

WORKPLACE SOCIAL INCLUSION

CONVENTION
STUDENT
EMPLOYEE
DISABILITY
ACTION
ILO
PRACTICE
LIFELOG
LEARNING
SOCIAL INCLUSION
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
EMPLOYMENT
DISCRIMINATION
RIGHT
DISABLED
EDUCATION
LAWS
ACTIVE CITICENSHIP

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Workplace Social Inclusion

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Workplace Social Inclusion

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PREFACE

The Workplace Social Inclusion paper is the result of the authors' collaboration within an Erasmus+ project, "SafeEngine-Blended Learning through Innovative Tools for Sustainable and Safety Engineering and Social Inclusion", nr. 2020-1-RO01-KA203-080085, implemented during 01.12.2020-31.05.2023.

Through the theme of social inclusion in the workplace, the book provides specialists from several interdisciplinary fields (pedagogy, psychology, special psychology, social work, law, management, economics, *etc.*) with general and specific information on the national and international legislative framework of the process of work inclusion of people with special needs, as well as intervention strategies aimed at facilitating and achieving the process of professional integration.

In the first chapter, Education for Diversity and Social Inclusion, the general framework of inclusive education is presented, which allows conceptual delimitations and understanding of the relationships between the basic terms specific to the field, as well as their evolution over time.

In the second chapter, National and International Legislative Aspects on Social Inclusion in the Workplace, the most significant national and international legislative documents regulating the social inclusion of people with disabilities are presented.

In the third chapter, Strategies for Social Integration in the Workplace for Different Categories of Socially Disadvantaged People, the strategies adopted with the aim of integrating people with different types of disabilities in the workplace are outlined.

In the fourth chapter, Active Citizenship, concepts of active citizenship, characteristics of effective active citizenship, and examples of active citizenship in education are presented.

In the last chapter, Lifelong Learning Process, the benefits of lifelong learning, ways of approaching lifelong learning in life, ways in which lifelong learning drives the progress of countries and organizations, and strategies for implementing lifelong learning in various organizations are presented.

The publication of this book, through its content, structure, and examples of good practice, is an important contribution to the development of the field of inclusive education, a field that is characterized by continuous and rapid dynamics in education. Social inclusion of people with disabilities in the workplace is an important indicator of the democratic process of social equity at the European and international levels.

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INTRODUCTION

Inclusive and integrated education has become a reality of the Romanian educational system in the last 25 years, based on the idea that education is essential to people's and societies' growth. To attain inclusive policies and practices and to establish the foundation for an inclusive culture, inclusive education is a complicated, protracted process that requires ongoing examination, modification, and development.

The foundation of the inclusive education - education for all paradigm is defined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the World Program of Action for Persons with Disabilities, the UNESCO Conference of Ministers of Education in Jomtien, Thailand, 1990, the legal provisions regarding the integration of children and young people with disabilities in the usual education systems, the 1993 UN General Assembly resolution, and the Copenhagen Declaration.

Education systems must be inclusive and actively seek to include all children and respond flexibly to the situations and needs of all children/students. Romania has adopted laws to encourage and assist the integration and inclusion of underprivileged people, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Education Law no. 84/1995, Regulation on the organization and functioning of special education, and MEC Order no. 4653/08.10.2001.

The usefulness of defining the terminology used in Romania is to establish a common language specific to the field of inclusion. Integrated education is a set of measures applied to categories of the population that seeks to eliminate segregation in all forms. It is an institutionalized way of schooling children with disabilities in ordinary schools and classes or in school structures as close as possible to the usual ones. Inclusive education is based on changes and transformations in the school to support the participation in the learning process of all students in a community. The relationship between inclusion and integration focuses on the transfer of children from separate schools to regular schools in the community.

The ILO (International Labour Organization) made a recommendation in 1944 that people with disabilities should be provided with full opportunities for rehabilitation, specialized vocational guidance, training and retraining, and employment in useful work. The UN ratified the right to work for all people, including those with impairments, four years later. The ILO also adopted the Vocational Rehabilitation (Disabled) Recommendation, 1955, which was the basis for national legislation and practice in relation to vocational counseling, vocational training, and placement of disabled people.

The 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) reaffirms the right to work, including the option to support oneself through employment that is freely selected or accepted. States Parties also agree to provide everyone with an equal opportunity to be promoted into a position of responsibility at a suitable higher level, subject to no factors other than seniority and competence, and to provide safe and healthy working conditions.

The ILO's Human Resources Development Convention (No. 142) calls for open, flexible, and complementary systems of general, technical, and vocational education, educational and

vocational guidance, and vocational training, including continuing employment information. The Resources Development Recommendation (No. 150) emphasizes the importance of mainstreaming vocational guidance and training, educating the general public, employers, and employees about the employment of people with disabilities, and adjusting the workplace to accommodate disabled workers. The ILO and UNESCO have worked together to ensure that their instruments pursue complementary goals, such as the resolution on Vocational Rehabilitation and Social Reintegration of Disabled or Handicapped Persons, the UN General Assembly's Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons, and the ILO's Convention No. 159 in 1983.

