BEO PROJECT NEEDS ANALYSIS SYNTHESIS REPORT (OCTOBER 2024)

**BEO Project (Business Engagement Odyssey) -
Employer Engagement Training and Good Practice Guide
(Ref: 2023-1 – BEO2-KA220-VET-000164060)**

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

BEO Project (Business Engagement Odyssey) - Employer Engagement Training and Good Practice Guide

The BEO Project (Business Engagement Odyssey) is a two-year (1/11/2023 – 31/10/2025) project funded under EU Erasmus+ Programme.

The aim of the BEO Project is to develop specialised training programme to improve Supported Employment Professional's employer engagement skills. The project will combine existing training materials to develop and design a training course for employer engagement and a good practice guide for employers.

87 million Europeans have a disability, less than 50% are in employment. Supported Employment (SE) is the internationally recognised and evidence-based model which assists people with disabilities to gain and maintain employment. Employer engagement is a key component of Supported Employment model but is often the area identified by SE Professionals as the most challenging.

The BEO project will be delivered by 6 Partners – GTB (Belgium – lead partner), APEA (Portugal), URI (Slovenia), BASE (England), HAO (Romania) and ASEE formerly known as EUSE European Network).

The project will be delivered through 5 work packages: -
- WP1 – Project Management – GTB
- **WP2 – Detailed Needs Analysis – Health Actions Overseas (HAO) & University Rehabilitation Institute (URI)**
- WP3 – Employer Engagement Training – GTB & BASE
- WP4 - Good Practice Guide – APEA
- WP5 – Communication and Dissemination – ASEE

BEO Project was launched in November 2023. To find out more about the BEO Project contact the lead partner GTB, Stefany Tan E| stefany.tan@gtb.be or Daan Henkens E| daan.henckens@gtb.be

This report is the synthesis report of **Work Package 2 – Detailed Needs Analysis, led by Health Actions Overseas (HAO) and University Rehabilitation Institute (URI)** with all partners contributing and participating in the WP.

WORK PACKAGE 2 – DETAILED NEEDS ANALYSIS

*Supported Employment (SE) is the proven method to gain employment, and **employer engagement** is key to the process.*

*BEO Project aims to develop a blended **Training package on employer engagement for SE professionals (WP3)** and a **Good Practice Guide** aimed at employers (WP4).*

*To fully align the development of these resources with the needs of the target groups, a **Detailed Needs Analysis** (WP2) was conducted across five European countries. In addition, The Association of Supported Employment (formerly European Union of Supported Employment (EUSE)), circulated the Supported Employment Professional Survey to their members who are not partners of the BEO Project in order to enrich the Detailed Needs Analysis with contributions from other SE organisations of other European countries.*

The objectives of WP2 were: -

- ***to precisely determine the skills and competences required by SE professionals** for successful employer engagement.*
- ***to identify the needs and concerns of employers** in the process of employing people with disabilities.*

*Work Package 2 commenced with a with **desk research in 5 partner countries**: Belgium (Flanders), UK, Portugal, Slovenia and Romania, in order to identify the needs and concerns of SE practitioners for successful employer engagement.*

***All partners identified National Occupational Standards** (NOS) for Supported Employment Specialists which were analysed. The analysis focused on identifying what **competencies, knowledge and skills** do the NOSs have in common, offering the basis of a training needs analysis which helped project partners identify areas for further development in employer engagement.*

Analysing the partners National Occupational Standards influenced the development and design of two questionnaires – one for Supported Employment professionals and another one for employers. Both questionnaires (for SE professionals and for employers) were produced in English and then translated into the national languages of the partner countries. The Questionnaires were circulated to Supported Employment professionals and employers and were completed between January and April 2024.

*This final report is based on the national reports and is the result of the joint analysis of the data collected. The 6 national reports can be found in the **Addendum Report**.*

In the interest of simplicity and clarity, the present report is structured according to the different sections of the survey and contains 4 main units:

- ***Unit A** - Results from Supported Employment Professional Survey;*
- ***Unit B** - Conclusions and recommendations regarding analysing data from Supported Employment Professionals Survey;*
- ***Unit C** - Results from Employers Survey;*
- ***Unit D** - Conclusions and recommendations regarding analysing data from Employers Survey.*

UNIT A. RESULTS FROM SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROFESSIONALS SURVEY

This section contains the overall responses from participants, as reported by the partners (174 in total):

- 39 respondents from Portugal (APEA)
- 25 respondents from Romania (HAO)
- 34 respondents from Belgium (GTB)
- 32 respondents from Slovenia (URI)
- 22 respondents from United Kingdom (BASE)
- 22 respondents from other ASEE member states - *Austria, Finland, Germany, Gibraltar, Greece, Malta, Northern Ireland, Norway, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland.*

The survey questionnaire used can be found in **Annex I**. It comprised of **4 sections**:

I.   General information
II. Competences of SE professionals
III. Knowledge
IV. Skills

SECTION I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Concerning the general characterisation of the respondents involved in this study, **174 SE professionals** answered the questionnaire, **82%** of them are female and **17%** are male *(Figure 1)*. Regarding the age of the respondents, **20%** were between 26 and 35 years old, **29%** were between 36 and 45 years old, **32%** were between 46 and 55 years old and **17%** were over 55 years old *(Figure 2)*.

Most of the respondents (**30%**) have more than 15 years' experience *(Figure 3)*, followed by those with 2-5 years' experience (**28%**) and 6-10 years' experience (**20%**).
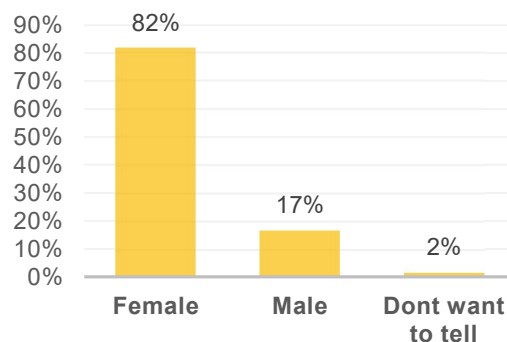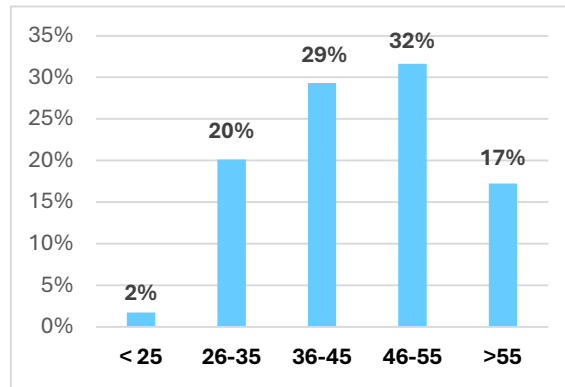

