



Survey of private sector employers' attitudes to recruiting people with disabilities.

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Summary

This report presents the findings from a survey of private sector employers' attitudes to recruiting people with disabilities. The survey was conducted by FÁS Planning and Research in conjunction with FÁS Social Inclusion Department. To maintain confidentiality and anonymity the survey was carried out by an independent Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing company REDC, on behalf of FÁS. This 2007 survey was conducted via telephone with a representative sample of private sector businesses in Ireland. One thousand interviews were conducted in the last two weeks of February 2007. Quotas were applied on the sample to provide robust data within small, lower medium, upper medium and large companies. The final data was then weighted to ensure that the final sample was proportionally representative of all companies in Ireland. The companies were asked a series of questions on employing someone with a disability. Opinions were sought on recruiting people with disabilities. They were also asked which, if any, of the Adaptation, Recruitment and Retention grants were they aware of, and which, if any, of those grants had they ever availed of.

Almost one in four employers (24%) claimed to have ever employed someone with a disability and of those who said they have never employed someone with a disability, over a third would consider employing a disabled person. There was little regional variation in employers employing someone with a disability (West being the highest at 27%, being the lowest at North East 21%). There was a big sectoral variation in disability employment, with financial and construction being the lowest at 19%. The retail sector (29%) and those companies with over 10 employees showed higher than average incidence of employing someone with a disability.

Among those who have not to date employed someone with a disability over a third have considered employing a disabled person. Construction scored lowest (22%) in considering employing people with disabilities, financial (48%) scored highest. The high level of considering employing people with disabilities in the West (46%) compared well with the high level of companies actually employing people with disabilities in the West (27%).

The lack of disabled candidates applying was the main reason why those who have considered employing a disabled person have not done so to date. Of the companies who stated a disability related reason for not employing a disabled person, half thought that disabled people were not suitable for the company's line of work.

For many companies who had not considered employing someone with a disability the "opportunity never arose" (22%) or they had never had a disabled candidate apply (16%). The remainder (62%) felt that employing someone with a

disability was not suitable within the company (18%), the work was specialised (7%), the work was too physical (5%), the premises was unsuitable (4%) or health and safety (2%).

Employers did not see disabled employees as impacting on their costs or profits. Those in the Manufacturing/Production sector were more likely to feel that employing a person with a disability would have an adverse effect on their productivity and costs. Those in the retail and construction sectors were most concerned about the potential legal consequences or implications for the company, if the recruitment of a disabled did not work out. About one third of companies in different sectors felt that they didn't know enough about different type of disabilities, this was slightly higher in retail (41%) sector, hotels and restaurant (43%) sector was also high.

There are three types of grants available for employers employing people with disabilities, Adaptation grants, Recruitment grants and Retention grants. Adaptation and Recruitment grants received awareness scores of circa 15% with only one in ten aware of Retention grants.

1. Introduction

This report presents the findings from a survey conducted by FÁS Planning and Research in conjunction with FÁS Social Inclusion Department. To maintain confidentiality and anonymity the survey was carried out by an independent Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing company REDC, on behalf of FÁS. This 2007 survey was conducted via telephone with a representative sample of private sector businesses in Ireland. One thousand interviews were conducted in the last two weeks of January 2007. Where possible, standard classifications were used. This allows cross referencing with other data sources. Quotas were applied on the sample to provide robust data within small , lower medium, upper medium and large companies. The final data was then weighted to ensure that the final sample was proportionally representative of all companies in Ireland.

2. Questionnaire

The companies were asked the following questions:

1. Have you ever employed someone with a disability?
2. Have you ever considered employing someone with a disability?
3. Why have you not employed someone with a disability to date?

Companies were also asked about their attitudes to employing people with disabilities using the following statements:

- The potential legal consequences or implications for the company, if the recruitment of a disabled person does not work out, concerns me.
- I don't know enough about different disabilities to employ someone with a disability.
- I like the idea of employing someone with a disability but don't know how to go about it.
- Employing someone with a disability would make my business less productive
- There are sufficient financial supports in place to allow me to employ someone with a disability.
- Employing someone with a disability would increase my costs.
- There are a number of grants available when you employ someone with a disability.

They were also asked which, if any, of the Adaptation, Recruitment and Retention grants were they aware of? And which, if any, of those grants had they ever availed of?

