



## COMPETITION AND INCLUSION: THE TRANSFORMATIVE ROLE OF COMPANIES IN SOCIETY

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**Maria Ines Vasconcelos<sup>1</sup>**

#### **Summary**

This article addresses the relationship between competition and inclusion, highlighting the crucial role of companies in promoting diversity. The ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) concept directs companies to consider not only profit, but also their social impact and environmental. In Brazil, despite the growing number of registrations of people with disabilities, only 1% are employed, revealing a challenge in inclusion in the job market. Companies that promote diversity reap the benefits, driving innovation and attracting talent diverse. Compliance with ESG and the creation of robust inclusion policies are essential for a more egalitarian society.

**Keywords:** Competition, Inclusion, Companies, ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance), Diversity.

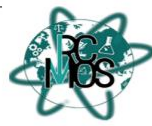
#### **Abstract**

This article addresses the relationship between competition and inclusion, highlighting the crucial role of companies in promoting diversity. The ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) concept directs companies to consider not only profit, but also their social and environmental impact. In Brazil, despite the growing number of enrollments of people with disabilities, only 1% are employed, revealing a challenge in inclusion in the job market. Companies that promote diversity reap benefits, driving innovation and attracting diverse talent. Compliance with ESG and the creation of robust inclusion policies are essential for a more equal society.

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## 1. Introduction

Today, the intricate link between corporate competitiveness and the promotion of social inclusion plays a central role in discussions on corporate social responsibility. In this context, the ESG concept, encompassing the Environmental, Social and Governance spheres, emerges as a guiding principle for organizations in broadening the scope of their assessments and decision-making. The remarkable complexity of ensuring the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in the labor market stands out as a pressing challenge, highlighting the need to adopt a more comprehensive and holistic approach to this issue.

## 2. Company Characterization

Contemporary businesses face an imperative that transcends their traditional role as mere economic agents. They are called upon to play a transformative role in building a society that is not only economically prosperous, but also socially just and environmentally sustainable.

This calling transcends the strictly economic and financial imperatives that have historically dominated the business landscape. By embracing this expanded mission, organizations assume deeper and more comprehensive responsibilities that go far beyond the pursuit of financial profit. They embody meaningful commitments to the community in which they operate and to the environment we share, recognizing that their impact transcends the boundaries of the business world. Thus, the contemporary business vision seeks a balance between economic prosperity, social justice, and environmental sustainability, recognizing that these three pillars are interdependent and essential to building a truly inclusive and equitable society.

## 3. Characterization of Educational Institutions

Educational institutions play a fundamental and multifaceted role in society, shaping not only intellectual development but also preparing individuals for successful entry into the workforce. These institutions bear the burden of responsibility for ensuring that their students are adequately prepared to meet the dynamic and complex demands of business and society as a whole.

The responsibility of educational institutions goes beyond the simple transmission of knowledge; includes the mission of cultivating a highly skilled and adaptable workforce capable of contributing effectively to the economy and society at large. This mission takes on a special dimension when it comes to students with disabilities, where the



guaranteeing equal opportunities and access to inclusive education become indisputable imperatives.

In this context, inclusive education emerges as a key element. It requires adapting teaching methods and infrastructure to accommodate the individual needs of students with disabilities, in order to ensure that they can acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to enter the job market on an equal footing. Furthermore, adaptive education, which focuses on personalizing the curriculum and developing practical skills, plays a crucial role in preparing students with disabilities for professional life. Thus, educational institutions have a responsibility to play a central role in promoting inclusion and training qualified professionals, regardless of their physical or cognitive abilities.

#### 4. Attitudinal Barriers

On the path towards the effective inclusion of people with disabilities in the labor market, legal barriers represent only part of the challenge. In addition to the legal provisions that seek to guarantee equal opportunities, attitudinal barriers emerge as equally relevant obstacles and, at times, more difficult to overcome. These barriers reside in the deep-rooted perceptions, attitudes and prejudices that persist in society and in the workplace.

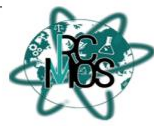
Changing mindsets and attitudes is a crucial step towards full inclusion.

Awareness, sensitization and education emerge as essential tools in eliminating these attitudinal barriers. Awareness involves spreading knowledge about issues related to people with disabilities, challenging stereotypes and prejudices. Sensitization, in turn, seeks to create empathy and understanding, encouraging people to adopt more inclusive perspectives. Education plays a fundamental role in promoting understanding of the needs and capabilities of people with disabilities, encouraging acceptance and appreciation of their diversity.

Therefore, overcoming attitudinal barriers requires a continuous and comprehensive effort, which goes beyond legal obligations and is based on building a more inclusive and diverse culture. Raising awareness and sensitizing people to the importance of equal opportunities, regardless of physical or cognitive abilities, is a fundamental step in building truly inclusive and equitable work environments.

#### 5. The Benefit of Continuous Payment

The Continuous Benefit (BPC) plays a prominent role as a social instrument that aims to facilitate the inclusion of people with disabilities in the labor market. This program represents an important financial support targeted at families that have members with disabilities. The BPC has the potential to act as a



significant incentive for effective inclusion and the promotion of equal opportunities.

The BPC is an income transfer program aimed at people with disabilities and elderly people in situations of socioeconomic vulnerability. By providing financial assistance to these families, the program aims to reduce inequality and promote the quality of life of people with disabilities. In relation to the labor market, the BPC can represent a valuable incentive for people with disabilities to seek inclusion in the professional environment.

