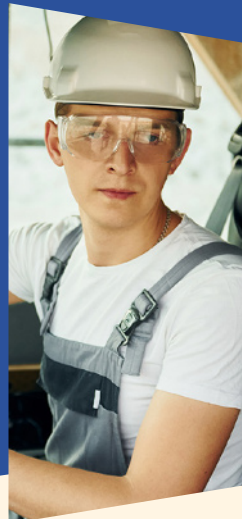
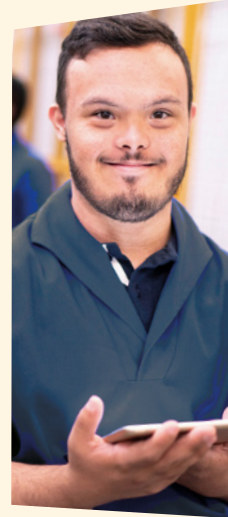




European
Commission

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION AT WORK



Guidance and good practice

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion

Directorate D – Social Rights and Inclusion

Unit EMPL.D.3 – Disability and Inclusion

Contact: Monika Chaba, Unit EMPL/D.3

E-mail: EMPL-D3-UNIT@ec.europa.eu

European Commission

B-1049 Brussels

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Reasonable accommodation at work

Guidelines and good practices

Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

LEGAL NOTICE

Manuscript completed in March 2024

This document has been prepared for the European Commission however it reflects the views only of the authors, and the European Commission is not liable for any consequence stemming from the reuse of this publication. More information on the European Union is available on the Internet (<http://www.europa.eu>).

Luxembourg Publications Office of the European Union, 2024

The reuse policy of European Commission documents is implemented based on Commission Decision 2011/833/EU of 12 December 2011 on the reuse of Commission documents (OJ L 330, 14.12.2011, p. 39).

Except otherwise noted, the reuse of this document is authorised under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC-BY 4.0) licence (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

This means that reuse is allowed provided appropriate credit is given and any changes are indicated.

Catalogue number KE-02-24-601-EN-N

ISBN 978-92-68-16402-0

doi: 10.2767/359088

© European Union, 2024



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION: WHAT ARE THESE GUIDELINES FOR?	5
1 LEGAL OBLIGATIONS, POLICY AND BACKGROUND	7
1.1 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD)	8
1.2 The Employment Equality Directive	9
1.3 Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030	10
1.4 National policies and legislation	11
1.5 The Court of Justice of the European Union	13
2 REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION: WHAT DOES IT INVOLVE?	15
2.1 The basics	16
2.2 Five methods of reasonable accommodation	19
2.3 What does not count as reasonable accommodation?	22
3 NO BARRIERS TO TALENT: ADOPTING A MODERN APPROACH TO DISABILITY	24
3.1 Considering a wide range of disabilities	27
3.2 Supporting an ageing workforce	30
3.3 Taking on staff with disabilities using reasonable accommodation: the benefits you can expect	32
3.4 How to raise awareness	34





3.5	Allocation of reasonable accommodations	36
3.6	Inclusive practices across employment stages	37
3.7	Facilitating communication on reasonable accommodation	40
3.8	Providing guidance	44
3.9	Finding less costly accommodations: striking a balance	45
3.10	Monitoring and review	46

4 INFORMATION AND SUPPORT _____ **47**

4.1	Where to look for assistance	50
4.2	Partnerships	51
4.3	Good practices	53
4.4	Additional sources of information	55

FINANCIAL SUPPORT _____ **56**

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES _____ **60**

EXAMPLES OF SYSTEMIC MEASURES _____ **100**

INTRODUCTION: What are these Guidelines for?

Reasonable accommodation has been an obligation for employers under the EU law since 2000.¹ Yet neither the concept nor the practice is well understood across the EU, and people do not always know where to find information and support.²

These guidelines provide information, practical examples and references to help employers meet this requirement. It has been prepared with the help of the members of the Disability Platform³ and social partners who provided not only suggestions but also examples of good practices. The guidelines could serve as a valuable resource for adjusting workplace practices to better support the general workforce, and to create a more inclusive and accommodating work environment for all employees, irrespective of their abilities.

Whether you are an employer or company owner, a manager or team leader, a human resources specialist, or sim-

ply a co-worker, the practical insights and examples of good practice contained in this brochure should inspire you in recruiting, employing and retaining persons with disabilities using accommodations or adjustments that benefit both employees and employers.⁴ Knowing the practicalities of reasonable accommodation and the background to it will put you in a better position to embrace the abilities and contributions of staff with disabilities, thus enriching the workplace and benefiting your organisation.

The guidelines are primarily for employers, but they are also highly relevant to a variety of stakeholders, such as employers' associations, trade unions, public authorities,

1 Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, [2000] OJ L303/16, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32000L0078>.

2 COM/2021/139 final

3 Register of Commission expert groups and other similar entities (europa.eu).

4 World Economic Forum (WEF) (2019), What Companies Gain by Including People with Disabilities, 23 April, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/04/what-companies-gain-including-persons-disabilities-inclusion>.


equality bodies,⁵ civil society and persons with disabilities. The guidelines can be used:

- ✦ by employers' associations to foster a culture of inclusivity among their member organisations, and promote a shared philosophy of accommodation and equal opportunities;
- ✦ by trade unions and civil society to advocate for more inclusive labour practices, heightening awareness and understanding of the vital need for reasonable accommodation;
- ✦ by public authorities to shape policy, enhance regulatory frameworks, and inform their strategies for promoting workplace inclusivity; and lastly;
- ✦ by persons with disabilities to better understand their rights and the accommodations they can expect in the workplace, and to advocate for their requirements effectively.

⁵ [Equality bodies - European Commission \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/equality/equality_bodies).



1 LEGAL OBLIGATIONS, POLICY AND BACKGROUND¹



“Everyone has the right to engage in work and to pursue a freely chosen or accepted occupation. Every citizen of the Union has the freedom to seek employment, to work, to exercise the right of establishment and to provide services in any Member State.”

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union

¹ See also: (i) the **EDE Synthesis report** – Waddington, L. (2023), *Striving for an inclusive labour market in Europe: Positive actions and reasonable accommodation to facilitate hiring and employment of persons with disabilities involving employers and employer initiatives*; (ii) the **EDE Statistical Report** – Grammenos, S. (2023), *The employment of persons with disabilities – Statistics, Data 2020*; and (iii) the **European Disability Expertise (EDE)** web page: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1532&langId=en>.

1.1 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD)²

All EU Member States have signed and ratified the UN CRPD, which means that they are each obliged under international law to protect the rights of persons with disabilities in line with this Convention. The European Union is also a party to the Convention in its own right.

The Convention represents a paradigm shift in attitudes and approaches to persons with disabilities – from viewing persons with disabilities as ‘objects’ of charity, medical treatment and social protection towards understanding that persons with disabilities are ‘subjects’ with rights, capable of making decisions and being active members of society. Employers are required to provide reasonable accommodation to enable a person with a disability to carry out work-related tasks. **An unjustified failure to pro-**

vide reasonable accommodation may qualify as a prohibited form of disability discrimination under national or European non-discrimination law, as well as under the Convention.

Article 27 of the UN CRPD,³ on work and employment, is particularly relevant, along with **General Comment No. 8** (2022)⁴ of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, concerning the right of persons with disabilities to work and employment. Article 27 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability with regard to all matters concerning all forms of employment, including recruitment, hiring, continuance of employment, career advancement and safe and healthy working conditions. General Comment No. 8 clarifies governments’ obligations under Article 27, emphasising that the right to work is a basic human right, vital for the fulfilment of other human rights. It is an inseparable and intrinsic component of human dignity, as it affirms an individual’s worth and their potential for contribution to society.

“States Parties recognize the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others; this includes the right to the opportunity to gain a living by work freely chosen or accepted in a labour market and work environment that is open, inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities.”

Article 27 of the UN CRPD

² See <https://social.desa.un.org/issues/disability/crpd/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-crpd>, Articles, in particular [Article 2](#) and [Article 5](#).

³ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/general-comments-and-recommendations/crpd/cg8-general-comment-no-8-2022-right-persons>.

⁴ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/general-comments-and-recommendations/crpd/cg8-general-comment-no-8-2022-right-persons>.

1.2 The Employment Equality Directive⁵

In the European Union, employers have a **duty to provide reasonable accommodation for workers with disabilities**. Council Directive 2000/78/EC, establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment ('Employment Equality Directive'), contains the most relevant provisions in EU law on persons with disabilities and reasonable accommodation.

"In order to guarantee compliance with the principle of equal treatment in relation to persons with disabilities, reasonable accommodation shall be provided. This means that employers shall take appropriate measures, where needed in a particular case, to enable a person with a disability to have access to, participate in, or advance in employment, or to undergo training, unless such measures would impose a disproportionate burden on the employer.

This burden shall not be disproportionate when it is sufficiently remedied by measures existing within the framework of the disability policy of the Member State concerned."

Article 5, Employment Equality Directive

⁵ Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, [2000] OJ L303/16, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32000L0078>.

1.3 Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030

As part of its disability policy, the EU seeks to support Member States in promoting the employment of persons with disabilities.

The Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030⁶ provides a framework for this policy, aimed at improving the lives of persons with disabilities.

One of the seven flagship initiatives of the Strategy is the **Disability Employment Package**,⁷ a set of guidance, practices and learning opportunities intended for employers, employers' organisations, public authorities and civil society, with the objective of improving labour market outcomes for persons with disabilities. These guidelines are part of the package.

In December 2022, the Council of the European Union called on Member States to implement the relevant guidelines, to support vocational education and training for persons with disabilities, to facilitate the transition to the labour market, and to set national targets for the employment of persons with disabilities and participation in adult learning.⁸

Principle 17 of the European Pillar of Social Rights⁹

specifically relates to the inclusion of persons with disabilities. It states:

“People with disabilities have the right to income support that ensures living in dignity, services that enable them to participate in the labour market and in society, and a work environment adapted to their needs.”

The recent Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive imposes new reporting requirements on businesses operating in the EU. In particular, it introduces a requirement to report on the company's diversity policy (covering disability) as applied to its administrative, management and supervisory bodies.¹⁰

6 For more information, see https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_21_810.

7 See <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1597&langId=en>.

8 See <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14495-2022-INIT/en/pdf>.

9 See <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1226&langId=en>.

10 Directive (EU) 2022/2464 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 December 2022 amending Regulation (EU) No. 537/2014, Directive 2004/109/EC, Directive 2006/43/EC and Directive 2013/34/EU, as regards corporate sustainability reporting.

1.4 National policies and legislation

All 27 EU Member States have national and regional laws transposing and implementing the Employment Equality Directive, meaning also that **employers are obliged to provide reasonable accommodation in all those countries**. Some countries, however, use only broad definitions of what counts as a reasonable accommodation, and of what may be considered a disproportionate burden.

Grants, subsidies and logistical support are available in most countries to cover the costs of making reasonable accommodations, as is support for planning and implementation.

Tax relief is available for employers who take on workers with disabilities in the open labour market in 11 EU countries, with 13 offering **reductions in social security or health insurance payments** by employers. Most countries offer **wage subsidies** to countries offer wage subsidies to encourage the employment of persons with disabilities, and take-up has been increasing (see below).¹¹

Most countries have implemented **awareness-raising initiatives** and provide **information, advice and support** for employing persons with disabilities. In some countries, there are schemes to facilitate contact between jobseekers with disabilities and potential employers, and awards for employers who demonstrate good practice. There is sometimes national legislation re-

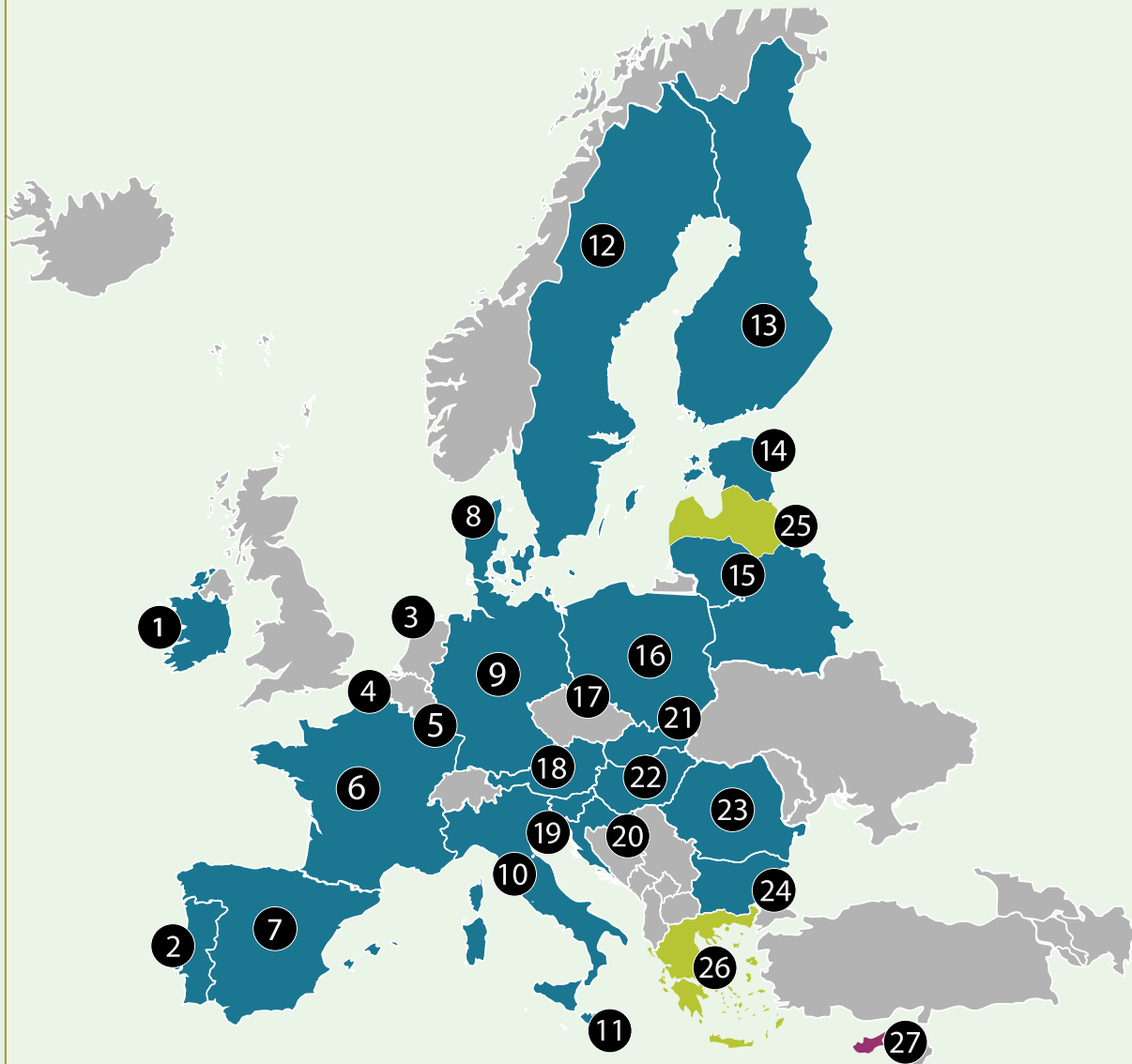
quiring organisations to appoint a disability manager or someone responsible for supporting employees with disabilities.