3. Disability Employment

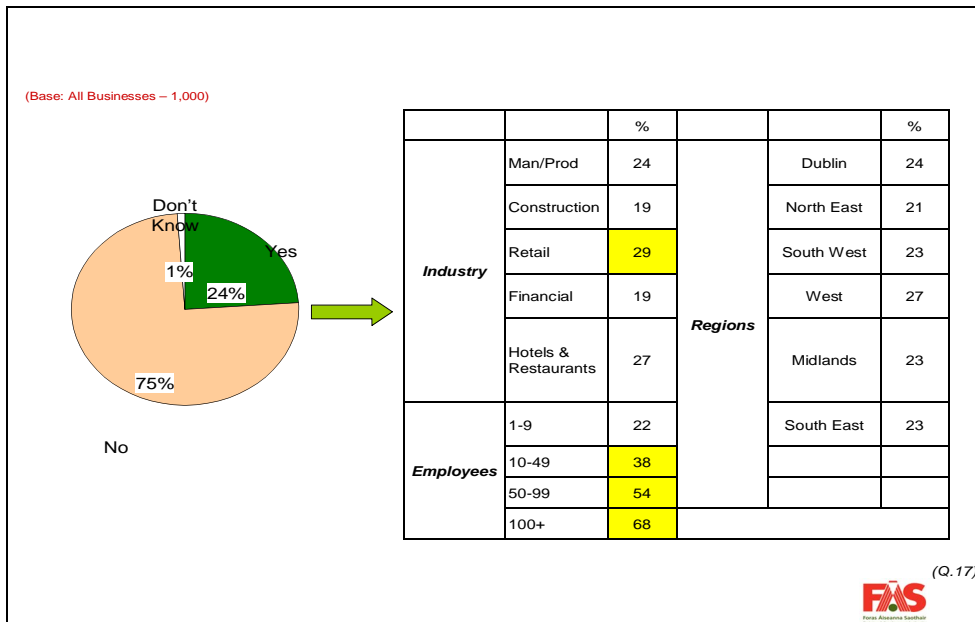


Fig 1. Ever employed someone with a disability ?

Footnote: Yellow shading indicates high score, grey shading indicates low score in all graphical figures.

Almost one in four employers claimed to have ever employed someone with a disability (Fig 1). There was little regional variation in employers employing someone with a disability (West 27%, North East 21%). There was a big sectoral variation in disability employment, with financial and construction being the lowest at 19%. The retail sector (29%) and those companies with over 10 employees showed higher than average incidence of employing someone with a disability. Larger companies were more likely to employ someone with a disability, 68% of companies with over 100 employees and 54% of companies with between 50 and 99 employees employed someone with a disability.

4. Considering Employing Someone with a Disability

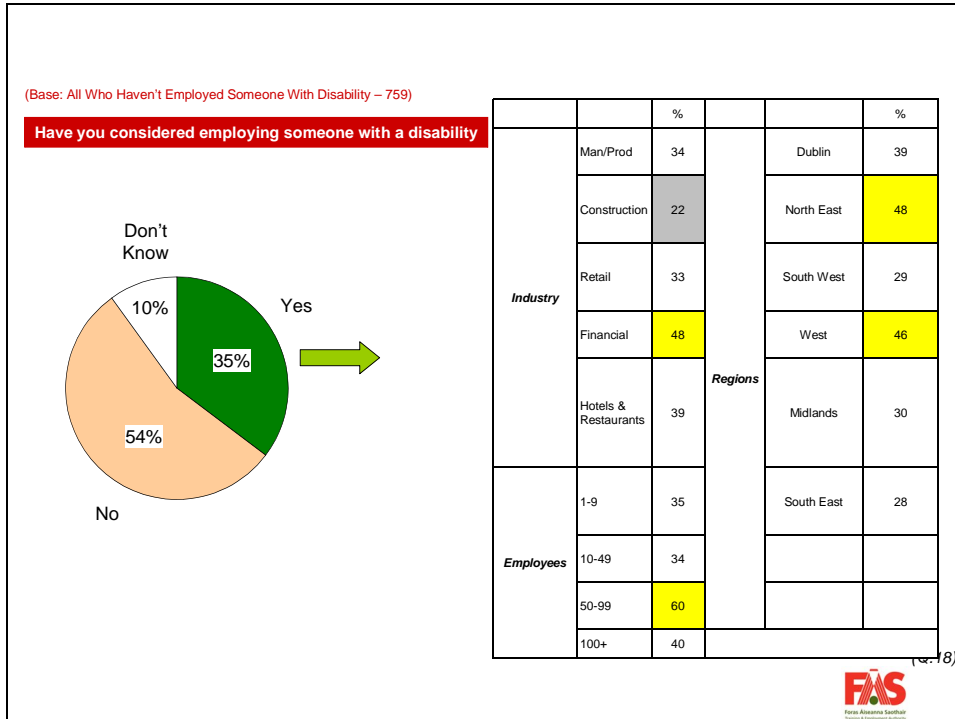


Fig 2. Have You Ever considered employing somebody with a disability ?

