Developing Skills for Employment

**When:** **13June 2023**, **11.30am-12.45pm EDT**

**Venue: UN, Conference Room C**

*Captioning and International Sign Interpretation are provided*

Qualified workers are essential for the health of economies and wealth of societies. However, companies consistently report difficulties finding the employees that they need. There is a mismatch between the demands from economic operators and the skills of workers. Vacancies remain open in many sectors including those where digital skills are needed. At the same time, the employment levels of persons with disabilities remain low and have been stagnated for years. In addition, access to education and vocational training by persons with disabilities remain a challenge.

Many countries around the world already have legislation forbidding discrimination and requiring reasonable accommodation, quotas, and other legal measures. While these are necessary, they seem to be insufficient to close the employment and skill gaps between persons with and without disabilities. All this underlines the need to reinforce the skills and competence of persons with disabilities to be better equipped to participate in the open labour market on equal basis with others, as stated by the UNCRPD.

This workshop will address the advantages that society and economy can gain by investing in the skills of persons with disabilities, thus opening up their employment opportunities while simultaneously supporting employers in finding the workers they require.

As the European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities states: Participation in employment is the best way to ensure economic autonomy and social inclusion.

The views of persons with disabilities, social partners, employers’ organisations, and policy makers at international level will be shared to exchange practices and promote better policies for developing skills for jobs.

**Programme**

**Moderator**: **Katarina Ivankovic-Kenezevic,** Director Social Rights and Inclusion **European Commission.**

**Speakers/topics:**

- **H.E.** **Helena Dalli,** **EU Commissioner for Equality**: *The European Years of skills and persons with disability including AccessibleEU, skills for accessibility*

- **Nina Pineau, Attaché, Belgian Ministry of Social Security:** *Goals and targets on employment for persons with disabilities and improving skills*

- **Dragos Pislaru, Member of the** **European Parliament:** *Improving digital skills for persons with disabilities*

- **Christophe Lefevre,** **Member of the** **European Economic and Social Committee** (EESC): *The role of social partners fostering skills development and employability*

- **Gunta Anca,** **Vice President** **European Disability Forum** **(EDF)**: *Unlocking talents of persons with disabilities through skills development and inclusive policies*

-**Matthieu Cognac, International Labor Organization** **(ILO)**: *Skills for employment ILO*

**Closing remarks**: **Alison Crabb,** **Head of Unit Disability and Inclusion, European Commission**