

# THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AND THE LESSONS LEARNT



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## **Project partners**





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### Prologue

The greater part of this study was executed months before the Covid-19 outbreak. Obviously, people with intellectual disabilities as well as their employment have been - and will continue to be - affected at least as much if not more by this global crisis.

Looking towards the 'world after', the research team fears a significant throwback when it comes to inclusive employment and to the creation of job opportunities, measures and motivation to include workers with intellectual disabilities in the regular economy.

On the other hand, the crisis revealed or emphasised certain particular needs/problems of the target group. Where relevant we have added Corona updates or comments. These updates are marked by this **(a)** icon.

However, all results, findings and conclusions should be read and interpreted in the light of the 'world before'.

## 1. Introduction

Jobseekers with (intellectual) disabilities have great trouble in finding long-term, sustainable jobs. They want to work; they are able to work but prejudices result in the absence of opportunities and unemployment or a state of long-term sick leave for a great number of people in this group.

The reasons are many and partially historically prompted: most societies make 'able-bodied' people the norm while all the others are different or deviant. E.g. a person not able to work is declared *un*-fit for work, a person using a wheelchair is called *dis*-abled...<sup>1</sup>

Disability, on this understanding, is seen as a problem located within the individual. Unless that individual can be cured or somehow adapted, they will not be able to participate in the life of mainstream society. It is they that must change or be changed in order to fit within a society designed for non-disabled people.<sup>2</sup>

Country	No disab	Moderate	Severe	Disab	Disab	Non-dis	Non-dis
	ite uisus	Moderate	Jevere	Women	Men	women	Men
AT	76,9	63,9	29,5	50,9	62,3	69,3	84,2
BE	74,4	53,0	21,5	38,1	47,8	71,5	77,1
BG	73,7	44,8	21,6	41,8	37,2	70,3	77,0
CY	71,0	52,7	33,1	41,3	52,9	64,8	77,7
cz	79,1	57,2	28,1	46,8	53,6	71,2	90,0
DE	79,4	62,4	28,4	50,4	53,2	74,8	84,1
DK	80,8	62,9	39,5	51,9	64,3	78,4	83,1
EE	83,0	68,1	41,2	63,1	61,2	79,6	86,6
EL	59,7	44,8	24,4	30,5	43,9	49,6	69,9
ES	67,6	44,6	20,0	38,2	42,1	61,2	73,8
FI	74,4	59,5	29,5	58,8	49,2	72,0	76,5
FR	74,0	60,7	44,2	54,7	56,4	71,6	76,5
HR	65,9	38,6	18,8	33,7	33,8	59,5	72,2
HU	76,1	55,0	23,6	44,5	49,3	69,2	83,0
IE	74,3	37,1	21,0	28,6	36,0	68,1	80,7
IT	65,5	56,3	27,2	43,9	61,0	54,5	76,4
LT	79,2	52,2	20,6	45,9	48,8	77,8	80,7
LU	68,9	59,0	38,3	46,1	61,1	62,4	75,4
LV	78,9	67,1	36,5	62,4	61,1	75,2	82,8
MT	73,6	37,7	35,1	27,0	47,5	61,3	85,2
NL	81,5	65,6	30,1	54,6	63,7	77,9	84,6
PL	74,5	47,5	29,6	39,1	46,2	66,6	83,4
РТ	75,0	59,9	40,9	54,7	58,1	72,4	77,5
RO	74,3	50,8	11,5	37,6	52,2	63,2	84,3
SE	83,5	56,4	44,9	50,2	56,5	81,9	84,9
SI	73,5	57,4	41,7	50,3	57,3	68,9	77,8
SK	80,0	65,0	34,1	54,9	61,0	75,1	84,6
UK	83,4	68,6	29,9	53,4	52,3	78,6	87,9
EU average	74,8	58,2	30,7	48,3	53,3	68,9	80,7

Hence, the data on the employment of people with intellectual disabilities.<sup>3</sup>

Non-EU average	64,4	41,8	22,8	35,0	38,0	59,8	68,7
Figure 1: Employment rates in 2017 - The Academic Network of European							
Disability Exp	oerts (ANE	ED)					1

27,5

18.4

49,7

20.7

48,0

30.4

80,8

46.6

85,9

56.7

83,5

51.7

NO

RS

58,2

27.8

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Taken from: "Inclusion de travailleurs ayant un handicap mental dans le circuit économique normal" (Tim Gielens, Anouk Van Hoofstadt, Evy Ploegaerts, André Schepers, Benjamin Huybrechts, Bart Cambré)

https://offer.antwerpmanagementschool.be/fr/t%C3%A9I%C3%A9charger-livre-blanc-id-at-work

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Lawson (2005)

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> https://www.disability-europe.net/downloads/1045-europe-2020-data-people-with-disabilities-tables-eu-silc-2017

Driven by Sustainable Development Goal number 8 of the United Nations<sup>4</sup>, awareness on the needs for and benefits of diversity is growing.



Governments, organisations and the corporate world are taking measures to improve diversity and activate the recruitment of jobseekers with disabilities and enhance their employment.

Example in Flanders, Belgium:

Since 1 January 2019, the decree 'Maatwerk bij collectieve inschakeling' (customisation with collective involvement) ', aims to offer customised work and support to people having difficulties finding a job. It allows them to move on from social/sheltered workshops to the regular economy. The reform simplifies the subsidy conditions and the support measures for enterprises in the social economy and harmonises them better.

The decree 'Maatwerk bij collectieve inschakeling' was approved by the Flemish Government on 3 July 2013.  $^{\rm 5}$ 

One of the problems here is that the terms 'diversity' and 'inclusion' imply a very large group of people. When quotas are imposed – as is the case in e.g. public administration and Belgium<sup>6</sup> and in The Netherlands<sup>7</sup> – recruitment tends to firstly level by gender, race, distance to the labour market and physical disabilities before hiring people with intellectual disabilities. This is due to the lack of knowledge and expertise of recruiters and employers, and the public in general, when it comes to intellectual disabilities.

