

# Implementation Methodology of People with Disabilities, for Work and Sports/Free-Time Teams

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## **ABSTRACT**

In the last 10 years, the Czech Republic has been struggling with a strong social policy, influenced by the active social policy of post-communist countries. The ever-increasing number of people with disabilities creates space for the creation of a universal method, for the implementation of people with disabilities into the work process, work teams, free-time activities and society as a whole. The aim of the research is to complete an implementation method for the integration of people with disabilities into work, leisure and sports teams. The implementation method brings a universal tool for recognizing the individual needs of people with disabilities and assistance with implementation into a specific team. The research focused on examining people with disabilities in work, free-time and sports teams. Primary research in the form of a questionnaire survey of open, closed and scale questions was solved on a sample of 101 employees and 15 team leaders in 8 companies, another was carried out, another Questionnaire survey at the level of employees/members of interest groups with health disadvantages 303 people from the Czech, Slovak and Hungarian Republics, persons with recognized disability I.III. degree. The secondary research worked with internal data of 8 companies, approximately 14322-15189 (influence of seasonality of employees and interest groups). The result of the conducted investigations is a specific method for the implementation of people with disabilities into the team.

**Keywords:** implementation, disability, implementation method, work and sport-teams, sport

## INTRODUCTION

Employment of people with disabilities is a very broad and constantly addressed topic in society, whether it is a specific country such as the Czech Republic or the European Union as a whole. It is a topic that moves society and represents a big problem for many people, which generally limits or affects society in some way, even though it may not seem so at first glance. However, it is usually difficult for people with disabilities to find a normal job, like any other healthy individual, especially in traditional areas (e. g. restaurants, company cleaning, warehouse work or even more skilled and professional work in international companies, etc.). In agriculture, on the other hand, it is even more difficult, because the work is more demanding, less accessible or in field conditions that do not allow a person with physical disabilities, blind or limited body functionality (or certain parts) to perform. It is the same with their implementation and integration back into the work process or a certain collective, where everyone is healthy in terms of health, etc. In the following paragraphs, we will look at this problem from the perspective of the Czech Republic.

Not only the employment of people with disabilities is specific and due to inequality in the labour market, these people encounter restrictions and solutions to situations based on their specific health disadvantage in their daily contact. According to research, there is a sense of belonging for people with disabilities, as evidenced by the 2013 and 2021 surveys using a questionnaire survey of workers with disabilities in security agency corporations. The sense of belonging is enhanced by collective activities, such as sports. Sport is no longer taboo for people with disabilities or for people with mental disabilities. Proof of openness and variability in the issue of DISABILITY are non-profit organizations focusing on associating people with disadvantages and breaking down established stereotypes. Like employing people with disabilities, their inclusion is important across every spectrum of their lives. It represents the full awareness of the collective about the specification of the disadvantage of the person in the team and in the approach to it. Each disadvantage carries unique features and in combination with the personal aspect of the disadvantaged person's personality, this combination and approach cannot be replicated identically. See the articles Pros and Cons in Employing People with Disabilities in a Company and Pros and Cons in Employing People with Disabilities in a Company already published in IJMAS vol.8, issue 8 (Sedláková, 2022; Sedláková, Pavelková 2022).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Inducted by the employer corporation and the developed method of the implementation People with health disadvantages, so-called "handicapped", have difficulty in finding a new job in the Czech Republic, because their health restrictions often do not allow them to perform any work (mostly physically demanding work). Another reason is that not every society is adapted to provide people with disadvantages with a sufficient environment for their work, mobility in the given environment, etc. This problem usually appears especially in manufacturing companies, where employees stand for hours at the production line, assemble various components, or the production

environment is so narrow and even dirty that it is not for these people with some types of health disadvantages, the so-called "Cold Bandwidth". A handicap, realistic in such an environment often to work at all, let alone move.

