



Activity 1 – WP2: Comparative analysis of aptitude requirements for transport and logistics jobs and their impact on the inclusion of people with disabilities in transport and logistics

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Introduction

In March 2021, the European Commission adopted the Strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities 2021-2030. This strategy paved the way to a barrier-free Europe and to the empowerment of persons with disabilities so they can enjoy their rights and participate fully in society and economy.

In 2023, 27% of the European population over the age of 16 had some form of disability, which, according to Eurostat, represents one in four adults in Europe (equals to 101 million people).

Despite the progress made in the past decade, people with disabilities still face considerable barriers and have a higher risk of poverty and social exclusion. For example, 17.7% of people with disabilities aged 20-26 were unemployed in 2020 compared with 8.6% of people without disabilities from the same age group.

In December 2022, the Council of the European Union invited Member States to implement the relevant guidelines, to support vocational education and training for people with disabilities, to facilitate the transition to the labour market and to set national targets for the employment of people with disabilities and the participation of adults with disabilities in learning.

European countries, all faced with the issue of integrating people with disabilities into the world of work, have tried to find solutions, each in their own way. However, in the absence of a common definition at the European level, the Member States have established their own criteria and methods of implementation in each of their national legislations. It is therefore essential to understand the mechanisms put in place in the various Member States.

Disparities in Europe in terms of treatment of people with disabilities persist. Furthermore, there are great variabilities in the interpretation and implementation of the law depending on the territories and bodies concerned. This document aims to draw up a comparative analysis of the regulations governing the employment of people with disabilities in the partner countries and establish a better understanding of inclusive provisions in transport and logistics in Europe.

1. Methodology

To start the DiTL project, the different partners of the project, who are from five European countries (France, Germany, Ireland, Portugal and Spain), have carried out desk research aiming for a better understanding of the current system and regulations relating to the concepts of disability, inclusion and employment of people with disabilities. Research has also been carried out regarding inclusive provisions in transport and logistics in Europe.

Based on this research, a focus group workshop was held in Paris, in January 2025, with the project partners to highlight similarities and differences, good practice and points of vigilance.

The following document presents the results of this research and workshop and will serve as a basis for the recommendations (WP2: Activity 4).

2. Results.

The results are presented in four chapters.

- The first one addresses the notion of disability in Europe and more specifically in the countries part of this project.
- The second one describes the general disability policies within those countries and how disability is assessed.
- The third one treats employment policies in regard to disability.
- The fourth one focuses on how disability is addressed within the sector of transports and logistics.

2.1 Disability in Europe.

There is no European Union definition of the concept of “disability” and definitions vary from one Member state to another. However, since the UNCRPD was signed in Europe and its Member States, the definition provided by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) has become the common reference.

The UN Convention refers to people with disabilities, not just disabilities and states that *“people with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”*

While there is no precise ‘definition’ of disability, this definition implies a relational model of disability. It involves ‘interactions’ between a person and barriers. Since the ratification of this text by the Member States, this notion of interaction has been used in many Member States to define the concept of “disability”.

All member States have established a legal definition of disability. The table below presents the definitions established by the countries which take part in this project.

Definitions of disability in each country of this project	
France	Article 2-L114 of Law 2005-102 of February 11 on equal rights and opportunities, participation and citizenship for people with disabilities: <i>“a disability is any limitation of activity or restriction on participation in society experienced by a person in his or her environment as a result of a substantial, lasting or permanent impairment of one or more physical, sensory, mental, cognitive or psychological functions, a multiple disability or a disabling health condition”</i> .
Germany	Book IX of the social code (Sozialgesetzbuch IX) , which came into effect in July 2001. A person with disabilities is defined as <i>“people who have physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with attitudinal and environmental barriers, are likely to prevent them from participating equally in society for more than six months”</i> .
Ireland	The Disability Act (Government of Ireland, 2005) defines disability as <i>“a substantial restriction in the capacity of the person to carry on a profession, business or occupation in the State or to participate in social or cultural life in the State by reason of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment”</i> .
Portugal	Article 2 of Law No. 28/2004 of 18 August <i>A person with a disability is one who, by reason of loss or anomaly, congenital or acquired, of bodily functions or structures, including psychological functions, presents specific difficulties which, in conjunction with environmental factors, may limit or hinder activity and participation on an equal basis with others.</i>
Spain	Article 7 of Law 13/1982 on Social Integration of Disabled People. Royal Legislative Decree 1/2013, of 29 November, approving the Consolidated Text of the General Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and their Social Inclusion, Article 2 <i>“Disability is a situation that arises from the interaction between individuals with potentially permanent impairments and any type of barriers that limit or prevent their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”</i> .

If all countries have a clearly expressed definition registered in a Law, different definitions may coexist in the same country because disability policies are the results of parallel constructions over time. Several factors contribute to these elaborations:

- **National history and its relationship with disability**, including cultural and historical perspectives.
- **The structure of social protection systems**, such as state-funded support, insurance-based schemes, or welfare programs.
- **The circumstances under which a disability occurs**, such as war-related injuries, workplace accidents, congenital conditions, or life events, and the authority responsible for recognizing the disability (e.g. the Ministry of Health, Armed Forces, or Ministry of Labor...).

These factors condition how disability is assessed and defined. For example, in France, even though a regulatory framework defines the concept of disability, there are several sets of regulations governing the concept of disability: in terms of employment, the French Labour Code provides a precise definition of a disabled person.

As a comprehensive structural umbrella for all those policies, two main models are influences. One is focused on the individual and the other on society or the environment. All European countries use both models in differentiated proportions and in different areas.

The individual models of disability focus attention on the person and their impairment characteristics (such as a health condition or their bodily characteristics) and means that solutions require the person to change, through treatment or adjustment to their circumstances. Policies based on this model will program measures directly towards the individual to help him or her in his or her everyday life: allocations, tools, access to therapists...

Social models of disability focus on the environment and societal characteristics (such as accessibility or inclusiveness) and consider that society is the source of the problem and that the solutions lie in social change, through the removal of barriers in society. Policies based on this model will program measures towards a better inclusion of persons within all aspects of society. Measures are not taken towards the individual but towards the actors which should include the persons with disabilities. One area of intervention is employment, with measures towards employers which can receive incentives or obligations. It is quite common to call such a set of measures “inclusion policies”.

2.2 Policies aimed at the individual: when measures compensate for the disability to alleviate it.

To directly compensate for individual disabilities, each country developed a set of measures. These measures can become essential to the person with a disability to be able to live a decent life. Here are some examples of such measures.

- **Disability Pension/Income Support:** Financial assistance to people with disabilities who are unable to work. This is a direct financial benefit to ensure that individuals can meet their basic needs.
- **Social Security Disability Benefits:** Like disability pensions, but aligned with insurance-based systems where individuals pay into social security during their working years and receive benefits when they can no longer work due to disability.
- **Transportation Benefits:** reduced or free public transportation for individuals with a disability.
- **Housing Benefits:** Financial aid for home modifications or subsidies for rent or mortgages to make living spaces accessible.
- **Free or Subsidized Healthcare:** Free or discounted medical care for people with disabilities, including access to rehabilitation, therapy, assistive devices (like wheelchairs or hearing aids), and surgeries.
- **Specialized Health Programs:** Healthcare programs that cater to the needs of people with specific disabilities, including mental health or chronic illness programs.
- **Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities:** Special grants, scholarships, or allowances for students with disabilities to ensure they can pursue higher education without financial burdens.
- **Social Care Services:** Home care, personal assistants, and day centres to support individuals with disabilities in daily activities and improve their quality of life.
- **Rehabilitation and Therapy:** Access to rehabilitation services that help people recover and adapt to their disability, whether physical or psychological.