In Spain, the Ministry of Finance and the Public Administrations have specific calls for positions for people with intellectual disabilities (in compliance with the reserve quota of the 2%). These positions are of Assistant of Management and Common Services.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Quota to be realised: 3% in the federal government, 2.5% in the Walloon Region, 2% in the Brussels-Capital Region, 5% in the COCOF (Brussels) and 3% in Flanders (targets). There are also targets for the employment of persons with disabilities within local and provincial governments. Quota count for all people presenting disabilities and chronic diseases. – ediv.be

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/envision2030-goal8.html

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> https://www.socialeeconomie.be/collectief-maatwerk

In 2018, only 5 federal agencies achieved the quota of 3 percent disabled workers. The total employment rate of people with disabilities within the federal administration in 2018 was only 1.25 percent – Belga, November 2019

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> By the beginning of 2026, a total of 125,000 jobs will be created for people with disabilities. This involves an additional 100,000 jobs in business. And 25,000 additional government jobs. This is called: 'Banenafspraak' (The job agreement). If employers are unable to create the agreed number of jobs for people with an occupational disability, then they still have to ensure a minimum number of

create the agreed number of jobs for people with an occupational disability, then they still have to ensure a minimum number of workplaces (a quota). This is called de 'Quotumregeling' (the quota arrangement). It applies to the public administration since 1 January 2020.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> https://www.plenainclusion.org/que\_hacemos/empleo

Laws are not enough to change a mentality that is deeply rooted in many people. Even when they are enforced, it takes time for common social portrayals and widely held assumptions to fade away.<sup>9</sup>

So, if we want to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 8 for <u>all</u> women and men by 2030, including people with disabilities, employers need support and training to bridge the knowledge gap.

They need

- to understand how to assess the talents and skills of workers with disabilities.
- tools, help and coaching.
- to get and stay motivated while workers with (intellectual) disabilities need to be empowered through coaching, accompaniment and support

Also, we believe that the professional world will need to evolve from inclusive employment to unified leadership where people with and without intellectual disabilities can work, thrive and lead together in order to learn from and strengthen each other.

Keyword for all parties concerned will be **flexibility**. That goes too for policy makers, education, processes and systems.

<sup>9</sup> Ferrucci (2014)

## 2. Understanding of the project

The project 'My Talents. For Diversity', focusses on the employment of people with intellectual disabilities in the regular economy; in the European Community.

The goal of this research project - executed by Antwerp Management School in Belgium - is to try and find answers to the following questions through research:

## 1. What are the benefits of diversity management with workers with intellectual disabilities?

2. How to ensure companies support workers with intellectual disabilities?

#### 3. How do people with intellectual disabilities contribute to diversity management?

We applied a mixed research methodology. All findings, conclusions and guidelines in this report will be based upon these activities.

#### A. Desk research

Screening of international, scientific and non-scientific literature on the recruitment and employment of people with intellectual disabilities and learning difficulties.

#### B. An online survey

A questionnaire available **in 9 different languages**. By decision of project management, the survey was aimed at active, inclusive employers. Participants linked to

https://uamangementschool.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\_8dlb316d0MxqzPv We registered **204 responses**<sup>10</sup> from **16 different European countries** of which **44** came from **privately held companies**.

#### C. In-depth interviews

**14 interviews** were performed in **10 inclusive companies** with employees with intellectual disabilities and their supervisors and in 4 companies that have not yet hired employees with intellectual disabilities or are in the process of recruiting representatives of this group.

The interviewees/companies are spread over 6 different European countries and represent 10 different types of businesses.

The interviews were done individually. For the sake of privacy, the identities of the interviewees are exclusively known and protected by the interviewers.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> Figures on 20 May 2020

The empirical research for this project used the techniques that have proven adequate during the project ID@Work<sup>11</sup>: a study on inclusion of workers with intellectual disabilities in the regular economy in Belgium; performed between 2015 and 2017.<sup>12</sup> - <sup>13</sup>

The research team identified levers (conditions that help) and barriers (conditions that block) for the employment of people with intellectual disabilities within companies and organisations having experience with this type of employment. The team turned the levers and barriers into 6 blocks that build inclusive employment. Together, these 6 blocks shape the conceptual research model (see Figure 3).



Figure 3: Conceptual Research Model - ID@Work

By hiring a junior researcher with intellectual disability, the research team also built its own case. The researcher was paid equally compared to staff of the same level and had the same rights, advantages and responsibilities as his colleagues. It was a part-time job since our researcher also works as a volunteer for the public road & traffic services of his hometown.

The duration of the contract of our junior researcher with intellectual disabilities did not stretch beyond the start of the Corona crisis and lockdown. We did not have the opportunity to experience the employment of a person with intellectual disabilities in these extraordinary times. However, we know from his testimonials that it was hard for him to accept that – since in Belgium people with disabilities were considered being at high risk of contamination – he was not allowed to work while his colleagues (from the public service) without disabilities could continue during lockdown. This made him feel excluded and frustrated.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> <u>https://inclusieophetwerk.be</u> – <u>https://inclusionautravail.be</u>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> "Inclusion de travailleurs ayant un handicap mental dans le circuit économique normal" (Tim Gielens, Anouk Van Hoofstadt, Evy Ploegaerts, André Schepers, Benjamin Huybrechts, Bart Cambré) – 2016

https://offer.antwerpmanagementschool.be/fr/t%C3%A9I%C3%A9charger-livre-blanc-id-at-work

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> "De quoi un employeur a-t-il besoin pour créer un environnement de travail inclusif ?" (Anouk Van Hoofstadt, Evy Ploegaerts, Benjamin Huybrechts, Bart Cambré) - 2017

https://blog.antwerpmanagementschool.be/hubfs/\_Downloadables/HRM%20&%20Organizational%20Development/White%20paper%2 0ID@WORK%20-%20FR.pdf

## 3. The quest for answers

## 3.1 What are the benefits of diversity management with workers with intellectual disabilities?

In order to provide a substantiated and nuanced answer, we observed:

- a. External benefits for the company
- b. Internal benefits for the company
- c. The benefits for the employee with intellectual disabilities

#### a. External benefits for the company

Research on the public views on employment of people with ID in **Canada in 2004**.<sup>14</sup> Revealed that about 87% of respondents believed that hiring people with intellectual disabilities would not negatively affect the image of workplaces.

A percentage almost equalled by the Belgian ID@Work study<sup>15</sup> in which 68% of the questioned entrepreneurs and employers indicated that they ultimately expected a positive impact of the inclusive employment on the companies' image.

A surprising answer since it is rather unusual for employers in the regular economy to advertise their inclusive employment and even less their employees with ID. Modesty and protection being the main reasons of their restraint.