If you would like to learn more about the situation of persons with disabilities in the EU, you can access reports on disability equality in individual EU countries on the European Commission's website (see European Disability Expertise reports).¹² The reports, shed light on the circumstances faced by persons with disabilities, both within and beyond the labour market in the various countries. This can help you to adjust your recruitment and retention strategies for persons with disabilities. Such proactive efforts on your part – to look at employment within the broader context of the lives of persons with disabilities – will help create a more inclusive labour market upholding the principles of equal opportunities, fair working conditions and social protection and inclusion (all aspects of the European Social Rights Pillar).

¹¹ For more information see European Human Rights Report Issue 7 – 2023, The Right to Work: The employment situation of persons with disabilities in Europe, [European Human Rights Report Issue 7, 2023 \(edf-feph.org\)](https://edf-feph.org), page 49.

¹² See <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1540&langId=en>.

EU MEMBER STATES THAT PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR REASONABLE ACCOMODATION IN THE FORM OF GRANT, TAX SUBSIDIES OR DIRECT PROVISION OF EQUIPMENT, ECT.



- **EU STATE MEMBERS THAT PROVIDE IT (24)**
 - 1 Ireland
 - 2 Portugal
 - 3 Netherlands
 - 4 Belgium
 - 5 Luxembourg
 - 6 France
 - 7 Spain
 - 8 Denmark
 - 9 Germany
 - 10 Italy
 - 11 Malta
 - 12 Sweden
 - 13 Finland
 - 14 Estonia
 - 15 Lithuania
 - 16 Poland
 - 17 Czechia
 - 18 Austria
 - 19 Slovenia
 - 20 Croatia
 - 21 Slovakia
 - 22 Hungary
 - 23 Romania
 - 24 Bulgaria
- **EU STATE MEMBERS THAT PROVIDE IT TO A LIMITED EXTENT (2)**
 - 25 Latvia
 - 26 Greece
- **EU STATE MEMBERS THAT DO NOT PROVIDE (1)**
 - 27 Cyprus

1.5 The Court of Justice of the European Union

The Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) has the task of judging whether EU law is being properly interpreted and applied in all EU countries. This is of crucial importance for the Employment Equality Directive, specifically for the obligation to provide reasonable accommodation, to ensure that national courts across the EU do not apply the rules in different ways.

In its landmark judgment *HK Denmark*, the CJEU held that reasonable accommodation, understood with reference to Article 2 of the UN CRPD, has a broad definition that refers to *‘the elimination of the various barriers that hinder the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in professional life on an equal basis with others’*. The concept of reasonable accommodation encompasses not only material, but also organisational measures, which could include an alteration to the speed or rhythm at which work is done. As such, a reduction in working hours could constitute a reasonable accommodation where fewer hours would make it possible for a worker to continue to participate in employment.¹³

More recently, in its *Ca Na Negreta* ruling, the CJEU clarified that the Employment Equality Directive protects the worker from automatic dismissal when a disability occurs during the employment relationship in a way that makes them permanently unable to perform the tasks set out in their employment contract. The

employer is required to provide for or maintain reasonable accommodation so the worker can stay in the job; the employer can dismiss the worker only if they can demonstrate that such accommodation would constitute a disproportionate burden.¹⁴



¹³ Judgment of 11 April 2013, *HK Danmark*, Joined Cases C- 335/11 and C-337/11, ECLI:EU:C:2013:222.

¹⁴ Judgment of 18 January 2024, *Ca Ca Negreta*, Case C- 631/22, ECLI:EU:C:2024:53.

Being an inclusive employer benefits everyone

ONE:

COMPLIANCE WITH LEGAL AND ETHICAL OBLIGATIONS

In addition to the [EU Employment Equality Directive](#), many countries have legal requirements on equal employment opportunities and non-discrimination for persons with disabilities.¹⁵

By actively recruiting and employing persons with disabilities, employers ensure compliance with these obligations and demonstrate their commitment to social responsibility, human rights and ethical business practices.

TWO:

INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

Employing persons with disabilities demonstrates commitment to an inclusive and diverse workplace culture, sending a strong message that the organisation values diversity and is dedicated to providing equal opportunities. Workplaces that promote employee engagement can attract the top talent available.

¹⁵ For more information see: EDE **Synthesis report** – Waddington, L. (2023), *Striving for an inclusive labour market in Europe: Positive actions and reasonable accommodation to facilitate hiring and employment of persons with disabilities involving employers and employer initiatives*.

THREE:

ACCESS TO A DIVERSE TALENT POOL

Hiring persons with disabilities opens up access to a diverse range of skills, abilities and perspectives, particularly in a context of labour shortages. Their experience can bring fresh ideas and creative approaches to overcoming challenges.

FOUR:

INCREASED EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND LOYALTY

Employees with disabilities demonstrate high levels of engagement and loyalty. Employees working in an inclusive workplace feel valued and recognised. This in turn helps to boost employee engagement and productivity, reduce turnover rates and promote positive staff relations within the organisation.

FIVE:

EXPANDING YOUR CUSTOMER BASE AND MARKET REACH

Employing persons with disabilities can help organisations better understand and cater to the needs of a diverse customer base. This can lead to new business opportunities, improved customer satisfaction and extended market reach. Customers are more likely to support companies that prioritise diversity and inclusion, which contribute to a positive brand image and reputation.

SIX:

FOSTERING A POSITIVE ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

By employing persons with disabilities, organisations promote a positive and inclusive organisational culture that upholds the principle of equality among all employees, a sense of community, teamwork and employee morale. This positive culture attracts and helps retain top talent, resulting in a more engaged and productive workforce.

2 REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION: WHAT DOES IT INVOLVE?



2.1 The basics

The purpose of reasonable accommodation is to enable persons with disabilities to have access to, participate in, or advance in employment, to enable employees with disabilities to achieve the same work outputs and have equal opportunities as employees without disabilities, by doing things a bit differently.

In other words, reasonable accommodation is any change to a job role or work environment that is needed to enable an employee with a disability to perform their job.

The right to reasonable accommodation extends to all work-related activities covered by EU law, from the job application process through to termination of employment. It also extends to promotion, working conditions, training and any fringe benefits offered to staff.

When does the duty start?

As an employer, your obligation to provide reasonable accommodation begins from the moment a person with a disability requires access to locations or situations that are currently inaccessible due to barriers that may, for example, prevent them from participating in a job interview or reading a job advertisement.

Employees who have not faced any significant barriers before can develop disabilities, following an accident or illness, for example. Those employees might require adjustments at the workplace which were not previously necessary.

You need to take **proactive measures to identify and remove any barriers** that may exist in your policies or practices, or in the physical working environment, in order to provide equal access and opportunities for persons with disabilities. An approach based on **universal flexible working measures for all employees** could be a good start.

It could help with retention not only of persons with disabilities, but also of other employees, for example older workers.

Remember that reasonable accommodation needs to be implemented at all stages of employment, namely **recruitment, retention, and career progression**.

These guidelines explain how the employer can ensure that measures taken to accommodate persons with disabilities are sufficient, effective and practical, and that they are **tailored to the specific requirements of each employee**.

The following practical actions could help you ensure compliance with the obligations of Article 5 of the Employment Equality Directive:

* **Inclusive recruitment process**

Ensuring that the hiring process is inclusive and accessible for candidates with disabilities, including through communication support.

* **Inclusive career advancement and training**

Ensuring that you provide reasonable accommodation not only for carrying out particular job, but that persons with disabilities can benefit from career advancement process and training.

* **Adoption of assistive technologies**

Aligning with the Employment Equality Directive's emphasis on equal access, introducing assistive technologies such as screen readers or voice recognition software to enable persons with disabilities to perform their job tasks efficiently.

* **Ensuring digital accessibility**

Bearing in mind that not everyone can easily use standard IT systems, platforms and software. Those tools should be evaluated and adapted to make sure they are inclusive and accessible for everyone.

* **Promotion of accessible communication**

Setting up accessible communication channels such as captioning services during meetings, assistive listening devices, or providing sign language interpreters for sign language users, promoting an inclusive dialogue within the workplace as outlined in the Employment Equality Directive.

* **Ensuring physical accessibility**

Ensuring that workplaces are physically accessible to people with disabilities. This includes ramps, lifts, accessible toilets and other adapted facilities and equipment.

* **Fostering flexible working arrangements**

Creating an environment where flexible working arrangements allow employees with disabilities to work and manage their conditions. These accommodations should promote equal opportunities, empowering employees **with disabilities to demonstrate their abilities and to effectively perform their duties at work.**



- * **Raising awareness of stigma**

Raising awareness of disability-related stigma and prejudices and taking steps to combat them within the workplace.

- * **Working with civil society organisations**

Working closely with persons with disabilities and their representative organisations to benefit from their knowledge, expertise and resources.

- * **Fostering supportive networks**

Creating mentorship programmes or peer support groups to facilitate the social and professional inclusion of employees with disabilities, embodying the Employment Equality Directive's essence of promoting fair access for everyone.

These measures should not represent an **unreasonable burden** on your organisation, taking into account its size and financial capacity and the various costs you may incur – both financial and non-financial. It may be worth exploring options for obtaining public funding or other types of assistance to help implement the measures required. For more details, see the 'Financial support' section of these guidelines.

2.2 Five methods of reasonable accommodation

There are complementary methods for implementing reasonable accommodation at the workplace within a short period of time. For more information on specific countries, please go to the EDE reports: *Striving for an inclusive labour market*.¹⁶

There are complementary methods for implementing reasonable accommodation at the workplace within a short period of time. For more information on specific countries, please go to the EDE reports: *Striving for an inclusive labour market* or the Equinet discussion paper listing specific national case law practices, including the annex on individual cases of persons with disabilities.¹⁷ For illustrations of how these methods can be applied, please see the 'Illustrative Examples' section of the Guidelines.

method 1

PROVIDING ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

You can support employees who face barriers in their work by providing them with assistive technology – such as a computer program that can be used to enlarge text, together with a special large screen, or assistive listening devices for connection with telephones. It is worth check-ing – for example with local authorities – to find out about funding to help cover the cost of various assistive devices and IT solutions.

Reasonable accommodation **goes beyond making the workplace accessible** – such as providing access to desks, toilets, exits. Ensuring that a person with a disability can access their workstation or the canteen, for example, may require some adjustments to be made (such as altering doorways, swapping people to different rooms, moving or replacing furniture, or providing ramps), but you also need to ensure that adequate adjustments are made so that staff members with disabilities are properly equipped to perform the tasks they are employed to do.

¹⁶ See <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1540&langId=en>.

¹⁷ See [Reasonable-Accommodation-Disability-Discussion-Paper.pdf](#) (equineteurope.org), pages 23-26 and the annex, <https://equineteurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Annex-Reasonable-Accommodation.pdf>.

method 2

PERSONAL ASSISTANCE

Personal assistance services could be helpful for persons with disabilities to help them understand, organise and carry out tasks. For example, being accompanied at work, carrying out an individualised assessment to adapt a recruitment process, training or tasks. Individualised assessments focus on the strengths and requirements of the individual employee who faces barriers. The employer can then assess the areas in which the employee has the greatest potential. Numerous websites provide employers, job centres and individuals with access to personal assistants.

method 3

ADJUSTING WORKSPACE (INCLUDING TELEWORKING)

Employment support for employees with a disability includes adjusting the workspace. This can refer to a range of measures, from adjusting furniture, equipment and facilities in the offices or more widely on the premises, to carrying out architectural changes facilitating inclusion and accessibility, to provision of a quiet space, individual workspace, or telework. Both public and private sector employers can offer the choice of teleworking as a form of reasonable accommodation. As a result, wheelchair users with a severe physical disability, for example, or persons with visual impairments, can access their work through a combination of reasonable accommodations. Specialist IT equipment and/or a desk may need to be installed at the person's home rather than in an office, for instance, especially if public transport cannot be used. IT equipment must be accessible and include accessible channels of communication (such as speech-to-text during virtual meetings).

However, it is important **not to impose teleworking but to offer it as an option**. Working from home can affect an individual's ability to get recognition for their work and to get promoted. It can increase loneliness and isolation, and also generate extra costs (such as energy costs) for the employee. Therefore, it is advisable to carry out a prior risk assessment (including psychosocial risks).

method 4

FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS

Adapting the working day does not involve any special tools or physical adaptations, nor are any public subsidies required. The only requirement here is to change working hours. Workers with disabilities may need to take a longer lunch break than most of their colleagues, or they might wish to come into work earlier or stay later to benefit from times when the workplace is quieter, reducing sensory overload.

Institutionalising flexible working arrangements is crucial for promoting a culture of inclusivity. This method should not hinge on the discretion of individual managers, but be embedded within organisational policies, ensuring a structured approach to reasonable accommodation. This way, the employment security and financial stability of persons with disabilities are unaffected, while their unique needs are acknowledged and catered for.

method 5

FLEXIBLE TASK ARRANGEMENTS

Rearranging work tasks within a workplace (known as 'job carving'), can form part of a supported employment strategy, enabling people to take up work, despite the barriers they may face. These arrangements might start during an initial period of employment, with individualised assessments. **Reasonable accommodation through job carving involves swapping job roles or specialist tasks between job roles to make the most of the individual skills of a person with a disability, so that they can perform the tasks at which they are best skilled or most successful.** For example, someone with an intellectual disability who is unable to handle payments may still be able to work in a shop or market, serving customers and presenting them with their goods.

In addition to making organisational accommodations, it is important for managers and co-workers to show a welcoming attitude towards colleagues with disabilities. For this, co-workers need to understand that special arrangements are put in place to facilitate work of persons with disabilities, not to provide them with extra privileges. When persons with disabilities feel at ease and socially included in the workplace, beyond just logistical arrangements, they are likely to perform their tasks more effectively and feel an integral part of the team.

2.3 What does *not* count as reasonable accommodation?

Some practices or changes may be mistakenly assumed to be reasonable accommodations, but they do not necessarily meet the requirements of the Employment Equality Directive or of the UN Convention. Reasonable accommodation is distinct from accessibility. The UN CRPD's General Comment on accessibility specifies that accessibility relates to groups, whereas reasonable accommodation relates to individuals.¹⁸

It also clarifies that accessibility is a pre-condition, whereas reasonable accommodation is something that comes after, as a way of overcoming persisting barriers and respond to individual requirements.¹⁹ Accessibility, in certain circumstances, may also be a component of reasonable accommodation. Moreover, when accessibility is already achieved, reasonable accommodation, in relation to technical devices, is much simpler and less expensive.

(i) Minimal adjustments with little impact

Making minor changes in your workplace may not be sufficient to meet the requirements of reasonable accommodation. On their own, adjustments such as providing a larger font size on a computer screen or assigning a mentor to assist an employee with a disability – while useful – might not adequately address all the barriers faced by an employee in performing their job or advancing in their career. You should tailor reasonable accommodations

to meet the specific requirements of your employees, allowing them to participate fully in the workplace.

(ii) Adjustments that do not meet the need expressed

When an employer provides a service that does not meet the requirements expressed by the person with a disability, this does not count as reasonable accommodation under the UN CRPD. On their own, adjustments such as providing closed captioning for meetings for a deaf employee – instead of national sign language interpretation as requested – does not adequately address the challenges faced by a deaf employee in performing their job.

(iii) Temporary solutions

You might wonder whether providing temporary or short-term solutions can be considered as reasonable accommodation – for example, allowing an employee with a mobility impairment to

¹⁸ UN CRPD Committee (2014), General Comment No. 2 on Accessibility, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/docu/ments/general-comments-and-recommendations/general-comment-no-2-article-9-accessibility-0>.

