

# Jobsearch and Persons with Disability

Results of a study among persons with disability and employers

Research and Development Division  
Employment and Training Corporation  
Malta

2005

## Jobsearch and Persons with Disability

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Employment and Training Corporation

Head Office, Hal Far

Malta

Tel: (+356) 222 01 124

Fax: (+356) 222 01 803

Email: [etc@etc.org.mt](mailto:etc@etc.org.mt)

[www.etc.gov.mt](http://www.etc.gov.mt)

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**Author:** Antonella Borg, Senior Executive, R & D Division, ETC  
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# Foreword

***The Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) is Malta's public employment service, mandated to assist jobseekers and employers through training and employment programmes.***

Clients making use of ETC's services include groups who are disadvantaged in the labour market particularly persons with disability. These clients require policies and strategies that address their needs. According to Eurostat estimates, 15% of the European Union population suffers from a disability: proportionately, their employment rate is substantially lower and their unemployment rate higher than for others in the labour force. Similarly in Malta 8.4% of the Maltese mention having health problems of whom only 32.2% are in employment.

In recent years, the rights of persons with disability have been better articulated, among them the rights to economic integration and equal opportunities in the labour market. Policy emphasis has increasingly been in encouraging the recruitment, integration and retention of persons with disability in the 'mainstream workforce, stimulated by an 'equality' agenda as well as by a general movement in employment policies worldwide from passive to active labour market measures.

Toward this end the ETC has compiled this report in order to gather more information on the job search and work experience of persons with disability. The aims of this project are twofold. We wanted to find

out more about the experiences and aspirations of persons with disabilities who are seeking to enter the labour market as well as those who have managed to do so. We also wanted to understand the factors and conditions that positively or negatively affect the access of persons with disability to the labour market, and what would be the best policy approaches that respond to these factors.

We hope that the findings of this report will help everyone interested in the subject achieve a better understanding of the problems being faced by persons with disability. Findings suggest that persons with disability need special support mechanisms in order to enhance their chances for employment and training. They also imply that once these mechanisms are in place persons with disability do give a positive contribution to the workplace as other employees.

These findings will assist the ETC devising new policies aimed at strengthening these persons' work potential. ETC hopes that other key stakeholders will find the report's findings useful in their endeavours in favour of persons with disability. This would ensure that policies and strategies devised by the various key stakeholders will find support disabled persons' needs and achieve a more accessible work environment.

Robert Tufigno  
Chairman, ETC



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*The main interest of the report is to provide a clearer picture of the labour market situation of persons with disability.*

## Executive Summary

### Why and how was the report conducted?

The aim of the report is to gather information on issues pertaining to persons with disability as well as their jobsearch and work experience. Information gathered includes details on the labour market history of persons with disability, methods used for jobsearch and types of assistance sought, support needed at the workplace, job retention of disabled workers as well as employers' views on the recruitment of persons with disability amongst other issues.

The report comprises the results of two surveys, one among persons with disability and another among employers. The former was carried out between March and June 2003 among a stratified random sample of employed disabled individuals, unemployed persons with disability registering for employment with the Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) and persons with disability who are neither working nor seeking a job from lists provided by the National Commission Persons with Disability.

The second survey was administered among a small sample of employers divided between those who employed persons with disability and those who did not. Due to the small sample size employers were chosen purposively according to the economic sector in which they operate as well as company size. Employers were interviewed during March and June 2003. The Research and Development Division was mainly responsible for questionnaire design, data analysis and the compilation of the report.

### What are the factors influencing the jobsearch experience of persons with disability?

The jobsearch experience of persons with disability is mainly characterised by relatively long periods of unemployment and particular difficulties in obtaining a job. Most respondents had been seeking work for more than a year. A significant number of unemployed respondents mentioned registering for work with the ETC for two years or more. Three quarters of respondents mentioned that their jobsearch experience was difficult.

They encountered difficulties because of their disability, because they had not received a response from employers, because there were not enough job opportunities and because the support needed at work was lacking.

There are differences among respondents when it comes to interest in finding employment. Females were less likely to be interested in obtaining a job. Indeed fewer females than males were registering for work with the ETC and less were in employment. Women were less likely to seek guidance and assistance in choosing their career and were less likely to be actively seeking work than their male counterparts. Meanwhile there were more youth registering for employment with the ETC than older individuals. Youth seem to be finding particular difficulties in securing employment. As to types of disability, persons with intellectual disability, persons suffering from mental health difficulties and persons with multiple disabilities were less in employment and were more likely to be registering for work or to be inactive than were individuals with other disabilities.

The ETC was the agency most sought by respondents when it comes to career guidance and jobsearch assistance. However, survey participants also referred to other methods of jobsearch namely assistance from voluntary organisations or help from family and friends. Apart from the ETC, respondents also got to know about jobs that interested them from personal contacts or by speaking directly to employers, among other methods.

### The work experience of persons with disability.

Persons with disability already in employment generally have a stable employment history with low job mobility and long job tenure. Most employed respondents stated that they had been working in their current job for two years or more and were working on a full-time basis. A significant number earned between Lm200 and Lm349 monthly. However most respondents, including the unemployed, mentioned that they worked in low-status jobs such as plant and machine operators, elementary occupations or clerks.

Around 40% of respondents mentioned that they required some form of assistance at work such as the services of a job coach, personal assistant or changes in office set-up. Generally employers stated that they were willing to introduce support measures at the work place such as changing conditions of work, providing technical aids or the services of a personal assistant. They were less ready to make structural changes or to give the opportunity to persons with disability to work from home. In actual fact a significant number of respondents, particularly the unemployed, mentioned that they had to leave their previous job due to health and disability-related problems. Other reasons most mentioned by respondents for losing their job were redundancy and working conditions. Similarly few respondents who mentioned that they had an accident at work stated that they were offered another job with the company. Most had to start looking for another job. Thus lack of support at work seems to be affecting some persons' ability to retain their job.

Meanwhile other factors that are inhibiting persons with disability to find and retain employment include low levels of education and low work experience. Most respondents stated that they have low levels of schooling with little or no qualifications. Employers remarked that they could not employ disabled persons who had applied for a job with their company due to their low level of education. Moreover when unemployed respondents were asked whether they had ever been employed less than half mentioned that they had been in paid work.

Although quite a significant number of employers stated that they knew about ETC's Bridging the Gap scheme, few mentioned that they made use of the scheme. A similar result was obtained among persons with disability. There is need to establish regular contacts with employers in general and better marketing of employment and training schemes in particular. Employers need to become more aware of issues tied to the recruitment of persons with disability and should be provided with more information on the matter.

### **What are the perceptions and experiences of both employers and persons with disability on the employment of disabled persons?**

Both persons with disability and employers' knowledge of legislation pertaining to persons with disability and equality of opportunity is quite satisfactory, with more than half stating that they knew about the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act of 1969 and the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act of 2000. However, unemployed and inactive individuals, women and employers who do not employ persons with disability tend to know less about both legislations. Quite a significant number of respondents from both surveys stated that they did not agree with the quota system established in the Act of 1969. The main reasons for disagreement were that the employment of persons with disability should not be obligatory and that the quota system is ultimately not effective.

Meanwhile most persons with disability described their work experience as a positive one. They stated that work gave them the opportunity to socialise and become financially independent among other reasons. Others mentioned more negative statements such as having problems at work because of their disability and bad working conditions. As to their jobsearch experience most respondents described it as difficult. When asked specifically about their knowledge of ETC services for the disabled, most knew about the placement and training services. They knew less about the co-operation agreements, guidance and counselling service, and ETC's employment and training schemes. Respondents mostly wished the ETC to continue providing them with adequate employment opportunities and jobsearch assistance. They also mentioned specifically other services such as the provision of transport facilities and the need to promote accessibility and employment issues among the general public and employers.

Most employers held positive views about the recruitment of persons with disability. However they remarked that the employment of persons with disability very much depends on the type of job and disability. Some mentioned specifically the need for adequate assessment of both the abilities of the individual and of the requirements of the job in question. On a less positive note, employers were less ready to employ persons with severe disabilities than those with moderate disabilities. They were also less prepared to dedicate parts of their profit to making the necessary adaptations for the eventual recruitment of these persons.

## Chapter 1

***The Employment and Training Corporation (ETC) is responsible of providing employment and training services to persons seeking employment including persons with disability.***

# Introduction

As Malta's public employment service, the ETC offers employment and training services to persons seeking employment as well as those already in employment wishing to upgrade their skills. In its efforts to provide more individualised services to persons with disabilities, the Corporation set up the new Supported Employment Section. The Section is responsible to provide individualised services to persons with disability wishing to find employment or who require any form of assistance pertaining to employment and training. The Section also runs a series of co-operation agreements with non-government agencies, which cover work exposure, training initiatives and job placement for persons with intellectual disability and individuals with mental health difficulties.

The above services form part of Malta's general commitment towards the integration of persons with disability at the workplace and in society in general. Indeed in Malta there exist a wide range of services provided both by the state as well as non-governmental agencies in order to protect the welfare and well being of persons with disability. These services, although not necessarily geared towards employment, ensure an adequate standard of living for all.

Recently, due to Malta's entry into the European Union, it has become particularly important to promote the integration of disadvantaged groups including that of persons with disability. As per guideline seven of the European Employment Strategy, Member States should strive to foster the integration of people facing particular difficulties on the labour market, including persons with disability. Strategies and measures would need to cover the development of these persons' employability, the increase of job opportunities and the prevention of discrimination against them. Malta is also obliged to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of any programmes launched on a regular basis. Measures listed in Malta's National Action Plan for Employment covering the year 2004 included the setting up of a special-

ised working group and the launch of a new employment and training scheme. The former aims at defining disadvantaged groups in the labour market and establishing procedures for the measurement of employment and unemployment gaps while the latter will target particularly unemployed persons with disability and intends to cover training, work exposure, job coaching and personal assistance to participants as well as financial incentives to employers. The scheme is a European Social Fund project.

The main aim of this report is thus to assist the Corporation to enhance its targeting of persons with disability. It mainly seeks to gather information on their jobsearch and work experience. The Corporation believes that through more information on the subject, it will be in a better position to provide better services to its clients and hopefully help them find employment. Indeed there seems to be a certain general lack of information and research on the subject in Malta. This report will also serve as a valuable contribution to policymakers and those individuals working among persons with disability to enhance their knowledge on the issue as well as to devise more informed strategies that aim for the better integration of these persons in society in general.

The following chapter provides information on the employment situation of persons with disability both in Malta and abroad followed by details of policy responses adopted by various countries mainly intended to enhance the training and employment situation of persons with disability. Chapter Three presents findings of the research conducted by the Corporation's Research and Development Division among persons with disability who are either in employment, unemployed or neither working nor seeking work, and employers who both employ or do not employ persons with disability. Findings cover a set of issues, which include information on the personal characteristics of persons with disability such as highest level of education obtained, age and gender, their labour market history, their jobsearch and

work experience as well as the perceptions and experiences of both employers and individuals on the recruitment of persons with disability. Quantitative analysis of all data gathered during the fieldwork is provided which is also accompanied by a number of charts and tables. In Chapter Four a number of possible recommendations based on the findings of the study are presented for discussion. The recommendations are intended to help improve current services offered for persons with disability, particularly those offered by the ETC.

## Chapter 2

*The participation of persons with disability in the labour market is significantly low across various countries*

# Persons with Disability and Work: An Overview

### The employment situation of persons with disabilities

Employment data across various countries reveal that the employment rates of persons with disability are significantly lower than for non-disabled persons. Employment rates for severely disabled people are only about one-third of those for the general non-disabled population, and for moderately disabled people around 70% (refer to table 1). Differences in

employment rates also exist by age group and gender. The employment rates of persons with disability who are over 50 years of age tend to drop much faster than those of non-disabled people (OECD 2003). Similarly disabled women find it more difficult to get a job than disabled men. The employment rates for severely and moderately disabled women in 1992 stood at 25% and 40% respectively (European Commission 1998).

**Table 1: Employment rates by degree of disability and country (percentage of 20-64 population late 1990s)**

	All	Disabled			Non-disabled
		All disabled	Severe	Moderate	
Australia	72.1	41.9	31.4	46.9	76.6
Austria	68.1	43.4	23.9	50.2	71.8
Belgium	58.7	33.5	21.1	40.0	61.7
Canada	74.9	56.3	-	-	78.4
Denmark	73.6	48.2	23.3	55.1	79.4
France	63.6	47.9	36.4	55.5	66.6
Germany	64.8	46.1	27.0	52.9	69.0
Italy	52.2	32.1	19.4	37.9	53.8
Korea	61.2	45.9	13.4	51.5	61.7
Mexico	60.1	47.2	-	-	61.1
Netherlands	61.9	39.9	26.5	46.4	67.0
Norway	81.4	61.7	-	-	85.8
Poland	63.9	20.8	-	-	71.2
Portugal	68.2	43.9	27.6	55.3	74.0
Spain	50.5	22.1	15.1	26.5	54.2
Sweden	73.7	52.6	33.8	69.0	75.8
Switzerland	76.6	62.2	-	-	79.1
United Kingdom	68.6	38.9	19.3	46.8	73.9
United States	80.2	48.6	26.4	58.8	83.9
OECD (19)*	67.1	43.9	-	-	70.8
OECD (14)	65.5	41.3	24.5	48.8	68.1
EU (11)	64.0	40.8	24.9	48.7	67.9
Non-EU (3)*	71.2	45.5	23.7	52.4	74.1

Source: Transforming Disability to Ability, Policies to Promote Work and Income Security for Disabled People, OECD 2003

- Data not available

\* Degree of severity of disability not available for Canada, Mexico, Norway, Poland and Switzerland.

In Malta, according to the Labour Force Survey of June 2003 published by the National Statistics Office, the employment rate of persons who have long standing health problems or disability (aged 15 years and over) stood at a low 32.2%. The proportion of young disabled persons in employment was higher than for older persons. 44.1% of those persons who were 44 years old or younger were in employment while only 26.1% of persons aged 45 years and over were in employment. Similarly when comparing male and female employment rates only 16.0% of disabled women were in employment while the rate for men stood at 44.2%.

Correspondingly, unemployment rates of disabled people across different countries tend to be very high when compared to unemployment rates of non-disabled people (refer to table 2). Similarly, in Malta, a

considerable number of disabled persons or persons who have long standing health problems were either inactive (63.9%) or unemployed (4.0%). In addition the severity of disability tends to have a direct impact on unemployment levels where people with severe disabilities tend to suffer from higher unemployment rates than people with moderate disabilities (OECD 2003).