These initiatives have led to the World Programme of Action Concerning Disabled Persons and the International Year of Disabled Persons. The Convention outlines fundamental principles that should guide vocational rehabilitation and work opportunities policies, emphasizing equality of opportunity and treatment, affirmative action, inclusion of people with disabilities in mainline work-related programs and services, assistance for those in rural and isolated communities, and the need for fairness and equity in all aspects of life.

Recommendation No. 168 outlines measures to enhance equal job possibilities, and the 1987 Global Meeting of Experts recommended a guidance principle to suggest action priorities. The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities were approved in 1993.

Generalization is difficult due to a lack of data, but some generalizations can be made based on the information at hand. In the EU, 40% of disabled adults of working age were employed in 2003, compared to 64.2% of people without a disability. The inactivity rate for people with disabilities is twice that of people without disabilities, indicating both low levels of integration following a long-standing health problem or disability (LSHPD) and comparatively low levels of educational and vocational training.

Different countries have different causes for this high inactivity, such as benefit “traps” and the possibility of losing benefits while entering work. People with disabilities had a 6.5% overall labor market availability in Canada in 2001, although they made up only 2.4% of the federally regulated workforce.

The unemployment rate for people with disabilities in France was three times greater than the rate for the country's active population as a whole, and the average length of unemployment for disabled workers was twice as long. In Germany, the labor market participation rate for those with severe disabilities was 37% (West), compared to 80% for males and 63% for women who were not impaired. In Sweden, 68% of people with disabilities were employed, compared to 77% of the country's overall population, and 57% of people had “impaired working capacity.” In the United Kingdom, 19% of the working-age population were employed, and 49% of the estimated 6.8 million people with disabilities of working age were employed.

People with disabilities typically have lower levels of education than the general population when it comes to the labor market and are more likely to hold part-time work. Mental illness is the leading cause of disability benefits enrolment in Switzerland, accounting for 40% of the total.

Factors contributing to the low employment rates of people with disabilities include a lack of education and training, a decline in the demand for unskilled labor, worries about accidents and insurance costs, a reluctance to register as disabled, a lack of knowledge about job opportunities, and a lack of awareness among employers of needs and a disability. More active labor market policy is needed to address these issues.

Active labor market policies use a higher percentage of public funds than passive policies, and high unemployment rates and a global economic crisis are making it difficult to put some of these measures into action. Sheltered employment should be provided to those with disabilities who cannot access open employment.

Active citizenship is an important part of creating healthy communities. It promotes democratic collaboration that respects diversity, embraces the entire community, and is based on the recognition of fundamental human rights and the rule of law. Schools play a crucial role in this process, and the development of educational programs is necessary to enhance skills like cooperation and communication, as well as to develop critical thinking, lessen prejudice, and foster tolerance, understanding, empathy, and an openness to variety. Active citizenship education has helped to shape an important civil society and political culture, and there is significant official support for working with the younger generation in the public sector to combat authoritarian views and foster the development of intercultural and democratic capacities.

Active learning involves the learner in the creation and construction of knowledge, social interaction, and practical acts performed for the benefit of others.

Bernard Crick argued for the inclusion of citizenship education in the National Curriculum for England, and volunteering is a voluntary activity where individuals donate their time to assist others in the neighborhood or larger society. Social enterprise is a non-profit with clearly stated social objectives, and students must be intellectually engaged in their study for "Pedagogies of Engagement" to effectively integrate civic learning into the curriculum. Active learning is the process of providing students more responsibility for their own education and providing them with the opportunity to engage actively and exchange ideas.

It involves identifying educational activities that pay close attention to learning behaviors, integrating critical thinking and lifelong learning, and associating higher-order thinking with intellectually stimulating tasks. Active citizens acquire knowledge haphazardly and informally from their interactions with other people as well as from their everyday experiences away from the classroom.

Lifelong learning is self-directed education that is centered on personal growth. It is defined as all learning activity undertaken throughout life with the aim of improving knowledge, skills, and competencies within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective. It is voluntary and intended to bring about personal fulfillment through informal or formal instruction. Projects for lifelong learning include self-taught research, discovering a new sport or hobby, acquiring knowledge of new technology, gaining fresh information, and taking a self-interest course. The benefits of lifelong learning include a better quality of life and a feeling of self-worth.

Lifelong learning can lead to many long-term advantages, such as renewed commitment, recognition of one's own goals and interests, enhancement of other social and professional abilities, improvement of self-confidence, and more. Employers are recognizing that obtaining formal academic certificates is not the only method to identify and nurture potential and that a desirable quality may be a commitment to lifelong learning. This type of personal learning is often referred to as continuous learning.