¹⁹ For further reading on the implementation of the concept in equality law practices please see Equinet 2021 discussion paper on reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities: exploring challenges in its practical implementation, and the European Commission 2016 European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination.

work from home for a brief period or granting intermittent leave. While temporary measures may be appropriate in certain situations, they may not be sufficient to address the long-term needs of the employee, so you will almost certainly need to explore accommodations of a more permanent nature. In other words, reasonable accommodation measures and procedures should be embedded in the workplace procedures.

(iv) Segregation or exclusionary practices

Employers might think that segregating employees with disabilities is a form of reasonable accommodation – for instance, assigning employees with disabilities to separate workspaces or limiting their interactions with colleagues. This may sometimes be helpful, for example in circumstances where an employee finds it significantly easier to concentrate and work when away from other people. However, care needs to be taken when devising such solutions. Employees with disabilities need interaction with their colleagues. Adjusting the work environment to the detriment of that and, in general, to the individual preferences and abilities of employees with disabilities, would not be reasonable accommodation; it would perpetuate stigmatisation, hinder the

career development opportunities of employees with disabilities, and undermine their inclusion in the workplace. In other words, it would be segregation. Reasonable accommodation aims to facilitate equal participation and inclusion, rather than isolating individuals because of their disabilities.

(v) Not allowing the use of prosthetic and orthotic devices

Prosthetic and orthotic devices are medical products for personal use which correct, enhance, or replace a body part or function. Examples are hearing aids or implants, artificial arms or legs, wheelchairs, and glasses. Sometimes, a public administration will decide that some of these devices (mainly hearing aids or hearing implants) cannot be used during civil service competitive examinations unless a person with a disability has applied for ‘reasonable accommodations’. This ignores the fact that these devices (such as glasses, implants and wheelchairs) do not constitute accessibility measures or reasonable accommodations, but are inseparable from and inherent to the person. Employers should be aware of this and consider allowing such devices to be used during recruitment processes.

3 NO BARRIERS TO TALENT: ADOPTING A MODERN APPROACH TO DISABILITY



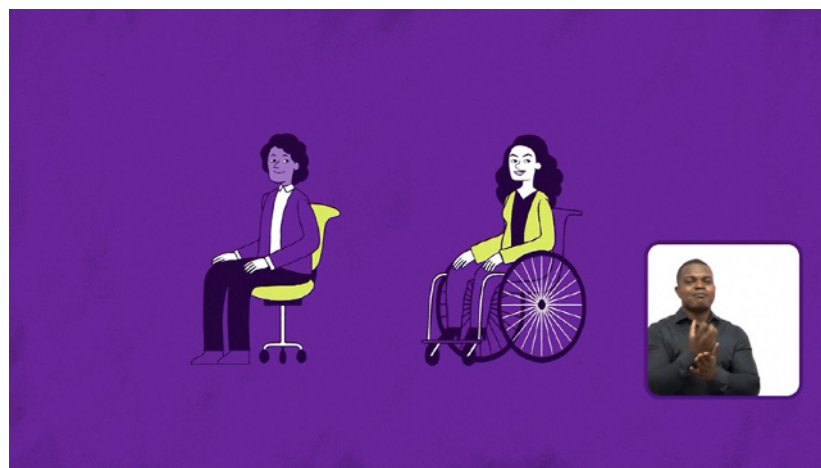
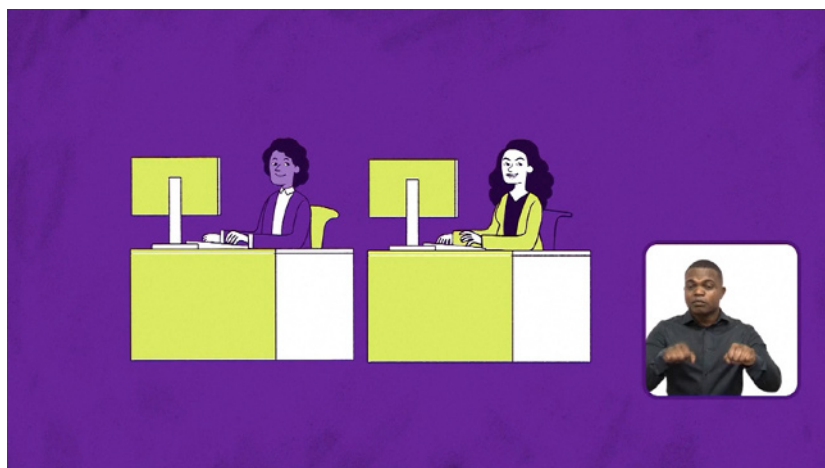
Across Europe, our attitudes towards disability and persons with disabilities have been evolving over time. Embracing an inclusive approach, focused on individuals and helping them to overcome their barriers, rather than concentrating on their impairments, is key to providing effective adjustments at your workplace to help all your employees thrive in a mutually supportive, productive environment.

Focus on the talents, merits, competence and skills of persons with disabilities, as you would with employees without disabilities.

If a disability is affecting the individual at work, ask the person what strategies they use in everyday life outside of work to deal with the barriers they face. It might be possible to use some of those strategies in the workplace.

You should devise accommodations in a person-centred way, taking account of the specific requirements, challenges and strengths of individuals with different disabilities. Open and respectful dialogue with your employees can help you determine and understand their unique requirements.

Engage with the trade unions within your workplace to consider reasonable accommodation solutions through collective bargaining.



There is more to reasonable accommodation than just obeying the law. In the context of employment, the ideal approach to disability should be:

- person-centred
- holistic
- biopsychosocial

and it should encompass:

- inclusion
- well-being
- empowerment
- accessibility
- recognising different types of disabilities.

What does a *biopsychosocial* approach involve?

The **biopsychosocial approach** recognises that disability concerns more than just biological factors – a condition or impairment, mental or physical, that affects the person concerned; rather, it involves a combination of biological, psychological and social factors, and **places the individual at the centre** of the reasonable accommodation process, considering their unique requirements, preferences and strengths.

The biopsychosocial model recognises that **disability is multidimensional**. While it takes into account a person's impairments and chronic conditions, it also considers the psychological aspects (cognitive and emotional factors) and social aspects (to do with social barriers,

attitudes and inclusion) that all shape that person's experience of disability.

The person-centred aspect of this approach concentrates on the individual's unique needs, preferences and strengths, recognising that each person with a disability while facing specific challenges, has their own individual abilities. There is no one-size-fits-all approach. Through meaningful conversations with your employees, you will be able to understand their specific circumstances and tailor your accommodations accordingly. This individualised approach promotes a sense of **ownership, dignity and respect**, leading to greater satisfaction and effectiveness in the accommodation process.

3.1 Considering a wide range of disabilities

By considering the different types of disabilities outlined in the UN CRPD and adopting a comprehensive and person-centred approach to accommodations, you can create **inclusive work environments** that provide equal opportunities for staff with physical, sensory, intellectual and psychosocial disabilities, including for an ageing workforce.

PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

There are a wide range of conditions that can affect a person's mobility, dexterity or physical functioning.

Examples include spinal cord injuries, muscular dystrophy and limb loss. You should ensure **physical accessibility within the workplace**, including **ramps, handrails, wide hallways, marked passageways, elevators** and **accessible toilet facilities**. Reasonable accommodation may include **adjustable desks** or **workstations, assistive devices, modified equipment** and **accessible parking spaces**.

SENSORY DISABILITIES

Visual impairments can range from partial sight to complete blindness, while **hearing impairments** can range from partial hearing loss to deafness. Among persons with a hearing disability, some communicate in a spoken language and some in a sign language.

You can provide adjustable desks and chairs, **screen readers**, materials in **Braille, speech-to-text interpreters, captioning, sign language interpreters** for those who communicate in a sign language or **assistive listening devices** for those who communicate in a spoken language. Accessible documents or alternative formats may be required to enable communication. Hold meetings in accessible spaces and provide meeting materials in accessible formats, such as Braille or electronic versions readable by screen readers.

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

These include limitations in cognitive functioning and in adaptive skills. Individuals with intellectual disabilities may require additional support in understanding and performing job tasks.

You should provide **clear instructions, simplified materials** and training. Accommodations may include **modified work processes, breaking down complex tasks**, allowing more time for tasks to be performed, providing **visual aids**, and support from **job coaches or mentors**.

PSYCHOSOCIAL DISABILITIES

Some mental health conditions can affect a person's emotional well-being and daily functioning – including depression, anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder.

You should create a **supportive** and **stigma-free** work environment, providing **flexibility in scheduling** and promoting **mental health training and awareness**. Reasonable accommodation may include **modified working hours, counselling, workplace adjustments** to reduce stress or a designated **quiet space**.

Accessibility is one of the key aspects of ensuring reasonable accommodation. This encompasses both physical and digital accessibility, accessibility of products and services,²⁰ and communication. By ensuring accessibility, employers demonstrate commitment to creating inclusive workplaces.

By considering the diverse types of disabilities outlined in the **UN CRPD** and adopting a comprehensive and person-centred approach to accommodation, employers can create **inclusive work environments** that provide equal opportunities for staff with physical, sensory, intellectual and psychosocial disabilities.

²⁰ See <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1202>.



3.2 Supporting an ageing workforce

By extending the principles of reasonable accommodation to consider the needs of an ageing workforce, you can build on the foundation of an inclusive work environment. If you take opportunities to improve ergonomics and allow flexible working hours, phased retirement options and ongoing skills training, this can benefit older employees while making the workplace more adaptable and resilient for everyone. This multigenerational approach aligns with the broader goals of social sustainability, ensuring that the workplace is a diverse, inclusive and productive space.

It is commonly but often wrongly assumed that the disabilities of older persons are simply a result of the ageing process, and it is crucial to challenge this. You should take care to differentiate

between age-related changes and particular disabilities that may require specific support and accommodations. When disability in older age is not properly recognised, barriers to accessibility may sometimes go unnoticed, which can hinder older individuals with disabilities from fully accessing employment opportunities.

As an employer, you can create supportive environments through flexible scheduling, remote work options, ergonomically designed workspaces, continuous learning opportunities tailored to the needs of older individuals, especially those with disabilities. By doing so, you not only enrich your organisational culture but also reinforce your competitive edge in the market in the ways listed in the following section.



- * **Experience and expertise**

Older individuals have accumulated years of experience and possess a rich repository of knowledge. Their insights, sharpened over decades, can prove invaluable in decision-making, problem-solving, mentoring younger employees, and customer relations roles.

- * **Diversity and innovation**

A diverse workforce, inclusive of a range of ages, promotes a variety of perspectives, which is key to innovation. Different life experiences and viewpoints can enrich collective thinking and facilitate creative solutions.

- * **Cost efficiency**

By offering flexible schedules or remote working options, businesses can retain the invaluable expertise of older workers at potentially reduced costs compared to a traditional in-office setup.

- * **Employer branding**

Being recognised as an age-friendly employer can enhance your brand image. It demonstrates a commitment to inclusion and social responsibility, which can attract a wider talent pool and resonate well with consumers.

- * **Legal compliance and risk mitigation**

Adhering to policies of inclusion and reasonable accommodation demonstrates compliance with legal standards and prevents risks linked to losing the senior staff or expertise.



3.3 Taking on staff with disabilities using reasonable accommodation: the benefits you can expect

Supported and valued staff

Promoting reasonable accommodation as a right can help create a more inclusive, diverse and supportive workplace and a culture of fairness and equal opportunities. This sends a clear message that staff with disabilities are valued and supported, and that those who face barriers can feel comfortable in bringing their authentic selves to work. This can even boost the number of job applications, if more persons with disabilities feel encouraged to apply.

The right support leading to improved retention

Employees who receive appropriate accommodation are more likely to feel supported, valued and empowered to contribute their best work. This, in turn, can improve job satisfaction, loyalty and

overall retention rates within the organisation.

Higher efficiency and productivity

When employees have the accommodations they need to overcome disability-related barriers, they can perform their job tasks more effectively and efficiently; optimised working conditions enable them to fully utilise their skills and abilities, improving productivity and performance outcomes.

The European Disability Forum devoted its 7th European human rights report to the right to work for persons with disabilities. It cites findings from several other reports on the productivity of persons with disabilities. For example, a study among human resources managers

found that 72% of employees with disabilities who are assured reasonable accommodation are rated as average, above average or excellent in their performance.²¹

Economic benefits for inclusive companies

A World Economic Forum study showed that, in the four-year period analysed, more inclusive companies achieved revenues 28% higher than those of less inclusive companies, double the net income and profit margins 30% higher.²²

Enhanced organisational reputation

The promotion of reasonable accommodation as a right showcases an organisation's commitment to diversity, inclusion and compliance with legal

²¹ For more information see European Human Rights Report Issue 7 – 2023, The Right to Work: The employment situation of persons with disabilities in Europe, [European Human Rights Report Issue 7, 2023 \(edf-feph.org\)](#), page 69.

²² For more information see European Human Rights Report Issue 7 – 2023, The Right to Work: The employment situation of persons with disabilities in Europe, [European Human Rights Report Issue 7, 2023 \(edf-feph.org\)](#), page 69.

obligations. This commitment enhances the organisation's reputation both internally and externally, helping to attract top talent and maintain positive relationships with clients and stakeholders, while positioning the employer as socially responsible and inclusive.

Positive workplace culture, and a sustainable workforce

A positive workplace culture helps break down stigma and prejudices associated with disabilities, and encourages respect and understanding. Adjustments can also be made for the benefit of an ageing workforce, taking account of specific barriers arising from disabilities while distinguishing these from age-related changes among older workers. This inclusive culture benefits all staff and helps create an environment where diversity is celebrated, and everyone feels valued and supported.



3.4 How to raise awareness

Increasingly, employers are recognising and understanding the potential benefits of reasonable accommodation, and actively promoting it as standard practice.

There are several ways you can raise awareness within your organisation or company about the importance and benefits of reasonable accommodation.

- **Training and workshops**

Training sessions and workshops on disability awareness and reasonable accommodation (led by your organisation's human resources (HR) department, for instance) can educate managers and other employees about the rights of employees with disabilities, the benefits of accommodation and best practices for implementing making accommodation in practice. In interactive workshops participants can examine the challenges and opportunities they face, discussing different case studies and scenarios.

- **Communication campaigns**

Awareness campaigns can be used to highlight the importance of reasonable accommodation and to encourage a culture of inclusivity. You can use internal newsletters, intranet pages and digital signage to share information, success stories and testimonials from employees who have benefited from accommoda-

tions, not just to raise awareness but to challenge misconceptions and promote positive attitudes towards reasonable accommodation.

- **Leadership, commitment and champions**

Leaders, executives and managers should help champion the cause of reasonable accommodation. If you are in a leadership role and can demonstrate your commitment, this sets the tone from the top and encourages broader adoption and acceptance within the organisation.

- **Collaboration with disability organisations**

Partnerships with external disability organisations (DPOs), advocacy groups or experts can bring in additional expertise and guidance. Their insights and resources can enhance your organisation's understanding of reasonable accommodation and of the experiences of employees with disabilities, leading to fresh ideas and approaches.

- **Evaluation and continuous improvement**

You should gather feedback from employees, HR staff and managers to identify areas for improvement, address challenges and celebrate successes. Continuous monitoring and evaluation can help your organisation refine its approach, enhancing staff awareness and maximising the benefits of reasonable accommodation.

