

Support Material for Recruitment

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Introduction

The Dys in Education, Professional Life, and Work (Dysineduprowork) project seeks to bridge the inclusion gap for individuals with Specific Learning Differences (SLD) in the professional and vocational education sphere. Tackling disparities in education and employment across Europe, the project has built a suite of practical tools and resources aimed at enhancing career outcomes for neurodiverse individuals and building inclusive workplaces.

A key role in the process of change toward greater inclusion is played by the recruitment process, the process has to be authentic and fair and promoting inclusivity as part of workplace culture is essential and legislation and company policies must clearly reflect it (Dysineduprowork Project, 2024). This document aims to support employers by providing a overview of how to adapt your hiring process and improve the inclusiveness of your company/organisation using a variety of tools developed by the Dysineduprowork Project. This document targets HR Managers, Recruiters and Employers to provide support material for recruiting and employing neurodiverse workers and sign post the reader to external resources that can support you in

your local context. The aim is to highlight how adapting the recruitment process can help to attract and retain employees with SLD's and improve your overall work environment.

Neurodiverse-friendly Working Environments

Diverse workplaces include employees with a wide range of different characteristics, such as gender, ethnicity, age, and physical ability. Other differences are less visible, for example, personality types, learning styles, education and socio-economic backgrounds, sexual orientation, and religious and political beliefs. A neurodiverse friendly work environment actively supports individuals who think and work differently to others due to the way their brains uniquely operate in relation to mood, attention, learning and sociability.

An inclusive workplace culture embraces individual differences by creating a sense of belonging and respect for all, making diverse employees feel valued, welcomed, integrated, and included in the workforce. The effective management of diversity goes beyond affirmative action. It requires organisations to create an inclusive workplace where all employees are valued for their talent, regardless of diversity. This can be achieved through active listening, practical measures to support individuals with SLD's, constructive feedback, effective communication, empathy and compassion, and teamwork.

A neurodiverse friendly work environment should practically provide reasonable accommodations such as assistive technologies, information in accessible formats, appropriate furniture, and suitable working environments. It should also adapt work tasks, allow flexibility, and give time to employees to process large amounts of information. Recruitment processes can also be enhanced to support and attract applicants with SLD's with small adjustments in the job advertisement, during interview stage and in instances where testing is used to assess the suitability of the candidate. While there is an initial cost to the employer, overall creating an inclusive work environment and offering reasonable accommodations are not only cost-effective but also beneficial for the employer and employee by retaining valuable employees, enhancing productivity, and fostering a diverse work environment (Schartz H.A, 2006).

The Advantages of a Neurodiverse Working Environment

There are many advantages of a neurodiverse working environment both for employers and employees. Such as the unique skills and perspectives that neurodiverse people, such as those with autism, ADHD, and dyslexia, can bring to an organization, enhancing innovation, problem-

solving, and productivity (Austin, 2017). The unique skill sets neurodiverse people often display can make it easier to attract and retain skilled workers in hard-to-fill positions.

By supporting a neurodiverse friendly work environment, team leaders can effectively leverage their employees' diverse ideas, experiences, thoughts, and perspectives for the greater good of their organisation; this can lead to innovation, creativity, and increased productivity. Moreover, adapting the workplace to be more inclusive can increase employee engagement and inject a sense of purpose and meaning into the company culture. Not only can it improve your company internally, the United Nations and other globally recognized organizations often show recognition to companies that implement neurodiversity policies, which can improve the employer brand (Indeed, 2024).

A summary of advantages, identified by the DysInEduProWork project in its Employer Guide ([Employer's Guide – DysInEduProWork](#)) on Neurodiversity [a non-exhaustive list], are:

Diverse perspective and Skill: Neurodivergent employees often bring unique strengths such as creativity, problem-solving, resilience, and high adaptability.

Improved Workplace Culture: Hiring neurodiverse talent promotes inclusivity and sets a standard for embracing diversity, which boosts team morale and collaboration.