MAJOR LEARNING OUTCOMES

CHAPTER 1

- √ The issue of integrated/inclusive education - conceptual framework, institutions, and programs related to the administration and/or application of the rules of social inclusion
- √ The relationship between exclusion, segregation, integration, and inclusion
- √ Disability inclusion matters for all - Special educational requirements (SEN)
- √ General and specific principles of integrated education
- √ The evaluation and complex diagnosis of students with special requirements
- √ Intervention tools, like “The Personalized Service Plan (PSP)” and “The Personalized Intervention Plan (PIP)”

CHAPTER 2

- √ Obligations and responsibilities of employers to protect people with disabilities and other sensitive groups - International legal instruments and policy initiatives
- √ Institutions and programs related to the administration and/or application of the rules of social inclusion
- √ Consultation, collaboration, and cooperation with workers and their representatives related to Social Inclusion and Diversity – Check-list
- √ Obligation of employers to ensure the availability of expertise and competence in matters of social inclusion
- √ Workforce diversity and risk assessment: ensuring everyone is covered (Examples of good practice)

CHAPTER 3

- √ Employing people with disabilities makes good business sense
- √ Disability Inclusion in the Workplace - Measures to facilitate work and employ
- √ ILO Conventions on Migrant Workers – flexibility, validity, relevance, and scope
- √ Migrant worker numbers grow along with vulnerabilities
- √ Example of good practices in companies from Romania

CHAPTER 4

- √ Characteristics of effective active citizenship
- √ Examples of active citizenship in education
- √ Examples of good practices in Italy, Spain, Romania
- √ Civics Lesson – Inspiring students to become active citizens
- √ Making persons with disabilities full citizens

CHAPTER 5

- √ What is Lifelong Learning
- √ Why You NEED to be a Lifelong Learner
- √ The benefits of skills and lifelong learning – ILC2021
- √ How to Embrace Being a Lifelong Learner
- √ Developing lifelong learning in organizations
- √ Lifelong learning and the future of work challenges and opportunities
- √ Why YOU Need Lifelong Learning to Be Successful

DEFINITIONS

Adjustment or Accommodation

Adaptation of the job, including adjustment and modification of machinery and equipment and/or modification of the job content, working time, and work organization, and the adaptation of the work environment to provide access to the place of work and to facilitate the employment of individuals with disabilities.

Competent Authority

A ministry, government department, or other public authority having the power to issue regulations, orders, or other instructions having the force of law.

Decent Work

Productive work in which rights are protected, which generates an adequate income, with adequate social protection.

Disability Management

A process in the workplace designed to facilitate the employment of persons with a disability through a coordinated effort addressing individual needs, work environment, enterprise needs and legal responsibilities.

Disabled Person

An individual whose prospects of securing, returning to, retaining and advancing in suitable employment are substantially reduced as a result of a duly recognized physical, sensory, intellectual, or mental impairment.

Discrimination

Any distinction, exclusion, or preference based on certain grounds which nullifies or impairs equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation. General standards that establish distinctions based on prohibited grounds constitute discrimination in law. The specific attitude of a public authority or a private individual that treats unequally persons or members of a group on a prohibited ground constitutes discrimination in practice. Indirect discrimination refers to apparently neutral situations, regulations, or practices which, in fact, result in unequal treatment of persons with certain characteristics. Distinction or preferences that may result from the application of special measures of protection and assistance taken to meet the particular requirements of disabled persons are not considered discriminatory.

Employee Assistance Programme

A programme – either jointly operated by an employer and a workers' organization, or by an employer alone, or a workers' organization alone – that offers assistance to workers and frequently also to their family members, with problems liable to cause personal distress,

which affect or could eventually affect job productivity.

Employer

A person or organization employing workers under a written or verbal contract of employment that established the rights and duties of both parties in accordance with national law and practice. Governments, public authorities, and private companies, as well as individuals, may be employers.

Employers' Organization

An organization whose membership consists of individual employers, other associations of employers, or both, formed primarily to protect and promote the interests of members and to provide services to its members in employment-related matters.

Equal Opportunity

Equal access to and opportunities for all persons in employment, vocational training, and particular occupations, without discrimination, consistent with Article 4 of ILO Convention No. 159.

Inclusion - the process of preparing educational units to include in the education process all members of the community, regardless of their characteristics, disadvantages or difficulties.

Inclusive Education is based on changes and transformations of the school (in terms of organization, goals set, improving school instruction, *etc.*) in order to support the participation in the learning process of all students in a community. It presupposes a process of continuous adaptation of the educational institution so as to permanently ensure the capitalization of the existing material and human resources in order to support and ensure the necessary support to all participants in education.

Inclusive School - an educational unit that provides an education for all children and is the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes. The children in these educational units benefit from all the rights and social and educational services according to the principle the resource follows the child.

Integrated Education is defined as a set of measures applied to categories of the population that seeks to eliminate segregation in all its forms and is a dominant trend in addressing people with disabilities in social and educational policies, reflecting a process of transition from the study, finding an explanation for institutionalization and standardization (through laws, declarations, and regulations), becoming a common practice both in the world and in our country. Integrated education is an institutionalized way of schooling children with disabilities (as well as other children with special needs) in ordinary schools and classes or in school structures as close as possible to the usual ones (Vrăsmaş, Nicolae, Oprea, Vrăsmaş, 2005).

International Labor Standards

Principles and norms in all labour-related matters, which are adopted by the tripartite ILC

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(governments, employers, and workers). These standards take the form of international labour Conventions and Recommendations. Through ratifications by member States, conventions create binding obligations to implement their provisions. Recommendations are non-binding instruments that provide guidance on policy, legislation, and practice.

Job Adaptation

The adaptation or redesign of tools, machines, workstations, and the work environment to an individual's needs. It may also include adjustments in work organization, work schedules, sequences of work and in breaking down work tasks to their basic elements.