Another and related problem with employing people with disabilities is their implementation itself, i. e. integration back into the work process. Every company, organization, society and overall employer providing a job or more jobs to people with disabilities must have a so-called implementation method. It is therefore a step-by-step procedure for introducing a new employee to other employees of the company, how to train him, guide him through the company, etc. However, Schur et al., during their research, found that it is impossible to determine the ideal method for the integration of people with disabilities. Despite the fact that employers and the state have discovered many advantages in employing people with disabilities, they encounter great diversity. The emphasis is on an individual approach to a specific group, as it is not possible to generalise the approach to specific groups, but is useful as a starting model for addressing groups such as people with disabilities (Schur et al., 2005). It is also stressed that benefits must be weighed side by side, which brings efficiency and profitability to all stakeholders. This approach leads to increased productivity, integrity of the company and the company itself in terms of creativity, efficiency, satisfaction, work ethic and increased prestige of the company (Lindsay et al., 2018). Based on Snyder's research, employees with disabilities are highly sensitive to injustice in the work team from their healthy colleagues or management (Snyder et al., 2010). For the company, this means higher inclusion costs and other additional costs to catch up with productivity. In 2001, Collella also identified several models that are based on a psychological approach to people with disabilities, where models serve as initial tools for setting up the right communication and approach to people with disabilities (Colella, 2001).

For the company, employing this group of people has several advantages, such as an income tax credit for each employed person with a disability (PWD) in the amount of CZK 18,000, in the case of a person with a health disadvantage (OZZ) it is already a discount of CZK 60,000 for each such person. Furthermore, there is also the possibility of the employer to pay this person only the minimum wage without the obligation to give more, which saves the employer part of the costs, because he does not have to evaluate the person with a disability with a monthly wage as well as any other and healthy employee in the same position, but can only give him a wage equal to the basic wage in the Czech Republic ([pruvodcepodnikanim.cz](http://pruvodcepodnikanim.cz), 2020). However, in addition to the above-mentioned financial benefits for the company, employing PWD and OZZ also benefits society through the public or corporate culture, because such an act casts a very good name on the company as such, that it cares about its employees and is willing to take care of anyone. However, this is often only the external point of view of the general public from the external environment of the company, and not from the internal environment.

Therefore, when it comes to employing people with disabilities or disabilities, it has never been easier for employers to find this type of people than it is now. Today, there are a number of websites where these people register and register with a demand for a possible job for them, ideally in their home or in the vicinity of their home, so that they are as little dependent as possible on transport and the help of other people and manage, for example, to get to work there and back on their own. Of course, not always and for everyone this is quite possible.

In 2018, there were approximately 1,152,000 people in the Czech Republic with various types of disabilities (smaller, major), of which more than half of these people were seniors over the age of 65 and more often they were women (CZSO, 2020). The specific division of these people in individual age groups from 15 years of age to the age limit of people over 80 years of age according to the assessment of the severity of their disability (only subjective, medical, subjective or only medical) and through gender from 2018 can be seen in the following table, where the values are given both in absolute and percentage terms.

**Table 1.** Persons with disabilities as assessed, gendered and aged (CZSO, 2020)

disability assessment	total	sex		age groups				
		men	women	15–34	35–49	50–64	65–79	80+
<b>absolute number in thousands</b>								
<b>total</b>	<b>1151,9</b>	<b>510,9</b>	<b>641,0</b>	<b>64,6</b>	<b>136,6</b>	<b>313,6</b>	<b>415,9</b>	<b>221,2</b>
only subjective	508,0	222,7	285,3	14,2	30,2	79,7	227,0	106,9
both subjective and medical	617,0	275	342,0	47,0	101,1	220,3	135,4	113,2
medical only	27,0	13,2	13,8	3,3	5,3	13,7	3,6	1,1
<b>structure in %</b>								
<b>total</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>	<b>100,0</b>
only subjective	44,1	43,6	44,5	22,0	22,1	25,4	66,6	48,3
both subjective and medical	53,6	53,8	53,4	72,8	74,0	70,2	32,6	51,2
medical only	2,3	2,6	2,2	5,1	3,9	3,9	0,9	0,5

Note: Medical assessment – disability pension or care allowance or mobility allowance or disability status or disability card.

It is clear from the table values that a greater number of people with disabilities or disadvantages appear in men according to the medical and medical assessment as well as their subjective assessment, but women dominate the subjective assessment of disability. According to the medical assessment, there is almost no health disadvantage in younger people aged 15–34 years, because they are of working age and therefore also in an age with better immunity, etc. While, in other gradually older age limits can be observed already occurrence of these problems, it may be caused by worse health of people, fatigue from some professions and occupations that are physically more demanding after their long-term-performance, etc. According to the medical assessment, the greatest impact is on people aged 50–64, when people are tired, tired and often count down the days until the nation has enough to retire, see e.g. (Maxwell, 2022).

