



# MANUAL FOR JOB4DIS

## NEW MODEL OF EMPLOYMENT GUIDANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN EUROPE

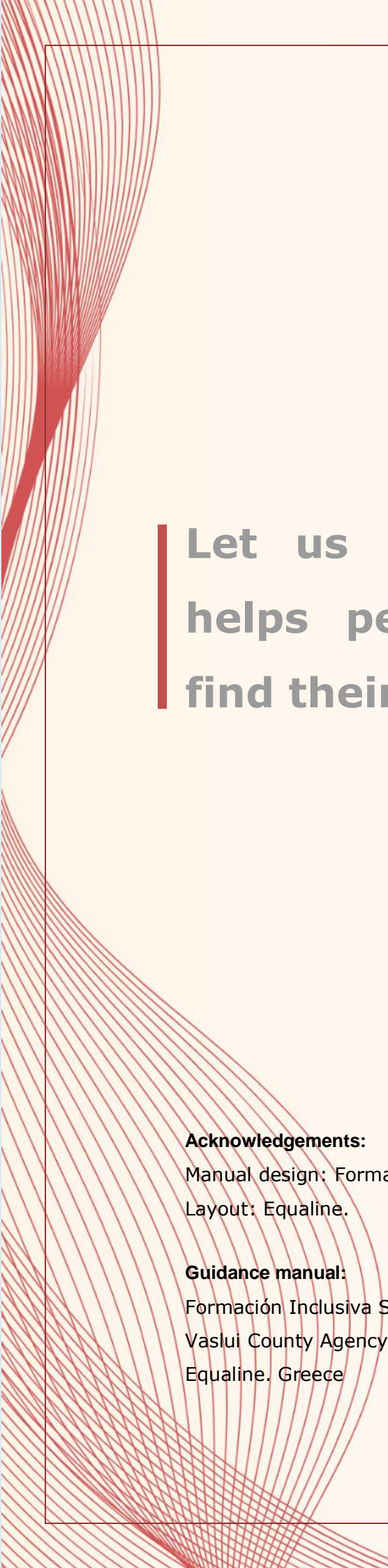


[WWW.JOB4DIS.EU.COM](http://WWW.JOB4DIS.EU.COM)



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Union Programmes Agency (EUPA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



**Let us be the compass that  
helps people with disabilities  
find their place in society.**

**Acknowledgements:**

Manual design: Formación Inclusiva S.L.

Layout: Equaline.

**Guidance manual:**

Formación Inclusiva S.L. Spain

Vaslui County Agency for Employment. Romania

Equaline. Greece

## **INDEX**

<b>Presentation and Justification of the Project</b>	<b>3-7</b>
<b>1. The Labour Market: Changes after Covid 19</b>	<b>9-22</b>
<b>2. Employability Skills for people with disabilities</b>	<b>24-35</b>
<b>3. Phases of a Personalised Itinerary of Insertion</b>	<b>37-50</b>
<b>4. The counselling process according to the type of disability</b>	<b>52-67</b>
<b>5. Profile of the career guidance counsellor: competences and knowledge</b>	<b>69-87</b>
<b>6. Job search organisation and methodology</b>	<b>89-101</b>
<b>7. Bibliography</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>8. Annexes</b>	<b>104-109</b>

## **PRESENTATION AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROJECT**

This manual is part of the Erasmus + Project, Job4Dis, which aims to create a "New Model of Employment Guidance for People with Disabilities in Europe", that is, we want to generate a tool that helps employment counsellors who assist people with disabilities in search of employment, to do it properly, so that all people with disabilities can have an effective care in employment services anywhere in Europe.

Three countries are involved in this project: Romania, Greece and Spain.

In order to gain a better understanding of the guidance process in each of these countries, a survey was carried out among the professionals who currently carry out guidance tasks, focusing on the care of people with disabilities.

After making a comparative table with the results of this survey (Annex 1), we can observe the most significant differences in the guidance processes in each of these countries. In terms of similarities, the low participation of people with disabilities in the labour market is particularly relevant.

The aim of our project is linked to improving the employability of people with disabilities and promoting their access to the labour market, thus providing them with a greater degree of autonomy, independence and equal opportunities.

**The data** recorded in the **European Union** on the **employment of people with disabilities** are worrying, and are closely related to the risk of poverty for this group.

In Europe, only around **30%** of people with disabilities have access to employment, for example in the countries of the project consortium, in Romania this percentage is close to 37%, in Spain 34.6% and in Greece 32.6%. The situation is even worse for women with disabilities, whose employment rate does not reach 20% in any of the countries.

This lack of income from work leads the majority of people with disabilities in Europe to subsist on government aid, which in most cases does not cover the basic needs of this group, thus generating situations of poverty and exclusion.

There are different reasons why people with disabilities find themselves in this situation, for example, starting from the earliest stages in the life of people with disabilities, access to adapted training, architectural barriers, deficient infrastructures, social ignorance... make the normal educational/professional development of people with disabilities impossible. And starting from these deficiencies, they will subsequently encounter discriminatory situations such as limited funding and support, excessive bureaucracy, lack of information, etc...

Currently, the wages of people with disabilities are lower than those of the rest of the population, and they have a greater number of expenses. Sometimes this is due to sheltered employment models that generate jobs exclusively for disabled people, but in conditions of disadvantage and wage inequality.

Taking into account the situation described above, our project aims to contribute a grain of sand, directly supporting guidance professionals to be more effective in the process of counselling, information, improvement of employability and accompaniment, promoting increased participation in the labour market of people with disabilities.

The qualification of a career guidance practitioner is not established by any academic certification, as there is no official qualification specific to this occupation.

The people who work in this field come from degrees such as psychology, pedagogy, social work, law, labour relations... but more important than the degree is the attitude, social and communicative skills, creativity, active listening etc... that is to say the personal characteristics of the counsellor.

And in addition to these personal and professional competences they must have knowledge of:

- Development of a Personalized Itinerary of Insertion
- Labour Market information
- Advice on job search techniques
- Career guidance
- Counselling for self-knowledge and positioning for the labour market
- Accompaniment in the search for employment

- Detection of entrepreneurial profiles and for self-employment.
- Self-guidance
- Managing individualized action plans for people with disabilities

Although the actions to be carried out by a guidance counsellor in the workplace are very similar from one guidance unit to another, there are a series of particular characteristics that differentiate the units that cater to special groups from those that cater to the unemployed in general.

Not just any person is suitable for working with these groups, as a series of personal characteristics are required that facilitate communication with the user, who knows the environment in which these people live, the peculiarities of accessing the labour market for this group, what public and private resources we can count on to help improve the working and social conditions of the people we serve, etc...

Within the group we are dealing with, people with disabilities, we must differentiate between the types of disability that exist, physical/organic, sensory, intellectual and mental, and the particularities of each type of disability.

In addition to learning about the difficulties historically faced by people with disabilities in accessing the labour market.

In this handbook we want to offer a practical approach to the functions and competencies that a professional in the orientation that is dedicated to the care of people with disabilities, as well as

providing the basic theoretical contents for the handling of information and the correct performance of their profession.

## OBJECTIVES

When career guidance professionals are trained through courses or complementary training actions, information on tools, techniques, resources, etc. is usually provided in a general way, without taking into account the target group.

As a **general objective of this manual** we want to bring the reality of the daily practice of the professional counsellor who assists people with disabilities in search of employment closer to reality, providing them with the knowledge and resources necessary for the adequate performance of this profession.

The specific objectives are:

- To find out how Covid 19 has affected the employment of people with disabilities.
- Describe what skills need to be worked on to improve the employability of people with disabilities.
- Establish the phases in the care of a user. The itinerary.
- Adapt the guidance process according to the type of disability.
- Define the personal and professional profile of the counsellor.
- List the strategies, techniques and resources for Active Job Search.





## Chapter 1:

*The Labour Market.*

*Changes after COVID 19*

## **1. The Labour Market: Changes after Covid 19**

We would like to start this handbook with an aspect that we, as guidance professionals, must take into account, as it directly affects the performance of our work and how this situation has influenced the integration of people with disabilities in the labour market.

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted European labour markets, stalling the protracted recovery from the Great Recession (2007-2009). The slowdown in business activity since the start of the pandemic in 2020 resulted in sharp declines in employment and working hours.

The pandemic also accelerated the digitisation of European workplaces, pushing companies to adapt to the "new normal" much faster than was considered feasible before the crisis. The recovery phase has been rapid, with employment levels and working hours almost reaching pre-pandemic levels by the end of 2021, but there are still many areas for improvement.

This digitalisation does not only occur in the performance of the job but also changes, among other things, the way of looking for a job, and all the procedures with public administrations and other bodies, which in some cases it entails. In this chapter we will describe how this digitalisation influences the process of career guidance for people with disabilities.

Recovery from the pandemic has been uneven across sectors, occupations and labour market groups. Employment and working hours for the categories of workers most affected by the pandemic - young workers, low-paid women, low-skilled workers, vulnerable groups, etc. - remained at lower levels than before the pandemic. In contrast, the possibility of teleworking in some sectors and occupations has contributed to the preservation of jobs during the pandemic and to a rapid recovery of employment levels.

While job losses during the pandemic were concentrated in low-paid jobs, the recovery in employment levels during 2021 was driven by growth in well-paid jobs and occupations. Over the period 2019-2021, increases in well-paid employment have been larger among women than men in the EU, while at the same time job losses have been more acute for women in low-paid jobs.

The rise of telework is likely to remain a legacy of the COVID-19 crisis, with telecommuting continuing to grow in 2021 in almost all EU Member States even after the dramatic increase recorded at the start of the pandemic. The crisis has also favoured job growth in sectors and occupations where telework is most feasible: between 2019 and 2021, information and communication technology (ICT) professionals were the fastest growing occupation and the occupation with the highest share of telework in 2021.

The breakdown of labour market data by different types of workers suggests that, compared to other recessions, where male employment tends to be affected to a much greater extent than female employment, the impact of the Covid-19 crisis was relatively similar for men and women. Young, low-skilled workers and workers on temporary contracts were particularly affected. While the employment outcomes of young people recovered quickly, those of low-skilled workers lagged considerably behind those of higher-skilled workers.

On the other hand, the observation of increasing peaks of labour shortages during economic booms may point to a structural trend in a context where economies are increasingly dependent on skilled labour and where demographic trends lead to a decline in the working age population across the EU.

In 2022, the EU labour market continued to recover, reaching record participation rates and record unemployment figures. Looking ahead, the labour market outlook remains highly variable in relation to the pandemic, geopolitical tensions and macro-policy responses. The ecological, digital and demographic transitions are likely to continue to put pressure on the labour market to reallocate labour between different tasks, jobs and economic activities.

To facilitate labor market reallocation, policy support can focus on retraining and upskilling programs, strengthening public employment services and broader matching services. In light of increasing labor market transitions and the risk of increasing inequalities stemming from the uneven impact of the Covid-19

crisis, policies should also address inclusiveness and the adequacy of safety nets.

The negative impact of the crisis on the labour market has been partially alleviated by unprecedented levels of government support, funded through the European Commission's temporary scheme "Support for Mitigating Unemployment Risks in Emergency Situations" (SURE). The Resilience and Recovery Mechanism was set up by the European Commission to address, in the medium to long term, the structural changes brought about by the ecological, digital and demographic transitions. By July 2022, all Member States had submitted national recovery and resilience plans, and 22 plans had been approved by the EU Council. Around 40% of the fiscal allocations in the approved plans are related to climate policy support measures, while 26% is earmarked for investments in digitisation.

Together with the objectives set out in the European Pillar of Social Rights and the associated action plan, these investments aim to contribute to widening labour market participation, increasing productivity through re-skilling and up-skilling and the overall resilience of the workforce. The targets of 78% employment and 60% of adults participating in training each year by 2030 will be achieved through a range of social investment policies and reforms, including an adequate minimum wages directive, a strengthened youth guarantee and revised European mobility rules. Concrete actions also include the Recommendation on Active and Effective Employment Support (AES) in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis, which encourages Member States to develop active labour market policies with

funding from the Recovery and Resilience Mechanism. These plans are vital in the context of adjustments to the COVID-19 outbreak in European labour markets, and new pressures arising from geopolitical shifts and supply chain bottlenecks.

### **1.1 DIFFERENCES BETWEEN POPULATION GROUPS**

By population group, the impact of the pandemic was greatest among young people, low-skilled workers, workers on temporary contracts and migrant workers. Young people were particularly hard hit by pandemic-related hiring freezes. Last-in, first-out practices and generous severance payments for older workers may also help explain why young people experienced more job losses than older workers.