Figure 1: Respondents' gender

Figure 2: Respondents' age
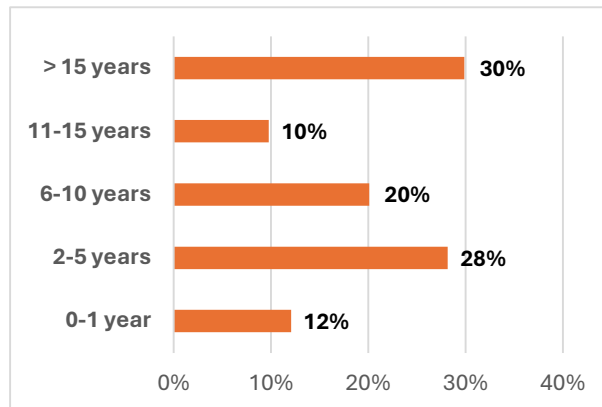
Figure 3: Respondents' work experience in the field of SE

| SECTION II. | COMPETENCES OF SE PROFESSIONALS |

Concerning the need for training, the majority of respondents agree (**93%** - strongly agree and agree) that there is a need for specialised training on employer engagement area, while **5%** neither agree nor disagree. Just **1%** of respondents did not consider there is a need for a training (*Figure 4*).

Regarding the confidence (being assured) in dealing with employers, most of the respondents (**56%**) are partially confident while **32%** are highly confident in their contacts with employers. A percent of **11%** of respondents are feeling partly unsure and **1%** are feeling unsure. (*Figure 5*).

Figure 4: Perceived need for specialised training

How assured do you feel in contact with employers?

- Highly assured: 32%
- Partly assured: 56%
- Partly unsure: 11%
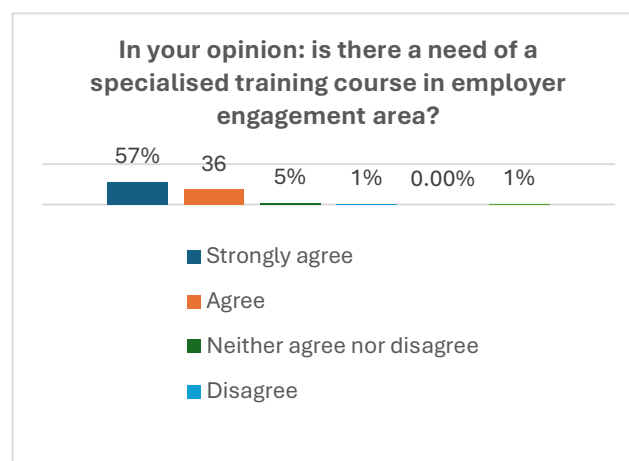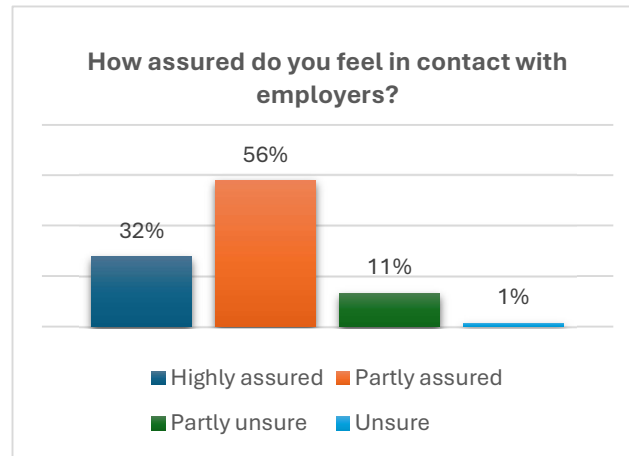- Unsure: 1%

Figure 5: Perceived confidence in employment engagement contacts with employers

According to the data obtained, for the analysis, we have combined the answers rate as follows:

- Always with Very Often or Very Necessary with Necessary;
- Sometimes or Partially Necessary.
- Rarely with Never or Less Necessary with Not Necessary.

Concerning the frequency of using competencies already acquired by the respondents in employer engagement process, the results of the questionnaires (*Table 1*) showed that:

The **most frequent compentencies** used by 84% of respondents are *Activate and search with the client for suitable job opportunities* followed by *Use methods to match individual job seekers to paid employment opportunities* (75% of respondents) and *Identify the needs of the employer* and *Mediate between employer and client / Negotiate the hiring (68% of respondents).*

The compentency used **sometimes** by most of the respondents (26%) is *Contact employers within the different sectors of activity, aiming to create a network (updated pool of companies and employers).*

The most competencies **rarely** or **never used** by the respondents are: *Monitor the entire post-hiring process, recording incidents and providing support to both the company and employee (job seeker) in resolving any problems that may arise (23%)* followed by *Carry out job analyses to understand prospective employment opportunities (20%) and Analyse and creates instruments to support the inclusion of employee (job seeker).*

How often do you use the following competencies in employer engagement process?	Always/ Very Often	Sometimes	Rarely/ Never
Activate and search with the client for suitable job opportunities (a)	84%	12%	4%
Use methods to match individual job seekers with paid employment opportunities (f)	75%	17%	8%
Identify the needs of the employer (c)	68%	24%	8%
Mediate between employer and client / Negotiate the hiring (e)	68%	17%	14%
Contact employers within the different sectors of activity, aiming to create a network (updated pool of companies and employers) (b)	62%	26%	12%
Carry out job analyses to understand prospective employment opportunities (d)	59%	21%	20%
Analyse and creates instruments to support the insertion of employee (job seeker) (g)	59%	21%	20%
Monitor the entire post-hiring process, recording incidents and providing support to both the company and employee (job seeker) in resolving any problems that may arise (h)	58%	20%	23%

Table 1: Frequency of use of the listed competencies

Concerning what competencies are necessary to be improved at SE practitioner, the results of the questionnaires (Table 2) showed that between 79% and 90% of respondents consider all the competencies listed as necessary for employer engagement training course.

