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The promotion of recruitment and selection of employees with autism spectrum disorder:

A qualitative meta-analysis.

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Resumo

A inclusão de indivíduos com Transtorno do Espectro Autista (TEA) no mercado de trabalho tem ganho relevância, apresentando desafios e oportunidades dentro da diversidade no local de trabalho. Embora o diagnóstico de TEA tenha aumentado nos últimos anos, coincidindo com o aumento da inclusão da neurodiversidade, há uma persistência das elevadas taxas de desemprego. Este estudo foca-se na forma como são promovidos o recrutamento e seleção de colaboradores com TEA, com foco em Práticas de Recursos Humanos (RH). Baseado numa meta-análise qualitativa, sintetiza a literatura atual, para fornecer noções de barreiras e facilitadores nestas contratações. As principais conclusões destacam os equívocos e desconhecimento entre empregadores, a importância de práticas personalizadas e a necessidade de ajustes de apoio no local de trabalho. O estudo destaca o papel vital dos gestores de RH na promoção de um ambiente inclusivo que destaque as qualidades únicas dos colaboradores com TEA.

Palavras-chave: autismo, Transtorno do Espectro do Autismo, recrutamento e seleção, empregabilidade, neurodiversidade

Número de palavras: 7973

Abstract

The inclusion of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the labour market has been gaining relevance, presenting both challenges and opportunities within workplace diversity. Although diagnoses of ASD have increased over the past years, coinciding with the rise of neurodiversity inclusion, unemployment rates persist. This study examines how the recruitment and selection of employees with ASD are promoted, focusing on Human Resources (HR) practices. Based on a qualitative meta-analysis, it synthesises current literature to provide notions of barriers and facilitators in hiring people with ASD. Key findings highlight the misconceptions and unfamiliarity among employers, the importance of tailored practices and the need for supportive workplace adjustments. The study underscores the vital role of HR managers in fostering an inclusive environment that enhances the unique strengths of employees with ASD.

Keywords: autism, autism spectrum disorder, recruitment and selection, employment, neurodiversity

Number of words:7973

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Introduction

The inclusion of individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is increasing in today's labour market, presenting both challenges and opportunities for workplace diversity. Diagnoses of ASD have risen over the past two decades, coinciding with a growing trend towards embracing neurodiversity (Faras et al., 2010; Yu & Sterponi, 2023). Neurodiversity refers to the natural variation in human brain function and neurological development, including conditions such as ASD. Therefore, Human Resources literature increasingly focuses on mechanisms to improve work experiences for employees with ASD. Additionally, organisations aim to develop training programs to equip employers with the necessary skills to recruit and retain people with ASD.

Research on autism and the recruitment and selection of employees with autism has been going on for several years. This focus is a result of the high unemployment rates faced by individuals with ASD, highlighting the need to address their employment rights as if they were neurotypical (Davies et al., 2023). National and European legislation is progressing, yet the pace remains slow due to limited knowledge. Despite the documented benefits of hiring employees with ASD, such as increased productivity and reliability (Lindsay et al., 2019), employer hesitancy remains due to misconceptions. The literature offers limited solutions to overcome barriers.

Employers have a responsibility to educate and support employees with ASD. However, their role in this process still needs to be clarified. Human Resources Management (HR) practices like flexible work arrangements, workplace accommodations, and support systems positively affect employment outcomes for autistic employees (Scott et al., 2022). However, their effectiveness in this context needs strong empirical evidence (Erickson et al., 2014). Existing solutions often rely on experience and testimonial evidence, highlighting the need for robust research with sustained findings. This study aims to address this gap by investigating the question "How is the recruitment and selection of employees with autism spectrum disorder promoted?". It will

consider the limitations identified, focusing on evidence-based practices for positive change.

The importance of this topic ultimately falls on the skills that a human resources manager must possess. As the person responsible for satisfying both parties, the human resources manager must have the necessary tools to work with anyone, regardless of their characteristics. Human resources must be able to attract and retain the best professionals (Jamshidi et al., 2012). As people with ASD are very methodical and focused, they can be the best workers in some more analytical areas (Ha et al., 2015). A human resources professional familiar with ASD has the potential to improve employment outcomes for individuals with ASD.