**Testimonial case 14 -** *"I do not want to show off with my employee with ID. It is not appropriate, and I think it could be held against us."* 

**Testimonial case 2** – "We do not really proclaim to be open to people with ID."

Comparing the tendency for modesty of the inclusive companies to the view of the general public from the Canadian study, a more extravert attitude of the first ones could help inclusive companies to improve their image and contribute to the 'normalisation' of inclusive employment of people with intellectual disabilities. The more, most of the workers with ID can and want to be proud, loyal ambassadors to their employer. (see 3.3)

#### b. Internal benefits for the company

The **first benefit** certainly is the fact that workers with ID are seen as typically stable, dependable and competent employees, and as such, they represent a potentially valuable resource for the workforce.<sup>16</sup>-

<sup>14</sup> Burge et al.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> "De Quoi un employeur a-t-il besoin pour créer un environment de travail inclusif?" – Anouk Van Hoofstadt, Evy Ploegaerts, Benjamin Huybrechts, Bart Cambré - 2017

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Lysaght et al. (2010) - Canada

**Testimonial case 2** - *"My worker with intellectual disabilities is very active and dedicated. I would like 30 more workers like him."* 

The workplace challenges that may be associated with ID include slower than average learning of new tasks, impaired memory, slow and sometimes impaired motor performance, and reluctance to change roles and routines. <sup>17</sup> Although, these are the typical remarks (and even prejudices) raised by uninformed employers - the majority in the regular economy when it comes to intellectual disabilities - some of the challenges have to be taken into account as confirms the manager of case 2:

**Testimonial case 2** – "New assignments are presented to the colleague with ID and learned step-by-step. Last-minute changes in his daily planning remain difficult for him. We all know that. His supervisor gives him time and space to adapt to the new and unforeseen situation."

This is where the building block **Job matching** (see conceptual research model, p. 10) comes in.

Job matching refers to all processes involved to associate a candidate or employee to a certain set of tasks, from the search to suitable ID candidates up to and including the execution of the job.<sup>18</sup> It includes job sculpting<sup>19</sup> and/or of job carving<sup>20</sup>.

Our survey results clearly indicate an understanding of the inclusive employers for the need of job matching (see Figure 4). Job matching is indeed a crucial element to achieve supported employment<sup>21</sup> (Wehman & Kregal 1985; Beyer 1995) which is increasingly mentioned in policies as a successful model for people with ID.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Lysaght et al. (2010) - Canada

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> "White Paper: "Inclusie van werknemers met een verstandelijke handicap in het normaal economisch circuit" - Tim Gielens, Anouk Van Hoofstadt, Evy Ploegaerts, André Schepers, Benjamin Huybrechts, Bart Cambré - 2016

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Job sculpting: certain tasks are extricated from the initial package of tasks of the employee or adapted to the functioning of the employee <sup>20</sup> We define jobcrafting as "shaping" the job so that it better matches the interests, capacities and employee limits. It is important that the adjustments are initiated by the employee. (De Prins, 2015).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Supported employment is now defined as integrated jobs in community settings where persons with disabilities have the opportunity to work alongside with people without disabilities and are provided with individualized supports to facilitate long-term success [26] - Jenaro et al. (2002).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Beyer, Brown, Akandi & Rapley



Figure 4: adjusting tasks to skills

Job matching may well be seen as the **second internal benefit** for the company. Indeed, once an organisation has learned how to match, design, sculpt or craft jobs for workers with ID and thus have learned that taking a fresh look at jobs can be effective and appreciated by the complete staff, the efforts of diversity management will benefit all the internal processes of the company. As confirm testimonials taken from the in-depth interviews and literature.

**Testimonial case 6 -** "Thanks to the partnership with the sheltered workshop, we made operations more efficient. We should have done the same for our own staff before. The arrival of the workers of the sheltered workshop did speed things up."

**Testimonial case 2** - "An agency presented a worker with intellectual disability to me. I did the interview as I would do with any other candidate: look for skills, drive and motivation not search for limitations. I was willing to find out what this candidate's skills were and match tasks to these skills. So, I looked for repetitive, structured tasks weighing on other staff members. I combined them into a job with a clear description for the worker with intellectual disability.

We tackled communication more thoroughly and slower. We repeated a lot. We should have done the same before with all other staff members.

**Testimonial (desk research) on an ID employment in a 4-star hotel in the UK**<sup>23</sup> "We went through a careful process of 'job carving', supported by the worker's job coach and his school. They established his key strengths and matched these with roles and tasks that needed to be completed in our hotel.

It involved a totally new way of looking at our recruitment and challenged us to be more flexible with our job descriptions and job scopes.

In addition, we worked to be flexible with our application process to ensure it was fully accessible to the candidate with ID. Instead of having a standard interview for the role he made a video with his job coach that showed him demonstrating all the jobs he could do and the skills he has."

**Own case (case 13)** – "We knew exactly what needed to be done (contact and interview companies and workers) by our junior researcher with intellectual disabilities and recruited him within our network. We knew his strong social and verbal competences, and ease with current communication technology. We also needed him to enlighten us – from his point of view as an employee with intellectual disabilities – on the results of the interviews and survey.

Together with his direct colleague, a distribution of tasks that suited everyone's talents was developed. Sometimes even at micro level; meaning that mail texts were written by the team member without ID and the actual sending was done by the team member with ID.

Since our colleague with ID has problems reading and writing, all analyses of survey and interviews were conducted orally. We also knew in advance that he would not be able to take part in the actual writing and editing of the intermediate and the final report. During these periods, tasks matching his skills were searched for and found in other departments. By executing these tasks, the employee with ID not only learned to do new things but also reduced the workload of his colleagues."

A third internal benefit for the company involves the organisational culture (see Figure 3, p. 10). The presence of this building block and its positive impact on the company, is defined by the norms and values of the company, the diversity performance, the organisation and the policy.

**Testimonial case 1** - "My worker with Down syndrome proved to be a winning factor. If you have somebody like him working with you, it brings the staff closer together. Colleagues put their own problems more in perspective. Their work ethic and performances have improved."

<sup>23</sup> https://dwp.shorthandstories.com/DC-Adam-Marriott/index.html

This third benefit seems to be very important to the respondents to the survey, since 78% expect the employment of a person with ID to have a positive impact on the organisational culture. (see Figure 5)



Figure 5: effect of inclusive employment on organisational culture

Knowing that a large majority of the respondents are inclusive employers, one can ask if the expectation is given in by their current experience, if this is more of a hope they express or if this is a theoretical answer knowing that the ingredients for a positive impact are in place; these ingredients being:

- o an individualised and flexible management style,
- the focus on skills and competences,
- o full integration,
- o equal treatment and fairness



Taking a closer look at **integration**, the survey response is positive.

