



# EMPLOYMENT FOR ALL

6 Best Practices  
on Employment Strategies for Persons with Disabilities



The European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities

EASPD is a European NGO network representing over 17 000 social and health support provider organisations across Europe and across disabilities, working towards the promotion of equal opportunities for persons with disabilities through effective and high-quality service systems.

## LADAPT

L'association pour l'insertion sociale et professionnelle des personnes handicapées (LADAPT) is a not-for-profit association that fights for the integration of disabled people. Created in 1929 by twenty disabled people, it has always focused on a specific objective: to ensure that disabled people are integrated into active and professional society. LADAPT's actions are focused on schooling, adult training, insertion of persons with disabilities into the workforce, supported employment and the development of support services.



## Disability, Equality, Security Careers. Back on the ground (DESC 2)

DESC 2 is an Erasmus+ funded project which was created as a follow up to DESC 1. It aims to develop the results of the first project which was about promoting equal opportunities and securing professional career paths for young people with disabilities in Europe. DESC 2 aims to produce convincing evidence of the effectiveness of inclusive employment methodologies for all stakeholders involved.



With the financial support of the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSi" (2014-2020).

The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the official position of the European Commission.

# Table of Contents

Foreword	4
Introduction	7
Selection	8
<b>Best Practices</b>	
Businesses	
Now Group - Northern Ireland	10
Grupo SIFU - Spain	12
Eker & Tohum - Turkey	14
Services	
Landsforeningen Lev- Denmark	16
Dafür - Austria	18
Barcelona Network for Labour Market Inclusion - Spain	20
Conclusion	23

# Hello

It was with great pleasure that I accepted the invitation to write the foreword to this Employment for All booklet presenting this year's winners of the 'Employment for All' award. The period we are currently passing through is characterised by the coronavirus pandemic that has brought such an immediate and complete change in our lives. Our usual way of living clashes with health safety; and this is coupled with the disruption of our whole economic system. Any commercial and social activities have had to stop for almost two months so far and, by keeping social distances between individuals, in several activities there has been a severe cut of 40-50% of employees. This situation has underlined the vulnerability of our social systems and has created widespread precarious conditions. And once again, this crisis affects most those that are already more vulnerable, such as persons with disabilities.

This brief overview of the historical time gives the idea of the thick borderline between "prior to and after" COVID-19, underlining the importance of the collection of good practices reported in this booklet and the attention accorded to it. Now more than ever, we need good practices to give us hope, and innovation to give us new ideas and inspiration. Regardless of the situation, being able to have meaningful, paid employment remains a fundamental right for everyone, including persons with disabilities. Work is a defining feature of human existence and in many societies the ability to work is viewed as one of the most important ways in which people can make their individual contributions to the community. However, despite existing local and international laws, such as Article 27 of the UN CRPD, persons with disabilities too often continue to be denied the right to work worldwide. Many persons with disabilities are still discriminated against and do not have access to the same education and training opportunities as their "non-disabled" peers. It is imperative to empower the voices of persons with disabilities and those stakeholders involved in the same field, to eradicate institutional barriers to their success. My wish is that in a not-so-far future, persons with disabilities will no longer need special events, ceremonies and collections of good practices, with their rights fully respected at work and in society, their real added value will be clear to all. Society itself will then have true moral and civil growth.

Please, be the instrument to this goal!

## Dr. Fabrizio Fea

EASPD Vice President and  
Chair of Standing Committee on Employment



Photo: 2017 Employment For All Award Nominee, Associação para a Recuperação de Cidadãos Inadaptados da Lousã (ARCIL), Portugal

# INTRODUCTION

“Everyone has the right to work, to free choice, to employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment” - Eleanor Roosevelt



Photo: 2017 Employment For All Award Nominee,  
Institut für Inklusive Bildung gemeinnützige GmbH,  
Germany

