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## Inclusion of disabled persons by the corporate community

### Focus Group - Sercotel

**Promoting a diverse workforce by companies and institution to generate innovation and reflect the profile of it shareholders, clients, suppliers in the world today.**

**Very active exchange among participants sharing opinions regarding actions that should be taken to promote a social and professional involution of disabled persons in Spain considering the barriers they has identified as a result of the lack of competences, skills and attitudes of the agents that give support to this community of persons highly discriminated in this country.**

**The group has the unanimous conviction that selecting and recruiting professional with disabilities out of the 14.5% of the disabled community into the company workforce is a key strategy to increase the innovation capacity of the organization. And identifies with the 37% of the population that care and give support to the disabled community**

## Conclusions of the Focus Group

CLAP HANDS is a ERASMUS+ project with partnership in four European member states: France, Spain, Portugal and Sweden. All partners with ample experiences in the care, education as well as social and professional inclusion of persons with disabilities in the art and culture

The situation for the disabled community was highlighted in order to focus on the importance that the development of this population has for the sustainability of the social, political and economic environment.

In Spain 14.5% of the population has certified disability profiles. And 37% of the population care for this community. There are 1.8M persons with disabilities unemployed. A main barrier is the pension systems which does not allow pensionists to have any other further income, limiting their labor possibilities under the risk of losing their pension. Of limiting their total income to 11.000€ a year, including the amount of the pension they receive. This, of course, creates a barrier to employment of disabled persons that collect a pension. Another barrier is the cultural heritage and



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attitude towards disabled persons responding to the social stereotype which discriminate persons which to not respond to what is considered as the normal profile

### **Evaluation of Technical Competences and Social Skills by focus group participants.**

In general the participants found difficult to grade the importance of the skills brought up in the questionnaire. Therefore the majority gave high value to all the skills proposed by the project

Getting to know the disabled persons through evaluating their profiles was rated highly . As well as the need to give support based of the knowledge of individual education objectives

The group as a whole suggest:

- That there should be developed a train the trainer tool in order to make the training project available to a large number of organizations as fast as possible
- It would be very advisable to recruit persons with disabilities to have the capacity to help the trainers in implementing the training project. It would be very effective for those professional attending the training sessions.
- Patience is a critical personal skill these professionals must have and develop. To transmit trust as they care for persons of disabilities in their personal, health and professional process development.



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Another key issue deeply shared is that the base of all the present attitude toward disability is the family. The social culture of the family and the stereotype of normal and disabled that is transmitted. The family include people like them and discriminates persons with diverse profiles, particularly the behavior related to persons with disabilities. The family culture also determines the acceptance or not of persons of other races, nationalities, gender and even age. And this stereotype acquire in early age is difficult to manager as the person matures and has to take its own stand towards diversities.

The proposal is to propose a research under a new ERASMUS+ project to study the behaviour of the family towards this issue, that will allow organisations to develop effective project to help family memeber to asume that their relatives with disabilities can have the possibility to develop a professional life.

### **Technical competences**

Participants of the focus group also agreed in that the technical competencies singled out by the questionnaire were essentially- and not simply important - for a professional caring for disabled persons must have and acquire.

The critical skill that the professionals that care for the disabled community is that for them their work must be vocational. For these professional to be really efficient it is vital for them

- 1- to feel that it is their personal objective to improve the quality of life of persons with disabilities;
- 2- that these persons are normal as they are. Their profile is different from that of the majority of the population who have an average degree of mental and physical abilities.
- 3- and that they can develop a professional life; to a larger of less degree, but they have the right to develop a competence which they like performing and consider it



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their professional; whether this activity generates for them an income or not. the important thing is that they have an activity they carry out and consider it they working life

The participants agree in that the competences and skills brought up in the focus group should be acquired by the entire population and do not refer only to the professionals that care for persons with limitations and disabilities. A debate on how to reach the parents and family members of persons with disabilities was intense. Although a formula of doing so was not reached. Hence the proposal to carry out a research to deeply analyse the fundamental of this reality; the influence it has of the quality of life of disabled persons of their families; the degree of social inclusion of their disabled persons in their environment to participate actively in their environment; the deciding effect they have in the development of professional activities and life of members of the disabled community

### **General comments and contribution on the part of the focus group participants**

Again it is import to emphasize that the participants opinion is that all the subjects brought up in the focus group to be evaluation are all of basic importance for any professional that care for disabled persons must equally have.

Professional that care for persons with disabilities must carry out their work as a vocation and not simply as a profession. With the contextual understanding of the social, political and economic impact that this population has in the country and European scenario. A scenario with dramatic generational curve, Europe cannot afford not leveraging the capabilities and contributions of 13% of its population. And Spain cannot afford disregarding 14.5% of its population.

Education is a core issue to be addressed urgently in order to achieve total inclusion of the disabled community into social and professional life in the country. When addressing this issue there is a classification that should be considered.



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The project addresses the care that must be given to persons with disabilities or reduces abilities or mobilizes, not to persons who having the potential capacity to carry out in life, do not advance for lack of interest, personal effort or negative culture.

Education, as the participants emphasis, is set by the family environment. Accepting and inclusive disabilities is learned early in life as the family sets stereotype of what is right or wrong in their environment . therefore adult education is critically needed. School education is basic. As in school children and later students of upper grades must learn not only geography and mathematics, but more important, to communicate and interact with classmates of all different profiles. Bullying is a disease of this era in the education system. Where discrimination against disabled classmate is the cause of lack of progress of members of this community. Therefore teachers and professors must play a critical role in educating the art of inclusion of all profiles, particularly the less favored which are the children with disabilities.

Disabled persons should be involved in working with training to make more effective the message and learning process of the training program. As well as they could act as mentors whenever possible particularly if they have had a professional inclusion experience.

Learning to value what persons with disability can offer is of extreme importance. Just take as example Steven Hopkins. The most brilliant brain in the world capable of understanding and explaining to the rest of humanity the genesis the universe. Trapped in the most disabled body. Persons with autisms to who extraordinary in mathematics. Mobility disabled professional in information technology. The most brilliant artists in history have been disabled: Leonardo da Vinci, Beethoven, Mozart, Munch, Van Gogh, Goya, Cervantes.....

The group insists in that persons considered disabled by society can have extraordinary talent which should be recognized and respected. And specially leveraged by the corporate community



**CLAP HANDS**  
ACCESS TO PROFESSION FOR PERSONS WITH HANDICAP

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