The most necessary competencies considered by 90% of respondents to be improved are *Identifies the needs of the employer,* followed by *Contact employers within the different sectors of activity, aiming to create a network (updated pool of companies and employers)* and *Carry out job analyses to understand prospective employment opportunities (89%).*

In your opinion what competencies are necessary to be improved at SE practitioner through a training course in employer engagement? Rate each competency on the scale from 5 (very necessary) to 1 (not necessary)	Very necessary/ Necessary	Partially necessary	Less necessary / Not necessary
Identifies the needs of the employer (c)	90%	7%	2%
Contacts employers within the different sectors of activity, aiming to create a network (updated pool of companies and employers) (b)	89%	9%	3%
Carries out job analyses to understand prospective employment opportunities (d)	89%	9%	2%
Uses methods to match individual job seekers to paid employment opportunities (f)	87%	10%	3%
Analyses and creates instruments to support the insertion of employee (job seeker) (g)	85%	10%	5%
Mediates between employer and client/ Negotiate the hiring (e)	83%	13%	4%
Activates and searches with the client for suitable job opportunities (a)	79%	16%	6%
Monitors the entire post-hiring process, recording incidents and providing support to both the company and employee (job seeker) in resolving any problems that may arise (h)	79%	17%	3%

Table 2: Need for improvement of specific competencies

SECTION III.   KNOWLEDGE OF SE PROFESSIONALS

The results from the SE Professionals questionnaire showed that between 54% and 87% of the respondents considered all the knowleadge listed in the questionnaire as very necessary and necessary in their work related with employers (*Table 3*).

The **most necessary** knowleadge considered by 87% of the respondents are *How to make initial contact with employers across different sectors in a way that engages and interests them,* followed by *Knowledge about working in partnership with employers and building networks (83% of respondents), Knowledge of recruitment methods (82% of respondents) and Knowledge about local, regional and national labour market: current job market and trends, sources, how to access them, knowledge of each of the employers doing business in the locality (82% of respondents).*

The most **partially necessary** knowledge considered by the respondents (34% of them) is *knowledge of business systems or economic process and theories,* which is also percieved as **less or not necessary** knowledge (12% of respondents).

Please, rate your need of knowledge in your current field of work related with employers engagement on the scale from 5 (very much needed) to 1 (not needed)	Very necessary/ Necessary	Partially necessary	Less necessary/ Not necessary
How to make initial contact with employers across different sectors in a way that engages and interests them (e)	87%	6%	7%
Knowledge about working in partnership with entrepreneurs and building networks (f)	83%	13%	4%
Knowledge about local, regional and national labour market (current job market and trends, sources, how to access them, knowledge of each of the employers doing business in the locality) (a)	82%	15%	3%
Knowledge of recruitment methods (g)	82%	11%	7%
Why and how reasonable adjustments may need to be made to secure equal access to paid employment as well as the safety and welfare of those in paid employment (h)	81%	14%	5%
Knowledge of workplace teaching methods and their applications (i)	81%	9%	10%
Knowledge and methods to match individual job seekers to paid employment opportunities (k)	81%	8%	11%
Techniques for coaching and supporting learning in and outside the workplace (n)	81%	13%	6%
Techniques used to advocate for support to achieve positive outcomes (l)	79%	14%	7%
Knowledge of corporate culture and various policies (e.g. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - DEI strategy) (d)	78%	16%	6%
Current national and international employment and equality legislation requirements for the workforce (c)	74%	17%	9%
How to conduct task and job analyses to understand all aspects of employment opportunities (j)	73%	18%	9%
Knowledge about lifting and mobilizing natural supports for individual support (m)	71%	21%	8%
Business systems / Knowledge of economic process and theories (b)	54%	34%	12%

Table 3: Perceived need for specific knowledge

SECTION IV.   SKILLS OF SE PROFESSIONALS

Concerning the skills of SE professionals, respondents were asked to list at least 3 most needed skills of SE Professionals. The analysis of the answers highlighted the following main categories of skills:

Categories of answers:
1. **COMMUNICATION skills (the most needed skills):** active listening, assertive communication, written and oral communication skills especially over the phone, presentation skills, promotion skills, asking the right questions.
2. **FLEXIBILITY AND ADAPTABILITY:** ability to adapt quickly to ever changing technology etc., practical thinking, reliability, resilience.
3. **SOCIAL AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS:** relationship building abilities, respectful, flexibility trust, transparency, commitment, interaction and inter-relationship skills, determined, convincing and optimistic, collaboration - ability to create strong partnerships with both employers and job seekers.
4. **EMPATHY AND UNDERSTANDING:** empathy, being comfortable with people, understanding, patience and open minded.
5. **SOLUTION ORIENTED SKILLS:** problem solving, presenting as a solution not as problem, decision making skills, seeing possibilities and convincing the employer to try something, thinking out of the box and thinking ahead, versatile possibilities to work, solution-oriented skills and creativity solutions.
6. **LABOUR MARKET:** knowledge of the local labour market, global trends and knowledge of newly developed professions and future professions, ability to identify needs on the labour market or with employers.
7. **NETWORKING SKILLS:** networking of relevant stakeholders, developing employers' network.
8. **JOB ANALYSIS:** identification of employer needs, job analysis and adaptation, job adjustments possibilities.
9. **JOB MATCHING SKILLS:** mediation skills, negotiating with employers about contracts and wages.
10. **MARKETING SKILLS:** sales and marketing, knowledge of inclusion, skills needed to deliver training.
11. **LEGISLATION:** keeping up to date with changes in legislation of employment, social protection and employment of disabled people in general and incentive system (financial incentives and others: wage subvention, workplace adaptation …).
12. **DISABILITY:** good knowledge of disability, making the business case for employing people with disabilities.
13. **DIGITALIZATION:** how to use technology as efficiently as possible, knowledge and awareness of digitization and robotization and the impact that they can have on labour market.

Table 4: Most needed skills according to SE professionals

With regards to SE Professionals receiving training in these skills, most respondents stated they received extra occupational training (**29%**), learned from colleagues (**21%**) or learned by doing (**21%**). Only **11%** of the respondents received a formal training as a prerequisite before starting work (*Figure 6*).

Figure 6: Ways of receiving supported employment skills

Respondents were asked to rate from a list which skills were needed in employer engagement process. According to the data obtained, for the analysis, we have combined the answers rate with:

- 8, 9 and 10 as highly relevant and relevant,
- 4, 5, 6 and 7 as partially relevant and
- 1, 2 and 3 as not/lower relevant.

The highest reported percentage of respondents (**84%**) indicated that social and relationship skills are the most relevant skills needed in the employer engagement process, followed closely by problem solving skills (**83%**), negotiation and mediation skills and networking and relationship skills (**80%**) (*Table 4*).

The lowest reported percentage of respondents (**44%**) indicated sales and marketing skills are highly relevant, however the highest percentage of respondents (**19%**) indicated these skills are not so relevant skills needed.