Figure 6: Integration of employees with ID

During the in-depth interviews, it became clear that integration is a working point when it comes to getting to the level as sited by the manager in case 1 (p.14)

**Testimonial case 2 -** "I informed my staff of the arrival of a person with intellectual disabilities ahead because it has an impact. After 2 weeks, I had to repeat this because the arrival of the person with intellectual disabilities was not obvious. I noticed growing frustration. So, I communicated again, without the colleague with intellectual disabilities. It went well. Since, the person with intellectual disabilities integrated the team on his own."

**Testimonial case 6 -** "When announcing the embedding of a group workers of a sheltered workshop, we were a bit scared. How would our staff react? They were frightened to lose their job. So, we approached the arrival of these people from the sheltered workshop as natural as possible. We did not want to make too much fuss about it. We thought this would only stigmatise them."

The same observation goes for the expectation of **equal treatment**. Survey results are motivating but we want to warn for a true risk of positive discrimination.



Figure 7: Equal treatment of colleagues with intellectual disabilities

In the ID@Work-study, we clearly saw cases of higher tolerance towards 'deviant' attitudes of workers with intellectual disabilities. We also observed lower expectations in terms of worked hours for the same salary.<sup>24</sup> Although, these differences between workers with and without intellectual disabilities did not seem dysfunctional, we are not convinced of the sustainability of this approach. In this case staff without intellectual disabilities might get frustrated.

From our own experience with previous inclusive employment, we can say that the 4 conditions pointed out on p.15, are not enough to make things work. As we will see in chapter 3.3, the starting employer of workers with ID needs more building blocks to make the hiring a success.

On the other hand, we must not over-estimate the presence of above cited ingredients as a guarantee for hiring of people with intellectual disabilities.

In **case 3** diversity, corporate social responsibility, equality is boosted top-down. The measures to manage diversity and inclusion with a personalised approach are in place. The company has general and personalised on-boarding systems. New staff get a buddy. All staff benefit from a paid day off to engage in societal activities (for example volunteering). Nevertheless, the company does not have any workers with intellectual disability on the payroll. They estimate that there are no jobs for workers with intellectual disabilities at the company.

In **case 6**, the employees of the sheltered workshop, are considered to be colleagues. They participate in incentives, company parties, briefings and trainings. But the HRmanager prefers to stay in control through the embedded work with a sheltered workshop. A certain anxiety and reluctance towards the hiring of people with intellectual disabilities continues to exist.

#### c. <u>The benefits for the employee with intellectual disabilities</u>

Although this European research mainly focusses on the employers' side (in the regular economy) and on his needs to develop employment of people with ID, this study also observed benefits for the employees with ID. It is a must to emphasise them as well.

Work is one of the most valued social rules in modern society, contributing to a person's sense of economic well-being, self-esteem, personal identity, and social status. <sup>25</sup> People with ID do not make an exception to this rule.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> ID@Work, White paper 1 - "Inclusie van werknemers met een verstandelijke handicap in het normaal

economisch circuit, (Gielens, Van Hoofstadt, Ploegaerts, Schepers, Huybrechts, Cambré) p. 24, paragraph 3 & 4 $^{25}$  Mueser & Cook

Research indicates that the perceived benefits of work for persons with ID are similar to those for the non-disabled population; namely, the sense of feeling productive and being busy, having relationships with co-workers, feeling important, having increased income and opportunities for continued growth and advancement.<sup>26</sup>

For all those reasons, we believe that the impact of the Corona crisis on the lives of workers with ID will be higher than on that of all other workers. The most fragile will be the first ones to be threatened by unemployment in a world where high productivity and fast economic growth is at stake.

In our **own case** (case 13) we observed a considerable impact of the employment at a business school on the life of our junior researcher. On different levels.

- He grew his network and got contacted by people and organisations for articles, testimonials, talks on inclusive employment and intellectual disabilities. Although, it made him a role model and a leader, these contacts have not turned into new paid job opportunities (at time of writing). Organisations proposed volunteer jobs because they struggle with low budgets.
- $\circ$   $\;$  He learned new skills and experienced a paid job for the first time in his life.
- Knowing of this paid job, the gardening services from his hometown are studying how they can compensate his work until now executed as a volunteer.
- His parents testified of a considerable improvement in his reading and writing and a motivation to keep on working on these skills.
- The junior researcher himself was glad and proud to be fully accepted by staff of a university. He testified feeling fully integrated and listened to.

The Corona crises interfered with the last weeks of his contract. Although the team extended with HR management and buddies gathered for a video call to say goodbye and insisted on him coming to school as soon as allowed, the sadness was tangible.

Supported employment<sup>27</sup> has offered opportunities to increase the number of workers with disabilities who otherwise could not enter mainstream employment. The movement towards integrated employment suggests that the general public will come into increasingly greater contact with people with ID as potential employers, supervisors, or as co-workers.<sup>22</sup> Successful employment outcomes depend on the availability of suitable employment options, the willingness of employers to hire, and the presence of adequate support systems in the workplace. In addition, for true inclusion to occur, workers with special needs must become part of the workplace and interact meaningfully with other workers.

The ingredients of the last paragraphs will be tackled in the next chapter.

<sup>26</sup> Burge et al.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Supported employment started as an initiative in the United States in the early 1980's It is now defined as integrated jobs in community settings where persons with disabilities have the opportunity to work alongside people without disabilities and are provided with individualized supports to facilitate long-term success - Jenaro et al. (2002).

#### 3.2 How to ensure companies support workers with intellectual disabilities?

Companies will only be able to support workers with ID when they hire them. That is the unconditional first step. This means employers need to know where to find and how to recruit workers with ID, and what it takes to make it a successful and sustainable employment.

Since the larger majority of the respondents to the survey are companies and people who employ or have employed workers with ID, the following result does not come as a surprise.



Figure 8: Degree of knowledge on workers with ID organisation claim to have.

However, during the in-depth interviews we observed a reduced presence or total absence of knowledge.

