



Highlighted experience

Increasing labour inclusion and employability of people with disabilities in Brazil

A PENDING CHALLENGE

6.7% of the Brazilian population suffers from some type of disability, according to the 2010 Census by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) and the Washington Group of Statistics on people with disabilities in Mercosur countries. These people face great difficulties when it comes to finding employment and keeping their job, which requires adaptations and creates challenges depending on the different cases. The challenge of labour inclusion is still valid, and ranges from the regular school training process to the promotion of entry into professional life.

The **more than 520,000** people with disabilities who worked in the formal sector of the economy in 2019, according to data from the Annual Social Information Report (RAIS), represented only 1.10 % of the total number of employees in that sector. Although inclusion has been increasing over the last decade, it is still evidenced by extremely low numbers. A large percentage of people with disabilities occupy the informal job market, exercising precarious and discontinuous activities, without employment-based coverage or social security.

On the positive side, the country has laws that set a quota for people with disabilities, whose employment is mandatory both in private companies and in the public sector. However, difficulties persist in complying with this percentage, in most cases due to misinformation and prejudice towards these people.

The belief persists that people with disabilities do not have the necessary skills or sufficient utility to contribute like anyone else to



Access to a decent job that allows the development of skills, personal fulfilment and fair remuneration is the first step towards full inclusion in society. In addition, such inclusion should be promoted under the principles of equality and non-discrimination, in open, inclusive and accessible environments, both in the public and private sectors.

Rudy Martínez, Promotion of the employment of people with disabilities; EUROsocial+ Tools No. 32.

the common goal of a company or an institution. Lack of access also contributes, among other factors, to low levels of qualification and preparation for entering the job market of a part of the disabled population, as well as the lack of inclusive awareness of companies, which hire people with disabilities only to comply with the law and avoid fines.

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The promotion of public policies for labour market inclusion is supported by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) which, in its article 27, establishes that States party to it must allow effective access for technical and vocational guidance programmes, as well as job placement services and professional and continuing training. The Inter-American Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities, and ILO Convention 159 on the vocational rehabilitation and employment of persons with disabilities reaffirm this commitment.

Furthermore, Brazilian legislation establishes a clear prohibition of discrimination in the employment of persons with disabilities. It also contemplates a series of affirmative measures, which include the reservation quota of 2 to 5 percent of jobs for people with disabilities in companies with 100 or more employees, as well as supported work, included in Article 37 of Law No. 13,146, of 6 July 2015.

Although in Brazil there has been progress in this context, the level of compliance with the quota law in 2019 barely exceeded 50 percent. When separating the data according to the legal nature of the employer, it can be seen that the degree of compliance by the Public Administration is only 12.17%, compared to 52.48% in the case of Public Sector Companies and Mixed Economy Companies, and 54.32% in the case of private employers.

The European Union EUROsociAL+ Programme has been working in coordination with the Brazilian Ministry of Women, Family and Human Rights in this area, to strengthen the policy for the labour market inclusion of people with disabilities, in order to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, in particular those related to SDGs 5, 8, 10 and 17.

EUROSOCIAL+ SUPPORT TO STRENGTHEN THE POLICY

EUROsociAL+ support, implemented with the significant collaboration of Spain's **ONCE Social Group**, initially focused on the design of a proposed Bill for the labour market inclusion of people with disabilities. To this end, expert visits were organised to the United Kingdom and Sweden, two countries with the best rates of employability in this field, in order to learn about their institutional and legislative measures, as well as the good practices undertaken. Likewise, the point of view of the European Union was made known in a visit to the Directorate-General for Employment of the European Commission in Brussels. A study was also undertaken on international experiences of labour market inclusion of people with disabilities.

Subsequently, the government that took office in Brazil in 2019 resumed the proposed bill in order to move towards a version agreed with the different sectors involved. In this new stage of review and improvement, the EUROsociAL+ Programme has been supporting the Ministry of Women, Family and Human Rights in dialogue with stakeholders, including organisations representing people with disabilities, businesspeople, unions and public officials.

The dialogue seeks to improve the application of the quota system, not eliminate or relax its obligation or reduce its scope, as well as to ensure that quotas improve employment opportunities for different groups of people with disabilities, especially for those people with disabilities who find it more difficult to access the labour market. The solutions that are adopted must avoid the stigmatisation of this group, and must be supported by a broad consensus.

EXCHANGE WORKSHOPS TO LEARN ABOUT INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES

With the support of EUROsociAL+, **six workshops** on exchanges were held, in which international experts identified by the ONCE Social Group participated in order to address supported employment, accessibility and adaptations in jobs, professional rehabilitation services, as well as digital transformations, social benefits and other aspects key to promoting greater labour market inclusion of



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Promotion of the employment of people with disabilities

people with disabilities. The gender approach is present throughout the entire process.

Along with the reform or adaptation measures of the quota system, the goal is to establish other positive action programmes aimed at promoting access to employment for people with disabilities, such as the promotion of supported employment programmes or the availability of reasonable accommodation, etc.

Remarkable rates of discrimination against women have been observed in the employability of people with disabilities. The work of the EUROsociAL+ Programme for the labour market inclusion of this group contributes to improving the care strategies provided for people in vulnerable situations.

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