As mentioned earlier, policies were developed in different historical and organisational settings. However, they all imply an individual assessment, which is often linked to the specificities of the request. Furthermore, such measures are usually implemented by different actors (social security, insurance, ministry...), at different levels (local, regional or national), which might not have the same procedures (and therefore scales) within the same country.

Along with the wide variations in the social benefits available to people with disabilities across Europe, these aids may depend on the degree of disability. Also support for disabled people may vary from one administrative territory to another within the same country. For example, in Spain, the General National Act on the

Rights and Social Inclusion of People with Disabilities guarantees the right to equal opportunities and treatment, as well as the effective and real exercise of the rights of people with disabilities on an equal footing with other citizens. On the other hand, assistance and social services are the sole responsibility of the Autonomous Communities (regional administration). As the latter have adopted specific regional legislation and regulations in addition to the general law, the level of support for people with disabilities varies from one region to another.

These assessments condition the access to rights and services. Therefore, they may have direct consequences on the career path of the person with a disability. Hereafter is a table showing what type of assessment is required in the countries participating in this project.

Main type of disability assessment in each country of this project	
France	General Social Security scheme or Mutualité Sociale Agricole which is for farmers (MSA) are the organisms which define disability. A person is considered disabled if, because of an accident or illness in one's life (of non-work- or work-related origin), the ability to work or earn an income is reduced by at least 2/3 (66%). The "RQTH title", which is a status attributed to disabled workers, is attributed by a commission within the Departemental House for Disabled People which includes medical doctors at regional level based on a medical expertise. This house is independent from the Social Security to clear out any financial interests. The guidelines and scales are set up at national level. Children go through the same process.
Germany	The relevant bodies are the local Versorgungsämter (social security offices). The process is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals must submit an application for the recognition of their disability to the local Versorgungsamt or similar authority • The application requires medical documentation • The authorities evaluate the application based on the VersMedV • The determination includes the degree of disability and the according specific rights and benefits
Ireland	The determination of whether a person is considered disabled or in a situation of disability varies according to the specific legal, social, or administrative context. Multiple criteria may be applied, including legislation, personal circumstances, medical opinions, and self-declaration, often in combination. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical Opinion: A doctor's report is required, confirming that the person has a disability expected to last at least 12 months. • Functional Criteria: For example, in the case of Disability Allowance, the applicant must demonstrate that they cannot work due to their disability.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Social Protection Assessment: A decision-maker evaluates the person's medical evidence, circumstances, and self-declaration. <p>The government is ultimately responsible for disability-related statuses and supports. It operates through specific departments, agencies, and local authorities, ensuring a coordinated approach while adhering to international obligations like the UNCRPD.</p>
Portugal	<p>Disability is assessed by medical commissions that certify temporary disability (Decree Law No. 360/97) and permanent disability (Decree Law No. 202/96). Medical boards in relation to the State through the Ministry of health or another Ministry (Armed forces, Police...) grant the status based on the National Table of Disabilities.</p> <p>In 2024, the MultiPurpose Medical Disability Certificate (MDC, DecreeLaw No. 15/2024) suffered changes and its purpose is to quantify the degree of disability according to the WHO's International Classification of Functioning (ICF). Achieving a degree of disability equal to or greater than 60 % confers legal status as a person with a disability and unlocks rights such as mandatory employment quotas (Law No. 4/2019), tax and social benefits associated with the MDC (fee exemptions, income tax deductions, social security supports), and access to the Social Inclusion Benefit (SSI) for households with disability superior or equal to 60 %.</p>
Spain	<p>Regional bodies (Servicios Sociales de las Comunidades Autónomas) assess the person's condition using official scales. The evaluation includes an interview, review of medical documentation, and sometimes additional tests or reports. The applicants must present medical reports that describe their condition, its impact on daily life, and its prognosis. Oversight at the national level is provided by the Ministry of Social Rights and 2030 Agenda (Ministerio de Derechos Sociales y Agenda 2030).</p>

2.3 Inclusion policies and employers' obligations in Europe.

Inclusion policies can take different forms. Those are general obligations which are not linked to the specificities of the individual, even if it can be or is adapted. For example, some European countries have policies that ensure disabled children and students can attend mainstream schools with necessary accommodations, like special education teachers or physical adaptations in schools. In another example, all European countries implement regulations regarding the accessibility of buildings. Employment is also subject to such inclusion policies.

In European countries, 'disabled workers' are generally considered to have reduced chances of finding or keeping a job because of their disability. This motivated the European Council to issue the Directive 2000/78/EC which relates to equality in employment. It contains relevant provisions of Union law on persons with disabilities and reasonable accommodation¹. To access those packages, there may be some requirements on behalf of the disabled person. The table hereafter lists them for the countries which are part of this project.

Employment gap between disabled and non-disabled people total in 2023 (source EU-SILC)²	
European Union- 27 countries	21,5 %
Euro Zone - 20 countries	20,2 %
France	19,9 %
Germany	22,6 %
Ireland	36,7 %
Portugal	14,0 %
Spain	13,8 %

The larger the employment gap, the more difficult it is for people with disabilities to find employment compared to people without disabilities. A large gap indicates that there is a greater difference in employment rates between these two groups, which may reflect additional barriers for disabled people, such as discrimination or lack of accessibility.

¹ "Article 5 Reasonable accommodation for disabled persons

In order to guarantee compliance with the principle of equal treatment in relation to persons with disabilities, reasonable accommodation shall be provided. This means that employers shall take appropriate measures, where needed in a particular case, to enable a person with a disability to have access to, participate in, or advance in employment, or to undergo training, unless such measures would impose a disproportionate burden on the employer. This burden shall not be disproportionate when it is sufficiently remedied by measures existing within the framework of the disability policy of the Member State concerned."

² The employment gap is the percentage point difference in the average employment rate between non-disabled and disabled people of working age. The percentage here is the total of all severity types of disability for the year 2023. Source :

https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/hlth_dlm200/default/table?lang=fr&category=dsb.dsb_ab

Requirements for the disabled person to access employment measures	
France	The “RQTH title” attributed by the commission des droits et de l'autonomie de la personne handicapée (commission for the rights and autonomy of disabled people) in link with the social protection scheme is the key to benefit Employment aids and services. Some may be conditioned by the degree and type of disability. The status of beneficiary of the employment obligation is the condition for benefiting from specific employment aids and services.
Germany	To benefit from Employment aids and services, people must have a degree of disability considered to be severe, i.e. equal to or greater than 50 (the German scale ranges from 20 to 100).
Ireland	Employment policy for people with disabilities is primarily a national responsibility, overseen and coordinated by the Department of Social Protection (DSP) and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment (DETE). However, there are elements of the implementation and support that are delivered at regional and local levels.
Portugal	To benefit from Employment aids and services people must a degree of physical or mental disability equal to or greater than 60 %, based on the National Table of Disabilities and prove it with a Medical Certificate of Multiple Disability
Spain	To benefit from Employment aids and services, disabled people must be registered as disabled and seeking work, with a reduction in working capacity of at least 33%.

