

Survey on an employer attitude towards employment of people with disabilities /special educational needs

Qualitative research report



IPM Research

8, Baratashvili Str. 0105, Tbilisi, Georgia

Phone: 0322 99 82 03, 0322 99 72 14

Contents

General information	3
Survey goals and missions	4
Survey methodology.....	4
Survey area	5
Sample size	5
Results of the survey.....	7
A people with special educational needs/with disabilities as a term and its understanding among the respondents	7
People with special educational needs/with disabilities, working environment and co-workers.....	7
Inhibiting factors and barriers for employment of people with special educational needs/with disabilities	12
Physical environment	14
Awareness	14
Vocational schools and possible cooperation perspectives.....	16
Role of the state	17
Considerations of representative of Ministry of Labor Health and Social Affairs of Georgia	19
Summary.....	21
Recommendations.....	23

General information

Georgian Ministry of Education and Science, in close cooperation with the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, introduces inclusive education in vocational education and implements the project "Implementation of Inclusive Education in Vocational Education and Training System of Georgia" (2013-2016). The goal of the project is to provide a quality vocational education to people with special educational needs/with disabilities. One of the main missions of the project is to increase a chance of employment for people with special educational needs/with disabilities.

Accordingly, it is a priority for the Georgian Ministry of Education and Science to cooperate with employers, to study their relationship and readiness to employ people with special educational needs/with disabilities.

The aims of the studies, which were conducted in Georgia on employment of people with special educational needs/with disabilities, were reviewing of existing situation around this issue in our country, also comparing the existing situation and legislation with foreign experience. Some qualitative and quantitative studies were conducted with directors of VETs¹.

Employment of people with disabilities and people with special education needs implies two different realities. On one hand, it is about the state, legislation, VETs, on the other hand, it is about the employer, as an independent subject, who makes decisions regarding hiring the person. Based on that, aim of the current study was not collecting more or less standard information and analysis or reviewing of the existing situation, but to study subjective views and expectations. The report is examining employers' views and discussions on hiring people with disabilities and people with special needs. Aim of the study was to analyze views and opinions in the form as they exist, because these are the employers whose subjective views really influence on employment of people with disabilities and people with special education needs.

The respondents discussed difficulties and barriers connected to employment of people with disabilities and people with special education needs not as an experts of this field, but as the individuals based on the information and experience they had during interviewing.

¹a) „Employment possibilities of people with disabilities in Georgia”, 2014, Tamar Saginadze (Master degree essay) 2014, b) "Study on existing situation in Georgian vocational institutions for introducing inclusive education", 2012, International institute of education planning, policy and management

Survey goals and missions

The goal of the employer attitude survey was to reveal the main challenges, supporting factors and pre-requisitions associated with employment of people with special educational needs/with disabilities,

The tasks of the survey were following:

- What is the local employer's attitude towards employing people with special educational needs/with disabilities (For example: if they would employ people with special educational needs/with disabilities, if they have the same attitude towards disabilities, etc.)
- What is the experience of employing the people with special educational needs/with disabilities and how much is it effecting on employers' attitudes and considerations on hiring people with special educational needs/with disabilities.
- What the employers think is or might be a barrier during employment of people with special educational needs/with disabilities;
- What the employers think is or might be contributing factors during employment of people with special educational needs/with disabilities;
- Plans of the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social care on employment of people with special educational needs/with disabilities during 2015-2018 (what specific steps are implemented and planned) and etc.

Expected results of the survey

The survey contributed to the determination of proper policy for vocational training and employment for people with special educational needs/with disabilities and to expand the employment capabilities for people with special educational needs/with disabilities.

As a result of the survey

- The employers' attitude towards employing people with special educational needs/with disabilities were identified in Georgian reality.
- The factors which increase employers' motivation to employ people with special educational needs/with disabilities were identified.
- The factors which increase the chances of employment of people with special educational needs/with disabilities were identified.
- The employment process barriers in employment of people with special educational need/with disabilities were identified.
- The resources, mechanisms of the State, which support the employment of people with special educational needs/with disabilities were identified.

Survey methodology

Survey method

The survey was administered using qualitative methods, which are in-depth interviews and focused discussions.

Target groups

1. A representative of the Department of Labor and Employment Policy, the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Security.

2. Local employers; the following criteria were taken into account while selecting the focus group:
 - a) Employers who have experience of employing people with special education needs/with disabilities
 - b) Employers who do not have experience employing people with special educational needs/with disabilities;
 - c) Big entrepreneurs
 - d) Small entrepreneurs

People who are making a decision about hiring were identified as respondents.

Survey area

The survey was held in the same geographical area as given in the project “Inclusive education in Georgian vocational education and re-training program.” The vocational institutions participating were: Tbilisi, Batumi, Kutaisi, Akhaltsikhe, Kachreti (vicinity of Kachreti is also acceptable). In-depth interviews were held in Tbilisi and above mentioned regional areas, and focused discussion only in Tbilisi.

