

INCLUSIVITY OF EMPLOYEES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS AND VALUE CREATION IN ORGANISATIONAL SETTINGS

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Abstract. The organisational structure and business strategies of for-profit organisations are built on workforce efficiency, speed, and quality of operations that are largely globally wished to be aligned with sustainability principles. The concept of inclusivity gains more attention in organisational strategies and goals; however, its practical application is nuanced and shaded by different challenges, such as employers' silent ignorance and doubts about the quality of work and efficiency of tasks of persons with special needs. Businesses care about their good reputation, fast processes, and results, keeping non-financial goals on the second hand, if keeping them at all. The inclusive business, the challenges of employing individuals with special needs, and the value they bring to organisations are integral parts of today's world concerns, where equal opportunities are the value of an organisation and society. This article aims to explore value-creation elements and their interdependencies in organisational settings. An explorative study of organisational value creation practices in special needs employees' inclusive organisational research results in confronting the stereotypes by providing subtle evidence and observational insights that employees with special needs, being integrated into the labour market, perform their tasks effectively, are loyal, productive, and responsible, confirming that when socially accepted and physically welcomed by organisational communities they can successfully contribute to creating significant value for businesses, as well as reducing the social burden and costs for society and the country.

Keywords: inclusivity, social inclusion, employees with special needs, organisational setting, value creation.

JEL Classification: A13, J14, L2, L3.

1. Introduction

The principles of sustainability and the integration of social responsibility have become increasingly vital in contemporary business practices. Organisations strive not only to enhance financial performance but also to uphold their corporate reputation, ensuring they are recognised and valued by society. A fundamental aspect of this approach involves fostering inclusive opportunities for employment, participation, engagement, and socialisation – extending beyond racial and other minority groups to include individuals with disabilities.

Although the European Commission has introduced the 2021–2030 strategy to enhance the inclusion of individuals with special needs in the labour market, significant challenges persist. Society, businesses, and individuals with disabilities continue to encounter systemic barriers, including a lack of genuine interest, restricted employment opportunities, stigmatization,

social exclusion, and, in some cases, complete marginalization (Jurado-Caraballo & Quintana-García, 2024). It is essential to emphasize that approximately 20% of the global population has special needs. However, despite widespread awareness of this issue, these individuals still face substantial obstacles in accessing the labour market (Miethlich & Oldenburg, 2019).

Academic research indicates that organisations often fail to implement concrete measures that would facilitate their employment – this shortcoming is particularly evident in the fields of business administration and industrial engineering (Soares, 2019). Moreover, many businesses neglect this issue, failing to invest in essential accommodations such as assistive technology and workplace modifications. As a result, they limit interactions with individuals with disabilities, ultimately leading to their exclusion from the workforce. This exclusion not only undermines their financial independence but also restricts their ability to participate in society, contribute

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meaningfully, and generate value for both businesses and the broader community (Miethlich & Oldenburg, 2019).

Despite the discrimination, difficulties, and structural barriers they encounter, individuals with disabilities should be actively integrated into both society and the labour market. Achieving economic independence and full participation as self-sufficient citizens is essential to fostering social equity and sustainable development (Jurado-Caraballo & Quintana-García, 2024).

Although many authors explore inclusive business practices, the integration of individuals with disabilities into the labour market, and the provision of equal opportunities, a notable research gap persists in the academic literature. Empirical evidence in scientific articles remains insufficient in demonstrating that individuals with disabilities contribute equally to business value creation as their non-disabled counterparts. Therefore, this *article aims* to identify the key elements of value creation and their interconnections within an organisational context.

This study seeks to demonstrate that individuals with disabilities not only have the capacity to generate value for businesses but also are already doing so successfully. Their contributions enhance corporate competitiveness, strengthen brand reputation, drive positive word-of-mouth, engage stakeholders, and, most importantly, support the implementation of sustainable and socially responsible business practices. This perspective underscores the necessity of addressing these challenges not only from an economic standpoint but also through a human-centred and ethical framework.