To illustrate what type of measures can be taken, here is a list of the current main measures to enforce the employment of disabled persons:

- **Disability Employment Allowance:** Special allowance to individuals with disabilities to assist in finding or keeping a job, including financial support for accommodations or special workplace modifications.
- **Vocational Training:** Programs to help individuals with disabilities learn a trade or skill that can enable them to work in a specialized field or support their career development.
- **Supported Employment:** Programs that help individuals with disabilities to secure and maintain employment, often with specialized job coaches or adjustments to the workplace environment.
- **Tax Breaks for Disabled Employees:** Some countries offer tax relief for companies that employ individuals with disabilities, which can make the hiring process more attractive.
- **Quotas:** Many European countries have legal protections against discrimination based on disability in areas such as employment, housing, and education. Some introduced quotas, which, if they are not respected, are punished by a fine.

For this project, the focus is on employment. If the disability employment allowance is not of interest, the other measures are. The following tables will compare and identify specificities of each country in terms of general aids and services aimed for disabled persons to access employment and remain in the position. As a reminder, the employment gap between disabled and non-disabled people (total in 2023) will be noted under the name of the country.

2.3.1 Vocational Training

Directive 2016/2102 on the accessibility of public sector websites and services makes it obligatory for public buildings to be accessible for persons with disabilities. It has been followed by the Directive 2019/882/EU (European Accessibility Act) which addresses the same issue across various sectors, including buildings. Ever since, accessibility national regulations have been adopted in every country in Europe. Since training centres receive the public, they have the obligation to adapt their facilities, whether they are public or private services.

This project focuses on how persons with disabilities can access and receive training for careers in the transport and logistics sector, with training serving as the key entry point into these professions. Vocational centres have their own regulations. They will be addressed in WP3, along with the specificities of vocational training for transport and logistics. In this section, the general framework of disability policies and its impact on training centres will be described.

Some of the resources developed for training centres are also used for employment support. The distinction here is aimed to take a broad picture of the ecosystems. There are several types of aids for vocational training:

- The trainee is granted specific support.
- At the training centre level:
 - The training centre adapts its facilities to respect accessibility standards.
 - The training centre adapts its training conditions to a certain trainee.
- For the examination.

Vocational training: Programs to help individuals with disabilities learn a trade or skill that can enable them to work in a specialized field or support their career development.	
France 19.9%	<p>Human help can be attributed with the individualized services such as caregiver of a disabled student (<i>accompagnants des élèves en situation de handicap</i>)</p> <p>When a trainee has part of the training within a company, the company can receive financial help to adapt the working environment of the trainee. The law provides for a higher level of support for apprenticeship contracts for people who are recognized as disabled workers (RQTH). In France, employers who take trainees receive some subsidy to pay the salary of the trainee. In case it is a disabled trainee, the help is higher.</p> <p>Both for the adaptation of the working environment and the financial help, the private employer needs to address a request to the Agefiph, <i>Association de gestion du fonds pour l'insertion des personnes handicapées</i>. If it is a public employer, it is the FIPHFP, Fund for the integration of disabled people in the civil service</p> <p>The décret n° 2010-356 specifies that <u>certain examinations</u> can be adapted for students with a disability. The adaptation includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical adaptation of the facilities or the conditions of the examination, • Reasonable extra time to pass the examination, • Human assistance. <p>To have access to such conditions of examination, a request filed with a medical expert must be approved by a commission.</p> <p>For the physical accessibility of the training centres and the training, certain types of training centres can receive financial help from the Agefiph. All must have a designated person to address disability issues.</p> <p>Some private foundations also provide some financial help and services for students with a disability. (https://www.monparcours handicap.gouv.fr/).</p>
Germany 22.6%	<p>There are several institutions and programmes established for support schemes in VET in Germany.</p> <p>1. Employment agencies (Agentur für Arbeit / Jobcenter)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides funding and coordination for vocational training under SGB III and SGB IX. • Offers:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ LTA (Teilhabe am Arbeitsleben) – e.g., finance training, transport, or technical aids. ○ Berufsvorbereitende Bildungsmaßnahmen (BvB) – preparatory courses for specific learning needs in vocational schools ○ Rehabilitative training programmes – adapted apprenticeships for young people with disabilities. <p>2. Vocational training centres for specific learning needs (Berufsbildungswerke -BBW)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Specialized training centres for young people with disabilities or other special learning needs ● Combine vocational education, rehabilitation, and social integration. ● Have in-house workshops, schools, and accommodation designed for accessibility. <p>3. Vocational training centres for specific learning needs (Berufsförderungswerke - BFW)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Similar to the above but targeting adults who have a disability or specific learning needs (also focusing on retraining) ● Offer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Career orientation and diagnostics ○ Fully adapted retraining programs in various professions, including logistics and transport. <p>4. Integrationsämter / Inclusion Offices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide workplace support and guidance for employers and employees with disabilities. ● Can fund assistive devices and workplace adaptations. <p>5. Inklusionsbetriebe / Inclusive companies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Employ a significant number of persons with disabilities and offer practical vocational experience. <p>Examples of programmes in the sector :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Modular qualification programs in logistics adapted for persons with mobility, cognitive, or sensory impairments. ● Digital learning platforms with accessibility features (screen readers, captions) ● Supported employment schemes after training, especially in warehouse, driving, or dispatching sectors. ● Mentorship and job coaching during internships and job transitions
Ireland 36.7%	<p>SOLAS (Further Education and Skills Service) is a state agency which contracts Specialist Training Providers (STPs), such as the National Learning Network, in 55 centres to deliver vocational training to disabled people who require more intensive support than would be</p>

	<p>available in the general options. This training is provided exclusively to people with disabilities within a segregated setting.</p> <p>Training providers must make reasonable accommodations to enable people with disabilities to access and participate in training programmes, including adjustments to the learning environment, teaching methods, and assessment procedures, and they must not discriminate against people with disabilities in recruitment, selection, or during the training programme itself.</p> <p>Training centres must be physically accessible, with adjustments made to buildings, facilities, and equipment to ensure that people with disabilities can access and use them.</p> <p>Training providers <i>should</i> adopt inclusive practices that promote the participation of people with disabilities, including awareness training for staff and the use of accessible communication methods.</p> <p>Other Training Options available to Disabled people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BTEI Initiative - The Back to Education Initiative (BTEI) provides part-time further education courses mainly for young people and adults who have not completed the Leaving Certificate or an equivalent qualification or are in receipt of a disability payment or hold a medical card. (free if eligible) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ DARE Scheme – If eligible, the DARE scheme can provide reduced points entry based on the impact of your disability on your education ◦ HEAR Scheme – The HEAR (Higher Education Access and Retention) scheme is another route to college, offering additional support and access. ◦ AHEAD – the Association for Higher Education Access and Disability (AHEAD) can provide information and guidance on accessing college and available supports. • ATU Project WAVE (Working towards Academic and Vocational Equity) is supported through the Higher Education Authority Path 4 funding. This two-year project provides individuals with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to attend college. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Project WAVE provides a comprehensive programme, addressing students' social, academic, and vocational needs. Students in Project WAVE will experience college life at ATU by attending classes with other students and participating in clubs and societies.
Portugal 14%	<p>In Portugal, vocational training for persons with disabilities is provided by IEVT – the Institute of Employment and Vocational Training, a public institute funded by the State Budget and co-financed by the European Social Fund, through its network of Employment and Vocational Training Centres, the Alcoitão Vocational Training and Rehabilitation Centre, participatory management training centres, and accredited external training providers.</p>