Sample size

The survey for the first target group included one in-depth interview with a representative of the Ministry of Health and Social Care.

The survey for the second target group included 16 in-depth interviews (in Tbilisi and regions), and the focus discussion was held in one group with 8 members (in Tbilisi).

In Tbilisi – 8 in depth interviews (4 respondents with the experience of employment of people with special educational needs/with disabilities and 4 respondents without the experience, and 4 small and 4 big entrepreneurship among them);

In each regional area – 2 in-depth interviews (1 respondent with the experience of employing people with special educational needs/with disabilities and 1 without the experience, and 1 small and 1 big entrepreneur among them);

The table depicts the aspect of survey with the target group (employer)

Method / Tool	Geographical area	Sample size (number of respondents)	Selection criteria a- experience with employment of people with special educational needs/with disabilities; B- without experience with employment of people with special educational needs/with disabilities; c—big entrepreneur; d- small entrepreneur;	
In-depth interview	Tbilisi	8	a - 4	c – 2 d -2
			b - 4	c - 2 d- 2
			a -1	c, d
			b- 1	
	Kutaisi	2	a -1	c, d
			b- 1	
Focus Group	Batumi	2	a -1	c, d
			b -1	
	Akhaltsikhe	2	a-1	c, d
			b-1	
	Kachreti and its vicinity	2	a-1	c, d
			b-1	
Tbilisi*	8	a - 4	c -3 d -1	
			b -4	c-2 d -2

* as one of a small entrepreneurship representative, with employment experience of people with special educational needs/with disabilities, did not show up, a large entrepreneurship representative, with employment experience of people with special educational needs/with disabilities, who was intended as a reserve, participated instead of him. An entrepreneurship with an experience of employing people with special educational needs/with disabilities was identified as a reserve, as it was quite difficult to find respondents like that during the recruiting process and make them to agree to the interview. Accordingly, when a small entrepreneurship representative did not come, the group filled with 8 members with a reserve respondent.

Results of the survey

People with special educational needs/with disabilities as a term and its understanding among the respondents

The terms are more or less unknown for small and large businesses, especially among the respondents, who do not have experience in the employment of a disabled person. The meaning of a term *people with special education needs* is even stranger to respondents.

Disabilities are associated with hearing impairments or speech problems for the part of the respondents. For the other part of the respondents understanding of disability is narrowed to problems to move and is directly associated to a wheelchair. Disabilities from the perception of respondents are more connected to visual problems, apparent physical features and less to mental problems.

People with disabilities is a general term for the respondents, which makes the differentiated perception of the meaning difficult. This often determines employer's attitude towards employing people with disabilities. *It is important for an employer that he/she has a differentiated knowledge to what spectrum of physical and mental problems people with disabilities have. All the details are important, as an employer thinks that he/she should have a relationship not with a disabled person, as a depersonalized physical person, but with an individual, who should fit with the work specifications and etc. In other words, it is important for the employer to know about the real abilities and skills of a disabled person.*

People with special educational needs/with disabilities, working environment and co-workers

The relationship of the co-workers to people with disabilities is regulated not by so-called social responsibility or any social feelings associated with civil responsibility but by traditional morals (which is affected by religion) on one hand and by individual ethical norms on the other. So, employer's and co-workers' attitudes towards people with disabilities are determined by both employer's personality and co-workers' mental position towards people with special educational needs/with disabilities. In other words an attitude towards people with special educational needs/with disabilities is not effected by system variables (ex.: law, Civic consciousness, social responsibility, etc.) but by individual variables which are difficult to control (ex.: individual's mental position towards different in general, upbringing features, personal traits, Religiousness, traditional morals, etc).

It should be taken into the account that a legislative base, which should regulate the relationship between people with special educational needs/with disabilities and an employer in general is unknown for the majority of the respondents, the position characterized by a civil society towards people with special educational needs/with disabilities is strange to them.

Nevertheless, the absolute majority of the interviewed respondents, except one, has not only

positive attitude towards people with special educational needs/with disabilities as a real or potential employee, but highly evaluates the quality of work, communicational skills and competency of people with special educational needs/with disabilities. It is a widespread opinion that co-workers, employers and society is not ready to accept people with special educational needs/with disabilities among them, help him/her in full adaptation. According to the qualitative survey data the opinion is not confirmed.

Adaptation with working environment should be discussed as dual process. People with special educational needs/with disabilities are adapting with working environment and environment is trying to adapt to people with special educational needs/with disabilities. Often the dual process of adaptation is not significantly different from adaptation stages though what a new employee in general might need to go to work, which the people with disabilities and people with special educational needs confirm based on their personal experience.