The low participation rate of persons with disability is usually attributed to the high number of people in receipt of disability benefits. In Malta, the Household Budgetary Survey gathered by the National Statistics Office reveals that 33% of households having at least one member with a disability cite social benefits as their main source of income. The percentage for other households stands at 16% (Cordina 2004). Data gathered through the European Labour Force Survey

**Table 2: Unemployment rates by degree of disability and country (percentage of 20-64 population late 1990s)**

	All	Disabled			Non-disabled
		All disabled	Severe	Moderate	
Australia	7.1	10.2	10.1	11.8	6.8
Austria	5.6	13.0	22.0	11.2	4.9
Belgium	14.4	22.8	35.9	18.2	13.9
Denmark	9.4	15.7	29.3	13.7	8.5
France	13.2	17.5	20.8	16.0	12.6
Germany	9.3	20.5	35.6	16.9	7.4
Italy	13.2	14.5	23.1	12.2	13.1
Korea	14.9	47.4	84.0	41.5	13.7
Mexico	3.6	1.8	-	-	3.7
Netherlands	12.5	26.8	39.6	22.3	10.1
Poland	13.6	19.7	-	-	13.2
Portugal	8.8	12.7	17.9	10.8	8.2
Spain	20.4	27.0	31.1	25.4	20.2
Sweden	10.2	18.0	21.4	16.4	11.9
Switzerland	3.7	6.8	-	-	3.3
United Kingdom	6.9	12.1	18.9	10.9	6.3
United States	3.7	5.3	5.7	5.2	3.6
OECD (17)	10.0	17.2	-	-	9.5
OECD (14)*	10.7	18.8	28.2	16.6	10.1
EU (11)	11.3	18.2	26.9	15.8	10.6
Non-EU (3)*	8.6	21.0	33.3	19.5	8.0

Source: Transforming Disability to Ability, Policies to Promote Work and Income Security for Disabled People, OECD 2003

- Data not available

\* Degree of severity of disability not available for Mexico, Poland and Switzerland.



**Table 3: Main occupation of total employed persons**

Occupation group	With disability or long-standing health problems	Without disability or long-standing health problems	Total
Armed Forces	0.9 <sup>u</sup>	0.9	0.9 <sup>u</sup>
Legislators, senior officials and managers	4.5 <sup>u</sup>	8.4	8.2
Professionals	6.9 <sup>u</sup>	9.3	9.1
Technicians and associate professionals	11.6 <sup>u</sup>	13.8	13.7
Clerks	10.8 <sup>u</sup>	12.2	12.2
Service workers and shop and sales workers	10.9 <sup>u</sup>	13.7	13.5
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	2.5 <sup>u</sup>	1.7	1.7
Craft and related trades workers	20.2 <sup>u</sup>	12.5	12.9
Plant and machine operators	11.5 <sup>u</sup>	12.8	12.8
Elementary occupations	20.2 <sup>u</sup>	14.7	15.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Labour Force Survey June 2003, National Statistics Office

<sup>u</sup> - indicates under-represented figures

reveals that a total of 50% of all inactive people cite retirement and disability as the reason for their inactivity (European Commission 1999). Similar findings were reported by the OECD study on persons with disability, work and income security (OECD 2003) where disability benefits and retirement benefits were found to be the main source of benefit income for working-age people with disability. Unemployment benefits were found to play a much less important role overall despite high unemployment rates. Nevertheless OECD also highlights the fact that being disabled does not necessarily mean that one is receiving disability benefits or vice versa. Indeed there can be people who do not claim to have a disability and receive disability benefits while others who are subjectively classified as severely disabled and who do not work receive no benefits.

Meanwhile when compared to their non-disabled counterparts, more persons with disability tend to be employed in the agriculture or service sectors. As to their occupational distribution more are employed in elementary and low-skilled occupations. This may be partly a reflection of the high rate of occupational accidents, which happen in the construction and agricultural sectors. Persons working in craft-related and manual occupations in these sectors tend to be

more prone to industrial accidents than other workers. (European Commission 1998). Similar results were obtained by the Maltese Labour Force Survey of June 2003 where disabled people were mostly employed in the agriculture (3.4% disabled, 2.2% non-disabled) or service sectors (69.9% disabled, 65.8% non-disabled). More were employed in low skilled occupations such as craft and related trades workers and elementary occupations than non-disabled people (refer to table 3).

One principal factor that influences the rate of participation of disabled persons in the labour market is educational attainment. Statistics from various EU countries reveal that few persons with disability have university degrees. Moreover a significant number of inactive disabled persons, in particular women, have only basic schooling (European Commission 1998). In Malta more than 50% of all disabled persons captured by the Labour Force Survey have either primary education level or no schooling while only 3.5% have a tertiary level of education. The proportion of persons without health problems or disability having primary education level or no schooling is much lower (25.8%). In contrast more have tertiary level of schooling (8.6%). Meanwhile the rate of women with disability who have either primary education level or no schooling tends to

be slightly higher than that of men with 56.9% and 52.2% respectively. It is interesting, however, that more women with disability (4.0%) tend to have a tertiary level of education than men (3.2%). This is similar to the situation among persons without disability since more women tend to have lower levels of education (28.8%) than men (22.9%). A slightly different picture emerges in the tertiary education level whereby more men have a tertiary level of education (10.0%) than women (7.3%) (National Statistics Office 2003).

Such important data tends to shed some light on the employment situation of persons with disability and what policy considerations should be adapted in this regard.

### Policy responses in the European Union

Disability employment policy has been characterised by two main objectives. The first objective is usually that tied to income security where governments provide adequate resources for persons with disability in order to ensure an adequate quality of life. The second objective targets the integration of persons with disability in the labour market and society in general (Mont 2004). Such objectives are both considered as important but tend to go against each other. Policies which aim towards the integration of persons with disability tend to create more risks due to the lack of support mechanisms that exist in society in general for the actual take up and retention of employment by disabled persons whereas policies which target income security tend to act as a disincentive to people with disability to participate in the labour market.

As outlined by Mont (2004) in his analysis of disability employment policies among OECD countries, a spectrum of policies, which cover both objectives has been adopted across various countries. Policies tend to fall into three broad types mainly: (1) regulations, (2) counterbalances, and (3) substitutions.

*Regulations* usually affect the demand side of the labour market whereby legislation in the form of quotas is introduced that requires employers to hire disabled workers. The quota system obliges employers to employ a set number or percentage of persons with disability. It can be voluntary or as is usually the case a legal requirement. Fines for non-compliance usually accompany such quotas.

Although quota systems are quite popular and in fact are currently adopted by over one-third of OECD countries, they are generally not complied with, and

have a limited effect on the employment of persons with disability. As a result some countries such as Austria, Czech Republic, Germany and Poland have introduced a quota-levy system whereby employers who decide not to hire persons with disability contribute money to a special fund. Funds are then distributed among disabled workers, service providers and employers. The latter receive funds as compensation for additional costs tied to the recruitment of disabled persons. Funds are also used to maintain sheltered workshops and other segregated settings. Many employers prefer to pay the fine than recruit disabled persons. As a result, disabled persons remain segregated while little is done for their recruitment in open employment.

Regulations policies also cover anti-discrimination laws, which include requirements for employers to make all reasonable accommodation necessary for disabled persons to fully integrate at the workplace. Countries such as the UK, Sweden and Germany have anti-discrimination laws. Like quota systems such legislation affects the demand side of employment. This approach tends to assume that the costs of absorbing persons with disability in employment are relatively low and that persons with disability are easily employed by the private sector.

*Counterbalances* tend to assume that persons with disability are initially less productive and require forms of assistance such as wage subsidies, vocational rehabilitation and supported employment to be able to integrate fully in the labour market. Such policies tend to focus both on the demand side of employment by relieving some of the extra costs of hiring disabled persons by employers and the supply-side by increasing the productivity of disabled workers. Measures can be of a limited duration or cover longer periods of time. There are country variations in the duration of such measures. Denmark, for example, has no time limit in its supported employment programme but Germany has set a right to supported employment for a period of up to three years.

Vocational rehabilitation usually involves the provision of vocational guidance, vocational training and selective placement. In various countries such services are mandatory whereby persons with disability applying for benefits are required to seek services prior to receiving cash payments. Such a policy is intended to promote early intervention and prevent the withdrawal of persons from the labour market.

On the other hand supported employment involves programmes designed to integrate people with disability directly into the workplace. Common features of supported employment are job coaches who offer individualized assistance at the workplace, transportation services or specific devices.

In order to encourage the actual take up of persons with disability by employers, countries such as Norway and Austria also provide wage subsidies for employers that cover part or all of the wages of persons with disability. These subsidies are intended to cover extra costs required by employers in the recruitment of disabled persons such as accessible work places or specialised training. Tax incentives can also form part of these measures. However as outlined by Mont (2004) these incentives are rarely utilised by employers and their impact on the hiring of disabled people is rather limited.

Finally *substitutions* implicitly assume that persons with disability cannot fully integrate into the labour market. Such policies would usually resort to measures such as sheltered employment and specifically arranged jobs in the public or private sector.

Sheltered work provides employment in segregated facilities. In countries such as Poland, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Switzerland sheltered employment is quite widespread. Arguments in favour of sheltered employment focus on the need to protect persons with disability, recognising the fact that sheltered employment ensures some form of employment for persons with disability, and that it may act as a stepping-stone into regular employment. In reality, however, very few leave sheltered employment to work in the open labour market, and the wage tends to be of a nominal value. Moreover, such policies tend to disregard the need for persons with disability to fully integrate in society and the need for more and better support mechanisms in society in general.

Such employment policies are also accompanied by different benefit systems that are either needs based or tied to contributions to a pension. These systems may either encourage the integration of disabled persons through tighter eligibility conditions and/or lower level of payments (integration policy) or act as a disincentive to employment through the payment of permanent benefits to a broad range of disabled persons (compensation policy).

All OECD countries tend to provide direct cash benefits to disabled persons. These vary from universal programmes that pay benefits to all persons with disabilities to means-tested programmes that target particular groups. Despite these differences in benefit systems, the rate of exit from such systems by disabled persons is low amongst most countries. This means that once disabled persons enter into such benefit schemes it is highly unlikely that they opt for work and exit the benefit scheme. Mont (2004) states that the outflow rate in countries such as Germany, Portugal and Sweden amounts to a mere one percent.

Generally all European Union Member States are moving towards integration policies, which enhance the integration of persons with disability in the labour market. This shift has been prompted by changes in the labour market as well as the increasing costs of passive welfare measures. Indeed in the European Union changes in the labour market have usually led towards the deterioration of the employment position of disabled people. It seems that in times of economic and social restructuring, disabled people are the first to leave the labour market and the last to return to work. Meanwhile according to the European Commission (1999) there has been a remarkable growth in the past few years in the number of recipients of disability benefits, such benefits have become one of the major items in social protection expenditure in the EU.

In view of the above situation the EU approach to disability has been to try and integrate persons with disability as much as possible by devising appropriate policies and measures that promote inclusion. The integration and participation of disabled people as well as the fight against discrimination are considered as fundamental by the European Union for the inclusion of people with disability into employment and society at large.

The above principles are outlined in the Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27th November 2000, which establishes a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation in the EU. The Directive states specifically that no discriminatory action is allowed on the grounds of disability and that reasonable accommodation should be provided for disabled persons 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. Among other provisions, the Directive also states that the principle of equal treatment shall not prevent Member States from launching measures that protect and promote the employability of disabled persons. Other related documents issued by the Council on persons with disability

are the Council Decision of 27th November 2000, which sees for the establishment of a Community action programme to combat discrimination (2001 to 2006) and the Council Resolution of 15th July 2003 on promoting the employment and social integration of people with disability.

Meanwhile, the European Commission has actively tried to put these Council provisions into practice. In its Communication of October 2003 on equal opportunities for people with disability, the Commission states that it is particularly committed to promote policies and good practices in this regard. The policies and objectives as set out in the Communication include:

- Enhancing respect for diversity through individual rights,
- Making the environment more accessible through the elimination of barriers,
- Encouraging inclusion through employment by means of the European Employment Strategy, the structural funds and the modernisation of social protection,
- Fostering social integration and fighting against marginalisation through the European Social Inclusion Process,
- Empowering and enhancing structures in society, which sustain participation through mainstreaming of the disability perspective into relevant sectors of policy.

In its efforts to achieve these principal objectives the Commission introduced a multi-annual Disability Action Plan. The Communication of October 2003 states that the first phase of the Action Plan will cover years 2004 and 2005. During this phase Member States are encouraged to introduce activities that create the necessary conditions for the successful inclusion of persons with disability into employment. The four complementary pillars of the Plan refer to:

1. Access to, and remaining in employment,
2. Lifelong learning in support of employability, adaptability, personal development and active citizenship of people with disability,
3. Using the potential of new technologies,
4. Accessibility to the public built environment.

These pillars would cover a wide range of activities that aim to increase the integration of persons with disability at the workplace and society in general. Activities include awareness-raising activities for equal treatment in employment and occupation, the promotion of active labour market measures, and the improved provision of personal assistance, guidance and training. Other activities refer to the design of accessible ICT products, mainstreaming of public procurement policies, changes

in national legislation, the promotion of social dialogue and mainstreaming in health and safety. Further development of national statistical systems and the effective use of the European Social Fund and other EU programmes are also listed in the Communication.

### Disability employment policy in Malta

As in most European countries, disability employment policy in Malta has been mostly geared towards the integration of persons with disability in society at large. Government agencies such as the National Commission Persons with Disability and *Aġenzija Sapport* were set up in order to ensure that persons with disability do not suffer from discrimination and that they can fully participate in society both economically and socially. Legislation was enacted in this regard and a number of measures have been implemented in order to ensure that such policies are adhered to.

Services provided to persons with disability fall within the spectrum of compensation and integration policies similar to other EU member states. In Malta persons with disability can apply for cash benefits and secure an income without actively seeking work. Those wishing to find employment are entitled to specialised vocational, guidance and employment services. Persons with disability can also make use of specialised day services where they can participate in activities intended to help them develop their potential though not exclusively with respect to employment. Furthermore a set of regulations and incentives exist for employers to encourage them to recruit more persons with disability in their workforce.

Apart from services provided by government, a number of non-government agencies also offer specialised services for persons with disability. These services, which cover training and development sessions among other activities, are intended to assist these persons in acquiring the necessary skills to live an independent life and maybe even manage to take up employment.

In Malta persons with disability are entitled mainly to two types of cash benefits. The first is known as the disability pension. This pension is a non-contributory type of pension and provides persons with disability with an average of Lm32.22 per week depending on one's marital status. Persons eligible for such a pension have to be certified by a medical panel appointed by the Minister. The medical panel examines whether the applicant suffers from severe disability. Moreover in order to be eligible for the pension applicants should not

have a combined income that exceeds the national minimum wage.