Job Retention

Remaining with the same employer, with the same or different duties or conditions of employment, including return after a period of paid or unpaid absence.

Mainstreaming

Including people with disabilities in employment, education, training, and all sectors of society.

Organizations of and/or for persons with disabilities

Organizations that represent persons with disabilities and advocate for their rights.

Return to Work

The process by which a worker is supported in resuming work after an absence due to injury or illness.

School Center for Inclusive Education - a school institution which, in addition to organizing and carrying out the teaching-learning-evaluation process, has other directions of institutional development: training/information in the field of special education, documentation/research/experimentation, as well as educational services for/in the community [222].

Vocational Rehabilitation

A process that enables disabled persons to secure, retain and advance in suitable employment and thereby furthers their integration or reintegration into society.

Work Trial

Work activity to provide experience in or test suitability for a particular job.

Worker/employee

Any person who works for a wage or salary and performs services for an employer. Employment is governed by a written or verbal contract of service.

Workers' Representatives

Persons who are recognized as such under national law or practice, in accordance with the Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971 (No. 135), whether they are: (a) trade union representatives, namely representatives designated or elected by trade unions; or (b) elected representatives, namely representatives who are freely elected by workers of the undertaking in accordance with provisions of national laws or regulations or of collective agreements and whose functions do not include activities which are recognized as the exclusive prerogative of trade unions in the country concerned.

Working Conditions

The factors determining the circumstances in which the worker works. These include hours of work, work organization, job content, welfare services, and the measures taken to protect the occupational safety and health of the worker.

Working Environment

The facilities and circumstances in which work takes place and the environmental factors which may affect workers' health.

Workplace

All the places where people in employment need to be or go to carry out their work and which are under the direct or indirect control of the employer. Examples include offices, factories, plantations, construction sites, ships, and private residences.

Works Council/workplace Committee

A committee of workers within the enterprise with which the employer cooperates and which is consulted by the employer on matters of mutual concern.

Workstation

The part of the office or factory where an individual works, including desk or work surface used, chair, equipment, and other items.

Education for Diversity and Social Inclusion

Abstract: Inclusive and integrated education has become a reality of the Romanian educational system in the last 25 years, based on the idea that education is essential to people's and societies' growth. To attain inclusive policies and practices and to establish the foundation for an inclusive culture, inclusive education is a complicated, protracted process that requires ongoing examination, modification, and development.

The foundation of the inclusive education - education for all paradigm is defined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the World Program of Action for Persons with Disabilities, the UNESCO Conference of Ministers of Education in Jomtien, Thailand, 1990, the legal provisions regarding the integration of children and young people with disabilities in the usual education systems, the 1993 UN General Assembly resolution, and the Copenhagen Declaration.

The concept of integrated or inclusive education involves creating learning environments where all students, including those with disabilities or special needs, are fully included in regular classroom settings.

Here is a conceptual framework outlining key aspects of integrated/inclusive education:

- **Diversity and Inclusion:**

Embracing diversity: Recognizing and valuing the unique backgrounds, abilities, and learning styles of all students.

Promoting inclusion: Creating environments where every student feels welcome, respected, and supported.

- **Equity and Access:**

Equity in education: Ensuring that all students have access to high-quality education, regardless of their background or abilities.

Removing barriers: Identifying and addressing systemic barriers that may prevent students from fully participating in the educational experience.

- **Universal Design for Learning (UDL):**

UDL principles: Designing instruction and curriculum materials that are accessible and engaging for all learners, including those with diverse abilities and learning needs.

2 *Workplace Social Inclusion*

MARA and VLAD

Multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement: Providing multiple ways for students to access information, demonstrate understanding, and engage with learning materials.

• **Collaborative Partnerships:**

Collaboration among stakeholders: Building partnerships among educators, students, families, and community members to support the inclusion of all students.

Shared responsibility: Recognizing that creating inclusive learning environments is a collective responsibility that requires collaboration and cooperation from all stakeholders.

• **Individualized Support:**

Individualized education plans (IEPs) or personalized learning plans: Developing individualized plans that outline goals, accommodations, and support strategies for students with special needs.

Differentiated instruction: Adapting teaching strategies and materials to meet the diverse needs of students within the same classroom.

• **Positive School Climate and Culture:**

Creating a supportive environment: Fostering a school culture that values diversity, promotes respect and empathy, and celebrates the contributions of all students.

Addressing bullying and discrimination: Implementing policies and practices to prevent bullying and discrimination based on factors such as disability, race, gender, or sexual orientation.

• **Professional Development and Capacity Building:**

Training and support for educators: Providing professional development opportunities to help teachers develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to effectively support diverse learners.

Building inclusive practices: Encouraging continuous learning and reflection to enhance educators' ability to create inclusive and accessible learning environments.

• **Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation:**

Ongoing assessment: Monitoring student progress and adjusting instructional strategies and support services as needed to ensure that all students are making meaningful progress.

Program evaluation: Regularly evaluating the effectiveness of inclusive education initiatives and practices and making data-informed decisions for improvement.

By embracing these principles and practices, educational institutions can work towards creating inclusive learning environments that enable all students to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

Keywords: Diversity, Disability, Inclusive education, Inclusive learning environment, Student.