The 'choosing to disclose' model

The 'choosing to disclose' model recognises the individual's right to decide whether or not to disclose their disability. It allows people to have conversations about reasonable accommodation when they are ready and willing to do so.

This means that a person with disabilities can keep control of their personal information.

This approach respects individual autonomy and allows people to share their disability status and discuss their accommodations (perhaps involving a flexible accommodation process) at their own pace.

Respecting this individual choice promotes privacy and confidentiality, ensuring that sensitive personal information is shared only with relevant individuals, such as HR personnel or supervisors, which helps maintain a safe space for open and honest conversations.

By creating an environment where individuals are not compelled to disclose their disabilities, this model can reduce stigma and the risk of discriminatory treatment, so staff facing barriers can have their work assessed based on their abilities, skills and performance – not their disability.



3.5 Allocation of reasonable accommodations

You can achieve a sustainable solution for your staff with disabilities through a well-organised process for allocating reasonable accommodations. The accommodations that are provided need to be effective, efficient, and tailored to the individual. The solutions provided need to be sustainable over time. You may need to conduct thorough assessments for employees with disabilities, considering expert advice when available, and you should involve your employees in the decision-making process. Your aim should be to identify accommodations that address the immediate needs of those employees who would otherwise face barriers in their work, while also considering long-term sustainability.

The process of allocating reasonable accommodation is guided by **legal obligations** and **anti-discrimination laws**. If you are unsure of the exact requirements, you should consult your local authority or employers' organisation, which could assist in identifying respective laws. Complying with the law protects the rights of employees with disabilities and reduces the risk of legal dis-

putes or discrimination claims, while also creating and maintaining a fair and equitable work environment.

Collective bargaining and social dialogue between employers and trade unions play an important role in negotiating and implementing measures for reasonable accommodation in the workplace for persons with disabilities. Through these collaborative discussions, trade unions become powerful advocates for workers with disabilities, using their collective strength to influence and secure necessary adjustments. By addressing specific needs and fostering an inclusive atmosphere, this dialogue reinforces the commitment to equal opportunities, making the workplace accessible and supportive for everyone.



3.6 Inclusive practices across employment stages

The employment of persons with disabilities is a journey that begins with the recruitment phase, it encompasses retention and includes facilitating smooth career progression. This section sets out steps that employers can take at each stage of employment to foster an inclusive work environment.

I. RECRUITMENT

Engaging a diverse workforce begins with an inclusive recruitment process. As an employer, you are at the forefront, with supportive roles played by recruitment agencies and public authorities.

Collaboration

- Engage with specialised recruitment agencies that have expertise in hiring persons with disabilities.
- Liaise with public authorities for guidance and support, to make sure you comply with legal requirements.

Accessibility

- Ensure job advertisements are accessible and inclusive, providing alternative formats or wording when necessary.
- The job announcement should ask candidates to indicate whether they have a specific need or require an accommodation to be able to attend the interview.
- Make the interview process inclusive and accessible, offering reasonable accommodations such as sign

language interpreters or accessible venues, assistive listening devices, speech-to-text.

Awareness and training

Conduct awareness programmes and training sessions to dispel myths and foster a welcoming atmosphere for candidates with disabilities. For more information on organising training programmes, see the section on 'Facilitating communication on reasonable accommodation'.

II. RETENTION

Retention is decisive to building a beneficial work environment. It is not just about keeping staff on the payroll but also about ensuring their well-being and productivity.

Reasonable accommodation

- Offer reasonable accommodation without too much delay.
- Create inclusive and accessible workplaces and provide assistive technology.
- Provide personal assistance.

- Offer flexible working hours and options to work remotely (if required by employees with disabilities).
- Adjust job duties to align with the abilities of persons with disabilities.
- Arrange accessible transportation.
- Use accessible communication tools.
- Offer a return-to-work programme for employees who have to leave the workplace to recover from an accident, illness or other condition that can affect their ability to carry out their duties.
- Implement regular check-ins to understand and address any ongoing needs.

Support networks

Foster peer support groups, for example a disability employees resource group, and mentorship programmes to help with social and professional inclusion for employees with disabilities.

Continuous learning and development

Provide opportunities for skills development and training; ensure fit-for-purpose and accessible venues and learning materials.

III. CAREER PROGRESSION

Promoting a culture of growth and opportunity for all employees is essential for an equitable workplace.

Performance evaluation

- Ensure that performance evaluations are fair, unbiased, and based on the individual's capabilities and achievements.
- Encourage open dialogue to understand the aspirations and career goals of employees with disabilities.

Promotion opportunities

Foster a transparent promotion process, ensuring that all employees, regardless of their disabilities, have access to career advancement opportunities. If a person has the appropriate qualifications and experience for the job, and can compete for the promotion for the job, any need for reasonable accommodation should be considered.

Capacity building

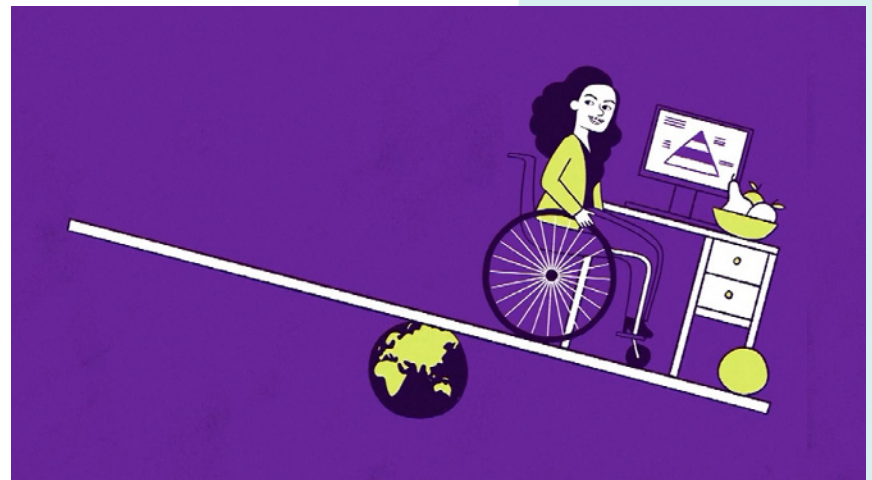
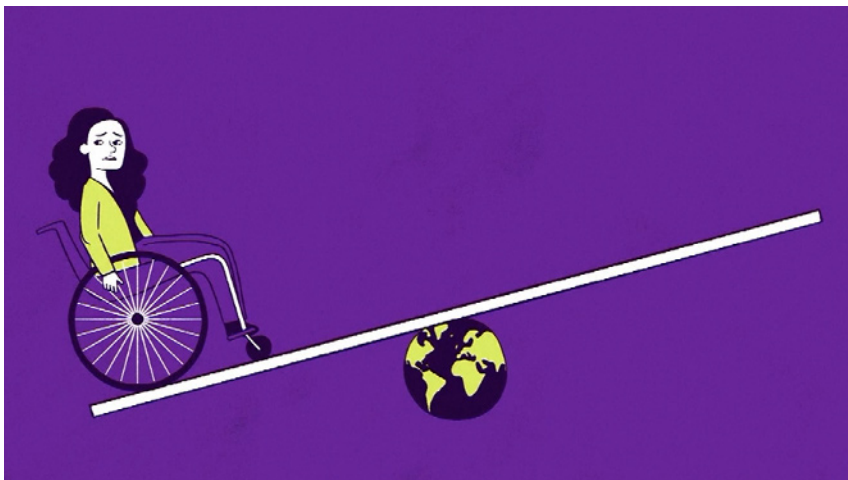
Offer leadership training and mentorship programmes to prepare employees with disabilities for more senior roles.

Collaboration with external partners

Engage with disability advocacy groups and vocational rehabilitation services for guidance on facilitating career progression.

Embracing reasonable accommodation and inclusion across all employment stages is not just a legal requirement; it makes a significant contribution to a harmonious and productive work environment. Employers, in collaboration with external partners, are key drivers in promoting a culture of accessibility, equal opportunity, and growth for all employees, setting a strong foundation for a progressive and socially responsible enterprise.

Recruitment, retention and career progression are part of the same continuous process of fostering an inclusive work environment. In this section we illustrated how interconnected these employment stages are. These guidelines offer a comprehensive exploration of measures to ensure a supportive and inclusive workplace environment across the employment lifecycle.



3.7 Facilitating communication on reasonable accommodation

There are several strategies for ensuring effective communication when staff request and receive reasonable accommodation.

Clear, inclusive and accessible communication channels

Employees with disabilities need to be able to use communication channels that give them easy access to information about the accommodation process. You could set up a dedicated email address, for instance, perhaps together with a helpline or web page, where staff can submit requests for reasonable accommodation and seek clarification if they need to discuss their individual needs. You should make the relevant information available in easily understandable language and in multiple formats to maximise accessibility.

Transparent policies and procedures for reasonable accommodation

You could assign a staff member to oversee diversity and inclusion. In collaboration with staff members with disabilities, they could draw up a policy paper or guidance material on reasonable accommodation. It is important to involve persons with disabilities in the drafting process for such guidance, which would align

with principles of inclusivity and the ‘nothing about us without us’ approach, used by many DPOs and associated with the UN CRPD. Your policies and procedures should clearly outline the accommodation process, and the relevant documents should be made available to all employees, including those with disabilities, so that they have a clear understanding of the steps involved. The individuals or departments they need to contact should be clearly indicated. The policies and guidance should emphasise confidentiality and should reassure staff that whatever accommodation requests they make will be treated privately and with sensitivity.

External mediation

When agreement between an individual and an employer cannot be easily reached, you may wish to seek assistance from an impartial external mediator. This can help you to broker an agreement and come to a mutually acceptable decision on what adjustments are to be made.

Education and training for everyone

Organisations are advised to provide training or educational programmes to enhance awareness and understanding of the reasonable accommodation process. Employees with disabilities should themselves be given training, if required, to ensure they understand how to navigate the process effectively. It is important to make sure that members of staff with disabilities understand their rights. Organisations should be aware that, according to the UN CRPD, disability is an evolving concept resulting from interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers. Not all disabilities are visible. The Convention's shift in approach to disability, away from a medical and charity-based approach to one based on human rights, needs to be reflected within the organisation's reasonable accommodation process.

HR staff and anyone else who plays a role in coordinating reasonable accommodation arrangements will require training, too, including training on the relevant laws and best practices, and on sensitive handling of requests. Training should also be provided for team leaders and managers, who should help maintain a supportive and inclusive environment in their department or organisation – a place where employees with disabilities get the accommodations they require to overcome barriers and perform

their jobs to their best potential in a way that is understood and supported by their colleagues.

Who can provide training?

- * **Internal experts.** If your organisation has a diversity and inclusion department or experts in disability rights and reasonable accommodations, they would be the ideal candidates to conduct the training.
- * **External consultants.** Professionals specialised in workplace diversity, inclusion and compliance with disability laws can be hired to conduct training.
- * **Government agencies.** Some countries have governmental organisations dedicated to workplace diversity and inclusion. They often provide training resources or even direct training services.
- * **Not-for-profit organisations and advocacy groups.** Organisations that focus on disability rights and inclusion often supply training services, or they can recommend expert trainers.

How should the training be organised?

- * **Needs assessment.** Before the training, assess what kind of training is needed – whether it is for general awareness or legal compliance, or specialised training for HR and management.

- * **Curriculum development.** Based on the needs assessment, develop a training curriculum. This could include presentations, workshops, case studies and interactive sessions.
- * **Mode of training.** Decide whether the training will be in-person, online or hybrid. Whatever the means, ensure that the training is inclusive and accessible.
- * **Scheduling.** Plan when the training sessions will be held. Arrange them at times when most people can attend.
- * **Involve persons with disabilities.** If possible, involve persons with disabilities in the planning and delivery of the training to ensure it is genuinely inclusive.
- * **Feedback and evaluation.** After the training has been delivered, collect feedback from participants to assess its effectiveness and areas for improvement.
- * **Ongoing training.** Consider making the training an ongoing process, with regular updates to accommodate any changes in the law or internal policies.
- * **Documentation.** Keep records of who attended training sessions, when they were conducted, and the materials used. This could be important for legal compliance and for subsequent internal evaluations.

By being methodical in the planning and delivery of training, you can ensure that it serves its purpose effectively in promoting a more inclusive environment.

Individualised communication and consultation

When an employee with a disability requests reasonable accommodation, there should be an open and respectful dialogue with them. They should be given the opportunity to express their specific requirements and concerns in a confidential and understanding environment. If the details of the employee's accommodations need to be worked out, they should play an active part in decision-making and problem-solving in relation to the barriers they face. In other words, their voice should be heard, and their perspectives considered. This approach promotes a sense of ownership and inclusivity in the process. Process the request as quickly as possible.

This is how you, as the employer, can engage with the employee in an open dialogue and with their active participation in setting up the reasonable accommodation.

1. INITIAL EXPRESSION OF NEED

The **employee** communicates their need for reasonable accommodation without necessarily disclosing the specific nature of their disability – unless they feel comfortable doing so.

The **employer** acknowledges the request and expresses a willingness to discuss possible solutions. The initial discussion should take place without delay.

2. SETTING THE STAGE

Confidentiality. Confirm that the discussion is confidential and will only be shared with those who need to know.

Respectful atmosphere. Create a welcoming atmosphere that puts the employee at ease so that they can discuss their needs candidly.

3. NEEDS AND CHALLENGES

The **employee** describes the specific challenges faced in the workplace due to their disability.

The **employer** asks open-ended questions to understand these challenges better, without making assumptions.

4. PROPOSED ACCOMMODATIONS

The **employee** offers suggestions of reasonable accommodations that could address these challenges.

The **employer** responds with additional suggestions or adjustments based on the operational capacity of the organisation.

5. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

The **employer** outlines the legal rights of the employee and the obligations of the employer under relevant laws and policies. The **employee** confirms that they understand, asking questions if clarification is needed.

6. COST AND LOGISTICS

The **employer** discusses any concerns about the cost or feasibility of the proposed accommodations.

The **employee** offers alternatives or shares insights on how similar accommodations have been effective elsewhere.

7. TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The **employer** provides a reasonable time-frame within which the accommodation will be implemented.

The **employee** acknowledges the timeline or negotiates if required.

8. FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW

Both parties agree on how they will assess the effectiveness of the accommodation and when they will reconvene to review its success.

9. DOCUMENTATION

The **employer** summarises the key points of the discussion, the agreed accommodations and the timeline in writing, and shares this with the employee.

The **employee** reviews the document for accuracy and indicates their approval. This should take place without any delay.

3.8 Providing guidance

Guidance and advice should be provided to meet the requirements of employees with disabilities, managers, staff responsible for processing accommodation requests and team leaders or colleagues welcoming employees with disabilities into their department or team.

FOR THE EMPLOYEE WITH DISABILITY

If you face barriers at work, you should be provided with educational resources and training materials on your rights, the different reasonable accommodations available to you and any other support and guidance that may be offered. You may be directed to disability support networks, specialist services or other resources.

Channels should be set up for you to express your requirements, concerns and feedback, with follow-up to ensure that the accommodations are effective. Adjustments to your accommodations should be made over time if required.

FOR EMPLOYEES WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROCESSING ACCOMMODATION REQUESTS

You should receive comprehensive training on disability awareness, reasonable accommodation, legal obligations, and best practices for processing requests.

Guidance should also be drawn up on effectively communicating with employees who have requested accommodations, covering active listening, maintaining confidentiality and showing good understanding of the concept, empathy and respect.

