



HARKIN
SUMMIT
PARIS

international
summit

skills employment & disability

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MARRIOTT CHAMPS-ELYSEES

handicap
international  humanity
& inclusion

The logo for Handicap International, featuring the letters 'Hi' in a stylized, rounded font where the 'i' is connected to the 'H'.

Harkin Summit 2019

Paris put the spotlight on inclusion at work this past spring: the Harkin Summit took place on 8 and 9 April 2019, attracting 180 participants from 27 countries. And, on the morning of April 8, the Global University Disability and Inclusion Network (GUDIN), an event dedicated to the issue of improving access to advanced education for students with disabilities, also convened for the first time. The Harkin Summit, in its fourth year, added global momentum to the issues of access to employment for people with disabilities. This report intends to summarize some of the headline messages from this important gathering.

"The future is resolutely inclusive." These were the opening words of Manuel Patrouillard, Director General of the Humanity & Inclusion Federation, at the start of the summit. The challenge of the event was clear: an exchange between the actors who have appropriated the tools and methods that enable their organizations and teams to welcome professionals with disabilities and those who want to take the step forward. Through these collaborations, it is a question of moving from a sum of local solutions to a coherent and effective global action.



Manuel Patrouillard, opening the event

U.S. Senator Tom Harkin (retired, Democrat-Iowa), who initiated the organization of this annual summit, emphasizes the importance of work in building individual identity: **"Work is a characteristic that defines human existence,"** he said in his opening speech. Thus, access to employment for people with disabilities must be a priority. Through work, the individual develops a sense of belonging to a community, in this case a professional one. So it is an important step toward

inclusion. The evolution of the legislative framework is also essential, so that people with disabilities are no longer objects of care, but subjects of rights. The action and commitment of companies and large international organizations in this regard proves that future solutions are possible. The Harkin Summit, through its various exchanges, makes it possible to share them with as many people as possible.

First plenary: "Let's go!"

The first plenary aimed to mobilize participants to accelerate the global movement to include people with disabilities in employment. Moderated by Caroline Casey, founder of Valuable 500, it featured Jean-Michel Guillon, Director of Personnel and Executive Director of the Michelin Group; Oliver Faust, CSR Director of the Renault Group; Deborah France-Massin, Director of the Bureau for Employers' Activities of the International Labour Organization (ILO); Carlo Purassanta, President of Microsoft France and Mike Ellis, Global Vice President Accessibility for Sprint.



From left to right: Caroline Casey, Deborah France-Massin, Carlo Purassanta, Oliver Faust, Jean-Michel Guillon and Mike Ellis.

This plenary session was an opportunity for actors from the private sector and international organizations to share their experience of inclusion. The first idea raised was that the desire to be involved in inclusion is above all a personal process, a decision motivated by one's own choices. Faced with situations of exclusion, the choice to remain passive or become proactive arises because **"inclusion is a journey we make"** in the words of Carlo Purassanta. Therefore, inclusion is first a personal journey.

In a second step, this personal motivation must be transformed into a collective dynamic, at the level of the organization. In the case of Microsoft, this globalization requires technology, a powerful tool to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities, especially those living with mental or intellectual disabilities. Microsoft therefore supports innovative initiatives, often led by start-ups. For example, one of them has developed a system for detecting dyslexia in young children aged 4 to 6 years: this allows early care by medical and educational services and appropriate family and personal follow-up. Another example is the use of holograms to facilitate communication with children with autism. The digital leap can therefore benefit the inclusion of people with disabilities from an early age. These development prospects are therefore encouraging and allow the creation of inclusion tools for the greatest number of people.

Companies can also play a key role in their internal operations to ensure the better inclusion of people with disabilities. The Renault Group thus sees mobility as a social and economic link that allows access and inclusion. Internally, there are workstation accommodations for employees with reduced mobility and flexibility in working hours. These measures aim not only at people with disabilities but also at employees who may need them—this is the case for parents of children with disabilities. These measures are accompanied by disability awareness. Assuming that in 80% of cases the disability is invisible, the company believes it is important to free up the voice within the organization in order to create a climate of trust and goodwill between employees.

Another strong idea of the first plenary was the existence of a very strong link between performance and inclusion. At team meetings, it is observed that the presence of a deaf person facilitates mutual listening, each person speaking in turn; in a noisy factory, deaf workers are the most efficient, etc. Disability then becomes a strength for the actors and for the functioning of the company.