The second pension, referred to as the invalidity pension, is a contributory type of pension where persons wishing to apply for such a pension should at least have 250 contributions and have paid at least an average of 20 contributions per year from the age of 19 till the date of claim. Applicants have then to be certified by a medical panel, appointed by the Minister responsible, that they are incapable for suitable full-time or regular part-time employment due to a serious disease or physical or mental impairment.

Statistics issued by the Department of Social Security reveal that for the past three years the number of recipients of both benefits has been on the increase. In 2003 the number of individuals receiving disability pension stood at 2,047 a rise of 216 persons since 2000 while 8,424 persons were receiving invalidity pension resulting in an increase of 2,169 persons (Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity 2004). It is argued that both pensions could be acting as a disincentive to disabled persons to search for work since the amount received approximates the minimum wage, which currently stands at Lm53.88 per week. Moreover persons wishing to work can only earn up to the minimum wage in order not to lose their pension entitlement. Persons may not be willing to give up their pension due to the possibility of losing their job because of lack of job security and/or bad working conditions. In case they *do* lose or leave their job they would have to re-apply for the disability pension again, a process that may take long and leave the person with disability without any income for weeks or even months.

Legislation on the employment of persons with disability is outlined in the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act of 1969 and the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act of 2000. The former provides for a quota system where employers employing not less than 20 workers must also employ a quota of disabled persons. Currently the quota stands at 2%. The Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act enacted in 2000 tackles discrimination against persons with disability in areas such as employment, education, access to areas, housing and insurance. Both sets of legislation are considered as an important move towards the better integration of persons with disability in the world of work and society in general. However it is questionable how much employers abide by the quota system and how many provide adequate support in the

recruitment of persons with disability in general. The quota system in particular is not enforced or monitored by authorities.

The Employment and Training Corporation, Malta's public employment service, is the main provider of active and preventive measures that see for the better integration of persons with disability in the labour market. The Corporation provides vocational training to persons with disability in a variety of skills in order to help them find suitable work as well as other services such as vocational guidance, job search assistance and job placements. It also administers two schemes that cover training and job placement of disabled persons with an employer. Both schemes encompass a system of wage subsidies for employers as well as opportunities for vocational training and rehabilitation for disabled persons.

The Employment Training and Placement Scheme provides financial assistance to an employer amounting to half the minimum wage for a maximum period of 12 months. In order to be eligible for the scheme persons with disability should be registering for work. Once accepted to participate in the scheme the applicant has to forfeit all benefits since he/she would be considered as a regular employee.

The Bridging the Gap Scheme provides more tailor made assistance to persons with disability. The scheme lasts for a maximum of one year and covers on-the-job training, which may include the assistance of a job coach. The Employment and Training Corporation pays the scheme participant a weekly allowance of Lm35, however s/he is obliged to forfeit any other benefits such as the unemployment or disability benefit throughout the whole programme. Assistance to employers is higher than that provided through the ETPS as throughout this period the employer is free from paying wages to the scheme participant, National Insurance payments or sick leave benefits.

Meanwhile the Corporation also runs a series of co-operation agreements with a series of non-governmental organisations. Such co-operation agreements cover the provision of individualised services by non-government agencies that work directly with persons with disability. Services cover training in personal and work skills, work rehabilitation programmes and work placements that include the service of job coaches. NGOs efforts for placing clients in gainful employment are compensated financially.

Rates of persons with disability placed in employment and participation rates in schemes organised by the Corporation compare very well with figures obtained for non-disabled clients. In fact in 2003 and 2004 on average 23% of unemployed disabled persons registering for work were placed in regular employment<sup>1</sup>. Similar results were obtained in scheme participation rates when on average during both years 10% participated in the Bridging the Gap Scheme and 3% in the Employment Training and Placement Scheme. The average of non-disabled scheme participants for both years stood at 3%. On a more negative note less clients with disability participated in vocational training. The average rate of registered disabled clients participating in ETC courses for the years 2003 and 2004 stood at 19%. The figure for the non-disabled is much higher and stands at 38%. In 2003 and 2004 the number of persons with disability registering for work with the Employment and Training Corporation stood at 316 and 311 respectively.

These positive results reflect the efforts being taken by the Supported Employment Section at the Corporation to place individuals in employment. Efforts include not only guidance and job and training referrals of clients but also ongoing visits to employers' establishments to market the employability of persons with disability and the possibility of creating new vacancies for registered disabled clients. Moreover the support and co-operation sought with NGOs is also bearing fruit. These organisations tend to train quite a significant number of ETC clients with intellectual disability or mental health difficulties. They also achieve a good number of placements each year. Indeed in 2003 and 2004 on average NGOs managed to train 81% of all individuals trained by the ETC in those years. As regards placements they accounted for 35% of all job placements made by the ETC during both years.

A number of factors may be attributed to the above situation. Firstly co-operation agreements incorporate a job coaching service where on obtaining a job placement for persons with disability organisations are obliged to provide job coaching for a stipulated period of time (around 12 weeks) followed by support services, which the individual may require to retain employment. Secondly the expert knowledge that these organisations have on the needs of persons with disability ensures a high quality assistance and individualised attention to both disabled persons and

employers, where the latter would require information and advice on employing a person with disability. Finally these organisations tend to make great efforts through information campaigns in order to convince employers for the actual take up of persons with disability in employment. However, despite these efforts, one still needs to assess the level of job retention by persons with disability after a certain period of time and whether they ultimately end up losing their employment because of difficulties encountered at the workplace such as the lack of specific equipment or low levels of accessibility in general.

Meanwhile tax incentives for employers in relation to the employment and training of disabled persons have also been incorporated in the Business Promotion Act. Qualifying enterprises that create a job for an individual who is registered as a person with disability with the Employment and Training Corporation are entitled to a 200% deduction of the wage costs incurred. The Act also provides for deductions in actual expenditure incurred for the training of employees with disability. Deductions amount to 150% of the costs incurred. These regulations have been introduced only recently and it is still early to assess their use by employers and their effect on the hiring and training of disabled persons.

When it comes to other services for persons with disability that are similar to sheltered employment programmes, the Ministry for the Family and Social Solidarity provides day services to adult persons with disability. Services are provided in a number of centres in various parts of the Maltese Islands including Gozo. These services include different types of activities that may not necessarily be tied to employment but serve to further develop the potential of persons with disability and at the same time support their families. Similar services are provided by a number of non-governmental organisations.

### Research scope and methodology

The Employment and Training Corporation felt the need to improve its assistance to disabled individuals wishing to take up work particularly in view of their low level of participation in the labour market in general. In order to achieve such an objective it was felt that more information and knowledge on disability and employment issues is required since a certain lack of information and research on the subject currently exists in Malta. Following are some of the research areas tackled by the study:

<sup>1</sup> Etc unpublished data

- Individual characteristics of persons with disability;
- Jobsearch by persons with disability;
- Work experience and orientation at the place of work;
- Job retention;
- Perceptions and experiences of persons with disability;
- Employers' experience and perception of persons with disability and employment.

The study comprised two separate surveys, one among persons with disability and another among employers.

The survey among persons with disability was administered among a stratified random sample of disabled individuals. The sample consisted of three sub-samples the objective of which being to achieve interviews with approximately 100 employed disabled individuals, 100 unemployed disabled individuals and 50 inactive disabled people. The target population for the first two sub samples consisted of all registered disabled individuals chosen from lists gathered by the Corporation on persons registering for work and employed persons. As to the third sub sample the National Commission Persons with Disability (KNPD) offered to purposively choose disabled persons who are neither working nor seeking work from its own lists.

The total number of registered disabled persons registering for work with the Corporation in September 2002 stood at 304 while the number of disabled persons in employment stood at 1 179 individuals. All unemployed individuals were invited to participate in the survey in order to achieve the desired sample size. A systematic random sample of 392 employed individuals was selected in order to obtain an achieved sample of 100 individuals. The target population for the inactive sub-sample could not be identified since at that time no list was available of inactive disabled individuals.

Subsequently a covering letter was sent by post to all employed and unemployed selected individuals inviting them to participate in the survey. Inactive individuals chosen by KNPD were contacted by phone.

Meanwhile, the Research and Development Division formulated a questionnaire to be used in the survey. The questionnaire was piloted among a small number of disabled individuals randomly selected from the ETC lists. Research staff at the Corporation interviewed the selected individuals.

Data was collected between the beginning of March 2003 and the end of June 2003. All data was captured through face-to-face interviews by a group of trained interviewers who were contracted for the purpose. Table 4 represents the sampling distribution by type of sub-sample and gender of all participating individuals.

The target population of the second survey consisted of all private companies employing at least 4 full-time employees or more registered with the Employment and Training Corporation in the month of September 2002 (employers employing part-time employees only were excluded since official data on the gainfully occupied population is calculated on full-time employees only). The total number of employers amounted to 3,172.

The final sample consisted of two sub-samples the objective being to interview 25 private companies, which employ disabled persons and 25, which do not. In order to achieve such a sample all companies were first divided into 6 economic sectors: agriculture and fishing; construction; manufacturing; wholesale and retail; banking, insurance and real estate; transport storage and communications; and hotels and catering establishments. A group of companies was then selected purposively, due to the small sample size,

**Table 4: Sample distribution of persons with disability survey**

Employment Status	Males	Females	Total
Employed	76	24	100
Employed %	76.0%	24.0%	100.0%
Unemployed	84	27	111
Unemployed %	75.7%	24.3%	100.0%
Inactive	16	18	34
Inactive %	47.1%	52.9%	100.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>245</b>
<b>Total %</b>	<b>71.8%</b>	<b>28.2%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Table 5: Employers' survey sample distribution by economic sector**

Employment of persons with disability			
Economic sector	Yes	No	Total
Agriculture, hunting and forestry	1	0	1
Manufacturing	3	4	7
Construction	3	3	6
Wholesale and retail trade, repairs	8	5	13
Hotels and restaurants	2	6	8
Transport, storage and communication	6	0	6
Financial intermediation	2	3	5
Other community social and personal service activities	1	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>48</b>

under each category depending on the size of companies. This was done in order to ensure that companies of different sizes and different sectors would form part of the sample. Selected companies were then checked as to whether they employ registered disabled persons or not. The final sample population of companies selected stood at 131, of which 48 participated in the survey.

Subsequently a covering letter was sent by post to all selected companies inviting them to participate in the survey. Companies were interviewed on a face-to-face basis by a group of trained interviewers who were contracted for the purpose between the beginning of March 2003 and the end of June 2003. The Research and Development Division designed the questionnaire for the purpose. Tables 5 and 6 represent the sampling distribution of survey participants by economic sector and size.

**Table 6: Employers' survey sample distribution by size**

Employment of persons with disability			
Size	Yes	No	Total
1-4	1	0	1
5-19	4	2	6
20-49	11	2	13
50-99	7	4	11
100-399	3	12	15
400+	0	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>48</b>



## Chapter 3

*The participation of persons with disability in the labour market is being influenced by a number of factors. These include 1st level of education, gender and type of disability among others.*

# Research Findings

### Personal characteristics of persons with disability

Findings of this study reveal that there are differences in the characteristics of persons with disability between the employed, unemployed and inactive sub-samples.

Women with disability seem to be less prone to seek and enter the labour market than males. Employed and unemployed survey respondents (including individuals registering for work and students) were more likely to be male. Inactive respondents were almost divided equally between males and females (refer to table 7). These findings tend to be similar to those documented in other surveys, mainly the Labour Force Survey of June 2003 published by the NSO, the 'Research about the Major

Concerns of People with Disability and their Families' published by the National Commission Persons with Disability (2004), and the study commissioned by the Department of Education and Employment (DFEE) on the 'Employment of Persons with Disability in the UK' (1999), where it was found that females with disability tend to have significant lower rates of economic activity than males.

Young disabled individuals seem to be particularly interested in finding work, however they also seem to be encountering difficulties in securing employment. In actual fact almost half of the unemployed respondents of this survey were in the younger age group while a

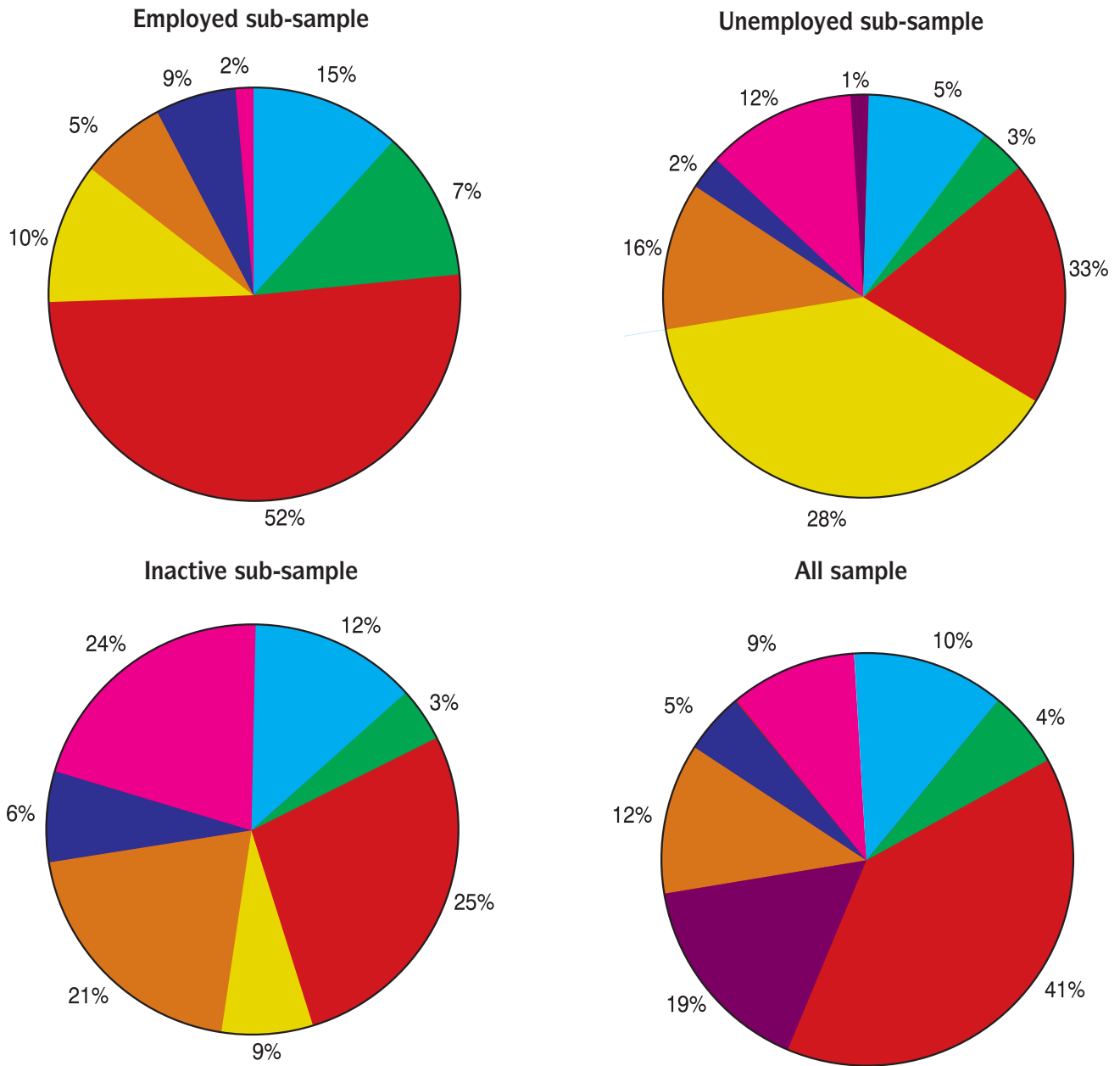
**Table 7: Personal characteristics of sample by gender and sub-sample**