One way in which BPC can facilitate inclusion in the labor market is by providing financial support that alleviates the economic pressures faced by families caring for members with disabilities. This allows these families more flexibility to invest in education, training and adaptations needed to facilitate the entry or continuation of a member with a disability in the labor market.

Furthermore, BPC can act as an incentive for companies to actively consider including people with disabilities in their workforce, as the benefit can provide an additional layer of financial security for employees with disabilities. This can reduce concerns related to financial stability while also promoting diversity in the workplace.

However, it is important to note that the BPC must be combined with other support measures and inclusion policies to achieve its full potential in promoting inclusion in the labour market. Collaboration between the public sector, the private sector and civil society is essential to create an environment in which persons with disabilities can not only access the labour market, but also thrive and contribute meaningfully to society. Therefore, the BPC represents an important resource for promoting inclusion, but its success requires an integrated approach and a continued commitment to building a more just and inclusive society.

## 6. Training and Qualifications Provided by the Company

Companies' commitment to inclusion is not limited to hiring people with disabilities; it goes beyond that, encompassing the training and professional development of these employees. In this context, companies play a crucial role in the training and qualification of their employees, regardless of their physical or cognitive abilities. This is reflected in the creation of personalized training programs adapted to the specific needs of these professionals.

Providing tailored training is a key step towards promoting inclusion. This means that companies not only recognize the importance of providing job opportunities, but also of empowering their employees with disabilities so that they can perform their jobs effectively and productively. These training programs are designed to meet individual needs,



taking into account any necessary adaptations, such as assistive technology or adjustments to the work environment.

Furthermore, tailored training aims to develop specific skills that are compatible with market demands. This not only enables employees with disabilities to perform their roles competently, but also provides them with an opportunity for continued professional growth and development. Access to tailored training not only benefits employees with disabilities, but also enriches companies as their teams become more diverse and able to meet a variety of needs and challenges.

Furthermore, investing in personalized training and qualifications demonstrates a company's commitment to promoting inclusion and valuing diversity in the workplace. This not only contributes to a more inclusive organizational culture, but also strengthens the company's reputation as an employer that cares about the well-being and development of its employees.

In short, training and qualification programs provided by companies play a key role in promoting inclusion and professional development for employees with disabilities. They are an essential component in ensuring that all team members have the opportunity to contribute fully and thrive in an equal and inclusive work environment.

## 7. Workers with a Purely Contractual Position

To ensure effective inclusion of workers with disabilities, companies must adopt an approach that goes beyond a mere contractual relationship. Simply hiring employees with disabilities is not enough; it is essential to foster an organizational culture that values diversity and equality. This involves creating truly inclusive and welcoming work environments, where employees are not just expected to fulfill a contract, but to contribute fully and thrive within the organization.

The approach that goes beyond the strictly contractual recognizes that inclusion is not just about numbers or meeting quotas, but about creating an environment where all voices and perspectives are respected and valued. This means that the company must go beyond complying with legal obligations and actively promote diversity in all aspects of its operation. This includes not only hiring, but also creating human resources policies and practices that ensure equal opportunities, as well as fostering a culture that celebrates diversity.

This approach is in line with the recognition that inclusion is not just a benevolent act, but a smart strategy for business success. Diversity of experiences and perspectives enriches decision-making, promotes innovation, and boosts overall company performance. Workers who feel valued and included tend to be more engaged and productive, contributing more meaningfully to the organization's goals.



Creating inclusive and welcoming workplaces is not only a social responsibility, but also a competitive advantage. Companies that adopt this approach not only fulfill their social mission, but also position themselves more attractively in the talent market and improve their reputation with customers and society at large.

### **8. Productive When in Positions of Their Competence**

The inclusion of people with disabilities in the labor market should not be seen only as an obligation or a social responsibility action. It should be guided by a strategic approach that recognizes the intrinsic value of the diversity of skills and competencies. Placing these professionals in positions compatible with their skills and competencies not only benefits workers, but also enhances the productivity and overall performance of companies.

By adopting a strategic approach to inclusion, companies recognize that diverse talent is a valuable asset. Each individual brings a unique set of skills, experiences, and perspectives. Leveraging these differences and assigning tasks based on individual competencies allows companies to optimize their human capital.

When workers with disabilities are placed in positions that are aligned with their skills and competencies, they tend to be more engaged and effective in their roles. This not only promotes personal and professional fulfillment for these professionals, but also improves the efficiency and quality of the work performed.

Additionally, strategic talent allocation contributes to a more harmonious and collaborative work environment. Collaboration between team members who have different strengths and experiences enriches problem-solving and innovation. This diversity of perspectives can lead to creative solutions and better decision-making.

### **9. Conclusion**

Promoting the social and labor inclusion of people with disabilities not only fulfills the social function of companies, but is also essential for building a more just and inclusive society. The effective implementation of the ESG concept serves as a guide for companies, encouraging the adoption of sustainable and responsible practices that integrate inclusion into their essence. To overcome the inclusion paradox, it is essential that companies act proactively, developing robust policies and programs that are aligned with the organizational culture. This contributes to a more egalitarian and inclusive society, in line with the principles of the Brazilian Constitution. As companies embrace diversity and inclusion, they not only improve their own results, but also promote a positive transformation throughout society.



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