Employment dynamics were also strongly differentiated by the skill level of workers. Highly skilled workers started to show higher employment levels than before the crisis rather quickly after the onset of the pandemic. This was helped by the well-documented fact that these workers generally have better possibilities for teleworking. As will be seen below, the possibility to telework contributed greatly to protecting employment against the pandemic. In contrast, less skilled workers saw a significant deterioration in their employment prospects, a trend that may not be easily reversed in the future, as newly created jobs tend to be more skill-intensive than jobs that are being destroyed. This compounds the challenges related to the widespread disruption of education and training systems as a result of the pandemic.

In terms of the gender dimension, there were fewer divergences in labour market developments than in previous economic downturns. During economic downturns such as the one observed in 2008, male employment tends to be more affected than female employment. As the COVID-19 crisis fell more heavily on services, it was to be expected that women would be affected to a greater extent than men.

Instead, the data suggest that women and men were affected to a similar extent by the pandemic. At the same time, recent studies suggest that the increased burden of childcare as a result of widespread school closures has fallen disproportionately on women, which may have affected their ability to perform at work and their future career prospects.

Workers on temporary contracts have been particularly hard hit. Of all groups, workers on temporary contracts have suffered the greatest contraction in employment. Not only are they over-represented in the sectors most affected by the containment measures, but they are also less protected by short-time working schemes and are therefore at greater risk of losing their jobs. Employment of temporary workers bottomed out in the second quarter of 2020, with a fall of 15%. In the following three quarters, about half of these job losses were recovered.

The self-employed were more affected than wage earners in the first quarter of 2020 and in the first quarter of 2021, but less than temporary workers. Analysis of the OECD's Employment Outlook 2021 suggests that they were also more affected than salaried workers in terms of reduced hours worked,

particularly during the first wave. Moreover, it is noted that, in the case of the self-employed, it was more uniform across skill levels than for wage earners (OECD 2021). Possible contributing factors include the fact that among the self-employed there is not the same employment protection gradient as among employees (low-skilled workers tend to have temporary contracts more often than high-skilled workers); that the demand for labour for the low-skilled self-employed (e.g., in agriculture or delivery services) did not decline as sharply as for salaried workers, and/or that the self-employed have less access to social protection and public benefits, leaving them with no choice but to continue working in the face of health risks.

## **1.2 DISABILITY, COVID'19 AND THE LABOUR MARKET**

Among the disadvantaged groups mentioned in the previous section, we would like to make special mention of people with disabilities.

One of the reasons that give sense to this project and to the elaboration of this manual has a lot to do with the situation that the professionals of the labour guidance had to face when the state of alarm was established, but to understand it better, we have to start by knowing what was the situation of the people with disabilities that attended the guidance services before the confinement.

Trying not to fall into generalisations, we want to establish a "typical" profile of users with disabilities who come to the



employment guidance services, in order to understand what the arrival of COVID '19 meant for them.

Some characteristic features are:

- Predominant ages between 30 and 60 years.
- Low educational levels.
- More men than women.
- Poor knowledge and use of information and communication technologies.
- Experience in low-skilled work.
- Limitations on the performance of some jobs.
- Economic situations supported by pensions, benefits and/or allowances.

Guidance services for people with disabilities have been characterised by the development of a personalised methodology, which tends to facilitate and accompany users in all phases of the guidance process, and even once integration has been achieved. As we will see in another chapter of this manual, this will depend very much on the type of disability.

Guidance professionals help users to carry out any procedure that the person needs within their Personalised Itinerary of Insertion, and in many cases a relationship of dependence is generated in which the user turns to the guidance counsellor for anything they need, whether or not it is related to employment.

When a state of alarm is declared in 2020, and with it, confinement, a rather complex emotional situation is generated in the general population, where fear, insecurity and uncertainty take hold of all of us. And all these emotions are multiplied in people with disabilities, as they are more vulnerable as a result of their pathologies and/or disorders.

As the days go by, people start to realise that this situation of confinement is going to last longer than originally thought; people start to use technology to communicate with their loved ones, to play sports, to learn how to cook, and companies start to consider how to continue to operate remotely.

In the service sector, there is a demand for cleaners, transport and trade personnel, who were indispensable during the confinement in order to face this crisis.

Many people with disabilities who were engaged in such occupations before the pandemic find themselves having to accept such jobs because of the risk of becoming infected.

During this period, the difficulties of access to new technologies that many people have when it comes to: sending CVs to job offers, doing online interviews, dealing with social security or other administrations, etc... are also evident.

The work of the professional counsellors at that time was essential to help with all these administrative procedures, as well

as accompanying from a distance many people with disabilities in very complicated personal situations.

As in any crisis situation, it is necessary to reflect on the weaknesses revealed by the confinement. And from the point of view of employment guidance services, the most relevant aspect to be taken into account is the need to provide people with disabilities, users of our employment services, with sufficient autonomy to be able to face the job search through the knowledge of resources, the use of computer tools, improving their digital skills, rejecting the paternalistic role of the entities and professionals who interact with them, in short, providing them with the necessary professional skills to access the labour market without depending on the guidance counsellors.

This implies a change of paradigm in the performance of the occupation of employment counsellors, which until now had a markedly welfare character and which should be changing towards the promotion of the autonomy and independence of the users according to their personal and professional profiles.

The change that has taken place in the labour market supports this trend, in which professionals with personal and professional skills adapted to the needs demanded by companies are sought after, where the ability to adapt, the need for resilience and ICT skills is essential, as is the promotion of training to access the more highly skilled labour market, which is on the rise, as we have seen in the previous section.

The socio-occupational needs that Covid'19 has highlighted have as a consequence a series of political measures, with the aim of improving the quality of life of citizens and companies, which we as guidance professionals must be aware of.

### **1.3 POLICY INDICATIONS**

While priorities will vary according to the specific country context, a number of policy options can be considered to make jobs more attractive to workers where labour shortages are most acute:

- Increase social protection coverage (health insurance, sick leave, unemployment benefits, short-time working schemes), e.g. for atypical workers.
- Encourage companies to offer flexible working conditions in terms of, for example, hours worked and, where feasible, teleworking, accompanied by appropriate e-skills training and infrastructure.
- Pursue policy efforts in a wide range of areas, from family policies to labour law and taxation, to reduce the gender gap in the labour market; in particular, ensure access to affordable and quality childcare and well-targeted child benefits.

- Strengthen active labour market policies to promote the reskilling and redeployment of jobseekers, but also of workers in need of reskilling:
  - In the short term, setting up accelerated programmes to help address growing tensions in relatively low-skilled jobs, e.g. in personal care.
  - In the medium to long term, designing policy packages to support the transition of workers to low-carbon activities. Policies aimed at employers are likely to play a role in encouraging reallocation. This could include the provision of wage subsidies for firms that retrain or hire unemployed workers into roles in which they have no previous experience.
  
- Promote workers' bargaining rights over wages and working conditions in highly concentrated labour markets where companies have monopsony power, for example:
  - Integrating labour market considerations into competition policy.
  - Reducing barriers to job-to-job mobility, e.g. by reforming regulations on occupational licensing and non-compete clauses. In the current high inflation environment, labour market policy measures aimed at improving workers' bargaining power may pose a difficult trade-off with macroeconomic policy to avoid wage price spiral effects.
  
- Facilitating the influx of international migrants while ensuring complementary integration policies and effective recognition of

qualifications acquired abroad. Reforms in this area are becoming a priority to address the ongoing war in Ukraine, especially among European countries.

- The increase in labour market shortages following the pandemic highlights the need for effective social investment and active labour market policies that develop skills and improve access to employment. Ensuring good quality jobs, whether through policy instruments or collective bargaining, can help to alleviate labour shortages.
- Youth employment and employment of low-paid workers have not yet recovered to pre-pandemic levels. These groups are more likely to experience poor living conditions and at risk of material deprivation and social exclusion. Given current inflationary pressures, policy should focus on providing support through social protection and social assistance schemes.

#### **1.4 CONCLUSIONS**

- Trends in the labour market following Covid'19 have highlighted the need for a change in the profile of the workforce.
- The occupations with the highest employment opportunities have shifted to those occupations with the highest qualifications.
- The use of ICT is essential for the performance of any occupation, and/or when carrying out any administrative procedure.

- The methodology used so far in the guidance processes must be adapted to the new demands of the labour market.
- The professional counsellors for people with disabilities in search of employment will have the objective of advising, informing, guiding and accompanying users in the improvement of their employability.
- Achieving true socio-labour inclusion of people with disabilities starts with good training and education to make them more competitive when it comes to accessing the labour market.
- Raising the awareness of society in general, and of the business world in particular, with regard to the capabilities that people with some kind of functional diversity may have, is essential for the proper integration of this group.
- The role of the counsellor becomes particularly important as a social agent promoting change.

Now that we know the current situation of the labour market and we are clear about the objective of professional counsellors who assist people with disabilities, we can continue to develop the rest of the content of this manual which will provide us with the necessary knowledge for the correct attention of people with disabilities in the counselling services.



## Chapter 2:

# *Employability skills for people with disabilities*



## 2. Employability Skills for people with disabilities

**Social** skills are basic to improve employability and achieve social and labour insertion of people with disabilities. Some of these people, due to the traditional difficulties they have suffered to be socially accepted, are often marked by insecurity and low self-esteem, on the other hand, the lack of awareness of the business world hinders the labour integration of people with disabilities, due to the lack of accessibility, ignorance, prejudices, etc.

These obstacles will be worked on in individual sessions, depending on the characteristics of each user. Depending on the type of disability each one has, a specific skill will be worked on, for example, hygiene and personal care, socialisation, etc. In some cases, specific group workshops will be set up, for example on self-esteem.

In order to develop personal and social skills, the competences to be worked on are:

- Acquire self-confidence.
- To achieve the maintenance of a certain behaviour.
- Maintain good personal relationships.
- Achieving independence.
- Acquire problem-solving skills.
- Communicating with others in an appropriate way.

Social skills are necessary to adapt to any situation in everyday life. In the world of work, where we spend or will spend a large part of our lives, the fact of developing adequate social

skills take on special importance, as it will allow us to have good working relationships, which will favour positive aspects both for the workplace, where we carry out our work, and for our personal lives.

Social skills are the behaviours that allow us to relate to other people in an appropriate way and help us to avoid and solve the problems we face.

## **2.1 OBJECTIVES OF EMPLOYABILITY WORK**

- To develop social skills that enable them to function effectively in work situations and to relate to others in an appropriate manner.
- Identify, control and modify erroneous thoughts produced by stressful situations.
- Know and put into practice the steps to follow in order to acquire good social skills.

## **2.2 TYPES OF SOCIAL SKILLS**

### **2.2.1 Basic social skills:**

- Listen,
- start a conversation,
- ask a question,
- thank you,
- to be presented,
- introduce other people,
- pay a compliment.

### **2.2.2 Complex social skills:**

- Empathy. Ability to put oneself in the other person's shoes.
- Emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is a person's social ability to manage feelings and emotions, to discriminate between them and to use this knowledge to direct one's thoughts and actions (Salovey and Mayer, 1990).
- Assertiveness. This refers to the ability to be clear, frank and direct, saying what you want to say, without hurting the feelings of others or belittling the worth of others, only defending your rights as a person.
- Listening skills. That is, being able to listen with understanding and care, understanding what the other person means and conveying that we have received their message.
- Ability to communicate feelings and emotions. To be able to express our feelings, whether positive or negative, in the right way to other people.
- Ability to define a problem and evaluate solutions. That is, a person's ability to analyse a situation taking into account objective elements. Also, one's feelings and needs.
- Negotiation. Communication skills aimed at finding a solution that is satisfactory to all parties.
- Modulation of emotional expression. Ability to adapt the expression of our emotions to the environment.
- Ability to apologise. Being aware of mistakes made and acknowledging them.

- Recognition and defence of one's own and others' rights. Ability to be aware of our rights and those of others and to defend them in an important way omit of the skills.

Social skills are fundamental in our daily lives, and are a fundamental part of an intervention focused on social cognition. Training, learning and developing these competencies is essential for our users to achieve optimal and satisfactory relationships with others, whether in the family, work or fraternal environment. Social skills also play a fundamental role in improving self-esteem, improving communication and achieving vital objectives.

People who show good social skills are always aware of the needs of the person they are talking to, they put themselves in their place and try to understand them. They are very necessary to be able to adapt to any situation in daily life and very important in the workplace. For example, we need good social skills to go to a job interview, to ask for help and to have good relationships with the people around us.

### **2.3 PROBLEM SITUATIONS IN THE WORKPLACE**

It is likely that when we work among people, regardless of their hierarchy, we will be involved in conflicts, so it is necessary to know how to solve problems, defend our rights, accept or reject criticism, etc.

In the work environment, situations can arise that make us feel anxious, nervous or stressed and that can lead to conflicts and

confrontations. We are going to describe why such situations can occur.