2. Literature review

2.1. Defining the concept of a person with special needs

Academic literature, as well as publications from various associations representing individuals with disabilities, reveal divergent and often conflicting perspectives on the appropriate terminology for referring to individuals with special needs. For instance, Arzu Forough, President of the Washington Autism Alliance, argues that using the term “special needs” serves as a way to avoid the word “disability,” which is often perceived negatively. This avoidance, however, reinforces stigma, perpetuates stereotypes, and contributes to the perception that individuals labelled as having special needs are viewed more negatively than those referred to as disabled (Forough, 2024). Furthermore, the same article emphasizes a crucial point: individuals with disabilities have the same fundamental needs as everyone else. Therefore, rather than highlighting differences, the focus should be on inclusivity – ensuring that all needs are met equally and equitably (Forough, 2024). Despite these discussions, both terms – “individuals with special needs” and “individuals with disabilities” – remain widely used in academic discourse, with dictionaries often listing them as interchangeable.

It is also important to consider the use of “person-first language” when discussing disability-related terminology. Scholars stress that individuals should never be defined by their condition; language should prioritize the person first instead. For example, the preferred phrasing would be “individuals with disabilities” rather than labelling them by their condition (Apgar, 2021).

In both society and the labour market, perspectives on disability remain inconsistent. In some cases, disability is associated exclusively with visible physical impairments, such as mobility restrictions, hearing loss, or vision impairments (Gould et al., 2022). However, disability is a far broader concept. Academic literature categorizes individuals with special needs into several groups, including those with hearing and visual impairments, intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities, physical or health-related disabilities, emotional or behavioural disorders, speech and communication disorders, and multiple disabilities (Chindo, 2021). Understanding and appropriately using these terms is a crucial aspect of fostering inclusivity. Proper terminology not only helps avoid offense but also ensures that employees with disabilities feel recognized, valued, and integrated into their work environment.

2.2. Defining the concept of inclusive business

The term “inclusive business” in academic literature refers to the involvement of marginalized groups in organisational activities and businesses, intending to achieve both economic and social development (Rolle et al., 2020). Inclusive business is crucial not only for individuals with disabilities but also for businesses and the broader functioning of society and the state. However, the reality often differs. Research highlights that both employees with special needs and organisations face numerous challenges in ensuring equal employment opportunities (Soares, 2019). Necessary resources include special equipment, training programs, tailored support, skill development, and accessibility to individuals with special needs to create a supportive, disability-friendly environment that facilitates successful integration into organisations (Suwintanty & Setyari, 2024). Further studies indicate a lack of specialized entrepreneurial training for employees with special needs, which would enable them to recognize and leverage business opportunities in the market (Popa & Saghin, 2024). Consequently, inclusive businesses can only succeed when they are supported by society, stakeholders, and appropriate policies, with the necessary guidelines in place (Ngah et al., 2023). This collaborative engagement can be observed in the G20, a multilateral forum of 19 countries, including the European Union, where global social and economic issues are actively discussed. Among these issues is integrating individuals with disabilities into the labour market, helping them participate more effectively and easily (Suwintanty & Setyari, 2024).

Moreover, the EU’s strategy for people with disabilities, which is set to be implemented by 2030, provides

more specific measures for individuals with disabilities. This strategy focuses on combating discrimination, addressing legal aspects, offering support, and encouraging states to integrate people with disabilities into the labour market while promoting their entrepreneurship (Popa & Saghin, 2024). In addition, society increasingly expects businesses to be inclusive, urging companies to consider not “whether to be inclusive” but “how to do it correctly?” (Miethlich & Oldenburg, 2019).

Despite the challenges, businesses should strive to integrate individuals with disabilities into the labour market, ensuring that employees have not only the necessary equipment, devices, and training resources but also the respect and opportunities to contribute to societal well-being, feeling valued in the process (Soares, 2019).

2.3. The importance of inclusion for individuals with special needs

Engagement in the labour market, participation in various activities, and being part of different environments are particularly important, and even essential, for individuals with special needs. Unfortunately, although legal regulations encourage individuals with disabilities to engage in the workforce, employees with special needs often choose to work independently due to the discrimination they face (Popa & Saghin, 2024). However, while working independently may offer more flexibility, this approach not only avoids the problem but also limits the acquisition of crucial skills. Academic literature emphasizes that employment plays a significant role in developing personal identity, enhancing social inclusion, improving communication skills, and providing opportunities for growth, self-exploration, and utilising one's talents and potential (Soares, 2019). It is also emphasized that work is particularly important for individuals with special needs due to emotional stability, a reliable source of income, and a sense of independence. Moreover, employment serves a psychological function, allowing individuals to feel valued as society contributors and acknowledge their own worth (Alves et al., 2022). Unfortunately, research shows that many people with special needs experience shame regarding their disabilities, and without societal support, encouragement, and motivation, they face difficulties maintaining psychological well-being, including depression, emotional stress, and exhaustion (Nghah et al., 2023). For these reasons, work and inclusion are far more significant for individuals with special needs than employees without disabilities (Alves et al., 2022). It is argued that acceptance and inclusion for individuals with disabilities help to overcome not only societal stigma, but also promote higher self-esteem, encourage active participation in social life, and contribute to a higher quality of life with fewer limitations (Nghah et al., 2023). It is also important to note that, due to the increasing life expectancy and the continuous progress of radical technologies, the number of people with disabilities globally will only rise, meaning businesses will

increasingly face the challenge of inclusion for such individuals (Apgar, 2021).

