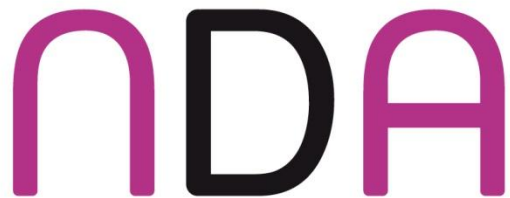


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# Towards a comprehensive employment strategy for people with disabilities

Eithne Fitzgerald



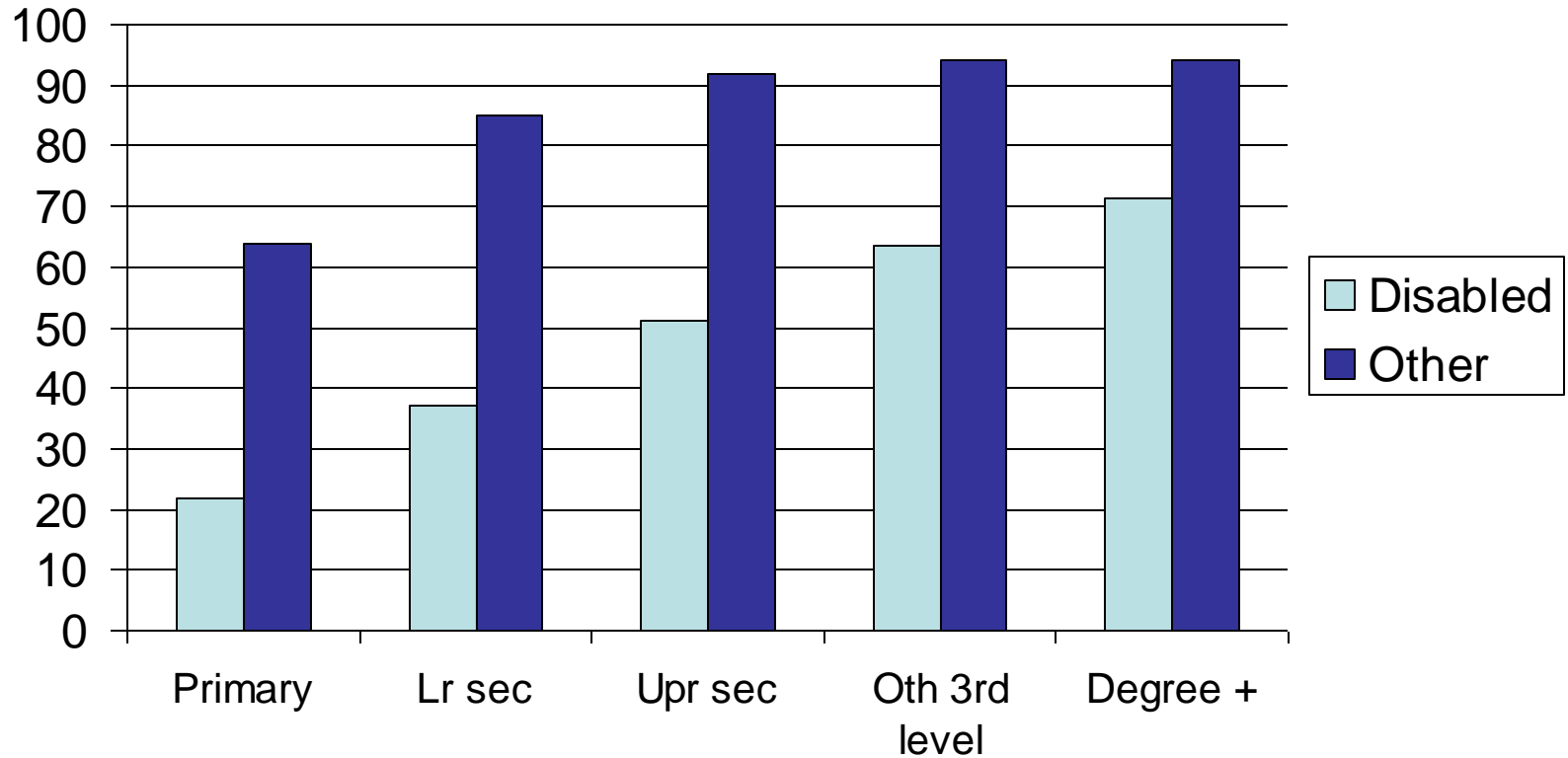
Údarás Náisiúnta Míchumais  
National Disability Authority