THE ISSUE OF INTEGRATED/INCLUSIVE EDUCATION- CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Inclusive and integrated education have established themselves not only as modern educational alternatives but have become, in the last 25 years, a reality of the Romanian educational system [1]. The idea that education is essential to people's and societies' growth is at the heart of inclusive education. Recent approaches to inclusive education highlight that this is primarily a reform of education and not just a matter of placing the student and the type of institution in which he or she is enrolled.

In order to attain inclusive policies and practices and to establish the foundation for an inclusive culture, inclusive education is a complicated, protracted process that necessitates ongoing examination, modification, and development.

At the legislative level, regulations have been developed, both worldwide and in our country, which support and guide society and its members in achieving the goals promoted by inclusive and inclusive educational policies.

The foundation of the inclusive education - education for all paradigm is defined by the following legislative framework:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948), which affirms that all people are created with inherent worth and dignity, is where the idea of inclusion first appeared Fig. (1). This claim suggests that acceptance of everyone, regardless of differences, is what inclusion entails [2].
- The World Program of Action for Persons with Disabilities adopted in 1981 [3].
- UNESCO Conference of Ministers of Education in Jommtien, Thailand, 1990, laying the foundations for a new direction in international education policies, namely education for all.
- The legal provisions regarding the integration of children and young people with disabilities in the usual education systems through the Resolution of the Council of Ministers of Education of May 31, 1990 [4, 5];
- The 1993 UN General Assembly adopted the resolution Standard Rules on Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities [6];

CHAPTER 2

National and International Legislative Aspects of Social Inclusion in the Workplace

Abstract: Legislation related to social inclusion in the workplace varies from country to country and may encompass a range of laws, regulations, and policies aimed at promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion. While I cannot provide a comprehensive overview of every country's legislation, I can highlight some common legislative aspects and international conventions that address social inclusion in the workplace:

- **Anti-discrimination Laws:** Many countries have laws that prohibit discrimination in the workplace based on factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity. These laws ensure equal opportunities for all individuals and promote a diverse and inclusive work environment.
- **Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Legislation:** EEO laws aim to ensure that all individuals have an equal chance of employment and advancement in the workplace, regardless of their background or characteristics. These laws often require employers to implement non-discriminatory hiring and promotion practices and provide reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities.
- **Affirmative Action Policies:** Some countries have affirmative action policies or quotas that require employers to actively promote diversity and inclusion by hiring and promoting individuals from underrepresented groups. These policies aim to address historical inequalities and promote social inclusion in the workforce.
- **Workplace Accessibility Standards:** Legislation may require employers to make their workplaces accessible to individuals with disabilities, including providing accommodations such as wheelchair ramps, accessible restrooms, and assistive technologies. These standards ensure that all employees can fully participate in the workplace and perform their job duties.
- **International Conventions:** Several international conventions and treaties address issues related to social inclusion in the workplace, including the International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions, (Fig. 1) the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). These conventions set forth principles and guidelines for promoting equality and non-discrimination in employment.
- **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Guidelines:** While not legislative in nature, CSR guidelines and frameworks encourage businesses to adopt inclusive practices and

promote social inclusion in the workplace voluntarily. Many companies incorporate diversity and inclusion initiatives into their CSR strategies to demonstrate their commitment to social responsibility.

It is essential for employers to be aware of and comply with relevant legislation and international conventions to create an inclusive workplace where all employees feel valued, respected, and empowered to contribute to their fullest potential. Additionally, ongoing efforts to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion through training, awareness-raising, and organizational policies can complement legislative measures and contribute to a more inclusive work environment.

Keywords: Diversity, Employer, Law, Legislation, Social inclusion.

IMPORTANT INTERNATIONAL LAWS AND GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

The process of social inclusion (educational, cultural, at work) of persons with disability is an elaborate process that demands the knowledge of legislative steps, which allow effective action in this regard.

The most significant international legal instruments and policy initiatives are presented.



Fig. (1). International Labour Organization¹.

The ILO (International Labour Organization) announced one of the early worldwide recognitions of the right of people with disabilities to employment opportunities in 1944 [1].

The ILO made a thorough and forward-thinking recommendation that clearly states that impaired employees “should be given complete opportunity for rehabilitation, specialised vocational assistance, training and retraining, and employment on productive work, regardless of the cause of their impairment”. According to the ILO, people with disabilities should, whenever possible, undergo the same training as other workers, with the same pay and working conditions.

The organization also called for equal employment opportunities for disabled workers and affirmative action to encourage the hiring of people with serious disabilities [2].

Four years later, the UN affirmed the inclusion of people with disabilities in the right to work. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights' Article 23 — adopted by the General Assembly on December 10, 1948 — could not be clearer: “Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment (Fig. 2). Everyone, without discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work. Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection. Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests” [3].