2.4. The concept of value creation

Value creation is a crucial aspect for any organisation aiming to establish a strong presence in the market. However, in academic literature, the concept of value is often narrowed down and divided into two main categories: value creation and value capture. This distinction is widely accepted (El Sawy & Pereira, 2013; Hein et al., 2018; Moser & Gassmann, 2016). Value creation describes a set of activities that gradually increase the company's value. It is important to emphasize that value creation does not focus solely on sales, as it is oriented toward building long-term relationships, collaboration, partnerships, reputation, improving customer experience, and promoting social responsibility (Sjödin et al., 2020). In contrast, value capture is primarily concerned with financial indicators. According to academic sources, value capture is defined as “the process through which profit is secured from value creation and this profit is distributed among the participating parties” (Sjödin et al., 2020). It is further detailed that value capture can be achieved by negotiating prices and increasing sales volumes (Minerbo et al., 2021). Other scholarly articles agree, stating that “value capture is the process through which financial or non-financial profit is derived from value creation, often defined as the customer's willingness to pay (or buy), thus generating revenues that the provider can appropriate” (Ritala et al., 2024). Value capture is also described more simply as monetisation of value (Rodrigo et al., 2025). Although considerations of value capture must go beyond the revenue model (Hein et al., 2020) and include non-financial return. Therefore, understanding and distinguishing between these two concepts, identifying their differences, and applying them to business strategies is highly significant. It is essential to highlight that, to ensure organisational success – not only through the growth of financial indicators but also through the establishment of long-term partnerships – it is necessary to align value creation and value capture. This alignment ensures that both processes complement each other, helping the company achieve its goals (Sjödin et al., 2020). Value creation and capture are fundamental components of organisational functioning, as they determine how companies survive and strive to maintain their market position. The literature emphasizes that businesses focused on both value creation and value capture possess greater potential for long-term competitive advantage, as they can address customer needs and collaborate effectively (Sjödin et al., 2020). In addition, value creation is approached as a prerequisite for value capture (Veit et al., 2014). The ability to capture created value is necessary for the survival and prosperity of the company (Laczko et al., 2019). However, “capturing value is often much more difficult than creating it” (Bock & George, 2017). Thus, in academic literature, value is divided into two distinct concepts: value creation and value

capture. While these concepts are closely related, they represent different things: value creation is understood as a long-term process of building partnerships, considering customer preferences, and improving customer experiences, while value capture is viewed through a financial lens – monetization. It is also important to stress that network effects significantly impact value capture. In general, both value creation and value capture are critical phenomena for organisations, as they allow firms to build strong relationships with business partners while improving their financial performance.

2.5. Inclusivity and organisational value creation

Value creation for businesses that integrate and employ individuals with special needs can be both beneficial and effective. It is emphasized that including employees with special needs in the workforce can generate value, directly and indirectly increasing sales and expanding the loyal customer base (Miethlich & Oldenburg, 2019). Although academic literature acknowledges that this topic is relatively rarely analysed, it is recognized that individuals with disabilities represent an underutilized and often overlooked market. By harnessing their labour potential rather than wasting resources, businesses can benefit from this segment, which can positively impact the overall business success (Miethlich & Oldenburg, 2019). First and foremost, research indicates that employees with disabilities possess exceptionally well-developed skills that are highly valued in today's ever-changing labour market: creativity, the ability to find unconventional solutions, thinking outside the box, and loyalty. These traits help create innovative services and foster workforce trust (Jurado-Caraballo & Quintana-García, 2024). Additionally, research shows that individuals with special needs, when working in service-oriented roles, often enhance the customer experience, as they value being served by a colleague with a disability (Miethlich & Oldenburg, 2019). Moreover, it is suggested that individuals with special needs are not only more motivated and enthusiastic about being involved in business but are also more productive, attracting a broader customer base. This is driven more by social rather than economic motivations (Suwityanti & Setyari, 2024). It is also important to note the competitive advantage that organisations gain by including individuals with disabilities. Studies indicate that the inclusion of people with disabilities in the labour market fosters a positive, long-term corporate reputation. It also serves as an effective marketing tool, generating interest both within society and among potential investors (Jurado-Caraballo & Quintana-García, 2024). It is crucial to raise employers' awareness about the importance of including individuals with disabilities in the workforce so that this process is seen not as a legal obligation but as a long-term strategy for business development (Alves et al., 2022). Moreover, efforts should be made to ensure that the inclusion of individuals with special needs in the labour market is not just a one-time initiative but is part of an ongoing process integrated into

