hungary, students' opportunities for experience, decision-making and further education are more limited than those of the majority population. Foreign language and soft skill knowledge is low among the target group, which further hampers their chances of finding employment. In addition, they often experience a lack of access to marketable skills training opportunities, which may indicate problems related to the lack of adaptability of programmes, physical barriers, and training methods and tools that do not match the skills and needs of young people with disabilities (FSZK Final Study, 2017).

PwD tend to have lower educational attainment than the general population: 28% have at least a secondary school leaving certificate, compared to 60% in the majority population; and only 6% have higher education compared to 24% in the majority population (KSH, 2015). Lack of foreign language skills and a characteristic ability profile (low self-confidence, inability to make decisions, lack of assertiveness and empowerment) due to educational discrimination are typical.

A significant proportion of PwD are not in employment, with 75% of PwD being inactive (KSH, 2015). They also have a higher unemployment rate, 2.5 times higher than the unemployment rate for people without a disability (KSH, 2015).

Those who do work are rarely able to find employment in marketable occupations after leaving the education system due to inadequate education and skills, and therefore mostly work in low-status, low-paid jobs (77% in manual jobs) or in sheltered/ accredited jobs. Even for those with relatively high tertiary qualifications, few of them are in jobs that match their qualifications. Thus, they either do not obtain any or have inadequate work experience, which would later be a serious disadvantage if they were to work in more decent jobs.

Their low salary (either from the open labour market or from sheltered employment) makes them vulnerable and dependent on the social assistance system. Subsidies alone are not an incentive for further skills development and the dependent, vulnerable status erodes self-confidence and self-empowerment, often leading to so-called learned helplessness.

Low incomes make it difficult or impossible to finance their independent living (see: personal assistance, dependence on family/parents, higher health costs, transport), which is an additional barrier to successful entry into the labour market, to staying



in it and to their visibility in society. They cannot participate in high quality training that requires a tuition fee. Their low ability to pay means that they do not become marketable actors and therefore do not benefit from market solutions. In addition, they cannot benefit from income-linked public subsidies.

The second systemic barrier they need to face is the lack of information and non-inclusive attitude of the companies. Due to the fact that PwD belong to a marginalized, severely discriminated and segregated group, they are rarely encountered by mainstream society and have little information about them. For this reason, the image of PwD is often based on stereotypes, misconceptions and prejudices. They are often thought of as dependent, incompetent persons. There is a lack of accessibility and reasonable accommodation to individual needs, which contributes to maintaining social invisibility.

The person with a disability is identified with his or her disability, as indicated by common terms such as “disabled”, “handicapped”, etc. - they do not see the person as having different characteristics, but the condition is extended to the whole person and thus the disability associated with the condition is identified with the whole person.

Prejudiced, non-inclusive attitudes affect all aspects of the participation of PwD in the labour market and, added to the gap between the expectations of PwD and the labour market, reinforce its negative effects. The impact of frequent discrimination, which typically starts in childhood, has a negative impact on the self-image, self-confidence and self-assertiveness of PwD from the earliest age, and can affect their overall psychological development.

Low self-esteem can be reflected in a lack of assertive communication at a job interview, when building relationships, and typically PwD lack the confidence to set worthy career goals for themselves that are commensurate with their abilities. The effects of a preconceived, non-inclusive attitude are thus transmitted to individual career paths.

As a result of systemic segregation, PwD have less experience of what it is like to exist in inclusive communities in partnership, and this lack of experience can typically be a disadvantage when integrating into a workplace community.

Prejudices and myths

By definition, the word “disability” represents a limitation in a person’s ability to interact with the surrounding environment creating social, intellectual, physical or moral difficulties. A person may have a physical or intellectual impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to carry out daily activities.

Business representatives can make a difference by simply being aware of the specifics of the disability group. Disabilities are diverse - physical, sensory, cognitive, and permanent health impairments. This means that PwD are not a homogeneous group.



