

Disability should not be a workplace handicap

Written by Rosa Estaràs Ferragut on 3 December 2019 in Opinion
Opinion

Spanish EPP deputy Rosa Estaràs Ferragut, vice president of parliament's intergroup on disability, spells out why society needs to remove obstacles to the workplace for people with disabilities.



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Persons with disabilities face lower incomes and higher unemployment rates and, in many cases, have insufficient social protection.

The situation is aggravated when it comes to women with disabilities and young people. Young persons with disabilities face a difficult period of transition towards the achievement of an independent life and access to the labour market.

Member states, in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the United Nations (UNCRPD), should remove all legal barriers to access to the labour market.

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Such obstacles include limiting the legal capacity of persons with disabilities, preventing them from signing work contracts, opening a bank account and having access to their money.

All such barriers can leave them financially excluded. We should tackle these measures at European level because persons with disabilities should be able to enjoy the benefits of the internal market.

"Persons with disabilities should be able to enjoy the benefits of the internal market"

Access to the labour market requires the application of measures that result in a win-win situation for both the employee and the employer. The overall cost of keeping persons with disabilities out of the labour market is higher than including them in the workplace.

We should also support social enterprises in line with the principles stated in the Bratislava Declaration and Madrid Declaration on the Social Economy, as an important source of employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

We need to work towards achieving all necessary measures to guarantee access to the labour market for people with disabilities, especially for young persons, so that they're on equal terms to persons without disabilities.

The European Disability Strategy for 2020-2030 gives us the opportunity to change this situation and work towards different pieces of legislation that improve access to the labour market for persons with disabilities.

We should improve access to the labour market for persons with disabilities with various measures. These include promoting social inclusion and social enterprises, accessible recruitment procedures, accessible transport from and to the workplace, career development and training and, obviously, accessible work places.

About the author

Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (ES,EPP), is a vice-president of Parliament's disability intergroup

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