the company's long-term business strategy (Gould et al., 2022). In conclusion, studies and the analysis of various authors in academic literature suggest that employees with disabilities are highly valuable, should not be sidelined, and must be included in the labour market. They possess the necessary skills, are creative, loyal, and productive, and can generate value for businesses.

2.6. Labour market perspective regarding employees with special needs

Various protests, discussions, laws, and regulations have been organized to ensure equal rights and promote the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in the labor market. One example is the United Nations Convention, which enshrines states' commitments to eliminate discrimination against individuals with disabilities and ensure that employees with special needs have the freedom to work wherever they wish and that all pathways to the labour market are open and accessible (Jurado-Caraballo & Quintana-García, 2024). Despite the laws and legal regulations enacted and adopted, individuals with disabilities still face dominant stereotypes from employers, along with negative attitudes. It is argued that these attitudes emerged during the Industrial Revolution, when productivity became a key value, and employees with disabilities were considered a hindrance to businesses and society (Apgar, 2021). Moreover, individuals with disabilities are often perceived not as an advantage but as a cost (Gould et al., 2022). Although decades have passed since then, entrenched attitudes and stigmas persist.

Research indicates that employees with special needs are often associated with negative perceptions due to their potential need for additional leave, integration costs, and the prevailing belief in their low productivity and efficiency (Jurado-Caraballo & Quintana-García, 2024). Despite this, it is suggested that companies tend to choose employees whose maintenance costs are lower and whose integration does not require radical changes. As a result, recruitment processes are often based on exclusionary logic, and individuals with disabilities experience discrimination even before being hired due to preconceived biases (Alves et al., 2022).

Scientific literature also describes cases where employers view individuals with disabilities as a burden, avoiding considering their competencies, talents, or skills (Chumo et al., 2023). However, it is important to emphasize that individuals become "disabled" not because of their health condition but due to others' attitudes towards them, lack of opportunities, and being left on the margins (Gould et al., 2022). Due to these attitudes, the inclusion of employees with disabilities in organisations is often regarded as insincere, charitable, or altruistic. These individuals are treated differently from other employees, and double standards are applied (Miethlich & Oldenburg, 2019).

To reduce and ultimately eliminate such long-standing stereotypes, measures must be taken. Developing and implementing these measures requires considerable time

and resources but can help successfully integrate individuals with special needs into the labour market. One of the key elements of such integration is minimizing physical and psychological barriers, including workplace aspects, the ability to work both in the office and remotely, and providing specially adapted working hours that can be flexibly adjusted when needed (Miethlich & Oldenburg, 2019). It is also essential to consider each individual's abilities, talents, and uniqueness to create effective communication processes, assign tasks, and design training programs (Jurado-Caraballo & Quintana-García, 2024).

Academic literature also explains that to include individuals with disabilities in the labour market, the business organisational structure must be changed from the ground up – employees must be educated, an inclusive environment must be created, and established stigmas must be reduced (Gould et al., 2022). Furthermore, it is emphasized that individuals with disabilities must be provided with entrepreneurship training to facilitate their integration (Popa & Saghin, 2024). It is especially important that employees with special needs are not forgotten during meetings and that microphones, subtitles, and visual displays on screens are used to convey critical information (Gould et al., 2022). Therefore, it is essential that organisational and societal support for employees with special needs is based on equal opportunities, rather than sympathy (Ngh et al., 2023). Only then will individuals feel valued, needed, accepted, and independent.

To summarise, our literature review elaborates on connecting the key elements of the topic: the concept of a person with special needs, the concept of inclusive business, and the concept of value creation. We discuss these elements in light of socio-economic organisational settings where businesses consciously prioritise sustainable development and keep the principles of social sustainability at their high, aiming to sustain the interplay between their financial and non-financial performance goals. We draw a holistic understanding of the inclusivity of employees with special needs and value creation as one of the aspects of the inclusivity-focused business.