They all have different needs, interests and views of life and the world. Accordingly, when working with representatives of different groups, specific steps and guidelines should be taken into account in order for communication and inclusion to be fully successful.

Prejudices

One of the main barriers preventing employers from employing someone with a disability is prejudice. In the most general case, it is believed that the employee will not be able to cope with the daily activities that he/she should have. When an applicant who is PwD who has the beneficiary status appears for a job interview, this automatically labels him/her “unsuitable.” This is therefore one of the reasons why many PwD are reluctant to share about their condition and needs, as they fear they will never be called for a job interview and therefore move on.

Other reasons that stop applicants from saying they have a disability are the worry that it will get them into trouble, reluctance to share something so personal, the possible chance that the disability has been diagnosed very soon and others.

Myths

A risk factor is the lack of sufficient information and awareness on the topic of inclusion of PwD in the labour market. Society and employers are of the opinion that many people cannot perform specific activities because of a particular type of disability. For example:

- **Blind people cannot use computers and the internet.** - On the contrary, there are web accessibility softwares which can change fonts, colors, letter sizes, and screen readers which are software applications that enable people with severe visual impairments to use a computer. Screen readers work closely with the computer’s Operating System to provide information about icons, menus, dialogue boxes, files and folders. Visually impaired people can be excellent programmers, office assistants, operators in outsourcing companies and others.
- **Hearing impaired people do not use sites like YouTube, etc.** - This is also not the case as such sites offer closed captions of content and this helps to solve the problem.
- **Persons with physical disabilities cannot do any work.** - Again, this is a myth. A large number of people with physical disabilities have exceptional intellectual capacity that remains completely intact, even in the wake of an accident or illness that is causing the functional difference. Accordingly, the person can handle any intellectual activity, as well as various occupations, tailored to his level of mobility.



Potential and opportunities for development of talents with disabilities in the labour market

Jobs are constantly changing and are becoming highly digitalized. Given the changing nature of the work with increased integration of digital tools, both the employers' and employees' needs are transforming, requiring accessible and sustainable methods for finding the necessary digital and IT-related skill-set. Many tasks and jobs can be delivered and performed nowadays remotely which also brings flexibility to workers.

The rising need among employers for tech-related and data-driven jobs creates a great opportunity. Globally IT talent is sold out and this trend will remain like that in the upcoming years unless employers, IT academies and academic institutions do not translate relevant changes into curriculums. The untapped human capital of PwD can actually fill this gap. What all stakeholders need to do is to join forces and start investing in the capacity building of talents with disabilities because in order to furnish them with key competencies and make them agile to be included in the future of work. In the long run this can not only tackle the lack of qualified workers but it can bring great impact and positive change to the lives of PwD and their families.

According to experts from LinkedIn, by 2030 there will be a great need for the following types of specialists:

- Augmented-reality journey builder
- Metaverse planner
- Earthquake forecaster
- Makeshift structure engineer
- Algorithm bias auditor
- Human-machine teaming manager
- Digital currency advisor
- Drone traffic optimizer
- Autonomous car mechanic
- Smart home design manager
- Agile supply chain worker

As long as accessibility is tailored to different types of disability, any of these positions can be performed by PwD.

The future of work should belong to us all. It is up to us to make it accessible!

Accessible technologies facilitating capacity building

Online platforms can be very useful to reach out to PwD as long as they are accessible to all of them. People with visual impairment require the most special accommodation measures in this regard.



Below we listed a couple of good practices which might be useful to bear in mind:

- **Content creation:** There are some document formats that are easy to handle for the screen reader softwares, these are the following: docx, doc, rtf, txt- the simpler the format is, the better for people with visual impairment. Presentations (ppt-s) should be avoided or kept very simple. The same applies to the tables that might be embedded in the document. As for pictures, a description must be added to them.
- **Recruitment:** Google forms can serve as a good recruitment platform, it may include various questions and the format is readable for the special softwares as well (with the exception of some particular question types - e.g.: the date picker).