	<p>Facilities are equipped with physical accessibility features (ramps, lifts, adapted restrooms) and technological aids (assistive technologies, materials in accessible formats) in compliance with Decree-Law No. 163/2006.</p> <p>Trainees receive from IEVT supports such as meal allowances, travel expenses, accommodation subsidies, dependent-care support, and personal accident insurance (Social Support Index – SSI – 2025: € 522.50) and benefit from individualized support—including an Individual Activity Plan, educational tutoring, and curricular and pedagogical adaptations which, together with these supports, help them meet requirements for minimum attendance ($\geq 85\%$), punctuality, active participation, and fulfillment of their training plan.</p>
Spain 14.8%	<p>The financial aid program for students with special educational needs, funded by the Ministry of Education, aims to support individuals with disabilities, behavioral disorders, autism spectrum disorders (ASD), and high intellectual capacities. The aid extends beyond traditional education to vocational training, covering students in basic, intermediate, and advanced vocational training cycles, as well as transition-to-adult-life programs. Financial support includes grants for pedagogical and language reeducation, educational materials, transportation, and specialized training to enhance employability.</p> <p>https://www.educacionfpydeportes.gob.es/servicios-al-ciudadano/catologo/general/05/050140/ficha/050140-2024.html</p> <p>The "V Convocatoria Becas NOVA 2024" program, organized by Fundación Prevent, offers financial aid and career support to students with disabilities pursuing higher education in Spain. This initiative grants 50 scholarships of €2,000 each to selected candidates, aiming to promote academic continuity and facilitate their transition into the workforce. Eligible applicants include university undergraduates (who have completed at least 50% of their credits), postgraduate or master's students, and advanced vocational training students, provided they reside in Madrid or Catalonia, have a certified disability of at least 33%, and were born in or after 1995.</p> <p>https://www.fundacionprevent.com/ca/beques-nova/</p> <p>ONCE Foundation (Fundación ONCE) is a prominent organization dedicated to the inclusion of people with disabilities in education, training, and employment. It runs programs like Inserta Empleo, which offers vocational training, job placement, and employer engagement. It funds workplace adaptations and promotes entrepreneurship among people with disabilities.</p>

Different implementation strategies and levels of development characterise the five countries whose approaches vary in terms of structure, integration, and support intensity.

The first distinction is the choice of integrated persons with disabilities or to offer them special training, some countries mixing the two approaches. Ireland stands out for its segregated training approach, offering specialized centres solely for people with disabilities, while Germany and France adopt a more integrated approach, blending general vocational pathways with tailored support for disabled individuals. Spain and Portugal strike a hybrid balance, supporting mainstream access while also offering dedicated programs and supports.

Germany and France go further with digital platforms, in-company apprenticeship adaptations, and legal mandates for exams. They also actively involve employers through financial incentives for hiring or training people with disabilities.

Portugal emphasizes comprehensive trainee benefits (transport, meals, accommodation) and individualized plans.

Spain combines national and private funding (e.g., ONCE Foundation) to widen access, including transitions to adulthood and entrepreneurship. Spain's ONCE Foundation and programs like Inserta Empleo also highlight the role of NGOs and private foundations in workforce integration.

In summary, Germany appears to have a structured, multi-institutional approach that supports disabled individuals throughout the entire training-to-employment pipeline. France also provides a strong legal backing and financial incentives, while Ireland, though segregated, provides focused support. Portugal and Spain offer solid national frameworks enhanced by EU funding and foundation-led programs.

The different models, Germany for infrastructure, France for integration incentives, Ireland for intensity of support, and Portugal/Spain for blended, accessible solutions, show a diversity of approaches.

2.3.2 Quotas

In every country in Europe, employers are prohibited from discriminating on the grounds of disability in all aspects of employment, including hiring, salary, promotion, training, and dismissal. These protections cover both direct and indirect discrimination, as well as harassment and victimization.

Quotas are usually introduced to oblige public sectors, as well as private sectors to reach a rate of employment of people with disabilities or face a penalty. Meaning that, if the quota is not reached; the employer must pay a financial compensation in general to a fund set up to help employment of people with disabilities. It should be noted that these quota policies vary enormously from one country to another. Their efficiency has been the object of a debate within scholars and disability advocates communities, with differing perspectives on their impact on long-term inclusion and workforce integration.

Quotas		
Country	Private sector	Public sector
France 19.9%	Employers with 20 or more employees: 6% (Each disabled worker aged 50 or over will have a 1.5 coefficient applied when calculating the number of employees who qualify as Disabled Workers).	
Germany 22.6%	Employers with 20 or more employees: 5% of their position to persons with severe disabilities (GdB 50 or higher)	
Ireland 36.7%	There is no legal obligation for private sector employers to hire disabled workers.	6%
Portugal 14%	Law 4/2019: Medium-sized companies with 75 or more employees must hire at least 1 percent disabled workers, while large companies must hire at least 2%. Employers must also ensure that at least 1 % of new hires each year are people with disabilities, starting in the first year after the law comes into force.	Decree-Law no. 29/2001 of 3 February establishes a system of employment quotas for people with disabilities who have a degree of functional incapacity equal to or greater than 60%, applicable to all public administration services and bodies (central, regional and local).
Spain 14.8%	Employers with 50 or more employees: 2% Only when it's impossible to comply with the 2% quota because of the absence of candidates or technical reasons (exemple: the nature of the sector), the regulation allows to compensate the obligations by supporting financially some non profit organisations specialising in disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers with 50 or more employees: 2% • 10% in new employment offers

However, countries without quotas haven't demonstrated their ability to better include persons with a disability.

Discrimination being outlawed on penal grounds, legal actions can only be taken at the individual level to punish it. That is a person, eventually helped by an NGO, will pursue the discriminating body on the legal grounds of discrimination. If the case is won, the fine will be paid to the individual. The State will not collect any fund from the suit, or very few.

In the case of quotas, the private and public sector must face the State in terms of respect of legal requirements. The countries which set up quotas differ in how the control is done, in the choice of penalties and in the use of the collected money.

Penalties in case of non-respect of legal requirements	
France 19.9%	<p>If a company doesn't meet the quota, it must pay a fine to the Agefiph (<i>Association de gestion du fonds pour l'insertion des personnes handicapées</i>). The fine is based on the number of missing disabled workers and can be quite high, depending on the size of the company. The company has to pay this fine instead of hiring the required disabled employees. Public services must pay their due to the FIPHFP.</p> <p>The annual contribution, before deductions, is equal to the product of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • number of beneficiaries of the employment obligation who are missing (difference between the number of beneficiaries of the employment obligation who should be employed and the number of beneficiaries actually employed) ; • one of the following amounts, determined according to the number of employees subject to the obligation: • 400 times the gross hourly wage (1) between 20 and 250 employees; • 500 times the gross hourly wage (1) 250 and 750 employees; • 600 times the gross hourly wage (1) 750 employees.
Germany 22.6%	<p>The levy is calculated based on the degree to which the employer fulfills the quota:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3%-5% compliance: €140 per unfilled position per month. • 2%-3% compliance: €245 per unfilled position per month. • Less than 2% compliance: €360 per unfilled position per month. <p>0% = €720 per unfilled position per month.</p>
Ireland 36.7%	No quotas
Portugal 14%	<p>Failure to comply with legal quotas is a serious labour offence, subject to fines that vary according to the company's turnover. Managers, administrators and directors are jointly and severally liable for the payment of the fine, regardless of who committed the offence. This is to ensure that leaders are aware of their legal obligations and act diligently. It is essential that they maintain vigilance over legal compliance to promote a culture of compliance and avoid offences.</p>
Spain 14.8%	<p>Penalties for non-compliance range from €300 to €10,000 depending on severity. The Labor and Social Security Inspectorate (<i>Inspección de Trabajo y Seguridad Social</i>) is responsible for monitoring and enforcing compliance with the quota system. Inspectors may review employment records and request proof of compliance during routine inspections or in response to complaints. Companies found in violation may face penalties. There is no unified or transparent mechanism publicly available that outlines exactly how these funds are allocated. In most cases, they go into the general budget and are</p>