Fig. (2). Article 23, Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

One of the most important international instruments pertaining to the freedom of individuals with impairments to work is the Vocational Rehabilitation (Disabled) Recommendation, 1955, which was adopted by the International Labour Organisation (ILO - No. 99) [4]. Recommendation No. 99 served as the basis for national legislation and practice in relation to vocational counseling, vocational training, and placement of disabled people until the ILO Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention (No. 159) and Recommendation No. 168 were adopted in 1983. It expanded upon the essential provisions of earlier accords with regard to things like equal pay for equal work, equal opportunity, and vocational training, for example. Reiterating those earlier concepts in the

Strategies for Social Integration in the Workplace for Different Categories of Socially Disadvantaged People

Abstract: Promoting social integration in the workplace for different categories of socially disadvantaged people requires a multifaceted approach that addresses various barriers they may face. Here are some strategies tailored to different groups:

- **People with Disabilities:**

Accessibility: Ensure that the workplace is physically accessible, with ramps, elevators, and accessible restrooms. Provide assistive technologies and reasonable accommodations to support employees with disabilities.

Inclusive Policies: Implement inclusive policies and practices that promote equal opportunities for people with disabilities, including non-discriminatory hiring practices and flexible work arrangements.

Education and Awareness: Offer disability awareness training for all employees to foster understanding and promote a culture of inclusion. Encourage open communication and dialogue about disability-related issues.

- **Ethnic and Racial Minorities:**

Diversity Training: Provide diversity and inclusion training to raise awareness of unconscious biases and promote cultural sensitivity among employees.

Diverse Hiring Practices: Implement recruitment strategies that attract a diverse pool of candidates, including outreach to minority communities and partnerships with diversity-focused organizations.

Employee Resource Groups: Establish employee resource groups or affinity groups where minority employees can connect, share experiences, and advocate for their needs within the organization.

- **Low-Income or Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Individuals:**

Living Wage: Pay a living wage that allows employees to meet their basic needs and support themselves and their families.

Financial Education: Offer financial literacy programs and resources to help employees manage their finances, save money, and plan for the future.

Career Development Opportunities: Provide opportunities for skills development, training, and advancement to help employees build long-term economic stability and upward mobility.

• **Older Workers:**

Age-Inclusive Practices: Implement age-inclusive hiring and promotion practices that value the skills and experience of older workers.

Flexible Work Arrangements: Offer flexible work arrangements such as part-time schedules, remote work options, and phased retirement programs to accommodate the needs of older employees.

Continuing Education: Provide opportunities for ongoing learning and skill development to help older workers stay current in their fields and adapt to changes in the workplace.

By implementing these strategies, organizations can create a more inclusive and equitable workplace where individuals from all backgrounds feel valued, respected, and empowered to succeed. It is essential to involve employees in the process, listen to their feedback and experiences, and continually evaluate and adjust strategies to ensure they are effective in promoting social integration and diversity.

Keywords: Disability, Flexible work arrangement, Older workers, Strategy, Workplace.

WORK AND EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS

The following career choices were listed by O'Reilly in his 2007 study "*The Right to Decent Work of Persons with Disabilities*".

Open/competitive Employment

Generalization is challenging since many countries lack sufficient and comparable data. However, some hazy generalizations about the scenario can be made based on the information at hand. While the unemployment rate tends to be greater, people with disabilities tend to participate in the workforce at a rate that is significantly lower than that of other workers.

Compared to those without a handicap, 64.2% of EU adults of working age were employed in 2003, compared to 40% of disabled adults (EC2005; numbers based on surveys rather than administrative data) (Fig. 1).

The inactivity rate for people with disabilities is twice as high as it is for people without disabilities, according to the European Commission, which illustrates both low levels of integration following a long-standing health problem or disability (LSHPD) and comparably low levels of educational and vocational training.

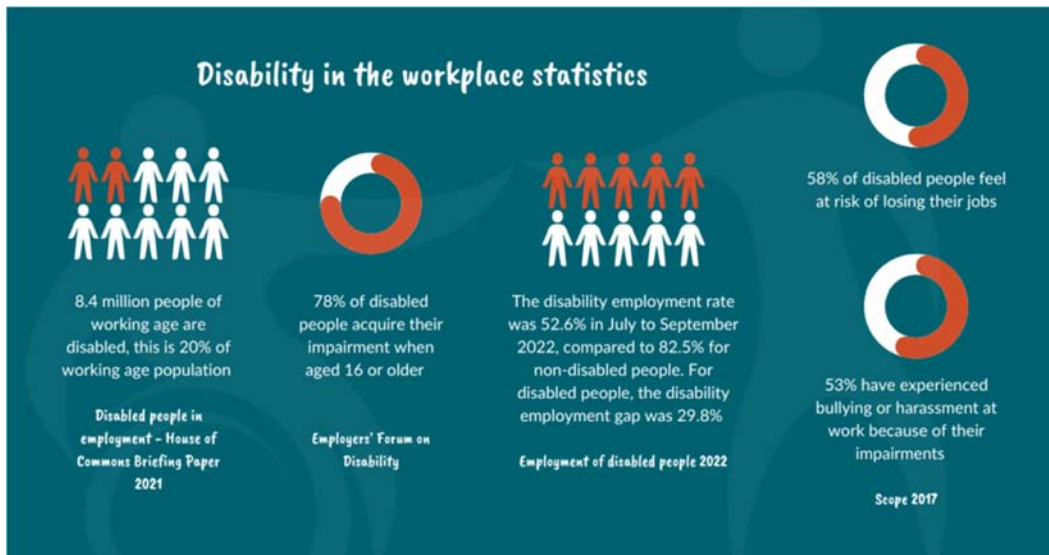


Fig. (1). Disability in the workplace (May 15, 2023)¹.