The listed skills needed in employer engagement process	High relevance/ relevance	Partial relevance	No/Lower relevance
Social and relational skills (f)	84%	14%	2%
Problem solving skills (e)	83%	14%	3%
Negotiation and mediation skills (g)	80%	17%	3%
Networking and relationship skills (b)	80%	17%	3%
Information, advice and guidance skills (h)	74%	24%	2%
Supporting development skills (i)	74%	24%	2%
Advising employers about recruitment and selection processes to ensure that best methods are used to assess the suitability of the job seeker for the specific job role (c)	71%	24%	5%
Training skills (ex: know how to plan, develop, monitor and evaluate professional training in a work context) (k)	68%	27%	5%
Assessment and planning skills (j)	68%	27%	5%
Supporting employers to formulate tasks and required competences of the missing profiles (d)	67%	28%	5%
Data collection skills (i)	49%	44%	7%
Sales and marketing skills (a)	44%	37%	19%

Table 5: Skills needed in employer engagement process according to SE professionals

UNIT B. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT PROFESSIONALS SURVEY

All SE professionals agree that there is a need of a specialised training course in employer engagement (93% - strongly agree and agree). Most of the respondents have received extra-occupational training (29%), have learned from colleagues (21%) or have learned by doing (21%). Only 11% of respondents had formal training as a prerequisite before starting work.

The Supported Employment Professionals Survey has clearly identified the need to develop and design employer engagement training as a key part of the Supported Employment model, as well as the key areas (competencies, knowledge, and skills) required.

The most necessary/important COMPETENCIES to improve, according to over 83% respondents, are:
1. identifying the needs of the employer
2. contacting employers within the different sectors to create a network (an updated pool of companies and employers)
3. carrying out job analyses to understand prospective employment opportunities
4. using methods to match individual job seekers whit paid employment opportunities
5. analysing and creating instruments to support the inclusion of employees (job seekers)
6. mediating between employer and client/negotiating the hiring

The most necessary KNOWLEDGE as considered by over 82% of respondents, includes:

1. knowledge of how to make initial contact with employers accross different sectors in a way that engages and interests them,
2. knowledge about working in partnership with entrepreneurs and build networks,
3. knowledge about local, regional and national labour market (current job market and trends, sources, how to access them, knowledge of each of the employers doing business in the locality),
4. knowledge of recruitment methods.

The most relevant SKILLS in employer engagement process indicated by over 67% of respondents are:

1. Social and relationship skills
2. Problem-solving skills
3. Negotiation and mediation skills
4. Networking and relationship skills
5. Information, advice and guidance skills
6. Supporting development skills
7. Advising employers about recruitment and selection processes to ensure that best methods are used to assess the suitability of the job seeker for the specific job role
8. Training skills (ex: know how to plan, develop, monitor and evaluate professional training in a work context)
9. Assessment and planning skills
10. Supporting employers to formulate tasks and required competences of the missing profiles

UNIT C. RESULTS OF THE EMPLOYERS SURVEY

Employers' characteristics and their policies and practices are workplace environmental factors with important implications for the recruitment and retention of employees with disabilities. To explore these factors, a survey was developed focusing on employer policies and practices related to the successful employment of people with disabilities.

The survey used can be found in **Annex II**. It comprises of 5 sections:

   A.   Information about the size and the type of industry the employer belongs to and some information about the respondent (title, function and number of years with his/her organisation);

   B.   A list of benefits/services/resources that companies use to help integrate people with disabilities. The respondents were asked to indicate which of them are utilised in their company and rate its degree of helpfulness;

   C.   A list of employers' policies and practices that ensure their engagement for the inclusion of people with disabilities and respect for fundamental rights. The respondents were asked to indicate which of them are implemented in their company and rate their degree of progress;

   D.   A list of employment practices regarding recruitment and opportunities for promotion/training for people with disabilities. The respondents were also asked to indicate which of them are used and rate their degree of progress;

   E.   A list of items covering the reasonable accommodation process. The respondents were asked to indicate which of them are implemented and rate the degree of progress.

In the interest of simplicity and clarity, this report is structured according to the different sections of the survey questionnaires.

SECTION I. COMPANY PROFILE

The breakdown of the general characterisation of the respondents involved in this study, 63 representatives from **63 companies** (17 from Portugal, 12 from Belgium, 10 from Romania, 14 from Slovenia and 10 from United Kingdom) answered the questionnaire (online/Google forms or face- to- face in UK).

Overall, the distribution of the sample across profile of companies was equal, except for the 15 - 25 employees' group. As shown in *Figure 7*, **19%** have 26 - 50 employees and 52 - 250 employees, **17%** have 1,500+ employees, **16%** have 0 - 15 employees, **11%** have 500 – 1,499 employees and **10%** have between 251 to 499 employees.
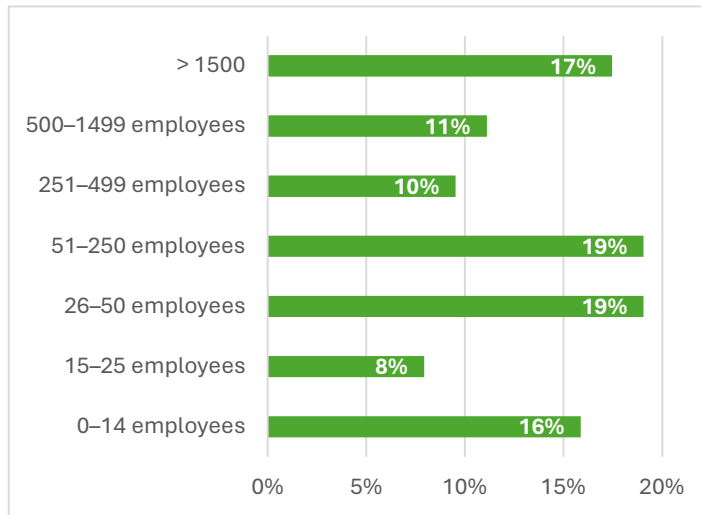
Figure 7: Company size

61% of all respondents reported they were from these 3 types of industries: wholesale and retail trade industry (21%), from other service activities (21%), and from human health and social work activities (19%) (*Table 6*).

Types of industries the respondents belong to:	%
Wholesale and retail trade	21
Other service activities	21
Human health and social work activities	19
Production	6
Accommodation and food service activities	6
Education	5
Information and communication	3
Public administration and defense activities	3
Manufacturing	3
Construction	3
Administrative and support services	2
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	2
Professional, scientific and technical activities	2
Restaurant	2
Financial and insurance activities	2
Arts, entertainment and recreation	2