The internal practices of companies are therefore a considerable springboard for the inclusion of people with disabilities in employment. But the legal framework is also important. This legal framework is certainly present, but it is not enough to change attitudes and behaviors. This is where companies play an important role, working with national and international institutions.

Second plenary: "Let's go together!"

Inclusion is a long process that requires extensive expertise. During the second plenary, participants addressed the question of internal and external partnerships, in order to show that we should not embark on the adventure of inclusion alone and that there are a multitude of specialized actors with whom to cooperate. Lizzie Kiama, founder of This-Ability, moderated the second session, which featured Berhanu Tefera, Executive Director of the African Disability Forum; Hervé Bernard, Director of Social & Inclusion at Humanity & Inclusion; Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo, Disability Adviser at the World Bank; Pascal Andrieux, CSR Director of the Malakoff Médéric Disability Foundation; Leslie Wolfe, Managing Director of Maximus and Patrick Gohet, Deputy Human Rights Defender in charge of the fight against discrimination.

The presence of a representative of the Human Rights Defender made it possible to take stock of discrimination against people with disabilities and the remedies available in France. It should be noted that the first cause of referral to this institution is discrimination based on disability, up to 23%. The Human Rights Defender acts as a link between civil society and the public authorities in order to "take the pulse" of society. However, Patrick Gohet underlines the very important role that associations play in this advocacy work with public institutions. The Human Rights Defender is then rather a relay for these actors in the associative world, and supports their demands.

There are indeed many organizations that work with people with disabilities and promote inclusion. However, there is a significant compartmentalization and lack of fluidity between these different actors. The objective is therefore to create bridges, in order to create a real cooperation circuit and avoid a form of competition.

The importance of partnerships is particularly relevant with players such as the World Bank, whose expertise can benefit companies. Awareness-raising is an important component, as Charlotte McClain-Nhlapo shows: cooperation with a specialized actor can be used to deconstruct prejudices about the employment of people with disabilities, such as the significant cost that this would entail for a company. By providing reasonable accommodation arrangements adapted to the

specific needs of people with disabilities, specialized actors push companies towards inclusion by overcoming fears and misconceptions.

The importance of local culture, in terms of the vision of disability, is also essential, as Hervé Bernard points out. Indeed, in some countries, the vision of disability is influenced by local beliefs and practices. In this context, some companies encounter difficulties in understanding these local issues. Working with a partner who knows and masters the local fabric - like Humanity & Inclusion - brings obvious advantages.

Another challenge of the partnership is its long-term sustainability. Indeed, the partnership must take the form of everyday support to achieve real results. Within the framework of Humanity & Inclusion, some partnerships have seen their results after several years (for example, the support of the company “Casino” on Reunion Island). This has been possible thanks to a long-term, close relationship.

Workshops

The second part of the summit for the training and employment of people with disabilities was dedicated to exchanges and analysis of practices between the various employment actors through five workshops on various themes: legal frameworks and public policies, exchanges of good practices between companies, access to vocational training, the role of local authorities and micro-businesses, the role of small and medium-sized enterprises (MSME).

Workshop 1 - Learning to navigate a complex network of global employment policies for people with disabilities

This first workshop addressed how companies can evolve in the complex network of national, regional and international policies that govern their activities, as diversity and inclusion initiatives move from national to global. The challenge is to simultaneously promote the company's activities and the inclusion of people with disabilities.

National and international legislation influences initiatives that promote inclusion. Public authorities can be champions for the inclusion of people with disabilities through progressive, inclusive policymaking and thus support other organizations in

their inclusion process, whether they are companies of different sizes, training centers, universities, etc.

Two types of legislation systems are currently being implemented: one around non-discrimination, and another promoting quotas. Both approaches have their advantages and disadvantages, which are detailed in the latest White Paper published by Humanity & Inclusion at the Harkin Summit. Entitled "Towards an inclusive globalization," the paper deciphers the foundations of employment policies and promotes existing initiatives to reflect good practices and propose avenues for actors who wish to engage in an inclusive approach.

The quota system, which consists of a mandatory employment rate for people with disabilities with financial sanctions or benefits, is proving imperfect. Several examples, such as China's, show that these measures are partially effective. Indeed, it is necessary to note certain issues: recruitment of unskilled people, employment of people with disabilities without giving them tasks to perform interpretation of the law as a simple tax to pay among others, etc. As Liz Sayce mentioned, a quota can be useless, because "it doesn't matter if people are fit for work, it matters if work is fit for the people." Also, a quota policy can't really influence inappropriate work for people with disabilities.