The data gained from the qualitative survey, describing dual process of adaptation of people with special educational needs/with disabilities within work environment, is somehow paradoxical: the respondents with experience of employing people with special educational needs/with disabilities report that the people with special educational needs/with disabilities hired by them adapt to a work environment faster than other employees, and also to challenges which might be connected with disabilities. The disabilities are hyper compensated by super adaptation with an environment.

People with special educational needs/with disabilities who work a different type of entrepreneurship functions somehow are like social facilitators. Employment experienced respondents (employing a people with special educational needs/with disabilities), report that work successfully done by people with special educational needs/with disabilities serves as motivational function for other employees. Probably this effect is achieved by empathy which is felt towards people with special educational needs/with disabilities by other employees, what "forces" them at least not to do work worse or lower quality than people with special educational needs/with disabilities.

The meaning of a term "positive discrimination" is not familiar to most of the respondents, because this term was not mentioned by any of the respondents. Nevertheless in practice, in everyday situations positive discrimination is almost never detected. Both employers and co-workers can control not only potential negativism but also excessive attention, extra care. Co-workers help people with special educational needs/with disabilities to adapt but try not to overdo with support, as they would have done with a regular employee. The majority of employers with employment experience said that at the final stage of the adaptation, people with special educational needs/with disabilities did not differ from a regular employee, and a specific disability which was apparent to co-workers at the initial stage, becomes reality, which is not a central aspect of a subject. I.e. a people with special educational needs/with disabilities gains a status of a complete worker, and he/she is not defined as people with special educational needs/with

disabilities.

Respondents think that people with special educational needs/with disabilities helps humanization of work environment improves co-workers self-reflection and working ability.

At the initial stage of relationship between people with special educational needs/with disabilities and co-workers, other workers feel some kind of tension, respondents talked about feeling inconvenient, glance controlling, etc. Although the majority of respondents with experience of employment of people with special educational needs/with disabilities said that the initial period is very short and it goes away maximum at the end of the first week. It should be mentioned that these types of affects (tension, feeling of inconvenience, and feeling of shame) usually are felt not by people with special educational needs/with disabilities but co-workers and people with special educational needs/with disabilities help them to overcome the emotional conditions.

Three terms thoroughly describe emotional-affective position of co-workers and employers: empathy (towards people with special educational needs/with disabilities), feeling of guilty and feeling of social responsibility. The feeling of social responsibility, as a value is a result of social-cultural and mental processing of empathy and feeling of guilty and we might assume is as a condition which is most free from primitive, irrational tendencies, although that is (social responsibility) has derived from relatively primitive conditions (empathy, feeling of guilty).

I.e. the employer in the worst case feels empathy towards people with special educational needs/with disabilities when hires him/her and at the same time has a minimum self-reflection towards it. Empathy as a motivation for hiring is completely relying on defect, restriction, diagnoses, which people with special educational needs/with disabilities might have. The second motive for an employer, and relatively more developed one, is a feeling of guiltiness, as sublimated and mentally processed version of empathy. An employer has a feeling guiltiness (feeling of being guilty, troubled conscience) what forces him from inside to employ people with special educational needs/with disabilities (when empathy feeling is determined completely from outside and is based on a certain diagnoses). The feeling of social responsibility, civil position is not only free from empathy but also the feeling of guiltiness, though it is derived from them. **A small number of respondents feel empathy, which is the most primitive mental motive for employment. Majority has a feeling of guiltiness. The feeling of social responsibility, as motive for employment, was rare as feeling of empathy.**

“Nothing special, I just needed an accountant and I hired him. It’s a little awkward to say, but there were cases when he said something and I didn’t understand, and then I told it to him as a joke. People are more open at this time. I had often told him to repeat, and when I was not able to understand I used to tell him that I did. Right now the problem does not exist, I can understand him.”

“They were looking at him very seriously, they felt sorry for

him, even now they get awkward while talking to him. But after they knew him, everything changed. I don't find his talk weird any more, he is also my friend."

"On the contrary, it goes better and people are more interested, and others are performing their jobs better "

"I tell you briefly, compassion is not a virtual thing, I need to feel it, touch it, feel the pain. In order to understand other people's needs you should have a live relationship. It does not matter how much you will talk with them or show the movies They won't get it. Initially it might be difficult for the staff but that's ok, it will get easier."

The first meeting, interview, between an employer and people with special educational needs/with disabilities, as well as familiarizing with application, often has an accidental nature, is caused by accidental factors. Acquaintances, friend requests, neighborhood, relatives' connections are the factors which enable the meeting between an employer and people with special educational needs/with disabilities. The role of vocational institutions or other institutions is minimal in the process. One of the motivations for a meeting, the first contact, might be the high competency of people with special educational needs/with disabilities.

"We needed to create a web site, so we made a call to a vocational institution. Today our organization work relying on this person."

"First of all, I knew that people and I didn't offer a job to anyone else. I came to him because I knew him, I knew that he was very talented. He works as an accountant with me."