Table 6: Type of industry

Most of the respondents (**29%**) were HR staff, followed closely by senior management (**27%**) and junior management (**22%**).
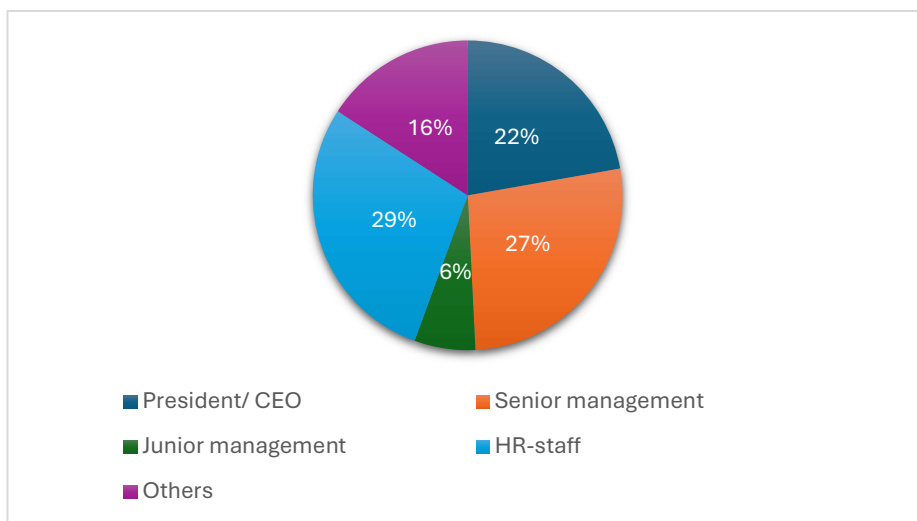
Table 7 presents the division of respondents according to their functions. The three most common areas of responsibility of respondents were in employment/recruitment (35%), followed by administrative (29%) and human resources (21%). The least common area of responsibility were those who selected "other" in the functions of office management, social worker and technical direction (2% for each).

Respondents varied in the number of years they had been with their organisation. Over a quarter of respondents had been with their organisation for more than 15 years (41%), followed by those with 2-5 years (22%), 11-16 years (16%), and 6-10 years (14%).

Respondents Functions	%
Employment / Recruitment	35
Administrative	29
Human Resources (HR)	21
Training & Development	13
Employee Relations	13
Diversity	10
Organisational Development	8
Disability	6
Other - Management	5
Benefits / Compensation	3
Health / Safety / Security	3
Other (office manager)	2
Other - Social worker	2
Other - Technical direction (1)	2

Table 7: Type of industry

SECTION II.   BENEFITS/SERVICES/RESOURCES

The most commonly **benefits/services/resources used by the employers** are *Information and advice services (about recruiting, adjusting a workplace, benefits of employing People with disabilities , online application for the employment assistance fund and supported wage system)* (59% employers), followed by *Opportunities to network, share resources and learn from other employers' efforts to offer more opportunities to People with disabilities (48%) and Staff disability awareness training (44%).*

The least used benefits/services/resources are *Employment incentives for workplace adaptations (65%)* followed by *Counselling services on how to deal with a disability in the workplace (types of disabilities and their characteristics, limitations and advantages, etc.)* and Wage subsidies (financial assistance to employers who employ People with disabilities) (63%)

Topic	Used	Not used	Very helpful	Somewhat	Minimally	Not helpful at all	I don´t know
Information and advice services (about recruiting, adjusting a workplace, benefits of employing People with disabilities , online application for the employment assistance fund and supported wage system) (4)	59%	41%	68%	30%	0%	0%	3%
Opportunities to network, share resources and learn from other employers` efforts to offer more opportunities to PwD (7)	48%	52%	70%	20%	7%	3%	0%
Staff disability awareness training (5)	44%	56%	82%	18%	0%	0%	0%
SE services, tax exemptions and other financial incentives (3)	40%	59%	68%	24%	8%	0%	0%
Wage subsidies (financial assistance to employers who employ PwD) (1)	37%	63%	61%	35%	4%	0%	0%
Counselling services on how to deal with a disability in the workplace (types of disabilities and their characteristics, limitations and advantages, etc.) (6)	37%	63%	91%	4%	4%	0%	0%
Employment incentives for workplace adaptations (2)	35%	65%	59%	41%	0%	0%	0%

Table 8: Type of industry

SECTION III.   ORGANISATION STRATEGY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

More than half of the respondents indicated that their **company has a vision and strategy for the inclusion of people with disabilities and respect for fundamental rights**. The most companies have *Internal regulations or a Code of Conduct where the commitment to non-discrimination and the inclusion of people with a disability is specifically stated* (67%) followed by *Company website, recruitment boards and online tools are fully accessible to persons with different types of disabilities* and *A person responsible for ensuring the implementation of inclusion actions for the person with disability*.

The company policy which brough the most positive aspects (78%) is *Partnership (formal or informal) with a social organisation, through which the company integrates people with disabilities professionally.*

The company policy, used by the employers, which needs the most improvement is *Company website, recruitment boards and online tools to be fully accessible to persons with different disabilities (37%).*

The least used policy in companies is the implementation of *a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) strategy that is regularly reviewed* (78%) but on the other hand, the employers who implemented it indicated it among the policies that brought the best positive results.

Topic	Used	Not used	Has brought positive aspects	It needs improvement	I don´t know
The company has internal regulations or a Code of Conduct where the commitment to non-discrimination and the inclusion of people with a disability is specifically stated (1)	67%	33%	57%	26%	17%
Company website, recruitment boards and online tools are fully accessible to persons with different types of disabilities (4)	65%	35%	51%	37%	12%
Has the company appointed a person responsible for ensuring the implementation of inclusion actions for the person with disability (who may be an employee with a disability who already works in the company) (5)	65%	35%	63%	27%	10%
The company has a partnership (formal or informal) with a social organisation, through which the company integrates PwD professionally (3)	63%	37%	78%	15%	8%
The company has a policy for job change and job coaching (reintegration after sickness), if needed? (6)	60%	40%	58%	32%	11%
The company has implemented a DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) strategy that is regularly reviewed (2)	52%	48%	67%	21%	12%

Table 8: Organisational Policies

SECTION IV.   RECRUITMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROMOTION / TRAINING

Concerning **the recruitment and opportunities for promotion/training** the most used strategy is creating accessible and non-discriminatory job advertisements and inclusive and understandable interview questions (84%), followed by modifying pre-employment tests (67%), and providing vocational training and apprenticeship (65%).

Also, employers see *Inclusive and understandable interview questions* as the strategy that has brought the most positive aspects (83%) followed by the v*ocational training and apprenticeship (78%) and mentoring, job shadowing, work experience, internship and other training opportunities* (77%).

Job circuit is less widely used (30%) and 48% of the employers who have used this method do not know whether it has had any positive aspects.

