
Promoting Employment and Employability for Persons with Disabilities: Evidences from Tuscany

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Résumé

The effective enjoyment of the right to work by citizens with disabilities is to be considered both as an end in itself and as an instrument for the full and effective achievement of citizenship rights. This concept is well defined both in the CRPD (art. 27) and in the laws of individual countries: in the Italian case, for example, the first article of the Constitution emphasises that "Italy is a democratic Republic founded on labour". The European Union is committed to promoting the full enjoyment of the right to work. In particular, instruments such as the European Social Fund provide European regions (i.e. at the sub-national level) with the resources to promote greater inclusiveness of development processes at the local level

This is why, over the years, there has been an increasing focus on accompanying citizens with disabilities to work through pathways that enhance people's skills, aspirations and agency. The construction of this type of pathway cannot be done without the collaboration and alignment of different actors. Among these, people with disabilities are obviously the central pillar but others also play a relevant role: companies, social workers, third sector organisations etc.

This paper presents the outcomes of an action-research project that started in 2016 and involved the collaboration between the ARCO research centre and the social-health services of many districts in Tuscany. The collaboration led to the co-creation of an information gathering tool based on the bio-psycho-social approach to disability. The tool was developed with the dual purpose of providing support for individualised planning and of enabling a standardised collection of information for analysis, transparency and planning purposes. A second strand of work focused on conducting territorial animation activities aimed at fostering dialogue between the various actors involved in the construction of pathways to promote access to work for persons with disabilities

In practice, this paper will present a quantitative analysis of the outcomes related to the participation to employability enhancement projects: in particular, the analysis will be aimed at understanding how and if the alignment between the disabled citizen and social workers (i.e. alignment about the aims of the project, alignment about the perception of skills and limitations) influences the impact that this type of projects can have. This type of analysis will be based on the comparison between the assessment conducted by social workers and the self-assessment conducted by citizens with disabilities involved in employability enhancement projects. The analysis will consist of estimating micro-econometric models (logit and multilogit) having as dependent variable a set of impact indicators and as independent variables potential determinants of the impact itself. The results thus obtained will then be triangulated with the qualitative evidence that emerged during the various phases of the action-research pathway.

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