Competitive Advantage: Diverse teams can improve organizational performance. Neurodiverse employees may offer unique approaches to challenges, benefiting decision-making and strategy.

Incentive and Supports: Employers may qualify for grants, tax benefits, or consultancy services when hiring individuals with SLDs

A Loyal Workforce: Providing an inclusive environment fosters loyalty, with employees feeling valued and motivated to contribute over the long term.

How to Improve your recruitment process to attract Employees with SLD's

The Job Advertisement

A good place to start when consider how to enhance your recruitment process' inclusivity is when you are creating the job advertisement for the position you wish to fill. It is helpful to identify what the role is and what are the essential duties i.e. tasks that must be completed by the employee and non-essential duties i.e. tasks that would be of added value to the role but not

central to filling the position. This will help the person with an SLD to better judge whether or not they are suited to the position or not. Avoid identifying skills and physical abilities that are not required by the role (Employers for Change, n.d.).

After fine tuning the requirements of the role, you should consider how the advertisement will be written, where possible avoid jargon and complex language. We recommend using plain language or easy-to-read text. Here is a task blueprint to guide you on how to write inclusive text: [FR-How-to-write-inclusive-text-1.pdf](#)

To encourage and attract individuals with SLD's it is helpful to include an accessibility statement that highlights your intentions as an inclusive employer, for example you can state that you are committed to having an inclusive recruitment process and that interested candidates can contact you if they require accommodations to participate in the process.

Accessible Application Process

When you have finalised your job advertisement, you should now consider how you will design the application process. As mentioned, you should identify from the onset that applicants can seek accommodations to support them in their application. You should consider the platform and tools that you will use for the submissions, if it is an online portal for example it should be compatible with assistive technologies and incorporate universal design principles. It is best practice to test the tools you are using regularly to ensure they are operating correctly. Additionally, you should offer different formats for applicants to apply for the role (online/offline - email, phone, accessible online platform, using different formats - braille or with large fonts)

The Interview

During the interview stages of your recruitment process, it is important that your staff who carry out the interviews receive disability awareness training so they can communicate respectfully and effectively with candidates who have a disability. Disability awareness training is provided widely and in some cases, companies are incentivised to provide these types of trainings. Please see our support directory in section 6 below for relevant resources related to training and development of staff in areas of inclusion and diversity in your country.

If the candidate has disclosed to you that they have a disability then it is important to only assess their skills and experience without focusing on their disability. To help you plan for interviews, ensure that candidates feel comfortable to seek accommodations in advance of the

interview so that you can provide the needed support for example providing interview questions or a guideline on the content of the interview in advance. It is advisable to keep records of all decisions made during the interview and decision making to ensure fairness and transparency.

Selection Criteria

To improve the inclusivity of the selection of candidates it is helpful to create inclusive selection criterion that involve evaluating candidates based on their ability to perform the essential functions of the job and ensuring that the criteria for selection are job-related. Interviewers should ensure that candidates who qualify with reasonable accommodations should not be disadvantaged or viewed differently to candidates without them.

To help your interviewers avoid bias, structured interviews with standardized questions should be used and employers should consider who forms the interview panel. Encouraging a varied panel, where feasible, that represent diverse viewpoints, such as having lived experience of a disability, can promote fairness and inclusivity in the selection process (Employers for change, n.d. [Inclusive and Accessible Communications](#)).

Legal Obligation by Country and Helpful Resources

It is important to understand your legal obligations as an employer, as they relate to recruiting and hiring people with disabilities. Employer's obligations can for example require you to provide reasonable accommodations to employees and job candidates. Reasonable accommodations can include making adjustments to physical spaces, providing flexible working arrangements or assistive technology.

In this section we provide brief overviews of the legal context in relation to recruiting and employing individuals with disabilities in Ireland, Estonia, Greece, Italy, and Belgium. Since the introduction of EU Employment Equality Framework (2000/78/EC) Directive, which mandates non-discrimination based on disability in all stages of employment, including recruitment, EU countries have aligned their national legal framework on Employment Equality with this Directive.