Clear procedures and guidelines should be drawn up for processing accommodation requests (covering details such as deadlines and documentation requirements). You should be offered ongoing support and resources, including access to expert advice and mediators, as well as relevant training and development opportunities.

FOR TEAM LEADERS AND TEAMS RECEIVING EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES

You should receive ongoing training and guidance on disability awareness, fostering an inclusive work environment and managing diverse teams. You should engage in an open dialogue with employees with disabilities with the aim of achieving maximum understanding and collaboration.

3.9 Finding less costly accommodations: striking a balance

It is important to balance the need for accommodation to meet the specific needs of each individual with practicality and cost. The aim should be to find the most straightforward accommodations at reasonable cost that effectively meet the employee's needs and individual circumstances.

In taking an individualised approach to addressing the unique needs and circumstances of each member of staff with a disability, you can provide tailored solutions that effectively address barriers and promote equal opportunities.

A study by the Job Accommodation Network in the United States revealed that 60% of workplace accommodations can be made at no cost, while the average cost is USD 500 (EUR 491) per employee.²³ Accommodations help retain employees, improve attendance and productivity, and save on insurance costs.²⁴

MAXIMISING EFFECTIVENESS, RETENTION AND PRODUCTIVITY

The primary goal of reasonable accommodation is to enable employees with disabilities to perform their tasks effectively. While cost and feasibility will clearly be important considerations, the effectiveness of accommodations in meeting the employee's needs should take precedence. The better the accommodations are tailored to the specific, personalised needs of employees with disabilities, the more positive the effect on retention and productivity.



²³ For more information see: [European Human Rights Report Issue 7 – 2023, The Right to Work: The employment situation of persons with disabilities in Europe, European Human Rights Report, Issue 7, 2023 \(edf-feph.org\)](#), page 77.

²⁴ For more information see: [European Human Rights Report Issue 7 – 2023, The Right to Work: The employment situation of persons with disabilities in Europe, European Human Rights Report, Issue 7, 2023 \(edf-feph.org\)](#), page 77.

3.10 Monitoring and review

The process of monitoring and reviewing reasonable accommodations is essential to ensure their ongoing effectiveness and to address any changes or adjustments that may be needed.

You should assess the ongoing effectiveness of the solution that has been provided. This may involve regular check-in meetings, reviews of job performance metrics, gathering feedback from supervisors or colleagues or listening to the employee's own input on whether and how the accommodation has facilitated their work. By assessing the effectiveness of the accommodation, you may be able to identify areas for improvement or explore alternative solutions if the solution that has been provided is not adequately meeting the employee's needs.

The needs of employees with disabilities may evolve over time, so it is important for you to make any changes or adjustments required. It may be necessary to adjust the accommodation in light of new information or changes in the employee's circumstances, such as a change in their condition or new job responsibilities. You should engage in open and transparent communication with the employee to determine if any alternative

accommodations or alterations to their existing arrangements are necessary to ensure continued effectiveness.

Throughout this monitoring and review process, it is crucial that you maintain accurate documentation and records. This includes documenting the details of the accommodation, any changes made, the employee's feedback and the outcomes of the monitoring process. Documentation helps track the history of accommodations provided, facilitates future reference and ensures compliance with legal requirements.

It is best to adopt a mindset of continuous improvement when it comes to reasonable accommodation. As leaders or managers, you should learn from each accommodation experience, identifying best practices and implementing changes as required. Regular reviews or evaluations of the effectiveness of accommodations can prove highly useful in informing future decision-making.

4 INFORMATION AND SUPPORT



While implementing accommodations for staff with disabilities often incurs changes and costs, both financial and practical assistance are available.

In many EU countries, financial support is available to cover some or all of the costs of setting up reasonable accommodations. This can take the form of grants or subsidies, sometimes alongside logistical support to help identify appropriate accommodations and apply for grants or subsidies. The amount of financial support varies considerably across Europe, as do the kinds of accommodations that can be funded, but schemes commonly fund the adaptation of a workstation used by a person with a disability. Help with paying for job coaches or travel costs is also available in some cases.

To be eligible for funding, occupational or technical aids must be disability-related and used for the specific work activities or other relevant tasks. Technical work aids, both software and hardware, can be regarded as a specific form of accommodation. These sometimes enable employees with disabilities to do tasks they could not otherwise do at all.

Public funding can cover the cost of training an individual to use the work aid. The amount awarded is decided on a case-by-case basis and depends on various criteria such as the degree of impairment, the total costs of the measures and the amount of

disability-related expenses that would otherwise be incurred by the employer.

You can receive funding specifically to cover the costs of creating new workplaces for persons with severe disabilities, perhaps following a period of employment in a sheltered workshop. In such circumstances, the supported posts must be reserved for such persons on a long-term basis.

Grants or subsidies for making reasonable accommodations are available in some circumstances in most EU countries, although the amounts vary, and the application processes are sometime administratively burdensome. Note that subsidies may need to be partly refunded if the employer terminates the contract within a particular time.

In some EU countries employers can receive logistical support to help them plan and implement reasonable accommodation, possibly in addition to financial support. This support is often provided by the public sector, including organisations that provide a wide range of public services not exclusively focused on disability together with government departments such as the employment

service. However, it is noteworthy that in some countries, there are specialised organisations dedicated to assisting employers in hiring persons with disabilities. For more information see the EDE country reports entitled *Striving for an inclusive labour market*.²⁵

A selection of organisations and sources of assistance at EU level are listed under 'Financial support' at the end of these guidelines.

²⁵ See EDE web page: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1532&langId=en>.



European
Commission

4.1 Where to look for assistance

- The official websites of national, regional or local government departments responsible for employment, labour, social affairs or disability rights often provide information on the grants, subsidies and support programmes that may be available to help employers set up reasonable accommodations.
- Some disability and employment organisations, associations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) specialise in supporting employers and individuals with disabilities. They often provide resources, guidance and information on the available financial and logistical support for reasonable accommodation. Examples are the European Disability Forum²⁶ and the European Blind Union.²⁷ The European Network of Equality Bodies provides a review of recent case law in a number of European countries.²⁸
- The European Commission and its various directorates offer information on funding opportunities, programmes and resources for employers for the purposes of reasonable accommodation, and various EU web pages often highlight initiatives on disability rights, employment and social inclusion.
- The International Labour Organization's 'Promoting Equity' series aims to help employers of all sizes and in all economic sectors to provide reasonable accommodation at all stages of the employment cycle.²⁹
- Business support centres, chambers of commerce, professional or sectoral organisations and business associations often issue guidance and resources for employers, including information on financial support, grants and logistical help.
- Local employment agencies or job centres may also have information about grants, subsidies or support programmes for employers.

²⁶ See [Promoting diversity and inclusion through workplace adjustments: A practical guide \(ilo.org\)](#).

²⁷ See [EBU guidance on reasonable accommodation for visually impaired employees and applicants. Sept2023.pdf \(euroblind.org\)](#).

²⁸ See [Annex- Reasonable-Accommodation.pdf \(equineteurope.org\)](#).

²⁹ See https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/equality-and-discrimination/WCMS_536630/lang--en/index.htm.

4.2 Partnerships

In a partnership, individual employers and external bodies can work together to identify and implement an appropriate reasonable accommodation for an individual employee. In addition to partnerships with job centres and other recruitment organisations, vocational rehabilitation centres or civil society organisations, employers can also work with company doctors, occupational health teams or trade unions.

Partnerships to assist employers in making reasonable accommodation exist in some form in most EU countries, often helping through advice or support to identify appropriate accommodations. While they can sometimes be formed with public bodies such as the employment agencies responsible for placing persons with disabilities in employment, NGOs and employer organisations are also often involved.

There are numerous examples throughout Europe of partnerships offering support such as financial assistance, advice (individualised advice on appropriate accommodation, guides for employers, advice on designing disability-friendly workplaces), support networks (of companies, a network of employers with experience of hiring staff with reduced working capacity), a work coordinator to identify recruitment opportunities and tasks suit-



able for those with a partial work capacity, databases (the recording of accommodations in a database and mediation services to find agreement on working conditions). Occupational health experts are also sometimes involved in partnering with employers.

Trade unions actively engage with employers, policy-makers and relevant stakeholders to raise awareness about the needs of workers with disabilities and to promote the integration of disability-inclusive measures. In some countries, such as Spain, trade unions and employers' organisations have signed framework agreements, national and provincial collective agreements and company or organisational-level agreements regarding measures such as adaptations and relocation where suitable.

The **European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)** plays a significant role in facilitating reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities, as part of its work on employment and labour rights across Europe. As a leading organisation representing workers and trade unions in the EU, the ETUC advocates for the rights and interests of employees, including those with disabilities, working to ensure that workplace policies, collective bargaining agreements and labour laws promote inclusive practices and reasonable accommodation. The ETUC actively engages with employers, policy-makers and relevant stakeholders to raise awareness about the needs of workers with disabilities and to promote the integration of disability-inclusive measures.



4.3 Good practices

The 'Illustrative Examples' section of the Guidelines presents best practices for ensuring reasonable accommodation (RA) by employers. Below is an overview of potential measures that can be implemented. For more detailed information, please refer to the 'Illustrative Examples' section.

TECHNICAL MEASURES

- Equipment for adapting a workstation (such as video magnifier, ergonomic seat)
- Software for persons with visual impairments
- Communication equipment for persons with sensory impairments
- Using simple symbols for persons with intellectual disabilities
- Using contrasting colours in the work environment to help visually impaired staff find their way
- Using accessible video conferencing platforms (with speech-to-text)
- Using visual alarms for persons with a hearing disability (for example, to signal an emergency, a doorbell, a telephone call, the start and end of working day)



European
Commission

ORGANISATIONAL MEASURES

- Adjusting workspace, premises and equipment
- Physical/architectural modifications to facilitate access to the workplace
- Providing quiet space or individual workspace to facilitate concentration
- Offering the option of teleworking
- Human assistance, such as sign language interpreter, spoken language coder, tutor or pair worker
- Adjustment of working hours, such as part-time work or working hours that are different to the rest of the team – i.e. individualised hours for which a collective schedule does not apply
- More frequent breaks during the working day (for example, for workers with diabetes)
- Communication in simplified language for persons with intellectual disabilities
- Sitting (for a workstation that is usually standing)

- Translation of work instructions into sign language or language that is easy to read and understand
- Assignment to a post that is geographically close to the home of the worker with disability
- Adaptation of a vehicle to enable a person with a disability to travel to and from work if public transport is not accessible
- Choice of meeting venues, taking into account accessibility and communications
- Team restructuring or task distribution within a team (reshuffling the tasks)
- Disability awareness-raising

GOOD PRACTICE IN IMPLEMENTATION

- Determining functional limitations for the job description and support required
- Implementing reasonable accommodation taking into consideration the needs and preferences of the employee with a disability as far as possible
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the adaptation, making any necessary adjustments
- Consultation with experts, e.g. disability inclusion consultants, human resources professionals, and legal specialists in employment law and disability rights

4.4 Additional sources of information

Several European States have their own publications and other information for employers regarding reasonable accommodation. This may be produced by government ministries, equality bodies or employment services, or sometimes by units specialised in the employment of persons with disabilities in the public sector. Employers' organisations, trade unions and NGOs (including DPOs) have a role to play in many countries, too.

Other sources include disability inclusion initiatives, academic journals, legal materials (such as case law summaries), employer disability toolkits (often developed by public bodies or non-profit organisations, or through disability-specific initiatives), webinars and online training, and guidance from industry-specific associations.

A comprehensive list of bodies to consult at the European level is provided below, under 'Financial Support'.



FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Funds at national, regional and local levels are the main sources of financial support for employers to provide reasonable accommodation in the workplace. More information is available in the EDE country reports entitled *Striving for an inclusive labour market*.³⁰

Some sources of EU funding

As a complement, European Union funding can be used to put in place reasonable accommodation and to promote accessibility and inclusion in the workplace.

- The **European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)**https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funding/erdf_en
- The **European Social Fund (ESF+)**
<https://ec.europa.eu/european-social-fund-plus/en>
- The **Cohesion Fund**
https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/funding/cohesion-fund_en
- **Horizon Europe**³¹

Horizon Europe, the EU's research and innovation programme, provides funding opportunities for projects related to disability

and accessibility. Organisations can apply for funding under specific calls or topics focusing on inclusive technologies, assistive devices or inclusive workplace design. The programme promotes the development of innovative solutions and technologies that facilitate reasonable accommodation in the workplace.

Organisations can identify relevant calls for proposals or funding opportunities published by the European Commission or various EU agencies. These calls typically set out specific objectives, eligibility criteria and funding priorities related to accessibility and reasonable accommodation. Organisations should carefully review the guidelines, prepare a project proposal and submit it within the specified deadlines.

The application process depends on the specific funding programme or initiative. Organisations are typically required to submit a project proposal outlining the objectives, activities, expected outcomes and budget for their reasonable accommodation project. Eligibility criteria may include the project's alignment

³⁰ See EDE web page: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1532&langId=en>.

³¹ For more information on Horizon Europe, see https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en.

with EU priorities, its potential impact, partnership requirements and financial sustainability. Organisations may need to demonstrate their capacity, expertise and experience in implementing similar projects.

Securing EU funding for reasonable accommodation initiatives brings several benefits. First, it provides financial resources to support the implementation of projects that promote accessibility and inclusion in the workplace. It also offers opportunities for networking, collaboration and knowledge exchange with other organisations and experts working in the same field. Additionally, receiving EU funding enhances the visibility and credibility of the organisation's work and can lead to increased recognition at national and international level.

By understanding the application process, eligibility criteria and potential benefits of securing EU funding, organisations can leverage resources such as ESIF, Horizon Europe and EaSI to promote accessibility, inclusion and equal opportunities in the workplace for employees with disabilities.

Organisations providing information and advice

- **European Disability Forum (EDF)**

The largest umbrella organisation representing persons with disabilities in Europe, advocating for the rights of all persons with disabilities across various disability types.

<https://www.edf-feph.org/>

- **AGE Platform Europe (AGE)**

Promoting a society for those of all ages in which every-one has equal opportunities to be included and participate at all stages of their lives.

<http://www.age-platform.eu/>

- **European Union of Supported Employment (EUSE)**

Non-Government organisation facilitating the development of Supported Employment to help persons with disabilities to access quality employment with an ongoing assistance.

<https://euse.org/about-euse/>

- **Inclusion Europe**

An organisation focusing on the rights and inclusion of persons with intellectual disabilities and their families.

<https://www.inclusion-europe.eu>

- **European Network on Independent Living (ENIL)**

Advocates for the rights of persons with disabilities to live independently and be included in the community.

<https://enil.eu>

- **Mental Health Europe (MHE)**

Working to promote the rights and well-being of persons with mental health conditions.

<https://www.mhe-sme.org/>

- **European Blind Union (EBU)**

Represents the interests of blind and partially sighted people in Europe.

<https://www.euroblind.org/>

- **European Union of the Deaf (EUD)**

Promotes the rights of deaf people and the recognition of sign languages in Europe.

<https://www.eud.eu/>

- **European Dyslexia Association (EDA)**

Advocates for the rights and needs of individuals with dyslexia across Europe.

<https://eda-info.eu/>

- **Autism-Europe**

An international association that focuses on promoting the rights and inclusion of persons with autism spectrum disorders.

<https://www.autismeurope.org>

- **European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD)**

Represents service providers working with persons with disabilities, including physical, intellectual and sensory disabilities.