Among those who have not to date employed someone with a disability, over a third have considered employing a disabled person (Fig 2). Construction scored lowest (22%) in considering employing people with disabilities, financial (48%) scored highest. Regionally the highest level of companies considering employing people with disabilities was the North East (48%), the West at 46% was next highest.

It is interesting to compare Fig 1 and Fig 2. The high level of considering employing people with disabilities in the West (46%) compared well with the high level of companies actually employing people with disabilities in the West (27%).

In Fig 2 the financial sector scored highest in considering employing people with disabilities, yet in Fig 1 the financial sector scored the lowest in actually employing people with disabilities. Likewise the North East region scored highest (48%) in considering employing people with disabilities, yet scored lowest (21%) in actually employing people with disabilities.

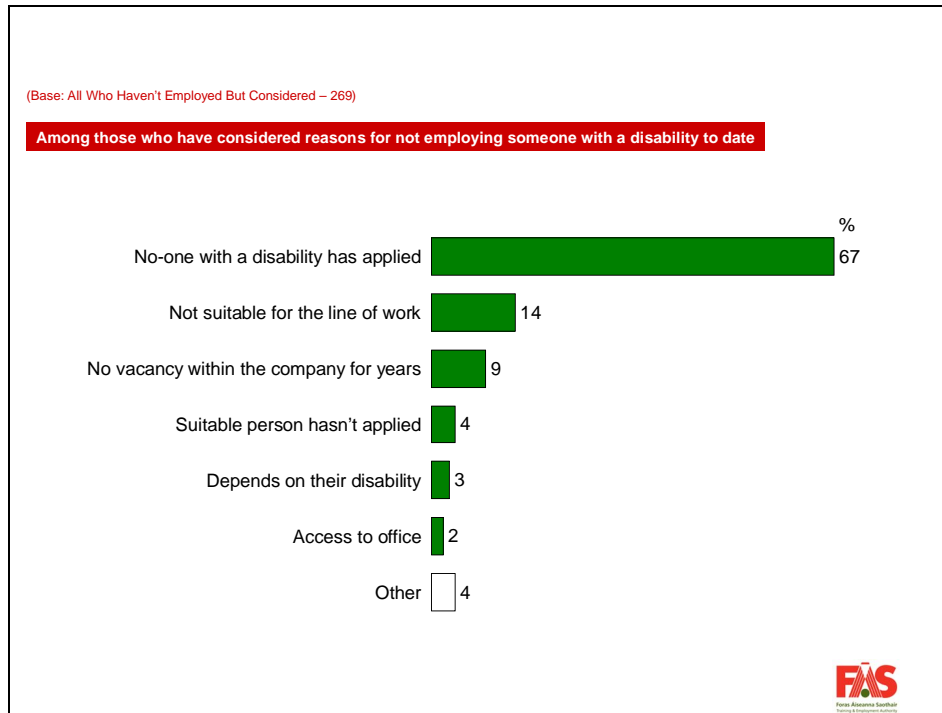


Fig 3. Reasons stated for not employing someone with a disability

The lack of disabled candidates applying was the main reason for those who have considered employing a disabled person but have not done so to date (Fig.3). Of the companies who stated a disability-related reason for not employing a disabled person, half thought that disabled people were not suitable for the company's line work.

Base 269 as fig 3

Company Size	1 - 9	10 - 49	50 - 99	100+
Reason for not employing				
No one with a disability had ever applied	67%	73%	100%	100%
No vacancy within the company for years	9%	4%	0%	0%
It depends on disability	2%	4%	0%	0%
Not suitable for their line of work	14%	13%	0%	0%
Suitable person has not applied	4%	0%	0%	0%
Access to office	1%	4%	0%	0%
Number of companies involved	242	24	2	1

Table 1. Reasons stated for not employing somebody with a disability by company size

In Table 1. the reasons for not employing people with a disability (among those who have considered employing people with a disability) are detailed by company size, the number of companies involved is also given. Due to the small numbers involved this table, caution must be exercised in interpreting this data.