The right to work is a fundamental right, as recognised in several international legal instruments. Finding long-term employment on the open labour market not only fulfils the right to work but also facilitates an individual’s enjoyment of a number of other human rights. But being employed is much more than a right, and having a job often forms an inherent part of a person’s identity, enabling them to be economically independent; provide for their families and actively contribute to their communities. EASPD believes in all efforts to create effective systems, that enable the employment of people with disabilities, contributing to the change of the social reality and full implementation of Article 27 of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UN CRPD). As part of their work, to further support the implementation of different systems for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the workforce, EASPD and LADAPT searched for the 6 best models/schemes promoting employment of persons with disabilities. EASPD and LADAPT screened numerous submissions from separate Employers/Businesses, as well as Social Services/Support Providers, to find the “best practices”: these that provide for sustainable and active involvement of persons with disabilities in the labour market. From these two categories, 6 practices were chosen (3 from each category), which in our opinion, best promote the employment

of persons with disabilities. 4 nominees, 2 from each category, were invited to host a workshop where they presented their practice during EASPD and LADAPTS’s online conference “Road to Employment for Persons with Disabilities”. The winners of each category were also announced during the conference. The numerous applications received, including those that are not among the nominees for the award, exhibited:

- Desire to contribute to improvement of the employment opportunities for persons with disabilities
- Increased level of service support provided
- Supporting opportunities for organisations and practices
- A variety of improvement models
- Operation on different levels of community and different fields of employment
- A platform of interested actors to improve the employment situation of persons with disabilities

This booklet presents the 6 practices that promote the most sustainable model of employment for persons with disabilities. EASPD and LADAPT believe that these practices/schemes have the potential to provide for a high level and quality of employment of persons with disabilities.

# SELECTION

The categories and selection criteria

The Employment for All award considers and awards two separate categories of entities:

•**Business/ Employers** who promote and actively incorporate actual employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

•**Social Services/Support Providers** who exhibit exceptional qualities in contributing to the employment.

These two distinct groups of entities provide a positive effect on the place of persons with disabilities on the labour market. Nevertheless, their contribution and assistance usually comes in rather different ways. That is why the Employment for All Award separates them and considers their efforts based on the particular activities of the groups. The practices submitted to EASPD and L'ADAPT went through a heavy screening firstly by an internal jury within our organisations and then through the 12 person jury panel made up of experts, service providers and policy makers. We received numerous interesting ideas for employment of persons with disabilities. Nevertheless, the jury had the difficult task of narrowing the list down to 6,

then 3 and ultimately, a winner. Nominees were chose based on:

- The promotion of art. 27 UN CRPD
- The effect of the practice on the individuals
- The future prospects of the practice

•The possibility of its replicability

The Grand Jury scored the nominees based on several points/ conditions:

- Whether it is an on-going practice and has future prospects
- Whether the practice has proven its merits in improving the access to actual employment of persons with disabilities

•Whether it supports increase of quality of work and career opportunities

•Whether it is a process built around a person and supporting personal autonomy and empowering environments.

Now without further ado, we present the 2020 Employment For All Award nominees...

Photo: 2017 Employment For All Award Nominee, Associação para a Recuperação de Cidadãos Inadaptados da Lousã (ARCIL), Portugal



## NOW GROUP

### VERVE PROGRAMME

**N**OW Group is an award-winning social enterprise that supports people with learning difficulties and Autism into jobs with a future.

Their Verve programme started in 2018 and will run for four years. It is funded by the European Social Fund, Department for Economy and local authorities. Verve is a person-centred programme that focuses on helping people into open employment with tailored support based on their needs and aspirations. Participants have a range of barriers to employment including low levels of numeracy, literacy and confidence, problems travelling independently and little, if any, work experience.

The programme offers academy-based training courses comprising 12-week programmes that consist of both theoretical and practical learning and which tailor to Northern Ireland's economic growth sectors such as hospitality. This allows participants to gain a holistic perspective of the industry they are interested in and delivers well trained, qualified and 'work ready' members of the workforce for local employers. They also support their participants by offering social groups, day opportunities and a family support programme which ultimately leads to them having better health, better education and a brighter future which can positively affect their whole community.

The first two years of the project has seen them support 541 people (75% of their four year target) with 177 securing employment

(84% of four year target). This equates to a value for money output of £3,691 per person against a target of under £6,000 per person. Additionally, Verve has moved an impressive 33% of participants in to paid employment with 93% of them sustaining employment for a minimum of 6 months.



[www.nowgroup.org](http://www.nowgroup.org)

15-17 Grosvenor Road Belfast, BT12 4GN

Northern Ireland





# EKER

## Autism in Workforce

With support from the Tohum Autism Foundation, Eker started this employment programme as a model to be utilised by every business in Turkey further into the future. Their primary objective is to facilitate the social integration of people with autism, lessen parents' overwhelming worries regarding their children's future and open up the space in the workforce that people with autism deserve. By reifying the concept of gainful and meaningful employment for people with autism, "Autism in Workforce" lays out this blueprint as a sustainable business model that can be utilised by all forms of organisations –both public and private.

