



# Managers attitude to hiring and retaining employees with disabilities

Ásta Snorradóttir, PhD, lecturer

University of Iceland - Faculty of social work

Co researcher: Hulda Þórey Gísladóttir



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FÉLAGSRÁÐGJAFARDEILD

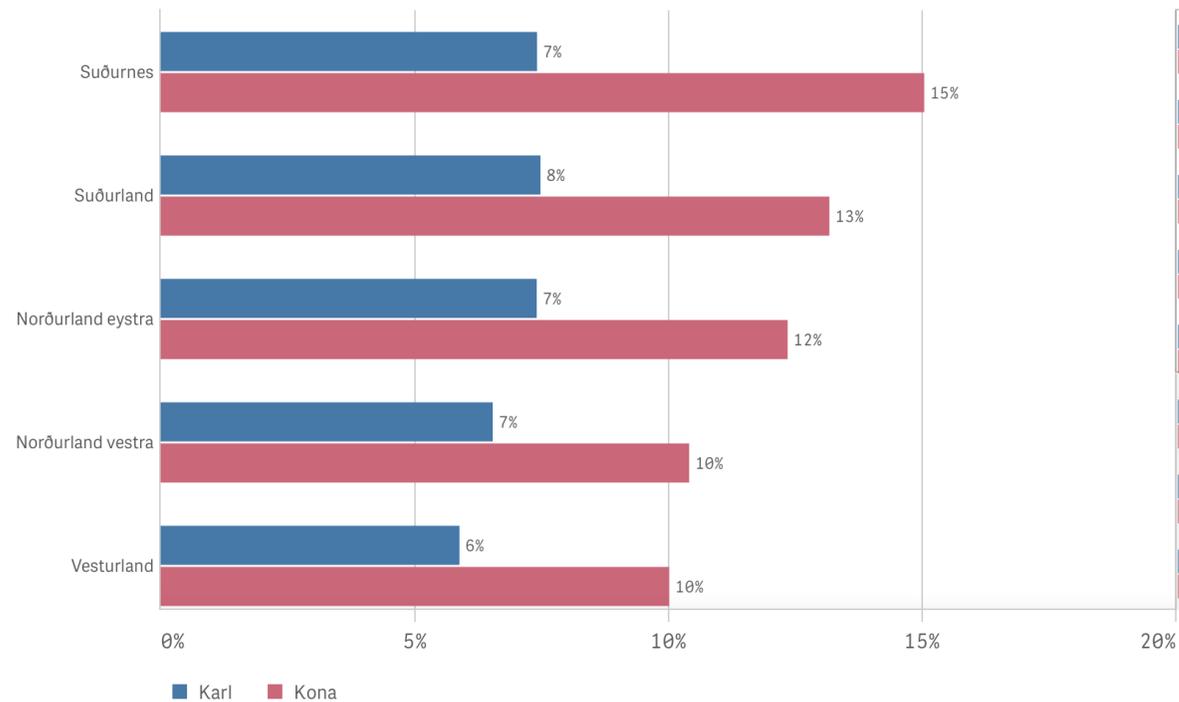
Nordic conference in Work &  
Rehabilitation 2nd October 2018