When it comes to the organization of online trainings, there are a range of accessibility requirements to be taken care of in order to make sure that the training will be inclusive for everyone:

- **Choosing the platform carefully is essential;** Zoom might be a great choice, this platform is easy to use for the participants and works also quite well with the screen reader softwares.
- **The presence of sign language interpreters is a must** if we have participants with hearing impairment. Also, it is important to make sure that all video-based material has subtitles
- **Sometimes typing might take more time for people with physical disabilities.** It is important to make sure that they have the opportunity to express their opinion, so we can give them some extra time to write down their answers or ask about their thoughts orally.

Inclusive offline training has very similar preconditions as online ones, when it comes to providing reasonable accommodation for participants with hearing- and/or visual impairments. Physical accessibility, however, requires some extra attention in this case:

- First of all, **the training venue needs to be accessible for people with physical disabilities** - it includes the training room itself and a bathroom as well
- **One or more personal assistant(s) should also be present during the training** to make sure that the participants can take part in it independently while their basic personal needs will also be satisfied
- **In case you do not have any previous experience** in organizing inclusive training or have any doubts in this regard, feel free to ask someone who holds hands-on experience regarding the accessibility needs of your target group



Successful cooperation and communication with people with different types of disabilities

PwD comprise a very diverse group. Members generally have more challenges concerning inclusion in society. They often face discrimination on many societal levels, including education, labour market inclusion, accessibility, accommodation, and transportation.

“Discrimination on the basis of disability” 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 basis 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-CRPD, Article 2)

Hence, we would like to provide information on how to prevent discrimination of people with various needs by adopting the human rights approach in this curriculum. However, each disability and condition has its specifics; therefore, when communicating with PwD in a fruitful and mutually pleasant way, it is important to have both general awareness and specific information about the individual needs of a person. We always recommend actively seeking the accessibility needs of an individual you connect with and not being afraid of asking specific questions.

As a ground rule, it is important to remember not to talk to people through an intermediary or facilitator. Always contact the person directly and speak directly to them. Below are some general guidelines for communicating with certain groups of PwD, particularly at the first instance you meet them .

People with physical disabilities

Physical disabilities can vary widely concerning which body parts are affected, and the severity and the eventual mobility challenges one faces. Some might lead their life autonomously while others might need personal assistance in some or all fields of their lives.

People with physical disabilities often face barriers in and around buildings - entrances, ramps, lifts, door widths, thresholds, and inadequate toilets. These make it challenging for them to access and work in some offices.

When meeting, it is important to shake hands and then sit down on a chair for a chat to get on the same level. That way, no one will feel uncomfortable.

Don't feel awkward, if someone is missing a hand - replaced by a prosthesis. Greet the person verbally or ask if they are fine with a handshake.

Some people might be unable to fill in or sign a form. In this case, you should offer help to them and ask them how you could specifically support them.



People with visual impairments

Visual impairment and vision-related diseases often pose a barrier to the transmission of information.

Some people may find it challenging to navigate in an unfamiliar place on their own. They may not be able to fill in an admission form at check-in. In such cases, **the assistance of someone, like security guards/receptionists may be needed not only to fill in the form but also to help them find their way around the building.**

When you greet someone with a visual impairment, after the handshake, **it may be necessary to explain the location of other people in the room and how the space is organized.**

Also, in meetings, you are often advised to **describe yourself and your physical attributes, clothes and features, such as, for instance, you have glasses.** This kind of description gives a proper introduction to the person with a visual impairment.

People with hearing impairments

Hearing impairment might be partial or full. Some people use hearing devices to understand speech, while others might use sign language. Out of respect for people with hearing loss, never call them deaf-mutes, as this is not an appropriate definition.

In most cases it would be impossible to conduct a telephone conversation, as a small percentage of deaf people can use mobile devices. It is advisable to arrange a face-to-face meeting with a person with hearing impairment and for a sign language interpreter to be present to ensure that no information is lost in the communication.

