



Resolution 2258 (2019)¹

For a disability-inclusive workforce

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Throughout Europe, persons with disabilities encounter multiple obstacles with regard to access to and participation in the labour market. Lack of accessibility, prejudice regarding the level of competences, discrimination and the unwillingness of employers to provide reasonable accommodation in the workplace hinder participation in the workforce. The Parliamentary Assembly is convinced that it is time to combat negative attitudes, practices and stereotypes, to dispel the myth according to which persons with disabilities cannot work as efficiently as others, and to highlight abilities instead of disabilities.

2. Various measures have been taken in recent years in several Council of Europe member States to increase the participation of persons with disabilities in the labour market. However, many barriers remain and the employment rate of persons with disabilities in both the public and private sectors is unsatisfactory.

3. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ratified by 46 of the 47 Council of Europe member States, lays down the fundamental principle of inclusion of persons with disabilities in society. The holistic vision of inclusion promoted by the convention depends on both inclusion in the mainstream education system and inclusion in the labour market. Its Article 27 recognises the right of persons with disabilities to work on an equal basis with others and the obligation to provide reasonable accommodation for them in the workplace.

4. Promoting a disability-inclusive workforce means preventing and combating discrimination against persons with disabilities in access to employment and in the workplace. Effective implementation of anti-discrimination legislation needs to be ensured. In the spirit of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, failure to provide reasonable accommodation in the workplace, such as the adjustment of equipment, the modification of a job description, of working time and of the organisation of work, and the adaptation of the work space, can be qualified as discrimination.

5. The Assembly reiterates its call to develop policies fostering the employment of persons with disabilities made in its [Resolution 2039 \(2015\)](#) on equality and inclusion for persons with disabilities. In addition, it fully supports the Council of Europe Disability Strategy 2017-2023, which calls on Council of Europe bodies, member States and other relevant stakeholders to seek to promote equality of all persons with disabilities and non-discrimination with regard to them, in particular through an inclusive education system and the development of training, communication and employment initiatives.

6. The participation of persons with disabilities in the workforce is a condition for their full inclusion in society. The Assembly believes that tangible progress can be achieved with regard to the participation of persons with disabilities in the workforce if political will is translated into concrete action and sufficient financial resources are allocated to this end.

7. In the light of these concerns, the Assembly calls on Council of Europe member States to:

7.1. commit to making the inclusion of persons with disabilities a priority by adopting comprehensive national disability action plans, where this is not yet the case, and allocating sufficient funding for their implementation;

1. *Assembly debate* on 23 January 2019 (6th Sitting) (see [Doc. 14665](#), report of the Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination, rapporteur: Mr Adão Silva). *Text adopted by the Assembly* on 23 January 2019 (6th Sitting).



- 7.2. implement legislation on preventing and combating discrimination in access to work and in employment, and adopt specific provisions on non-discrimination on the grounds of disability, if this has not yet been done;
 - 7.3. ensure that public transport and public buildings are accessible to persons with disabilities;
 - 7.4. provide inclusive education and ensure the access of children with disabilities to mainstream schools, with the provision of specific assistance when needed;
 - 7.5. engage in or support awareness-raising activities on the added value and positive results of the participation of persons with disabilities in the workforce with a view to combating negative stereotyping;
 - 7.6. provide an inclusive, accessible and safe working environment for persons with disabilities which allows them to work in fair conditions and enjoy equal opportunities, as laid down in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
 - 7.7. invest in specific programmes on access to traineeships and first jobs for persons with disabilities to enable them to gain work experience;
 - 7.8. encourage the creation of specific human resource services or foundations providing coaching and implementing projects to boost the employability of persons with disabilities and helping them to develop their potential;
 - 7.9. provide financial incentives for companies to make working spaces accessible and to propose training on disability-inclusive working environments for managers and potential co-workers;
 - 7.10. protect persons with disabilities from vulnerability in the labour market by ensuring specialised support, including at the financial level, both when in employment and when looking for employment;
 - 7.11. set up specific programmes, where they do not yet exist, for the reintegration of people who become disabled when already in employment;
 - 7.12. step up investments in assistive technologies for persons with disabilities;
 - 7.13. collect data on the employment of persons with disabilities disaggregated by gender, age and type of disability so as to enable the adaptation of measures to existing situations;
 - 7.14. consider creating inclusion awards or inclusion labels for companies and administrations which are proactive with regard to the recruitment of persons with disabilities and promote a disability-inclusive working environment.
8. The Assembly calls on national parliaments to ensure the accessibility of their premises and encourages them to lead by example with regard to the employment of persons with disabilities.
 9. The Assembly praises the essential role played by non-governmental organisations with regard to the promotion of the participation of persons with disabilities in the labour market and calls for these organisations to be financially supported.