The team that runs the project is comprised of a supervising specialist psychologist who trained the three "job coaches" in guiding people with autism through work as well as the social components of the workplace. One job coach coaches two employees with autism. Currently six young people with autism are actively working at Eker's manufacturing operation.

By achieving this, "Autism in Workforce" shows and proves that when job coaches and proper opportunities are provided, people with autism can become a part of the workforce and work in a factory setting. This project grants true independence, self-care

skills, income and socialisation opportunities for people with Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) who are often forced into social isolation once their parents pass away with no training, work experience and social connections.

The project demonstrates the sustainability of the business model by showing that their employees with autism are efficient and valuable members of the team. The project supervisor produces monthly behavioural and work skills reports which are then evaluated by Tohum Autism Foundation, and together progress and improvement plans are made for their employees with ASD.

These progress reports tangibly show that the performance of their five young workers has improved by 191%. "Autism in Workforce" programme participants

work at the packaging station alongside neurotypical employees. True and measured performance data display that the employees with ASD match and sometimes surpass the performance of their co-workers. Overall, it is shown that productivity levels show an uptick at the stations these five workers are working.

[www.eker.com/EN/Main/](http://www.eker.com/EN/Main/)

**Odunluk Mah. Erdogan Binyucel Cad. No: 13/A, 16110, Nilufer, Bursa**

**Turkey**



# GRUPO SIFU

Successful Inclusive Enterprise



**G**rupo SIFU was founded in Barcelona in 1993 as an inclusive company, at a time when the Spanish labour market did not offer any opportunities to people with disabilities. Over more than 20 years, the growth of the company has been unstoppable as it has expanded its professional activity in more than 30 delegations in Spain and set up its first international office in France in 2018.

Grupo SIFU, began as a pioneer initiative in Spain, and is a practice that is not only sustainable but also can be seen as an international reference. It is the private company that employs the highest number of people with disabilities in Spain. Currently, it has more than 4.500 employees, of which 89% have any type of disability and 31% are considered persons with high support

needs due to their condition. SIFU's mission is to promote a work environment with equal opportunities for all. As a Facility Services company they provide companies with several services such as cleaning, environmental services, maintenance, supplies, facility management and Disability Law Consulting. Grupo SIFU's employees work in any of these areas. More than 1,600 of their clients in the public and private sectors indicate a 95% level of satisfaction with the services contracted. Grupo SIFU also offers specialised support to its employees through a specific unit that provides individualised and personalised assessments, orientation, guidance and support. Its target is people with disabilities (Medical Certificate 33% min), and it works with people with all kinds of

disabilities and it also has service users with multiple disabilities and high needs.

Grupo SIFU also has a foundation, which is a non-profit organisation aimed at promoting and encouraging the social and labour integration of people with disabilities. The foundation's belief is that everybody can access the labour market with equal opportunities and therefore it created an inclusive employment programme in 2019 which aims to put Grupo SIFU workers in contact with ordinary companies to be able to cover job vacancies.

Nowadays, the practice has received formal recognition, funding or other support from official bodies, organisations, networks, employers or other stakeholders.

[www.gruposifu.com](http://www.gruposifu.com)

C/ Femades 19-25 Bajos,  
l'Hospitalet de Llobregat,  
Barcelona 08907

Spain



# LANDSFORENINGEN LEV

## KLAPjob



**K**LAPjob promotes inclusion on the open labour market and demonstrates alternatives to sheltered workshops. Since 2009 more than 3.600 persons with intellectual and cognitive disabilities, have secured jobs on special conditions on the open labour market via K LAPjob. The numbers are rising and the satisfaction is great for both employees – who feel included in society when forming part of the ordinary labour market – and companies that want to show social responsibility. K LAPjob create

jobs for persons with intellectual disabilities, autism, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, or people that have acquired brain damage or other types of disabilities which have resulted in cognitive impairment. The employees in jobs on special conditions via K LAPjob all receive a disability pension or other social benefits from the state.

The jobs created by K LAPjob are all part-time, unskilled service jobs on special conditions, which means the workplace is considering the particular support needs of the employee.



The job is always defined first and advertised on jobnet.dk as any ordinary job. The job applicant is subsequently guided to choose between several advertised jobs and apply for the one that suits him or her best. During the job interview the consultants focus on the skills and abilities of the applicant. Before a job match, the company and the applicant agree on the applicant's need for support in the job.

