

**Our study about how technology   
can help people with disabilities   
to work**

**Easy-to-read version**

Easy-to-read is information  
that is written in a simple way   
so that all people can understand it.  
You can find more information  
about easy-to-read at:  
[www.inclusion-europe.eu/easy-to-read](about:blank).

The difficult words in the text are marked in **bold**.

You can find their explanation at the end of this booklet.

# Who we are

We are the European Disability Forum.   
We are an organisation   
of people with disabilities in Europe.   
In short, we are called ‘EDF’.

At EDF, we work to protect the rights   
of all people with disabilities in Europe.  
We think that people with disabilities   
should have the same chances in life   
and take part in the community   
like everyone else.

# Why we made this study

We made this study to check:

* How technology can help   
  people with disabilities to work,
* What the situation is   
  for people with disabilities in Europe,
* What can be better.

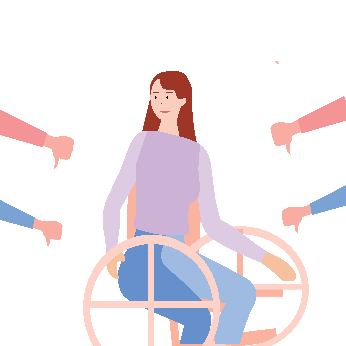
To make this study,   
we asked for the views of people with disabilities and their organisations   
in all countries of the **European Union**   
and the United Kingdom.

We also asked for the views of **employers**   
in these countries.

In the next few pages,   
you will read what we learned from this study.

# How technology can help people with disabilities to work

People with disabilities have the right to work   
like all other people.   
They should not be left out   
because they have a disability.

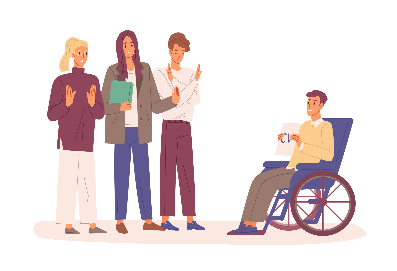
‘Assistive technology’ can help   
people with disabilities   
to work and do everyday activities   
that would be hard or impossible to do otherwise.

Here are some examples of assistive technology:

* **Wheelchairs**   
  A wheelchair helps people   
  who cannot walk   
  to get about.
* **Hearing aids**  
  Hearing aids help   
  people who do not hear well   
  to hear better.
* **Braille keyboards**   
  A keyboard with Braille can be used   
  by a blind person to type.
* **Screen readers**  
  This is a system that reads texts aloud   
  to people who have trouble   
  reading for themselves.
* **Easy-to-read**   
  Having information which is easy to read   
  makes it possible for everyone   
  to understand it without problems.

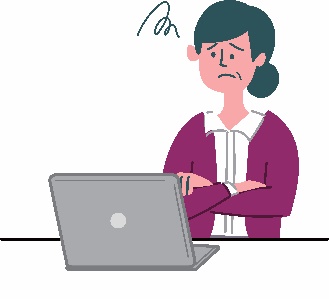
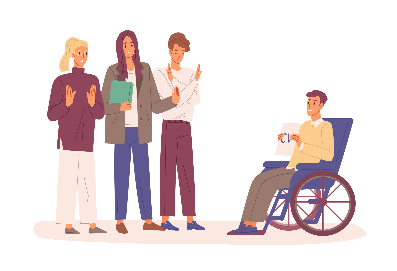
Having assistive technology is very important  
because it helps people with disabilities   
to work and to be independent.

# What the situation is for people with disabilities in Europe

In practice,   
almost half of people with disabilities in Europe   
do not have a job.

But even those who have a job,   
they may only work part-time and get little money.

Amongst other reasons,   
our study showed that this can be because:

* **Many people with disabilities in Europe may not know how to use technology.**   
  They may also not know   
  that they have the right   
  to get the technology they need   
  to be able to work.
* **The information and process to apply for a job   
  are often not accessible   
  to people with disabilities.**   
  For example, the website   
  or application to fill in to apply for the job.  
  This means that people with disabilities   
  may not be able to apply for this job   
  like other people.
* **Most employers do not understand   
  how they can hire people with disabilities.**   
  **Employers** may be afraid it will cost them a lot to adjust the workplace to the needs   
  of people with disabilities.   
  This can be done by adding a ramp   
  that people in wheelchairs can use to get in,   
  having **accessible** toilets   
  and getting the technology   
  that people with disabilities need.

Also, **employers** may not know   
that they can get money from their country   
to make their workplace **accessible**.   
But even if they know,   
the process to get this money   
may be long and difficult.

# What can be better

Our study made it clear that   
there are many things that can be better.

## We ask countries in Europe to:

* Make sure schools teach children   
  how to use technology.   
  This way they will be able   
  to use technology at their work later on.
* Give more support to **employers**   
  to be able to make changes in the workplace   
  to meet the needs of people with disabilities.
* Let **employers** know   
  that they can get money and support   
  to make their workplaces **accessible**   
  to people with disabilities.

## We ask employers to:

* Give training to people who work with them   
  to learn how to use technology.
* ****Make information and process   
  to apply for a job **accessible**   
  so that persons with disabilities   
  can apply like everyone else.
* ****Make changes in their workplace to fit the needs of people with disabilities and all people.   
  That could be:
  + Making a ramp   
    that people in wheelchairs   
    can use to get in.
  + Having **accessible** toilets   
    that people with disabilities   
    can use.
  + Getting Braille keyboards  
    that blind people can use   
    to type.
  + ****Allowing people with disabilities   
    to work from home   
    if it is hard for them   
    to get to the office every day.
  + Making information easy to read   
    so that all people   
    can understand it.

## We ask companies that make assistive technology for people with disabilities to:

* Explain to **employers**   
  what assistive technology is   
  and how they can get it.
* ****Ask for the views of people with disabilities when they make new technology.
* Make technology cheaper   
  so that more people can afford to buy it.

# Explanation of difficult words

## Accessible

****Things are accessible when they are easy to use for people with disabilities and all people.  
For example,   
when buildings have ramps   
that people in wheelchairs can use to get in.   
Or when information is easy to read   
and all people can understand it.

## Employer

Employer is a person or a company   
who hires someone to do a job for them   
and pays them a salary for this job.

## European Union

The European Union   
is a group of 27 countries   
in Europe.

These countries work together   
to make things better   
for their people.