# Fewer pwd at work, even in boom time

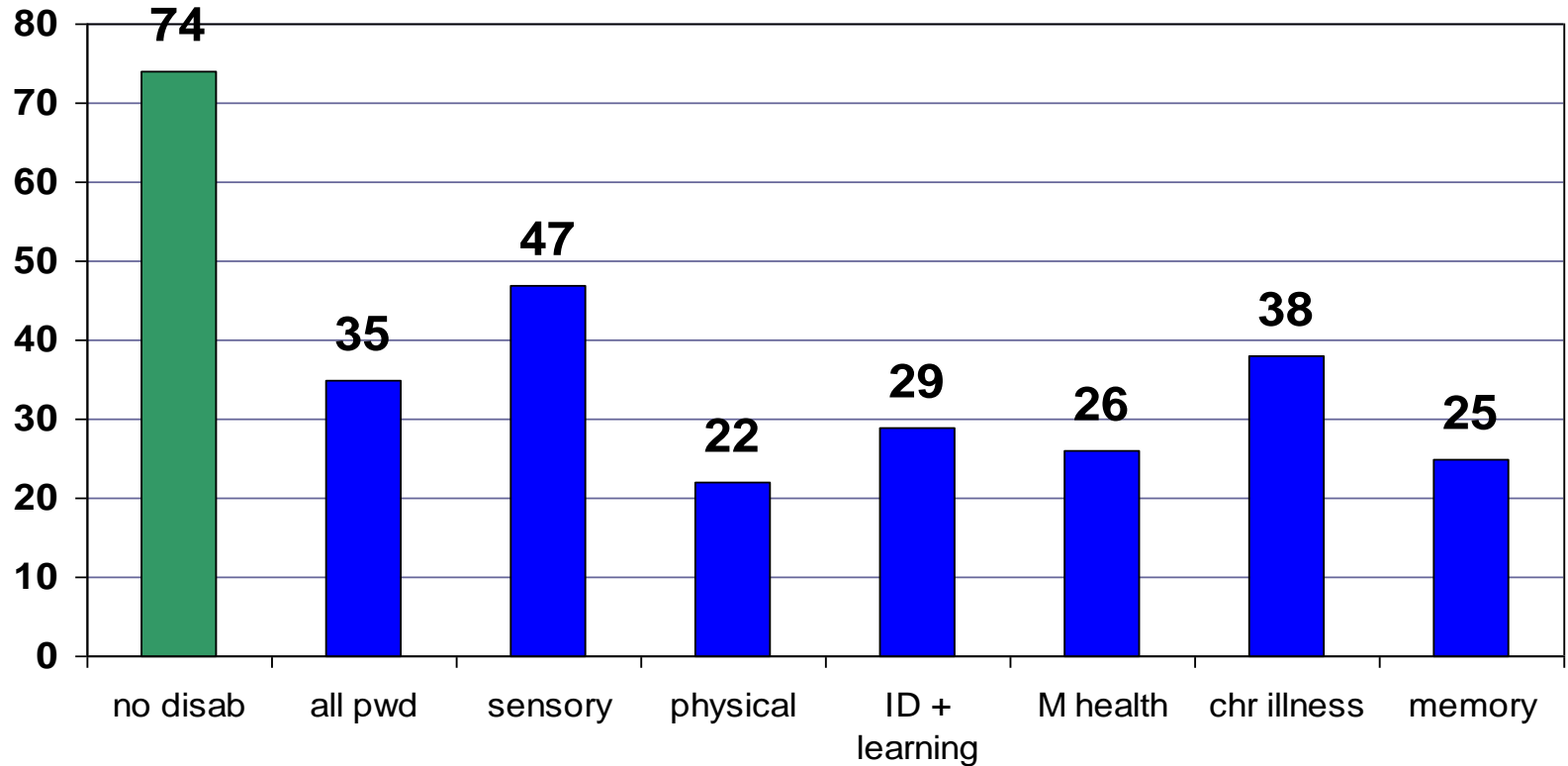
- Employment rate of pwd is half that of others
  - 2002 – 40%, 2004 – 37%
  - Strong link to age and education
  - Poorer education → low workforce participation → double the risk of poverty
-

# Employment rates, disabled and other men by education level

(age 25-34; Census 2002)



