

Side event to the 17<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of State Parties

11<sup>th</sup> of June 15h00 – 16:15, Conference Room 4  
Captioning and International Sign Interpretation are provided  
Organised by: Belgium  
Supported by: the European Union

**Concept note: Mobilising State parties, employers and worker organisations for Article 27 of the UNCRPD - the right to work for persons with disabilities**

Article 27 of the UNCRPD recognises the right of persons with disabilities to work on an equal basis with others. Participation in employment is an important way to ensure economic autonomy and social inclusion. Yet in many State parties the employment gap between persons with disabilities and those without remains stubbornly high. Many barriers remain that hinder the access to employment.<sup>1</sup>

As privileged partners in labour market policy, the worker and employer organisations play a crucial role in shaping working conditions and labour market outcomes. General comment No. 8 of the CRPD Committee, on the right of persons with disabilities to work and employment, elaborates on the roles and responsibilities of worker organisations, employers and State parties. It outlines for example, that trade unions should play an important role in defending the right of persons with disabilities to work and that employers have a fundamental responsibility to protect the health and safety of their workers and need to ensure that processes are in place for reasonable accommodations.

Mobilising employers and worker organisations to contribute to the fulfilment of article 27 of the Convention is thus essential to create labour market opportunities for persons with disabilities. In order to take progressive steps to implement the UNCRPD, as well as steps towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 on decent work and economic growth (Goal 8) and leaving no one behind.

In 2022, the European Commission launched its Disability Employment Package. The package of guidelines covers all stages of employment from career guidance, hiring, through ensuring reasonable accommodation, effective prevention and retention of persons with disabilities at work. It also looks into alternative employment models and transition to the open labour market. The guidelines have been developed together with key stakeholders, such as civil society, social partners and EU member states. Several guidelines target public authorities and social partners and aim to offer comprehensive support to narrow the disability employment gap.

This side-event focuses on the role that State parties, employers and worker organisations can play through disability inclusive policy measures and social dialogue. Cooperation and exchanges of good practices are important to take steps forward, not only between State parties but also between organisations and companies (peer-to-peer). Speakers are invited to share their vision and

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<sup>1</sup> See: <https://ilostat.ilo.org/new-ilo-database-highlights-labour-market-challenges-of-persons-with-disabilities/#:~:text=Persons%20with%20disabilities%20are%20only,share%20of%20persons%20without%20disabilities>.

expectations on measures that will promote the recruitment, retention and career opportunities for persons with disabilities and to share good practices of involving persons with disabilities and representative organisations.

Guiding questions:

1. How do worker and employer organisations contribute to the employment of persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others?
2. How can persons with disabilities and their representative organisations be better involved in social dialogue? Which good practices can be identified?
3. What policy measures from governments to promote the employment of persons with disabilities are needed and which measures can they take to support worker and employer organisations to this effect?

#### Speakers line-up

**Moderator: Katarina Ivankovic-Knezevic**, Director for Social Rights and Inclusion, European Commission

#### Keynotes:

- **Helena Dalli**, European Commissioner for Equality, European Commission
- **Dr. the Honourable Norman Dunn**, Minister of State in the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Jamaica

**Video message – Karine Lalieux**, Minister in charge of Persons with Disabilities, Belgium  
*Video message in French with English subtitles*

#### Panel interventions:

- **Güler Koca**, Disability Inclusion and Gender Equality Specialist, International Labour Organization
- **Shitaye Astawes**, International Disability Alliance (IDA)
- **Javier Güemes Pedraza**, International Director, ONCE
- **Alex Campbell**, Director Washington office, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)

#### Q&A