The EU Employment Equality Framework Directive (2000/78/EC) establishes a general framework to ensure equal treatment in employment and occupation across the European Union. It prohibits both direct and indirect discrimination based on religion or belief, disability, age, or

sexual orientation in areas such as access to employment, vocational training, working conditions, and membership in professional organizations.

The Directive applies to both public and private sectors, covering all types of employment or occupation. Additionally, it mandates reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities to enable their participation in the workforce unless it causes a disproportionate burden to the employer. Positive action measures can also be taken to prevent or compensate for disadvantages linked to the protected grounds. This Directive aims to implement the principle of equal treatment and improve equality in practice within the EU labour market (European Commission n.d., [Employment Equality Directive \(2000/78/EC\) - European Commission](#))

In Ireland

Under the Employment Equality Act 1998 (Employers for Change LINK), people with disabilities are protected against discrimination in areas of employment, VET Training and Work Experience. In relation to the recruitment process, this covers job advertisements and the act aims to ensure that suitable facilities for people with disabilities are available in relation to access to employment, advancing in employment and taking part in training. The Employment Equality Act was amended by the Equality Act 2004 to enhance anti-discrimination measures in Ireland, promoting equality across various grounds such as gender, age, and disability and further align Irish law with the European Equality Framework.

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC, [IHREC Website](#)) is the body that oversees the enforcement of equality legislation and provides guidelines for employers on making their recruitment processes inclusive. Employers for Change provide a helpful webpage with an overview of legislation that apply to employers operating in Ireland here:  Legislation

In Estonia

the European Employment Equality framework has been adopted primarily through its national Equal Treatment Act ([Equal Treatment Act-Riigi Teataja](#)) and Gender Equality Act, which prohibit discrimination on grounds such as gender, race, disability, age, and sexual orientation in employment and pay. The country has established a legal framework that supports fairness, safety, and dignity at work, including protections against harassment and requirements for reasonable accommodation of employees with disabilities.

Estonia has an Unemployment Insurance Fund (Töötukaasa, [Töötukassa Information Link](#)) that already has several programs to help persons with disabilities enter and stay in the workforce. Estonia first registers the person as having reduced work ability, and evaluates to what extent that ability is reduced. One such assistance program offers employers a job assistant for up to 12 months. This additional person is usually used in a job-training capacity, but can also be used to aid a person with physical limitations.

Secondly, the unemployment fund offers employers a consultancy service. "The consulting and information service provides employers with an overview of how to support people with various health problems and special needs in the workplace" (Töötukaasa, n.d.). Finally, there is a monetary incentive. If an employer hires a person with a reduced work capacity, that employer can have a reimbursement of the social taxes that are paid. Social tax is an additional ~35% that employers pay directly to the state on top of the regular salary. This amount is not included in the salary offer, thus it is not considered an income tax, but rather an employer cost. There is a similar program if the employee is labelled simply as long-term unemployed.

In Greece

Multiple laws are enforced, in line with EU law and International conventions, ensuring equal employment opportunities and accommodations for neurodivergent individuals.

Neurodivergent job applicants (e.g. autistic, ADHD, dyslexic) are legally protected under the broad definition of disability. Their rights include non-discrimination in job postings, screening, interview formats, and selection decisions.

The EU Employment Equality Framework is implemented under Law 3304/2005 while Law 4443/2016 increases the rights for individuals with disabilities, especially in work and vocational training, and strengthens anti-discrimination guidelines. In addition, article 21(6) of the Greek Constitution guarantees the rights of disabled people to be independent, work, and participate equally in the social, economic, and political life. Additionally, individuals with disabilities are entitled to access reasonable accommodations, from the hiring stage onward, which include flexible scheduling, alternative formats, quiet rooms, assistive tools, simplified instructions, and use of support personnel (e.g. job coaches, interpreters).