You can ask the person **about the most appropriate communication method. Only one person must speak at a time.** Otherwise the conversation may become confusing and unintelligible. There should be no distracting noise in the room.

Finally, you as a conversation partner have to be illuminated by light and should never speak with your back turned so that the person with hearing impairment can read your lips.

People with speech and language barriers

Speech impediments or language difficulties often arise when communicating parties do not understand each other. This situation can also occur, when a physical disability makes verbal communication challenging to a person with hearing impairment, whose mother tongue might be sign language.

In such cases, the person with disability might misunderstand something and may need repetition of what was said.



If you are not sure if you have understood what you have heard, **try to repeat in your own words, and ask if everything is clear to avoid information getting lost.**

People with intellectual disability

Intellectual disabilities are quite diverse and vary in a wide spectrum from autism to Down syndrome. When interacting with a person with an intellectual disability, depending on the type of disability, **you may experience their lack of interest or attention.**

In general, what works best with most types of intellectual disabilities, is a quiet environment, free from unnecessary light and sound, as this can cause anxiety and make it difficult for them to pay attention. A positive attitude is helpful, as they are sensitive. Talking to strangers can make some people with intellectual disabilities anxious. If you create an emotionally safe and well-structured, predictable situation, they will be best able to show their strengths.

Telling them what will happen, and how long the meeting/situation will last, can help them to orient themselves in time and space. Use easy-to-read communication, expressing yourself in simple, short sentences. Try to refrain from abstract expressions, and to use more concrete and clear language.

If you feel that the person you are talking to may not have understood what you are saying, ask them and repeat if necessary.

People on the autism spectrum

According to a new study (Zeidan et al., 2022), ca. 1 in 100 children (or 100 in 10.000 children) around the world are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Compared to 2012 global average, that is an increase from 62 in 10000; which is interpreted as the result of public awareness and efforts on “identification” and “diagnosis” (Autism Speaks).

When communicating with people with autism, we must convey clear and precise messages. They may find it difficult to answer theoretical questions that require imagination. They tire easily and need to rest or find a place where they can relax.

People with autism might become anxious and act shy in front of strangers and avoid eye contact, because they might be overwhelmed with information in social situations.

Psychosocial disabilities

Anxiety, depression, and many mental health concerns can be categorized as psychosocial disabilities, recognizing the actual or perceived impairment these concerns produce in daily life. Such disabilities manifest in relation to a diversity of mental, emotional, or cognitive experiences. (...) Psychosocial disabilities also frequently go hand-in-hand with physical health conditions and disabilities, and this



co-occurrence can produce a more complex experience of disability relative to those who have only mental or physical health concerns (Ringland et al., 2019).

According to a WHO report (2010), “mental and psychosocial disabilities are associated with rates of unemployment as high as 90%”. Moreover, people with such disabilities often lack “**educational and vocational opportunities to meet their full potential.**” What is dramatic is that studies also indicate that an “estimated one in four people globally will experience a mental health condition in their lifetime”. Such conditions may often result in mortality and disability, corresponding to “8.8% and 16.6% of the total burden of disease due to health conditions in low- and middle-income countries, respectively”. Depression is also assessed to be “the second highest cause of disease burden in middle-income countries and the third highest in low income countries by 2030” (WHO, 2010).

After this glimpse at different types of disabilities, we are now equipped to move forward with how to further build and maintain effective communication with people with disabilities.

Equal access to information and communication

Many people take access to information and accessible communication for granted, but this is not exactly the case for everyone. For PwD, the ability to build capacity largely depends on the accessibility of skill-building opportunities in relation to their disability, because only when the environment and conditions match their needs, they can absorb information in a qualitative way.

Accessibility in knowledge acquisition and in education is when the needs of talents with disabilities are specifically considered and materials, facilities and teaching methods are developed or modified so that they can be used by people of all abilities.