Simultaneously, the session noted that the system of non-discrimination, based on employer responsibility, does not compensate for the lack of access to training or services. It may even be counterproductive in some cases, as shown by the example of Colombia, where a law protecting against unfair dismissal has become a barrier to the employment of people with disabilities.

Multiple obstacles to the employment of people with disabilities have been highlighted as the businesses' difficulties to find qualified and talented people with disabilities, discriminations and bias. But several solutions and alternatives exist:

- Act at the board room level: for the moment, there is a very little diversity in the board rooms (women, people with disabilities, etc.). Making board rooms more inclusive could represent a shift in power. Quotas could apply directly to the board room

- Make the businesses aware of their responsibilities and make them act at different levels to show transparency (publication of hiring practices) and leadership
- Governments can help the employers (particularly the small ones): for example, by taking into account that some disabilities cannot allow people to work full-time and covering their time off so it doesn't represent a burden for the employer.
- Help employers recruit in a different way, for example by sourcing by potential and not diplomas
- When a government develops a policy on inclusion of people with disabilities, organizations of people with disabilities organizations (DPOs or OPDs) and businesses must both be involved in the drafting of that policy.
- We must collect data to show the benefit of inclusion to businesses (geographically specific data). For that, find funding for research and skills on the economic benefit of employment of people with disabilities in the global south is important.
- All government ministries should embrace the topic of disability, and ensure that their programs, policies, and funding priorities recognize and include people with disabilities – not only the Minister of Economy.

Workshop 2 - From local to international: sharing and disseminating good practices in companies

The purpose of this second workshop was to identify and share, at the international level, good practices in the employment of people with disabilities. This workshop was an opportunity to address the issues of launching inclusive dynamics in a company's subsidiaries and taking into account the local context in the development of local inclusion policies.

The first question discussed during the workshop plenary was how to transform inclusive practices from the local to the global level and vice versa. The panel presented ideas, such as the creation of champions for the inclusion of people with disabilities from internal networks. Jürgen Menze, Director of the Global Business and Disability Network, shared an ILO practice: an annual event to gather innovative best practices in the field of disability inclusion in local offices around the world, to evaluate these practices, and to reward the best practices.

The other theme discussed in plenary was the importance of training decision makers and HR managers on understanding the principles and issues of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). It is necessary for a company to know the status of the CRPD in its host countries, as the countries that have ratified it have an obligation to comply with it. Article 27 of the CRPD obligates States with regard to non-discrimination and the employment of persons with disabilities, obligations that will affect companies. In addition, ensuring that its employment policy complies with the CRPD is a guarantee of good practices, quality and consideration of the rights of people with disabilities. The workshop panel thus recalled the importance of raising awareness and training managerial teams on this subject.

Following this plenary discussion, six roundtables were held to share/discuss existing practices in the employment of people with disabilities. 5 practices were identified for sharing prior to the workshop, 1 was proposed directly during the workshop. All were chosen for their innovative and/or reproducible nature, in order to give everyone practical tools to implement them.

- How can a Headquarter-level Disability/Diversity mission mobilize sites/subsidiaries to develop more inclusive policies? Best practices and difficulties, based on the experience of Renault's Diversity Division - HQ.
- How to ensure that workers with disabilities have access to reasonable accommodation across all work sites? Sharing of IBM's International Policy on Reasonable Accommodation - HQ.
- How to boost its sites around supported employment - Definition and best practices based on the experience of Microsoft's World of Supported Employment program - presented by the European Union of Supported Employment EUSE.
- How to encourage and galvanize the private sector to initiate the hiring and/or increase the employment of talent with disabilities, through a "public forum" - The experience of [Willis Towers Watson Philippines'](#) annual Workability Inclusion Network (WIN) Summit

- How to support the retention in employment of employees who have developed motor disabilities - Based on the experience of Toyota - France.
- How to support the employment of people with intellectual disabilities, through the experience of DP world - Senegal.

Nearly 40 representatives of international companies or associations working in the field of disability thus met around these topics and were able to share their experiences and develop their professional networks, in the service of best professional practices for the employment of people with disabilities.