	not earmarked for disability-related programs. Moreover, it would depend on the regulations of each autonomous community.
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Some countries dedicated the fund collected through penalties to some sort of program for disabled persons: work adaptation and/or construction work to make the company's premises more accessible to company premises to disabled workers; the implementation of human, technical or organizational or organizational means to compensate for the disability. Such initiative is only possible when tools, both in terms of regulation, control, and assessment, are available.

2.3.3 Supported employment.

Supported Employment: Programs that help individuals with disabilities to secure and maintain employment, often with specialized job coaches, financial incentives or adjustments to the workplace environment.	
France 19.9%	<p>Cap emploi are specialized placement organizations and support workers with disabilities for whom disability expertise is necessary, whether to find or keep their job. The missions of the Cap emploi are also to support companies in identifying compensation needs..</p> <p>Organisations which handle dedicated funds, like the Agefiph for the private sector and FIPHFP for the public sector, help employers cover the costs of workplace adjustments, specialized equipment for their disabled employees.</p> <p>Certain companies and specialised establishments such as ESAT only hire disabled persons. Because they are dedicated to disabled persons, they have specific subsidies.</p> <p>There are also a number of support measures available under common law, such as “supported employment” and the “entreprises adaptées”. An adapted company is one that enables disabled people to access employment under conditions adapted to their abilities. These companies must employ at least 55% disabled workers. They offer an inclusive working environment and support their employees in realizing their career plans. They can also serve as a gateway to other private and public employers.</p> <p>Some individualized services such as Support Service for Social Life (<i>Service d’Accompagnement à la Vie Sociale</i> - SAVS) or specialised job coaching through diverse organisations offer a human help to the disabled person.</p>
Germany 22.6%	<p>Employers who do employ persons with disabilities are entitled to various incentive programmes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wage subsidies: Inclusion offices and the Federal employment Agency provide wage subsidies for employers (varying levels between 30%–70%, up to 100% in special cases)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • funding for workplace adaptations to remove barriers: all bodies listed below provide funds for workplace adaptation covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Construction of ramps, accessible bathrooms, elevators ◦ Assistive technologies (screen readers, Braille displays, adaptive keyboards) ◦ Special work equipment or modified machinery ◦ Cost of structural adjustments to meet accessibility standards <p>The main actors responsible for providing support to employers are:</p> <p>1. Versorgungs- or Integrationsämter (Inclusion Offices)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part of the regional social welfare system, usually connected to local authorities. • Focus: Severely disabled persons (Grad der Behinderung – GdB \geq 50) or those treated equally. <p>2. Federal employment agency (Agentur für Arbeit)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main provider of employment services in Germany • Offers broader support including for people with lesser degrees of disability (GdB \geq 30) <p>3. Jobcenter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For people receiving Unemployment Benefit II (Bürgergeld). • Involved in supporting long-term unemployed individuals, including those with disabilities. <p>4. Rehabilitation Providers</p> <p>Under SGB IX, these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pension insurance (Deutsche Rentenversicherung) • Accident insurance (Berufsgenossenschaften) • Health insurance providers
Ireland 36.7%	<p>Employers are not required to contribute to a specific fund for the employment of disabled workers. It is called “Work and Access”. However, the state provides various incentives and support schemes to encourage employers to hire and retain workers with disabilities. These supports aim to mitigate potential costs associated with accommodations or workplace adjustments and promote inclusivity (Work and Access Funding Scheme - https://www.employersforchange.ie/Work-Access)</p> <p>Supported Employment Initiatives :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WorkAbility

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EmployAbility • Work & Access Programme (Offers employers a range of supports including inclusion training, workplace adaptations & workplace equipment grant etc • Work Placement Experience Programme (WPEP) • Jobs Plis Scheme • Community Employment Scheme • TUS Scheme • KARE • WALK - Funded through dormant accounts <p>The Wage Subsidy Scheme gives financial support to employers who employ people with disabilities. Employers can apply for a grant of up to €20,000 to arrange and pay for disability equality and inclusion training. The level of funding available depends on whether the course is certified by QQI or another nationally recognised governing body.</p>
Spain 14%	<p>In Spain employers are indirectly required to contribute to the employment of disabled workers through various mechanisms, but there is no specific national fund exclusively for this purpose.</p> <p><u>Fundación Adecco</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specializes in integrating people with disabilities into the mainstream labor market. • Partners with companies to develop diversity strategies, provide sensitivity training, and implement accessibility solutions. • Offers personalized job search assistance and vocational training. • All these services are mentioned here : https://fundacionadecco.org/
Portugal 14.8%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The + Emprego measure provides financial support to employers who sign full-time open-ended employment contracts with unemployed people registered with the IEFP. It is a financial support of 12 IAS (€ 6,270 in 2025), increased by 35 % (€ 8,464.50) for contracts with persons with disabilities, funded by Portugal 2030, with an obligation to maintain the job for 24 months. • +Talento Programme: support identical to +Emprego, targeted at unemployed youth (≤ 35 years) with qualifications level 6–8 of the National Qualifications Framework, including the 35 % increase when hiring young persons with disabilities . • Workplace Adaptation and Barrier Removal: fixed support of 1.25 IAS (~ € 653) per beneficiary, plus co-financing of accessibility works and equipment acquisition, under the Employment and

	<p>Qualification Support Programme for Persons with Disabilities and Incapacities .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment Insertion Contract (CEI/CEI+) – Supported Employment: IEFP cofinances 100 % of the monthly wage supplement, meal and transport subsidies (or 90 % in CEI+ for public entities/local government sector), and provides on the job training and technical mentoring for up to 12 months • Support for Integration, Maintenance and Reintegration into the Labour Market includes modalities such as placement support, post-placement monitoring and job adaptation. This support includes non-refundable subsidies for adaptations and the elimination of architectural barriers, with specific limits in relation to the IAS.(In 2025, the value of the IAS is 522.50 €)
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All countries have policies to ensure that necessary adjustments are made to the workplace, such as equipment or environmental changes, to accommodate employees with disabilities. They are usually financed by specific provisions. Their origins might be from funds from employers which did not meet the expected quotas (France), from the State or from some other type of funds.

Several countries emphasize job coaching or professional support to ensure individuals with disabilities are successfully integrated into the workplace. For example, in France, Cap Emploi provides job coaching for people with disabilities, while Ireland has disability stakeholder groups that help in evaluating policies. Germany also offers support programs aimed at the recruitment and retention of individuals with disabilities.