The difference in attitudes among respondents who have employment experience with people with disabilities/people with special educational needs and respondents without having experience in this field.

- Important differences were observed in some of the parameters between respondents who have employment experience with people with disabilities/ people with special educational needs and respondents without having experience in this field, which may describe the employer's attitude towards people with disabilities / special educational needs employment issue. Respondents with employment experience are more informed, but in general both categories experience lack of information.
- Awareness of respondents inexperienced in the employment of the people with disabilities/ people with special educational needs close to zero. This part of respondents heard almost nothing, or has not heard about, for example, that the people with disabilities/ people with special educational needs learn different professional institutions.

- The respondents with no experience in the employment of people with disabilities/ people with special educational needs can't offer more or less adapted natural environment. Also, they don't have any practical experience of what it means nor theoretical knowledge about of employment disabled / people with special educational needs and have not heard about the foreign experience and discussions are based mainly on the Soviet period experience.
- The main difference in imagination between respondents who have employment experience with people with disabilities/people with special educational needs and respondents without having experience in this fields: for respondents without having experience in this field is very difficult, physically difficult issue to employee people with disabilities/ people with special educational needs, while for experienced respondents to have people with disabilities/ special educational needs in employment, the work done and the degree of relationship with the staff, does not mean problems and barriers, but is seen as an advantage for the production. Inexperienced respondents rely on the subjective imagination; the imagination is much more of a hindrance than a reality, with what experienced respondents have daily contact. Contrasting performances, in one case, the respondent has the feeling of an insurmountable barrier, while the respondents who have employment experiences of people with disabilities/ special educational needs (if they have a minimum competence and meet the obligation) is not a problem.

"I can say one thing, if this will happen employer and the employee will have benefited from such employment, because these people are working in good faith. I have experience and I can't imagine to employee another person in his place"

Disabled / special educational need peoples employability – employers' assessments

The absolute majority of respondents who have employment experience of disability / special educational needs indicated that they are distinguished by employees who work exclusively devoted to extreme punctuality, reality, and performed adequate attitude for work and social competence. Part of respondents believed that people with disabilities / special educational needs are an example for other employees. High sense of responsibility disabled/ special educational needs is the most commonly used assessments to describe employee.

- For employer is very important not to limit and diagnosis itself, but also the following factors
 - a. Transport, people with disabilities / special educational needs movement and route.
 - b. Their real capabilities, real skills and competency determination
 - c. The real needs of the employer and the determination of specifications
 - d. The employer activities specifications must be adjusted with disabilities / special educational needs real opportunities the skills and competence must comply employer requirements, in this case the limited ability, no longer

takes part in the diagnosis in the relationship between people with disabilities / special educational needs and employer, and it becomes of secondary importance.

- The majority of employers noted that it is important not limited opportunity, diagnosis, but also determination of a person with disabilities / special educational needs real skills and abilities. According to the employers opinion, in the enterprise can always be found activities that people can cope with various disabilities, but only if the activity is determined by the specifics and the specific nature of disability, in order to avoid possible incompatibility.

"They should have the necessary means of movement, even transport, ramps and everything, nothing more. In my opinion, they must not feel the difference; they are normal, talented people. In many things they may be better than others "

"They can make easy work like the others. A selection of activities. Can always work in sewing, weaving factory, such factors could employ them. The new presses can, also, carpentry work, which does not require an active movement of the carriage and sitting next to a man can perform. Normally can work with these people "

"It depends on the job, what work. That the carving is done, people sitting and doing. This case, which only needs a hand movement and thinking "

"For example, we have a vineyard, where physical work is required, and in this case, those with hearing and speech problem will not interfere with work. If this will be the intellectual case, no restrictions are for physical disabilities, but if it will be physically disabled, we don't have conditions, Unfortunately people don't have the opportunity to move to a wheelchair "

"Our field of activity is making glass facades, which are made with a very heavy weight to bear on the floors. It all takes place manually. Generally it is hard physical work. A second stone production, which is even heavier work "

Inhibiting factors and barriers for employment of people with special educational needs/ disabilities

The majority of inhibiting factors for employment of people with special educational needs/with disabilities is more linked to outside factors rather than inter-organizational factors. People with special educational needs/disabilities who work at an entrepreneurship feel good inside the

company. They are adapted, are successful at accomplishing their work, not discriminated against, and have better relationships with an employer and co-workers. The majority of inhibiting factors for employment are outside the organization, company or co-workers:

- The main inhabiting factor is physical environment, which does not adapted for people with special educational needs/disabilities. The environmental problem is directly linked to transportation, movement. An employer can not do anything to improve these issues.
- One of the barriers is specifics of the work. In cases when work is extremely heave, needs physical strengths or special safety measures, an employer tries to avoid hiring people with special educational needs/disabilities. The majority of respondents thinks that people with special educational needs/disabilities can work at company administration, at the office, occupy positions of an accountant, manager, etc. The types of work which do not require physical strengths.
- Rarely, but there still are cases when there is an apprehensive attitude is shown from the employer. The fair that people with special educational needs/ disabilities will not be able to accomplish assigned job or comply with safety measures partially affected the respondents' attitudes and discussions.
- The major issue is a low level of awareness. There is no accessibility to bases, where potential employers can find people with special educational needs/disabilities and get information about their competencies and skills.
- The low quality of people with special educational needs / disabilities, which, according to respondents, is caused not because of a certain disability but is a general problem, and it, is concerning people with special educational needs/ disabilities the same as other potential employees.
- According to respondents sensibilization of employing people with special educational needs/ disabilities should happen in society. An employer is a part of the society so information campaign will also affect him/her. The majority of employers were saying that they never saw people with special educational needs/disabilities, they didn't have accessibility, real contact with them, they didn't know about their capabilities, skills or professions, they might be learning in different educational institutions and vocational schools.
- It is important for an employer to get the same benefit from people with special educational needs/disabilities as from other employees. They think that only compassion and altruism should not be leading motivations for employing people with special educational needs/ disabilities.
- Not having an experience to employ people with special educational needs/ disabilities is one of the inhibiting factors for an entrepreneur that prevents him/her to hire people with special

educational needs/ disabilities. Experienced employers are ready to hire people with special educational needs/with disabilities, while motivation is not as high for inexperienced employers.

- Having no support from the State, no benefits, not knowing the legislative base, and not knowing the foreign experience are inhibiting factors for employing people with special educational needs/disabilities.

Physical environment

The majority of respondents think that one of the major obstacles in employing people with disabilities/special educational needs is un-adapted and unsettled physical environment.

- The absence of ramps, absence of elevators in different organizations, often makes it impossible to employ people with disabilities/special educational needs, regardless of desire and good will of both employer and people with disabilities/special educational needs.
- The in-existence of resting places within the organization is also considered to important parameter for adapted physical environment.
- According to some respondents, if within one district or city employing people with disabilities/special educational needs takes systematic form, government should allocate vehicles, which will serve them to move in the morning and in the evening after work.

„One can imagine such a thing, may be impossible for one or two people, but when there are 15-20 people, it is possible to do this. It will take only 15-20 minutes for special transport to take these people to different locations in whole Kutaisi“

„It should be possible for them to move and get to work with special transport. Must be done so that it will be 10 or 20 people, they should be served with one special transport“

Awareness

Low level of awareness is one of the major problems in employing people with disabilities/special educational needs after un-adapted physical environment. Unawareness consists of several aspects:

- The majority of respondents don't have information about the number of people with disabilities/special educational needs in given cities or regions and in the country overall, as well as don't have information about real abilities, professions or skills of them, which they obtain in vocational schools. Even in the case of desire and good will employer has no access to databases, where he or she could search desired information, get information about the skills and competencies of people with disabilities/special educational needs and match them to their manufacturing needs.

- The majority of respondents, especially respondents with no experience of employing people with disabilities/special educational needs, has no information about vocational schools, or in best case scenarios they have heard about these schools, have received interns from vocational schools, but they have no information that people with disabilities/special educational needs also learn different professions in vocational schools.
- The respondents' level of awareness equals to zero, when it comes to awareness of government programs, projects, NGO activities, which aims to employ people with disabilities/special educational needs.
- Respondents have never heard of government policy, future plans that might refer to employment of people with disabilities/special educational needs.
- The majority of respondents has never received information from neither NGOs nor governmental structures about the perspectives of employing people with disabilities/special educational needs, about their potential. They have never received offers from governmental or non-governmental organizations, initiatives or any kind of encouragement.
- Recent protests of people with disabilities/special educational needs on Rustaveli avenue have more or less high awareness.

In conclusion, we can say that there is no intermediate link, a bridge, connecting node, which would act as intermediary between people with disabilities/special educational needs and employer. The people with disabilities/special educational are isolated from the employer and vice-versa. Respondents with no experience of employing don't know that there exists successful practice of employment of people with disabilities/special educational needs in Georgia. They have not heard of employers, who have experience of employment of people with disabilities/special educational needs.

„Suppose I would like to employ them, where should I find these people? Who should I apply to? Who must give me a recommendation?“

„I can not recall anything particularly, though there often is a talk on TV about this“

„Is not well widespread, we did not get this information, the same will be in other organizations“

„Yes, it would be good if there is information that this and that profession is necessary in this particular district, etc.“

„Whether it will be a vocational school director or administration, there should be one person allocated, who would look for manufacturers and offer them such things

based on their own selection. Suppose there is a tailor company and offer them employee in this direction. Recently we talked about carving, who prepares furniture, this person can stay at home, not go to work at all and work at own place, he or she won't need to use transport. Vocational schools should be interested too, let them finish, taught them, then what?"