<https://www.easpd.eu/>

- **European Down Syndrome Association (EDSA)** Advocates for the rights and well-being of persons with Down syndrome.

<https://www.edsa.eu/>

- **COFACE Families Europe**

Advocates for the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities and their families in Europe.

www.coface-eu.org

- **European Federation of Parents of Hearing Impaired Children (FEPEDA)**

Promotes equal rights of deaf and hard of hearing children and young people and their families.

<https://fepeda.eu/>

- **European Multiple Sclerosis Platform (EMSP)**

Works to improve the quality of life of persons with multiple sclerosis (MS) in Europe.

<https://emsp.org/>

- **European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH)**

Represents the interests of hard of hearing people across Europe.

<https://www.efhoh.org/>

- **European Federation of Neurological Associations (EFNA)**

Focuses on advocacy and support for individuals with neurological disorders, including conditions such as epilepsy, Parkinson's disease and multiple sclerosis.

<https://www.efna.net/>

- **European network of Public Employment Services (PES)**

Established to maximise the efficiency of public employment services.

<https://www.pesnetwork.eu/>

This list is not exhaustive. There are numerous other organisations and associations at national, regional and local level that advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities across Europe. For more information, see the EDE country reports entitled *Striving for an inclusive labour market*.³²



³² See EDE web page: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1532&langId=en>.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES

method 1

method 2

method 3

method 4

method 5

The methods of reasonable accommodation (RA), illustrated by the examples show which measures can be taken by employers to fulfil the legal obligation (2000/78/EC)³³ for reasonable accommodation and to ensure the employment of persons with disabilities. By following these methods, reasonable accommodation measures can be implemented within a short period of time.

Please note that the presented list of methods is not exhaustive.

³³ See <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32000L0078>.

method 1

method 1

PROVIDING ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

Employers can get help and support to employ people who face barriers in their work by providing them with assistive technology. It is therefore useful to find out about the availability of and access to various assistive devices and IT solutions.

1.1 Project Manager on the autism spectrum in the pharmaceutical industry

method 1

Country	Austria
Employer	A leading company in the pharmaceutical industry
Barrier for employee	Autism spectrum, requiring a focused environment for repetitive tasks that demand high concentration and accuracy.
RA provided	A quiet office space to enable the employee to work without external disturbances.
Objective	To facilitate the project manager's responsibilities in structuring and administering technical facilities by aligning with her unique strengths.
Benefit for the employer	Facilitating the employee's natural aptitude for tasks requiring meticulous focus and precision results in higher-quality work outcomes. The minor adaptation of providing a quiet office generates significant returns in the form of essential, high-quality work. It also demonstrates the employer's commitment to an inclusive work environment, attracting a diverse talent pool and possibly leading to innovations born from this diversity.
Cost	Minimal, given the measure involves the availability of a quiet office space.

1.2 Visually impaired retail worker on the shop floor

method 1

Country	Austria
Employer	Supermarket chain
Barrier for employee	Visual impairment
RA provided	Mobile phone equipped with a read-aloud app and a scan app.
Objective	To enable the employee to perform duties like refilling products on the shelves and training new employees.
Benefit for the employer	By making a small technological investment, the supermarket not only ensures that tasks are completed efficiently, but also leverages the employee's in-depth knowledge of product locations for training new staff. This enhances productivity and creates a learning environment for all employees. The store also gains a reputation as an inclusive workplace, which can attract a diverse customer base and set it apart from competitors.
Cost	Minimal, considering a minor technological investment.

1.3 Visually impaired call centre coordinator

method 1

Country	Austria
Employer	Leading service provider in the Austrian residential property market
Barrier for employee	Visual impairment
RA provided	Specialised reading devices and a specific computer screen.
Objective	To enable the employee to coordinate calls effectively and handle customer queries efficiently.
Benefit for the employer	The employer benefits from a dedicated, efficient call centre coordinator who can manage complex customer interactions with ease, thanks to the assistive technologies. These adjustments not only secure a competent, loyal workforce but also contribute to higher levels of customer satisfaction and retention. Furthermore, by fostering an inclusive work environment, the company enhances its reputation as a socially responsible organisation, making it more appealing to potential clients and employees.
Cost	Minimal to moderate, in view of the procurement of specialised devices.

1.4 Visually impaired accounting and IT professional

method 1

Country	Austria
Employer	Non-profit organisation in the Fair-Trade Sector
Barrier for employee	Visual impairment
RA provided	Electric magnifier, screen reader, monitor reader for printed materials, and special lights.
Objective	Facilitating the transition from field services to a specialised role in accounting and IT following maternity leave.
Benefit for the employer	With a relatively modest investment in assistive technologies, the organisation retains a skilled and versatile employee capable of handling both accounting and IT responsibilities. This not only ensures that crucial roles are filled by an experienced, committed individual but also sends a strong message about the organisation's dedication to inclusivity. The employee's skill set, combined with the tailored workspace, enhances productivity and work quality, which ultimately benefits the organisation's mission and bottom line.
Cost	Minimal to moderate, considering the investment in assistive technologies.

1.5 Blind and visually impaired actors

method 1

Country	Croatia
Employer	Established Croatian theatre for the blind, renowned for attracting top national talent in direction, playwriting, and set design.
Barrier for employee	Visual impairment
RA provided	
Objective	To facilitate the performance tasks of blind and visually impaired actors, while also providing them the means to understand and navigate the stage space.
Benefit for the employer	The theatre not only stands out for its talent but also for its innovative and adaptive approaches, earning it a reputation for boundary-pushing creativity and inclusivity. The accommodations make it possible to employ an underrepresented pool of highly talented, dedicated actors, thereby enriching the theatre's productions and diversifying its talent base. Employing actors with diverse abilities opens new vistas in storytelling, potentially attracting a broader and more engaged audience.
Cost	Moderate, in view of the adapted space and adjusted working method.

1.6 Employees with visual disabilities in the banking sector

method 1

Country	Cyprus
Employer	Bank employing approximately 500 people
Barrier for employee	Visual impairments, including blindness and partial sightedness
RA provided	Customised assistive technology, such as screen readers, magnifiers, and specialised desktop setups.
Objective	To adapt the individual workstations to the needs of the three employees with visual impairment, ensuring that they can perform their tasks effectively.
Benefit for the employer	Beyond fulfilling social responsibility and regulatory requirements, the bank gains a diverse workforce that offers a unique perspective, potentially attracting a broader customer base. The provision of assistive technology also signals an inclusive culture, enhancing the employer brand and potentially attracting top talent across the board. The bank also benefits from the dedication and skills of these employees, who are highly motivated in part due to the employer's willingness to accommodate their needs.
Cost	Moderate, investment in customised assistive technologies

1.7 Graphic designer with time management challenges

method 1

Country	Denmark
Employer	Design agency
Barrier for employee	Challenges with time management due to the aftermath of stress and severe depression.
RA provided	An app that helps the graphic designer to manage and allocate time for tasks and sub-tasks effectively.
Objective	To enable the graphic designer to focus on his work by giving him the tools he needs to manage his time better.
Benefit for the employer	By offering a simple yet effective accommodation, the employer retains a talented graphic designer who is now more productive and focused. This investment not only boosts the employee's output but also signals to all employees that the company is committed to their well-being and success, thereby potentially increasing overall workplace morale and productivity.
Cost	Minimal, given that the accommodation involves a software application that supports time management.

1.8 Wheelchair user in a progressive career

method 1

Country	Denmark
Employer	Company
Barrier for employee	Wheelchair user with a progressive disease
RA provided	Initially, a home office was set up for the employee equipped with special equipment. Plans were made to install wheelchair lifts, automated access doors, and make modifications to the workplace and toilet facilities for wheelchair accessibility. Multiple stakeholders were involved, including key persons and disability consultants.
Objective	To accommodate a highly skilled employee who can contribute significantly to the company's objectives but requires a wheelchair-accessible environment.
Benefit for the employer	Harnessing the expertise of a highly skilled employee improves productivity and brings a unique perspective to the team. The company's commitment to making comprehensive accommodations also elevates its reputation as an inclusive and adaptive employer, which can be a competitive advantage in both talent acquisition and customer relations.
Cost	Moderate, but with long-term return of investment (ROI) considering the talent retained.

1.9 Employee with restricted mobility at a furniture company

method 1

Country	Estonia
Employer	Medium-sized furniture manufacturing company with about 45 employees
Barrier for employee	Restricted mobility and hand movements; inability to carry out physical work involving movement over long distances or raising hands above shoulder height.
RA provided	The employer adjusted the workspace to minimise the need for moving over long distances and applied for technical aids from the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund. The Fund provided a pneumatic lifting tool and compensated the cost of a vacuum lifter.
Objective	To adapt the working environment and provide the necessary tools so that the employee could comfortably and effectively work, despite his mobility restrictions.
Benefit for the employer	The employer gains a committed and abled workforce member, enriching the workplace diversity and possibly qualifying for incentives from government funds for employing persons with disabilities.
Cost	Minimal, being financed by the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund.

1.10 Employee diversity at a lamp-manufacturing company

method 1

Country	Finland
Employer	Lamp-manufacturing company with 20 employees, led by a person with a disability
Barrier for employee	Various, including disability, age, refugee status, and immigrant status. Around 30% of the workforce comprises vulnerable groups.
RA provided	The employer offers necessary lighting and sight-enhancing equipment for employees with visual disabilities immediately upon their arrival.
Objective	To create an inclusive workplace environment where everyone, regardless of their background or health condition, has an opportunity to work.
Benefit for the employer	Promotes diversity and inclusion, bringing in a range of perspectives and experiences to the company. May also enhance the company's reputation as an equitable employer.
Cost	Moderate, self-financed by the employer, who chose not to apply for public financial support due to bureaucratic obstacles.

1.11 Workplace adaptations – Implementation of necessary adjustments

method 1

Country	France
Employer	Groupe Bonduelle
Barrier for employee	Disability requiring workplace adjustments
RA provided	Modifications to workplaces for employees with recognised disability to address the barriers and make as many workplaces accessible as possible. Modifications may include ergonomic workstation adjustments, specialised equipment, transport assistance, accessibility enhancements, training, communication tools for different disabilities, and specific software/hardware adaptations for various impairments.
Objective	To make workstations accessible by implementing necessary adjustments recommended by the occupational physician and other involved actors, including trade unions.
Benefit for the employer	Facilitating inclusion and accessibility for employees with disabilities.
Cost	Costs covered by Handipol fund and Agefiph in specific conditions, with limits for the maximum invoice amount. Commission to be consulted if the budget exceeds EUR 5 000 per person annually.

1.12 Computer support technician with hyperacusis

method 1

Country	France
Employer	Company providing computer support services
Barrier for employee	Hyperacusis, a hearing condition that makes the individual overly sensitive to everyday noises, which causes discomfort and affects job performance.
RA provided	Consultation with an occupational physician for an ergonomic assessment prior to hiring; purchase of a binaural headset to isolate from extraneous noises; installation of a screen filter to reduce harsh lighting; adaptation of a specialised chair for greater comfort; extension of keyboard and mouse for colleagues around him to reduce noise.
Objective	To enable the employee to focus on his tasks without being disturbed by everyday office noises, thereby improving his productivity and well-being.
Benefit for the employer	Improved employee performance and productivity and enhanced workplace culture as colleagues displayed solidarity and understanding. The approach taken by the employer was holistic, involving medical and ergonomic expertise right from the recruitment stage, and proved to be a win-win for both the employer and the employee.
Cost	Moderate, given that the costs for ergonomic equipment and consultation were assumed by the employer, but resulted in increased productivity, making it a valuable investment.

1.13 Accountant with left-sided hemiplegia

method 1

Country	France
Employer	Company
Barrier for employee	Left-sided hemiplegia, which affects mobility and fine motor skills on the left side of the body.
RA provided	Initial meeting with an ergonomist and stakeholders to define the objectives and tools to be used; observations at the workstation to highlight difficulties faced by the employee, such as room layout, furniture arrangement, and the unsupportive chair; submission of activity report with proposed organisational and material solutions; provision of multiple desk options for the employee to choose from, thereby empowering the employee in decision-making.
Objective	To adapt the workspace in a way that compensates for the employee's disability, thereby allowing him to continue his work as an accountant effectively.
Benefit for the employer	Retention of skilled labour without the need for rehiring or retraining and enhanced morale among the workforce, demonstrating the employer's commitment to inclusivity and employee well-being.
Cost	Moderate, involving the cost of ergonomic assessment, furniture, and other accessories covered by the employer.

1.14 Nurse with hearing impairment in a Paediatric Cancer Ward

method 1

Country	Germany
Employer	A healthcare company with approximately 3.400 employees and multiple affiliated hospitals
Barrier for employee	Hearing impairment, specifically limited perception in certain situations like noise or acoustic disturbances, or when using the telephone.
RA provided	Reinforced signalling equipment on the ward, including visual alerts on central displays at the nurse station and in corridors; a radio signalling system was installed to send signals from Infusomats to a receiver the nurse wears; a new wireless telephone was also installed, equipped with volume control, a vibration setting, flashing light indicators, and Bluetooth connectivity to link with the nurse's hearing aids.
Objective	To enable a skilled nurse to effectively perform her duties in a paediatric cancer ward despite her hearing impairment.
Benefit for the employer	Implementing these specialised accommodations ensures the retention of a highly skilled and specialised nurse in a sensitive healthcare setting. It further exemplifies the organisation's commitment to an inclusive workforce, which can improve morale, attract top talent, and strengthen the company's reputation in the healthcare industry.
Cost	Moderate, but returns significant long-term value through employee retention, improved patient care, and reputation building.

1.15 Public servant using wheelchair

method 1

Country	Italy
Employer	Government office
Barrier for employee	Physical disability making it difficult to access the car park designated for him due to wheelchair use.
RA provided	At the request of the employee immediate provision of a pass to an accessible parking space that is easier to navigate with a wheelchair.
Objective	To make it easier for the employee to arrive at and depart from work without the struggle of navigating a less accessible parking space. Employee arrives at work on time and in good spirits, ready to contribute productively.
Benefit for the employer	Minimal cost and effort involved in adjusting parking space assignment. The employee's request was promptly addressed, making his daily commute to work easier and less stressful. The
Cost	employer demonstrated flexibility and swift action to accommodate the employee's specific need. It also shows that even small actions can contribute to a more inclusive work environment, benefiting both employees and employers.

1.16 Reasonable accommodation for a worker with motor disabilities

method 1

Country	Italy
Employer	ASL (Local Health Authority)
Barrier for employee	Workplace difficulties due to motor disabilities exacerbated by a heart disease.
RA provided	Workplace relocation to a fully accessible office and adjustments in job hours to accommodate aggravated disability.
Objective	To facilitate an inclusive and supportive work environment for the employee's changed circumstances.
Benefit for the employer	Improved employee performance, retention, and morale due to a more accommodating workplace, fostering loyalty and satisfaction. Enhanced support for employees with disabilities, cultivating a workplace that values inclusivity and attends to specific individual requirements.
Cost	Minimal or moderate, potentially including the cost of office modifications or adjustments, offset by improved employee satisfaction and productivity.

1.17 Newly hired employee with physical disabilities

method 1

Country	Luxembourg
Employer	Higher education institution in Luxembourg with about 300 faculty members and 7.000 students
Barrier for employee	Physical disabilities requiring specific seating and desk adjustments.
RA provided	Collaboration with local occupational health services to identify the employee's needs; provision of a specialised chair and adjustable desk based on recommendations.
Objective	To create a comfortable and functional workspace that enables the employee to perform his job effectively.
Benefit for the employer	Consultation with experts ensures that the accommodation is both suitable and effective, thereby enhancing employee performance and satisfaction. Promotes a culture of inclusivity, which can enhance the institution's reputation and appeal to a broader talent pool.
Cost	Moderate, involving the purchase of specialised furniture and consultation with occupational health services.