***Company-related.***

- Company facilities (cramped premises, high noise, poor hygiene, lack of ventilation, lack of accessibility, etc.).
- Few tools and machinery to carry out the work.
- Failure to adapt workplaces.
- The company does not have clear rules (working hours, prohibitions, management relations).
- Frequent changes in the work team.
- Changes in work plans.

***Related to interpersonal relations.***

- Relationship problems among co-workers.
- Rivalry among staff.
- Personal problems in the workforce.
- Managers do not value the work. Lack of recognition leading to dissatisfaction and demotivation.
- Over-familiarity.
- Excessive demands.
- Lack of confidence of managers in the work that workers do.

***Related to the person him/herself.***

- Undervaluation. Low self-esteem, does not consider him/herself capable of doing the job well.

- He feels that he does not count and does not show his communication skills.
- You don't give yourself time to learn. Wants to do the same as other people from the first day on the job.
- You feel marginalised because you do different tasks from other people.
- Does not interact appropriately, accepting jokes, criticisms or defending himself against accusations.
- Does not ask for help when he/she does not know how to perform a task or does not accept it.
- Does not recognise his limitations. He blames others for his own mistakes.
- He only attends to negative criticisms of his work and his mistakes.
- Feels constantly evaluated.
- You want to put yourself on a par with the rest of the company's staff by carrying out tasks that do not fall within your duties and for which your profile is not suitable.

## **2.4 NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF LABOUR DISPUTES**

Many of the work situations that provoke anxiety and stress can cause us to feel negative emotions and wrong thoughts of the type:

- **Generalisation:** Believing that if you do something wrong once you will do it wrong every time. For example: "I will never learn this".
- **Guilt:** This consists of holding yourself responsible and punishing yourself for something that has gone wrong. For example: "I'm to blame for this not going well. I am a disaster. I'm useless.
- **Negativism:** Refers to seeing only the negative side of things. For example: "All staff work better than me".
- **Personalisation:** This consists of believing that everyone is talking about you. For example: "Everyone is talking about me".
- **Hyper-responsibility:** This consists of thinking that you have to do everything on your own. For example: "I have to solve this problem however I can, without asking for help. This is my job".
- **Irresponsibility:** This consists of thinking that one's own mistakes are exclusively due to the behaviour of other people. For example: "My partner distracted me and it was her fault that I made a mistake".
- **Over-demanding:** This consists of asking too much of oneself. For example: "I have to do my homework, like everyone else, from day one".
- **Wrong anticipation:** This is believing that everything that is going to happen to you will be negative. For example: "I'm not going to continue working here, I'm sure I'll be fired".
- **Feelings of inferiority:** This consists of thinking that what you do is less important than what the other people

who work with you do. For example: "What I can do, anyone can do. I would like to be as skilled as other people.

## **2.4 OTHER SKILLS TO WORK WITH USERS**

### **2.4.1 Personal autonomy.**

- **Personal Project:** These are the short-, medium- and long-term objectives that the individual has in relation to his or her life project.
- **Decision-making:** These are the decisions that the individual makes about his or her personal and professional goals.
- **Displacement:** An individual's ability to move around autonomously in his or her community.
- **Management of personal activities:** This is the degree of autonomy in the performance of those tasks involved in the development of the individual's usual activities. Foreexample, preparation of clothes and materials for work, study, leisure activities, etc.
- **Domestic chores:** These are the tasks that are carried out in the domestic environment: picking up the room, making the food, preparing the clothes, etc.
- **Use of basic technologies:** The degree of autonomy with which the candidate makes use of basic technologies such as fixed telephones, mobile telephones, telefaxes, cash dispensers, ticket dispensers, time clock, personal computers, internet, e-mail, photocopiers, etc.



- **Trade management:** The degree of autonomy in the management of tasks related to regular trade: buying, paying, giving change, making returns, etc.
- **Management of administrative tasks.** This is the autonomy in carrying out simple administrative tasks such as going to the bank, filling in documents, etc.

### **2.4.2 Professional skills**

In the workplace, a series of personal relationships are established which, on occasions, are conditioned by the job we hold within the company. These relationships are between colleagues, bosses, clients...

Often, the fact of keeping a job depends directly on knowing and putting into practice the social skills necessary to establish and maintain appropriate relationships that allow us to function effectively in the workplace, and not exclusively on the performance of a merely productive task.

- **Value of the job:** This refers to the value that the job occupies in the candidate's scale of values.
- **Responsibility:** This refers to the candidate's ability to take responsibility for the execution of his/her work activity. This factor is described by behaviours such as: arriving at work on time; giving notice in case of absence due to force majeure; trying to carry out the tasks correctly; taking initiative when correcting mistakes; taking care of the material and tools; taking precautions

with all those actions that may imply a risk to their own safety and that of others.

- **Task supervision:** This is defined as the degree to which the candidate requires the supervision of others for the proper execution of tasks.
- **Adequacy of personal image:** The adequacy of the candidate's personal image - clothing, grooming - in relation to the work situation - recruitment process, job performance, etc.
- **Relationships in the work environment:** This refers to the candidate's ability to interact with colleagues and supervisors.
- **Pace of work:** The candidate's ability to adapt to different work rhythms.

### **2.4. 3 Planning skills**

The success of any action we take in our lives is clearly linked to the time we spend planning it.

The soft skills needed for good planning and implementation are:

1. Set objectives.
2. Collect information.
3. Problem solving.
4. Decision-making.

### **Objectives of working on planning**

- Develop the skills necessary to plan our actions.
- Developing choice and decision-making skills.

- Know and put into practice the procedure for solving problems.
- Analyse the problems we face before attempting to solve them.
- Use a variety of information gathering strategies.
- Assess the feasibility of the objectives we set ourselves.

To set an objective, we must specify what we want to achieve, directing all our actions towards it:

If we set goals that are impossible or difficult to achieve, such as performing tasks for which we have no training or experience, occupying jobs that require qualities or qualifications that we do not possess, etc., we will not achieve our goals, which will cause us stress, negative emotions and low self-esteem because we devalue our abilities.

To avoid these situations, we must analyse our capacities and limitations and assess the possibility of achieving the objective we want to achieve, gathering information on the resources and means we need.

Once we are clear about our goal and we are confident that we can achieve it, we must draw up a plan to achieve it, bearing in mind that we will encounter problems along the way that we must solve as soon as possible.

## **2.5 CONCLUSIONS**

### **Social skills:**

- They improve self-control and self-esteem.
- They reduce stress by helping to manage conflict situations.
- Improve social relations.
- They make it easier to adapt to work.
- They make it possible for us to achieve our goals.
- They allow us to adapt to different situations and contexts.
- They make us control negative emotions that produce stress and anxiety.

Our job orientation service or programme will work on social competences with people with disabilities who are looking for employment. We will work on attitudes and aptitudes towards employment, skills for social relations which are basic, not only

for their insertion in the labour market, but also for the maintenance of the job. The focus should be on the importance of **autonomy and independence.**



*Chapter 3:*

*Phases of a Personalised  
Itinerary of Insertion.*

### **3. Phases of a Personalised Itinerary of Insertion**

#### **3.1 THE GUIDANCE PROCESS**

The particularity of this handbook is to know the differences between an orientation process for unemployed people in general and for people with disabilities.

The objectives of a counselling service will be:

- Development of a Personalised Itinerary of Insertion
- Labour market information
- Advice on job search techniques
- Career guidance
- Counselling for self-awareness and positioning in the labour market
- Accompaniment in the search for employment
- Detection of entrepreneurial profiles and for self-employment.
- Self-guidance
- Management of individualised action plans.

If we analyse these objectives, we can see how they will be the same as those that can be established in guidance services for people without disabilities, only they will have some special characteristics or adaptations for the group we are dealing with here.

In the **planning and development of the Personalised Insertion Itinerary**, the necessary actions to improve the employability of the user will be specified. In our case, these actions will not only contemplate training or job search actions, but will also take into account all those actions that are considered necessary to achieve the social and labour insertion of our users. Unlike other groups, we must consider actions such as: coordination with family members, contact with agents involved in improving the quality of life of these people, such as: social services, associations, occupational workshops, educators, etc... In addition to taking into account other factors such as mobility, degree of motor, cognitive, behavioural affectation, etc... that will influence the development of the itinerary.

The **information** on the **labour market** is more extensive than for non-disabled groups, because within this sector there are other employment alternatives such as sheltered employment: special employment centres, employment enclaves, supported employment, etc., which can only be accessed if the disability is recognised. In addition, they are informed about employment in the Public Administration, with the corresponding quota of places reserved for people with disabilities, and finally, information is also provided about the ordinary company and the legislation that regulates it.

The way to look for a job, i.e. **"How" to look for a job**, refers to the **techniques** that we are going to use to be more effective in our search process. In this case there are more similarities

than differences with other groups, for example, when we talk about job search nowadays, we see that the tendency is to do it through the internet, using the websites of companies, job search engines, ETT and placement agencies, among other things, due to changes in the data protection law and the refusal of companies to accept CVs in printed format.

In **employment guidance** we will look for the necessary resources adapted to the profile of each user so that the guidance process is effective. When working in a service whose users are people with disabilities, we have to focus first on their basic needs, i.e. if they have covered areas of their lives such as food, housing, hygiene, mobility, etc... and then we will focus on knowing their personal and professional capabilities, since in the first visits they will have told us and will have provided the relevant documentation about their disability and the limitations they present.

In the search for these skills, in most cases, it will require actions for self-knowledge and how to enhance those competences that the labour market demands.

The way in which career guidance actions are developed will depend on the type of methodology used by the career counselor. The current trend in this in this field is centered on emotional intelligence and coaching. More and more methodologies in guidance are based on accompanying the user in the discovery of his/her capacities and competences, being themselves responsible for their development.



The difference with the methodology that has been used until relatively recently is mainly the role of the counsellor, who goes from being a "problem solver" and facilitator of resources, tools, techniques... to being a companion in the process where the user takes responsibility for the actions to be carried out for his/her future labour market insertion.

**Self-knowledge** is a process that takes time, we need to reflect on ourselves, and it is something that is not usually done, and people with disabilities are used to talking about their limitations, and rarely about their skills and competences. One of the main problems we encounter at this stage is **low self-esteem**. Society puts many labels and limits on people with disabilities, so much so that many of them assume this perception as their own and really think of their inability to do anything in life. Dismantling this is quite complex, and we need to help them to realise this and to change their view of themselves.

This aspect is basic to face the job search and the subsequent labour insertion, because if they do not believe in them, no employer will do it.

Once the person has reached a considerable level of self-knowledge and their self-esteem is at an optimal level, it is time to define **work objectives**. To help our user we can use questions, these questions will often focus on defining what they do NOT want, it is usually clearer, until we find out what our real objectives are. And then we will check whether the objectives set

**correspond** to the opportunities offered by the **labour market** and adapt them to this demand. For example, a hearing impaired person who wants to be a telephone operator, radio announcer... or in the case of the star occupation in this group, being a janitor/janitor, where there are few job offers and which requires some skills that are not taken into account such as: standing for long periods of time, use of computer tools, responsibility in the custody of the building, etc....

The service of **accompaniment to integration** is a very useful resource for the collective, this service is usually offered for people with disabilities and groups at risk of exclusion. There are many differences in the use of this service depending on the type of disability. While people with physical disabilities do not require too much attention from the accompaniment technician, for people with mental disabilities (mental and intellectual) it is an essential resource, ranging from accompanying them to manage benefits, pensions, applications for training actions, registration in employment exchanges, competitive examinations, management of job offers, accompaniment to interviews to coordination with family members and other agents involved in the daily life of these people.

The figure of the technician accompanying the insertion of people with hearing disabilities, it is necessary that he/she knows how to communicate in sign language for the correct attention of the users, and also because in many occasions he/she will have to perform the functions of an interpreter (although this should not be the case).

And you may ask, what does the support technician for people with physical disabilities do? He/she is still a very important figure for the development of professional skills in people with a low level of education, little or no professional experience, digital illiteracy, etc... In addition, on many occasions he/she will be the person in charge of labour intermediation. In other words, they are dedicated to attracting offers, raising awareness among employers and other social agents in order to improve employment and/or training opportunities for the group.

Due to the unemployment situation faced by a very high percentage of PCD. Becoming **self-employed or setting up your own company** is an increasingly popular career option, and the emergence of start-ups has facilitated and simplified the concept of entrepreneurship as we have understood it until now. One of the advantages of setting up your own company when you are a PWD is that you can carry out the actions foreseen for this occupation without difficulty and while being compatible with the receipt of other pensions.

Finally, **Self-Orientation** refers to the acquisition of knowledge on the use of tools and techniques for job search in an autonomous way without the need for direct support from the counsellor.