# Disability in Iceland 2018

Fjöldi einstaklinga með réttindi sem hlutfall af mannfjölda. Örorkulífeyrir

Eining: Prósent Ár: 2017



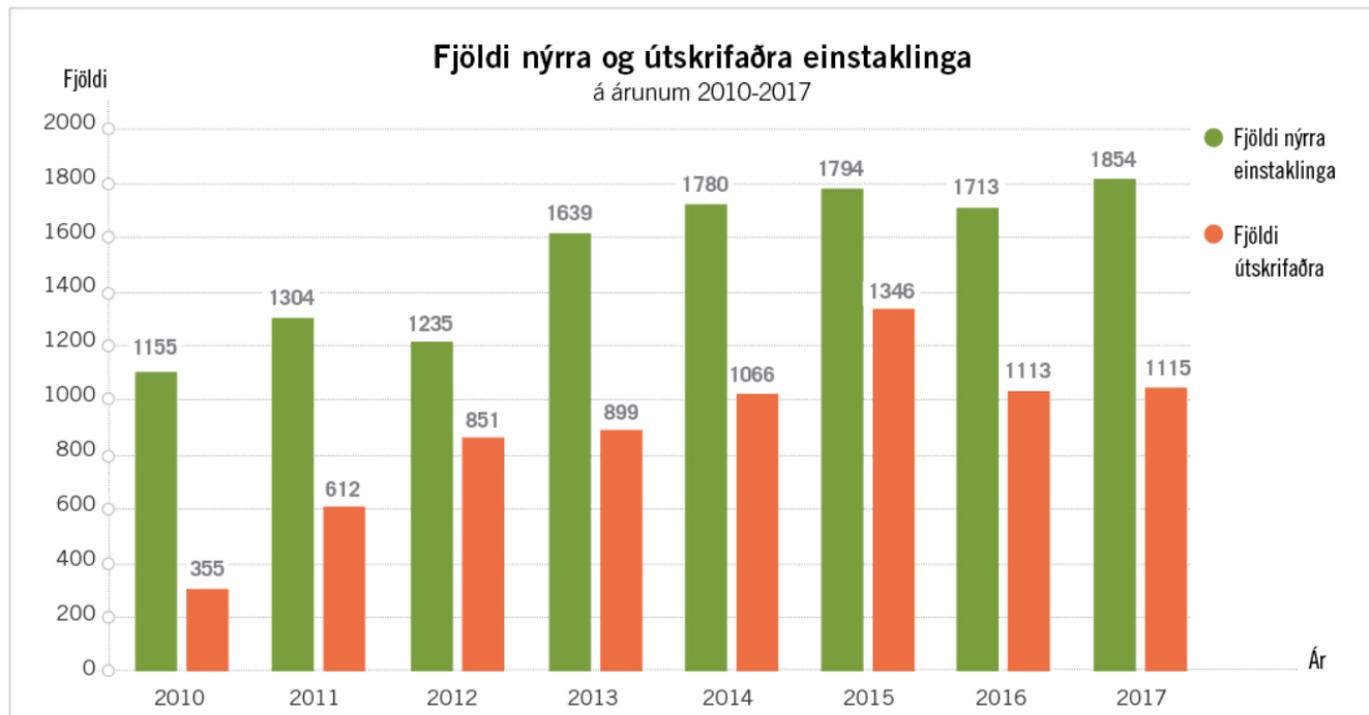
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# New individuals to Virk