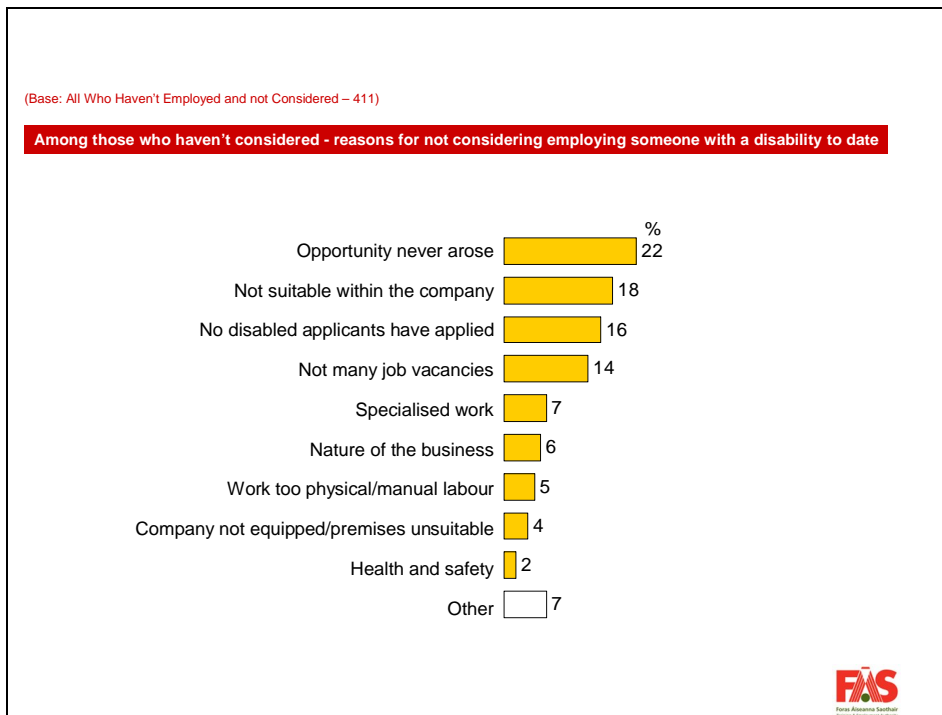


Fig 4. Reasons for not considering employing someone with a disability.

For many companies who had not considered employing someone with a disability the “opportunity never arose” (22%) or they had never had a disabled candidate apply (16%) (Fig 4). The remainder (62%) felt that employing someone with a disability was not suitable within the company (18%), the work was specialised (7%), the work was too physical (5%), the premises was unsuitable (4%) or health and safety (2%).

In Table 2. the reasons for not considering employing people with a disability are detailed by company size, the number of companies involved is also given. Due to the small numbers involved this table, caution must be exercised in interpreting this data.

Note: Some of the reasons from figure 4 are disaggregated in Table 2.

Base 411 as fig 4

Company Size	1 - 9	10 - 49
Reason for not employing		
Company not equipped	1%	2%
Don't know	2%	2%
Hasn't to date but would consider in the future	1%	2%
Health and safety	1%	2%
Nature of the business	5%	5%
Never came up	7%	17%
No applicants applied with disability	14%	23%
Not feasible	1%	2%
Not suitable with in the company	18%	15%
Opportunity never arose	13%	10%
Other	3%	2%
Premises not suitable	1%	2%
Small company not many job vacancies	14%	2%
Specialised work	6%	2%
Too physical/very physical/manual work	4%	5%
Number of companies involved	372	37

Table 2. Reasons stated for not considering employing somebody with a disability by company size

5. Employers' Attitudes to Disability



Fig 5. Attitudes to Employing People with disabilities.

Employers did not see disabled employees as impacting on their costs or profits (Fig 5). There seemed to be some desire to employ a disabled person, 1 in 4 agreed strongly with liking the idea of employing someone with a disability.

Twenty-seven of companies do not know whether there are sufficient financial supports in place to allow them to employ someone with a disability.

Forty percent of companies like the idea of employing somebody with a disability but do not know how to go about it .

Thirty five percent of companies feel that they don't know enough about different disabilities.

Over one quarter of companies are concerned about the potential legal consequences or implications for the company, if the recruitment of a disabled person does not work out.

