



## **Employment and Chronic Diseases in Europe: linking to Pathways Recommendations**

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# The framework

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## CHRONIC DISEASES AND EMPLOYMENT

Individuals with **chronic diseases and mental health issues** often experience **work-related problems**, leading to negative consequences at individual, national and European level.

The rising prevalence of persons with chronic diseases and mental disorders as well as the **current economic crisis** make this issue even more problematic, requiring actions in terms of innovative strategies to improve the participation of these persons in the **labour market**



# The framework

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- Chronic Diseases (CDs) impact on individuals in terms of negative employment outcomes, such as reduced workforce participation and early retirement, resulting in loss of income and increasing the risk of poverty.
- CDs also affect employers, that have to deal with absence from work, issues connected to employability, costs of retaining or replacing workers, and internal company policies, aspects which are crucial for hiring as well as re-integrating persons with CDs.
- On the other hand, work is a protective factor improving quality of life and well-being for people with CDs.



# The framework

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The European Network for Health Promotion in Workplaces estimates that in 2016, 25% of European population in working age shows symptoms of **at least ONE chronic disease** and that the percentage of people with chronic diseases actively working is at least 19% of the whole workforce.

Expectations towards 2020 and 2060 of the percentage of participation in the European labour market for people over 50s, that is the range of the working population mostly affected by a partial ability to work, mark an increase of 8.3% and 14.8% respectively.



# PATHWAYS

## 7 RECOMMENDATIONS



### **1# Raise *Awareness* about the role of employment for persons with chronic diseases**

The needs of PwCDs in the area of integration, inclusion and reintegration into the labour sector must be prioritized through targeted actions with a biopsychosocial approach where biological, psychological, social factors and their complex interactions are considered. Health in all policies implies that Governments have a responsibility for the health of their peoples. This can only be fulfilled by the provision of adequate health and social measures including awareness raising and information of society about chronic diseases and their impact on employment as well as the impact of employment on PwCDs.



### **2# Strengthen EU-Level Policies that promote inclusive labour markets for all**

Reduced unemployment, social equality and higher labour market participation are the main priorities of the EU's 2020 strategy. The European Commission has highlighted the importance of building an inclusive labour market for all, where all working-age and especially vulnerable and disadvantaged persons, should be given an equal opportunity to enter and remain.



### **3# Ensure adequate National legislation that promotes inclusive labour markets for all**

In many EU-countries persons with specific chronic health conditions can receive support in employment if -depending on the country-specific eligibility criteria - their condition is recognized as a “disability”. Such frameworks, however, create an “invisible” category of working-age PwCDs that are “not disabled”, and even though they face plenty of obstacles to participate in the open labour market, they are not eligible for the existing national policy provisions.



# PATHWAYS

## 7 RECOMMENDATIONS



### **4# Develop and monitor strategic approaches and directions that promote inclusive labour markets for all**

The achievement of active inclusion and of full participation of each person in the employment sector necessitates strategic actions on the part of employees, employers and all other stakeholders involved, in order to create a balance between incentives and obligations. A shift in attitudes of all parties and a genuine willingness/commitment of all to eliminate workplaces' restrictions for all, thus including PwCDs, is a must-factor in the changing



### **5# Develop and monitor measures that promote inclusive labour markets for all**

Promotion of sustainable employment of PwCDs involves the development of measures that take into account PwCDs' need for job security, employment support and reasonable accommodations as well as employers' need for economic sustainability.



### **6# Develop and monitor services that promote inclusive labour markets for all**

Biopsychosocial factors negatively impacting on the employment reintegration/inclusion of PwCDs are diverse and multidimensional and include personal, societal and environmental work-related parameters. Thus, different types of services and supports facing and addressing this heterogeneity should encompass all the different biopsychosocial aspects involved.



### **7# Promote research on effective and innovative strategies and use the available evidence for developing solutions for inclusive employment**

The development of agreed study protocols and the assessment of strategies should be at the centre of the governance structure as they serve as the basis for policy makers to collect valid and reliable information for establishing and monitoring the effects of existing strategies for work integration, reintegration and inclusion. This in return contributes to evidence-based decisions / policies.