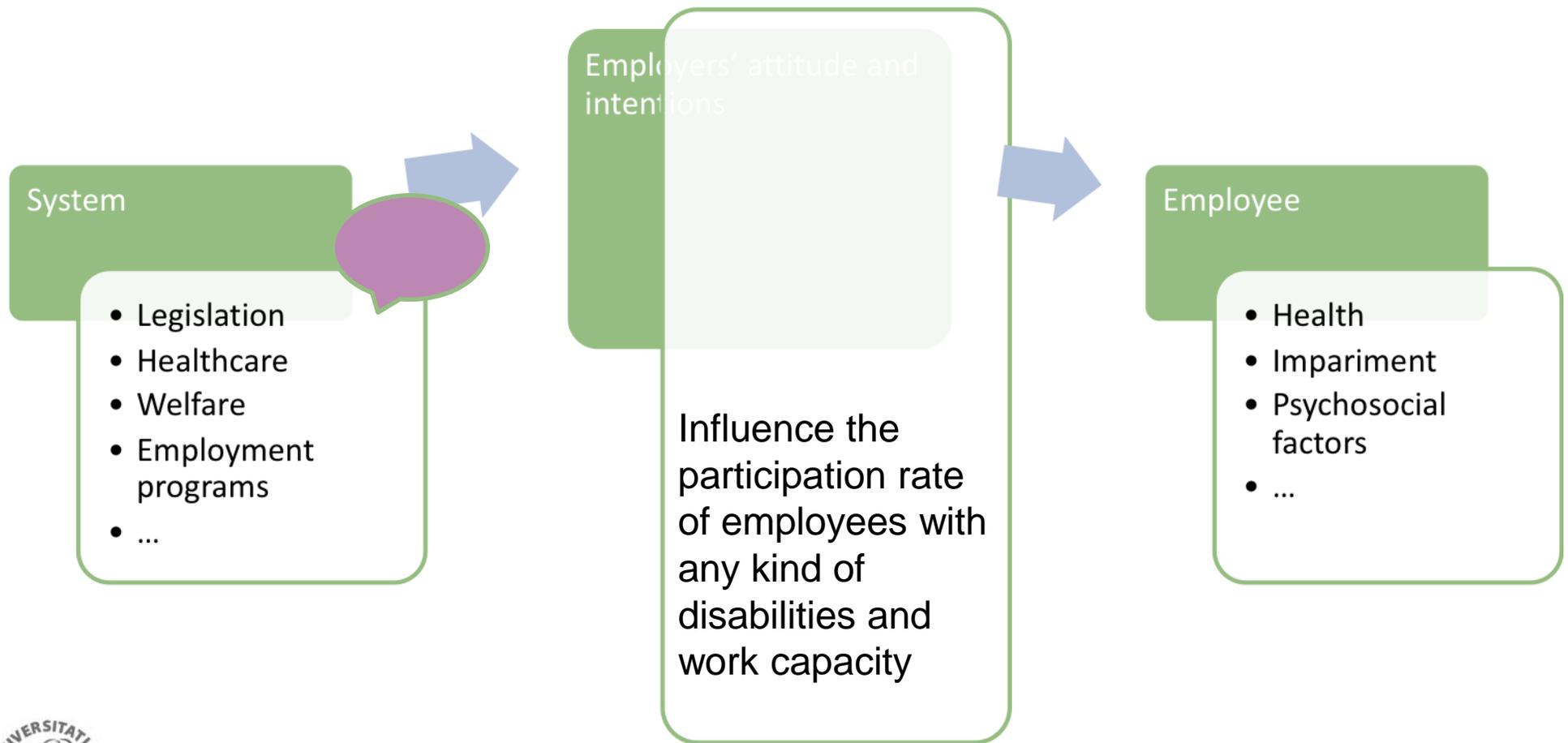
VIRK í tölum





- ‘work disability’ describes a loss of employment or decreased work productivity ostensibly due to an impairment or health condition (Loisel & Cote, 2013).







# On employers' attitude

- Three literature reviews (Hernandez, Keys and Balcazar, 2000 ; Ju, Roberts and Zhang, 2013; Unger, 2002)
- The latest by Ju et al. reveals
  - Is quite similar to those previous reviews which have shown that positive experience of employers is related to positive attitude to hiring
- Types of disability may also affect employers' hiring decisions.





- Among studies which indicated negative attitudes towards hiring workers with disabilities, the major expressed concern regarding the job skills or employability for individuals with disabilities
- The Ju et al. (2013) review reveals more positivity among employers to accommodate workers, f.ex. employers see disabled workers are reliable