In 2020, there were already 1.5 million people in the Czech Republic who had some kind of health disability or disability and were thus limited in part or most of the content of their work. (CZSO, 2020). The majority of these people therefore receive either a disability pension or at least contributions from the state to make up for this income difference. However, this contribution does not always cover all necessary expenses and especially the standard in which a person was accustomed to live until then.

### ***Integration of persons with disabilities into society***

Integration generally means the integration or joining of several parts into a unified and integral whole, or within the work environment, it can be said that the integration of a new employee into a still functioning and permanent working team among other employees. It can therefore be said that within the framework of people with disabilities or disadvantages, it is their involvement in an intact society and, for example, the involvement of these people in various social activities in the form of physical activities, the creation of recreational or team sports, teambuilding, etc. (Doležel, 2007). Of course, only if their health allows it and it does not limit them even more, mentally or physically.

As part of the implementation of these people back into work or sometimes personal life and their integration into the environment, e. g. at work, two basic factors influence them: personal and environmental factors. Environmental factors can include any physical and social factors, but also the attitudes of other people or the location where people live and thus spend most of their free time. The special basis of each person is then personal factors, which consist of the characteristics of a person beyond his health problems and health status. These are factors such as: age, gender, race, lifestyle or education, etc. (Hnízdová, 2016), (Opatřilová, 2011).

Every person, healthy or disabled, is influenced in some way by these two factors, although it may not seem so at first glance. At school, at home, at work, in public - everywhere, there are other people and different environments, places that can affect us differently than others. The same applies to people with disabilities, as they are also very affected by the environment. Unfortunately, it cannot always have a positive effect on them, whether because of other people (e. g. colleagues in the workplace, superiors or subordinates, etc.), as well as through a personal feeling from the work done or from the feeling atmosphere of the environment.

### ***Organizations involved in the implementation of people with disabilities***

In the Czech Republic and the European Union, there are a number of bodies responsible and dealing with the issue of implementation, i. e. the implementation of the European Union. Integration of people with disabilities back into the workforce, to a greater or lesser extent. One of these bodies in the Czech Republic is the Government Committee for Persons with Disabilities (VVOZP), which is a "permanent coordinating, initiative and advisory body of the Government of the Czech Republic for the issue of support for persons with disabilities". This committee was established in 1991 by a resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic and is mainly responsible for problems concerning people with disabilities that cannot be solved by one ministry alone, but it is necessary to involve the cooperation of several ministries (Government of the Czech Republic, 2023).

Another organisation is the United Nations (UN), where the so-called United Nations plays a very important role. UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities see MPSV (2020) or UN (2023), as the VVOZP always ensures the preparation of the National Plan for the Support of Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities at certain intervals, with the national plan being "the basic strategic document that determines the direction of the Government Policy of the Czech Republic in the area of creating equal opportunities for persons with disabilities for the following period" (Government of the Czech Republic, 2020). Now it is a support plan for the period 2021-

2025, which was approved by Government Resolution No. 761 of 20 July 2020. By its structure and content, this plan builds on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and contributes to its fulfilment, therefore these two organizations or bodies are important bodies in the issue of the implementation of people with disabilities in the work process itself, as the national plan also contains and treats this area.

### ***Disability in sport and free-time area***

They represent handicaps not only in work teams, but also in sports teams and free-time activities. Modern technologies and approaches to the implementation of people with disabilities are a huge group of people that need to be included, educated and developed. This situation brings space for the creation of methods, approaches and organizational techniques for effective alignment and a beneficial implementation process for the entire company (Pedersen and Thibault, 2014). Sports management education programs at colleges and universities in the U.S. and around the world have grown over the past twenty years (Zhang, Wang, Min, Chen, & Huang, 2016). There is a visible great effort of the USA for interdisciplinary penetration of the issue of DISABILITY.