Gender	Sub-sample						Total	
	Employed		Unemployed		Inactive		Number	%
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		
Male	76	76.0	84	75.7	16	47.1	176	71.8
Female	24	24.0	27	24.3	18	52.9	69	28.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 8: Personal characteristics of sample by age and sub-sample**

Gender	Sub-sample						Total	
	Employed		Unemployed		Inactive		Number	%
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		
15 - 24	18	18.0	52	46.8	3	8.8	73	29.8
25 - 34	20	20.0	28	25.2	10	29.4	58	23.7
35 - 44	19	19.0	17	15.3	8	23.5	44	18.0
45 - 54	33	33.0	10	9.0	11	32.4	54	22.0
55 - 64	10	10.0	3	2.7	2	5.9	15	6.1
Non res.	0	0.0	1	0.9	0	0.0	1	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Chart 1: Sample by type of disability**



- Visual
- Hearing
- Physical
- Intellectual
- Mental
- Other
- Multiple
- Non respondents

higher percentage of the employed and inactive individuals were 25 years or older (refer to table 8). Similar findings were reported in the Labour Force Survey of 2003 where a higher proportion of unemployed disabled individuals were young jobseekers (refer to table 9). The LFS reported that 28.0% of unemployed disabled persons were youth (including those seeking work but not registering and excluding students) while only 5.4% and 7.9% of inactive (includes students) or employed disabled individuals

**Table 9: Age distribution of persons suffering long-standing health problems or disability by employment status**

Gender	Sub-sample						Total	
	Employed		Unemployed		Inactive			
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
15 - 24	572 <sup>u</sup>	7.9 <sup>u</sup>	251 <sup>u</sup>	28.0 <sup>u</sup>	787	5.4 <sup>u</sup>	1,610 <sup>u</sup>	7.2 <sup>u</sup>
25 - 44	2,774	38.4	255 <sup>u</sup>	28.5 <sup>u</sup>	2,951	20.6	5,980	26.6
45 - 64	3,880	53.7	389 <sup>u</sup>	43.5 <sup>u</sup>	10,613	74.0	14,882	66.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,226</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>895<sup>u</sup></b>	<b>100.0<sup>u</sup></b>	<b>14,351</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>22,472</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: National Statistics Office, Labour Force Survey June 2003  
u = underrepresented figures

were estimated to be of the younger age group respectively. Employment and inactivity rates of the other age groups were much higher than those registered for youths.

Respondents of the three sub-groups also vary by type of disability. Type of disability seems to have a direct effect on labour market participation (refer to chart 1). More than half of employed respondents had a physical disability while the unemployed and inactive respondents were more likely to have mental health difficulties, intellectual or multiple disability than employed respondents. Statistics published by Eurostat (2001) reveal almost the same results where the higher

the severity of the disability the more likely that persons are inactive.

Similarly, level of education seems to be positively correlated with the labour market participation of persons with disability. Generally, the level of qualifications obtained by all the three sub-samples is low. However employed respondents tended to have somewhat higher qualifications than the unemployed and inactive. More employed individuals had O level qualifications or higher (refer to table 10). Minor differences were obtained in the educational attainment of the employed and unemployed sub-samples but inactive individuals tended to have a

**Table 10: Personal characteristics of sample by qualifications and sub-sample**

Qualifications	Sub-sample						Total	
	Employed		Unemployed		Inactive			
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Secondary school certificate	27	27.0	32	28.8	8	23.5	67	27.3
Secondary school certificate and trade certificate	4	4.0	8	7.2	0	0.0	12	4.9
O levels	8	8.0	9	8.1	1	2.9	18	7.3
A levels	8	8.0	2	1.8	0	0.0	10	4.1
Other	2	2.0	3	2.7	1	2.9	6	2.4
Degree	2	2.0	1	0.9	0	0.0	3	1.2
No qualifications	46	46.0	55	49.5	23	67.6	124	50.6
Non respondents	3	3.0	1	0.9	1	2.9	5	2.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 11: Personal characteristics of sample by educational attainment and sub-sample**

Educational attainment	Sub-sample						Total	
	Employed		Unemployed		Inactive		Number	%
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		
Primary	28	28.0	19	17.1	13	38.2	60	24.5
Secondary	55	55.0	61	55.0	11	32.4	127	51.8
Trade	9	9.0	16	14.4	3	8.8	28	11.4
Post-secondary	4	4.0	5	4.5	0	0.0	9	3.7
Tertiary	3	3.0	1	0.9	0	0.0	4	1.6
Post-graduate	0	0.0	1	0.9	0	0.0	1	0.4
Non respondents	1	1.0	8	7.2	7	20.6	16	6.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100.0</b>

much lower educational attainment than the other two sub-groups. A higher percentage of inactive respondents had a primary level of education or chose not to state their level of educational attainment at all (refer to table 11).

Most respondents attended secondary state schools (32.7%) or trade schools (17.1%). However unemployed and inactive individuals were more likely to attend special schools (26.5%, 19.8% respectively) than employed respondents (6.0%).

Similar to labour market participation, disability seems to be strongly correlated with the educational experience, attainment and qualifications obtained by persons with disability. Individuals with multiple, intellectual disability and mental health difficulties were more likely to have lower or no qualifications, have lower levels of education, and have attended state secondary or special schools.

These findings are similar to those documented in other studies such as 'Disability and Social Participation in Europe' published by Eurostat (2001) and the study commissioned by the DFEE. Both studies state that the degree of disability is strongly related to level of education and qualifications obtained. Generally individuals with a high severity disability score are less likely to have any qualifications and have experienced further education and training after compulsory schooling. Thus it seems that disability is acting as a barrier to both employment participation and educational attainment in various countries including Malta.

As to earnings received by respondents, employed respondents were more likely to receive higher monthly incomes but less likely to be in receipt of the disability benefit (12.0%) than unemployed (60.4%) and inactive (76.5%) respondents (refer to table 12). Although these findings need to be interpreted with caution due to the relatively high non response rate in the question pertaining to monthly income, they still tend to confirm the findings of other studies, such as the Household Budgetary Survey of 2000, where it is stated that households with a member with disability obtain a substantial amount of their income from social benefits and that such households obtain on average a lower income than other households in general (Cordina 2004).

Finally more unemployed (75.7%) and inactive (58.8%) respondents were single than employed respondents (50.0%). No particular differences were registered between sub-groups by district.

### Labour market history

This section looks at the respondents' current employment status and their labour market histories. Findings reveal that the employment experience of persons with disability is not homogeneous. Some individuals have secure jobs and thus a stable employment history while others are experiencing particular difficulties in finding and retaining employment. Factors that may constitute a barrier to finding employment could be education level, qualifications and type of disability.

Most employed respondents (91.0%) stated that they were employed on a full-time basis. Few stated that they were employed on a part-time basis (8.0%) or were working as self-employed (1.0%). This finding shows that the propensity for persons with disability to opt for part-time jobs due to their health or disability may not be as strong as assumed. Most persons with disability seem capable of working on a full-time basis. However, as outlined in the DFEE research report on persons with disability (1999), type of disability may influence one's employment status and whether one works part-time rather than full-time.

Similar to the findings of this research project, the research commissioned by DFEE states that a relatively low percentage (25%) of persons with disability worked on a part-time basis. Persons working part-time were slightly more likely to be severely disabled than persons working full-time. Nevertheless researchers assert that this relationship between disability and part-time work was not a strong one and it did not exclude persons with severe disability from holding full-time employment <sup>2</sup>.

Meanwhile, as expected by the research methodology chosen for this study, most unemployed respondents were registering for work (73.0%) <sup>3</sup>. The rest claimed that they were not registering for work but were still

seeking employment (14.1%), attending centres and/or participating in the Bridging the Gap scheme (7.2%), or were studying (5.4%). Six respondents out of the total of 34 inactive respondents stated specifically that they had been boarded out.

Persons with disability in work are usually found in blue-collar or low status occupations. Various research and statistical reports (Eurostat 2001; NSO 2003; DFEE 1999; European Commission 1998) illustrate that the proportion of persons with disability who have blue-collar occupations is higher than that of persons with no disability while the proportion in white-collar occupations is larger in the population with no disability than in the population reporting a disability. The Eurostat report, for example, reported that the proportion of persons with disability employed as skilled agricultural and fishery workers (4.9%), craft and related trades workers (19.8%), plant and machine operators and assemblers and elementary occupations (20.0%) was higher than that of persons with no disability (2.9%, 15.6%, 15.6% respectively). By contrast the proportion of persons with disability in white-collar occupations was lower than that of persons with no disability for instance legislators, senior officials, managers and professionals (16.9% and 21.5% respectively), technicians (14.3% and 15.4%) and clerks, service workers, shop and market workers

**Table 12: Personal characteristics of sample by monthly income and sub-sample**

Monthly income (Lm)	Sub-sample						Total	
	Employed		Unemployed		Inactive		Number	%
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		
20-49	3	3.0	3	2.7	1	2.9	7	2.9
50-99	3	3.0	1	0.9	0	0.0	4	1.6
100-149	1	1.0	26	23.4	6	17.6	33	13.5
150-199	2	2.0	11	9.9	4	11.8	17	6.9
200-249	14	14.0	0	0.0	2	5.9	16	6.5
250-299	20	20.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	20	8.2
300-349	27	27.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	27	11.0
350-399	5	5.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	2.0
400+	8	8.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	3.3
Non respondents	17	17.0	70	63.1	21	61.8	108	44.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<sup>2</sup> Given the small number of respondents in part-time work, a breakdown of respondents by type of disability in this research was not appropriate.

<sup>3</sup> Respondents in the unemployed sub-sample were mainly identified through ETC unemployment registers.

(22.8% and 26.4%) . Similar findings were reported by the NSO where the proportion of persons with disability was higher in the blue-collar occupations than in white-collar occupations as depicted in table 13.

The findings obtained in this study confirm the correlation outlined in other studies between disability and type of occupation. Almost half of the employed respondents participating in the survey were employed as plant and machine operators, assemblers and in elementary occupations (48.0%) followed by clerks, service workers, shop and sales workers (35.0%) and craft and related trades workers (8.0%). Few respondents reported to work in white-collar occupations such as senior officials, managers, professionals and technicians (7.0%). Differences were obtained by gender in type of occupation held. Women tended to work as clerks or service workers and shop and sales workers more than men while the latter mentioned blue-collar jobs such as elementary occupations more than women (refer to table 13). Low levels of education obtained by persons with disability in general as well as the higher risks to health and safety of blue-collar occupations may partly explain the higher percentage of people with disability in these occupations.

The majority of employed respondents were employed in the services sector (79.0%) followed by the industrial sector (16.0%). No respondents claimed to be working

in the agricultural sector. Similar results were obtained by other reports (Eurostat 2001; NSO 2003) where persons with disability were mostly employed in the services sector followed by the industrial and agricultural sectors respectively. Figures obtained show that generally the proportion of persons with disability in each sector was similar to those of persons with no disability, with the proportion of persons with disability working in the agricultural sector slightly higher than that of non-disabled persons.

Respondents were also asked, if employed, whether they were previously employed in other jobs, or if unemployed or inactive, whether they had ever been in paid work. Less than half of employed respondents stated that they worked in another occupation prior to their current job (38.0%). Similarly less than half of the unemployed respondents stated that they had previously held paid work (41.4%) and an even lesser percentage was obtained among inactive respondents (29.4%). These figures tend to reflect partly the overall labour market experience of persons with disability. On the one hand persons with disability in employment tend to have a relatively stable labour market history and retain their current job for long periods of time without moving from one job to another. Tied to this issue is the low possibility for persons with disability to obtain a promotion and move from one occupation to another. As outlined later in this report few persons with disability

**Table 13: Main occupation of employed sub-sample by gender**

Occupation Group	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Legislators, senior officials, managers and professionals	3	3.9	1	4.2	4	4.0
Technicians and associate professionals	2	2.6	1	4.2	3	3.0
Clerks, service workers, shop and sales workers	22	29.0	13	54.1	35	35.0
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	1	1.3	0	0	1	1.0
Craft and related trades workers	8	10.5	0	0	8	8.0
Plant, machine operators and elementary occupations	39	51.4	9	37.5	48	48.0
Non respondents	1	1.3	0	0.0	1	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 14: Previous occupation held by respondents by sub-sample**

Occupation Group							Total	
	Employed		Unemployed		Inactive			
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Legislators, senior officials, managers and professionals	0	0.0	1	2.2	0	0.0	1	1.1
Technicians and associate prof.	6	15.8	5	10.9	1	10.0	12	12.8
Clerks, service workers, shop and sales workers	11	28.9	11	23.9	3	30.0	25	26.6
Skilled agricultural and fishery workers	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Craft and related trades workers	3	7.9	5	10.9	2	20.0	10	10.6
Plant, machine operators and elementary occ.	17	44.7	24	52.2	4	40.0	45	47.9
Armed forces	1	2.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>100.0</b>

manage to obtain a promotion. Similarly, in the study carried out by the National Commission Persons with Disability (2004) most respondents mentioned that they have low prospects for promotion. On the other hand persons with disability outside employment seem to be finding particular difficulties in entering the labour market. Type of disability and lower levels of education may partly explain why these persons are finding it more difficult to obtain a job. As already outlined previously, unemployed and inactive respondents had lower levels of education as well as higher rates of mental health difficulties, intellectual and multiple disability.