3. Research methodology

The survey aimed to identify inclusivity-oriented value-creation elements and their interdependencies in an organisational setting. More specifically, we aimed to assess the presence of employees with special needs within organisations, workplace adaptations, inclusion culture, and the value these employees bring to companies.

The study's target population comprises employees working in the private sector in Lithuania, including those employed by individual enterprises. The study employed a pilot survey method to gather primary data from employees in various sectors across Lithuania.

The survey employed a convenience sampling method. Data were collected through a survey sent to

randomly selected employees from the private sector and individual enterprises, ensuring the representation of various sectors.

Respondents were provided with a questionnaire containing both closed and open-ended (reflective, opinion, and suggestion-giving) questions to gather quantitative data alongside the respondents' personal experiences and opinions. The survey template's language was Lithuanian.

Participation in the survey was voluntary, and respondents were informed of the survey's purpose and the anonymity of the data provided.

Our empirical research is built on an exploratory research design. Our research results from the descriptive data analysis are supported by publicly presented globally operating organizational practices. To contextualize the findings, this study compares the trends of workplace inclusion in Lithuania's business environment with global best practices. This comparative analysis helps identify potential gaps in Lithuanian companies.

4. Data analysis

4.1. Results from employees in Lithuanian businesses

Participants' firmographic profile. The survey involved 61 research participants from various sectors: customer service, retail, education, information technology, public administration, the arts, medicine, and manufacturing. The participants were employed in companies of different sizes, with responses being evenly distributed. The majority (32.8%) worked in large enterprises, while the smallest proportion (18%) were employed in micro-enterprises. The results gathered from employees working in Lithuanian businesses indicate that only 14.8% of companies employ individuals with special needs/disabilities. In comparison, 24.6% were not aware if their organisation employed persons with disabilities. This lack of awareness may suggest that companies are not dedicating sufficient attention to employee education, discussions, or training on this topic.

Organisational perceived readiness to accept employees with special needs. Additionally, nearly half of the respondents (41%) reported that their workplace is not adequately adapted for individuals with special needs, and almost the same proportion (34.4%) stated that the inclusion culture within their company is very low, meaning that the business is not inclusive concerning people with special needs.

Although the majority of surveyed employees claim that businesses are not inclusive, are not adapted for people with disabilities, and do not organize training or education on the importance of including people with special needs or why they need jobs, nearly half of the respondents (45.9%) emphasize that such training would be highly beneficial and necessary.

Organisational physical readiness to accept employees with special needs. When analysing the facilities essential for individuals with special needs, respondents

highlighted a lack of elevators, automatic doors, designated rest areas, quiet rooms, wider corridors, more accessible kitchen spaces, and workplace adaptations. Respondents also noted that employees with disabilities often require an assistant to help them open doors, access premises, or reach their workstations. This frequently causes discomfort for the employee, as it limits their independence and may contribute to social exclusion.

Inclusion-and-exclusion paradox in employment settings. In the survey, the respondents additionally emphasised that some companies only offer remote work opportunities to employees with disabilities. While this may provide employment opportunities, it also reinforces exclusion, as individuals with special needs are denied the chance to socialise and engage in face-to-face interactions.

How much and to what extent do organisations sufficiently adapt workplaces to employees with special needs? The remaining respondents stated that organisations should implement all the necessary facilities for individuals with special needs, as most workplaces lack adequate adaptations. Only a small proportion of respondents indicated that their offices are located in newly constructed buildings, where by law, specific accessibility features must be in place. However, respondents raised an important question: even if facilities are appropriately adapted for individuals with disabilities, is that sufficient? Would the installation of necessary facilities alone be sufficient, or should the development of an inclusive culture and educational initiatives also be emphasised?

Organisational value creation fostered by employees with special needs. Finally, respondents were asked about the greatest value employees with disabilities create or can create for a company. Their responses highlighted that these employees, drawing from their accumulated life experiences, can generate creative, innovative, and uniquely insightful ideas. They also bring a fresh perspective and strengthen the organization's reputation, brand, and image. Respondents further noted that employees with disabilities foster a sense of community, diversity, and equality while teaching others tolerance, acceptance, and patience. This, in turn, motivates other employees to become more engaged in their work and contributes to creating a positive work environment.

A few respondents also emphasised that employees with disabilities create the same value as other employees but also help reduce stigma and challenge entrenched stereotypes. Moreover, they encourage others to see the employee beyond their disability – to perceive them as equals within the workforce.