Topic	Used	Not used	Has brought positive aspects	It needs improvement	I don´t know
Changing wording of job adverts by making them accessible and non-discriminatory (1)	84%	16%	70%	17%	13%
Changing interview questions by making them inclusive and understandable for the candidate (2)	84%	16%	83%	13%	4%
Modifying pre-employment testing (e.g., time flexibility) (3)	67%	33%	67%	23%	10%
Vocational training and apprenticeship (6)	65%	35%	78%	12%	10%
Offer and/or expand mentorship, job shadowing and placements, internships and other training opportunities to people with disabilities, pre-employment training (5)	63%	37%	77%	13%	10%
Create inclusive job design, use job carving (4)	60%	40%	63%	13%	24%
Job circuit (Job Circuit methodology supports people with disabilities who need relevant work experience through short periods of different job activities) (7)	30%	70%	26%	26%	48%

Table 9: Strategies for recruitment and on-the-job training

SECTION V.   REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION STRATEGIES

In terms of **reasonable accommodation strategies,** the most used are *flexible working conditions* (79%), *accessible organisation facilities* (78%), *adapting the workplace/environment* and *consulting the employee with a disability about special equipment or assistive technology needed* (68%). *Purchased/adapted equipment or assistive technology* is also commonly used (59%) and *purchased/adapted examination or training materials* are less commonly used (48%).

More than 60% of the respondents consider that all the listed reasonable accommodation strategies have brought positive aspects, especially flexible working conditions (78%), *adapting the workplace/environment* and *consulting the employee with a disability about special equipment or assistive technology needed* (76%).

Adapted examinations/training material is used by the fewest respondents (48%) of whom 20% do not know whether it has had any positive effects.

Topic	Used	Not used	Has brought positive aspects	It needs improvement	I don´t know
Flexible working (having flexible start/finish times, working from home, etc.) (3)	79%	21%	78%	18%	4%
Made existing facilities accessible to employees with disabilities (1)	78%	22%	70%	22%	8%
Modified work environment (ex: work access, lighting, temperature, noise, break areas etc.) (6)	68%	32%	72%	14%	14%
Consulted the worker with a disability about special equipment or assistive technology needed (7)	68%	32%	76%	12%	12%
Restructured or modified jobs (changing tasks, time etc.) (2)	60%	40%	76%	16%	8%
Purchased / Acquired or modified / adapted equipment or assistive devices (4)	59%	41%	72%	14%	14%
Purchased / Acquired or modified / adapted examination or training materials (5)	48%	52%	63%	17%	20%

Table 10: Strategies for recruitment and on-the-job training

UNIT D: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING ANALYSING OF DATA FROM EMPLOYERS' SURVEY

Overall, sixty one percent (**61%**) of all respondents reported they worked in these 3 types of industries: wholesale and retail trade industry, human health and social work activities and other services. The distribution of the sample across profile of companies was equal, except for the 15 - 25 employees' group. Most of respondents were in employment/recruitment, administrative and human resources and over a quarter of respondents (**41%**) had more than 15 years of experience in their organisation.

The Employer Survey has clearly identified that:

- The most commonly benefits/services/resources used by the employers are *information and advice services* (about recruiting, adjusting a workplace, benefits of employing people with disabilities , online application for the employment assistance fund and supported wage system), *opportunities to network*, *share resources and learn from other employers' efforts* to offer more opportunities to People with disabilities , and *staff disability awareness training*;
- More than half of the employers have a vision and strategy for the inclusion of people with disabilities and respect for fundamental rights. The most companies have *Internal regulations or a Code of Conduct where the commitment to non-discrimination and the inclusion of people with a disability is specifically stated*;
- The most used strategy of recruitment and promotion/training is creating accessible and non-discriminatory job advertisements and inclusive and understandable interview questions, modifying pre-employment tests, and providing Vocational training and apprenticeship;
- The most commonly reasonable accommodation strategies used by employers are *flexible working conditions*, *accessible organisation facilities*, *adapting the workplace/environment* and *consulting the employee with a disability about special equipment or assistive technology needed*.

The Employer Survey has clearly identified **employer needs** for:

1. **Improving existing policies and practices:**
   - company website, recruitment boards and online tools that are fully accessible to persons with different types of disabilities,
   - policy for job change and job coaching (reintegration after sickness),
   - modifying pre-employment testing (e.g. time flexibility),
   - job circuit,
   - internal regulations or a Code of Conduct where the commitment to non-discrimination and the inclusion of people with a disability is specifically stated.

2. **Use of benefits/services/resources:**
   - accessing counselling services on how to deal with a disability in the workplace (types of disabilities and their characteristics, limitations and advantages, etc.);
   - in accessing employment incentives for workplace adaptations;
   - in purchasing and adapting examination or training materials.

Therefore, **employers are seeking good practices**. The BEO Project will develop a Good Practice Guide (GPG) to provide employers with practical tips, good practice and examples that will be a source of inspiration and encouragement for both employers and employees, offering initiatives that can be implemented in the workplace.

FINAL CONCLUSIONS

The SE Professionals Survey and the Employers Survey collectively emphasise an urgent need for specialised training to engage and support employers and the inclusion of People with disabilities in the workforce.

Presently, training for SE professionals often remains informal, with only a minority having received formal training before starting their jobs. Despite having many years of experience, over half of these professionals lack confidence in their interactions with employers.

SE professionals have identified several essential competencies crucial for employment of People with disabilities and some of the most frequently used still requiring improvement, notably job matching methods, identification of employer needs and conducting job analysis with a focus on prospective employment opportunities. Improvements are required also in methods aimed at expanding employer networks, refining job-matching techniques, developing strategies for the inclusion of people with disabilities in the workplace, and strengthening mediation/negotiation during the recruitment process.

Areas where a significant gap exists between acquired and necessary knowledge for effective employer engagement, include initiating contact in a manner that engages and motivates, establishing partnerships with employers, and understanding labour markets and recruitment methods.

Conversely, employers stress the need to improve existing policies and practices, particularly concerning digital information accessibility, (re)integration into work post sick leave, pre-employment testing adaptations, and workplace accommodations. Improvement of internal regulations concerning non-discrimination commitments and inclusion of people with disabilities is also a focal point. Among existing services, employers identify areas requiring improvement, such as access to counselling on handling/dealing with disability in the workplace and employment incentives for workplace and work task adaptations.

The findings from both surveys underscore the need for developing a specialised training course in employer engagement and enhancing policies and practices to support people with disabilities inclusion. Addressing these needs, the project will establish training focused on the primary/main competencies and knowledge identified in both surveys, accompanied by a good practice guide. This guide will offer practical tips, examples, and inspiration for both employers and employees to implement effective and inclusive initiatives in the workplace.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SE PROFESSIONALS

Dear respondent,

The consortium of the Erasmus+ project BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT ODYSSEY (BEO) project would like to ask you to share a tiny bit of your time to complete the following questionnaire. This is part of the research phase of the project which aims to develop a training package in employer engagement for Supported Employment (SE) Professionals.

Please take a few moments to fill in this questionnaire to help us design training that best suits your needs.

Participation is voluntary, your responses are confidential and will only be used for the purposes of the study. Your name is not required, and the completed questionnaire will be anonymous. If you would like to receive the results of this research by email, please give us your email address and we will get back to you after all the data will be collected and analysed (pre-estimated at early July 2024).

