



► Employment of persons with disabilities in the digital and green economy

First meeting of the Employment Working Group

March 2022

Introduction

- Lower labour market participation of persons with disabilities.
- Overrepresented in the impact of the pandemic, exacerbating pre-existing deficits
- Recovery must pay special attention to those most disadvantaged to be human-centred

“leverage the opportunities of just digital and environmental transitions to advance decent work”

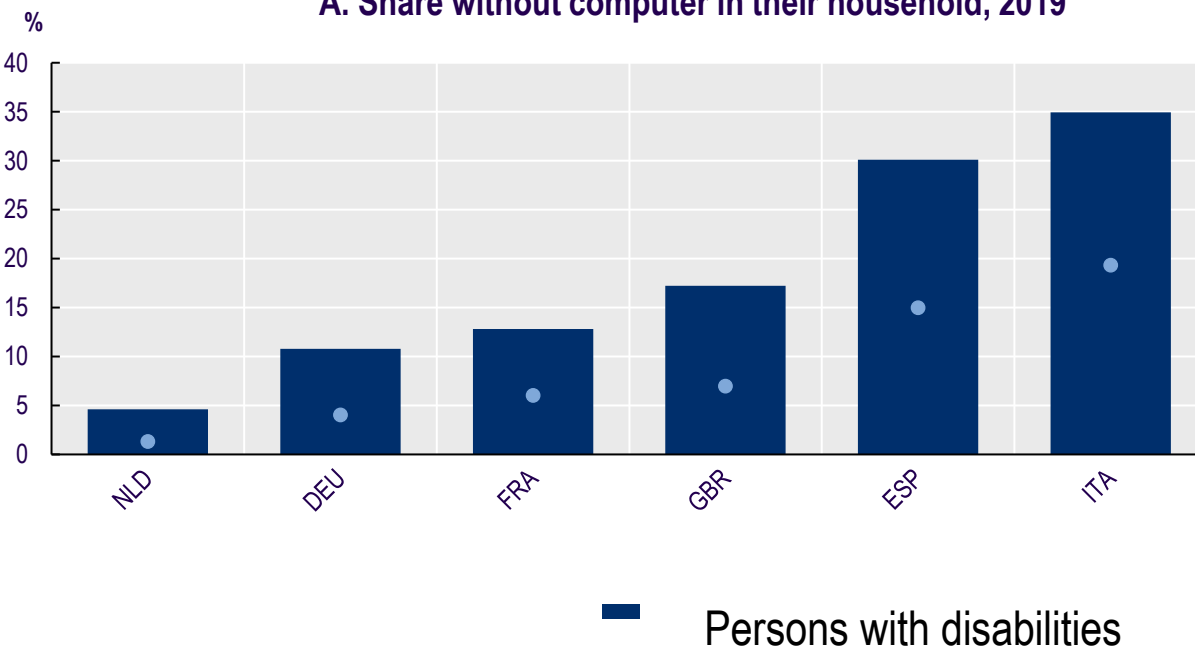
ILO global call to action for a human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 crisis