This fact is answered by the modern concept of this tendency, namely sports management, which now also counts on athletes with health disadvantages (Pitts, 2001). According to the UN, there are many stereotypes and stigmas about athletes with health or mental disabilities, the originator of this is in the fact that people with disadvantages for a long time were not allowed to play sports or only on an individual basis, and not on a collective basis (UN, 2015). According to the results conducted in 2010, the United States Office for Government Accountability (GAO) investigated that students with disabilities were not allowed to play sports and their interest in sports in high school was almost zero. United States Government Accountability Office, 2010. Three years later, Toppo published research from the university environment and here the participation of students in sports activities was higher among the physically disadvantaged and the interest was higher than among healthy students, taking into account specific conditions in participation according to the type of disadvantage (Toppo, 2013).

In response, the National High School Athletic Association and the National Association of Interscholastic Athletic Administrators have published a document on best practices in customized team sports for state athletic associations across the United States. This intervention was in response to the above research (NFHS, 2015). Sports, recreation, and fitness opportunities for people with disabilities are growing in number and diversity, becoming part of a growing industry in the United States and around the world (Disabled World, 2015, Shapiro and Pitts, 2014).

## **METHODOLOGY AND USED METHODS**

For research in the field of investigation of the implementation method for the integration of people with disabilities into teams, an evaluation strategy using the description of secondary data, analysis of initial collection at the level of companies and free-times activities, sports collectives used. To create a universal implementation method using the analytical-synthetic method and the resulting method represents a certain universal template of individual implementation.

### ***Material and methods***

For research in the field of investigation of the implementation method for the integration of people with disabilities into teams, an evaluation strategy using the description of secondary data, analysis of initial collection at the level of companies and free-times activities, sports collectives is used. To create a universal implementation method using the analytical-synthetic method and the resulting method represents a certain universal template of individual implementation. It builds on the results of previous research in the field of disability of the authors of this article.

## **SOURCE DATA AND COLLECTIONS**

### ***Research sample***

Three research samples were used for the overall results for the compilation of the implementation method, namely:

- Of 101 workers and 15 team leaders in 8 companies.
- Questionnaire survey at the level of employees/members of interest groups with health disadvantages, 303 people from the Czech, Slovak and Hungarian Republics, people with recognized disability I.III. degree. For primary investigation.
- Secondary research with internal data of 8 companies, approx. 14322-15189 (influence of seasonality of employees and interest groups).

### ***Secondary research***

For the application to the Czech environment was the contribution of the state and the determination of mines. From the research point of view, it is research using statistical processing of secondary data. Data from the CZSO, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic), etc. were used. In the field of sports and leisure activities, the search for secondary data was used and the implementation method was adapted for the team for sports or leisure activities.

### ***Primary research***

The research of the implementation method consists of several survey results that connect the issue of disability in the Czech environment from multiple perspectives. The specific implementation method is the result of the collection of raw data in the enterprise and is directly related to the results collected in earlier investigations, namely: A Pearson coefficient was used to confirm the correlation between company profits resulting from hours worked by employees with disabilities and factors that could affect profits, such as state support for workers with disabilities. Data was collected from 2013 to the end of 2019 and until the end of 2022. In-depth interviews were conducted semi-structured on 15 executives of leading teams of 8 corporations with or without active implementation method, questionnaire survey on 303 people with disabilities.

### ***Used Methods***

The Statistics program and the SPSS program were used for data analysis The research of the dissertation provides an overview of the issue of disability in the Czech environment in comparison

with Hungary and Slovakia, historically related territorial units, in the issue of employment of persons with disabilities and state support in employment, the research is carried out by an employer corporation and the developed method of the implementation process will be intended directly for corporations with ineffective or unimplemented implementation policies of persons with disabilities. Corporations are anonymized at the Company's request in order to provide complete sensitive data to maintain a competitive advantage. To assess the values, the evaluation was made by the graduation of the SPSS program Cohen d, Glass alpha and Hedg's g, which determine the standard deviation of the examined samples. For groups with a large difference in standard deviations, Glass alpha and use in the control group are significant, for smaller groups Hedg's g and Cohen's d are used, which evaluated the effect between two independent variables. To test the differences between the average values of numerical indicators (value of part-time work, hourly wage, etc.) for individual firms in groups (Disability yes x no), two sample t-tests were used. The assumption of normality was satisfied in the groups, the assumption of homogeneity of scatters in all groups was not. Depending on this, a variant of the test for homogeneous or non-homogeneous variances was used. Tests were evaluated at a 10% significance level, for more significant differences.