The similarities across the countries lie in their focus on supporting both employers and individuals with disabilities, primarily through financial incentives, workplace adaptations, and job coaching.

2.3.4 Tax breaks or benefits to employers for the employment of disabled persons.

Another type of incentive are tax breaks: the financial savings that they allow can come as a relief or even a benefit for organisations working for profit.

WAGE SUBSIDIES GO IN 2.3.3 EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

Tax Breaks or benefits for the presence of Disabled Employees: Some countries offer tax relief for companies that employ individuals with disabilities, which can make the hiring process more attractive	
France 19.9%	Employers can deduct three types of direct expenditure (provided they are not subject to financial aid or coverage outside the company). Maximum 10% of the gross contribution: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction work to make the company's premises more accessible to company premises to disabled workers. • the implementation of human, technical or organizational means to compensate for the handicap maintaining disabled employees in employment or retraining them. • the cost of training and awareness-raising initiatives for employees and support services for disabled employees disabled employees, such as job coaching, provided by organizations outside the company.
Germany 22.6%	There are no tax incentives for employing people with disabilities. The financial incentives for companies to hire people with disabilities do not include tax cuts but (1) negative incentives through compensation levies (see quota information), (2) wage subsidies, (3) grants for workplace adaptation.
Ireland 36.7%	The Wage Subsidy Scheme gives financial support to employers who employ people with disabilities. The scheme is a workplace support for employers from the Department of Social Protection (DSP). Sometimes, a disability can restrict an employee's ability to do all the tasks needed in a job. In this case, the Wage Subsidy Scheme (WSS) is paid to cover the cost to the employer of changing the job requirements. The WSS is paid directly to the employer (who pays the employee as usual). Example: A job in a factory expects workers to package 100 units a day. However, a new employee who has a disability or health condition can only package 60 units a day. The WWS is paid to the employer to cancel out the cost (40 units a day) of changing the expected output of the role for that employee.

	https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/employment/employment-and-disability/wage-subsidy-scheme-for-people-with-disabilities/
Portugal 14%	<p>In addition to direct grants(+Emprego, + Talento, Workplace Adaptation and Barrier Removal and Employment Insertion Contract (CEI/CEI+) – Supported Employment), companies benefit from fiscal incentives in the form of social security contribution reductions:</p> <p>Reduction of Employer's Social Security Contribution Rate: for open-ended contracts of workers whose disability reduces their work capacity below 80 %, the employer's contribution rate is 11.9 % (instead of approximately 23.75 %) for the duration of the contract, upon application to Social Security.</p>
Spain 14.8%	<p>Under Article 38 of the Spanish Corporation Tax Act (LIS), companies can receive deductions for increasing their average number of employees with disabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● €9,000 per person/year for each increase in the average number of workers with disabilities (33%–64%) compared to the previous year ● €12,000 per person/year for each increase in the average number of workers with disabilities (65% or more) compared to the previous year These deductions can be carried forward for up to 15 years if not fully utilized in the current tax period. <p>The Spanish Public Employment Service (SEPE) provides various incentives for hiring individuals with disabilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Open-ended contracts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ €3,907 subsidy for each permanent contract with a person with a disability. ○ Social Security contribution reductions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ For workers without severe disabilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Under 45 years: €4,500/year (men), €5,350/year (women). ■ 45 years or older: €5,700/year. ■ For workers with severe disabilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Under 45 years: €5,100/year (men), €5,950/year (women).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 45 years or older: €6,300/year. ○ Workplace adaptation subsidies Up to €902 for modifying the work environment to accommodate the employee's need. citeturn0search6 ● Training contracts: *50% reduction in Social Security contributions for companies employing individuals with disabilities under training contracts. ● Temporary contracts: *€3,500–€5,300/year in subsidies, depending on the worker's age and disability severity <p>For companies operating in the Canary Islands, deductions for hiring individuals with disabilities are increased by 3% For example, the €9,000 deduction becomes €11,700, and the €12,000 deduction becomes €15,60.</p> <p>To qualify for these incentives, the employee must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have a recognised disability of 33% or more.- Be registered with the Public Employment Service.- Not have had a contractual relationship with the company in the last 24 months. <p>Additionally, companies must comply with all legal obligations and ensure that the employment contract is maintained for the required duration to avoid penalties.</p>
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While all five countries aim to improve employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, they take different strategic approaches:

- Spain stands out for offering comprehensive financial support: generous tax deductions, social security relief, and hiring/training subsidies.
- Ireland has more direct employer support, compensating for productivity gaps without relying on tax policy.
- Germany and France use regulatory measures or deduction-based support, focusing less on traditional tax incentives.
- Portugal combines social security relief with grant-based schemes, creating a cost-effective hiring framework.

The choice of system may depend on whether a country prefers proactive encouragement (like Spain's model) or compliance and support frameworks (like Germany or Ireland).

2.4 Specificities of the transport and logistics employers.

In the previous part, general employers' obligations were highlighted. Transport and logistics activities have a set of regulations in all countries in regard to the sector activities and risks impacting society. How do those regulations impact the employment of persons with a disability? In some cases, States left employers complete autonomy in their recruitment. In some others, regulations did draw a line considering that some disabilities are incompatible with the practice of certain activities. **Hereafter is a table of the transport and logistic regulations in regard to employment in the countries which are part of this project. This part does not include driver's licence requirements, which will be addressed in Activity 2.** A second table addresses warehouse specific equipment.

General employment regulation related to position requiring specific abilities	
France	<p>In France, Jobs Requiring Special Ability Conditions (ECAP) are jobs whose presence in the company makes it possible to modulate the contribution paid as part of the obligation to employ disabled workers (OETH). These categories of jobs requiring special skills (ECAP) are set out in a decree dated 22 January 1988.</p> <p>The 36 categories of job requiring special aptitude conditions (ECAP) are listed in article D.5212-25 of the French Labour Code. These ECAPs include the following transport and logistics professions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ambulance drivers - Transport inspectors (on board of vehicles) - Road and long-haul truck drivers. - Drivers of public transport vehicles. - Delivery drivers and couriers. - Drivers of heavy lifting equipment. - Drivers of heavy shunting equipment. - Qualified drivers of guided transport equipment (except ski lifts) - Cash-in-transit agents - Other agents and hostesses (transport, tourism, etc.) <p>There are rules governing safety in the workplace, but there are no recommendations/obligations relating to the physical or mental characteristics of warehouse workers.</p> <p>The French Labour Code provides that employees who are required to drive mobile work equipment, for which a driving licence is required, benefit from a medical fitness examination. These workers exposed to so-called "risky" positions are subject to enhanced individual health monitoring (SIR). The SIR includes a medical examination of fitness for employment, carried out by the occupational health practitioner prior to assignment to the post, which aims, in particular, to:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that the worker is medically fit for the job to which the employer plans to assign him • To determine whether the worker is suffering from a condition that is dangerous to other workers • To propose possible adaptations to the position or assignment to other positions, • Inform workers about the risks of exposure at the workplace and the necessary medical follow-up, as well as the means of prevention to be implemented. <p>This examination and its renewal give rise to the issuance by the occupational health practitioner of an opinion of fitness or unfitness, which is sent to the worker and the employer and placed in the occupational health medical file of the person concerned.</p>
Germany	<p>In Germany, explicit exceptions for certain professions or activities from the obligation to employ persons with disabilities are not mentioned as such in the law. However, two important aspects may be indirectly relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to Section 164 Paragraph 4 of the Social Code Book IX, employers can be exempted from the obligation to employ a disabled person if it is "unreasonable" for the specific job. This could be the case for jobs that are associated with special physical or safety-related requirements (e.g. professional drivers or activities in logistics). The assessment is carried out individually and is usually checked by the Integration Office. • According to Section 160 of the Social Code Book IX, employers can pay a so-called compensation levy if they do not meet the quota. This could be particularly relevant for employers in the logistics and transport sector if the obligation to employ people cannot be implemented in practice.
Ireland	<p>There are no official recommendations or requirements. However, general physical requirements are detailed in numerous job descriptions.</p>
Portugal	<p>In the private sector, employers can be exempt from the quotas by applying to the ACT, accompanied by an opinion from the INR and a statement from the IEFP proving that it is impossible to apply the quotas or that there are no qualified disabled candidates.</p>
Spain	<p>In Spain, The Royal Legislative Decree 1/2013, which governs the rights of people with disabilities, does not explicitly list specific occupations exempt from the quota system. Instead, exemptions are considered on a case-by-case basis, based on justifications provided by employers. These justifications often relate to the</p>