# % employment rate of people with disabilities age 20-64 by type of disability (Census 2006)

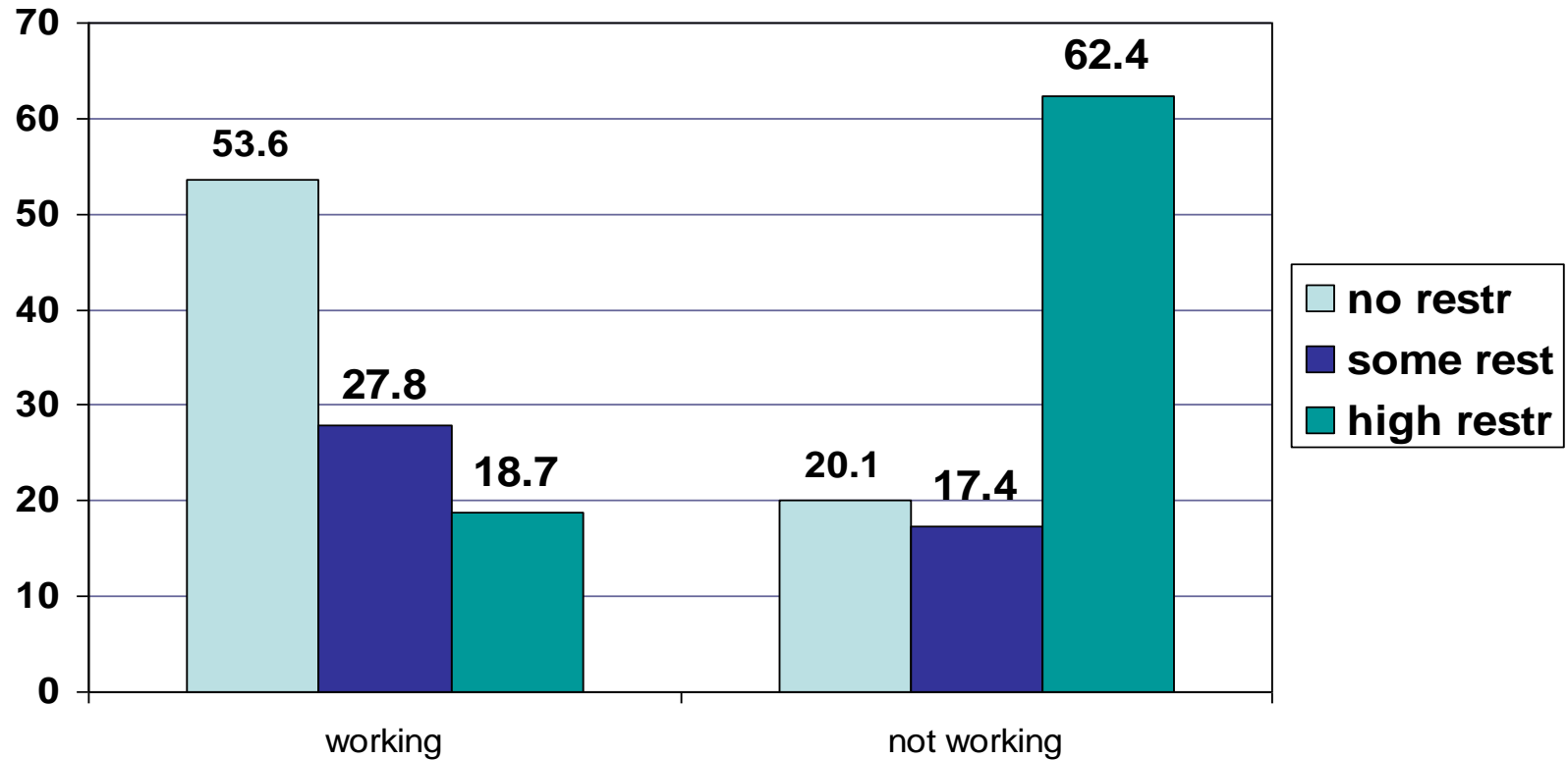


# What the figures tell us

- 35% of people with disabilities have a job v. 74% of others
  - 60% of people with disabilities not working are restricted in type or amount of work they can do
  - But many who are restricted have jobs
  - Accommodating disability is critical
-

# % employed by difficulty in working

## QNHS 2002



# People with disabilities and employment

Pwd of working age

(20-64) - Census 2006

**208,000**

Not  
in  
work

63,000

*Difficulty  
working*

72,000

0

In  
work

62,000

*Difficulty  
working*

11,000

Potential labour force

(less home duties, students, older retired)

**99,000**

unemployed

15,000

Labour force  
status ill/  
disabled

81,000

# Accommodating disability

## Reasonable Accommodation - Employment Equality Acts

- Those currently outside the workforce have more difficulties

### QNHS 2002

- In Ireland the proportion of pwd given assistance to work was half that for the EU-15
  - Only 5% of pwd in open employment have received assistance to work
  - About 18% of pwd not in work need assistance to facilitate work
-