### ***Result of the methods used***

For the application to the Czech environment was the contribution of the state and the determination of mines. From the research point of view, it is research using statistical processing of secondary data. Data from the CZSO, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic), etc. were used. In the field of sports and leisure activities, the search for secondary data was used and the implementation method was adapted for the team for sports or leisure activities.

### ***Implementation method***

The implementation method was compiled on the basis of in-depth interviews with managers of diversity teams, corporate management and employees of corporations themselves using a questionnaire survey. The sample consisted of 101 employees and 15 team leaders in 8 companies. The method is based on the following subdivisions to adapt integration appropriately to the specific needs of the worker with disabilities. The breakdown by health disadvantage is based on S. Venclíková (Venclík, Venclíková et al., 2016). After minor modifications, this method can be transformed into the implementation of any person with mental and health disadvantages and carried out orally or in writing. Implementation brings not only a sense of interest in the person with a disadvantage, but an understanding of their behaviour, disadvantage and helps to induce a sense of belonging and happiness, which Owen mentioned in the era of pre-classical economics.

## **RESULTS**

The specific result of the work is the implementation method for a worker with a disability in the work team listed below. The method below will help an existing or new worker with a health disadvantage to effectively integrate into the work team, facilitate the understanding of his



disadvantage, adjust his needs, job and work performance and, from the company's point of view, mainly evaluate the effectiveness of the employment of such a worker at a basic level, although the results of previous studies paradoxically show that more than 62% of people with disabilities working full-time are as or more effective than employees without disadvantage (according to hours worked).

## **DISCUSSION**

Based on the results of this survey, the individuality with which people with disabilities must be approached is visible. This created implementation method will serve the company and the employees in many ways. It will be easier to build a suitable environment for a given workplace. Within the free-time activities and sports, this implementation method will help instructors or employees to choose the appropriate level of difficulty for the given activity, to adapt the necessary tools or to choose a suitable environment. This is precisely why understanding the needs of a disadvantaged person plays an important role. Each individual has specific wishes, needs arise from his personality, but above all from his health disadvantage and it is necessary to approach it with regard to him. It is necessary to involve workers in leisure activities to strengthen the collective, but again based on the disadvantage of the worker, e. g. there will be no joint physical activity, e.g., volleyball for a team employing a wheelchair worker. Therefore, it is necessary to understand these people, adapt and use their strong work potential, of course also in terms of human and social level.

Given the social security benefits provided to persons with disabilities, which may undoubtedly be necessary to meet their basic needs, it is best to legislate this item of expenditure so that there is no overall abuse of the benefits provided. Another option is to enact and provide direct benefits for sports and free-time activities to disadvantaged people. In this way, part of the expenses would be shifted to be used for a specific purpose, which would not lead to misuse of funds. Furthermore, this would support the inclusion of disabled people in free-time activities and sports, not only within teams made up of disabled people, but also in combined teams. It will help physically disadvantaged people to be in a group of people/athletes who are in a similar situation. Sports activities allow them to develop mental activity in addition to physical activity. Thanks to this factor, we have a wide representation of athletes at the Paralympic Games, whether winter or summer. Increasing self-confidence and motivation helps to integrate into a team of healthy athletes. Compared to the financial reward for winning a medal that healthy athletes receive, the amount for Paralympics is literally sad.

## **CONCLUSION**

The aim of this research was to complete the implementation method for the integration of people with disabilities into work, leisure and sports teams. The research, therefore focused on the examination of persons with disabilities in work, leisure and sports teams to complete the implementation method and at the same time to verify the fulfilment of the set research objective.

The obtained results show that the implementation method represents a universal method for the implementation of a person with a health/mental handicap in a team, both in a team motivated by motivation and economy for employers, as well as for leisure and sports teams. The problem solved in this research and the obtained results of this investigation can certainly be followed up by the continuation of further research, which would focus its attention, for example, on the very introduction of the implementation methodology in various types of organizations, what difficulties this method has or, conversely, on the verification of the method by applying a specific sample, e.g. 15 athletes with different types of health handicaps in the diversity team. The diversity team and investigation would be implemented in selected secondary schools in the Czech Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany. The aim of the research can be found in the attachment to the article, as the output and fulfillment of the stated objective of the investigation.

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