Occupations previously held by respondents were similar to those currently held by the employed sub-sample. The majority of respondents held blue-collar occupations particularly plant and machine operators, assemblers and elementary occupations followed by white-collar occupations that fall into the category of clerks, service workers, shop and sales workers (refer to table 14).

Respondents used to work in the services (63.8%), industrial (26.6%) and agricultural (2.1%) sectors respectively. Interestingly the proportion of unemployed respondents that used to work in the industrial sector (32.6%) and particularly in the hotels and restaurants sector (17.4%) was higher than that of employed respondents (13.2% and 7.9%)<sup>4</sup>. It seems that persons working in these sectors are more prone to lose their job and end up registering for work than persons working in other sectors.

Consequently the study also sought to know the reasons why respondents who had a previous job left their job. As shown in table 15 the most common reasons for leaving were health reasons and disability, redundancy and working conditions. Differences emerge between those who are employed and those who are unemployed and inactive. For the employed sub-sample the most common reasons for leaving their job were redundancy and working conditions. Fewer respondents stated that

<sup>4</sup> Given the small number of inactive respondents mentioning their previous employment, a breakdown of respondents by economic sector was not appropriate.

**Table 15: Reasons for leaving previous job by sub-sample**

Reason for leaving previous job							Total	
	Employed		Unemployed		Inactive			
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Redundancy	8	21.1	12	26.1	1	10.0	21	22.3
Boarded out	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	20.0	2	2.1
Contract terminated	3	7.9	4	8.7	0	0.0	7	7.4
Fired	2	5.3	4	8.7	2	20.0	8	8.5
Health and disability	4	10.5	15	32.6	4	40.0	23	24.5
Working conditions	8	21.1	5	10.9	0	0.0	13	13.8
Studies	1	2.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.1
Other	3	7.9	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	3.2
Non respondents	9	23.7	6	13.0	1	10.0	16	17.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>100.0</b>

they gave up work for health and/or disability reasons. By contrast, giving up work for health considerations was the most common reason for the unemployed and inactive sub-samples. Similar findings were reported in the DFEE report (1999) where inactive respondents were more likely to leave their job because of health reasons than respondents who were either unemployed or employed.

Apart from different disability types, these differences between sub-samples in the reason for leaving previous employment may also be partly explained by the occupation held and the sector that unemployed and inactive individuals worked in. As outlined previously, most unemployed respondents were employed in the industrial and hotels and restaurants sectors respectively. Individuals working in these sectors are more exposed to occupational accidents than other workers. Moreover these sectors tend to employ a high proportion of individuals in elementary and low-skilled occupations, which in turn tend to attract a relatively high number of persons with disability. The latter may have found difficulties in retaining their job, due their disability and health status and/or the lack of adaptations made in the work environment by their employer.

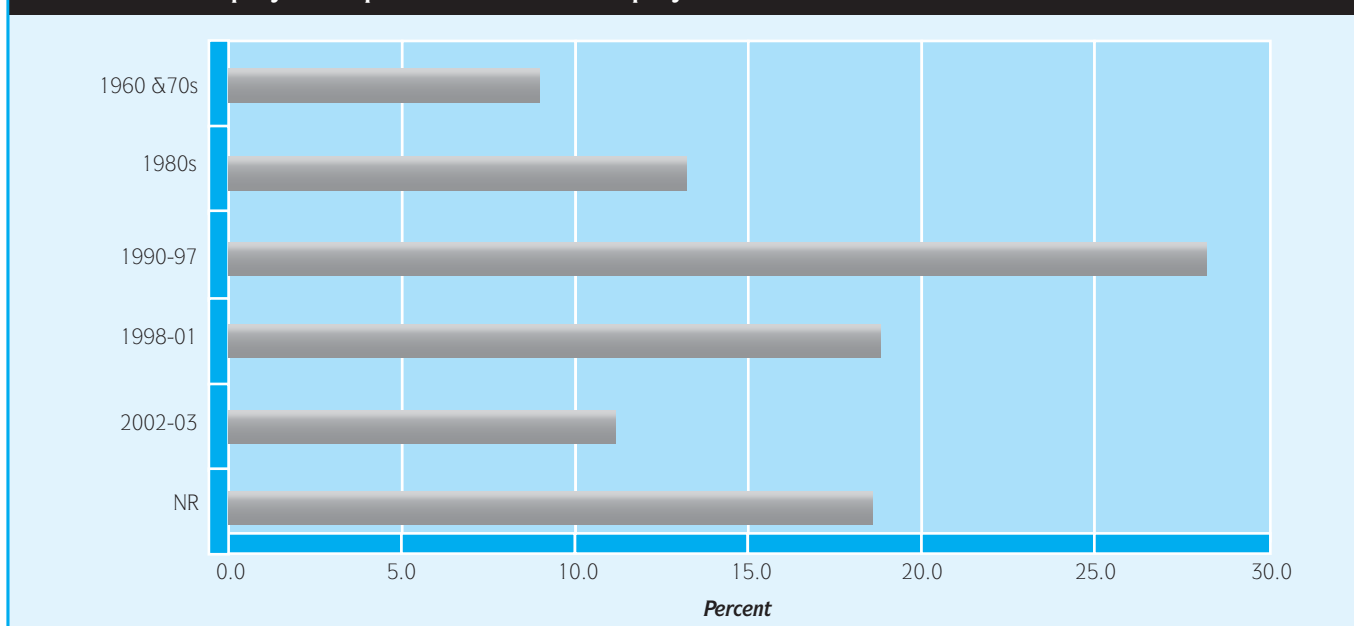
Disabled persons who are currently in employment generally started their period of continuous

employment during or prior 2001 (69.0%) (refer to chart 2). As one would expect, the duration of continuous employment was strongly correlated with the age of the individual. No difference was found between men and women. This finding shows a certain degree of employment stability among disabled persons. Similar findings were obtained by the DFEE survey of 1999 where it was found that over half (53%) of employed disabled people in the sample had found employment in the 1990's and 14% found employment in 1996 (the year in which the survey took place). When comparing these figures with the UK LFS of Spring 1997 the same results were obtained where 61% of disabled persons had started work during the 1990s and only 24% had started since 1996. This suggests that employed disabled persons in both samples exhibited a certain level of employment stability especially when compared to their non-disabled counterparts in the LFS sample.

Stable employment, however, does not seem to be typical of all disabled persons. In fact when respondents were asked how long they remained in their previous or last job, differences emerged between sub-samples. Unemployed respondents remained in their last job for shorter periods of time than their employed counterparts. 52.3% of unemployed respondents managed to retain their last job for more than a year compared to 68.4% of employed



**Chart 2: Year employed respondents started employment**



respondents. Unemployed disabled persons seem to be finding it more difficult to retain employment for longer periods of time than their counterparts.

### Jobsearch

The decision to take up a job involves a process whereby persons have to actively seek for work, make use of relevant services in order to get to know about jobs available, apply for such jobs and attend for interviews with the hope of acquiring the job they aspire to. Manuals produced by the International Labour Organisation (2001) and the European Disability Forum (1998) tend to look at the design and establishment of recruitment and work practices that effectively enable people with disabilities to integrate into the workplace. Such practices would involve developing workplace strategies on disability management, communication and awareness raising, using high-quality job-matching services to match persons with disabilities to jobs that suit their capacity and interests, ensuring that persons with disabilities have an equal opportunity to apply for jobs available and are considered on an equal basis with other candidates.

In spite of these good practices it seems that persons with disability are still encountering a number of barriers in their search for work despite the growing interest of all parties concerned to increase the number of disabled persons in employment. Respondents of

this study were asked a series of questions on their jobsearch experience and eventual recruitment. Employers were also asked similar questions in order to gain some information on their experience of recruiting persons with disability at the workplace.

When asked whether they had sought any assistance in choosing their career, generally less than half of respondents (46.9%) stated that they did seek assistance with more unemployed respondents answering positively (62.2%) than employed (45.0%) and inactive (2.9%) respondents (only one inactive respondent stated that she sought career guidance). Women were less likely to seek assistance than men in both the employed (37.5% females, 47.4% males) and unemployed (51.9% females, 65.5% males) categories. When analysing respondents by age, more young employed respondents answered that they had sought career guidance but no differences were registered in the unemployed category by age<sup>5</sup>.

The Employment and Training Corporation was the organisation most mentioned by respondents for career guidance followed by voluntary organisations working amongst persons with disability and their relatives (refer to table 16). Minor differences were obtained among employed and unemployed respondents in their preferences, however more unemployed respondents mentioned the ETC than employed respondents when seeking career guidance.

<sup>5</sup> Given the small sample size, a breakdown of respondents by career guidance, employment status and disability was not appropriate.

Unemployed and inactive respondents were also asked explicitly if they ever sought employment and their reasons for not seeking employment. Interestingly, not all unemployed respondents answered that they had actively sought work in spite of their registration with the ETC. In fact 76.6% or 85 unemployed respondents answered that they had been searching for work. However this percentage is much higher than that registered for inactive respondents where only 23.5% or 8 respondents answered in the affirmative. Unemployed (63.0%) and inactive (5.6%) women stated that they have been searching for work less than males (81.0% unemployed, 43.8% inactive). As to disability, figures seem to suggest that unemployed respondents who are either intellectually disabled or with mental health difficulties or have more than one disability have been searching for work less than other respondents. However these figures have to be treated with caution due to the low numbers obtained. No significant differences were obtained by age.

Reasons mentioned for not seeking employment varied between unemployed and inactive respondents. Responses by the unemployed were more varied and

included attending adult training centres (7), lack of skills or in need of job assistance (5), disability or health reasons (4), studies (4) or not interested in finding a job (2). On the other hand more inactive respondents mentioned disability or health reasons (12) followed by lack of skills or in need of job assistance (8), not interested in finding a job (4) and attending a centre (1).

Most unemployed respondents who sought employment stated that they got to know about a job that interested them (62.4% or 53 respondents) (a small number was obtained in the inactive sub-sample which restricted further analysis in this regard). Most respondents got to know about the job through ETC (56.6%), personal contacts (22.6%) or newspapers (11.3%). Jobs that interested them fell mostly in the elementary occupations (41.5%) and clerks (26.4%) categories requiring either basic knowledge (18.9%) or no particular skills or qualifications (37.7%). Few respondents mentioned that the jobs they were interested in required some kind of qualification such as O levels or A levels (7.5%). Occupations mentioned are similar to the current occupations held by employed

**Table 16: Career guidance by sub-sample \***

Type of career guidance							Total	
	Employed		Unemployed		Inactive			
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Family	3	5.5	8	8.0	0	0.0	11	8.9
Friends	2	3.6	2	2.0	0	0.0	3	2.4
School	2	3.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.6
ETC	26	47.3	62	62.0	1	100.0	79	63.7
KNPD	3	5.5	1	1.0	0	0.0	4	3.2
Voluntary organisation (PWD)	11	20.0	21	21.0	0	0.0	12	9.7
Other voluntary organisation	2	3.6	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.6
Labour office	3	5.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	1.6
Politicians	0	0.0	1	1.0	0	0.0	1	0.8
Church	0	0.0	1	1.0	0	0.0	1	0.8
Newspapers	0	0.0	1	1.0	0	0.0	1	0.8
Other	3	5.5	3	3.0	0	0.0	6	4.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Respondents could indicate more than one form of assistance.

respondents and those held previously by both employed and unemployed respondents. This reinforces the now established tendency that respondents of this survey tend to hold low-qualified and low-status jobs.

Meanwhile 49 out of the 53 unemployed respondents who found a job that interested them applied for it. Most applied through the ETC (19), by filling an application (10) or sending a letter and CV (8). 43 were invited for an interview but only eight were accepted for the job. Almost half stated (19) that they mentioned their disability during the interview while 6 stated that the interviewing board mentioned their disability. Only two mentioned that they were offered work as part of an ETC employment and training scheme with one interviewee stating that he/she was accepted for the job after the period covered by the scheme.

Employed respondents were also invited to describe how they got to know about the job that interested them and their experience in acquiring the said job. 67 respondents answered these set of questions. Most got to know about the job through the ETC (23) however more respondents mentioned that they got to know about it through personal contacts (20) or by speaking to the employer themselves (13) than unemployed respondents. 62 had eventually applied for the job with most stating that they applied through ETC (18), through an application form (17) and through personal contacts (8). The majority went for an interview (57) with more than half stating that they mentioned their disability during the interview (33). 5 stated that the board of interviewers mentioned their disability. More employed respondents (7) mentioned that they were offered work as part of an ETC employment and training scheme. 5 stated that they were accepted for the job after the period covered by the scheme. 46 out of the 57 who had attended for the interview were accepted.

Similar questions on the jobsearch of persons with disability were asked to the 48 employers participating in the small-scale survey. 15 employers out of 48 mentioned that persons with disability had applied for a job with the company. Less companies that do not employ persons with disability (5 out of 26) mentioned that they had persons with disability applying for a job than companies employing disabled persons (10 out of 22). Most companies stated that the persons that applied did not have the required qualifications (9 out of 15). Most had applied without any form of assistance (8) followed by those who applied through NGOs (6) and the ETC (4). 11 employers out of 15

stated that they offered a job to these persons. Reasons cited for not offering a job varied from the person not having the required abilities for the job or that the job was dangerous.

All employers were asked who decides whether to employ persons with disability with the company. Most cited that the general manager/director (30) takes such a decision followed by the human resources manager (9) and other section managers (8). The fact that most companies mentioned the general manager/director may partly reflect the companies' concern when recruiting persons with disability and that they consider this as a very sensitive issue. 31 employers mentioned that they order medical tests after the interview for all prospective employees. However when asked explicitly as to whether they order such tests to persons with disability more than half (17) stated that they do not order medical tests to disabled persons.

22 employers mentioned that they knew about the ETC Bridging the Gap Scheme but only 5 mentioned that they had used the scheme. Four out of these five employers mentioned that they had retained scheme participants after the period covered by the scheme. The low use by employers of the Bridging the Gap Scheme may partly reflect their low propensity to recruit persons with disability. In fact more employers mentioned that they had made use of other ETC employment and training schemes (27). When asked whether they required help by the ETC in the recruitment of disabled persons exactly half of all employers mentioned that they needed such help, with more employers that do not employ persons with disability (15 out of 26) requiring such help than their counterparts (9 out of 13).

The above results show that ETC has a very important role to play in placing persons with disability in employment. Most respondents with disability got to know about jobs through ETC. However other more informal methods such as personal contacts and getting to know the employer beforehand also seem to be very effective methods among persons with disability in obtaining a job. Disability seems to be a point of discussion in quite a number of interviews. It would be interesting to know how employers tackle such issues during interviews. Indeed most employers stated that they require more help and information on the subject by the ETC.