„Database should be available, where any employer will be able to search for desired staff or to obtain information on what kind of stuff has the particular vocational school employable, what type of people with disabilities/special educational needs are there and how are they adapted accordingly..."

„Last activity was the one I liked the most, when they placed wheelchairs on car parking places next to Rustaveli underground station"

Vocational schools and possible cooperation perspectives

Part of respondents, which more or less are aware of vocational colleges, criticize graduates of these college. In their opinion, there is not the formation of qualified personnel in vocational colleges and education there are a formality.

- According to respondents, qualified specialist should be preparing personnel in vocational colleges.
- Surveyed respondents consider that vocational college must more closely and actively cooperate with employers, especially in context of employment issue of people with disabilities/special educational needs.
- According to the majority of employers, it is difficult to find a good specialist, especially if it comes to specific professions.

„Desperately lacking is a good handyman"

„There are no young people who are interested in crafting"

„Not only people with disabilities/special educational needs, but generally the employment situation is very bad, in fact, there are very few normal schools and therefore there is a lack of specialists".

"My business is based on semi-unskilled, self-educated workforce. Actually, we don't have specialists"

„In several areas, which do not require great knowledge, they have normal personnel. Generally they don't even have qualified teachers to teach others. It is a general problem of the whole country.“

"It needs better financing, finding the subject matter experts. The selection of students should be real and not only for giving a name to a group. Business is starving, there are no specialists, That is why more money should be invested and more attention should be paid to vocational institutions, and students will also get interested to go and study."

"A person should be able to get a better qualification, that is why it is important to have an appropriate database at the institution. And later this information should be available, and should not have to try to find it. We have very good salaries from 500 GEL to 3000 Gel and most of our employees have more than 1500 GEL. And there is not much stricter. A person might earn approximately 50 GEL per day here. At least 5v people should be coming to us every day and asking for a job, but it is not like that.

Role of the state

Supposedly being poorly informed ensures that the majority of respondents finds it difficult to discuss about the role of the country in the employment of people with disabilities/special educational needs.

Respondents' opinions regarding the role of the state are limited just by tax benefits which state imposes on employers of people with disabilities.

- The vast majority of respondents does not know what the state is doing right now to settle problems related to people with disabilities or people with special educational needs. The fact that they do not know the State's policy and strategy enhances the perception that the state does not care about the people with disabilities/special educational needs. The perception demotivates the employers, and it consists of several components: 1. Employers think that, first of all the state should take care of employment of people with disabilities. 2. Employers think that the government is not taking a proper care of employing people with disabilities 3. If the state does not take care of people with disabilities, then why should an employer care?

- Adaptation of physical environment to the possibilities of people with disabilities is considered as obligation from the side of the state. According to respondents, within the organization adaptation of the environment must be the obligation of the employers, but outside the organization, it is the state itself which should take care about the movement of people with disabilities. Movement is the number one barrier, according to employers, and against it both people with disabilities/special educational needs and employers are powerless.
- Respondents consider that raising motivation and interests of employers is possible by Tax benefits. According to them salary of people with disabilities should be tax free. Though it is not the motivator of leading importance. Tax benefits are a motivator which is mentioned very often, but it lacks psychological weight for the employers, besides it is not profitable from the financial point of view.
- Most entrepreneurs think, that employment of people with disabilities /special educational needs must not depend just on the good will of an employer, but it should be regulated by law. The state law should require an entrepreneur to employ people with disabilities/special educational needs, at the same time offering him some privileges, and what is the main thing care for the employed people with disabilities/special educational needs to move.

“Everybody is powerless before the law, and this issue should be regulated by law. It should not depend on my wish. I may want to employ, but someone else may refrain from.

- Respondents think employers suffer a kind of fear that people with disabilities/special educational needs will not be fully competitive in the terms of performance. Therefore, employment of people with disabilities/special educational needs is connected with some risks for the employer. The risk or feeling that work performed by them cannot be 100% satisfied, should be compensated by the state benefits.
- Respondents think that employers have some kind of fear that people with disabilities might not be able to compete with other employees. That is why their employment is connected to a risk. The risk or perception that a work done by people with disabilities or special educational needs might not be 100% satisfied should be compensated by the governmental benefits.
- According to the respondents, responsibility of employing people with disabilities/special educational needs should be taken and shared by both the state and the entrepreneur. Employment of people with disabilities/special educational needs should be mutual and regulated by law. Only then we can discuss such factors as social

responsibility, compassion and empathy, individual characteristics of employer, personal aspects, and etc.

“ If this kind of people works in the enterprise he should not pay Income Taxes. Cannot tell about other factors.”

“ Such people should be exempt from income taxes.”

“Benefits should exist not only for people with disabilities or People with special educational needs, but also for the organizations which employ him. Thus a company would be more interested in employing them.”