PRIVACY POLICY (separate document)

For your participation in this study, you will be asked to give some data and information, which will be processed in accordance with the present **General Data Management and Protection Policy**. Please, pay particular attention to your rights in relation with your personal data. Acting in the framework of our general policy, we provide the following specific information with regards to the collection and processing of data for the present study.

As a rule, we need your responses to the questions to make general conclusions about the situation in different countries with regards to the studied subjects and we do not have any interest in collecting data that will enable identification of an individual whatsoever. Therefore, no matter how you will provide your responses, i.e., filling-in printed versions of the questionnaire and handing it to project consultants offline or filling-in the dedicated online survey, we will take all measures to aggregate the data and achieve the highest degree of pseudonymization, before any analysis is performed on the data for extracting conclusions.

However, at the beginning of the data collection process, there are cases where the data you provide may give grounds for identification. For instance, you may provide your email address to receive the results of the study or have the chance of any different follow up with the team undertaking the study. If you fill-in the online version of the questionnaire, the system will record the IP address (internet protocol address) of the device through which you do the work. If you fill-in the offline version of the questionnaire and hand it over to a project consultant, that person may be able to identify you.

Please, note: the above-mentioned data will be kept ONLY during the data collection process, which will stop by end of June 2024. After that, all data that link your responses to your identity, will be deleted and the questionnaire content will undergo a fully anonymized processing. In other words, no human or the system collecting data, will be able to identify the individual that provided the responses. Your email or other contact details will be kept longer only if you give your explicit consent. The pseudonymized data will be kept for a period of **5 years after the end of the project on October 2025**, for the needs of the project.

Erasmus+ BEO Project Team

Full name (optional):

| |
| |

Email (optional):

| |
| |

Other contact details, e.g., telephone number (optional):

CONSENT:

I provide my explicit consent for my participation in the aforementioned study and for the subsequent processing of the data and information I provide, as above described:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

I explicitly consent for the BEO Project members to keep my email and the other contact details I provided above, so that they will be able to contact me and inform me of the progress of the BEO project and future activities:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

I also explicitly consent for the BEO Project members to keep my email and the other contact details I provided above, so that they will be able to contact me and inform me of other projects you participate in, which are relevant to my line of business and profile:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

I. GENERAL INFORMATION						
1. **Gender**:	Male	☐	Female	☐	Don`t want to tell	☐
2. **Age**:	☐ under 25 years ☐ 26- 35 years ☐ 36- 45 years ☐ 46- 55 years ☐ over 55 years					
3. **Working experience in the SE field**:	☐ 0 – 1 years ☐ 2 – 5 years ☐ 6 – 10 years ☐ 11 – 15 years ☐ more than 15 years					

II. COMPETENCES OF SE PROFFESIONALS	
1. **In your opinion: is there a need of a specialised training course in employer engagement area?**	☐ Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Neither agree nor disagree ☐ Disagree ☐ strongly disagree ☐ Don´t know
2. **How assured do you feel in contact with employers?**	☐Highly assured ☐Partly assured ☐Partly unsure ☐Unsure
3. **How often do you use the following competencies in employer engagement process?**	
a. Activate and search with the client for suitable job opportunities	☐ Always ☐ Very Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never
b. Contact employers within the different sectors of activity, aiming to create a network (updated pool of companies and employers)	☐ Always ☐ Very Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never
c. Identify the needs of the employer	☐ Always ☐ Very Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never

d.	Carry out job analyses to understand prospective employment opportunities	☐ Always ☐ Very Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never
e.	Mediate between employer and client/ Negotiate the hiring	☐ Always ☐ Very Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never
f.	Use methods to match individual job seekers to paid employment opportunities	☐ Always ☐ Very Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never
g.	Analyse and creates instruments to support the insertion of employee (job seeker)	☐ Always ☐ Very Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never
h.	Monitor the entire post-hiring process, recording incidents and providing support to both the company and employee (job seeker) in resolving any problems that may arise	☐ Always ☐ Very Often ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never
4.	**In your opinion what competencies are necessary to be improved at SE practitioner through a training course in employer engagement? Rate each competence on the scale from 5 (very necessary) to 1 (not necessary)**	
a.	Activates and searches with the client for suitable job opportunities	☐ 5 ☐ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1
b.	Contacts employers within the different sectors of activity, aiming to create a network (updated pool of companies and employers)	☐ 5 ☐ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1
c.	Identifies the needs of the employer	☐ 5 ☐ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1
d.	Carries out job analyses to understand prospective employment opportunities	☐ 5 ☐ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1
e.	Mediates between employer and client/ Negotiate the hiring	☐ 5 ☐ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1
f.	Uses methods to match individual job seekers to paid employment opportunities	☐ 5 ☐ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1
g.	Analyses and creates instruments to support the insertion of employee (job seeker)	☐ 5 ☐ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1
h.	Monitors the entire post-hiring process, recording incidents and providing support to both the company and employee (job seeker) in resolving any problems that may arise	☐ 5 ☐ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1

	III. KNOWLEDGE	
1.	**Please, rate your need of knowledge in your current field of work related with employers engagement on the scale from 5 (very needed) to 1 (not needed)**	
a.	Knowledge about local, regional and national labour market (current job market and trends, sources, how to access them, knowledge of each of the employers doing business in the locality)	☐ 5 ☐ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1
b.	Business systems / Knowledge of economic process and theories	☐ 5 ☐ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1
c.	Current national and international employment and equality legislation requirements for the workforce	☐ 5 ☐ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1
d.	Knowledge of corporate culture and various policies (e.g. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion - DEI strategy)	☐ 5 ☐ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1
e.	How to make initial contact with employers across different sectors in a way that engages and interests them	☐ 5 ☐ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1
f.	Knowledge about working in partnership with entrepreneurs and building networks	☐ 5 ☐ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1
g.	Knowledge of recruitment methods	☐ 5 ☐ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1
h.	Why and how reasonable adjustments may need to be made to secure equal access to paid employment as well as the safety and welfare of those in paid employment	☐ 5 ☐ 4 ☐ 3 ☐ 2 ☐ 1

i.	Knowledge of workplace teaching methods and their applications	☐ 5	☐ 4	☐ 3	☐ 2	☐ 1
j.	How to conduct task and job analyses to understand all aspects of employment opportunities	☐ 5	☐ 4	☐ 3	☐ 2	☐ 1
k.	Knowledge and methods to match individual job seekers to paid employment opportunities	☐ 5	☐ 4	☐ 3	☐ 2	☐ 1
l.	Techniques used to advocate for support to achieve positive outcomes	☐ 5	☐ 4	☐ 3	☐ 2	☐ 1
m.	Knowledge about lifting and mobilising natural supports for individual support	☐ 5	☐ 4	☐ 3	☐ 2	☐ 1
n.	Techniques for coaching and supporting learning in and outside the workplace	☐ 5	☐ 4	☐ 3	☐ 2	☐ 1