**CHRODIS+**  
IMPLEMENTING GOOD PRACTICES FOR CHRONIC DISEASES

**WP8**

**Employment and Chronic Diseases: health in all sectors**

# WP 8 leaders

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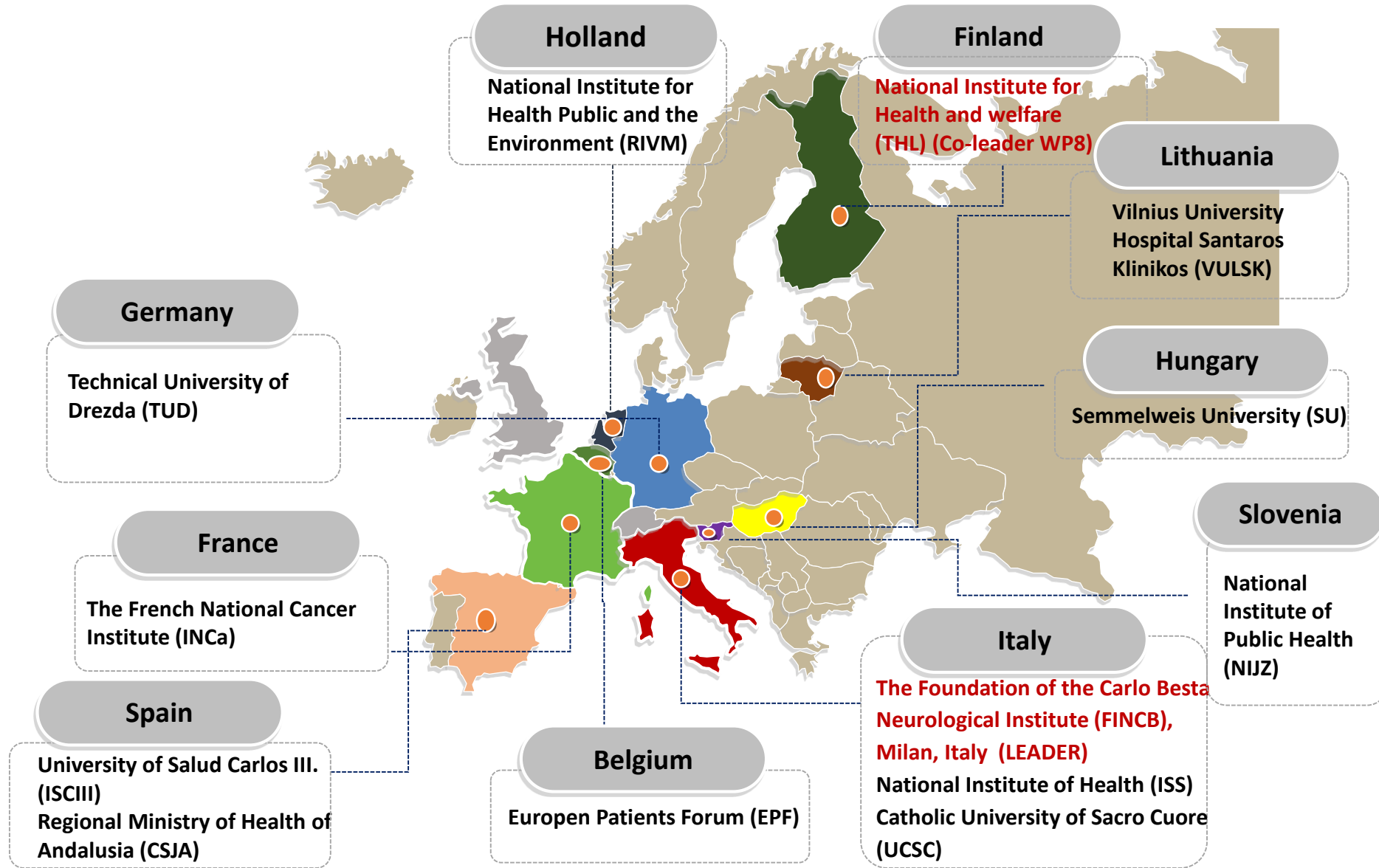
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Finland