In **case 4**, when starting the interview, we discovered that the company only has workers with physical disabilities. During the preparation of the interview, our person of contact had let us believe otherwise. When asked why they do not have employees with intellectual disability, the interviewee answered that they do not know how to recruit people with intellectual disabilities nor how to work with them.

In **case 3**, a world leading company with a 6-figure number of employees across the globe and a well-developed diversity policy, the interviewee asked us to define intellectual disabilities. The interviewee's colleague, the company's physician, tried to define by talking about pathologies (theory of diseases) herewith following the biomedical model<sup>28</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> The biomedical model offers little guidance for the employment of those with congenital disabilities such as ID that are unlikely to be resolved, except that these workers are typically embraced by the health care system early in their lives, and viewed as "patients" in a unique category with no real expectations of social contribution. From a rehabilitation standpoint, strategies or technologies that help accommodate a deficit can eliminate the impact of the disability on employment - Lysaght et al. (2010) - Canada

When given examples of what intellectual disabilities can mean, the interviewee concluded that there are no vacancies possible for this type of profile in the company. Her argument being that the type of work done in the company requires only highly educated profiles.

These are just two examples of the ignorance of employers and emphasise the existing confusion on (intellectual) disabilities.

Persons in a wheelchair, little people, persons with sight problems... are easily recognisable. Based on this fact, company managers have no trouble in saying that they work with people with disabilities. The lack of visible problems makes it far more difficult to recognise people with, e.g., auditive problems or intellectual disabilities. For this reason, when searching for inclusive companies, we were often told that they did not know if they are employing workers with intellectual disabilities. We do not know because we do not see it.

People like to categorise. Discussing intellectual disabilities, one rapidly starts talking about Autism or Asperger. Because these disabilities and their symptoms are more commonly known and have a name. Having met and being impressed by the talent and skills of our junior researcher with intellectual disabilities, people often asked: "What is *wrong* with him?". "What is his disability *called*?"

The reaction joins the findings of an **Italian study**<sup>29</sup>: "For many people, when they think of disability, they imagine persons whose physical disability has also taken away other characteristics that distinguish human beings: desire, aspiration, motivation and the assumption of responsibility and risk. For this reason, they assume that persons with disabilities are not capable of acting in an enterprising way. They do not consider the possibility that the measures and structures that currently exist could be used to promote the entrepreneurial potential of disabled persons." This is one of the principal reasons why workers with ID are the last in line to be hired; even in companies who have adopted a diversity management.

#### Social & societal engagement

So, in order to ensure the support of workers with ID by companies, we need to upgrade the general **knowledge & expertise**. This building block is highly connected to another one: **Strategy**. Because everything starts with the question: would you hire a person with intellectual disabilities and why?

**Testimonial case 1** - "Our worker with Down syndrome is the son of a staff member. I knew him from visits to his mother in our offices. More than 12 years ago, she asked me if her son could do an internship. I started informing myself on Down and how to deal with it. I talked a lot to his parents and opened up to him. The internship was a success. I decided to give him a chance. As the general manager, I became his coach and teacher as well as his person of reference. Now, he works 2,5 days/week at the company".

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Ferrucci (2014)

**Testimonial case 7** – "When my daughter with Down syndrome started going to inclusive school, I quit my job as a coach, thinking it might be better to be close to the school in case they needed help. I got bored and started a coffee shop. A friend knew a young man with Down who was bored of being in day centre every day. So, in spite of the advice I got from the coach helping me to start the coffee shop, I hired him. Then came a second staff member with Down, then I hired my daughter and later on another person with Autism. Running the restaurant and finding out the skills of everyone is not different than what I did in my former job when I used to coach 15 people."

**Testimonial case 5 -** "As an entrepreneur (a father of a young man with intellectual disabilities, author), I find that you have to do a good deed, once in a while. I would hire a worker with intellectual disabilities out of social engagement not for economic reasons. I think a lot of my staff would appreciate it. The problem is: I do not know where to find them".

**Testimonial case 14** – "The agencies recruiting for me know they can send me candidates with disabilities, former inmates, immigrants... I find they all deserve a chance. When interviewing I look for soft skills such as drive, passion, enthusiasm, ambition."

All of the above testimonials are given in by social motives, confirming the result of the survey. The choice for societal/social engagement can be found in literature as the philanthropic model.<sup>30</sup>



Figure 9: In my organisation we hire workers with intellectual disabilities because...

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> views people with disabilities as victims of their unfortunate circumstances, and in need of charitable treatment [14]. This viewpoint may explain research findings showing that the primary incentive for many employers to hire people with intellectual disabilities derived from a sense of social responsibility, including such motives as contributing to breaking down stereotypes and helping people with ID integrate in the community [18]. It is considered laudable in this view if people can work a bit, but not an expectation - Lysaght et al. (2010) - Canada

Not seldom, the employers acting from a social and societal engagement, have knowledge on intellectual disabilities because they are related to a person with ID. That does not mean they possess sufficient expertise neither is it a guarantee to make the employment sustainable as we shall see further on and as testifies an interviewee:

**Testimonial case 2** - "Hiring a person with intellectual disabilities cannot be an act of compassion or a good deed. There has to be real work, a real job and both parties (employer and employee) have to feel it that way. Otherwise, it will not last. As an employer you need to offer meaningful, paid work that fits the skills of the worker with intellectual disabilities".

#### **Financial incentives**

The possibility to **receive grants, subsidies and other financial incentives** are indeed important factors. They can compensate the loss of profitability when hiring a person with intellectual disabilities and/or pay for extra coaching. Governmental support should not be seen as a way to make an employee 'cheaper'. If an employer starts an inclusive employment for economic reasons only, without having the necessary knowledge & expertise, the sustainability of the employment might be threatened.



Figure 10: In my country, the government supports the employment of people with intellectual disabilities.

Interviewees indicated that financial support is a nice-to-have but systems were criticised for being too complex and complicated. The manager in **case 14**, e.g., indicates that he is not interested in any financial support and does not apply for any other kind of support. Although his franchise is part of a European group, his actions are solely his decision. He thinks the Group is not ready for this type of employment.