Whether a person has an LSHPD that has lasted more than six months or is expected to last six months is the fundamental question utilized in the EU method for data collecting [1]. A little more than 16% of people in the EU who were of working age (between 16 and 64) in 2002 believed they had an LSHPD. This statistic does not differentiate between those with disabilities and people who are ill.

Different countries have different causes for this high inactivity. Significant deterrents include benefit “traps” and the possibility of losing benefits while starting a job. Employers may also be hesitant to hire disabled persons because it is difficult to “let someone go” after they have been hired or because it will cost them money to implement necessary workplace adaptations.

In 1998, the participation rate for men with disabilities in **Australia** was roughly 60%, compared to 90% for people without disabilities. For women, the equivalent percentages were 46% and 71%. In comparison to men without disabilities, who had an unemployment rate of 8%, men with disabilities had a rate of 14%.

Active Citizenship

Abstract: Active citizenship is an important part of creating healthy communities. It promotes democratic collaboration that respects diversity, embraces the entire community, and is based on the recognition of fundamental human rights and the rule of law. Schools play a crucial role in this process, and the development of educational programs is necessary to enhance skills like cooperation and communication, as well as to develop critical thinking, lessen prejudice, and foster tolerance, understanding, empathy, and an openness to variety. Active citizenship education has helped to shape an important civil society and political culture, and there is significant official support for working with the younger generation in the public sector to combat authoritarian views and foster the development of intercultural and democratic capacities.

Active learning involves the learner in the creation and construction of knowledge, social interaction, and practical acts performed for the benefit of others.

Bernard Crick argued for the inclusion of citizenship education in the National Curriculum for England, and volunteering is a voluntary activity where individuals donate their time to assist others in the neighbourhood or larger society. Social enterprise is a non-profit with clearly stated social objectives, and students must be intellectually engaged in their study for “Pedagogies of Engagement” to effectively integrate civic learning into the curriculum. Active learning is the process of providing students more responsibility for their own education and providing them with the opportunity to engage actively and exchange ideas.

It involves identifying educational activities that pay close attention to learning behaviours, integrating critical thinking and lifelong learning, and associating higher-order thinking with intellectually stimulating tasks. Active citizens acquire knowledge haphazardly and informally from their interactions with other people as well as from their everyday experiences away from the classroom.

Keywords: Active learning, Citizenship, Critical thinking, Civil society, Development process.

WHAT IS ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

“No one is born a good citizen; no nation is born a democracy. Rather, both are processes that continue to evolve over a lifetime”. Kofi Annan

Involvement in local politics and communities on all stages, from local to national, refers to what is meant by “**active citizenship.**” Active citizenship might take the form of something little like organizing a street clean-up effort or something huge like teaching young people about democratic values, participation, and skills. One of the most crucial elements in creating healthy communities is active citizenship [1].

A democratic society is built and maintained by the knowledge, attitude, abilities, and behaviours that make up active citizenship. Active citizenship encourages democratic cooperation built on the acceptance of basic human rights and the rule of law, respect for diversity, and inclusion of the entire community [2]. All parts of our common social life are educated toward acquiring this knowledge and developing and using the abilities, but schools play a crucial role in this process (Fig. 1).

We may observe that the problems facing Europe are increasingly being addressed with severe measures. In this setting, active citizenship has a critical role to play in enabling citizens to examine actual solutions to issues rather than engaging in victimization, discrimination, and other radical techniques [3, 4].



Fig. (1). Active citizenship¹.

To improve interpersonal abilities including cooperation and communication, as well as to stimulate critical thinking, minimise prejudice, and promote tolerance, understanding, empathy, and an openness to difference, educational programmes must be developed.

However, if active citizenship education has different meanings in different countries and cultures, including in Germany and especially in West-German cities and city-states like Bremen, active citizenship has helped to shape an important civil society and political culture. Institutions with clout reject extreme or restrictive viewpoints [5]. Working with the younger generation in the public sector (schools, youth centres, *etc.*) to challenge authoritarian attitudes and promote the development of intercultural and democratic capacities has strong government support, both legally and financially.

ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP DEMANDS ACTIVE LEARNING

A teaching strategy called active citizenship empowers students to make educated decisions and act responsibly in order to improve their communities.

A method or strategy called “active learning” aims to get students involved in the planning, execution, and evaluation of their education.

<i>ACTIVE LEARNING</i>	<i>ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP</i>
Active learning includes the student in the development and building of knowledge, as opposed to passive learning. New experiences (doing and seeing) and an ongoing conversation about learning are also components of active learning (with self and others) [6]. A crucial component of active learning is social interaction. While physical activity is not a need for active learning, it is necessary for the brain to be engaged with the topics at hand.	Individuals or groups can engage cooperatively or independently to improve society, thwart an unwelcome change, or both. Students engage in planned activities to address concerns or problems that affect populations. Students gain the assurance and conviction that they can act in concert with others, wield power, and improve society through active citizenship.