“Will be the most effective if City Hall, state and local government finance the installation of ramps. Many organizations cannot afford it and it may be the reason not to employ people with disabilities. It would be good if the state government provides it.”

Considerations of representative of Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia

In the frames of this survey interview was conducted with representative of Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia. The respondent was asked to discuss existing legislation and legislative proposal, which ought to be regulating employment of people with disabilities or people with special educational needs.

According to ministry representative, the main problem is the law which was passed in '98 and is in force up to present and does not correspond to the needs of people with disabilities/ special educational needs, does not show existing reality, along with international practice in this sphere.

Based on ministry representative, previous government abolished the law on employment, but the new law which will be regulating employment of people with disabilities / special educational needs, is not yet passed. The quotation below represents discussion of the ministry representative about this matter:

„As to the employment of people with disabilities, appropriate legislation exists in Georgia, which is the field of your interest. As you know existing legislation, which is in force today, about social protection, is the law passed in '98 year and cannot handle the criticism and now we are working on a new law, on its enrichment, replacement. But interesting is the fact that general employment legislative proposals, which create some kind of space for employment of people with disabilities, were abolished by the previous government. Law on employment was abolished by the

previous government. Law on employment was also abolished by the previous government and the new one is not yet passed. We have prepared some legislative proposals and really work on this issue since 2013 year. In reality we have legislation proposals on employment, about working migration very important proposal about health care and job inspections."

In ministry representative's opinion main problem is absence of legislation, which makes impossible to implement already elaborated program on employment of people with disabilities/ special educational needs. According to his words, the state has elaborated new legislative proposals, also some programs, which should promote employment of people with disabilities/special educational needs, but one instrument does not work without the other, implementation of existing programs are not possible without passing updated laws.

According to the respondent it is important that not only new legislative proposals are elaborated, but also the programs, which should suite new laws and promote employment of people with disabilities and people with special educational needs.

„Nothing can be done in another way, because in all these laws are included, some conditions which will allow us to create special programs for such people and also implement them".

„Legislative proposal about social integration of people with disabilities was prepared at our department. It includes absolutely everything, starting from the rights ending with work conditions and employment. And do you know what happens? This is the next stage. The legislative proposal which I have listed must be passed so this law is in force. Besides, we permanently work on this issue, very actively cooperate with societies of people with disabilities. Do you know what is a pity? It was easy to abolish the laws, but restoring them is a little bit harder. Because they were the laws which were abolished, were short, but provided some kind of ways and space and these new laws which should meet Euro integration requirements are difficult. This law is also from European countries, Moldova, Czech republic, those countries who have this experience".

Summary

The terms are more or less unknown for small and large businesses, especially among the respondents, who do not have experience in the employment of a disabled person. The meaning of a term *person with special educational needs* is even stranger to respondents.

It is important for an employer that he/she has a differentiated knowledge of what spectrum of physical and mental problems people with disabilities have. All the details are important, as an employer thinks that he/she should have a relationship not with a disabled person, as a depersonalized physical person, but with an individual, who should fit with the work specifications and etc. In other words, it is important for the employer to know about the real abilities and skills of a disabled person.

The relationship with the co-workers to a person with disabilities is regulated not by so-called social responsibility or any social feelings associated with civil responsibility, but by traditional morals (which is affected by religion) on one hand and by individual ethical norms on the other.

It should be taken into the account that a legislative base, which should regulate the relationship between people with special educational needs/ disabilities and an employer in general is unknown for the majority of the respondents, the position characterized by a civil society towards people with special educational needs/ disabilities is strange to them.

Adaptation to working environment should be discussed as dual process. A person with special educational needs/with disabilities is adapting to the working environment and the environment is trying to adapt to a person with special educational needs/with disabilities.

The respondents with experience report that the people with special educational needs/with disabilities hired by them adapt to a work environment faster than other employees, and also to challenges which might be connected with disabilities. The disabilities are hyper compensated by super adaptation to an environment.

The first meeting, interview, between an employer and a person with special educational needs/ disabilities, as well as familiarizing with the application, often has an accidental nature, are caused by accidental factors. Acquaintances, friend requests, neighborhood, relatives' connections are the factors which enable the meeting between an employer and a person with special educational needs/ disabilities. The role of vocational institutions or other institutions is minimal in the process. One of the motivations for a meeting, the first contact, might be the high competency of a person with special educational needs/ disabilities.

Having no support from the State, no benefits, not knowing the legislative base, and not knowing the foreign experience are inhibiting factors for employing people with special educational needs/ disabilities.

The main inhabiting factor is physical environment, which is not adapted to people with special educational needs/disabilities. The environmental problem is directly linked to transportation, movement. An employer cannot do anything to improve these issues.