The training types include offline, online and hybrid formats. Offline training was the preferred format for teaching and gaining new skills until a few years ago. Nevertheless, especially during Covid-19 and after, online training methods and environments have become the latest trend. Educational institutions and academies increasingly offer their curriculums in an online environment or hybrid formats. Of course, both formats have both advantages and disadvantages. For example, with offline classes, many activities prepare students for different situations and help develop additional skills. For example, speaking in front of many people, communicating directly with people and making friends with them.

However, two of the downsides we can point out are outreach and time management. People who cannot afford to physically participate in training will be excluded. Moreover, the time taken to get from home or work to the training location can be long and involve many challenges in terms of infrastructure accessibility.

On the other hand, online learning helps us save time. One of the most significant advantages is that people can learn from anywhere in the world. All they need are computer access, the internet and accessibility. Even people inhabiting small villages



or rural areas can accumulate knowledge. One unfavorable aspect of online training is the limited nature of interaction between participants. For many people, even for participants without disabilities, sitting for several hours in front of a monitor is exhausting as well. Often, attention span decreases dramatically if the training is not interactive.

Several key features of training programs

Every training program contains key components, requires the preparation and creation of essential materials for the learners to acquire new knowledge and skills. Here are some of them:

Training topic and general information: Each training is designed to support the transfer of knowledge and the development of new skills among the group of learners. The topic of the training must be specific and clearly formulated, conveying in advance the information about the methods and requirements, including the prerequisite knowledge necessary for the course. Furthermore, students need to comprehend the necessary time commitment for the participation in the program, as well as where the training will be held and how accessibility will be ensured. The trainers or teachers need to prepare the information set, also called the “syllabus”, in advance when announcing the specific training course. Also, by creating promotional materials for enrolment, it is crucial to consider the different accessibility guidelines for disseminating information to the group of people with disabilities in an accessible way. The accessibility efforts can range from providing information in large print for people with visual impairments, or providing interpretation services for people with hearing impairments to recording videos in sign language or with closed captions. Furthermore, enabling people with dyslexia to access services by telephone rather than completing online forms can also be helpful.

The learning objectives and expected outcomes: The learning objectives and outcomes describe the knowledge and skills learners can earn by completing the training. This information is essential for everyone, and the same is true for PwD. As we have already described, they have been victims of systemic exclusion, segregation and stigmatization. Therefore, PwD are often suspicious of the opportunities offered and targeted at them. They are afraid someone could be trying to take advantage of them somehow. It is therefore very important to explain clearly and specifically why you are organizing a particular training, especially if you are providing such an opportunity for the first time to a group of PwD. It is equally vital to give information on the long term benefits and opportunities this training can bring after successful completion.

Creating content and training design: Some of the most important features of any training are the content, the teaching methods and the overall methodology behind it. The accessibility needs will depend on whether a training is conducted online, offline or sometimes as a combination of the two - in a hybrid format where online lectures are combined with the delivery of live hands-on training. Whichever case you prefer, the content and methodology must be accessible for participants with



disabilities. As a trainer, you need to consider the information under “Accessible technologies facilitating capacity building” and ensuring accessibility in online and offline environments from this Guideline.

Development of educational and training materials: Educational and training materials should be carefully aligned with the learning objectives and outcomes. Learning activities should enable learners to apply the principles learned from them. In addition, the trainers should not forget the theme of accessibility. For learners with disabilities to be able to absorb the information taught, the materials must be accessible to them. This could relate to providing sign language interpretation or providing captions for pre-recorded videos to online training to include hearing impaired learners. In creating digital materials such as lectures and presentations, the trainer should consider the accessibility of the files - docx, doc, rtf, txt, pdf, etc. It is good to avoid using images, graphics and photographs in materials to make it accessible to the visually impaired. If it is still imperative to use, it is mandatory to describe them.