#### The financial support barrier for workers with ID

Finance can also reveal to be an obstacle to workers with ID. Interviewees in different countries, indicated that people with intellectual disabilities risk losing partly or entirely their financial support when their salary exceeds a certain amount. If the system makes it too difficult to regain this allowance in case the employment is terminated, it blocks employment of people with ID. The obstacle comes in different forms:

- the candidate-employee starts negotiating a number of working hours that will guarantee him the continuity of his financial support. This may cause problems to the employer who planned to hire the candidate for a larger number of working hours. The employer is forced to find solutions.
- the candidate-employee let's go of his personal financial support, taking all the risks and sometimes facing opposition of his family who prefers the safety of a job in a sheltered workshop. (case 2)
- the candidate-employee chooses to work as a non-remunerated volunteer (case 1) herewith kind of confirming that people with ID cannot do a paid job.
   This last point tends to be a topic of discussion: some people will say, workers with ID do not have to get a salary since they get personal financial support. They are somewhat confirmed by the workers with ID who motivated and proud workers as they are do not mind being a volunteer. To them, paid employment in a private company or volunteering in public administration is the same, real job.

**Testimonial - case 1**: *"I work 2,5 days per week as a volunteer at the company. I would like to do more, but it is the maximum I am allowed to do. The rest of the week, I am at the day centre. This way I can keep my allowance. The company offers me a monthly fee for my work as a volunteer."* 

**Testimonial own case -** *"I can only work a limited number of hours at the university. If I earn too much, I lose my allowance. I also work as a volunteer for the road services of my hometown. Since I have started working as a junior researcher for a university, they are a bit embarrassed they do not pay me, so now they are studying the possibility of giving me luncheon vouchers to compensate."* 

#### Support the supporter

So, as it appears, the most important building block to ensure a company supports workers with ID is **Experience & Support**. This block focusses on how, and measures to what extent, the inclusive employer is/will be able to acquire knowledge on ID and learn to support his employee with ID.

Knowledge & experience can be developed through coaching and training by external expert agencies. For some employers, the acquisition of knowledge already starts with finding this formal support. If the results of our survey show that inclusive employers know where to find it (see Figure 11), the in-depth interviews revealed that employers who have little to no experience with inclusive employment have trouble in getting there. So, formal support needs to be visible. External agencies need to work on their image and reputation.



Figure 11: formal support meaning for example support from a job coach or organisation that has expertise in the support of employment of a person with intellectual disabilities

**Testimonial case 5** - "I will do whatever it takes to make the employment of our first person with intellectual disabilities work. I will call upon an external organisation to start with. In the beginning, I would very much appreciate the presence of a job coach at the workplace. Training for the employee with intellectual disabilities will be provided. All my staff gets training when they start in this company."

Our team referred the HR-manager of this case to external expert agencies and also offered to give a talk on inclusion at the company. They followed up on references and found some suitable candidates through an external agency. Unfortunately, the partnership did not turn out to be a success. The company was not able to hire a worker with ID because the employer wanted to start with 2h/day, 10h/week while the local labour law (Belgium) prescribes a minimum of 30% FTE / 11.4 h/week. The only solution was to outsource the job to a contractor.

#### **Hire differently**

An external expert agency can help with the review of job offers, descriptions and interviews of the candidates. A **recent study in the UK**<sup>31</sup> suggests that: "online recruitment processes leave many obstacles for disabled people. In particular, the visibility of inequalities within the labour market has been evident when employers adopt a one-size-fits-all application process that ignores unequal access to the Internet for disabled people. Findings demonstrate that although access to the Internet and a computer was an obvious barrier for some individuals, the inaccessibility or noncompliance of recruitment websites with assistive technology was even more evident for all participants in this study."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Disability inequality and the recruitment process: responding to legal and technological developments - Frederike Scholz, The University of Leeds, Leeds University Business School - I© 2017 The University of Leeds and Frederike Scholz

Time will tell if the Corona crisis will have been a setback or the start of a positive change when it comes to recruitment of people with ID. Obviously, there have been more online recruitments during this period and that is, as the study from 2017 in the UK (p.24) suggests, difficult for people with disabilities. At the same time, the corporate world has become creative and comfortable with online interviews, video calls and other ways of remote contact. This might be an opening to video candidacies and interviews as seen in the UK example on p. 14 This will also ask for a change in mind set and actions taken by people and organisations accompanying people with ID on their search for jobs.

As we have seen in the majority of the cases, engaged employers focus on skills, motivation and drive when interviewing candidates. External agencies can be a good partner in accompanying and supporting employers with less insight. Or as one of are interviewees put it very straight forward: "As an employer, do not complain you do not find suited candidates for the job. Just open up to other profiles and you will find good, loyal, dedicated workers."

Overall, the agencies providing formal support are one of the keys to the improvement of inclusive employment of people with ID in the regular economy. For this, the agencies have to be visible, convincing, credible and efficient. As we see in case 6, employers – even with a little experience - do not know formal support and doubt the efficiency of training.

**Testimonial case 6** - "I am in favour of a training for the employer. But every person with intellectual disabilities is different so what would be the point of a general training? I think that makes it difficult."

This kind of conviction results in a status quo when it comes to flow workers with ID from a job in a protected environment to an inclusive employment in the regular economy.

**Testimonial case 6** - "The partnership with a sheltered workshop saved one of our departments. We perceive the employees of the sheltered workshop as colleagues. They work at our plant, have the same rules and the same facilities as our own employees. But I do not see them 'grow' and come on our payroll. The sheltered workshop provides services we cannot offer such as transportation for example. It would be difficult."

#### Informed and prepared staff for sustainable mentor

Generally speaking, formal external support of the worker with ID ends after a certain period of time. Natural support or peer support (as we prefer to call it) will then continue. We observed two main reasons for frustration of staff of inclusive companies which can be of negative influence on this peer support:

#### 1. Fear for their own job.

This comes in before or at the beginning of onboarding. As seen in 3.1.b successful and sustainable employment of a worker with ID is one that is part of a strategy that is backed by staff and not a top-down decision only. So, staff needs to be informed and

listened to and formal support/training might be needed to prepare staff for the onboarding and the mentoring of a worker with ID.

#### 2. Social commitment and excess of tolerance

As seen in Figure 9, social and societal engagement are the main reason for the employment of people with ID, and that motivation is often shared by staff. Asking for support and mentoring by a colleague, is therefore understood and welcomed but needs to be clearly agreed upon and described if the mentoring wants to be sustainable. If not, it can become a burden for the mentor. Certainly, in smaller companies with a limited number of staff. The reason for this, is the lack of borders between private and professional life. In case 1, the company manager has become a father figure to his worker with Down syndrome. The worker with Down syndrome has lost his father some time ago. He can stay overnight at his manager's house. They go to parties and on vacation together. The manager does not seem to mind. To others, this kind of proximity or friendship, can quickly become too much.