In summarising the study and its findings, it can be concluded that businesses operating in Lithuania are not fully inclusive towards individuals with special needs. There is not only a lack of necessary facilities but also an insufficient focus on education and the development of an inclusive organisational culture. Although it is widely acknowledged and undisputed that employees with disabilities can create significant value for companies, they

remain underrepresented in the labour market, thereby reinforcing social exclusion.

4.2. Overview of globally operating organisations

An analysis of the article by the International Labour Organisation (2023) reveals a significantly different perspective. One of the best-known companies in the cosmetics industry, L'Oréal, has developed a program dedicated to individuals with special needs and their inclusion in the workforce. The program includes employment and focuses on ongoing career development, continuous training, and task assignments.

Another example is Repsol, an energy and oil sector company, which opens doors for individuals with intellectual disabilities by adapting workplaces, providing necessary training and job coaches, and stating that many individuals with disabilities have successfully integrated into the labour market.

Another example is BNP Paribas, a globally operating company representing the banking industry. This company is the only global network dedicated to employees with disabilities. Its main focus is continuous learning and education. The company and its employees participate in conferences and training sessions to improve their knowledge, enabling them to assist individuals with disabilities in entering the workforce.

Lastly, Inditex, a company in the fashion industry, is committed not only to hiring a more significant number of individuals with disabilities but also to ensuring that the labour market is completely open and freely accessible. It is emphasized that individuals with disabilities are employed in well-known stores such as Pull&Bear, Stradivarius, Zara, and Oysho, and some are also responsible for logistics and order management.

5. Conclusions

A review of various authors' academic articles and the survey results reveals that including employees with special needs in the labour market remains a significant issue. Despite implementing laws, regulations, and discussions in forums, this problem has yet to be fully addressed and adapted in a way that is accessible and suitable for all.

Although both the articles and the survey emphasize that individuals with disabilities create considerable value for businesses – stimulating more creative thinking, fostering unconventional and interesting solutions, enhancing company reputation, increasing competitive advantage, and indirectly contributing to higher sales – businesses are not adequately prepared to open their doors to employees with disabilities or integrate them into the labour market. It is evident that businesses lack not only a more open and inclusive culture of thinking but also the necessary equipment, ergonomic workplaces, elevators, alternative layout solutions, parking spaces, training, and comprehensive education.

While attention should be focused on how organisations must adapt to employ individuals with special needs, the current focus is still on the adaptation of employees with disabilities. For example, they are often required to hire assistants to help them safely access their workplace, or they are expected to consider remote work or even forego work altogether.

Thus, despite the prevailing stigma and stereotypes in society, employees with disabilities are indeed productive, responsible, loyal, and talented individuals who generate and create value for businesses. Unfortunately, as shown by the conducted study, most organisations operating in Lithuania are not prepared to hire such employees, which is largely due to deeply rooted stereotypes, the costs associated with installing specialized equipment, training, and employee education. Lithuanian companies are failing to leverage the talent available in the market by not providing the necessary tools that could ultimately help businesses thrive.

Additionally, the human factor is not being taken into account. There is a need for individuals with disabilities to communicate, socialize, feel important, accepted, and needed, and enter the workforce not only for economic reasons but also for social reasons.

In contrast to Lithuania, countless businesses globally are opening doors to individuals with special needs, publicizing their efforts, incorporating them into annual reports, and proudly contributing to including employees with disabilities in the labour market. This benefits not only individuals with special needs but also the companies. By doing so, they more effectively generate and create value, attract public interest, and gain a competitive edge over other businesses.

As for practical implications, we believe that organisations must go through a step-wise model of actions, starting from setting a proper physical infrastructure and continuing to develop and foster their organisational culture in that way so that the organisation engages itself in taking a path of understanding and learning to accept employees with special needs, and aims that inclusivity would be open, supported, respected, and valuable among all its stakeholders, including customers. The management of organisations should consider, among others, at job places, introducing employee-with-special-needs mentorship, coaching, or assistance schemes, new organisational structures of teamwork frameworks, and renewed employee performance evaluation and organisational value creation schemes. Our research suggests that the inclusivity schemes may lead to raising tolerance and acceptance levels among team or organisation members as well as may lead to contributing to organizational creativity as an additional value creation source for aiming for better organisational performance.

Disclosure statement

We declare that we do not have any competing financial, professional, or personal interests from other parties.

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