The respondents' level of awareness equals to zero, when it comes to awareness of government programs, projects, NGO activities, which aims to employ people with disabilities/special educational needs.

Not having an experience to employ people with special educational needs/ disabilities is one of the inhibiting factors for a entrepreneur that prevents him/her to hire them. Experienced employers are ready to hire people with special educational needs/with disabilities, while motivation is not as high in inexperienced employers.

Majority of inhibiting factors for employment of people with special educational needs/ disabilities is more linked to outside factors rather than inter-organizational factors.

Low level of awareness is one of the major problems in employing people with disabilities/special educational needs after un-adapted physical environment.

The majority of respondents don't have information about the number of people with disabilities/special educational needs in given cities or regions and in the country overall, as well as don't have information about their real abilities, professions or skills, which they obtain in vocational colleges.

The main difference in imagination between respondents who have employment experience with people with disabilities/special educational needs and respondents without having experience in this fields: for respondents without having experience in this field is very difficult, physically difficult issue to employ people with disabilities/ special educational needs, while for experienced respondents to have people with disabilities/ special educational needs in employment, the work done, and the degree of relationship with the staff, does not mean problems and barriers, but is seen as an advantage for the production.

The majority of respondents think that one of the major obstacles in employing people with disabilities/special educational needs is un-adapted and unsettled physical environment for them.

Having no support from the State, no benefits, not knowing legislative base, and not knowing the foreign experience are inhibiting factors for employing people with special educational needs/disabilities.

Low level of awareness is one of the major problems in employing people with disabilities/special educational needs after un-adapted physical environment

The majority of respondents has never received information from neither NGOs nor governmental structures about the perspectives of employing people with disabilities/special educational needs, about their potential.

Majority of respondents, especially respondents with no experience of employing people with disabilities/special educational needs, have no information about vocational colleges.

Respondents' opinions regarding the role of the state are limited just by tax benefits which state imposes on employers of people with disabilities.

The vast majority of respondents does not know what the state is doing right now to settle problems related to people with disabilities or people with special educational needs.

Respondents consider that raising motivation and interests of employers is possible by Tax benefits. According to them salary of people with disabilities should be tax free.

Most entrepreneurs think, that employment of people with disabilities / special educational needs must not depend just on the good will of an employer, but it should be regulated by law.

Respondents think employers suffer a kind of fear that people with disabilities/special educational needs will not be fully competitive in the terms of performance. Therefore ,employment of people with disabilities/special educational needs is connected with some risks for the employer. The risk or feeling that work performed by them cannot be 100% satisfied, should be compensated by the state benefits.

Recommendations

Employers should not only have information about employment issues of people with special educational needs/disabilities, and governmental or nongovernmental projects, they should also know competencies and skills and employment perspectives of people with special educational needs/disabilities who leaves at a certain region or town. Employers should be informed about people with special educational needs/ disabilities, for example, they should know that people with special educational needs/ disabilities who leaves in Kutaisi is a good technician or accountant.

- Creating information databases in every city and region so that employers could use them, finding people with disabilities/special education needs, collecting information about their competencies and skills.
- The relationship between employers and people with special educational needs/ disabilities are mostly accidental or based on employers good will. The information flow between the employers and institutions, responsible directly or indirectly, for the employment of people with special educational needs/ disabilities, is not systematic, controls, or based on specific procedures.
- Vocational colleges should actively cooperate with employers and suggest them qualified staff, should provide employer information about competencies and skills of people with disabilities/special educational needs. Exchange of information should have mass and regular characters.

- The majority of employers needs pre-processed ready information, which should include competencies and abilities of people with special educational needs/ disabilities. At the same time should include the market requirements, requirements for specific professions.
- Employment market should be researched and studied its real needs and deficits. Deficits of the employment market should be considered informational and education of people with disabilities/special educational needs.
- Any type of the state benefit would be a motivator to an employer, as most of the respondents do not lack internal motivators.
- The entrepreneur should be interested and encouraged by the state government. Special tax benefits should be imposed to the entrepreneurs.

It is important that what for entrepreneurs with experience of employment is an everyday reality, should become at least easily perceivable and understanding for ones without such experience. The contrast between objective reality and its imaginary version should be eliminated. The perception of experienced respondents is much lighter, that perception of inexperienced ones which is full of obstacles and barriers. The ones without experience are more critical and cautious of employing people with special educational needs/ disabilities than the experienced ones. Based on that it is important that the experienced ones shared their experience with inexperienced, encourage them and persuade them that hiring people with special educational needs/ disabilities has its priorities.

Besides the above mentioned, one of the important issues is adapting the physical environment, and taking care of movement of people with special educational needs/disabilities and about their transportation means. Because it will be impossible for people with special educational needs/with disabilities to show their abilities and competencies without adapted environment. And also an employer will be restricted indecision while hiring people with special educational needs/with disabilities.

The state is the main receiver of employers' advice and recommendations