Workshop 3 - Building an inclusive talent pool for people with disabilities: relevance of higher and vocational training to develop skills adapted to the labor market

Taking into account the impact of trends such as increased globalization and digitization, this workshop examined how the future of work will impact employment opportunities, particularly for people with disabilities, and how training systems can address these issues.

It is now estimated that 2/3 of children in primary school will have jobs in the future that we have never thought of, due to the rapid changes at work in our societies. For example, the changes brought by digital technologies in the professional world are very rapid. As a result, this requires new skills that are not currently available to all. For example, globalization, the rise of new technologies, human services and the consideration of the impacts of climate change are likely to increase the need for interpersonal skills and require new computer, information technology and green economy skills.

These developments must be taken into account when adapting training, which must be made accessible to people with disabilities. This requires, in particular, measures on mobility and accessibility. Lifelong learning also needs to be developed with people with disabilities taken into account.

People with disabilities have higher rates of leaving school early, and have very unequal access to diplomas. University training must be inclusive: by enabling people

with disabilities to acquire skills, and by facilitating their entry into the labour market. UNESCO plays an important role in this regard, supporting projects that aim to include students with disabilities in universities. This is the case with the EICON project, which aims to improve the inclusion capacity of educational institutions and organizations by providing training using information and communication technologies. This project includes teacher training. These issues were discussed at the GUDIN, an event organized by Humanity & Inclusion on the eve of the Harkin Summit, in the presence of many university representatives. Once university education is available to all, the question of hiring arises. In this sense, partnerships between schools and businesses can be effective in promoting access to employment for people with disabilities.

The idea is to feed the business case and show that hiring people with disabilities is not only possible but beneficial to business. One approach to better understand accessible jobs, and to help make that case, would be to adopt a pragmatic approach by first mapping existing needs at the company level, and then identifying the skills needed for the job directly with the companies concerned to be able to meet their needs as closely as possible. Depending on the country, the legal framework is more or less incentive-based, and the main thing, even if the legislation does not provide a favorable framework, is to rely on a fertile ground made up of voluntary public and private partners to implement concrete actions that can then serve as models for other actors.

Supporting companies to become more inclusive requires a holistic approach: beyond employee awareness, training managers and management teams is key. Refining recruitment procedures to match candidate profiles more closely with the skills sought by the company is also a possibility.

Overall, real training and employment pathways should be put in place, adaptable to the specific needs of the individual and offering bridges with different training and employment services, but also social, health, etc., to enable as many people as possible to acquire professional skills and then employment. New technologies have a role to play in ensuring greater fluidity in pathways, strengthening collaboration between different actors and facilitating the development of skills throughout life.

Workshop 4 - Do inclusive Micro Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) exist? The role of MSMEs and the impact of investments on reducing the employment gap for people with disabilities

This workshop focused on innovative solutions to promote inclusive MSMEs and their role in bridging the employment gap for people with disabilities. Panel participants discussed several aspects, including the difficulties faced by companies and investors in including people with disabilities, as well as innovation and risk-taking to overcome these challenges.

Small and medium-sized enterprises are now considered key players in the economy and growth. However, they do not necessarily play a major role in reducing the employment gap for people with disabilities. MSMEs face several challenges:

- Difficulty of access to appropriate financial services;
- Lack of skills;
- The lack of integration into networks.

The issue of MSMEs raises the issue of micro-entrepreneurship as a way out of extreme poverty. Indeed, this is part of the graduation model: this holistic approach seeks to enable people living in extreme poverty to become economically self-sufficient. This goes through several stages of a journey: consumer support, savings, skills transfer and training, asset transfer, access to credit, coaching.

It is therefore necessary to promote the micro-entrepreneurship of people with disabilities, in particular by giving them access to credit. Sometimes, the loan system can be done within the community or family, and allows the empowerment of a group of people who participate directly or indirectly in the activity developed.

In this logic of access to financial services, awareness-raising and training of loan officers is essential so that they can work with people with disabilities and offer them microfinance services. The tools used to grant loans must also be accessible.

The creation of entrepreneurship programs is therefore an important point. Another challenge for MSMEs is their ability to integrate people with disabilities as clients of their services and products. To this end, local partnerships are of great importance, as are employee awareness and training, and accessibility of workplaces and tools. It is therefore largely up to entrepreneurs to engage with more inclusive small and

medium-sized enterprises, both in terms of employment and in terms of the products and services offered.