We chose a qualitative meta-analysis (QMA) to answer our research question. A QMA allows us to analyse the newest literature, gain a broader understanding of a theme, and discuss specific matters in detail. The information was processed using content analysis (Timulak, 2009). The presentation of the work is divided into 4 main sections. The theoretical framework is the first section, where the contextualisation of the problem is made. The literature addresses the categorisation of ASD, the perspectives of stakeholders in the labour market and its integration into the law. Emphasis is placed on barriers experienced by employees diagnosed with ASD as they enable continuous process improvement. Methodology follows, providing an exposition of the information collection process for carrying out the QMA. After content analysis, the results are discussed, and the articles included in the QMA are discussed, presented, and concluded. Lastly, the final conclusions of the research are presented, concluding the work.

Theoretical Framework

Autism Categorisation

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex neurodevelopmental disorder that affects a person's perception and interaction with the world. ASD is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterised by reduced social interaction, communication impairments and inflexible behaviour (Celis Alcalá & Georgina Ochoa Madrigal, 2022). It is increasingly common, and studies on the subject are growing. However, ASD falls into a grey area when it comes to categorisation. While some consider it an illness, others believe it to be a disability. Trevarthen (2000) states that ASD cannot be considered a disease due to the lack of a cure. The term "disability" is a short expression to identify impairments that result from disease and injury or the mental, emotional and physical functional restrictions or obstacles a person has as an outcome of these impairments (Altman, 2014). Poland is an example which, to this day, assigns people with autism the code that indicates a disability (Perkowski & Oksztulski, 2018). Although the ICD-11 (International Classification of Diseases) and the DSM-5 (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) classify it as a mental disorder, organisations tend to consider it a disability.

ASD refers to three of the five pervasive developmental disorders: autistic disorder, Asperger's disorder and pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS). Experts diagnose these three based on impairments in communication, reciprocal social interaction and repetitive and stereotyped patterns of restricted behaviours or interests (Dücker et al., 2023). Autistic disorder involves simultaneously the three impairments mentioned before. Asperger's Syndrome, considered "high-functioning autism", requires autistic symptoms without significant language delay. PDD-NOS is diagnosed when symptoms match the triad but do not fit specific criteria (Faras et al., 2010). The presentation of these disabilities varies in extent and severity and often changes with the acquisition of other developmental skills.

The estimate of the diagnosis of ASD indicates a prevalence of around 20 in 10.000 individuals (Fombonne, 2009), although estimates tend to vary. This variability is partly due to evolving diagnostic criteria for ASD. Kanner first

recognised ASD in 1943, but formal diagnostic criteria were not established until the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Third Edition, was published. Before this publication, the lack of standardised criteria introduces inconsistencies in retroactive diagnoses (Faras et al., 2010 & Matson & Kozlowski, 2011). Historical trends suggest an increase in diagnoses, highlighting the importance of careful consideration in recruitment and selection processes to ensure the well-being of individuals diagnosed with ASD.

Discrimination and Intersectionality

Entering the job market can be an intimidating process. For people with ASD, this transition can be especially important as they are aware of their unique characteristics. Like most young people, a primary aspiration of people diagnosed with ASD is gaining successful employment (Hendricks, 2010). As defends Article 23 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: " Every human being has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to fair and well-designed working conditions and protection against unemployment". Employment is a vital community inclusion opportunity for people with ASD. Positive outcomes associated with employment can increase cognitive functioning, improve social interactions and integration and improve quality of life.

Ensuring compliance with the employment rights of individuals with ASD requires organisational preparedness. This crucial life stage presents unique challenges, highlighting the importance of individual preparedness, but more critically, organisational readiness. Traditional management techniques may be insufficient; companies must develop additional skills to effectively manage and facilitate this transition. To mitigate the inherent difficulties of this phase and minimise its impact on the broader workforce, businesses require a comprehensive understanding of ASD and access to specialised expertise (Dillenburger et al., 2013). Social communication deficits pose significant barriers to employment opportunities and workplace participation for individuals with ASD. These impairments create obstacles between employees and employers, potentially leading to unemployment. Unemployment can evoke feelings of shame, often prompting individuals to conceal their situation (Sundar

et al., 2018), as evidenced by personal observations and international studies indicating a 60% unemployment rate among adults with ASD. Individuals with ASD face such high unemployment rates due to factors such as discrimination and intersectionality.