Moreover the use of ETC employment schemes by employers needs to be investigated better. A small

**Chart 3: Factors influencing respondents to start seeking work**



number of respondents with disability mentioned that they were offered a job as part of an ETC employment scheme. However the fact that more employed than unemployed respondents mentioned the use of ETC schemes in their job search may partly reflect the success of ETC schemes for persons with disability who through them managed to find a job and retain it.

Similarly a small number of employers mentioned having used ETC schemes for the disabled but most users decided to retain scheme participants with their company after scheme completion. These findings seem to suggest that ETC schemes, if marketed more vigorously, can eventually lead to the recruitment of persons with disability.

**Table 17: Duration of registration for work \***

Duration							Total	
	Employed		Unemployed		Inactive		Number	%
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		
Less than 1 mth to 5 mths	10	14.7	4	4.9	0	0.0	14	9.3
6 to 11 mths	3	4.4	4	4.9	0	0.0	7	4.6
12 to 17 mths	17	25.0	6	7.3	0	0.0	23	15.2
18 mths but less than 2 yrs	4	5.9	3	3.7	0	0.0	7	4.6
2 years but less than 3 years	9	13.2	14	17.1	1	100.0	24	15.9
3 years but less than 4 years	8	11.8	8	9.8	0	0.0	16	10.6
4 years but less than 5 years	4	5.9	9	11.0	0	0.0	13	8.6
More than 5 years	8	11.8	23	28.0	0	0.0	31	20.5
Non respondents	5	7.4	11	13.4	0	0.0	16	10.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Unemployed respondents do not total to 111 since some had stated in a previous question that they were not seeking work despite registering with the Employment and Training Corporation.

Respondents with a disability were also asked what were the main factors that encouraged them to search for work. Financial independence was the factor that influenced respondents most in their decision to start seeking work. It was followed by acquiring a sense of responsibility at work and work as an opportunity to socialise. Respondents considered as less important the opportunity that work may offer to be productive and to learn (refer to chart 3). No significant differences were obtained between sub-groups.

Respondents were also asked how long they had been registering for work with the ETC. 68% of employed respondents stated that they registered for work with the ETC when seeking employment (refer to table 17). Respondents were equally divided between those who had been registering for work for less than two years and those who had been registering for work for two years or more. On the other hand unemployed respondents had longer periods of registration for employment with 20.7% stating that they had been registering for work for less than two years and 65.9% stating that they had been registering for work for two years or more. Quite a significant number stated that they had been registering for work for more than five years (28.0%). These figures tend to suggest that persons with disability tend to face long periods of unemployment until they settle in a job. Quite a significant number of unemployed disabled persons currently registering with the ETC are facing particular problems in finding

suitable employment resulting in long periods of unemployment.

### Job experience

The integration of persons with disability at the workplace may require particular supportive measures. This is not always the case due to the diverse types of disabilities that exist. However when persons with disability in need of support are provided with the necessary support needed they can be as fully effective as other workers. As outlined in the Code of Good Practice issued by the UK Employment Service (1990:16) companies may have to respond in general to three types of disabled workers mainly:

- (1) those who have overcome their handicap so that it no longer has any significant effect on the type of job they can do;
- (2) those who need practical help in overcoming their handicap which, once overcome, will not limit the type of employment they can undertake;
- (3) those whose employment range may be restricted by their handicap but who, given the right job, are as effective as anyone else.

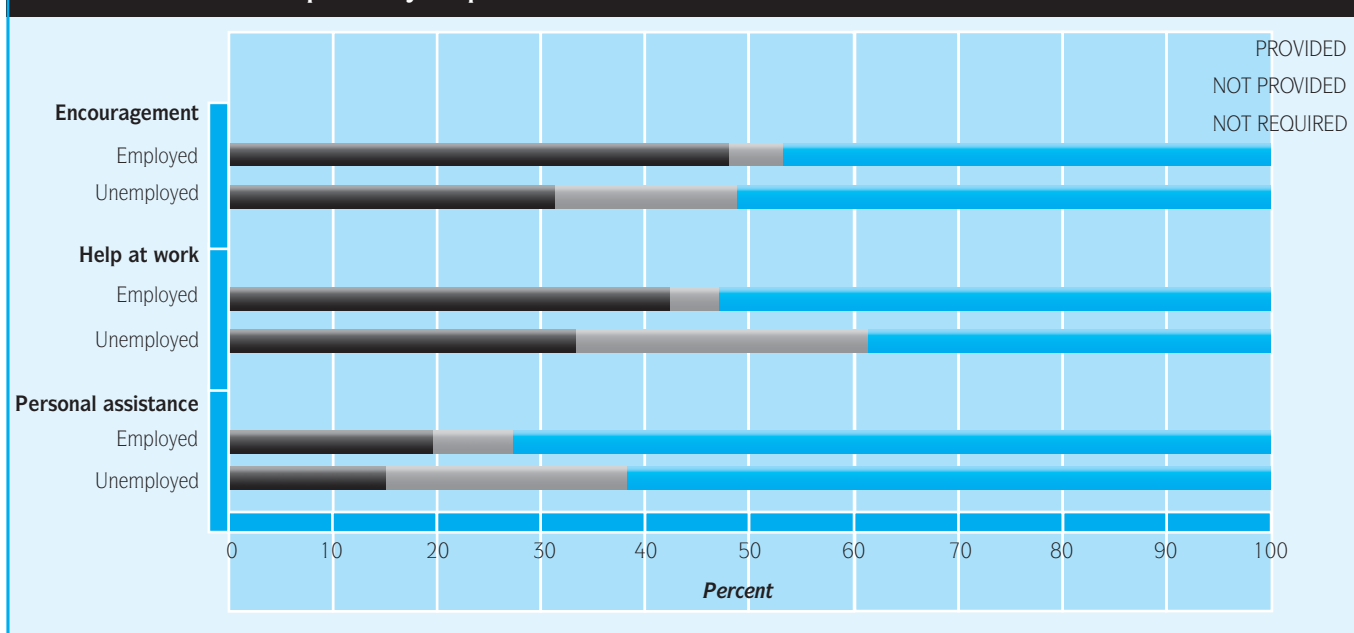
These three major types of employees do not include those persons with very severe disabilities where sheltered conditions of employment may be more appropriate for their kind of disability. However this does not exclude them from being offered jobs with certain companies or having work subcontracted to them at sheltered workshops.

**Table 18: Form of assistance required by respondents \***

Forms of assistance							Total	
	Employed		Unemployed		Inactive		Number	%
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		
Personal assistant	8	24.2	9	37.5	1	100.0	18	31.0
Job coach	8	24.2	8	33.3	0	0.0	16	27.6
Change in office set-up	3	9.1	2	8.3	0	0.0	5	8.6
Technical aids	3	9.1	1	4.2	0	0.0	4	6.9
Flexible hours	1	3.0	1	4.2	0	0.0	2	3.4
Different working conditions	5	15.2	2	8.3	0	0.0	7	12.1
Other	5	15.2	1	4.2	0	0.0	6	10.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\* Respondents could state more than one form of assistance

**Chart 4: Assistance required by respondents at work**



Respondents of this survey were asked a set of questions on their job experience and whether they were given any form of support when required. Employed respondents were asked to answer the questions on their present employment while unemployed respondents were asked to answer questions on their last employment. 85 employed, 46 unemployed and 8 inactive respondents answered this part of the survey respectively.

When asked on the adaptations and requirements needed for their daily working life, an average of 34.5% of respondents stated that they require some form of assistance at work (refer to table 18). Minor differences were obtained between the employed (35.3%) and unemployed (37.0%) categories (a low number of cases was obtained in the inactive respondents category). The services most mentioned by respondents were the service of a job coach or personal assistant with more unemployed respondents stating that they had these requirements than employed respondents. The other requirements most mentioned by respondents were changes in working conditions and office arrangements.

Respondents were also asked whether they required encouragement, help at work or a personal assistant in their current or past job. More unemployed than employed respondents stated that they required such help to do the job that they were assigned by the employer (refer to chart 4). A higher number of

unemployed respondents than employed respondents stated that they did not receive such assistance by their employer. These findings seem to suggest that a certain number of persons with disability are still not being provided with the right kind of assistance to be able to integrate at the workplace and to retain their job. However once this assistance is provided, persons with disability manage to perform in their job as other employees and retain it.

Almost half the respondents mentioned that they were given some form of induction at the workplace as soon as they started their job. No significant differences were obtained between the unemployed (47.1%) and employed (43.5%) sub-samples. Less stated that they were offered longer forms of training with 28.2% in the employed category and 19.6% in the unemployed category respectively. This figure compares well with the figure obtained for the total general population in the Continuous Vocational Training Survey administered by the National Statistics Office. The survey estimates that around 31.2% of all employees covered by the survey participated in CVT courses (NSO 2001). Meanwhile four employed respondents mentioned that they could not participate in the training they were offered. This was mainly because they needed a personal assistant, which was not offered to them and because they did not have enough educational attainment to be able to follow the course. Generally all respondents who attended the training were satisfied with the course. They were satisfied most with the tutor (mean average = 3.67)

followed by the accessibility of the training place (3.65), the relevance of the course for their work (3.63) and finally the material covered by the course (3.29) <sup>6</sup>.

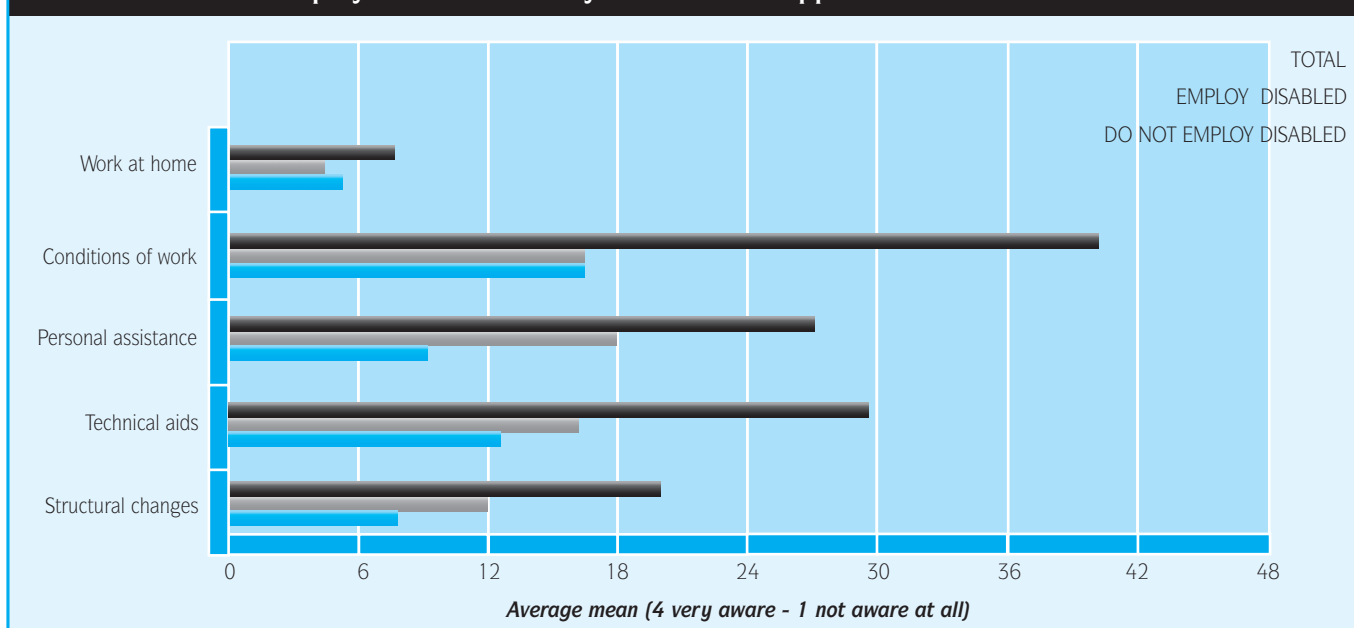
On average just one in ten (10.1%) of the employed and unemployed respondents mentioned being offered a promotion with a slightly higher percentage (17.3%) mentioning that they had the opportunity to apply for a promotion. Differences were obtained among the employed and unemployed categories with employed respondents stating that they either were offered (12.9%) or had the opportunity to apply for a promotion (21.2%) more than unemployed respondents (6.5% and 10.9% respectively). 8 respondents or 5.8% out of a total of 139 stated that they received a promotion, two of which were unemployed respondents.

Respondents were also asked whether they were union members and if they sought any kind of help from union representatives. On average 28.1% of respondents stated that they were union members, with more employed respondents than the unemployed and inactive stating that they were union members. Respondents mentioned that they asked assistance to union representatives on issues such as transfers, pay, facilities, discipline, breaks, leave and shifts.

As outlined previously most respondents generally left their job or previous employment because of health reasons and disability, redundancy or the working conditions they were offered by the employer (refer to table 15). More unemployed and inactive respondents than employed respondents stated that they left their job due to health and disability reasons. Respondents who cited working conditions as the main reason why they left their job, were asked to specify what these conditions were. Conditions most cited by respondents were looking for a better pay followed by work that interested them more and possibility for further training.

14 respondents out of the 94 who stated that they had terminated their last or previous job, mentioned specifically that they left their job because of an accident. Most worked either in elementary or crafts related occupations such as labourers in the construction industry or carpenters and mechanics. Nine stated that the accident took place at work. The majority stated that they started to search for work again while only three mentioned that they stopped working after the accident on a definite basis. Only four stated that they received help from the Human Resources Department before leaving their job while one respondent mentioned that he was offered another job with the company. None stated that they were offered re-training or the possibility to retain their job for a lower pay.

**Chart 5: Number of employers who are ready to introduce support measures**



<sup>6</sup> Responses were calculated on a 4-point scale with four meaning very good and one meaning poor.

Meanwhile employers were also asked a set of questions on a number of issues pertaining to the integration of persons with disability at the workplace. Questions covered accessibility of their premises, the nature of work done and whether in their opinion it restricts the recruitment of disabled persons, the employees' readiness to work with disabled persons and whether the employment of disabled persons would impact negatively on the company's clientele.

Over four in ten of employers interviewed mentioned that their premises are accessible to persons with disability (20 out of 48) with more companies that recruit disabled persons (13 out of 22) stating that their premises are accessible than other companies (7 out of 26). Employers are more ready to introduce support measures such as changes in working conditions and technical aids rather than giving disabled workers the opportunity to work from home (refer to chart 5). Companies already employing disabled persons and larger companies employing more than 100 employees were more willing to introduce support measures than other companies (minor differences were obtained by economic sector).