Different types of active citizenship are referred to by a variety of names:

- Bernard Crick used the term „community involvement” in 1998 when he argued for the inclusion of citizenship education in the National Curriculum for England. Community involvement is defined as „learning about and actively participating in the issues that affect their communities, and doing so while serving the community” (Crick, 1998) [6].
- Volunteering is typically a voluntary activity where individuals donate their time to assist others in the neighbourhood or larger society [6]. The finest volunteering examples involve students researching the function and goal of the voluntary action they plan to conduct and assessing what they gained from the experience.
- Practical acts performed for the benefit of others are referred to as social action. It entails actions taken by people or organizations with no regard for financial gain that intends to transform or improve communities. Giving of both time

Lifelong Learning Process

Abstract: “Lifelong learning” refers to the ongoing, voluntary, and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge throughout one’s life. It is an attitude and a habit of continuously seeking to acquire new skills, insights, and information. Lifelong learning extends beyond formal education and encompasses various avenues such as self-directed study, online courses, workshops, seminars, reading, and practical experiences.

Here are some key aspects and benefits of lifelong learning:

- **Adaptability:** In a rapidly changing world, the ability to adapt to new technologies, industries, and societal changes is crucial. Lifelong learning helps individuals stay relevant and adaptable in their personal and professional lives.
- **Personal Growth:** Lifelong learning contributes to personal development, broadening perspectives, and enhancing critical thinking skills. It fosters intellectual curiosity and a sense of fulfillment.
- **Career Development:** Continuous learning is essential for career advancement. It allows individuals to acquire new skills, stay updated with industry trends, and remain competitive in the job market.
- **Problem-Solving Skills:** Learning new concepts and tackling challenges can improve problem-solving abilities. Lifelong learners tend to approach problems with a more open and creative mindset.
- **Health Benefits:** Engaging in intellectually stimulating activities has been linked to cognitive health and a lower risk of cognitive decline as individuals age.
- **Networking and Community Building:** Lifelong learning often involves connecting with like-minded individuals, either in person or through online communities. This networking can lead to valuable collaborations, mentorship, and support.
- **Increased Confidence:** Mastering new skills and gaining knowledge boosts self-confidence. Lifelong learners are more likely to embrace challenges and take on new opportunities with a positive mindset.
- **Personal Satisfaction:** The pursuit of knowledge for its own sake can bring a sense of fulfillment and joy. Lifelong learners often find satisfaction in the process of learning itself, independent of any external rewards.

With the advent of online learning platforms, educational resources, and the availability of information through the internet, lifelong learning has become more accessible than ever. It empowers individuals to take control of their learning journey and shape their own paths of growth and development throughout their lives.

Self-directed education that is centred on personal growth is called lifelong learning. Although there isn't a single, agreed-upon definition of **lifelong learning**, it is typically understood to mean learning that takes place outside of a conventional educational setting like a school, university, or corporate training.

Traditionally, lifelong learning is defined as “all learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills, and competencies within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective” (European Commission [EC], 2001, p. 9) [1] (Fig. 1).

Jarvis [3] provided a more detailed description, “The combination of processes throughout a lifetime whereby the whole person - body (genetic, physical and biological) and mind (knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, emotions, beliefs and senses)—experiences social situations, the perceived content of which is then transformed cognitively, emotively or practically (or through any combination) and integrated into the individual person’s biography resulting in a continually changing (or more experienced) person” [1].



Fig. (1). Exploring the Concept of Lifelong Learning¹.

However, lifelong learning does not need to be limited to unstructured learning. It is best described as voluntary and intended to bring about personal fulfilment. This could be accomplished through informal or formal instruction (Fig. 1).

Lifelong learning can assist us in achieving personal fulfilment and pleasure, whether we are following personal interests and hobbies or professional goals [2, 3].

By focusing on the concepts and goals that drive us, we are motivated to enhance our own quality of life and sense of worth. It recognises that people have an inherent urge to discover, gain information, and develop.

Various projects for lifelong learning that you can take part in include [2]:

- Self-taught research (*e.g.*, learning a new language, researching a topic of interest, subscribing to a podcast, *etc.*).
- Discovering a new sport or hobby (*e.g.*, Joining martial arts, learning to ski, learning to exercise, *etc.*).
- Acquiring knowledge of new technology (smart devices, new software applications, *etc.*).
- Gaining fresh information (taking a self-interest course *via* online education or classroom-based course) [4].

Keywords: Lifelong learner, skills, knowledges, mindset, life development.

BENEFITS OF LIFELONG LEARNING

Many long-term advantages might result from incorporating lifelong learning into your daily routine, including:

Renewed Commitment for Yourself

Sometimes, we fall into the habit of doing things like going to work or cleaning the house just because we have to.

Finding your sources of inspiration puts you back in control and serves as a reminder that you can achieve your goals in life.

Recognizing One's Own Goals and Interests

Reviving the qualities that make you unique will help you feel less bored, make life more fascinating, and perhaps even create new chances. If you concentrate on your hobbies, you never know where they will take you.

Enhancement of Other Social and Professional Abilities

We are developing other important talents that can benefit us in both our personal and professional lives as we work on gaining new knowledge and skills. This is so that we can learn new things by using our existing talents. For instance, problem-solving is necessary when learning to sew.

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