One of the most important objectives in the guidance process is to ensure that the person is not dependent on any service to look for a job, that is to say, that he/she acquires the necessary skills to do it independently. But it is true that depending on the

group we are dealing with, it will be more or less difficult to achieve, for example people with mental disabilities, in particular people with intellectual disabilities, require a longer guidance process, a supported employment after the insertion, and a series of actions that will be carried out by the guidance counsellors and job coaches throughout the professional life of most of these people.

### **3.2 THE PHASES OF AN INTEGRATION PATHWAY ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

In the previous section we have seen the different actions that are carried out within the guidance process, and in this section we are going to list and define the phases that compose it.

**1. Contact:** The way to access a counselling service can be done in several ways: by the user's *own initiative*, who in some way has obtained information and is interested in participating, usually by consulting the web, surfing the internet or by an acquaintance who has used the resources before, and whose experience is positive.

Another option is that they are *referred* from other guidance services or employment offices, which attend to the unemployed in general or other groups that require specialised attention. In this section, we also find users referred from Social Services, Assessment Centres, Mental Health, etc...

Finally, we find the group of people *recruited by the service*, which refers to those users who come to the guidance service

because they are former users, relatives, friends, acquaintances of employees of the entity, etc...

The appointment is normally arranged **by telephone** and although it seems a simple action at first glance, it is not so simple. In this first contact we need to obtain and provide the minimum information necessary for the correct development of the appointment we are going to schedule. In our case we need to know: What type of disability? Percentage? Working or unemployed?... and for their part we need them to understand well: place and date of the appointment, documentation to be provided (necessary to justify their legal situation), how to get to our centre etc...

These kinds of questions need to be made clear in order to avoid wasting the time of both counsellors and clients.

**2. Reception:** The day of the appointment arrives, and we are going to assume that the person attends, I say we are going to assume, because many people miss these appointments, the reasons are several: **Forgetfulness** (sometimes appointments are given well in advance) for this is a good option to remember the appointment the day before, but sometimes it is impossible due to the workload that usually has the guidance staff. **Disinterest**, they do not come because they are not really interested in looking for a job and have been referred by other social agents. **They start working**, so they do not need to look for a job at this moment, and other situations of **problems in travelling, dependency**, etc...

It is already clear that the person has come and is waiting to be seen.

- We will not keep you waiting too long, and if, for reasons of workload, we are running late, we will inform you of this situation.
- Greeting. When we receive the person in the office it is important to introduce ourselves, greet him/her with a handshake, a kiss... This will depend on the counsellor, show him/her where he/she can sit, and encourage him/her to make him/herself comfortable.
- We are going to start an informal conversation so that the user can relax a little. We can do this by asking questions such as: Did it take you a long time to get here? Do you know this entity? Etc...

**3. Collecting information:** There are several ways to collect the data we need: questionnaires, files, databases, etc... but in the group of PWD, in many occasions, it is more interesting and relevant the information they provide us with through their testimony of life, than the information we can obtain through certificates and documents.

In our experience, it is better to start the interview without making notes, trying to generate a global vision of the personal, professional, economic, social etc... situation of the user, paying all our attention to the non-verbal language and expressions that will give us information, moreover this type of attention will

make the user feel better, since they feel attended to and listened to.

It is essential that the person feels comfortable in their presentation, creating a climate of trust and it is also necessary for the counselling staff to go through and/or summarise what they are telling us, to avoid wasting time with irrelevant information, digressions, etc....

Once we are more or less clear about the situation of the person in front of us, it is time to make the relevant notes in the corresponding file to avoid forgetfulness and to be able to identify the user among the many users of the service. (Annex 1).

**4. Interview battery:** The information obtained in the previous phase is not enough to get to know the user we have in front of us. We need to make several appointments to get to know other aspects that we cannot know in the first interview, and that will provide us with very valuable information about the personal and professional characteristics of the person. Moreover, through these interviews we will be able to define more concretely the objective(s) of the PCD and plan the actions to be carried out to improve employability. These appointments provide us with information on: punctuality, attitude, commitment to the process, appearance and personal image, use of language, verbal and non-verbal expression, etc... which will later help us to improve those aspects that we consider necessary for their correct social and labour insertion.

## **5. Knowledge and labour market support**

The interaction of the worker with the work environment is not static, but dynamic, as many variables have an influence. In terms of the worker, there is an evolution that gives rise to social changes, changes in people's values, changes in age and maturity, changes in attitudes, etc. And in turn, the labour market has also undergone changes such as automation, the participation of women in key positions, the increasing attention to the special cases of minority groups, young people in their access to employment, early retired workers, etc. that influence the search for employment.

The **objectives** set at this stage are:

- To raise awareness of strategies for accessing employment.
- To offer a realistic view of the current labour market situation.
- To know and position oneself in the labour market.
- Analyse the different professional alternatives.
- Promote the use of NNTT in the search for employment.
- Advise on the different training alternatives to access the labour market.

## **6. Development of personal and professional skills**

Competences refer to the capacities acquired (knowledge, attitudes, aptitudes, perspectives, skills) through systematic learning processes that enable, within the framework of the chosen field, adequate approaches to its specific problems, and



the suitable handling of procedures and methods to operate effectively in the face of the requirements that arise (Lafourcade, in Cocca, 2003:2). (Lafourcade, in Cocca, 2003:2).

### **The competences:**

- They are permanent characteristics of people.
- They become apparent when a task or job is performed.
- They are related to the successful execution of an activity.
- They have a causal relationship with job performance, i.e. they are not associated with success but are assumed to actually cause it.
- They can be generalised to more than one activity.
- They combine cognitive, affective and behavioural

### **The types of competences are:**

**Technical Competences:** These encompass the technical knowledge and specific skills directly related to the occupation.

They are not transferable outside the specific professional field.

**Transversal Competences:** Generic competences applicable to different professions and related to the integrated implementation of acquired skills, personality traits, knowledge and values.

Therefore, we know the technical competences through the curriculum, but what about the **transversal** competences?

One way of getting to know them may be according to:

- Management of resources: time, money, materials and distribution, personnel
- Interpersonal relations: Teamwork, teaching others, customer service, displaying leadership, negotiating, ...
- Information Management: Searching for and evaluating information, organising and maintaining information systems, interpreting and communicating, using computers...
- Systematic understanding: Understanding complex interrelationships.

In order to get to know the disabled user in depth and determine his/her personal and social characteristics, a series of actions will be carried out:

- Collect all necessary information on the personal and social characteristics of the user.
- Together with the user, analyse their attitudes and aptitudes, both personal and professional.

For this purpose, the technician or technician:

- It will use as a source of information the user him/herself, his/her family and professionals related to him/her.
- A personal development plan will be drawn up, deepening and extending the rest of the training received.
- Personal and social autonomy will be developed.

This information will allow us to:

1. To know the personal, professional and social characteristics of the user.
2. Detecting needs for action.
3. Establish intervention and/or referral guidelines.

### **3.3 CONCLUSIONS**

- **A Personalised Itinerary of Insertion (IPI) is the path** we are going to follow until we reach the objective set for each user.
- In the **planning and development of the Personalised Insertion Itinerary**, the necessary actions to improve the employability of the user will be specified.
- **The IPI for people with disabilities** will also include coordination with family members, contact with agents involved in improving the quality of life of these people, such as: social services, associations, occupational workshops, educators, etc... In addition to taking into account other factors such as mobility, degree of motor, cognitive, behavioural impairment, etc... that will influence the development of the itinerary.
- The phases of a Personalised Itinerary of Insertion are the same for the attention of any unemployed person, the only difference in the attention to people with disabilities will be the time dedicated to each phase.



*Chapter 4:*

*The counselling process  
according to the type of  
disability*

#### **4. The counselling process according to the type of disability**

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) disability is defined as an umbrella term that includes impairments, which are problems affecting a body structure or function, activity limitations, difficulties in performing actions and tasks, and finally, restrictions on participation in life situations.

As we can see, it is a **complex term** that highlights the **interaction between the characteristics of the human organism and those of the society in which we live**. In other words, it is not something that belongs to the person alone, but is the result of the interaction between the person and the environment, and it is this context that is the determining factor in disability.

This term is the result of a linguistic evolution, where the concept of **handicap** ceased to be used, as it was understood as a pejorative expression, and it has been modified over time to define a personal situation in the most correct way, being the terms **people with disabilities or functional diversity**.

It refers to a bodily impairment and/or difficulty in performing activities of daily living. The bodily impairment is more medical and the latter refers to more social aspects.

We can distinguish three main groups. Physical/organic, sensory and mental disabilities.

- **Physical/organic disability:** total or partial impairment of one or more limbs/organs of the body, which makes it difficult to carry out certain activities of a motor or functional nature.
- **Sensory impairment:** refers to visual and/or hearing impairment.
- **Mental disability.** In this section we must differentiate between **intellectual disability and mental disability**. The former is a disability that affects the cognitive system of the person, and the latter is a disorder or illness that affects the social, personal and family functioning of the sufferer.

<p><b>Physics/Organics</b></p>	<p>Depending on the time of onset, we will speak of <b>congenital or supervening disability</b>. There are various causes: congenital, hereditary, chromosomal factors, accidents or degenerative, neuromuscular, infectious or metabolic diseases, among many others.</p> <p><b>Physical disability</b> presents limitations in the performance of movements. Other areas such as language or manipulation of objects may also be affected. Some well-known examples are cerebral palsy, spina bifida, amputations...</p> <p><b>In organic disability</b> it is the internal organs that are damaged, which is why it is often associated with diseases that are not perceptible. Some well-known examples are cystic fibrosis, kidney and lung transplants, heart diseases, etc.</p>
--------------------------------	--

<b>Sensory</b>	<p><b>Disorders of the sense organs.</b> It includes disorders related to <b>sight, hearing and language.</b> They are very important pathologies to consider as they have serious psycho-social effects. They cause problems of communication between the person and their environment. If the disability is visual, we will speak of <b>low vision or blindness.</b> If it is auditory, we will speak of <b>hypoacusis or deafness.</b> These two cases can lead to a language disability, as in the case of deaf people, who need another communication instrument, Sign Language.</p>
----------------	---



<b>Psychic</b>	<p><b>Intellectual disability</b></p> <p>Intellectual disability is defined as any limitation of intellectual functioning that hinders social participation or the development of autonomy or areas such as academics or work, having an IQ below 70 and influencing different cognitive abilities and social participation. There are different degrees of intellectual disability, which will be directly related to the type of difficulties they may present.</p> <p><b>Mental disability</b></p> <p>We speak of mental disability when we are faced with a situation in which there are behavioural and adaptive behavioural alterations, generally derived from suffering from some type of mental disorder.</p>
----------------	--

It is not necessary for the counsellor to know each and every one of the pathologies, syndromes or affectations associated with each type of disability, he/she only needs to know how to consult the disability certificates where the most important information on the recognition of disability at a legal level is collected.

## **4.1 THE EUROPEAN DISABILITY CARD**

To make it easier for people with disabilities to travel between Member States, the EU is developing a voluntary system of mutual recognition of disability status and certain associated benefits, built around a European Disability Card.

At present, there is no mutual recognition of disability between EU Member States. This causes difficulties for people with disabilities, as national disability cards may not be recognised in other Member States.

The European Disability Insurance Card guarantees equal access to benefits outside one's own country, mainly in the fields of culture, leisure, sport and transport. The card is mutually recognised by the EU countries participating in the scheme on a voluntary basis.

### Pilot countries

A pilot version of the card was launched in February 2016 in eight EU countries:

- Belgium
- Cyprus
- Estonia
- Finland
- Italy
- Malta
- Romania

- Slovenia

The card does not change national eligibility criteria or rules. Member States reserve the right to decide who is eligible for the card, applying their own definition of disability, and to determine the issuing procedure.

### Evaluation

During the period 2019-2020, the European Commission evaluated the pilot project. The evaluation study confirmed the EU added value of the card: it allows mutual recognition of disability status in all Member States, which would not have been possible without EU intervention. The study also concluded that implementation costs per cardholder are low. As far as service providers are concerned, the benefits clearly outweigh the costs of participation. In addition, the card, which is increasingly in demand, addresses the fundamental needs of people with disabilities in the areas of application it covers.

### Continued

The continuation of the initiative was announced through the new Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030.

*Flagship initiative: By the end of 2023, the Commission will propose the creation of the European Disability Card, with a view to its recognition in all Member States. It will build on the experience gained with the ongoing European Disability Card*

*pilot project in eight Member States and the European Parking Card for people with disabilities.*

## **4.2 PRACTICAL TIPS IN THE COUNSELLING PROCESS ACCORDING TO THE TYPE OF DISABILITY.**

With the intention of providing guidance professionals with a practical vision of the process of caring for people with disabilities, we consider it necessary to provide some tips to be taken into account depending on the type of disability of the person we are going to guide. Although we must be clear that the premise that must always be present when carrying out this work will be the **attention focused on the individual person**, since one type of disability or another will be very different depending on each person and their circumstances.