Employers may decide not to employ persons with disability because of their perception that persons with disability may not be as productive as other workers or simply because of the lack of awareness and knowledge on the subject. When asked whether they agree with the statement "persons with disability are not productive enough when it comes to production or service delivery", almost 4 in 10 agreed with the statement. Employers who do not employ disabled persons and those recruiting less than 20 employees tended to agree with the statement more than other employers. Most employers tended to agree with the statements referring to persons with disability needing more help at work than other employees and that they do not know enough on the subject and how to go about recruiting disabled employees (6 in 10). Similar to the previous statement more employers who do not employ persons with disability tended to agree with these statements more than their counterparts. Seven employers also remarked that the employment of persons with disability very much depends on the type of job that is available. It would appear, therefore, that the experience of employing persons with disability serves to decrease employers' negative perception of their ability.

When asked about the impact that the employment of persons with disability might have on the service and/or

line of production, almost 6 in 10 employers stated that it does have an effect. Employers described how the requirements of the job influence the recruitment of persons with disability and how they would have to opt for particular jobs only (30 employers). These reactions were identified across companies operating in different sectors. Factors that were mentioned by employers included physical capacity, lack of qualifications held by disabled persons and the nature of the jobs concerned. Moreover some stated that they are careful where to employ persons with disability due to clients' perceptions (5 employers).

Finally all employers stated that their employees would be ready to work with colleagues with a disability and help them in their work. However, as already outlined in other statements, differences were noted between companies already employing persons with disability and those that did not. The former showed more readiness in their answers with more employers stating that their employees would be to a great extent ready to collaborate with disabled employees (14 out of 22) and help them in their work (15 out of 22 companies) than other companies (12 out of 25 companies, one company did not answer the set of questions).

### Perceptions and experiences

Perceptions held by employers and persons with disability on the possibility of finding employment may act as a barrier to work. Employers may feel reluctant to hire people with disabilities while individuals may lack the motivation, self-esteem or support required by their disability. Individuals may lack confidence in a number of ways: in their ability to find a job, to obtain it, to do the job without having grave consequences on their health or to keep the job without inconveniencing their employer (Regan and Stanley 2003). These perceptions together with other tangible difficulties, may act as a strong barrier to the employment of persons with disability. This study sought to understand better the perceptions held by respondents on the employment of persons with disability and their knowledge of relevant legislation and the services provided by the ETC.

Respondents were asked whether they knew about the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act of 1969 and about their reactions to it. Most employers and persons with disability stated that they knew about the legislation (refer to table 19). Employers who did not employ disabled persons and persons who were either unemployed or inactive knew less about the legislation



than other respondents. No particular differences were obtained by size of employer. In the persons with disability sample differences were also obtained by gender and disability. Females and persons with intellectual disability or mental health difficulties knew less about the legislation than other respondents.

When asked whether they agreed with the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act of 1969 most respondents held positive views. However a significant number did not agree with the legislation. 18 employers stated that they did not agree with the law mainly because they disagreed with the quota system and that according to them the employment of persons with disability largely depends on the type of job or company and thus should not be enforced. One employer also remarked that costs determine whether a company hires disabled persons or not. Meanwhile 15.9% of persons with disability stated that the legislation was not effective while 26.1% commented that the legislation was not being enforced properly or that it was not enough. A significant number did not state their opinion on the matter (28.6%).

Respondents were also asked whether they knew about the Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act of 2000 and that it makes it illegal to discriminate against individuals at work on grounds of disability. A significant number of respondents knew about the Act (refer to table 20). Similar to the previous findings employers who do not employ persons with disability knew less about the Act than other employers. In the persons with disability sample, differences were obtained by gender, type of disability and economic status. Females, unemployed or inactive and intellectually disabled individuals or those with mental health problems knew less about the Act than other respondents.

Disabled respondents were given the chance to express openly their views on their jobsearch experience. Out of the 184 respondents who answered this question more than half (77.2%) mentioned specifically that their experience of searching for a job was difficult. Barriers mentioned by respondents included their disability (39.1%), no response from employers when applying for a job (7.1%), not enough job opportunities (6.0%), the need for special support such as that provided by NGOs

**Table 19: Knowledge of Disabled Persons (Employment) Act of 1969 by respondents**

<i>Persons</i>							
Category	Yes		No		Total		
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Employed	72	72.0	28	28.0	100	100.0	
Males	56	73.7	20	26.3	76	100.0	
Females	16	66.7	8	33.3	24	100.0	
Unemployed	56	50.5	55	49.5	111	100.0	
Males	45	53.6	39	46.4	84	100.0	
Females	11	40.7	16	59.3	27	100.0	
Inactive	15	44.1	19	55.9	34	100.0	
Males	8	50.0	8	50.0	16	100.0	
Females	7	38.9	11	61.1	18	100.0	
Total	143	58.4	102	41.6	245	100.0	
Males	109	61.9	67	38.1	176	100.0	
Females	34	49.3	35	50.7	69	100.0	
<i>Employers</i>							
Category	Yes		No		Total		
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Do not employ disabled	19	73.1	7	26.9	26	100.0	
Employ disabled	19	86.4	3	13.6	22	100.0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>79.2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

(6.0%), difficulties tied to age (1.6%), transport problems (1.2%), lack of work experience (1.2%), and accessibility problems (1.2%).

As to their work experience 65.4% of the respondents who provided comments on the subject (162 respondents) were positive about it and stated that it is an overall good experience. Some emphasised that a job gives you the opportunity to meet others, earn a wage, help others, and feel independent and useful. However 19.8% were negative about their work experience with 18 respondents mentioning specifically that they had problems at work because of their disability. Other negative comments mentioned by respondents included bad working conditions, abuse by others at the workplace, age problems and being forced to work informally by the employer.

These findings tend to confirm findings by other researchers. In his study on the situation of the disabled in Malta, Joseph Troisi (1992) found that the majority of disabled persons interviewed in the study were happy at work and satisfied with the job that they were doing. They also remarked that being gainfully employed not only meant being financially independent but also gave them a sense of worth and creativity. It gave them the

opportunity to meet other people and integrate with the rest of the community. The disabled persons' families also shared this attitude towards work. The parents of the disabled remarked that persons with disability should be encouraged to work and integrate in society. According to some parents, it is degrading for persons with disability to rely entirely on the Disability Pension.

Despite these positive views Troisi also found that most respondents, including disabled persons, parents of disabled children and non-disabled persons, were of the view that, in spite of the opportunities that are available, disabled persons do not have sufficient opportunities to be gainfully employed. According to respondents the major obstacle was the attitude and mentality of employers who tended to discriminate against disabled persons. Employers were after flexibility and thus considered the disabled as limited in the amount and kind of work that they could perform. Employers were not aware that given the right kind of support, disabled persons could perform at work as much as non-disabled employees. Other barriers mentioned by respondents in Troisi's study were lack of accessibility in places of work, inadequate sanitary facilities and poor transport facilities.

**Table 20: Knowledge of Equal Opportunities (Persons with Disability) Act of 2000 by respondents**

Category	Persons					
	Yes		No		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Employed	74	74.0	26	26.0	100	100.0
Males	56	73.7	20	26.3	76	100.0
Females	18	75.0	6	25.0	24	100.0
Unemployed	67	60.4	44	39.6	111	100.0
Males	54	64.3	30	35.7	84	100.0
Females	13	48.1	14	51.9	27	100.0
Inactive	19	55.9	15	44.1	34	100.0
Males	11	68.8	5	31.3	16	100.0
Females	8	44.4	10	55.6	18	100.0
Total	160	65.3	85	34.7	245	100.0
Males	121	68.8	55	31.3	176	100.0
Females	39	56.5	30	43.5	69	100.0
Employers						
Do not employ disabled	20	76.9	6	23.1	26	100.0
Employ disabled	22	100.0	0	0.0	22	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>87.5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Table 21: Employers' perceptions on the employment of persons with disability \***

Do not employ disabled persons	Mean average	Employ disabled persons	Mean average
Tax incentives help employers to employ persons with disability	2.73	Parents don't want them to work	2.22
Employers find difficulties to make adaptations	2.70	Employers find difficulties to make adaptations	2.17
Not enough support from the state	2.67	Tax incentives help employers to employ persons with disability	2.13
Not easy to make adaptations	2.64	Have severe disability	2.00
Have severe disability	2.59	Employers have negative perceptions	2.00
Parents don't want them to work	2.45	Not easy to make adaptations	1.89
Employers have negative perceptions	2.05	Not enough support from the state	1.80
Low skills	2.00	Have the right not to work and receive benefit	1.67
Have the right not to work and receive benefit	1.95	Low skills	1.53
Don't want to work	1.91	Prefer to receive disability benefit	1.50
Low education	1.71	Low education	1.47
Prefer to receive disability benefit	1.68	Don't want to work	1.44

\* Responses were calculated on a 4-point scale with 1 meaning do not agree and 4 meaning strongly agree.

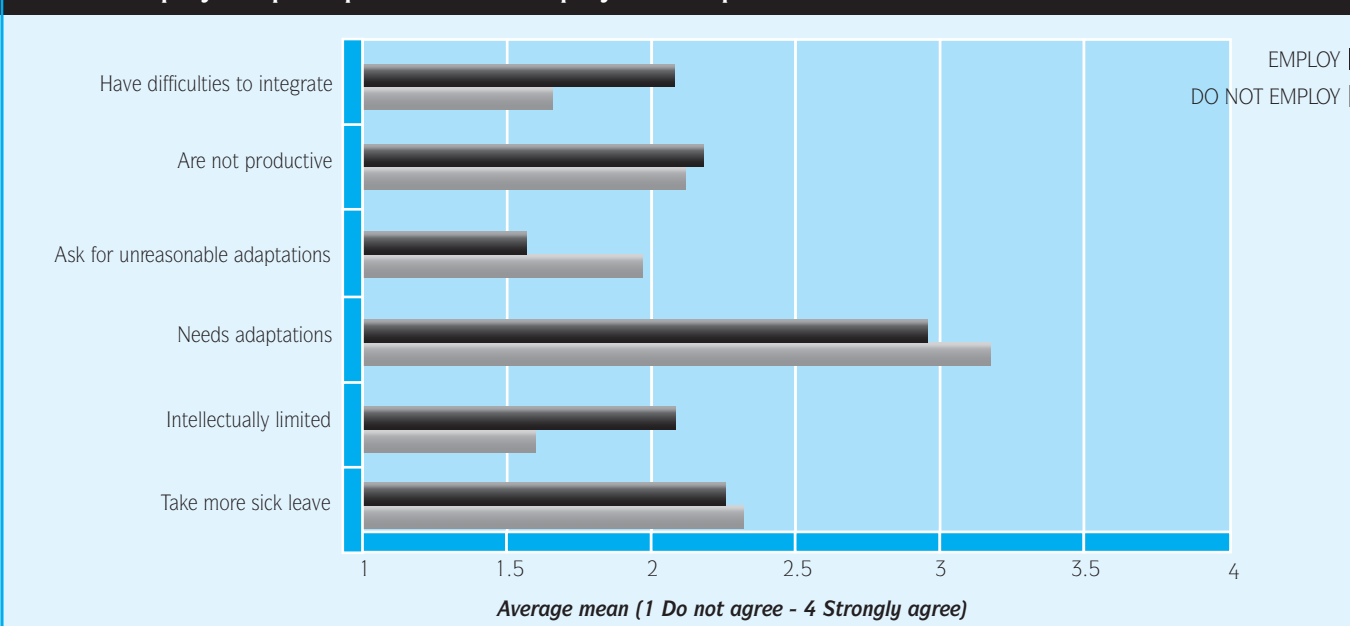
In this study, employers were also asked a set of questions on their readiness to employ disabled persons as well as the reasons why they think there is a low rate of persons with disability in the labour market (refer to table 21). Most employers, both those who already employ disabled persons and those who do not, tended to agree most with the difficulties involved in making the necessary adaptations to hire disabled persons. They also agreed that the provision of tax incentives would encourage employers to recruit more persons with disability. Employers who already employ persons with disability agreed with the fact that the relatives of persons with disability tend to discourage them from employment. Employers agreed less with statements tied to the persons with disabilities themselves such as their having low levels of education, low skills, not wanting to work and preferring to receive benefits rather than opting for employment.

Employers tended to differentiate between the employment of persons with severe and moderate disabilities (refer to charts 6 and 7). It seems that employers are less prepared and are finding it more

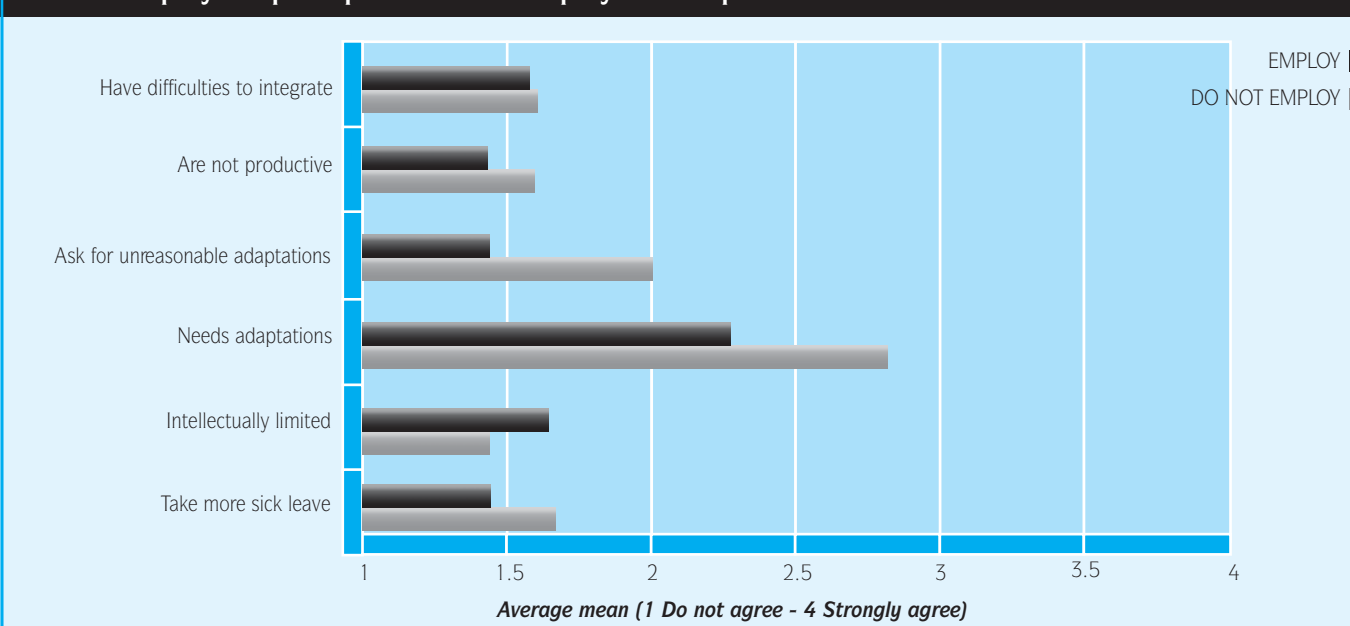
difficult to employ persons with severe disabilities rather than moderately disabled persons. When posed with a set of statements referring to the disabled persons' need for adaptations at work and low productivity levels, employers agreed more with these statements when referring to severely disabled persons than moderately disabled persons. Employers that already employ disabled persons were generally more positive in their attitude towards the employment of both types of disabled persons than their counterparts.