Teaching in an accessible way, transferring knowledge and new skills: Regardless of whether the training takes place in an online or offline environment, a key component is for the trainer to be prepared and equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills. This know-how includes how to present in an accessible way, how to facilitate the whole training to make it accessible for PwD. For instance, when a group comprises only visually impaired people, the trainer needs to be aware of the specific measures that are in place to ensure that this target group is fully included in the training process. However, suppose the group of learners is diverse and includes people with visual, hearing, physical and learning disabilities. In that case, a much more extensive range of measures are needed. You can find these measures for different types of disabilities in section “Successful cooperation and communication with people with different types of disabilities” of this Guide.

Yet, there is one key element that we must not forget, and that is **the human element**. Of course, no matter how prepared a trainer may be, it is possible that a situation may arise that he/she has not yet encountered and is not prepared for. It is also possible to make mistakes, but the role of the trainer is to be available for the group of participants, to ask if everything is clear and if necessary to repeat a part of the information again, sometimes using a different approach or teaching method if the previous one was not successful.

Last but not least, **the trainers need to have patience**. Maybe sometimes a lecture will take longer than expected, or too many questions will be asked. However, at the end of the day, showing understanding and tolerance within a certain structure and framework will motivate the participants and pave the way for positive results.



Testimonials from people with disabilities

Austria

"I wondered about the state of the art of transferring knowledge, it is fully interactive and straightforward. With it, I could grasp the concept of machine learning with joy. I am grateful to Jamba for getting such an amazing learning opportunity for me to be able to attend these courses on the topic of R Language."

Yftusira Shiferaw, 53 years old woman, wheelchair user and chronic illness survivor based in Vienna, Austria. Yiftu took part in one of the training programs organized by Quantargo and Jamba.

Bulgaria

"I was part of the open labour market for 4 years, until I decided to move out of the capital Sofia to the second largest city - Plovdiv. Then the reality hit me - there are basically no effective services and basic knowledge of the capabilities of people with deficiencies, in my case with limited sight. For 2 years I tirelessly tried, went to interviews, crushing prejudices and smashing barriers, but without any success. I knew of Jamba's services and started to participate actively in skill improvement courses, organized by them. And, after the Quality Assurance course - the opportunity arose. With the mediation of Jamba, I managed to get fully integrated in the company culture and develop my skills and potential for more than 2 years now. I feel like a person achieving equal, and sometimes better results, than my colleagues, for whose efforts I am financially compensated accordingly, as it should be."

Borislav Staykov - QA Engineer at Documaster AS

"I worked in the NGO sector of providing integration and job mediation services for visually impaired people for several years. I am a low vision person myself and I've had first-hand experience both as a consultant and as a customer of job placement services. I do know how hard and challenging this kind of work sometimes may be. I got to know the team of Jamba during their first career fair event several years ago. Their passion and willingness to help the differently abled people were obvious even for a person with a severe sight loss like me. Their warm and compassionate approach was so appealing that it made me write an article for the event and later on volunteer for several initiatives they did. As a result, I was able to witness how much time and effort the team of Jamba devoted to some of the people with diverse abilities they worked with. It sometimes took them somewhat longer than they expected and caused them different kinds of troubles, but they never complained and definitely did not give up until they succeeded in finding a suitable career opportunity for the respective person. With that in mind, although I have not used Jamba's services so far, I believe and feel confident enough to say they know what they are doing and they do it more than well!"

Ivan Karastoyanov, Business Communication specialist



Hungary

Gábor Bocskai is a young professional with a special interest in cognitive neuroscience and his dream was to find a job in this field. He lives with a physical disability and uses a wheelchair. With the support of Jamba he is currently working in a cognitive lab as a scientific researcher and has started his PhD.

As he summarizes his experiences:

"I am most proud of my perseverance. I think about a problem until I figure out how to solve it. My motto is: don't think, do! I have been working at the Beta Lab of Pázmány Péter Catholic University for more than 1 year. The key to successful integration of people with disabilities is to get to know and understand each other."

Good practices

Austria

Soziale Zukunft Verein zur Förderung der Integration behinderter Menschen has a focus on capacity building among PwD in Austria by running accessible training programs on soft skills, English and vocational skills in Information and Communication Technology and Artificial Intelligence sectors.