Base: All Respondents – 1,000

% agree	TOTAL	Industry					Employees			
		Man/Prod	Construction	Retail	Financial	Hotels & Restaurants	1-9	10-49	50-99	100+
There are sufficient financial supports in place to allow me to employ someone with a disability	27	30	31	26	21	27	27	34	37	47
I like the idea of employing someone with a disability but don't know how to go about it	40	35	30	40	32	42	41	38	30	22
I don't know enough about different disabilities	35	36	31	41	34	43	36	32	27	18
The potential legal consequences or implications for the company, if the recruitment of a disabled person does not work out, concerns me	27	25	32	35	21	13	28	24	22	16
Employing someone with a disability would increase my costs	18	24	13	17	14	23	19	13	11	10
Employing someone with a disability would make my business less productive	9	16	9	7	4	8	9	6	3	2

(Q.21)




Fig 6. Attitudes to Employing People with disabilities.

Those in the Manufacturing/Production sector were more likely to feel that employing a person with a disability would have an adverse effect on their productivity and costs (Fig 6). Twenty four percent thought employing someone with a disability would increase their costs, sixteen percent of companies thought

that employing someone with a disability would make their business less productive.

Those in the retail and construction sectors were most concerned about the potential legal consequences or implications for the company, if the recruitment of a disabled did not work out.

About one third of companies in different sectors felt that they didn't know enough about different disabilities, this was slightly higher in retail (41%) and hotels and restaurant (43%) sectors.

6. Employment Grants

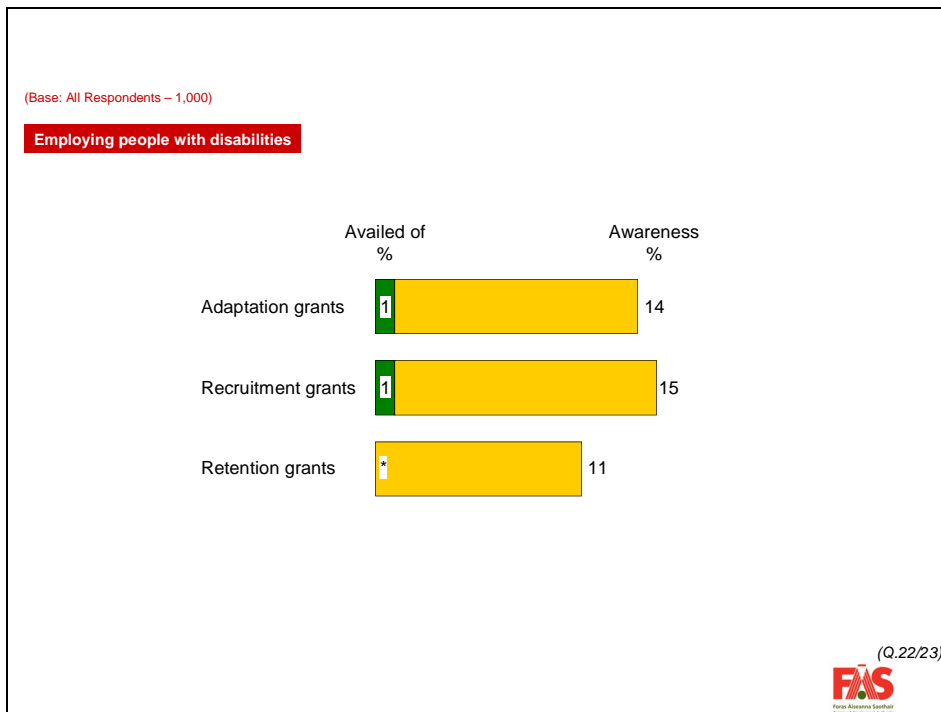


Fig 7. Employment Grants.

There are three types of grants available for employers employing people with disabilities; Adaptation grants – where financial assistance is provided to adapt the workplace for a disabled employee, Recruitment grants – where wage subsidies are provided when companies employ a disabled person, Retention Grants – where a grant is provided to assist employers to retain at work employees who become disabled during their employment through illness or injury.

There was a low awareness of the grants available for employing someone with a disability. Adaptation and Recruitment grants received awareness scores of circa 15% with only one in ten aware of Retention grants. Take up was very low with only 1% of companies stating they had taken up the grants.

Overall awareness of the three types of grants was very low and as a consequence those availing of the different types of grants was also low.