Peer support comes in many forms and largely depends on the needs of the employee with ID.

**Testimonial case 9** - "Before I started working here, I worked in the regular economy without people with ID. So, I had to adapt and that was not easy. Now, I find it normal. Even more, when my colleague with ID is absent, I am a little anxious because there are things she only knows. I am her direct contact person. We often have open and straight forward conversations, especially when I see she's not feeling well and/or if she's not working as she usually does. In that case we look for the causes and search for solutions together. We also have team conversations with colleagues and supervisors. People with ID are also supported by trainers and job coaches as long as needed. The company gets governmental support for this."

**Testimonial case 2** – "He has contact persons but no explicit support. Everybody tries to be as clear as possible. He had a job coach but does not need him anymore. I find this person has become stronger by working with us."

**Testimonial case 14** – "Our employment of a person with ID is not different from the one for all other staff. We have not prepared differently. It is straight forward. We have no financial incentives, no mentoring or formal support. I informed the direct supervisor of his arrival and he has colleagues to go to when he needs help. I am very satisfied with him and the way it works."

In our own case, our colleague with ID has - besides his direct colleague and supervisor - two buddies: employees of his own age who step in, when the direct colleague/supervisor is not available. They help him with translations, to understand new information or acquire new skills (e.g. filling out xcel sheets). They are much appreciated by our colleague with ID and that feeling is reciprocal. Both buddies testify they learn from the supportive role they play.

## 3.3 How do people with intellectual disabilities contribute to diversity management?

If we want people with ID to contribute to diversity management, they need to be able to get jobs in the regular economy and the chance to grow into leaders whose experience can be of added value. Therefore, they need to be empowered.

**Empowerment** is the 6<sup>th</sup> building block of our conceptual research model and observes how the company/organisation stimulates the autonomy, self-reliance and auto-steering of the employee with intellectual disability.

Underestimation and/or overprotection by parents, family, teachers, counsellors... grows learned helplessness on people with intellectual disabilities. It results in e.g. a lack of motivation, self-confidence, a low level of literacy. Typical internal barriers to employment for this target group.<sup>32</sup>

**Testimonial case 2** - "People with intellectual disabilities rarely apply for a job. I think they lack self-confidence. Applying is 'selling' yourself and that is difficult."

**Testimonial own case** – *"When my job as a researcher is done, I would like to apply for other jobs. I know I will need help to write my CV and to apply because that is a little difficult."* 

We believe empowerment of people with ID has to start at school. There is a need of educational systems looking for skills and talents rather than evolve according to the limits of a person.

During this project, we discovered an organisation presenting hybrid forms of education, training, job search, job coaching and employment. An Austrian Group (case 9), in the social economy, does all that. Partly in a franchise system. The fact that they hire people with ID for positions at their own offices makes them (also) experts by experience which – we believe – is an absolute added value when it comes to accompanying workers and employers towards inclusive employment.

Next to the support people with ID need to get to the job market, it is the degree of achievement in their job that will make them (ultimately) contribute to diversity management. Seen the lack of knowledge and confidence on both sides (employees with ID and employers), we believe that some sort of internship, trial or temporary is an ideal way to start a collaboration. We observed this mechanism in the majority of the cases. Internships can start at school but can also be part of the on-boarding process of a worker with intellectual disabilities.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> Shier, Graham, and Jones (2009), Winn & Hay, (2009)

**Testimonial own case** - "Because I have difficulties reading and writing, I was in the lowest level of special education. My teachers told me that I would never be able to work. I was heading for a life in day centres. I refused. I asked – almost always in vain - to be able to follow computer training at school and insisted on getting an internship at a company when I was in my last year. One teacher heard me. Thanks to her, I got an internship at the gardening services of my hometown. They were satisfied of my internship and I could stay on as a volunteer. But it wasn't a great success. I did not work a lot. The supervisor rarely knew what assignment to give me. When leaving for an assignment with my colleagues, I had to stay in the car, while they were working. They were always saying things were too difficult or too dangerous for me. It was frustrating and annoying. I felt like a toddler.

I asked to change departments. Now I work, still as a volunteer, for the road services. We mend pavements, we install fences and barriers for events. My colleagues and supervisors give me the chance to try and learn. I like it."

**Testimonial case 2** - "I was predestined to work in a sheltered workshop. It did not feel right, but my father wanted to accept. I could not believe that I was not capable of doing better. I asked the employment agency to do IQ-tests and other assessments to prove my talents. The agency did not think this was necessary. My job coach persuaded my father to give me a chance to work in a normal company. I applied a lot. Each time they found out of my intellectual disabilities, they bailed out. Until 2 years ago. I could start at a gardening company. First a trial of a week, then an internship, followed by an institutionally supported job of 6 months and then full-time work. At the beginning, I was hesitant, and it took a while before being accepted by my colleagues. But I liked my tasks, I had persons of contact I could (and still can) turn to and I can adapt my work as I seem fit."

Once an employment is started, contribution of the worker with ID to diversity management will also be driven by the **strengthening of competences through the increase of autonomy and confidence**. For this, **frequent and direct communication** are key.

**Internal contribution to diversity management**, means putting the worker with ID in the driver's seat. Give him the space to tell that documents (e.g. labour agreement) are too difficult to understand and let him suggest how to make them more adequate. Let him steer communication with, and help from, mentors and peers e.g. when accommodation of processes, systems or workplace is necessary.

Warning for over-estimation of the worker with intellectual disabilities:

the will to impress, the reluctance of saying that something is not understood, can create the impression that the employee with intellectual disabilities is ready to execute tasks when he is not. This will lead to failure, frustration and even abandon of the employee. By helping to re-think operations and communication, the worker will not only help himself but also pave the path for further diversity management.

**External contribution to diversity management**, will come when workers with ID are given **a face and a voice**. Most people with ID are proud to have a job, and even more when it is a job in the regular economy (because it still is rather unusual). They are proud of the company

they work for and keen to play an ambassadors' role. By giving them the opportunity to tell their story to the outside world, they can inspire both employers and people with ID.

In our **own case**, we had the chance to observe the effect of professionals meeting on our junior researcher. Just by doing his job, he displayed the skills he has to offer and moved employers to get more info on the employment of people with intellectual disabilities. For some a real eye-opener.