The first thing we must analyse and take into account is our attitude when we come into contact with a person with a disability, whether in the workplace, family, social environment, etc... Our recommendation is always to act **naturally**. Acting in a natural way, speaking directly to the person with a disability, not to their companion or interpreter, asking in a humble way how to act in certain situations, showing our lack of knowledge or experience, and showing willingness, without fear or prejudice to interact with the person, is the most appropriate way to establish proper communication and avoid uncomfortable situations.

Now that we are clear on the above, we will describe some tips that can help you in the orientation process:

- **Physical/organic disability**

- It can be a disability from birth or a disability due to illness or accident. It will depend very much on the moment when the disability occurs on the procedure we are going to use to work with the users in search of employment, because the needs are going to be very different.
- Degree of motor impairment, ranging from total mobility without any difficulty, to reduced or no mobility, with the help of third parties. Accessibility to the workplace and the reduction of architectural barriers will be the most relevant aspect to be taken into account in the labour integration process.
- In most cases, organic disability is not visible to the naked eye; transplants, heart disease, pathologies of one of the vital organs, etc. must be taken into account for other types of adaptations required by these people in the job they are going to take up.
- The level of training of users with physical disabilities will vary depending on the limitations they have presented during their educational stages, i.e. periods of hospitalisation, absenteeism due to lack of adaptations, accessibility, etc... This trend is currently changing, and more and more people with disabilities are gaining access to higher levels of education.

- **Mental Disability**

Within this denomination we must differentiate two groups, **intellectual disability and mental disorders**. They present very different characteristics that must be taken into account when attending to users with one or the other type of mental disability.

- **1. Intellectual Disability**

- This type of disability is present from birth or early stages of development. There can be many causes, but in our case what we need to take into account is how it affects access to the labour market.
- As with all other disabilities, the level of employability and our way of working with the user will vary greatly depending on the degree of impairment, the support provided during the developmental stages, socio-economic resources, cognitive stimulation, etc...
- In most cases, the information we want to convey to the user must be measured, using clear and simple language, reinforcing the information by repeating the most important aspects that we want to highlight, and even providing this information in writing so that it is not forgotten.
- Support needs in the active job search process, which entails a more exhaustive follow-up.
- Training in the use of public transport is sometimes required to access workplaces or internships.
- Accompaniment at the workplace during the first few days will be very important for the correct performance of the

job and the internalisation of the tasks to be carried out. This reinforcement does not have a stipulated period because it will depend on the needs of the person.

- It is likely that once the on-the-job reinforcement has been withdrawn, some interventions will be needed to reinforce the learning.
- With this group, it will be very important to have support within the company, i.e. colleagues who reinforce and support them in situations that may arise in their daily work.
- Many of the people with intellectual disabilities create an affective bond with the counsellor that makes them dependent on him/her. We must maintain an attitude that allows us to train all those working skills, which lead them to be autonomous and independent according to their abilities.

## **2. Mental Disability**

- The data show that they are the group with the greatest difficulties in accessing employment. This fact can be related to the side effects of medication, which in most cases is prescribed by the psychiatrists who treat them, as well as changes in mood, difficulties in social relations, limitations in maintaining schedules and routines, marked prejudices in society, etc....
- When working with people with mental disorders, it is important to get away from the stereotypes that have been

socially imposed on this group, giving the opportunity to get to know the person in front of us and their life story.

- The time spent in the counselling process will be determined by the user and his or her needs.
- We should bear in mind that the mood and involvement in the insertion process is likely to fluctuate, and we should not be frustrated by such changes.
- Awareness-raising actions with the business fabric of this type of users will be essential to achieve their integration into the labour market.

- **Sensory Disability**

As its name suggests, it is the type of disability that affects the senses: vision and hearing loss are the most limiting when it comes to interacting in society, so people who suffer from it have support needs in different aspects of daily life.

- When a **hearing impaired person** comes to our service, it is important to facilitate communication through the use of sign language, but if we do not use this tool, it is important to look the person in the face, speak slowly to enable lip-reading, do not be embarrassed to gesture or use any resource that helps us to make communication effective.
- Limitations in accessing the labour market will be related to the type of occupations that require oral communication (face-to-face or by telephone) with customers, or that



involve the use of acoustic signals during the work (warehouses or factories that involve risks).

- The ability to communicate will vary greatly among hearing impaired people, and in most cases is linked to the social and family relationships of hearing people with other hearing people.
- In the case of visually impaired people, the orientation process will be linked at all times with technical aids. From adaptations in the computer programmes to be used, to resources for mobility and communication. There are currently many mobile applications on the market that facilitate the independence, autonomy and therefore the social and labour insertion of visually impaired people.

#### **4.3 FACTORS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN THE ORIENTATION PROCESS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES**

- **The family:** This figure is not the same for all people with disabilities. While in the case of physical disabilities, contact with family members will depend on the degree of mobility and/or mobility support needs of the user, in most cases it is not necessary. In the case of people with mental disabilities, the family becomes a key factor in the process of integration into the labour market.

Families should be provided with information on the processes of labour market integration and on the employment possibilities of the person with a disability. It is necessary to establish channels of joint cooperation between the family and the service to enable

professionals to offer the necessary support to families, helping them to assume realistic expectations regarding the possibilities of social and labour integration of their children. Moreover, in this way, channels of cooperation can be established between families and professionals in the design, organisation and implementation of normalisation alternatives at all levels. It is noted that the dynamics of collaborative work with families should be established as soon as possible.

- **Training, a basic element for integration.** In order to be able to access most job offers, minimum requirements must be met, including the level of academic training, currently the minimum level is secondary education. The guidance services motivate users who do not have compulsory secondary education, because they belong to previous study plans, because they have abandoned formal training before obtaining it, or for any other reason, to obtain it through one of the channels currently offered (adult education, distance learning, second chances school, etc.). In addition to formal training, companies currently demand other skills that can be acquired through complementary training. These skills can be social (communication and collaboration at work with other workers), participative (planning and organisation of tasks in a progressively autonomous way) and methodological (problem solving in the workplace). Thus, the training undertaken should enhance the development of socio-personal knowledge and skills, in addition to those related to the world of work.

- **The working environment.** Public administrations should make a much more forceful effort to effectively promote actions to facilitate the recruitment of people with disabilities in ordinary environments. Currently, what hinders the integration of people with disabilities into the labour market is not so much non-compliance with legal regulations, but the fact that current legislation favours integration in the sheltered employment sector more than in ordinary employment contexts. Furthermore, it is necessary to regulate supported work, recognising it as another alternative for the integration of people with disabilities into the labour market.
- **Work accompaniment or monitoring of the worker in the workplace.** All work integration services, even those that do not currently undertake monitoring actions, recognise the importance of monitoring as a fundamental element to facilitate the worker's incorporation into the workplace and their subsequent adaptation to the working environment; in this sense, the decision to carry out monitoring actions should not be conditioned a priori by the type of disability of the worker, but rather by their needs and the characteristics of the workplace. A clear demand of the insertion services is the need to be able to respond to the real demands for support on the part of the company and the worker, a response that is currently conditioned by the resources and availability of the services.

- **The personal resources of the workers.** The fact that workers have a good level of socio-personal skills is particularly valued. The importance of mastery of personal relationships, communication, knowing how to be in the workplace and a series of behavioural patterns that denote the worker's social competence are emphasised.

#### **4.4 CONCLUSIONS**

- In this handbook we have classified the types of disability as follows:
  1. Physical/organic disability
  2. Mental Disability: Intellectual Disability and Mental Disorder
  3. Sensory disability.
- Person-centred attention must be the key in the guidance process. The type of disability will not determine the integration itinerary, but rather how this illness, pathology, disorder or functionality affects each user when it comes to carrying out a job.
- Naturalness, closeness and humility in dealing with users will create a relaxed and trusting atmosphere.
- It is necessary not to judge and to avoid stereotypes or prejudices.
- Support and collaboration with family members and other social actors will be essential for the counselling process to be effective.
- Training and information on disability and the current regulations on the integration of this group is essential in order to advise and guide users correctly.



## *Chapter 5:*

*Profile of the career  
guidance counsellor:  
competences and  
knowledge*

## **5. Profile of the career guidance counsellor: competences and knowledge**

As we have seen in Chapter 1 of this handbook, confinement and social distance have accelerated the digitalisation of labour markets, triggering changes in work patterns and demand for new skills, making further training, retraining and career guidance increasingly important.

This dynamic development in the aftermath of the pandemic highlights the need for European countries to redefine and integrate the professional profiles of counsellors.

In this chapter we will define some basic concepts for a better understanding of the guidance process, the different premises from which the guidance process should start, the minimum training and qualification requirements for career guidance practitioners in each EU country and finally, the personal and professional competences of guidance practitioners.

### **5.1 PREMISES OF THE GUIDANCE PROCESS**

Several assumptions underlie the practice of career guidance. These include the following perspectives:

1. Individuals have the ability and opportunity to choose their career path. The degree of freedom of choice depends in part on the individual's social, economic and cultural context.
2. Opportunities and choices must be available to all people, regardless of gender, socio-economic class, religion, disability, sexual orientation, age or cultural background.

3. Individuals are naturally presented with career options throughout their life.
4. People generally perform a wide range of work functions throughout their lives. These functions include both paid and unpaid work.
5. Career counsellors help individuals explore, pursue and achieve their career goals.
6. Professional counselling basically consists of four elements:
  - 6.1 To help individuals gain a better understanding of themselves in areas such as interests, values, skills and personality style,
  - 6.2 To connect users to resources so that they can learn more about jobs and occupations.
  - 6.3 To involve the people we mentor in the decision-making process so that they can choose a career path that is well suited to their own interests, values, abilities and personality style.
  - 6.4 To help individuals to be active managers of their career paths (including managing career transitions and balancing life roles) and to become lifelong learners in the sense of lifelong career development.
7. The reasons why people enter particular occupations vary according to the importance attached to personal preferences, such as interests, or to external influences, such as labour market trends or parental expectations.
8. Career decision-making is not a one-time event in a person's life, but a continuous process that can take place at any age.
9. All forms of work are valuable and contribute to the success and well-being of a society.

## **5.2 DEFINITION OF SOME TERMS USED IN CAREER GUIDANCE**

There are many different terms used around the world in the field of career guidance and counselling. For the purposes of this guide we define the most important ones:

- **Counselling** - Actively listening to an individual's story and conveying understanding, respect and empathy; clarifying their goals and assisting them in the decision-making process. Counselling is a mutual relationship between a counsellor (a professionally trained helper) and a user (a consumer of counselling services).
- **Career guidance** - A largely verbal process in which the counsellor and the counselee(s) maintain a dynamic and collaborative relationship, focused on identifying the goals of the counselee and acting on them, in which the counsellor employs a repertoire of various techniques and processes to help the counselee, who is responsible for his/her own actions, understand him/herself, understand the behavioural options available and make decisions. Career counsellors should have specialised training in career guidance and career development. They may also have additional training in personal and group counselling.
- **Career** - The interaction of work and other life roles throughout a person's life, including both paid and unpaid work. People create career patterns as they make decisions about education, work, family and other life roles.



The work of career counsellors, career advisors and peer counsellors can overlap in many ways. Each role is defined to show the various tasks in which individuals are involved in providing career programmes for students.

Career guidance counsellors should have specialised training and be able to provide specific information to individuals, such as how to write a CV and cover letter, what to expect in a job interview, how to find a job and how to use the resources of the career guidance centre.

Career guidance for adults has the potential to improve employment, education and training outcomes. For the economy as a whole, it can mitigate skills shortages, smooth the business cycle by facilitating structural adjustment and boost productivity by connecting adults to education and training opportunities.

To be effective, career guidance must be tailored to the particular needs of each adult. To do this, time must be taken to understand the client's goals and assess his or her unique set of skills.

A more personalised approach spends time exploring and addressing the underlying barriers to employment and helping the adult to find a job that meets their needs. It may involve, in the first instance, helping them to identify and complete training to fill skills gaps.

Standardisation of the training and qualifications of career guidance counsellors can promote the provision of high quality services. Career guidance counsellors need to be knowledgeable about the specific theories and methods that are fundamental to career guidance. The way in which counsellors are expected to

acquire this expertise varies from country to country and sometimes within countries. This section outlines the minimum training and qualification requirements for the recruitment of counsellors in specific career guidance programmes. It also describes the role of continuing professional development and professional certifications in standardising the training and qualifications of career guidance counsellors.