Given the founding of the organization in Austria in April 2020, right in the period of a global pandemic, offline training was not possible, which is why all training the organization has conducted so far have happened online. The groups of participants are always very diverse - people with visual deficits, physical disabilities, hearing impairments, chronic diseases and syndromes. We are grateful for the support from the academic and corporate sectors (Central European University, LinkedIn, Talent Garden, Quantargo and others) through which we have been able to deliver fully accessible and free training programmes for our talent.

Bulgaria

For the last few years our organization has become a leader in Bulgaria. So far we have trained over 700 people with disabilities and have found jobs for over 400 of them.

The successful results we share are due to well-established practices of adapted training for people with disabilities and inclusive training for companies that are open to diversity in the workplace.

Thanks to these trainings we have successfully implemented people in some of the largest Bulgarian and international companies in the country - Coca - Cola, Ernst & Young, HPE, SAP Labs, Telenor, Decathlon, Starbucks, Documaster and more.



Hungary

One of the most successful IHC-process led by Jamba Hungary was implemented for [Kifli.hu](https://www.kifli.hu), Central Europe's leading online grocery store. This company has been growing very dynamically and it is deeply committed to operate in a socially responsible manner, and also to increase the diversity of their staff by employing PwD as well.

After Jamba in Hungary completed the IHC and delivered the closing presentation for the representatives of the company, Kifli started to implement some of the proposals very quickly: they fixed a bathroom according to the accessibility standards, and bought some new tables that are specially adapted for wheelchair-users.

Today there are already three Jamba Heroes who work for Kifli.hu in various positions, such as marketing assistance, quality assurance and helpdesk.

Partner organizations

Austria

Soziale Zukunft Verein zur Förderung der Integration behinderter Menschen/JAMBA - Karriere für alle is part of the international JAMBA network and supports persons with disabilities and chronic illnesses in Austria to attain soft skills, English and professional skills in the fields of Information and Communication Technology and Artificial Intelligence sectors. As a follow-up step, the organization acts as a bridge between talent and employers so that way they begin their professional development and find a flexible, secure and inclusive tech job.

Our project empowers people with disabilities with digital skills & qualifications for emerging job fields. We support real social & economical inclusion. A 360° approach involves all stakeholders: people with disabilities, business sector, non-profits, academia & public sector.

Bulgaria

"JAMBA - Career for All" was established and started by the team who created the Social Future Foundation in Bulgaria in 2017. We are a non-profit organization that supports people with disabilities to gain key competencies, soft and professional skills, as well as language skills.

As a next step, our team acts as a bridge between them and businesses so that talents with disabilities can start their professional development, find jobs and businesses can access a large group of people with previously untapped human capital.

Thanks to our intermediary activity we have managed to train 700 people with different capabilities and 400 of them are now working in more than 60 Bulgarian and international companies, they feel fulfilled, competitive and of course economically



active. Our team supports the real social and economic inclusion of people with disabilities in Bulgaria.

Our organization is a licensed employment agency with specialized expertise in working with people with disabilities, providing supported employment for both them and employers who welcome diversity in the workplace.

Hungary

Jamba in Hungary, as part of the international Jamba Network, aims to include persons with all types and degrees of disabilities in the open labour market from 2019 to contribute to the implementation of their rights to work and employment (Art. 27, UN-CRPD, 2006) by reducing systemic and systematic discrimination against them.

They provide unique and accessible training and career development opportunities for people with disabilities, as well as innovative, inclusive services, counseling and training development opportunities for open employers. Through empowerment of both parties Jamba's work in Hungary can have an exceptional social impact by contributing to the fair treatment of 440.000 Hungarians with disabilities who lack relevant education and are marginalized in Hungarian society.

Meanwhile their employment provides a yet unused, economical benefit, direct savings for all Hungarian employers up to a yearly amount of 258 million EUR (92,3 billion HUF), decreases turnover rate and while creating innovation enhances the performance of teams.