	nature of the work or inherent requirements of the job. Transport and logistics roles are not categorically exempt, but exemptions can apply if specific physical requirements (e.g., lifting heavy cargo) cannot be accommodated through workplace adjustments.
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From the comparison of the regulations in transport and logistics, differences can be noted in terms of:

- Medical and physical requirements vary from none to very specific from one country to another.
- Disability is never mentioned in inclusive terms.
- Medical assessments also vary, even though they are clearly required only if there are medical and physical requirements.
- Workplace modification or adaptation are not mentioned as such, unless it is to be outlawed.
- In case there are no regulations, job descriptions are the entry point for employers and employees: they are the moment to be inclusive.

This project also addresses the specificities of certain equipment in the warehouse. In some cases, the sector set up some form of certification to prevent accidents which could be of use towards insurance companies. These certifications may include some abilities which a person with a disability could only pretend to with some form of adaptation. Hereafter is a table with these requirements, and the solutions for disabled persons by country, when they exist.

Transport and Logistics regulation in regard of warehouse positions	
France	<p>In accordance with the provisions of Article R.4323-55 of the French Labour Code, driving self-propelled mobile work equipment and work equipment used for lifting is reserved for workers who have received appropriate training, which must be completed and updated as necessary.</p> <p>The driving of certain equipment presenting particular risks, due to its characteristics or purpose, is subject to obtaining a driving licence issued by the employer (Article R.4323-56 of the French Labour Code). This authorisation is drawn up and issued to the worker by the employer, on the basis of an assessment carried out by the latter. This assessment takes into account the following three elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An aptitude test carried out by the occupational physician - A test of the operator's knowledge and skills in the safe operation of work equipment - Knowledge of the location and instructions to be followed on the site(s) of use. <p>It is the employer who is responsible for the training arrangements and for the theoretical and practical assessment at the end of the training, on the basis of which the driving licence will be issued. To</p>

	<p>meet this assessment requirement, a system based on recommendations has been developed by the French National Health Insurance Fund (CNAM): the 'Certificat d'aptitude à la conduite en sécurité' or 'Caces'.</p> <p>The CACES is neither a diploma nor a professional qualification. It is an examination that validates an employee's knowledge and skills in driving specific machinery. It is not compulsory, but it is a good way for employers to comply with their obligations in terms of checking drivers' knowledge and know-how for safe driving.</p> <p>There are eight recommendations of the Assurance maladie-risques professionnelles which define the modalities and content of the theoretical and practical tests of the different categories of CACES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R.482 - CACES® construction machinery • R.483 - CACES® mobile cranes • R.484 - CACES® overhead cranes and gantry cranes • R.485 - CACES® pedestrian stacker trucks • R.486A - CACES® Mobile elevating personnel platforms • R.487 - CACES® tower cranes • R.489 - CACES® self-propelled ride-on industrial trucks • R.490 - CACES® loading cranes <p>The validity period of all CACES is 5 years, with the exception of CACES - Construction Machinery for which it is 10 years.</p> <p><i>The suitability criteria for the ability to drive forklifts have similar requirements to those for the operation of light vehicles. Light vehicles driving regulations are set up within the "code de la route" (traffic regulations book) which interpretation is defined by the Ministry of internal affairs. In all cases, it is the occupational physician who decides based on his or her knowledge of the employee's state of health and working conditions.</i></p> <p>Acuity: There is no ophthalmic standard for the position of forklift driver, it is generally based on the standards of <u>fitness to drive light vehicles</u> for forklifts of groups 1, 2, 3 and stacking of less than 10 m and the <u>suitability criteria of the heavy licence</u> for categories 4 and 5 as well as stacking of more than 10 m. Heavy goods vehicles: in fact, the forklift truck normally travels at low speed, the forklift driver has time to turn his head.</p> <p>Contraindications for the position of forklift operator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certain <u>back pathologies</u>.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deafness. • An <u>unbalanced</u> diabetes. • Dizziness. • <u>Epileptic seizures</u> not controlled by treatment. <p>Taking certain medications can affect alertness.</p>
Germany	<p>To obtain a certification for forklift trucks and other industrial vehicles, such as pallet jacks. The DGUV Vorschrift 68 (German Social Accident Insurance Regulation) and Arbeitsschutzgesetz (ArbSchG)(Occupational Health and Safety Act) require that workers be fit to operate industrial machinery. Employers are responsible for ensuring that their workers meet the necessary physical and psychological criteria for operating heavy machinery.</p> <p>The Occupational Health and Safety Act (ArbSchG) and regulations like the DGUV set the standards for health checks, which employers must follow. These rules ensure that operators are physically and psychologically capable of performing their duties without putting themselves or others at risk. The legislation allows for the modification of handling equipment (such as forklifts, pallet jacks, and other warehouse machinery) to accommodate disabilities. This is in line with the country's disability rights and occupational health and safety laws to ensure that people with disabilities can work in various sectors, including logistics and warehousing, in a safe and accessible environment. Relevant legal texts have already been listed at the beginning of this survey and include, amongst others: Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz Sozialgesetzbuch IX</p>
Ireland	<p>Ireland's Health and Safety Executive Approved Code of Practice L117 outlines the standards for forklift operator training. Employers are not permitted to allow anyone to operate a forklift without training. There is <u>guidance on many different work vehicles</u>. There are no medical or physical requirements nor medical examination.</p>
Portugal	<p>It is mandatory for workers to receive appropriate training to drive self-propelled mobile work equipment and to use work equipment for lifting.</p> <p>Driving Self-Propelled Work Equipment: According to Decree-Law No. 50/2005, self-propelled work equipment can only be driven by workers who have been specially trained in its safe operation. Workers undergoing training must be supervised, and organizational measures must be taken to ensure safety during operations.</p> <p>Using Lifting Equipment: All lifting operations involving lifting equipment must be properly planned by a competent person, appropriately supervised, and carried out safely. Training ensures</p>