### **5.3 MINIMUM TRAINING AND QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

In most countries, "vocational guidance" (or its national equivalent) is not a regulated profession, which means that there is no legislation specifying which certificate, licence or registration must be obtained to use the title of the occupation. However, although not written in legislation, many countries do define minimum training and qualification requirements for employing counsellors in specific programmes. Minimum training and qualification requirements often also form the basis for professional certifications.

The OECD Policy Questionnaire 2020, "Career Guidance for Adults", asked countries whether counsellors working with adults are required to have any minimum training or qualifications to practice in their country. Overall, a tertiary degree is a minimum requirement for most adult career guidance programmes: in 18 out of 29 career guidance programmes, a first or second cycle programme at a university or other higher education institution was required.

Only four programmes had no minimum training or qualification requirement, while five required a non-certified short course or on-the-job training.

Although most publicly funded programmes require a higher education degree as a minimum requirement, it may not provide specialised training in career guidance.

Although most publicly funded programmes have a minimum requirement of a higher education degree, this may not provide specialised training in career guidance. The OECD identified five models of training and qualification for counsellors, as indicated in the table below. Each of these models varies in terms of how counsellors are expected to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to provide career guidance.

Model	Training and qualification requirements
Specialised vocational guidance qualification	Tertiary level qualifications providing specialised training in career guidance.
General counselling and guidance qualifications	Tertiary level qualifications that provide general training in counselling and guidance, but no or only minimal training in career-focused guidance.
Basic and general qualifications	Tertiary level qualifications in broad fields related to career guidance but which do not provide specific training in career guidance as such.
Limited training	No specific training in career guidance is required. The only requirement is a relatively short course provided by higher education institutions.
Continuous training	No specific training in career guidance is required. The only requirement is a relatively short course offered by the employer.

More and more countries are requiring counsellors to have advanced degrees with specialised training in career guidance.

**The German Federal Employment Agency** trains vocational guidance practitioners at the University of Applied Labour Sciences in a specific degree course of study (Vocational

Guidance for Education, Career and Employment). The modules include intensive training in counselling techniques for different target groups as well as training on the labour market and the education system, recent trends and sociology. The University of Applied Labour Sciences also offers a part-time Master's degree in Labour Market Guidance, which most of the employed career guidance specialists have obtained.

A common model is to require an advanced degree in any of a wide range of career guidance-related fields - including psychology, education, economics and social sciences - but without any specific training in guidance or counselling. Alternatively, counsellors may have a general qualification in guidance or counselling, but no specialised training in career guidance.

**In Finland,** PES counselling psychologists are required to have a Master's degree in psychology.

**In France,** guidance practitioners working in schools or universities must have a Master's degree in psychology and, after passing a competitive examination, they are required to complete a one year of university training in psychology, sociology, economics and educational sciences.

Although specialised career guidance qualifications are becoming increasingly common, many countries still require only general tertiary qualifications without a specific focus on career guidance. This general model is often used when there are no academic programmes in the country that offer specialised career guidance training.

One risk of this approach is that career guidance counsellors may lack the skills, attitudes and expertise to provide high-quality career guidance.

Competency frameworks detail what career guidance counsellors should know and do and provide a basis for designing training and qualifications. They are useful for recruitment and allow counsellors to self-assess and benchmark their competencies. Many countries have developed competency frameworks. **In Greece**, the competency framework for career guidance counsellors developed by EOPPEP forms the basis of an accreditation system as well as a national professional register. In Germany, both the Bachelor and Master programmes mentioned above are based on the 'guidance concepts' (Beratungskonzepte) of the Federal Employment Agency, which is a competence framework that is part of the country's quality assurance system.

## Competency frameworks for career guidance counsellors

Country	Use of the competency framework?	Details
Austria	Yes	MEVOC Standards
Belgium	Yes	"Competent" is being integrated into the PES database and counsellors' workflow.
Czech Republic	Yes	Three vocational qualifications were created in 2015: Job Coach for employment, Job Coach for endangered, at risk and disadvantaged population groups, Job Coach for educational and professional career
Denmark	No	
Estonia	Yes	In Eesti Töötukassa there is a competence framework for career professionals. In addition, there is a vocational qualification standard for career specialists and the Estonian Association of Career Counsellors organises vocational examinations ( <a href="http://www.kny.ee/">http://www.kny.ee/</a> ).
France	Yes	France Compétences has established a set of specifications to which advisors must adhere. However, these specifications are deliberately open-ended, in order to leave room for advisors to adapt and customise their service offerings, and to encourage innovative practices.
Germany	Yes	BeQu competence profile; "orientation concepts" of the Federal Employment Agency (Beratungskonzepte)

Greece	Yes	The competence framework for vocational counsellors is defined in the corresponding occupation scheme of the National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications and Vocational Guidance (EOPPEP).
Ireland	Yes	Programme recognition framework including competences required for guidance counsellors working in schools and VET settings ( <a href="http://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/Programme-Recognition-Framework-Guidance-Counselling.pdf">www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/Programme-Recognition-Framework-Guidance-Counselling.pdf</a> ).
Italy	Yes	Competences are established at regional level (see Atlante delle Qualificazioni INAPP, <a href="https://atlantelavoro.inapp.org/ricerca_testo_qnqr_list.php">https://atlantelavoro.inapp.org/ricerca_testo_qnqr_list.php</a> ).
Lithuania	No	/
Portugal	No	/
Spain	No	/
Sweden	No	/
Turkey	Yes	Certificate of qualification in labour and vocational guidance
Romania	No	/

Source: OECD 2020 Policy Questionnaire, 'Career Guidance for Adults' plus author elaborations based on desk research.

In some PES programmes, the only requirement is a relatively short course provided by a higher education institution. **Irish PES** social workers receive training through the Department of Employment and Social Protection and a certificate in employability services issued by the National College of Ireland.



It is also common for PES to recruit people without specific qualifications in career guidance and to provide them with ongoing training. This ongoing training usually does not lead to any formal qualifications and covers a range of administrative and procedural aspects of their work, as well as client interaction

skills (Cedefop, 2009[15]). The duration of training varies from a few months to a full year. **The Austrian PES**, for example, subject's new recruits to a year-long in-house training programme.

Only 4 of the 29 programmes mentioned in the policy questionnaire do not require a minimum training or qualification. In these cases, relevant professional experience may be given priority over qualifications or training. Managers of VDAB centres in **Flanders (Belgium)** must have at least three years of professional experience in the field of career guidance, career coaching, outplacement or guidance of jobseekers. Guidance counsellors in VDAB centres must have a Bachelor's degree or two years of relevant professional experience. However, candidates lacking relevant qualifications or work experience can obtain a validated certificate of "otherwise acquired competences" through a procedure of recognition of prior learning.

Advisers are often expected to keep themselves informed about labour market developments, although in some countries training is provided. In the Cités des Métiers centres in Belgium, advisers participate in weekly information sessions given by a specialist. **In Sweden**, the PES (Arbetsförmedlingen) and company representatives work closely together to provide training

sessions on labour market information for school teachers and vocational counsellors. Career guidance counsellors in charge of the CEP in France receive training sessions to keep them up to date on government reforms, economic changes, labour market cycles, innovations and digital transformations affecting the labour market.

#### **5.4 COMPETENCIES OF THE COUNSELLOR**

The job of employment counsellor requires personal and professional competences for the performance of his/her profession, which in the case of working with disadvantaged groups will be a bit more specific.

*"Competences are an articulated and dynamic set of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that take an active part in the responsible and efficient performance of daily activities within a given context (Vázquez Valerio, Francisco Javier 2010), and "competences are understood as comprehensive actions to identify, interpret, argue and solve problems in the context with suitability and ethics, integrating knowledge of being, knowledge of doing and knowledge of knowing (Tobón, Pimienta and García Fraile, 2010).*

With these two definitions, having a clearer understanding of the concept of competences, we will list and define what competences guidance practitioners should have.

- **Personal competences**

We start from the assumption that the main function of guidance is "helping people", for this it is necessary that the person who dedicates himself to this occupation is by vocation and presents special sensitivity to social and cultural differences, etc....

Some of the desirable characteristics of these professionals may include:

- Social sensitivity
- Self-confidence
- Self-monitoring
- Reliability
- Patience
- Responsibility
- Proactivity
- Positivism
- Kindness
- Empathy
- Assertiveness
- Adaptability
- Flexibility
- Cooperation.

- **Communication skills**

In order to be able to transmit information to our users effectively, we must be able to **adapt our language** to that of the person we are dealing with, **use appropriate body language**, create a **relaxed atmosphere** with a cordial

welcome and reception, use **simple language** that allows us to transmit ideas and concepts clearly. **Listening skills and the ability to understand, capture attention and ask questions.**

Within communication, **empathy** is basic to understand the perception, needs and attitudes of our users as well as to know and value their strengths and weaknesses, acting as a motivating factor generating optimism and confidence.

Finally, the guidance practitioner must **write** clear, grammatically correct ideas that convey the information to be conveyed unambiguously.

- **Skills to analyse and summarise information**

Much of the information we want to obtain from the interview with our users comes from our ability to **analyse the situation and synthesise it**. The first thing will be to collect the most important data on their socio-labour, family and, in our case, health situation, and once all this data has been collected, we will draw some **simple conclusions** about the person's profile and employability, to get an overall idea of the person and begin to establish the objectives to work with him/her.

During the counselling process, **complex situations** may arise, which the counsellor has to deal with by breaking down the problem into parts and providing solutions to each of them, or by enabling the understanding of the situation in order to facilitate **conflict resolution** by the persons involved.

The ability to detect whether a user is telling the truth or hiding information is based on experience. And if we suspect that the information provided is not entirely reliable, we will use the art of questioning to get the information we need.

- **Planning and organisational skills**

In the daily exercise of this profession there will be a large number of complementary tasks in addition to the care of users, strictly speaking. Managing the agenda for appointments, attending coordination or service development meetings, attending to family members and other professionals, searching for resources, referrals to job offers and/or training, etc... make it necessary to have a great capacity to plan and organise the work, prioritise the most important tasks, adapt the time to each task, adapt the resources to each person, etc...

Although they may seem to be the least important competences within the profile of the counsellor, a great responsibility falls on them, because at a bureaucratic level, the payment of the benefit of some of the people we assist in our service, will depend on the registration in the corresponding platform of the actions carried out in Active Job Search, otherwise they may be harmed and stop receiving this financial aid. Therefore, it is extremely important to pay attention to the administrative tasks that we must carry out.

- **Performance competencies**

They are those competencies that lead us to maintain stability in our responses, to be practical and balanced, to regulate our

fatigue or frustration during the process, to adapt to new situations, to respond to changes and to be flexible in order to make the necessary modifications.

It is important to have the ability to not take other people's problems as one's own. Given the number of people that are attended to in a counselling service, with quite complex situations and life stories, it is necessary to know how to disconnect and not let it influence either the performance of the occupation or our personal life.

- **Competences for working with groups**

When the guidance actions are carried out with a group, we need to create a relaxed and trusting atmosphere that facilitates communication. The person responsible for conducting these sessions must have pedagogical skills to create meaningful learning, transmit knowledge, clarify concepts and, above all, know the subject matter to be worked on in these sessions.

Motivating, stimulating, reinforcing the group to achieve the expected changes in these group sessions are other key tasks of the counsellor. To do so, he/she has to be empathic and flexible but with skills to coordinate and lead the session.

- **Other competences:**

- Respect the dignity of each person to whom professional development services are provided.
- Respect the feelings and cultural customs of the user.

- Report, orally or in writing, on the aims, objectives, techniques, policies and ethical standards appropriate to the service provided.
- Accept the user's right to make autonomous decisions and to take responsibility for them and their consequences.
- Treat each person fairly, equitably and without prejudice, respecting their values, beliefs and life experiences, as well as those of their families and communities of belonging.
- Avoid all forms of discrimination.
- Respect and acknowledge the contribution of other professionals.
- Cooperate with other professionals and/or colleagues in accordance with ethical practices and procedures relevant to the situation.
- Establish a good relationship with users.
- Create a climate of respect, trust, openness, confidentiality, positivity and comfort.
- Demonstrate empathy through genuine concern for the welfare and future of users.
- Find out, recognise, validate and respect the beliefs, values, opinions, contexts, perceptions and learning styles of oriented individuals.
- Promote a cooperative and productive environment.
- Determine and assess each other's expectations, needs and objectives.
- Continually demonstrate personal integrity, honesty and sincerity.