Under Greek legislation, employers in the private sector are required by Law 2643/1998, to hire at least 8% of their employees from protected groups, such as those with disabilities. A 5% quota must be met by public entities, and neurodivergent people who have a disability rating of 50% or

above are eligible (Disabled.gr, December 2009). Employers who successfully meet the established hiring quotas for individuals with disabilities may benefit from various subsidies and forms of support provided by OAED (now known as DYPA or Public Employment Service, [OAED Website](#)).

In Italy

Awareness of neurodiversity—especially Specific Learning Disorders (DSA: dyslexia, dysgraphia, dysorthography, dyscalculia)—has grown in educational settings but only recently in employment under Law 25/2022 (Art.7), that recognizes specific rights for workers with DSA, including during recruitment and selection processes it also affords a right to compensatory tools in job interviews and selection tests (extra time, speech synthesis, calculators, diagrams), Right to request accommodations once employed).

Italy has developed a comprehensive framework combining national and European measures. While protections initially focused on disability in general, more recent steps have extended rights to people with Specific Learning Disorders (DSA). Laws cover both non-discrimination and the provision of reasonable accommodations. Law 25/2022 is particularly significant as it explicitly grants workers with DSA rights during recruitment and employment, ensuring access to compensatory tools and adapted evaluations (Aiditalia.org, 2025).

Employers in Italy are expected not only to comply formally with legislation but also to adopt proactive measures that promote inclusivity. Their responsibilities include designing recruitment processes that are fair and accessible, respecting voluntary disclosure of DSA, and working with institutions such as ANPAL (<https://www.anpal.gov.it/>) and INPS/INAIL to access support schemes and training programmes.

Employers must also note that compensatory measures under Law 25/2022 are considered reasonable ex lege, since they are low-cost and easy to implement. The introduction of a work inclusion/disability manager (mandatory in the public sector after D.Lgs. 222/2023 and encouraged in private companies) shows the importance of structural roles in supporting inclusivity. Employers are also expected to handle DSA-related data under GDPR rules, ensuring voluntary disclosure, confidentiality, and secure processes.

In Belgium

As a member of the EU, has implemented the Employment Equality Framework Directive (2000/78/EC). The right of people with disabilities to inclusion in society has also been recognised in the Belgian constitution since 2021. EU law and Belgian practice require employers to provide reasonable accommodations during recruitment and employment, such as adapting selection tests, altering workspaces, modifying schedules, or providing assistive tools, unless doing so imposes a disproportionate burden. Belgium's public sector is subject to quota requirements for employing persons with disabilities, typically around 2%, depending on the region or level of government.

In addition, various financial incentives, subsidies, or premiums may be available to employers (especially in the private sector) to offset the cost of making adaptations. Employers who hire a disabled worker may receive an inclusion bonus ("prime d'intégration") of up to 25% of the total wage cost. Employers who appoint an employee to mentor a newly recruited disabled worker may receive a mentoring bonus ("prime de tutorat d'entreprise"). More information is available at the website of [Service bruxelloise Phare](#). The support available might differ depending on the region.

UNIA, the Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities ([Unia – Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities – Equinet](#)) offers training, draft policy recommendations and conducts research on discrimination and equality. The federal recruitment agency Travaillerpour.be ([Homepage | Travaillerpour.be](#)), offers guidance to help government departments adjust recruitment processes and posts. Adaptations taking place in the recruitment process in the federal government include tests on computers equipped with magnification software or speech synthesis and a Braille display, or additional time granted to candidates.

Reasonable Accommodations are outlined in the Belgian Constitution since 2021, and are assessed according to four criteria: effectiveness, equality, autonomy and safety. The accommodation must also be assessed at least in light of the financial impact of the accommodation, the organisational impact of the accommodation, the anticipated frequency and duration of use of the accommodation by persons with disabilities, the impact of the accommodation on the environment and other users, and the absence or otherwise of equivalent alternatives. For more information go to: ([What is a reasonable accommodation? | Unia](#))

If you are interested in learning more about Best practices of inclusion for people with SLDs and have an understanding of some of the barriers learners and workers with SLDs face, you can view the Dys Best Practice handbook here: [DYS-Booklet-Ireland.pdf](#)