1.18 Long-term employee with IBM

method 1

Country	Netherlands
Employer	A company where the employee has worked for 35 years
Barrier for employee	IBM, a rare muscle disease that has severely impacted the employee's mobility and muscle strength.
RA provided	Adaptation of the employee's role from a plumber to a different position that he can physically manage. Purchase of specialised chairs, specifically a triple chair and a saddle stool, to minimise leg strain while working in the aluminium department. The employee appreciates the accommodations and the ability to continue contributing to the company. Although the nature of his work has changed, he still finds value and fulfilment in his modified role.
Objective	To allow the employee to continue working despite his medical condition, preserving his value to the company and his personal satisfaction from being able to work.
Benefit for the employer	Retains an experienced and dedicated employee, preserving institutional knowledge. Demonstrates a commitment to employee well-being and inclusivity. Partial financial support from UWV (Employee Insurance Agency) for the accommodation, reducing the cost burden.
Cost	Moderate, mainly the cost of specialised seating. However, this is subsidised by UWV, reducing the financial impact on the employer.

1.19 Salesman with low vision in telemarketing

method 1

Country	Poland
Employer	A well-known telemarketing company
Barrier for employee	The salesman has low vision which can impact his ability to fully utilise standard office technology.
RA provided	Adapted computer to better suit the employee's visual limitations; a magnifier and a speech synthesiser installed at the employee's workstation upon request.
Objective	To enable the employee to effectively manage a telemarketing team, while also promoting an inclusive workplace where everyone, regardless of their disabilities, can contribute to their full potential. These accommodations help him manage occasional difficulties due to his disability while excelling at his job.
Benefit for the employer	Retains a highly capable and empathetic team manager who can relate to subordinates with disabilities. Sets a standard of inclusion, thereby enhancing employer branding and potentially attracting a broader talent pool. Contributes to an overall positive work culture. The employer's commitment to reasonable accommodation serves dual purposes: it enables the employee to work efficiently despite his low vision and also enhances the team's overall effectiveness.
Cost	Moderate, considering the procurement of specialised computer hardware and software.

1.20 Warehouse Manager with auditory impairments

method 1

Country	Portugal
Employer	Ice cream factory
Barrier for employee	The candidate has auditory impairments, making it difficult to manage orders via telephone, the company's usual procedure.
RA provided	Replaced telephone ordering system with a computer for receiving orders via email in the warehouse. The transition from a telephone-based to an email-based ordering system is a simple yet effective solution that not only benefits the employee but may also streamline
Objective	the company's ordering process.
Benefit for the employer	To facilitate the candidate's role as a warehouse manager, effectively allowing him to manage inventory, fulfil orders, and coordinate with shops without requiring auditory communication. The candidate can perform his managerial duties without the impediment of communication barriers, making him more productive and efficient at his job. His auditory impairments no longer limit his ability to manage the warehouse effectively.
Cost	Streamlines the ordering process, potentially making it more efficient and reducing the risk of miscommunication that could occur over the phone. Sends a strong message about the company's commitment to diversity and inclusivity, enhancing its corporate reputation. Expands the talent pool by showing that the company is willing to adapt its procedures to accommodate skilled candidates with disabilities. Minimal to moderate, in view of the initial setup of a computer and possible software to manage email orders.

1.21 Administrative employee with multiple impairments at a hospital

method 1

Country	Sweden
Employer	Public sector hospital
Barrier for employee	Multiple impairments, such as muscular dystrophy, vision loss and sensitivity to cognitive overload.
RA provided	Special computer programme and screen for vision loss; spacious office near restrooms and designated wheelchair parking; private office space to avoid cognitive overload; resting chair in the office; extra-long lunch breaks; meetings every other week with her manager to review her schedule and plan ahead.
Objective	To facilitate the employee's role in administrative duties by accommodating her multiple needs and ensuring that her workplace supports her in all aspects: physical, visual, and cognitive.
Benefit for the employer	Retains a valuable employee with specialised skills in administrative duties. Sets a standard for comprehensive reasonable accommodation, boosting the hospital's reputation as an inclusive employer. Promotes employee well-being and job satisfaction, which likely improves overall productivity. The hospital in Sweden sets a high standard for how employers can go beyond minimal adjustments to truly foster an inclusive work environment.
Cost	Moderate to major, considering the purchase of specialised equipment, office modifications and scheduling adjustments.

1.22 Agreement for professional integration at ENEDIS, maintaining job retention and career development of people with disabilities for the period 2021-2023

method 1

Country	France
Employer	ENEDIS
Barrier for employee	Some disabilities require workstation or tool adaptations for the employee to maintain or return to work. Modifications are recommended by the occupational physician of the company, carried out in consultation with trade unions, and completed as quickly as possible before the employee commences duties.
RA provided	The agreement reached between the trade unions and the employer provided for services and equipment related to workstation adjustments, including those specific to teleworking situations, as recommended by the occupational physician. For remote working, adaptations are made to facilitate the employee's work at home, replicating physical workstation adjustments when possible.
Objective	To ensure a reliable framework within the company for employees with disabilities to have access to necessary adaptations and accommodations at the workplace or when working remotely.
Benefit for the employer	By facilitating necessary adjustments and accommodations, the employer supports the inclusion and continued employment of individuals with disabilities.
Cost	The company had foreseen a "disability budget" to provide for services and equipment related to workstation adjustments and teleworking adaptations, including the physical adaptation of workstations at home and compensatory equipment.

method 2



method 2

PERSONAL ASSISTANCE

Persons who have problems with memory or concentration can still make use of their knowledge by using personal assistance services. Numerous websites provide employers, job centres and individuals with access to personal assistants. Handicap og Job, in Denmark, is a good example.

Employers can get information from such sources about personal assistance and aids, wage subsidies for new graduates and mentor support. Individualised assessments focus on the strengths and needs of the individual employee who faces barriers, and the employer can then consider where the employee has the biggest potential.

2.1 Junior Researcher at Antwerp Management School

method 2

Country	Belgium
Employer	Antwerp Management School (AMS)
Barrier for employee	Intellectual disability
RA provided	Accessible recruitment process; reasonable accommodations tailored to the individual's needs; involvement and training of colleagues to support the new recruit and implementation of a mentoring system. The individual received his first paid employment and felt meaningful inclusion in the workplace.
Objective	To enable the individual with an intellectual disability to work as a Junior Researcher, performing meaningful research tasks while being part of a team.
Benefit for the employer	Demonstrated the value of a diverse and inclusive work environment. Established a successful mentoring system that will be applied to future new employees, thereby improving onboarding for all colleagues. The measures improved team dynamics by fostering an inclusive environment. The initiative had a stronger effect: with the mentoring system being so successful that it will now be applied to all new employees.
Cost	Minimal to moderate, given the adaptation of the recruitment process, some reasonable accommodation for workspace or tools, and the establishment of a mentoring system.

2.2 Disability pensioner at a car workshop

method 2

Country	Denmark
Employer	Local car workshop
Barrier for employee	The employee has a learning disability that necessitates additional support to understand and initiate tasks.
RA provided	Wage subsidies for hiring the employee for 20 hours a week and a personal assistant for 10 hours a week to guide and support him in his tasks.
Objective	To provide the disability pensioner with an opportunity to work in an environment he enjoys and is skilled at, thus contributing to the workshop. The personal assistant helps the employee to adapt to his work tasks, making it possible for him to fulfil his role.
Benefit for the employer	Employing the disability pensioner diversifies the workforce and may qualify the employer for government wage subsidies, serving as a financial incentive. The employment of the person with a disability may also improve the workshop's social responsibility profile, attracting more customers who value businesses that are inclusive.
Cost	Minimal to moderate, given that the cost of employing a personal assistant for 10 hours a week is partially offset by wage subsidies from the government for employing the disability pensioner.

2.3 Secretary with memory problems

method 2

Country	Denmark
Employer	Company
Barrier for employee	The secretary has memory problems due to a brain injury, making it challenging for her to plan and structure her workday.
RA provided	One hour of personal assistance every morning, where a colleague helps the secretary to organise the day's tasks.
Objective	To provide the secretary with the necessary support to effectively perform her secretarial duties, thereby ensuring her professional growth and job satisfaction. This also helps in keeping her engaged and productive throughout the day.
Benefit for the employer	Retains a valued employee whose role is crucial for the smooth functioning of office activities. Utilising the subsidy for five hours per week helps payment costs, and the presence of an assistant not only benefits the secretary but also streamlines office planning, thereby improving overall productivity.
Cost	Minimal to moderate, considering that the cost is offset by a subsidy for five hours per week, provided to support the employment of persons with disabilities.

2.4 Computer engineer with autism

method 2

Country	Portugal
Employer	A multinational company in the energy sector
Barrier for employee	The computer engineer is autistic, which may affect his ability to meet certain academic requirements, participate in group pitches, written tests, and interviews, and integrate seamlessly into a team.
RA provided	Flexibility in the academic degree requirement: originally a master's degree was needed, but the candidate's degree was accepted; individualised recruitment process: the pitch and written tests were conducted on an individual basis to accommodate the candidate's needs; integration phase: the company selected a work area and team that best fit the employee's profile and held meetings with future managers for awareness-raising and advice on daily routines.
Objective	To enable the candidate to participate fully in the recruitment process and to contribute meaningfully to the workforce while respecting his unique challenges and strengths due to his condition.
Benefit for the employer	The employer gains a skilled computer engineer with specialised capabilities. Fostering an inclusive environment demonstrates corporate social responsibility and can attract a broader talent pool. Future managers are made aware of the diversity within their teams, which enhances their managerial skills and promotes a more inclusive work environment.
Cost	Minimal, in view of the cost of adapting the recruitment process, including time spent on individualised tests and pitches, as well as the time spent by managers in meetings for awareness-raising.

2.5 Adaption of the recruitment process and job coaching for autistic employees

method 2

Country	Denmark
Employer	Various companies and organisations
Barrier for employee	Every autistic person is unique and need tailored support to access employment, such as to ensure that communication is accessible and to address any sensory needs in the workplace.
RA provided	Job coach company offers support to employers to ensure an accessible recruitment process for the autistic candidate, provide support for the on-boarding and regular counselling on the job to the autistic employee(s) and managers.
Objective	The job coach companies help match the skills and characteristics of autistic people with roles that will suit their unique ways of working, while also harnessing their particular strengths. They help them find employers who will make the most of their abilities while appropriately accommodating their challenges.
Benefit for the employer	Employers are supported to build teams with diverse abilities.
Cost	Moderate

method 3

method 3

ADJUSTING WORKSPACE (INCLUDING TELEWORKING)

Employment support for employees with a disability or chronic illness includes adjusting workspace, including teleworking. Both public and private sector employers could not only adjust the furniture, equipment and premises, but also offer a choice of teleworking. As a result, wheelchair users with a severe physical disability, for example, or people with visual impairments can also telework, if required.

3.1 Judge using wheelchair

method 3

Country	Belgium
Employer	Public Sector Court System
Barrier for employee	Physical disability following a skiing accident that resulted in quadriplegic paralysis, presenting challenges in accessing and working in a traditional courtroom setting.
RA provided	A workstation was adapted at the judge's home, where he can telework three or four days a week; other accommodations include flexible working hours and financial support for workspace modifications.
Objective	To enable the judge to resume his duties and contribute effectively to the judicial system while enjoying equal standing with his able-bodied colleagues.
Benefit for the employer	Retains an experienced judge, thereby maintaining the quality of the judiciary. Demonstrates a commitment to inclusion and diversity, potentially attracting more diverse talent in the future. Sets a precedent for reasonable accommodation within the public sector.
Cost	Moderate, considering the cost of adapting the home workstation.

3.2 Computer operator with visual impairment

method 3

Country	Romania
Employer	IT Company
Barrier for employee	The employee has visual impairments, making it challenging to use standard computer equipment and affecting his ability to commute due to inaccessible public transport.
RA provided	The employer covered the cost of specialised equipment that the employee ordered online; he is offered more flexible deadlines for handling multiple projects and is allowed to work mostly from home; colleagues provide additional support for tasks that his assistive software cannot handle.
Objective	To enable the employee to function effectively as a computer operator and contribute to the company's projects while accommodating his visual impairments.
Benefit for the employer	Employs and retains a talented computer operator who can contribute valuable skills to the team. Enhances the company's reputation for inclusivity, which may attract a more diverse talent pool. The accommodation measures also cultivate a supportive and collaborative work environment.
Cost	Moderate, given the procurement of specialised computer equipment and software adaptations.

method 4

method 4

FLEXIBLE WORKING TIME

A working day adapted to the individual needs of persons with disabilities can allow them to play their part in the labour market.

This is a solution that, in itself, does not involve any special tools or physical adaptations, nor are any public subsidies required. The only requirement here is for the employer to make room for employees with disabilities who may have to function differently from most other workers.

4.1 IT professional with a child with multiple disabilities

method 4

Country	Croatia
Employer	Large Telecommunications Company
Barrier for employee	The employee is a mother of a child with multiple disabilities and is active in advocating for her child's rights. This demands a flexible work schedule and a supportive team environment.
RA provided	The company allows flexible working hours and encourages quality cooperation within her team; the company culture promotes collegiality, which is crucial for the employee to balance her professional responsibilities with her role as an active advocate and mother.
Objective	To enable the mother to maintain her high-quality professional work while also caring for her child with disabilities.
Benefit for the employer	Retains a highly skilled IT professional with 20 years of experience in the company. Also enhances the employer's reputation for being inclusive and supportive, contributing to its selection as one of the employers of the year for persons with disabilities in 2020.
Cost	Minimal to moderate, mainly in terms of managerial effort to ensure a flexible and supportive work environment.

4.2 IT specialist with mental health diagnoses

method 4

Country	Denmark
Employer	Small Business Hub for IT start-up companies
Barrier for employee	Mental health diagnosis for a form of schizophrenia, which requires the employee to have a different work schedule and the need for psychological consultations during work hours.
RA provided	The employer allows the employee to work predominantly at night when she is most productive; they also accommodate her need to consult a psychologist once a week during work hours.
Objective	To enable the employee to work efficiently according to her individual needs while contributing to the hub's goals of assisting IT start-up companies.
Benefit for the employer	The employer gains a dedicated IT specialist whose unique working hours can be an asset for projects that require around-the-clock attention. Additionally, the inclusive approach sets a positive example for other businesses in the hub, fostering a culture of diversity and acceptance.
Cost	Minimal, covering primarily managerial flexibility to accommodate the employee's working hours and psychological consultation needs.

method 5

method 5

FLEXIBLE TASK ARRANGEMENTS

The practice known as job carving is part of the supported employment strategy, and it can help people who face particular barriers to work and participate. These arrangements might start over an initial period of employment, with individualised assessments.

Reasonable accommodation through job carving makes it possible to swap specialist job roles or elements in order to make the most of the individual skills of a person with a disability, so that they can perform the tasks at which they are best skilled or most successful.