## **5.4 CONCLUSIONS**

- Guidance provision and governance in the EU differs greatly between countries and regions, as do the professional profiles and qualifications of career guidance practitioners.
- The diversity of entry routes into the profession reflects the multiple settings in which guidance is provided and the multiple tasks and competences required by practitioners.
- Some of the most important competencies of counsellors will be: In-depth and up-to-date knowledge of the field of work; Proficiency in the latest counselling techniques; Advanced and client-oriented oral and written communication skills; Knowledge of assessment and analysis methods; Ability to work strategically in a co-operative community service package; And a high level of psychological, social and emotional skills.
- The Cedefop (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training) Competence Framework for Career Guidance Counsellors and the Commission's European Reference Competence Profile for Public Employment Service Advisers and EURES have set the milestones to support the implementation of European competence standards.





*Chapter 6:*

*Job search organisation  
and methodology*

## **6. Job search organisation and methodology**

In the previous sections we have dealt with all the concepts, definitions, variables and phases necessary to understand the PCD counselling process.

In this section we are going to list and define the strategies, techniques and resources available to the user in order to find employment. It is necessary to clarify that they are the same as the ones we will use to guide people without disabilities, but we will make reference to the specifications of the target group of this manual.

### **6.1 Information on Employment Offices in Europe**

Each country has its own public employment service, but the competences of these services are similar, i.e. they are the offices where you can find all the information to work, find career guidance, training, job offers, as well as solve other questions related to work.

It is very important to make use of the services offered by the public employment offices in order to have more possibilities of labour insertion and access to training resources.

In the case of people with disabilities, they must also be registered with the public employment services. Many of these employment services will have some specific aids or job offers for this group.

## **6.2 CV preparation and submission to companies**

When we are looking for a job we need to have a presentation tool that summarises all the personal and professional information of the candidate. For this we use the Curriculum Vitae, a term that comes from Latin, which in one of its translations means "career of life".

There is a great variety of models for drawing up CVs, and there is no standard that establishes which one is the best. There are a number of basic criteria for drawing up a CV, which we will list and define:

- It should be **clear**, where you can get most of the information at a glance. Employers don't stop to read CVs with more than two pages, their time is money and they need to maximise efficiency in the shortest possible time. That is why we are going to present a clear, tidy CV with an original design.
- The **order** of the contents is not very relevant either, in most cases, we start with the **personal data** and then we consider it relevant to provide professional experience. There are two reasons for adding **professional data** here: firstly, when selecting candidates for a job offer, experience in that position, or in similar positions, is valued, and on some occasions, a series of competences are sought that have only been acquired through work experience. Secondly, in the group of PWD and in other groups, we find profiles with low qualifications and whose

level of education is often basic, so we focus on their experience, leaving their educational deficiencies in the background. Once we have personal data and experience, we will add the **training data**, both academic and complementary training, which must contain: title of the training action, year it was carried out, entity providing it and number of hours. Next, we write **other relevant data** for labour market insertion and finally we add the **occupations** requested by the job seeker. In the group of PWD, this last section is very important, so that the employer, recruiter, interviewer... can get an idea of the occupations that can be carried out, and for which they may have some limitations.

- Trends in CVs have also been changing over time, and we can find times when we talk about blind CVs (without personal data such as age, without a photo...) and at other times when such data are essential. The reality is that for the person in charge of selection, it is much easier and more effective to remember the candidates by the photo. As for the European CV, which has been in vogue for some time now, its use has been extended to higher-qualified occupations, but it is not very practical for trades and other occupations that do not require a higher qualification.
- CVs are not currently submitted in person at the company. To submit a CV, it is necessary to send it via e-mail or register on the company's website, which often has a section for registering potential candidates. Data protection

and the social distance that covid'19 has marked, mean that direct contact with the company's human resources managers must be made by appointment when they consider it appropriate.

### **6.3 Self-candidacy**

In order to find a job, it is necessary to take all the actions that increase the probability of accessing the labour market, and sometimes the offers do not meet the expectations and needs of job seekers. But we cannot just sit back and wait for the offer that best suits our profile to come up. We can look for companies that are interesting to us and that have staff with the profile we have, even if they are not currently looking for candidates.

To self-candidate we will follow the following steps:

1. **Research: Search** for companies that work in the occupation we are looking for. Once we have selected the interesting companies, we will look for information about the number of employees, headquarters, mission and values of the company, etc...
2. We will look for some **contact** details to send them our candidacy. Nowadays, companies have a section on their website called "work with us" or similar. It is advisable to fill in the information requested in this section, which in many cases will also ask you to attach your CV. This may be enough, but if we are very interested in working for a specific company, we will look for a way to send our CV and cover letter to the

person in charge of human resources or someone close to them.

3. Drawing up a **cover letter**. This is a document that, together with the CV, provides specific information about your interest in joining the company, highlighting your personal and professional skills, as well as what you can contribute to the company. The aim of the self-candidature is to get an interview with the person responsible for human resources and to have the opportunity to explain all of the above in detail and for them to get to know us personally.

#### **6.4 Job interview training.**

In the orientation process, the preparation for interviews is one of the actions that we work on the most, it is a situation that we do not usually face and we have to train in order to reach our objective, to be selected. In addition, with PWD we have to work on how to raise the issue of disability in the interview.

Vocabulary, body language, knowledge of the company, the selection of what I am going to say and how to deal with challenging questions are basic to successfully deal with this process.

Interview training can be done individually and/or in groups, the important thing is to get feedback on the aspects to be strengthened and those that need to be improved. For this purpose, video recordings are a very useful tool because it is the best way to become aware of our strengths and weaknesses.

With regard to disability, it is important to emphasise abilities and try to normalise the situation, with the aim of putting the focus on what I can do rather than on limitations.

Preparing the interview for people with mental disabilities requires taking into account other aspects depending on whether the disability is intellectual or mental. For example, we will work on aspects ranging from hygiene, appropriate clothing for the situation, use of verbal and non-verbal language, knowledge of the company and their own curriculum, enhancing strengths, how to deal with questions about our limitations, what should and should not be said, being clear about availability, mobility, timetable, etc...

But no matter how much preparation we can do, there is always the variable of the interviewer. Depending on their knowledge of the disability, the language they use, their attitude, patience and approach to the interview, they may be more or less successful in the selection process.

## **6.5 Manage documentation for courses, employment exchanges...**

One of the characteristics of the position of guidance counsellor is to be in a continuous process of searching for information. Information of all kinds, but mainly information that is relevant for the users of our service, and to provide them with this information to improve their employment opportunities. Knowing the current resources for unemployed people in general and people with disabilities in particular, is basic, and the long-term

objective will be that the user can access this information independently.

Among the information most in demand is public employment (competitive examinations, stock exchanges, etc...) and training resources.

When a call is opened to present documentation for a job vacancy, registration for competitive examinations, application for courses, etc... the workload increases because there are many people who require our help in the preparation of documentation and presentation of the same. And not only people with mental disabilities, but any user, and the reason is that sometimes these processes can be complex and tedious, generating anxiety and discomfort among people who face this process alone.

## **6.6 Tailoring your CV to different job offers**

In the preparation of a general CV, we will collect all the personal and professional data that provide global information about the person who submits it. The adaptation of the CV to the offer usually occurs when the candidate has extensive experience and/or training in different fields, and we want to highlight the information related to the position that is demanded. Normally in the guidance service for people with disabilities we find curricula vitae with little content, either due to lack of experience, or due to inability for the usual profession, where it is not worth explaining all the previous experience, or for other reasons. Although there are always exceptions and we find candidates



who need to modify their CV according to the position they are applying for. Moreover, in this section, the question of whether to include a disability or not arises again. There are many users who have a CV with the percentage of recognised disability and another without it, and each company delivers the one it considers most appropriate, mainly due to the social responsibility, sensitivity and commitment of this company to this group.

### **6.7 Draft Cover Letter**

The cover letter is a document through which the candidate gives a description of his/her experience, training, concerns, values, etc... In other words, the information contained in the CV, as well as personal characteristics and interests that lead him/her to want to join the company, and other information considered relevant that is not well reflected in the CV.

The cover letter is normally used in a self-candidature, as it should provide an explanation of why the CV is being sent. It can also be used in response to an advertisement or job offer, but this is less common. Some job portals ask for a short cover letter when you register for one of their job offers.

### **6.8 Drawing up lists of companies according to activity**

Directly related to the previous section will be the drawing up of a list of companies that may be of interest to me because the occupation they require is suited to the profile I present. In other words, look for those companies that may be of interest to me

for different reasons (profile required, salary, type of contracts, etc.) and investigate what options I may have of joining that company, as well as general information about it.

If, after the investigation, the assessment is positive, it means that I may have a chance. And it will be the moment to contact them, sending them my letter of introduction and my CV. Sometimes the letter of introduction is the wording that we write in the body of the message before sending the CV by e-mail.

### **6.9 Analyse the characteristics of different professions**

When at the first career counselling appointment you ask the client what he/she would like to work in, the most common answer is usually "anything", and when we get that answer, we are aware of all the work we still have to do.

The first thing is that not all of us are suitable for all occupations, everyone has certain skills and abilities that will lead them to perform one profession better than another, but in addition, people with an acquired disability have to know their physical, mental and/or sensory abilities in this new situation. I say acquired because people who have a disability from birth know their possibilities and limitations much better, although there are always exceptions.

Our job will be to help them to know and analyse the training, experience and competence requirements of each of the professions, whether or not they meet these requirements, and if not, to look for ways to meet them. The aim of this action is

that, once this analysis has been completed, they will be more aware that in order to access a job they have to prepare themselves to be able to compete with the rest of the unemployed looking for the same job, and they will value occupations that at first sight they considered to be less important.

In order for you to understand this better, I will give some examples. One of the most common situations in the group of people with disabilities, in which many of them have a basic level of education, is cleaning as the occupation that most of them consider they can do. I can simply say that on some occasions they have not been able to cover the demand for cleaning jobs because they do not have profiles that match the required profile.

This is due to:

- People with physical disabilities have limitations of mobility and effort, which are required for these jobs (climbing up and down stairs, carrying heavy buckets, repetitive movements, standing upright), and people with mental disabilities who do not have any physical limitations, require supervision and control of tasks that is sometimes not possible because they are jobs that require autonomy and self-management.
- The demands on some cleaning jobs are very high, so not everyone knows how to use the most suitable products and techniques for certain surfaces.

- On the one hand, they offer too short a working day, for which it is not worth giving up benefits or subsidies for the amount that they will receive, as the wage set out in the collective agreement is low. On the other hand, they offer a full day's work, cleaning building sites, windows and/or surfaces that require more effort and that our users cannot do without the risk of being harmed.

As we can see, when faced with an occupation that is considered low-skilled and supposedly easy to perform, we need to analyse the requirements to match the job to the person and vice versa.

Among the objectives of this job analysis, the most important for us will always be the well-being of PWD, avoiding worsening of their health status, avoiding frustrations and complicated socio-economic situations.

That is why it is good to make them reflect on the importance of selecting the occupations that I want and can carry out, because sometimes the urgent things make us not realise what is important.

### **6.10 Locating job offers suitable to the user's profile on web and social networks**

Now we come to the section on resources for the active job search. In a relatively short period of time, the way of looking for a job has changed, the data protection law has prevented people from handing in their CVs to different companies, and the internet is the most accessible way of looking for a job.

It is an obligation of the counsellor to know the employment resources in the area where he/she works, and it is convenient that there is a network of professional relations with these companies, in which they collaborate directly in the insertion of job seekers. Although for many people this would be intermediation, we believe that this contact is essential, so that our users can have more opportunities.

By general resources I mean those that serve for the active search for employment of unemployed people. And specific, those that we are going to use with the group of people with disabilities.

#### General:

- Employment agencies.
- ETT.
- Job seekers.
- Publication of offers on social networks...

#### Specific:

- The above when they present specific offers for the PWD group.
- Specific job seekers.
- Special employment centres.
- Foundations and associations representing the collective.

## **6.11 CONCLUSIONS**

- The content of this chapter describes the tools necessary to deal with the active job search.
- Career guidance counsellors need to master these tools, be aware of trends and changes in the labour market and of job search methodologies.
- The tools described are those used for any jobseeker, but they must be adapted to the characteristics and particularities of the group we are dealing with.



# *Bibliography and annexes*

## 7. Bibliography

- Communication from the commission to the European parliament, the council, the European economic and social committee and the committee of the regions (2021)  
*"Union of Equality: Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030"*.  
Manuscript completed in March 2021  
Brussels, 3.3.2021 - COM(2021) 101 final
- CEDEFOP. European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training. *"A new vision of the professionalization of vocational guidance counsellors"*.  
Information Note | December 2021 | ISSN 1831-2446
- Eurostat, European Commission. *"Disability in the EU: Facts and Figures"*. European Union 2022. Council of the European Union. Secretary General (Infographics)
- OECD (2020) Policy Questionnaire. *"Career Guidance for Adults"* plus author elaborations based on desk research.
- Serrano Mujika, Unai, Iturbide Rodrigo, Paula (2004). *"Manual de orientación profesional para personas con discapacidad"*.LanteguiBatuak. Zabalan equal (ed.)
- Connie R.Wanberg, Abdifatah A. Ali, and Borbala Csillag (2020)*"Job Seeking: The Process and Experience of Looking for a Job"*.  
Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior. Department of Work and Organizations, Carlson School of Management, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455.



