



Employability Challenges and Opportunities

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VATES Foundation

www.vates.fi



VATES Foundation

- A development organisation working for the equal opportunities in employment of people with disabilities
- Founded in 1993 by
 - all major national disability organisations
 - 3rd sector service providers
 - coalitions of municipalities
- Currently VATES council is represented by 35 organisations
- Currently 13 employees



Where are we at?

People with disabilities

- Have a low participation in paid work
- Want to work
 - Approx. of 30 000 people in Finland alone
- Have excellent or good working capacity (35 %)
- Have an education
 - 4000 in special vocational schools, 12 000 in special ed. in general vocational schools
 - Number of people with higher education?
- 20 000 disability pension receivers already work
- Need work experience
- Need support (transportation, accessibility, personal support)
- Need more ways to combine wages with benefits (part-time work)



Employability: How to make the perfect match?

Ability to employ

- Employers' view
- **Knowledge**
 - Is this possible, has anyone any experience?
- **Motivation**
 - Would this be useful for us
 - What can we gain?
- **Supply**
 - Where do I find job seekers?
 - How can I keep the people I already have?
- **Support**
 - Who can I ask for advice?
 - Can I get financial support?
 - Can I get personal support?

Ability to become employed

- Employees' view
- **Knowledge**
 - Can I become an employee and work alongside with others?
- **Skills**
 - Do I have the right skills?
 - How can I show what I have learned?
- **Motivation**
 - Is work worth the effort?
- **Support**
 - Who can I ask for advice?
 - Can I get financial support?
 - Can I get personal support?



What needs to be done?

- Consistent work with employers
 - Training and coaching in ordinary work places
 - Summer jobs, fixed-term jobs, part-time jobs (*VATES Campaign: Summer job for all: <http://www.vates.fi/kesatyo>*)
 - Foot work and tailored services already at school
 - Learning the needs of the employer
- Good examples and good practise:
 - Visibility and experience sharing
 - Awards (*VATES Foundation's annual award*)
 - Awareness raising at work places
 - Diversity management
- Networking
 - Disability organisations, Labour market organisations, Services



What needs to be done?

- Awareness raising
 - People with disabilities have to grow up learning to become employees not only service users
 - Special education does not mean segregation
 - Trusting the skills and capacities of people with disabilities
- Tailored support
 - Job coach helps the employee but also the employer
 - Flexible benefits allowing paid work
 - Accessibility to services (employment, rehabilitation, education)