5.1 Inclusive apprentice education (VET) in mechanical engineering

method 5

Country	Austria
Employer	Globally active enterprise in mechanical engineering
Barrier for employee	Young learners with disabilities may struggle with the standard three-year Vocational Education and Training (VET) apprenticeship in mechanical engineering.
RA provided	In partnership with an NGO, the company offers a tailored, two-year VET programme that allows apprentices to focus on specific parts of the mechanical engineering field that align with their individual strengths and capabilities; the programme employs methods like job stripping to analyse the most suitable tasks for each learner.
Objective	To offer an inclusive education that equips young learners with disabilities with a recognised VET degree in mechanical engineering. The ultimate aim is to prepare them for entry into the general labour market, and potentially for future employment within the company itself.
Benefit for the employer	By offering this inclusive programme, the company contributes to social responsibility and may identify new talents, reducing the dropout rate in apprenticeship programmes. The inclusive VET programme enhances the company's reputation and opens doors to a more diverse workforce.
Cost	Moderate, involving the partnership with the NGO, the customisation of the apprenticeship programme and hosting the programme on the company premises.

5.2 Beekeeper with visual impairment

method 5

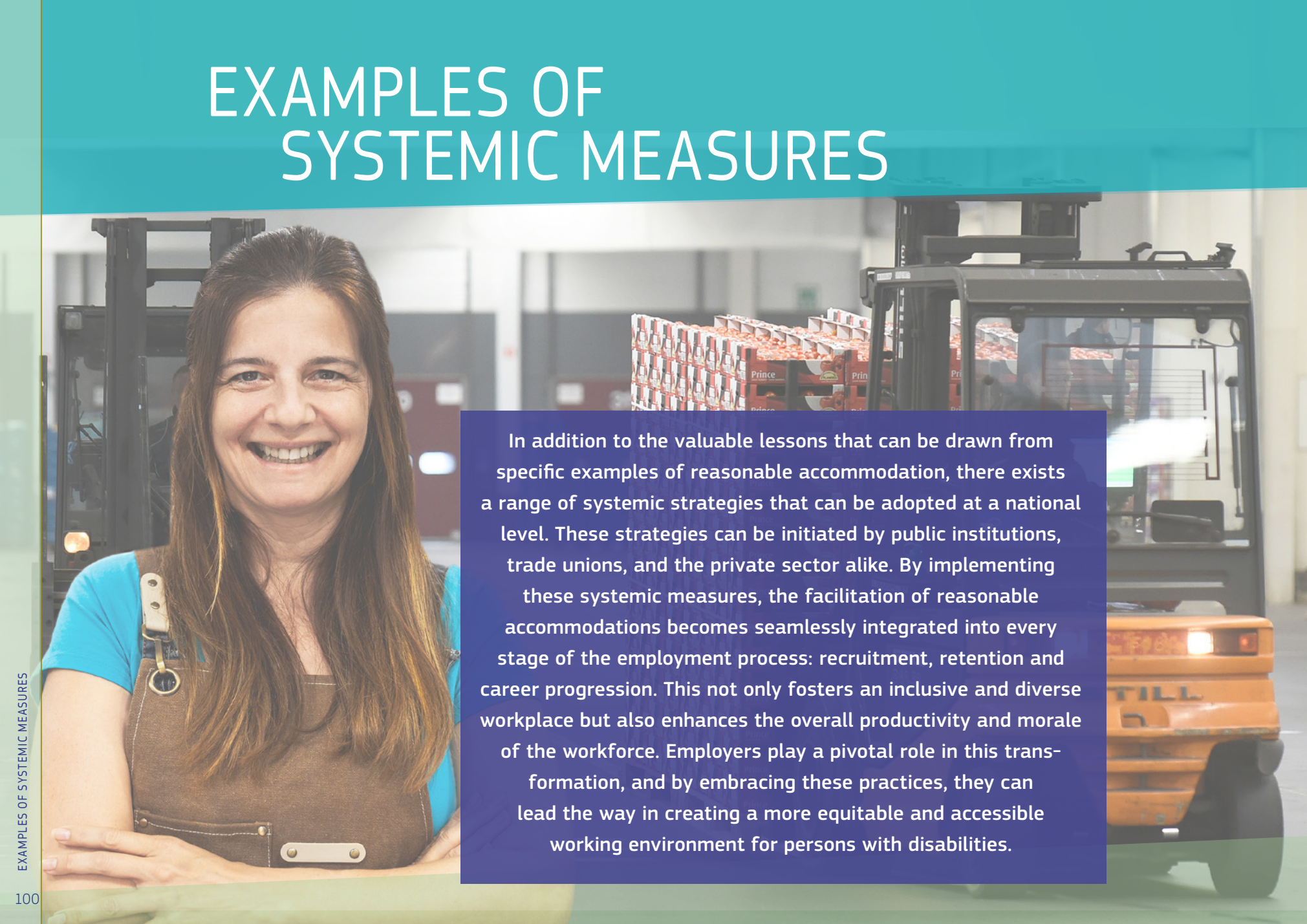
Country	Croatia
Employer	Family-owned beekeeping farm
Barrier for employee	The beekeeper has a visual impairment, making tasks requiring vision, such as equipment handling, procurement, and quality control, more challenging.
RA provided	Use of a computer adapted to his abilities, along with customised tools and aids designed by the beekeeper himself; he underwent training through professional lectures and mentorship from an experienced beekeeper.
Objective	To manage all aspects of the beekeeping business, from procurement and sales to marketing, product design and quality control, while adapting tools and methods to his unique needs.
Benefit for the employer	As the head of his own family farm, the beekeeper has successfully transformed a hobby into a profession. The adapted tools and training not only enable him to perform tasks efficiently but also have led to multiple awards for product quality.
Cost	Minimal to moderate, considering the adapted computer and the development of customised tools.

5.3 Employees at a hotel

method 5

Country	Lithuania
Employer	Hotel in Vilnius
Barrier for employee	Individuals with various disabilities may have limitations that prevent them from effectively performing all aspects of traditional hotel roles.
RA provided	Job carving strategy, which involves customising job roles based on individual assessments to highlight the unique skills of the persons with disabilities.
Objective	To tailor job roles so that persons with disabilities can maximise their productivity and job satisfaction, thereby promoting diversity and inclusion at the workplace.
Benefit for the employer	Utilises the unique skills and competencies of employees with disabilities, potentially filling gaps in roles or tasks that other employees may not perform as well. Enhances workplace diversity and underscores the employer's commitment to social responsibility.
Cost	Minimal to moderate, considering that initial costs associated with individual assessments and job carving are offset by the benefits of filling specialised roles more effectively.

EXAMPLES OF SYSTEMIC MEASURES

A smiling woman with long brown hair, wearing a blue t-shirt and brown overalls, stands in a warehouse. In the background, there are forklifts and stacks of boxes labeled 'Prince'.

In addition to the valuable lessons that can be drawn from specific examples of reasonable accommodation, there exists a range of systemic strategies that can be adopted at a national level. These strategies can be initiated by public institutions, trade unions, and the private sector alike. By implementing these systemic measures, the facilitation of reasonable accommodations becomes seamlessly integrated into every stage of the employment process: recruitment, retention and career progression. This not only fosters an inclusive and diverse workplace but also enhances the overall productivity and morale of the workforce. Employers play a pivotal role in this transformation, and by embracing these practices, they can lead the way in creating a more equitable and accessible working environment for persons with disabilities.

1 KLAPjob: flexible jobs for persons with intellectual disabilities

Country	Denmark
Employer	Various municipalities, companies and organisations through KLAPjob initiative
Barrier for employee	Individuals with intellectual disabilities and other cognitive difficulties face challenges in traditional employment settings.
RA provided	KLAPjob offers flexible, tailored employment with subsidised wages and helps match candidates to roles based on their skills and preferences.
Objective	To enable individuals with intellectual and other cognitive disabilities to find meaningful employment that suits their abilities, thereby increasing their social inclusion and independence.
Benefit for the employer	Employers can take advantage of a subsidy, reducing the hourly wage they pay, while diversifying their workforce and fulfilling social responsibility goals.
Cost	Minimal, given that employers benefit from a EUR 3 reduction on the hourly wage, which could offset the costs related to any accommodations needed.

2 Instructional films

Country	Denmark
Employer	National Board of Social Services
Barrier for employee	Wide range of disabilities
RA provided	A series of 10 films that offer good practice examples of reasonable accommodation in various employment settings for persons with disabilities. A series of 10 films illustrating best practices in reasonable accommodations, aimed at aiding persons with disabilities in obtaining or retaining employment.
Objective	To raise awareness about the challenges and accommodations needed for persons with disabilities to engage in or retain employment. The films aim to educate both employers and employees.
Benefit for the employer	By providing these educational resources, the National Board of Social Services strengthens its role as a knowledge platform and encourages better workplace practices. This in turn could lead to higher rates of employment for persons with disabilities, benefiting the labour market and society at large.
Cost	Moderate, in view of the profile of the platform.

3 Reasonable Accommodation Passport

Country	Ireland
Employer	All: private and public sector
Barrier for employee	Requesting and accessing a reasonable accommodation.
RA provided	RA agreed and implemented.
Objective	To enable individuals with disabilities to request and receive their individual personalised RA in a seamless manner. This application of RA removes misinformation about the RA process.
Benefit for the employer	The main employer organisation and the main trade union have agreed this passport. Thus, providing reassurance to both employer and employee about the RA process.
Cost	None

4 Promoting employment of persons with intellectual disabilities

Country	Malta
Employer	All
Barrier for employee	Bias towards recruiting persons with intellectual disabilities
RA provided	A series of 17 films – curriculum vitae that showcase the abilities of persons with intellectual disabilities.
Objective	To inform that persons with intellectual disabilities once given support are valuable employees. The videos feature comments by the participants' employers, job coaches, colleagues, therapists, social workers and other persons working with them. They show that persons with intellectual disability often also bring other valuable skills and abilities to the workplace, such as determination, punctuality, creativity, teamwork and a wish to learn.
Benefit for the employer	These video CVs are used as part of an online resource pack that is available on the University of Malta YouTube channel and that showcases their potential, creating a resource for employers and various professionals to appreciate the abilities of persons with intellectual disabilities as well as for academics and students to use for teaching, learning and research.
Cost	Moderate

5 Reasonable accommodation grant for employers

Country	United Kingdom
Employer	REISS
Barrier for employee	Individual with hearing loss experiencing challenges to understanding colleagues in team meetings and staff events.
RA provided	Access to Work, is the employment programme supporting employers, employees, and self-employed individuals through personalised grants.
Objective	To support the individual with hearing loss who require communication support during important staff events and team meetings. This enables employee inclusion and meaningful participation.
Benefit for the employer	The employer can ensure full staff inclusion via Access to Work grant, without having to cover the cost of speech to text interpreters. The employer can confidently support the employee to stay in the employment.
Cost	The grant covers cost of professional communication support (speech to text interpreter). There is also various percentage of cost sharing between the programme and employers towards assistive hearing equipment. The grant maximum award is £ 59 200 (EUR 68 000) per employee, per year.

6 The provision of professional and accredited national sign language interpreters for deaf employees to fulfil their political mandates

Country	Variable
Employer	The European Union, national parliaments and/or political groups
Barrier for employee	Information and communication are provided in the national spoken languages which means that deaf people cannot fully contribute to their work environment due to the linguistic difference coupled with the lack of accessible information in the national sign language.
RA provided	The European Parliament / political parties / national governments ensured the provision of professional and accredited national sign language interpreters for deaf people holding a political mandate. It aimed to remove any communicational barriers impeding their ability to fully contribute to their workplace and perform their job on an equal foot with their hearing counterparts.
Objective	To increase the opportunities of deaf people to meaningfully hold a political mandate as a mean of livelihood and, thereby, increase equal opportunities for all in all spheres of society.
Benefit for the employer	Employers can foster the diversity and inclusion in the workplace and contributing to reducing the marginalisation of persons with disabilities as well as placing them as economic contributors rather than burdens to their societies.
Cost	Variable, but it should be covered by public funding, in line with the principles of accessibility, equality and non-discrimination outlined in the UN CRPD (Articles 5, 9, 27).

7 Experimental project of the National Observatory on the conditions of persons with disabilities aimed at providing a technical unit which takes care of individual workers with disabilities

Country	Italy
Employer	Agreement potentially applicable to all employers of big companies
Barrier for employee	Lack of specialised support for workers with disabilities within companies.
RA provided	Establishment of technical units within large companies, dedicated to addressing individual issues faced by workers with disabilities.
Objective	To create customised projects through collective bargaining addressing working conditions for employees with disabilities, managed by skilled professionals (disability managers, etc.).
Benefit for the employer	Improved accommodation for workers with disabilities, fostering a more inclusive work environment and addressing individual needs.
Cost	Variable depending on the company's size and resources but typically incurred as an investment in fostering an inclusive workplace.

8 Seven-hour working day for persons with disabilities

Country	Poland
Employer	Provision applying to all workers
Barrier for employee	Physical and psychological burden of an 8-hour working day.
RA provided	NSZZ “Solidarność” successfully battled for the resumption of the seven-hour working day as a standard form of employment for people with an officially recognised disability. The motion the union filed to the Constitutional Court was reviewed as valid, thus the law was changed.
Objective	To alleviate the workload for employees with disabilities.
Benefit for the employer	Installing the culture of inclusiveness.
Cost	The cost of one hour of work per day.

9 Collective agreement at the Minister for Ecological Transition and Territorial Cohesion

Country	France
Employer	Ministry for Ecological Transition and Territorial Cohesion
Barrier for employee	Some disability situations may require specific accommodations of various kinds, including human, technical, or organisational measures to address the difficulties faced by employees due to their disabilities. Equipment for employees is crucial to effectively compensate for these challenges, enabling employees with disabilities to perform their duties like any other employee within the workforce.
RA provided	Reasonable accommodations provided as per recommendations of the occupational physician, in consultation with the prevention advisor. The occupational physician educates the hierarchy about the specific needs of the employee and why the accommodation is reasonable. In the absence of an occupational physician, an approved physician or the treating physician can be consulted.
Objective	To implement known measures and support systems for necessary accommodations and support, including utilizing resources provided by FIPHFP (Fund for Insertion of People with Disabilities in the Public Service).
Benefit for the employer	Enhanced inclusivity and accessibility, ensuring that employees with disabilities can perform their tasks effectively within the workforce.
Cost	Implementation costs covered by FIPHFP for necessary aids and training.

GETTING IN TOUCH WITH THE EU

In person

All over the European Union there are hundreds of Europe Direct information centres. You can find the address of the centre nearest you at: https://europa.eu/european-union/contact_en.

On the phone or by email

Europe Direct is a service that answers your questions about the European Union. You can contact this service:

- by freephone: 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 (certain operators may charge for these calls),
- at the following standard number: +32 22999696, or
- by email via: https://europa.eu/european-union/contact_en.

FINDING INFORMATION ABOUT THE EU

Online

Information about the European Union in all the official languages of the EU is available on the Europa website at: https://europa.eu/european-union/index_en.

EU publications

You can download or order free and priced EU publications from: <https://op.europa.eu/en/web/general-publications/>. Multiple copies of free publications may be obtained by contacting Europe Direct or your local information centre (see https://european-union.europa.eu/contact-eu_en).

EU law and related documents

For access to legal information from the EU, including all EU law since 1951 in all the official language versions, go to EUR-Lex at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/>.

Open data from the EU

The EU Open Data Portal (<http://data.europa.eu/euodp/en>) provides access to datasets from the EU. Data can be downloaded and reused for free, for both commercial and non-commercial purposes.



Publications Office
of the European Union