## 8. Annexes

### Annex 1. User welcome form

Date:

#### Personal data:

Name and Surname:	
D.N.I:	
Date of Birth: Age:	
Address:	
Telephone numbers:	
E-mail:	
Driving Licence / Type: Own Vehicle:	
Public transport	Dependent on 3rd person

#### Regulated Training: Work Experience:

Qualification:	Occupation
----------------	------------

#### Disability:

Diagnosis:			
%		Date:	
Operations:		Medication:	
Limitations			

#### Socio-economic situation:

Pension:	Amount:	Duration:
Jobs you cannot do:		
Family situation:	Time in unemployment:	

#### Job applications

Office		Date	
Occupations			
Availability			
Remarks			

## Annex 2. Comparative table

Analysis Survey on Employment Guidance for People with Disabilities			
	AGENTIA JUDETEANA PENTRU OCUPAREA FORTEI DE MUNCA VASLUI. ROMANIA (38)	FORMACIÓN INCLUSIVA S. L. SPAIN (54)	ΕΥΡΩΠΑΙΚΟ ΚΕΝΤΡΟ ΚΟΙΝΟΝΙΚΟΝ ΕΠΙΣΤΙΜΟΝ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΜΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΑΘΛΗΤΙΣΜΟΥ. GRECE (38)
Where do you carry out the guidance actions? 1. Public Employment Service 2. Association/organization of people with disabilities 3. Employment agency 4. Private company	<p>Where do you carry out the guidance action?</p>	<p>Where do you carry out the guidance action?</p>	<p>Where do you carry out the guidance action?</p>
Which collective do you serve? 1. Unemployed person 2. Person with disabilities 3. People at risk of social exclusion 4. Unemployed young people	<p>Which collective do you serve</p>	<p>Which collective do you serve</p>	<p>Which collective do you serve</p>

What % of the people you serve have disability? ● 100% ● 75% ● 50% ● 25% or less			
What type of disability do you most commonly deal with? - Physical /Organic - Sensory - Intellectual - Mental			
What is the degree of autonomy in the active search for employment of the people with disabilities you care for? ● They need support for everything ● They have limitations in some aspects (document management, access to INNTT) ● They are fully autonomous and have BAE competences.			



# Job4dis New model of employment guidance for people with disabilities in Europe



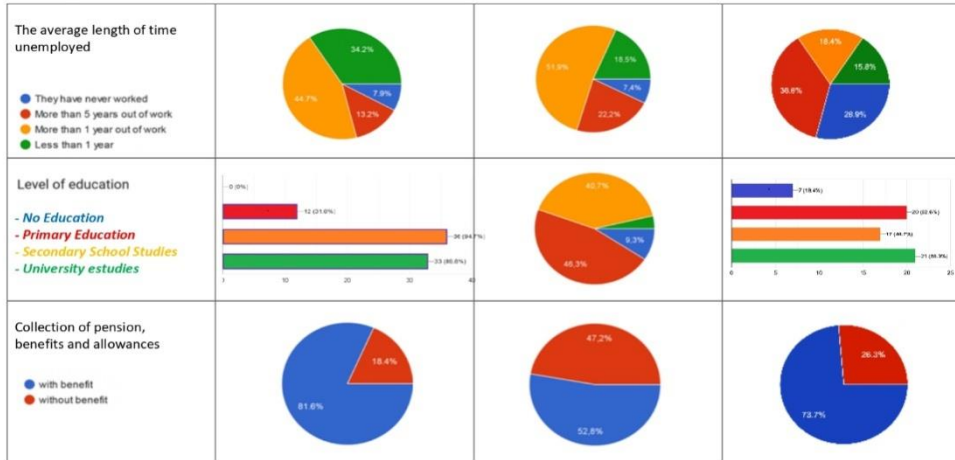
Co-funded by the European Union



## JOB4DIS. NEW MODEL OF EMPLOYMENT GUIDANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN EUROPE ACTIVITY N°1 COMPARISON TRANSNATIONAL OF CAREER GUIDANCE



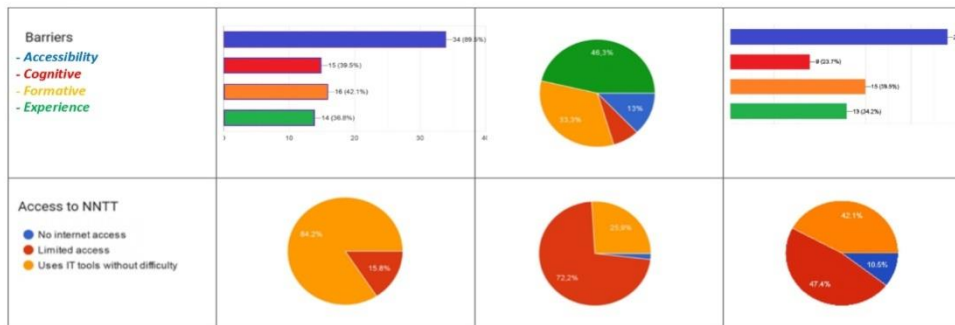
Co-funded by the European Union



## JOB4DIS. NEW MODEL OF EMPLOYMENT GUIDANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN EUROPE ACTIVITY N°1 COMPARISON TRANSNATIONAL OF CAREER GUIDANCE



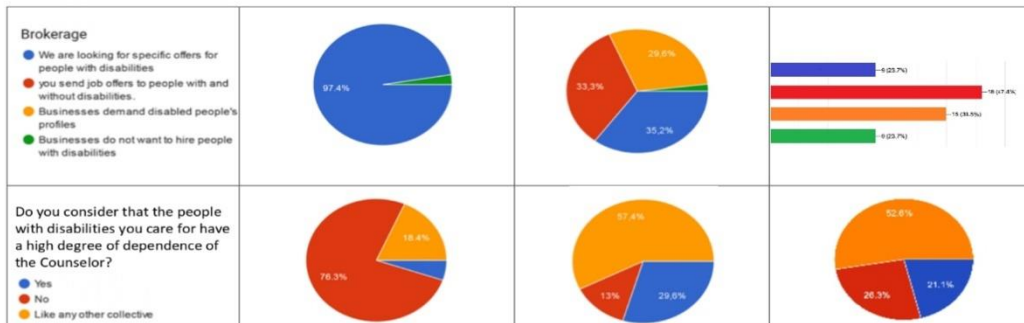
Co-funded by the European Union



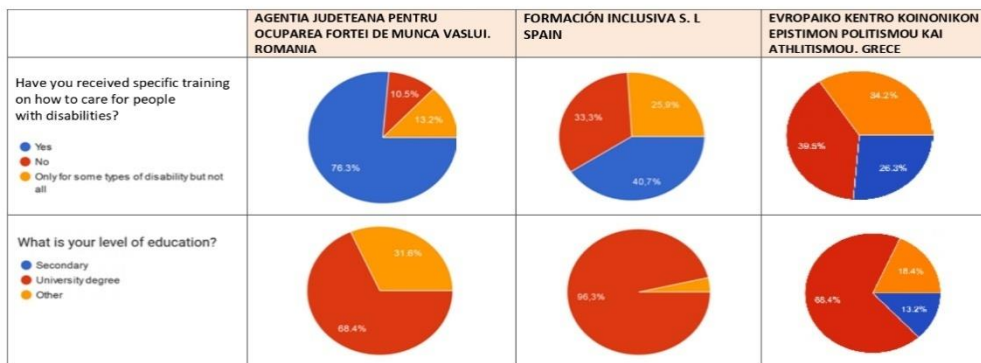
● **Methodology used in the orientation process of persons with disabilities**

	AGENTIA JUDETEANA PENTRU OCUPAREA FORTEI DE MUNCA VASLUI. ROMANIA	FORMACIÓN INCLUSIVA S. L SPAIN	ΕΥΡΩΠΑΙΚΟ ΚΕΝΤΡΟ ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΚΟΝ ΕΠΙΣΤΙΜΟΝ ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΜΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΑΘΛΗΤΙΣΜΟΥ. GRECE																								
Methodology used in the orientation process of the person with disabilities: -Language adaptation -Reinforce the work with a written document summarizing the most important aspect of the session. - Same as all other users - Use of sign language or the other alternative system of communication	<p>Methodology used in the orientation</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>Methodology 1</td><td>78%</td></tr> <tr><td>Methodology 2</td><td>2%</td></tr> <tr><td>Methodology 3</td><td>70%</td></tr> <tr><td>Methodology 4</td><td>10%</td></tr> </table>	Methodology 1	78%	Methodology 2	2%	Methodology 3	70%	Methodology 4	10%	<p>Methodology used in the orientation</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>Methodology 1</td><td>30%</td></tr> <tr><td>Methodology 2</td><td>33%</td></tr> <tr><td>Methodology 3</td><td>35%</td></tr> <tr><td>Methodology 4</td><td>2%</td></tr> </table>	Methodology 1	30%	Methodology 2	33%	Methodology 3	35%	Methodology 4	2%	<p>Methodology used in the orientation</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>Methodology 1</td><td>30%</td></tr> <tr><td>Methodology 2</td><td>35%</td></tr> <tr><td>Methodology 3</td><td>10%</td></tr> <tr><td>Methodology 4</td><td>20%</td></tr> </table>	Methodology 1	30%	Methodology 2	35%	Methodology 3	10%	Methodology 4	20%
Methodology 1	78%																										
Methodology 2	2%																										
Methodology 3	70%																										
Methodology 4	10%																										
Methodology 1	30%																										
Methodology 2	33%																										
Methodology 3	35%																										
Methodology 4	2%																										
Methodology 1	30%																										
Methodology 2	35%																										
Methodology 3	10%																										
Methodology 4	20%																										

<p><b>Target design</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The same as for other users</li> <li>It should be a much more defined objective.</li> <li>We subdivide it into smaller objectives because other areas of your daily life have to be taken into account.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Monitoring is carried out by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once a week</li> <li>Once a month</li> <li>Twice a month</li> <li>On user's request</li> </ul>			
<p><b>The resources you use for LFAs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They are the same as for any unemployed person</li> <li>You use specific resources for people with disabilities.</li> </ul>			

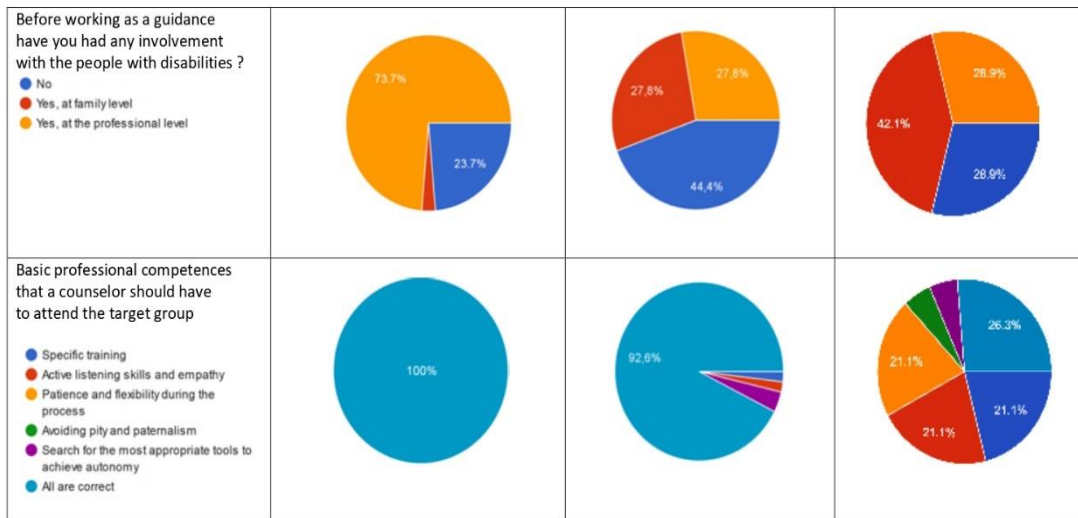


● **Counsellor competencies**





JOB4DIS. NEW MODEL OF EMPLOYMENT GUIDANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN EUROPE  
ACTIVITY N°1 COMPARISON TRANSNATIONAL OF CAREER GUIDANCE





# NEW MODEL OF EMPLOYMENT GUIDANCE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN EUROPE

[WWW.JOB4DIS.EU.COM](http://WWW.JOB4DIS.EU.COM)



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Union Programmes Agency (EUPA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.