Workshop 5 - The role of local and regional authorities in supporting inclusive employers

The fifth workshop was dedicated to the role of local authorities in facilitating inclusive employment in their territory. The creation of an enabling environment (including mobility) to enable access to employment was discussed, in particular by addressing possible relationships between authorities and companies and their modalities.

Local and regional authorities have an important role to play in ensuring that people with disabilities have access to employment, and this does not only involve measures concerning employment and business. Indeed, other aspects of a person's life affect their ability to work: for example, communities must also address transportation and housing issues. In a general context of decentralization, local authorities have the responsibility to take charge of these issues at the regional or even local level in order to better adapt them to the context and thus ensure that the responses are as effective as possible.

At the local and regional level, local authorities can make a direct link with companies in the area, and ensure that the needs of these companies are fully met by the population of workers with disabilities. Good knowledge of the local context makes it possible to encourage the hiring and retention of people with disabilities, for example through the creation of vocational training.

In general, local authorities must respond at their level to the needs of companies providing training and awareness-raising on the employment of people with disabilities.

Victor Calise, Deputy Mayor of New York, offered a concrete case study of what a city can offer in terms of disability management for its citizens. Indeed, New York counts people with disabilities as 11% of its population, yet 79% of citizens with disabilities are unemployed. Faced with this figure, the city decided to react through various initiatives. This is done through certain programs such as "[NYC: ATWORK](#)" or "[EmpoweredNYC](#)". The first program connects talented people with disabilities seeking employment with companies that can offer real employment opportunities,

with appropriate salaries. The second program guides people with disabilities through certain administrative procedures and job search. At the local level, the question of mobility or housing also arises. On this subject, the town hall ensures that 7% of affordable housing is accessible to people with disabilities. Urban mobility is obviously an essential point, for example, to make journeys from home to work. A huge work is done on the New-York transportation system (pedestrian walkways, trains, taxis) in order to make it accessible.

The development of public/private partnerships makes it possible to set up comprehensive actions: thus, communities can collaborate not only with companies, but also with foundations and universities present in the area, for example, or regional and governmental bodies.

The Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes region (France) is another example of the role of local and regional authorities in the inclusion of people in a territory through public investment, particularly in the hospital sector. For example, a computer-controlled robot-school system has been developed that allows children to follow courses at a distance during a long stay in hospital. The region has also funded tablets for young people who cannot be present in class or whose learning may require time adjustment.

The H+ Approach and Cared+ programs are also good examples. The first one provides disability focal points in training facilities to support people with disabilities in the labor market. The second program is based on 12 months of training for job seekers with disabilities who already have a promise of employment from their companies.



One of the limits of policies implemented at local and regional level is that they can create inequalities between territories. This is the case in China, where various measures are being implemented in the provinces. Indeed, the national policy of employment quotas for people with disabilities (set at 1.5% of companies' total workforce) must be implemented by all provinces, but each province that reaches this quota receives financial compensation that it can use as it wishes. The provinces offer training and awareness sessions for businesses, provide financial rewards and visibility for those that adopt good practices, directly link businesses and people with disabilities in job searches, etc. However, it must be noted that, on the one hand, incentives are no longer as effective and attractive as before, because of economic conditions and because they do not necessarily promote an inclusive environment either (compliance with the quota is not enough to change culture, perceptions, acceptance by the population, etc.). On the other hand, employment opportunities often remain unsuitable for people with disabilities and inaccessible.

Finally, in Tunisia, local authorities also play a role in supporting people with disabilities by developing micro-entrepreneurship and promoting internships and apprenticeship contracts within companies. ANETI, the National Agency for Employment and Self-Employment, is setting up a project in partnership with Humanity & Inclusion to support and raise awareness among companies, coupled with a program to empower people with disabilities.

Conclusion of the summit

To close this summit, Rich Donovan and Hiro Shibaya of the Nippon Foundation looked to the future. For Rich Donovan, **"we must not conceive for disability, but from disability,"** i.e. include people with disabilities in the economic fabric for the well-being of all, always starting from the person living with a disability and their needs. It is therefore necessary to highlight the gains of companies and the opportunity costs associated with inclusion. The new situation will be to reconcile the economy and the emancipatory environment for people with disabilities.

The Harkin Summit 2019 was rich in content and sharing. The next edition, in Tokyo, will continue this momentum in order to make a real shift towards a more inclusive world of work.