	<p>workers understand safety standards and correct handling techniques.</p> <p>Employers are responsible for providing this training and ensuring compliance with relevant legislation.</p> <p>Refresher training for operating lifting equipment typically follows these guidelines:</p> <p>Standard Intervals: Most industry standards recommend refresher training every three to five years to ensure operators maintain competence and stay updated on safety practices.</p> <p>Mandatory Triggers: Refresher training may be required sooner in specific situations, such as: After accidents, near-misses, or safety violations; if the operator demonstrates unsafe behavior or poor performance; when there are significant changes in equipment, workplace layout, or operational procedures.</p> <p>Employers should also monitor operators regularly and conduct risk assessments to determine if earlier refresher training is necessary.</p> <p>Operating certain warehouse equipment that presents particular risks, such as forklifts, requires specific training and certification. While a standard driving license (Category B) may sometimes be required to attend forklift training courses, the primary requirement is specialized training and certification to ensure the safe use of such equipment. This is mandated by safety regulations and is considered a legal obligation for employers to provide.</p> <p>The training focuses on understanding the correct operation of these vehicles, safety standards, and risk prevention in the workplace.</p> <p>The authorization for driving warehouse equipment is issued by the employer based on an assessment. According to the referred Decree-Law No. 50/2005, employers must evaluate the worker's skills to ensure compliance with safety standards under national occupational health and safety laws, which align with EU directives.</p> <p>The assessment elements required for authorization to drive warehouse equipment, such as forklifts, include the following: Compulsory Education completed; Category B Driving License (therefore, health conditions); Specialized Training on safety standards, proper vehicle use, and handling risks associated with work equipment. The training duration varies: 7 hours for individuals with prior driving experience; 14 hours for individuals without driving experience; Certification: After completing the</p>
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	<p>training, operators must obtain certification to ensure they are qualified to operate the equipment safely.</p> <p>As a member of the European Union, Portugal follows EU regulations and guidelines for forklift and warehouse equipment operation, namely: Regular safety audits and inspections to ensure equipment functionality and adherence to safety protocols; Risk assessments involving evaluation of forklift routes, storage layouts, and pedestrian crossings; Implementation of comprehensive hazard identification and risk assessment strategies; Compliance with regulations such as those related to work equipment maintenance, inspection, and operator training.</p> <p>There are examinations and certifications that validate an employee's knowledge and skills in operating specific warehouse machinery.</p> <p>There are government-approved training programs for warehouse machinery operators in Portugal. The Institute for Employment and Vocational Training, offers professional training courses in warehouse operations.</p> <p>There are accredited training entities in Portugal that provide specialized courses for equipment operators (accredited by DGERT - Directorate-General for Employment and Labor Relations).</p> <p>Several warehouse equipment types have publicly approved training programs: Forklifts, Mobile Elevating Work Platforms (MEWPs), Backhoe Loaders, Bulldozers.</p> <p>Risk assessments must be performed by employers, taking into account individual factors such as age, personal strength, ability, knowledge, previous musculoskeletal disorder incidents, and lifestyle. While not specifically health requisites, these regulations and requirements aim to ensure that operators are physically and mentally capable of safely operating warehouse equipment. It's likely that any health conditions that could impair an operator's ability to safely use such equipment would be identified during training and risk assessment processes.</p>
Spain	<p>To obtain a certification for forklift trucks and other industrial vehicles, such as pallet jacks, there are no medical or physical requirements nor medical examination. Spanish legislation allows handling equipment, including machinery like forklifts and pallet trucks, to be modified to accommodate the needs of workers with disabilities. However, modifications must comply with safety standards and ensure the equipment remains safe to operate.</p>

3. The road to inclusiveness: possible work paths to explore for the other working packages.

To produce this document, the project partners organised a workshop to pinpoint the key challenges and outline initial areas for improvement.

All participating countries have ratified the Convention, which defines a general concept of disability. However, the definitions of disability and the methods used for its assessment vary from one Member State to another. There are also significant differences in terms of the social benefits available to disabled people, including their scope and eligibility criteria. When it comes to recognizing the status of disabled person, there are regional differences within the same country (in Spain for example). The benefits granted may also vary between regions and municipalities within the same Member State. These disparities lead to very different treatment for the same person from one place to another. The challenge here is to address the issue of disability and make recommendations that include this fact.

Despite mandatory quotas, achieving compliance remains difficult across all countries. The unemployment rate for people with disabilities remains much higher than that of the general population and it gets worse when considering full-time employment. Furthermore, these quota systems, even if they are respected by companies, do not mean that people with disabilities will not be discriminated against: some companies meet their quotas by employing people with disabilities but in low-skilled or underemployed positions, with no real inclusion or career development.

Compliance and fines for the non-respect of the quotas is a good levy to enforce change. Furthermore, the fact that the fine can finance a fund to adapt to the work environment creates a virtuous circle. But for that, there needs to be tools to control that quotas are respected and legal tools to fine. Compliance inspections and enforcement mechanisms are insufficient in some countries (e.g. Spain), reducing the effectiveness of legislation.

The impact of employment quotas varies across Europe. For instance, in Ireland, where there is no legal obligation for private-sector employers to meet disability employment targets, the disability employment gap is one of the widest in the EU. In comparison, countries with financial sanctions (e.g., Germany and France) often achieve higher employment rates for people with disabilities.

Another challenge is the variability of treatment according to degree of incapacity. In Portugal, employment policy for people with disabilities is a national responsibility. The legislation establishes the employment quota system for people with disabilities with a degree of incapacity equal to or greater than 60%. In Germany, the quota system applies to people whose degree of disability is considered to be severe, i.e. equal to or greater than 50 (the German scale ranges from 20 to 100).

Regulations are one way to address this issue. Nonetheless, it is not sufficient to face employers' reluctance. Employers often cite financial and operational burdens as barriers to implementing reasonable accommodations.

3.1 Identified needs and recommendations

During the workshop, participants identified the following general needs:

- **Enhanced enforcement:** Strengthen inspection mechanisms to ensure compliance with quota systems and accommodation obligations.
- **Incentive for inclusion:** Increase financial support for employers, including subsidies for workplace adaptations and training programs.
- **Holistic approach:** Adopt individualised support systems that address specific needs and encourage long-term retention in the workplace.
- **Knowledge sharing:** Facilitate cross-country collaboration to share good practices and learn from effective models.
- **Awareness campaigns:** Launch national and regional campaigns to educate employers and society on the benefits of inclusivity.

3.2 Balancing two logics: Inclusion and Safety

This project operates at the intersection of two distinct yet interconnected approaches, which are interpreted differently across the five partners' countries:

- The institutional approach to disability

This perspective considers disability as a condition affecting individuals due to a physical difference, a pathology, an illness or some other affection. This project will not be able to define disability for all European countries since this debate has been going on for quite some time. No matter how disability is defined, there is a clear intention in every European country to adopt inclusion as a way to make society.

- The logic of safety in the transport and logistics sector

This approach prioritizes safety regulations to mitigate risks associated with operating vehicles and machinery. Risks are real and accidentology shows every day what the consequences are when there is a lack of security enforcement. On the other hand, the rationale behind the recommendation does not always consider the possibilities to adapt to the work environment.

Activity 2.3 will have the task to identify which one of these logics takes over and how with the directive 2006/126/CE.

WP3 will list the tools available to adapt the work environment and WP4 will elaborate training programs which will raise awareness. These two work packages will demonstrate that inclusion and safety are not mutually exclusive. When harnessed effectively, collective intelligence can ensure that both priorities coexist, fostering a more inclusive and secure work environment.