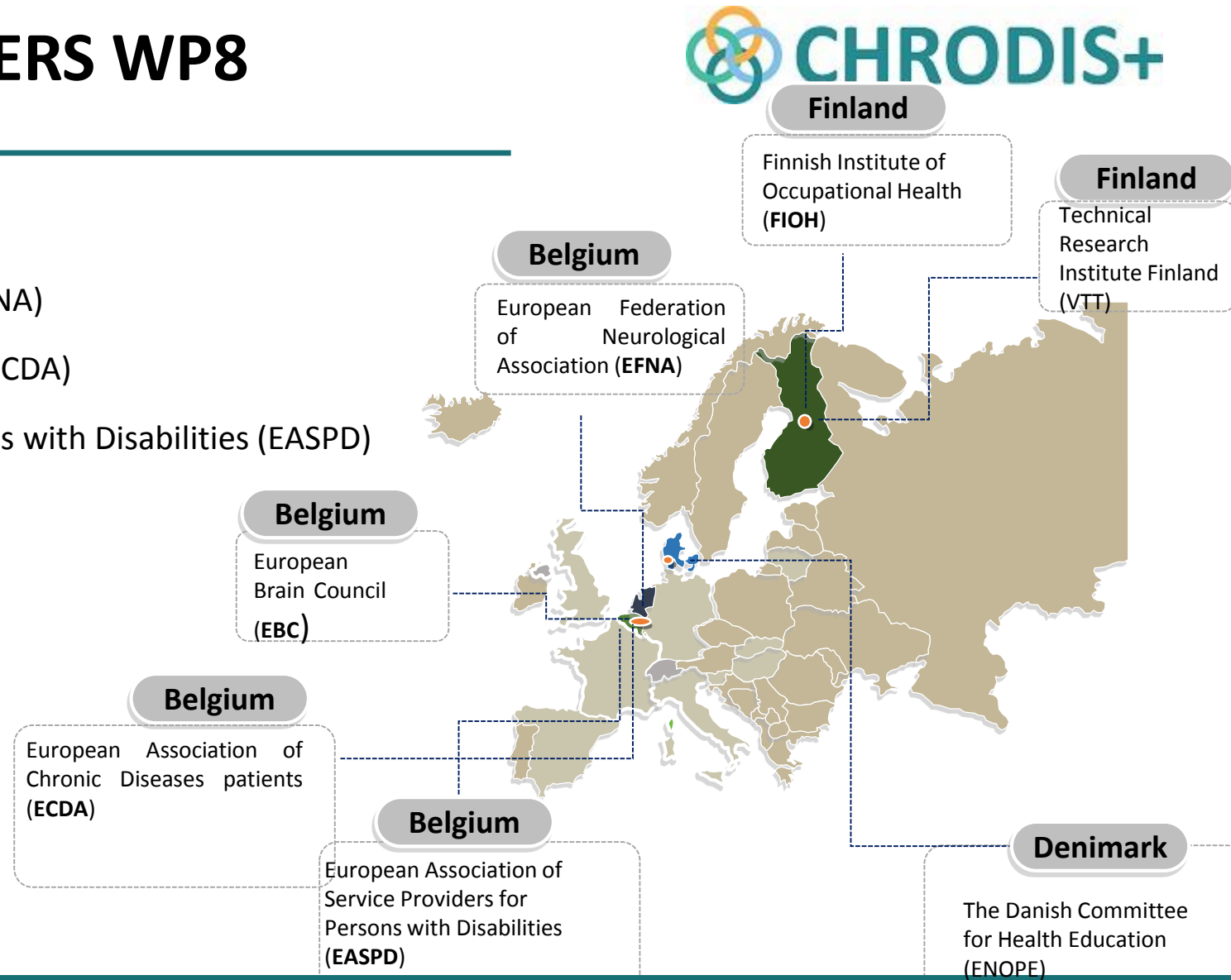


# PARTNERS WP8



# COLLABORATING PARTNERS WP8

- European Brain Council (EBC)
- European Federation of Neurological Association (EFNA)
- European Association of Chronic Diseases patients (ECDA)
- European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD)
- Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (FIOH)
- Technical Research Institute Finland (VTT)
- The Danish Committee for Health Education (ENOPE)



# Objective of this WP

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To improve work access and participation of people with chronic diseases, to support employers in implementing health promotion and chronic disease prevention activities in the workplaces and to reinforce decision makers' ability to create policies that improve access, reintegration, maintenance and stay at work of people with chronic diseases.

# Tasks of WP8

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## **Task 8.1: CHRODIS-PLUS Training Tool**

It will help employers understand the operational benefits of inclusion, integration and reintegration of people suffering of chronic diseases.

## **Task 8.2: CHRODIS-PLUS Toolkit for Adaptation of the Workplace**

It will be an evidence based, practice-oriented guide for the employers to adapt the work environments to support healthy lifestyles and prevent and manage chronic diseases in the work settings.



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## The Joint Action on Implementing good practices for chronic diseases (CHRODIS PLUS)

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