# Employment Equality Acts

1998 and 2004

- Employer has duty to take appropriate measures so
    - pwd can access and carry out their work
    - participate in training
    - unless measures impose disproportionate burden on employer
  - **Appropriate measures:**
    - Adaptation of work premises or equipment, patterns of working time, distribution of tasks or provision of training
  - **Disproportionate burden:**
    - Financial or other costs
    - The resources of the business
-

# National Disability Strategy

## Employment and disability commitments

- A comprehensive employment strategy for people with disabilities
  - 7,000 more in work
  - Cross-departmental co-operation across Depts of Enterprise; Education and Skills; Health; Social Protection
  - Specific commitments
    - enhance supported employment
    - bridge between HSE and mainstream training
    - systematic process of engagement with people with disabilities
-

# NDA role to monitor 3% employment target for public service

- Form of reports to NDA
  - No and % of staff with disabilities
  - What's working well, any obstacles, what needs to be done
  - Policies and practices
- Report to Minister, Dáil in November
- Advice to public bodies
- Showcase good practice
- Recommend action- bodies in breach for 2 years

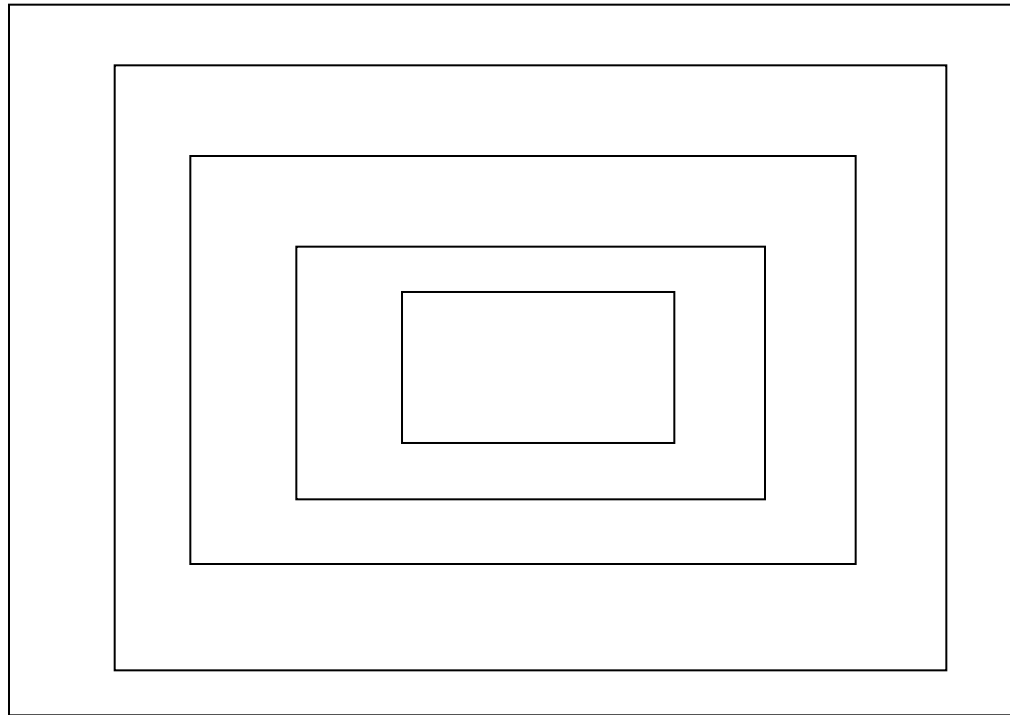
# Employers and disability

Lots of goodwill, **but...**

- 88% of companies say they do not employ anyone with a disability
- Only 5% employers have accommodated a staff member with disabilities
- Over half don't know about employer help
- Minimal take-up of FÁS supports especially job retention

# Unblocking all the obstacles

Does work pay? Are there jobs available? Do skills match available jobs? Do employers know enough? Is disability being accommodated? Is there transport to work?....



# Comprehensive employment strategy

## NDA report - Key pillars

- Make work pay, remove benefit traps
- Equip pwd to compete in labour market now and future
- Enlist public and private sector employers
- Prevent flow into inactivity
- Systematic process of engagement
- Comprehensive across individuals and levels of ability

# An employment strategy for pwd that is comprehensive...

- across both supply and demand side of job market
- across all types and levels of disability
- across different stages of life cycle
- across government policies and agencies
- across public and private sectors
- joining the dots