Employers were also asked whether they were ready to make certain changes at the workplace to accommodate persons with disability (refer to chart 8). Employers who already employ persons with disability were generally more keen to make adaptations than their counterparts. Employers were more prepared to introduce structural changes to the workplace, purchase special apparatus and provide personal assistance to disabled employees but were less ready to dedicate a percentage of their profit to make these adaptations. In fact, a significant number of

**Chart 6: Employers' perceptions on the employment of persons with severe disabilities**



**Chart 7: Employers' perceptions on the employment of persons with moderate disabilities**

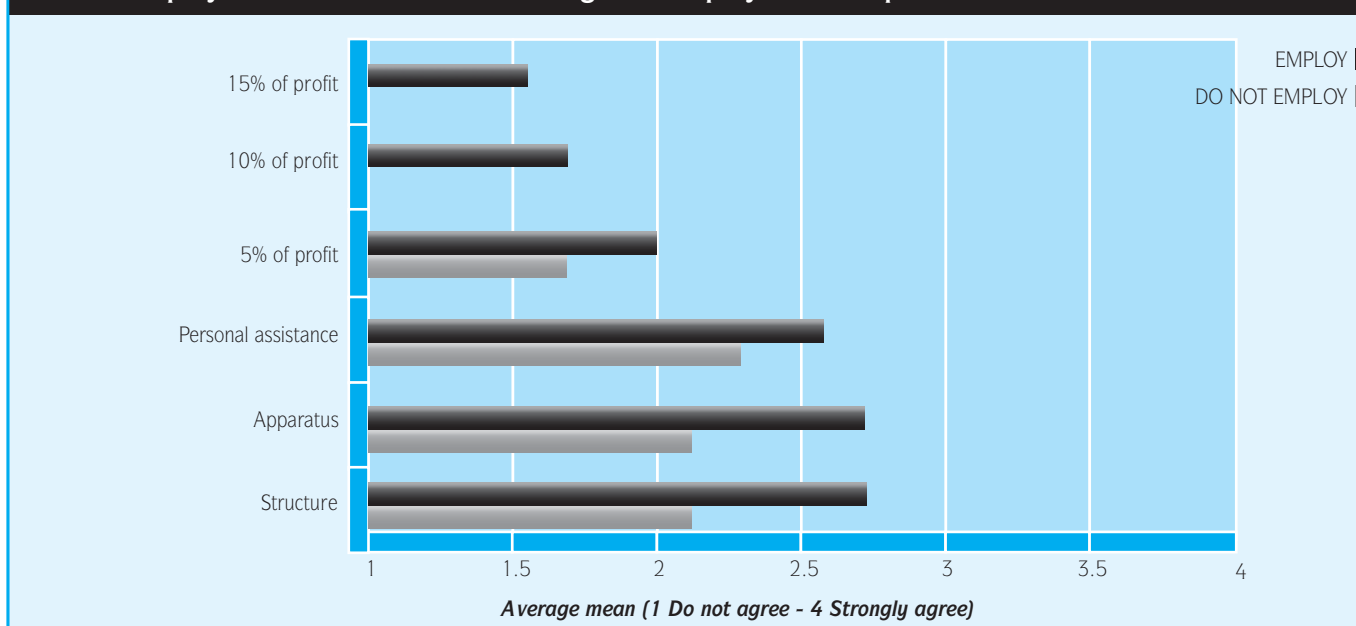


employers preferred not to commit themselves to these statements and chose not to answer these statements at all.

When given the chance to express themselves on the subject, employers generally showed positive views towards the employment of persons with disabilities. However they also mentioned the need of adequate assistance in order to be able to hire disabled persons in employment. A significant number of employers (14)

stated that the employment of persons with disability depends very much on the type of disability and the jobs that are available. Three employers mentioned specifically the need of an assessment of disability levels that would help employers match disability and skills levels held by individuals to job characteristics. Another eight employers stated that persons with disability have the right to obtain adequate job opportunities while four employers, who already employ persons with disability, remarked that companies should be more flexible on

**Chart 8: Employers' readiness to make changes to employ disabled persons**



**Table 22: Knowledge of ETC services by respondents**

Service	Sub-sample						Total	
	Employed		Unemployed		Inactive			
	T = 100		T = 111		T = 34		T = 245	
	T m = 76		T m = 84		T m = 16		T m = 176	
	T f = 24		T f = 27		T f = 18		T f = 69	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Guidance & counselling	40	40.0	52	46.8	9	26.5	101	41.2
Males	32	42.1	42	50.0	4	25.0	78	44.3
Females	8	33.3	10	37.0	5	27.8	23	33.3
Placement services	82	82.0	91	82.0	19	55.9	192	78.4
Males	62	81.6	73	86.9	9	56.3	144	81.8
Females	20	83.3	18	66.7	10	55.6	48	69.6
Training courses	80	80.0	85	76.6	16	47.1	181	73.9
Males	61	80.3	72	85.7	8	50.0	141	80.1
Females	19	79.2	13	48.1	8	44.4	40	58.0
Employment and training schemes	45	45.0	35	31.5	6	17.6	86	35.1
Males	33	43.4	29	34.5	4	25.0	66	37.5
Females	12	50.0	6	22.2	2	11.1	20	29.0
Co-operation agreements	57	57.0	56	50.5	9	26.5	122	49.8
Males	42	55.3	45	53.6	5	31.3	92	52.3
Females	15	62.5	11	40.7	4	22.2	30	43.5

their part. On the other hand, two employers stated that individuals should try and seek employment themselves and one employer mentioned the high costs tied to the employment of persons with disabilities. Eight employers stated that the state should provide adequate assistance that in turn leads to higher employment rates by disabled persons. Four referred to the need of more education and awareness on the subject.

Finally disabled respondents were asked whether they knew about the Supported Employment Section at the ETC and the services it offers. All respondents except two mentioned that they knew about the section. Most knew about the placement services and the training courses. Less respondents knew about the co-operation agreements signed with NGOs, the guidance and counselling service, and the employment and training schemes (refer to table 22). Females and inactive respondents were less likely to know about the services offered by the Supported Employment Section than other respondents.

When asked what other services they would like the section to offer, 150 respondents answered this question. Most respondents (31.3%) referred to placement services and help to find work, similar to the services currently on offer. A significant number (21.3%) would like the section to provide them with work opportunities or jobs with good working conditions (25.3%). The next services most mentioned by respondents were the provision of transport facilities (16%), the need to promote accessibility issues among the general public including employers (11.3%), and the provision of training courses (11.3%). A number of respondents also wanted the ETC to help disabled persons both personally (8.0%) and financially (6.7%), to conduct more awareness raising campaigns (6.7%) as well as take a more active role in the enforcement of legislation pertaining to the employment of persons with disability (10%).

## Chapter 4

***The main objective of this study was to gather information on the jobsearch and work experience of persons with disability. This information is intended to assist the Employment and Training Corporation to improve the services it offers to persons with disability wishing to find employment.***

# Conclusion

Findings of the study reveal that the employment of persons with disabilities can be an overall positive experience. However it is also clouded by a number of issues that are acting negatively on the entry of persons with disability in the labour market. Following are the main findings of the study.

The work experience of persons with disability is mainly characterised by occupations of relatively low status with low remuneration. Most employed respondents participating in this study mentioned working in occupations such as plant and machine operators, elementary occupations and clerks. A significant number mentioned earning between Lm200 and Lm349 a month. However, despite this situation, most stated that they tend to work on a full-time basis and have been working in their current job for two years or more. This reflects quite a stable work experience where persons with disability manage to retain their jobs and work normal hours of work as any other person.

This situation, however, is not unique for all persons with disability. Unemployed and inactive respondents participating in this survey seem to be experiencing particular difficulties in finding and retaining a job. A significant number of respondents stated that they had lost their previous job due to health and disability problems. A significant number also stated that they require more support at the workplace, such as the services of a personal assistant or job coach, to be able to retain the job. Meanwhile most unemployed respondents have been registering for work for two years or more. More than half were in receipt of the disability benefit.

Other factors that are inhibiting unemployed and inactive respondents to secure employment are their low level of education as well as their lack of work experience. All respondents, including the employed,

tend to have low levels of education with few or no qualifications. The proportion of unemployed and inactive respondents who have low or no qualifications was higher than that obtained for employed respondents. Consequently less than half of the unemployed respondents mentioned that they had previously held paid work. Occupations held were similar to those of employed respondents mainly plant and machine operators and elementary occupations followed by clerks, services workers and shop and sales workers.

Consequently differences were registered in participation rates by gender and age. Women respondents were less likely to be in employment and registering for work than men. More women answered that they were inactive during the time of the survey meaning that they were neither working nor seeking a job. Women were also less likely to seek assistance when searching for work. Unemployed registered youth seem to be finding difficulties in securing employment and almost half of all unemployed respondents participating in the survey were between 15 and 24 years of age.

In view of the above a series of initiatives can be taken in order to improve the employment situation of those persons with disability who are currently facing particular problems in securing employment. These initiatives need to target various points in service provision since the problems that are currently being faced by persons with disability are multi-faceted and deal with different issues.

The Supported Employment Section at the ETC will continue to strengthen its marketing of its schemes, its co-operation agreements as well as guidance and counselling service with its users. The unit needs to make its services more attractive to disabled women and encourage them to take up employment as men. The

services for youths need to be enhanced and monitored better since they seem to be finding particular difficulties in taking up work.

The unit will also seek to provide more and better training to persons with disability coupled with more work exposure and work-based training. This should be considered as very important especially in view of the lack of qualifications and work experience possessed by persons with disability in general. The lack of education and work experience are impacting negatively on the disabled persons' chances of securing employment.

Moreover it is highly recommended that a system of assessing the work potential and capabilities of disabled persons be established. This system would assess the type of work, including the number of hours that these persons can ultimately work. These systems would help the Corporation achieve a more individualised service to all disabled persons especially in view of the different types of disabilities held by the persons asking for the Corporation's services. As outlined by the study itself persons with different disabilities tend to have different work experiences. Moreover as mentioned by employers, it is also important to know what kind of job is the individual capable of doing. This would lead to better job matching and hopefully more work placements for persons with disability.

Consequently this approach is already going to be adopted in ETC's new Supported Employment Scheme. This scheme, which is funded by the European Social Fund, will cover training, work exposure, job coaching and personal assistance to unemployed persons with disability as well as financial incentives to employers. Scheme participants will first be screened and have their abilities assessed in order to ascertain what kind of work they are able to do. This would ensure that participants are given the right kind of assistance and are placed in jobs that match their abilities.

Meanwhile assessment procedures should also be accompanied by a review of the benefit for persons with disability. An in-depth analysis of the impact of the disability benefit on employment should be undertaken. The benefit may be impacting negatively on the persons' motivation to find adequate employment especially in view of the fact that most persons with disability end up in occupations that are low paid and of low status. Indeed they may prefer receiving the disability benefit rather than obtaining jobs that have low job security. A review of policy options with respect to disability benefits may be in order.

This leads to another important issue tied to the employment of persons with disability. A number of respondents participating in this survey described their work experience as a negative one. Some mentioned having problems because of their disability while others mentioned bad working conditions, abuse by others at the workplace and being forced to work informally by the employer. This situation requires adequate monitoring of the working conditions that these persons are being exposed to.

Employers, in particular, need to be better informed about the employment and training schemes offered by the Corporation. The Corporation needs to provide more awareness and information on the recruitment of persons with disability to employers. A number of employers participating in the survey mentioned that they need more information on the subject since they do not know what it entails to employ persons with disability. Moreover they stated that the decision to employ persons with disability with their company is usually taken by the general manager meaning that it is a very sensitive issue for employers. More awareness and education could eventually convince employers that it is possible to employ persons with disability if there is adequate preparation. This can aptly be done through marketing of best practices. Employers already recruiting persons with disability can show other employers what it involves to have persons with disability forming part of the workforce. This can be quite an effective strategy since as revealed by the findings of the study employers who already employ persons with disability are less negative on the disabled persons' ability to work.

Moreover it is also recommended that in parallel to the assessment of the capabilities of persons with disability, employers are provided with adequate help and assistance in making the required work arrangements. As outlined by the survey findings, a significant number of persons with disability require some kind of support to be able to retain their job. However, despite the employers' readiness to make the required adaptations, they were less ready to dedicate part of their profits to make these adaptations.

In view of this situation the role of the Employment and Training Corporation becomes crucial. The ETC could help assist both persons seeking work as well as employers to assess the kind of assistance required and eventually provide part or all of the support needed in order to make the said adaptations. These adaptations should incorporate a wide range of services that cover



the special needs and requirements of all types of disabilities from the provision of job coach assistance to changes in working conditions. At the moment the ETC seems to be focusing much of its assistance on the needs of persons with intellectual disability and mental health difficulties. It is recommended that such services start to cover the needs of persons with other disabilities as well.

This active approach would hopefully lead to better results. Indeed a significant number of persons with disability and employers participating in this study showed disagreement with the quota system. Disabled respondents stated that the system was not effective enough or that it was not being enforced properly. On the other hand employers disagreed with quotas since for them the employment of persons with disability largely depends on the type of job or company in question and the costs it entails. A similar situation exists in other countries where

quotas are generally not complied with and have limited effects on the employment of persons with disability.

Finally the employment of persons with disability involves a significant number of issues that if tackled in the right way may lead to positive results. The recruitment of persons with disability is made more possible where all parties concerned are properly informed and provided with the right kind of assistance needed. Employers need to be involved in the process and made aware of the issues concerning the employment of disabled persons. On the other hand the abilities of persons with disability should be enhanced through more and better training, more chances for work exposure, a review of the benefits system and more adaptations at the workplace. These and other measures would help increase the employment prospects of persons with disability and enhance their life situation in general.

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