K LAPjob is an initiative under the member organization Lev – Inclusion Denmark. Companies are very content to cooperate with an NGO that has in-depth knowledge of intellectual disabilities. The job consultants of K LAPjob also relieve the companies of the considerable administration attached to jobs with special conditions.

K LAPjob is based on national cooperation agreements with nationwide companies. The job description of a future K LAPjob employee is defined with the company head office. The local K LAPjob consultants approach local branches of the companies and help them identify specific positions. Subsequently they set up the match with the applicant and establish the internships and subsequent employments.

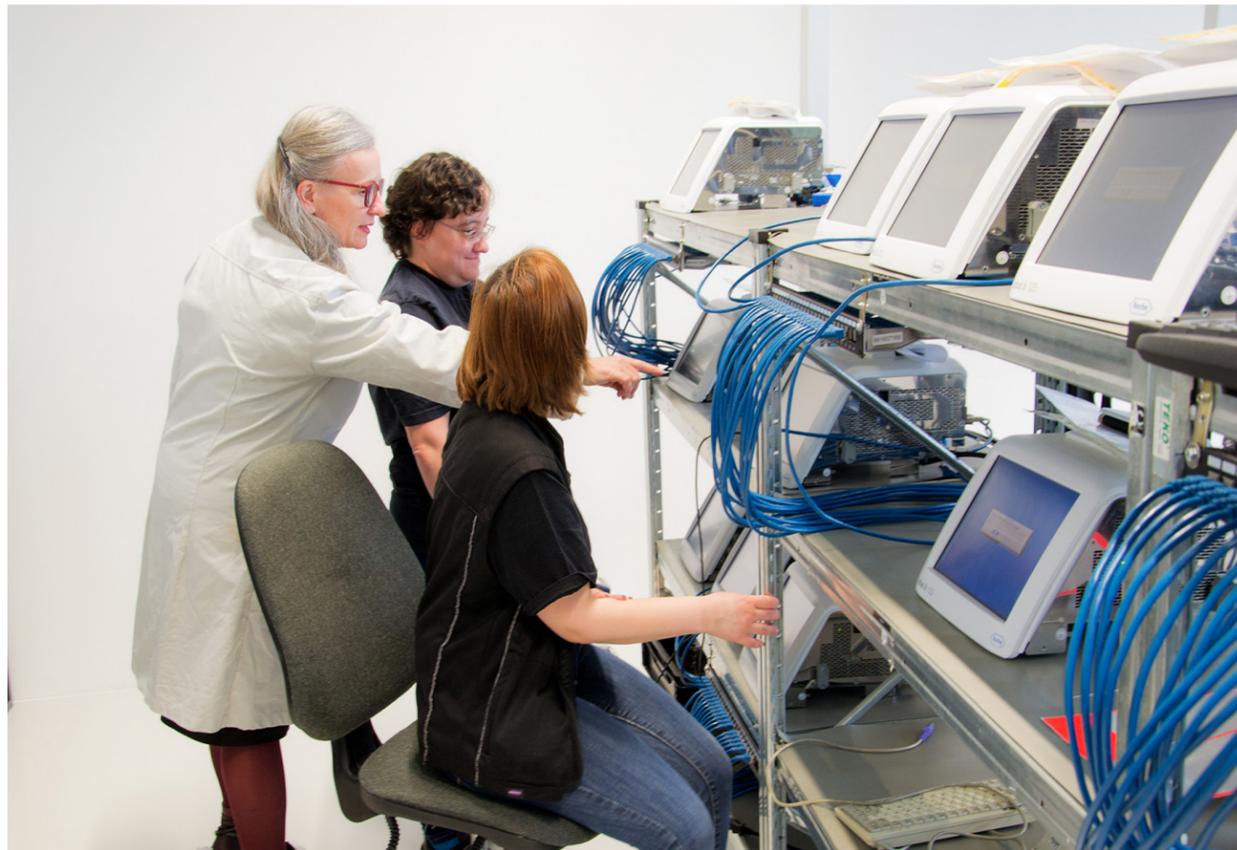
[www.lev.dk](http://www.lev.dk)