The key topics covered include:

- Overview of national reports in Ireland, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Belgium
- Common challenges
- Vocational Education Training graduation specialty vs. job placement
- Overview of interviews with select quotes
- Overview of best practices
- Best practices for workers and employer
- Tools and guidelines for job search
- Tools and guidelines for the workplace

Governmental Supports

Employers can leverage government support programmes and initiatives aimed at promoting the employment of individuals with disabilities, such as job placement services, tax incentives, and grants for workplace accommodations. National Government support can help you to cover costs to hire and retain employees.

For example:

In Ireland, **'Work and Access'** is a set of supports for persons with disabilities in the workplace that can facilitate access to Assistive Technologies and assessments of accessibility within workplaces ([Work and Access](#))

In Estonia, you can avail of **'Work-Related Technical Aid'** if an employee with a disability requires a new technology to support them in their role. ([Recruitment of a person with reduced work ability | Töötukassa](#) Sec.2)

In Greece, the **'OAED Supported Employment Grants'**, a public funding body, offers: salary subsidy for disabled hires; up to 90% of workplace accommodation costs; self-employment support ([www.OAED.gr](#)).

In Italy, employers can benefit from subsidies and initiatives such as 'DSA Progress for Work' ([Aiditalia](#)) and 'DSA Lavoro e Orientamento', which support inclusive practices and provide Dyslexia-friendly certification.

In Belgium, regional organisations, such as the [Service bruxelloise Phare](#), distribute bonuses to employers who hire a disabled worker and to those who appoint an employee to mentor them.

Support Directory

For more helpful links for Employers in the mentioned EU countries go to the Dysineduprowork Employer Support Directory: [WP4.5 Support Directory.xlsx](#)

Dysineduprowork Tools and Resources Table:

Resource	Purpose of Resource
Dys Best Practice Booklet	Designed using FIGMA, the Dys Best Practice Booklet is a digital publication highlighting best practices across partner countries (Ireland, Greece, Estonia, Belgium and Italy) as well as some challenges to inclusion in areas of education and employment. Link: DYS-Booklet-EN.pdf
Employer's Comprehensive Guide	<p>Designed using Genially, the Employer's Comprehensive Guide identifies strategies to improve co-worker interactions, practical training and awareness programmes, and accommodations for employees with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLDs).</p> <p>The guide highlights the benefits of neurodiverse hiring, offers communication tips for discussing workplace adjustments, and shares helpful resources. <i>Link:</i> Employer's Guide</p>
Fiches about learning disorders in the Workplace	<p>Designed using Canva, the goal of the Fiches about Learning Disorders in the Workplace is to provide short, summarised information to help employers better harness the employees' talents. The fiches are an additional resource to complement the employer's guide.</p> <p>The slides include specific characteristics of each SLD. They focus on learning disorders one by one, by highlighting the characteristics of each, as well as the strengths and challenges connected to each of them. They can provide you with practical tips on how to adapt the workplace to the needs of neurodivergent employees. <i>Link:</i> Fiches about Learning Disorders</p>
Task Blueprint Module	<p>Designed using Canva, the goal of the Task Blueprint Module, including a presentation and downloadable templates, is to inform employers of the benefits of creating task blueprints for various procedures in a company.</p> <p>A blueprint can be made by an expert to pass the instructions to someone less experienced with the topic in question. However, workers can also create blueprints as a tool for taking notes, organising their knowledge, and creating task lists.</p> <p>For instance, they can be used to design an inclusive contract, or to guide staff on how to effectively use digital resources and carry out administrative tasks. This can empower staff to tackle daily workplace tasks that can cause anxiety or stress, particularly during onboarding into a new position. <i>Link:</i> Task Blueprint Module</p>
Support Directory	Designed in a PDF format, the Support Directory provides a depository of relevant resources for Employers across Europe including local resources in Ireland, Belgium, Italy, Greece and Estonia. Download: Support Directory

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