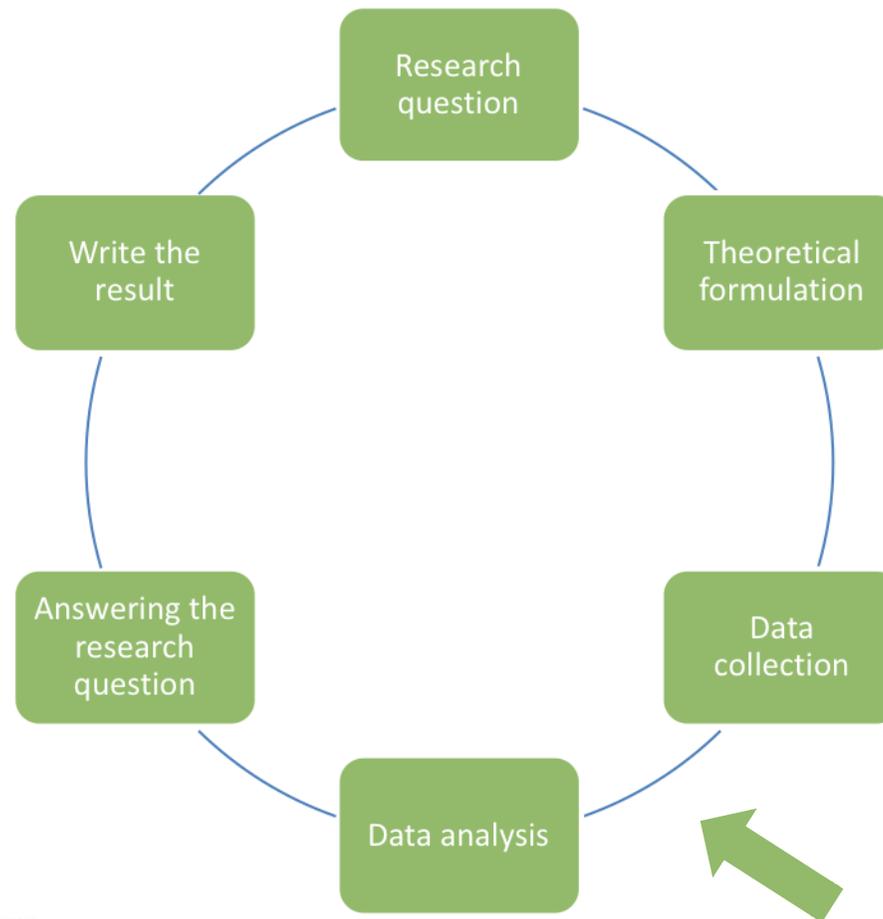
# Aim of the research

- To observe employers' view towards:
  - a) to hire employees with work disabilities
  - b) to retain employees with work disabilities
  - c) to facilitate return to work
- The research received a research grant from VIRK (approx. 4500 euros)





# Qualitative method





# Methods

- Purposeful sampling
- Interviews with 20 managers, 10 from the capital and 10 from the north-east region
- Semi structured interviews with predetermined set of open questions
- Interviews are transcribed





# Type of companies

- 6 private service sector jobs
- 2 public sector - administration
- 2 public sector - service





# On hiring: The companys' policy

- Values
  - Works both ways for employees with disabilities
    - Positive – i.e. “diversity”
    - Negative- i.e. “challenging” “happiness”
- Top managers (owners, board etc) are likely to be vital, i.e. their view on social responsibility or their requirements of profit





# Why they hire employees with disabilities

- Through the official program “supported employment”
- Good previous experience
- When there is lack of staff and lack of applicants





# The jobs

- There needs to be a “win win” in the fit for job
  - Not willing to make a job for an employee with special needs
- In this research we find that they are most likely involved in “simple” jobs or jobs where there is a lack of staff/applicants





# Return to work

- Most companies are supportive of employees who need to be on a long term sickness absence and facilitate return to work
- Mostly it is not a frequent procedure





# When there are troubles

- When there is a high proportion of employees with work disability it is very stressful for the management team
  - Primary prevention is threatened





# Sickness absence

- Younger employees are more frequently sick listed
  - The “cotton kids” have hard time overcoming any kind of obstacles, do not know how to handle simple tasks, are more nervous and frequently call in sick
  - The generation of “having and doing it all”





# Discussion

- It seems that official program for facilitating work for disabled workers is effective
- It seems that there is room for more discussion on inclusive labor market in Iceland
- It seems that there is need to focus on young employees





# Thank you



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