

# EU-level stakeholder views on labour market integration of people with chronic diseases

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# Policy framework and tools on RTW after chronic disease (1)

- International context
  - ILO Convention on Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (disabled persons)
  - UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
    - Article 27 (work and employment)
- Framework Directive 89/391/EEC on introduction of measures to encourage improvements in safety and health of workers at work
- EU OSH acquis
- Employment Equality Directive (2000/78/EC)
- 2007 Community Strategy on Health and Safety at Work
- 2010 European Disability Strategy
- 2014 EU Strategic Framework on Health and Safety 2014-2020
- 2017 Modernization of EU Occupational Safety and Health legislation and policy

# Policy framework and tools on RTW after chronic disease (2)

- Embedded in policy initiatives on
  - Equal opportunities and equal treatment of individuals with disabilities
  - Active and healthy ageing
  - Active Labor Market Policies
- Sibiu Declaration: fairness in the labor market
- European Pillar of Social Rights
  - Fair working conditions & equal opportunities regardless of disability...
- Pathways for the reintegration of workers recovering from injury and illness into quality employment
- Europe's Beating Cancer Plan

What is the role played by industrial relations actors in the context of return to work after long-term absence from work following chronic disease(s)?

# Method & sample

- Semi-structured interviews with stakeholders asking about
  - Level of involvement in SD on RTW
  - Nature of interactions between actors
  - EU-level social dialogue outcomes on RTW
  - Future potential for EU action on RTW

Type of organisation	Count
European social partners (total)	7
<i>Trade unions</i>	5
<i>Employer organisations</i>	2
European institutions	2
NGOs, patient or disease associations	6
Academia	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

- Relevant issue in the face of ageing and prevalence of chronic diseases, growing interest
- Not a top priority in the agenda of social partners (but patient organisations)
  - Limited resources or a matter of prioritisation
- Often RTW as part of broader OSH issues
- Requires a shift in thinking: what a person *can do*, rather than *cannot do*

- Different involvement/role of stakeholders in RTW policies
  - Awareness raising, promotion of good practices, information campaigns, lobbying, dissemination of research
- Shift in focus from prevention of accidents towards prevention of work-related diseases
  - The latter is the main cause of LT absence from work
- Challenges faced by SMEs – lack of information, resources for accommodating RTW

- Differences due unfavorable working conditions in some sectors:
  - e.g. construction, woodwork sectors, exposure to chemical agents
- No concrete SD outcomes on RTW at the EU level, but some relevant aspects appear elsewhere
- Main role at the EU-level is raising awareness
- Main policy action on RTW to be taken at national level
  - Even more relevant is national sectoral SD



Looking forward:

- European Charter on RTW and chronic diseases?
  - Collect good practices, create minimum standards and common guidance to MS
- European Semester & CSR
  - Data collection, emphasis on OSH issues?
- More research

Thank you for your attention!

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