At the same time, the growing number of (re)presentations during this project, strengthened him, made him more confident and thus becoming a better employee.

So, we can presume that contribution of people with ID to diversity management in general will also come from their achievements. Meaning a last point to make is the one of the growth perspectives offered workers with ID. As it appears a difficult one.

**Testimonial case 2** – "I haven't yet looked into the growth and promotion of my worker with ID. I will need to work on competence management."

**Testimonial case 14** – "My employee with ID has the same salary, the same clothes, the same training and the same growth opportunities as everybody else. So far, he has done and succeeded in all trainings. If at some point training would become too difficult for him, it will not become a reason to let go of him."

As part of this empowerment, we asked our colleague with ID to reflect on his job. These are his words:

"We agreed upon working 2,5 days/week and that was ideal. But as we all needed to be flexible and available for the interviews and talks, it happened that, on some occasions, I worked 4 days in a week. That was a lot and it got me quite tired in the evening.

Keeping concentrated has always been difficult for me and it was one of the reasons I needed more time to get some tasks done than my colleagues, but I made progress. My job has trained me to stay concentrated for a longer period of time.

The same goes for my reading and writing skills. They have improved because I had to use them. (Something that was confirmed by his parents, author) and I am more motivated to keep working on that aspect.

Analysing the interviews was not easy and would have been a real obstacle if I had to do in writing. But my colleague let me do it orally during meetings we had on each case we observed. I need adapted systems to work and this is an example of it. We found perfect ways of dividing the tasks and of working together.

My buddies have done a top job. They were always available and gave me the opportunity to say how I wanted to work with them. They let me steer.

We agreed upon the fact that during the actual writing of this report – something I am not good at – I would perform other tasks in other departments. The change did not trouble me. In fact, I learned a lot.

At the reception desk, I learned to be patient with people and to get things done.

At the IT department, I learned to do updates on computers and laptops and to clear hard disks.

At the events department (something I know from my family and love), I got missions to accomplish.

I do miss the job now the project is over and look forward to new challenges.

#### 4. Conclusions

The goal of this project was to try and answer the following questions through scientific research. These are our conclusions:

#### 4.1 What are the benefits of diversity management?

#### A better workplace and work environment

People with intellectual disabilities are motivated, enthusiast and proud ambassadors. They inspire.

#### Attract more and interesting profiles

By opening up to less 'obvious' profiles and jobseekers like people with intellectual disabilities.

#### Re-think and simplify processes and approach

In the end, everyone benefits from it and wonders why the adaptations were not applied earlier?

Stable workforce for jobs with a past of heavy turnover.

Stronger, more self-relied, independent workers with intellectual disabilities

#### 4.2 How to ensure that companies support workers with intellectual disabilities?

#### Provide employers with knowledge and expertise.

This block is an absolute condition for hiring workers with intellectual disabilities.

Make employers aware of the potential of people with intellectual disabilities.

Help employers in finding workers with intellectual disabilities.

**Provide employers with professional, specialised accompaniment**. It does not have to be long-term training and coaching but a guidance on how to work together with the colleague with intellectual disabilities seems generally appreciated.

#### Simplify the acquisition of financial support

Although, there's no outspoken need for institutional financial support, respondents would appreciate some financial incentive or compensation.

The idea being: *"if we go through the effort for society, it would be nice if society could give something back."* 

#### Financial incentives or support should be sustainable.

The level of coaching, training or supervision of the employee depends on his disability. This goes as well for the lower profitability of the worker with intellectual disabilities. Although, performances can get better in time thanks to learning and familiarity, the disabilities and the consequences on performance will continue to exist.

Flexibility when it comes to the financial support of the people with intellectual disabilities. Current systems stand in the way of a smooth hiring process or of paid work as such. It keeps people with intellectual disabilities from being hired or aspire to get a job.

# 4.3 How do people with intellectual disabilities contribute to diversity management?

Active participation in the organisation can change processes and systems in a good way for all staff.

This implies that the management gives the opportunity to the employee with intellectual disability to let his voice be heard.

A different vision of things can come as a breath of fresh air.

Their authenticity will reflect on the whole of the organisation/company

The pride of having a job at a 'normal' company makes them excellent ambassadors. Workers with intellectual disabilities are all too keen to show the outside world their company cares for diversity and gives them chances. The company will benefit from it.

Tolerance among colleagues will grow.

We see the following, steps, actions and stakeholders to come to sustainable inclusive employment in the regular economy.



Figure 12: Grow Model Inclusive Employment

## 5. Recommendations

The following recommendations are coming from the research team (lessons learnt), employers and employees with intellectual disabilities.

The recommendations show a (pro-)active thinking and engagement of inclusive employers and employees to pave the way for further inclusive employment and on a much larger scale.

#### 1. Creation of a network of inclusive companies and entrepreneurs

to exchange among peers,

to find workers with intellectual disabilities

to grow awareness on talents and skills of people with intellectual disabilities.

## 2. Better accompany people with intellectual disabilities in creating CV's, applying for jobs and connecting with potential employers.

People with intellectual disabilities have difficulties to find their way on the job market. They lack network.

Benefit of new technologies to give the opportunity to people with intellectual disabilities to prove their talents and skills without a CV.

#### 3. Create partnerships between schools and the industry.

An example is the partnership between a school and a major hotel in a large city in the UK.

Thanks to the engagement of a teacher of his school, our colleague (case 13) got an internship at the road services of his hometown. He stayed on as a volunteer after graduating. He recently changed services and is now working for the gardening department.

#### 4. Re-think hiring processes and procedures.

The assessment workers have to go through, even for jobs requiring low level education, are not adapted for people with intellectual disabilities. They block them from promotion in their companies although they have the skills and competences to grow

5. **Creation of easy to read documents** needed to onboard the new employee starting with the agreement.

## Addendum

### Case studies through interviews

Case 1	Banking & Insurances	Belgium
00		Delaisas
Case 2	Landscaping	Belgium
Case 3	Pharma	Multinational
Case 4	Banking & Insurances	Portugal
Case 5	Aviation technology	Belgium
Case 6	Pharma	Belgium
Case 7	Hospitality industry	Belgium
Case 8	Logistics	Multinational
Case 9	Social Economy	Austria
Case 10	Social Economy	UK
Case 11	Consultancy	Spain
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Case 12	Banking & Insurance	Belgium
Case 13	Education	Belgium
Case 14	Retail	Multinational