**Blekinge Boulevard 2, 2630 Taastrup**

**Denmark**

**K L A P job**

Job til mennesker  
med kognitive handicap



# DAFÜR

## JobCo (NEBA programme)

The dafür Unternehmens- und Personalberatung GmbH is the regional competence centre for vocational training and labour market inclusion of people with disabilities. They operate across the federal state of Vorarlberg, Austria, with the objective to secure fulfilling employment for disabled and disadvantaged people, because they believe that work is an essential precondition to live a self-determined life. They offer support in finding and sustaining paid, meaningful and productive employment through the focus on strengths, a strong network and considering both the employer's and the jobseeker's perspective. Dafür provides different services to people with all kinds of disabilities from the end of compulsory school until retirement. Their services include Youth Coaching and Vocational Training Assistance as well as Work Assistance and Job Coaching. The main objective of the JobCoaching programme is to assist people with disabilities to sustain employment in the open labour market in the longer term. Guided job trainings and work experience placements help to identify strengths and job-related support measures before entering in employment. The dafür-Job Coaches provide individualised and intensive support for people with disabilities directly at their workplace. In this process, the support of the employer is equally important. The Job Coaches create links to the persons with a disability at the workplace, their colleagues and their supervisor thereby including all relevant stakeholders. The most important activities include the training and development of job-specific skills, on-the-job training, (re-) organising work processes,

conflict management and mobility training. Promoting awareness and guidance to the working environment about disability-related issues is an important task too. From the intake to assessment, planning and tailor-made interventions, the monitoring, ongoing support and evaluation, the Job Coaching process follows the principles of Supported Employment and Case Management. They offer services to people who have a legal status of disability and to young people, who are socio-economically disadvantaged and are facing the risk of social exclusion.

[www.dafuer.at](http://www.dafuer.at)

**Markus-Sittikus-Str. 20, 6845 Hohenems, Vorarlberg**

**Austria**





# BARCELONA NETWORK FOR LABOUR MARKET INCLUSION

The XIB (Barcelona Network for Labour Market Inclusion) was created in 2014 with the aim of promoting the inclusion of people with disabilities and/or psychological disorders in the ordinary labour market. It is a public-private action strategy promoted by Barcelona City Council through the Municipal Institute for Persons with Disabilities (IMPD) and the city's social entities that specialise in promoting labour market inclusion in the ordinary labour market for all types of disabilities (mental, physical, sensorial, intellectual). Since its beginnings, their goals and work have been

aimed at creating a collaborative management model between these three actors. It has assisted more than 8,000 people since 2014 and has helped to recruit more than 3,000 people, with their quantitative results increasing every year as well as the number of participating social services. The practice began with the exchange of information and knowledge on the needs of the people and their families that benefit from the services and the different actions of the employment teams that manage labour market insertion. They also collected the

shared concerns and insecurities caused by the changes in the business sector and new forms of work to address the repercussions that they can have on the labour market inclusion of the people they assist. The outcome of this first phase, which was essential for creating trust and a sense of identity as a network, has been to move forward in responding to a basic challenge, the design of a set of strategies directed at the key stakeholders that intervene in labour market inclusion such as the city's businesses. Since then, the purpose has been to create job opportunities in companies for persons with functional diversity and include them

in the open labour market by involving three stakeholders: companies that are potential employers and have a need to fill job vacancies, people with functional diversity or a mental illness who are looking for work, and the labour market inclusion support and advisory services. INCLOU FUTUR, a service designed by XIB and directed specifically at the businesses in the city, was launched in 2019 to provide advice, assistance and support in the ordinary labour market insertion of people with functional diversity. The service raises awareness, advises and supports the city's small and medium-sized companies.

<https://ajuntamentbarcelona.cat/accessible/>

**Institut Municipal de Persones amb Discapacitat València 344 1r 08009 Barcelona**

**Spain**



Photos: Aura Foundation, Spain



## CONCLUSION

Article 27 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recognises the right of persons with disabilities to work. Sometimes those organisations and individuals who work day in, day out, helping people with disabilities into a job, are not so good at letting everyone know what they do.

The Employment for All Awards is our way at EASPD to celebrate this action, to put a spotlight on their work to ensure people with a disability take their rightful place in the labour market. This is the fourth edition of our awards, this year held jointly with our French partners, L'Adapt.

We hope that, like us, you have been inspired by the stories of our 2020 Award nominees, their creativity and their ambition to make a difference!

**James Crowe**  
EASPD President

Copyright © EASPD 2020. All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system without the prior permission of the copyright owners