IV.   SKILLS

1. From your point of view what are most needed skills of a SE Professionals in respect of employers in an ever-changing labour market, with challenges from globalization, digitization, robotization and aging?
Please list **at least 3 skills below**:

2.	Did you receive any training on these skills within the occupation you are currently working in? *(Basic education is excluded - training during your current work only!)*	☐ Yes, a formal one, as a prerequisite before starting ☐ Yes, extra occupational training ☐ Yes, within my enrolment from colleagues ☐ No, but an informal training ☐ No, but it was "learning by doing"

3. Rate the listed skills needed in employer engagement process in order of relevance (from 1= lower relevance to 10= high relevance); give each skill its ranking from 1 to 10:

	SKILLS	RATE
a.	Sales and marketing skills	
b.	Networking and relationship skills	
c.	Advising employers about recruitment and selection processes to ensure that best methods are used to assess the suitability of the job seeker for the specific job role	
d.	Supporting employers to formulate tasks and required competences of the missing profiles	
e.	Problem solving skills	
f.	Social and relational skills	
g.	Negotiation and mediation skills	
h.	Information, advice and guidance skills	
i.	Data collection skills	
j.	Assessment and planning skills	
k.	Training skills (ex: know how to plan, develop, monitor and evaluate professional training in a work context)	
l.	Supporting development skills	

ANNEX II

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EMPLOYERS

I. PROFILE OF COMPANY (EMPLOYER)	
1. Company size: *(Please tick one response)*	☐ 0–14 employees ☐ 15–25 employees ☐ 26–50 employees ☐ 51–250 employees ☐ 251–499 employees ☐ 500–1499 employees ☐ 1500+ employees
2. Type of Industry (according to https://ilostat.ilo.org/resources/concepts-and-definitions/classification-economic-activities/**)**	☐ Agriculture, forestry and fishing ☐ Mining and quarrying ☐ Manufacturing ☐ Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply ☐ Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities ☐ Construction ☐ Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles ☐ Transportation and storage ☐ Accommodation and food service activities ☐ Information and communication ☐ Financial and insurance activities ☐ Real estate activities ☐ Professional, scientific and technical activities ☐ Administrative and support service activities ☐ Public administration and defense; compulsory social security ☐ Education ☐ Human health and social work activities ☐ Arts, entertainment and recreation ☐ Other service activities _____

3. Your title: *(Please tick one response)*	☐ President/ CEO ☐ Senior management ☐ Junior management ☐ HR-staff ☐ Others _____
4. Your function: *(Several answers are possible, tick all relevant)*	Administrative ☐Benefits /Compensation ☐Disability ☐Diversity ☐Employee Relations ☐Employment/Recruitment ☐Health/Safety/Security ☐Human Resources (HR) ☐Legal ☐Organizational Development ☐Training & Development ☐Other (Please specify)
5. Number of years with your organization:	☐ _____Years

II.   BENEFITS/ SERVICES/RESOURCES

Please indicate which of the following benefits/services/resources your company utilizes to help integrate PwD and rate their degree of helpfulness (Please tick if utilized and one response for each item utilized)

Topic	Used	Not used	Very helpful	Somewhat	Minimally	Not helpful at all	I don´t know
1. Wage subsidies (financial assistance to employers who employ PwD)	☐	☐					
2. Employment incentives for workplace adaptations	☐	☐					
3. SE services, tax exemptions and other financial incentives	☐	☐					

4. Information and advice services (about recruiting, adjusting a workplace, benefits of employing PwD, online application for the employment assistance fund and supported wage system)	☐	☐				
5. Staff disability awareness training	☐	☐				
6. Counselling services on how to deal with a disability in the workplace (types of disabilities and their characteristics, limitations and advantages, etc.)	☐	☐				
7. Opportunities to network, share resources and learn from other employers` efforts to offer more opportunities to PwD.	☐	☐				

III. YOUR COMPANY VISION AND STRATEGY FOR THE INCLUSION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND RESPECT FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

If topic is implemented, please rate the degree of progress.

Topic	YES / NO	Has brought positive aspects	It needs improvement	I don´t know
1. The company has internal regulations or a Code of Conduct where the commitment to non-discrimination and the inclusion of people with a disability is specifically stated.				
2. The company has implemented a DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) strategy that is regularly reviewed				
3. The company has a partnership (formal or informal) with a social organisation, through which the company integrates PwD professionally				
4. Company site, recruitment boards and online tools are fully accessible to persons				

	Topic				
	with different types of disabilities				
5.	Has the company appointed a person responsible for ensuring the implementation of inclusion actions for the person with disability (who may be an employee with a disability who already works in the company)				
6.	The company has a policy for job change and job coaching (reintegration after sickness), if needed?				

IV.   RECRUITMENT AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROMOTION/TRAINING

If topic is implemented, please rate the degree of progress.

	Topic	YES / NO	Has brought positive aspects	It needs improvement	I don´t know
1.	Changing wording of job adverts by making them accessible and non-discriminatory				
2.	Changing interview questions by making them inclusive and understandable for the candidate				
3.	Modifying pre-employment testing (e.g., time flexibility)				
4.	Create inclusive job design, use job carving				
5.	Offer and/or expand mentorship, job shadowing and placements, internships and other training opportunities to people with disabilities, pre-employment training				
6.	Vocational training and apprenticeship				
7.	Job circuit *(Job Circuit methodology supports people with disabilities who need relevant work experience through short periods of different job activities)*				

V.   REASONABLE ACCOMODATION

If topic is implemented, please rate the degree of progress.

Topic	YES / NO	Has brought positive aspects	It needs improvement	I don´t know
1. Made existing facilities accessible to employees with disabilities				
2. Restructured or modified jobs *(changing tasks, time etc.)*				
3. Flexible working *(having flexible start/finish times, working from home, etc.)*				
4. Purchased / Acquired or modified / adapted equipment or assistive devices				
5. Purchased / Acquired or modified / adapted examination or training materials				
6. Modified work environment (ex: work access, lighting, temperature, noise, break areas etc.)				
7. Consulted the worker with a disability about special equipment or assistive technology needed				
8. Other (Please specify)				

BEO Project Needs Analysis, Synthesis Report is available in accessible formats by contacting Communication and Dissemination lead partner, the Association of Supported Employment Europe E| edythdunlop@niuse.org.uk

For further information on the BEO Project, contact lead partner GTB E| Stefany Tan, E| stefany.tan@gtb.be or

Daan Henkens E| daan.henckens@gtb.be

**BEO Project (Business Engagement Odyssey) -
Employer Engagement Training and Good Practice Guide
(Ref: 2023-1 – BEO2-KA220-VET-000164060)**