Persons with disabilities have less access to relevant technology

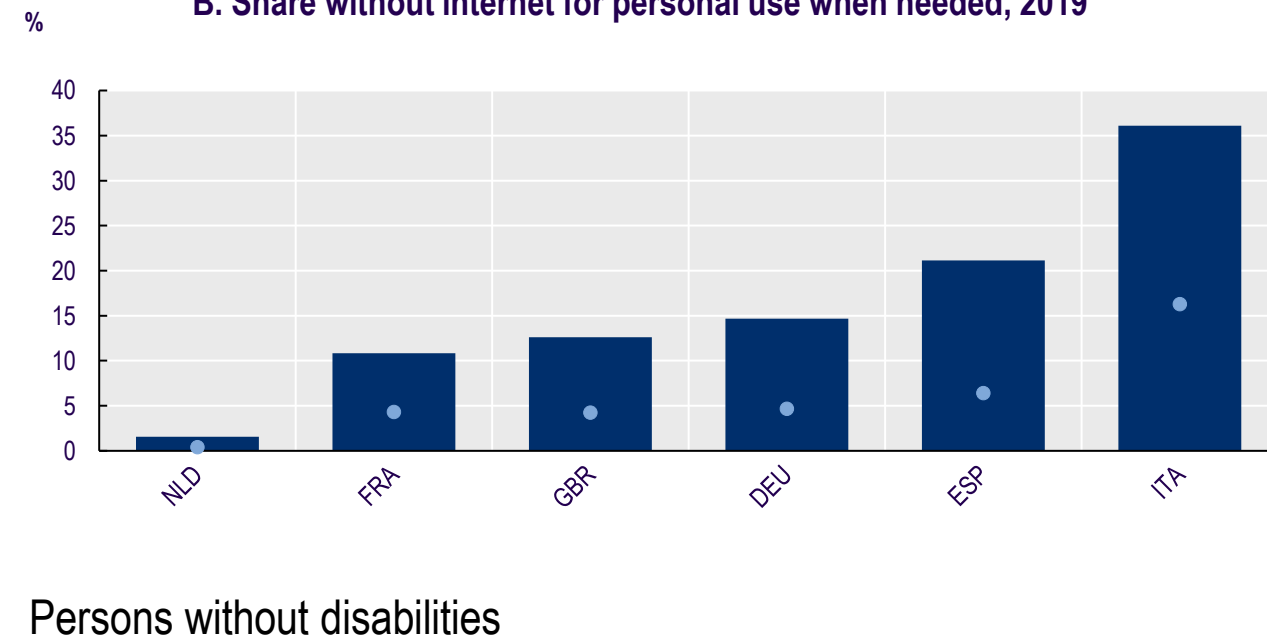
Lower access of persons with disabilities to basic technology

GSMA data show that there are significant digital gaps in mobile telephone ownership and use

A. Share without computer in their household, 2019



B. Share without internet for personal use when needed, 2019



Digital skills leading to digital jobs

Opportunities

Mismatch between supply and demand of new digital jobs is an opportunity if adequate action taken

Increased demand for digital accessibility professionals also resulting from legislation

Opportunities both for advanced digital jobs but also entry level IT jobs

Solutions require:

- concerted action among relevant stakeholders
- promoting disability inclusion in mainstream digital skills initiatives

But...

There is a digital skills gap between persons with and without disabilities.

And let's not forget those persons with disabilities who are in the labour market and whose jobs are in risk because of automation

▶ Artificial intelligence as an enabler but also barrier

Opportunities

Recent AI-enabled assistive technologies that support the employment of persons with disabilities:

- ▶ Vision to language tools
- ▶ Text simplification tools
- ▶ Auto-captioning
- ▶ Virtual or augmented reality technology

Risks

resulting from the use of AI in recruitment processes as these can replicate and embed bias

► Promoting *Universal Design* of mainstream technologies and access to assistive technologies

It is important that mainstream technologies are inclusive from the outset

Digital accessibility is increasingly seen as a must and needs to include online recruitment

Public procurement and public funds are some of the ways through which the public sector can support this

There are also industry initiatives in this area (GSMA principles)

It is also important to promote the development and availability of assistive technologies

There are an increasing number of companies that provide these technologies as workplace adjustments

► Teleworking and digital platform work

Teleworking will be more prevalent in the future

Teleworking offers new opportunities but also poses challenges for persons with disabilities

It should not be imposed on persons with disabilities as their only choice

Mental health related considerations

ILO survey among digital platform workers showed a high percentage of persons with physical and mental health conditions

Some indicated that they can only work from home

► Inclusion of persons with disabilities in the green economy

Large potential of employment creation in the green economy

Increased attention to persons in disadvantage in the context of just transition

COP26 Just Transition declaration

Increased attention to persons with disabilities in climate action planning

Role of Government and social partners to advance inclusion of persons with disabilities in the green economy

Nationally determined contributions have to be revised in 2022 and provide an opportunity to address green jobs for persons with disabilities

► Conclusions and recommendations for governments, social partners and development partners

Beyond targeted skills development initiatives to **inclusion in mainstream digital skills initiatives**, leading to digital employment

Foster **reskilling and upskilling** of those affected by automation

Promoting **Universal Design in ICT** through legislation and public procurement

Promoting **access to assistive technologies**

Increased employment of persons with disabilities in the **green economy** through skills development and incentives for employment

Involvement of organizations of persons with disabilities in digital and green economy initiatives

More efforts for **disability disaggregated data** in these areas

Particular attention to **women with disabilities** and other intersecting grounds