Intersectionality is an important concept that highlights overlapping disadvantages. It is “the idea that people have several individual statuses simultaneously and that these statuses intersect in different ways” (Crenshaw, 1989). These statuses are gender, ethnicity, class, age and, recently, disability. (Golpadas et al., 2013). According to the literature, gender, disability, and ethnicity are significant employment predictors. (Witte et al., 2022). Eurostat studies historically show that women have higher unemployment rates than men. They also present higher unemployment rates for Black, Asian and Hispanic people than for White people. People diagnosed with ASD can be affected not only by their gender, ethnicity, age or other factors but also by their neurodivergence. Acknowledging these intersecting factors can raise awareness and emphasise the importance of inclusive strategies to promote equity in employment opportunities.

Inclusion in the Labour Market

People with ASD can struggle to find employment due to organisational limitations in recognising and accommodating their strengths. To address this, companies must develop recruitment and selection practices that appreciate the individuality of those diagnosed with ASD, turning their unique attributes into assets (Luthans, 2002). Our focus is to explore organisational obligations to hire individuals with disabilities, mainly focusing on ASD. In addition, our goal is to understand the skills necessary for Human Resources professionals to recruit individuals with ASD successfully. Organisations must adopt an accepting and inclusive approach to autism, recognising diversity and providing essential support and resources so autistic people can reach their full potential.

The present study also explores the law’s perspective regarding lawyers’ perspective regarding the recruitment and selection of people with reduced capacities, focusing on individuals diagnosed with ASD. Perkowski and Oksztulski (2018) state that people with reduced capacities are classified as

people with disabilities. People with reduced sensory or intellectual efficiency or functional capacity are included here. Legally, in the European Union, Article 5 of the Council Directive 75/78 of 27/11/2000 states, “To guarantee compliance with the principle of equal treatment about persons with disabilities, reasonable accommodation shall be provided.” This means that employers must take appropriate measures, where needed in a particular case, to enable a person to have access to, participate in, or advance in employment or to undergo training unless such measures would impose a disproportionate burden on the employer. This burden shall not be disproportionate when it is sufficiently remedied by measures existing within the framework of the disability policy of the Member State concerned.

Individuals with ASD face multiple barriers in the workplace. Hedley et al. (2018) identified unpredictability as a primary concern, with unexpected events, such as computer malfunctions and delays, leading to anxiety and stress. Difficulties in learning new tasks and managing time were also reported with worsening by co-occurring attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Additionally, social interactions create hurdles, particularly in understanding workplace relationships, and although participants acknowledged the necessity of social engagement for integration, it caused unease.

Adjustments in the Workplace

The literature suggests organisations should make environmental modifications, behavioural adjustments and organisational support to ease their integration. From the employers’ point of view, people with ASD can excel in specific tasks where their attention to detail is an asset and their dedication and unique perspectives can benefit the organisation (Giarelli et al., 2013). As the literature states that employment of individuals with ASD can have significant economic benefits, we explored the employer’s perspective further. Dreaver et al. (2020) focused on 4 steps essential to the employment of someone diagnosed with ASD by the employer:

Table 1: 4 essential steps to inclusive employment

Training	Recognition for formal training from the HR department to perform the job correctly by
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	identifying people with ASD and adapting the interview mode.
Job Match	People with ASD tend to focus on a topic they like and study until they become specialists. Correctly matching employees to their jobs maximises their potential. It ensures that the roles and responsibilities align with the person’s preferences and capabilities.
Work environment	Support systems, from recruitment to ongoing employment, must be in place to address obstacles. Flexibility, such as remote work, can benefit people with autism. A general workplace culture ensures mutual respect between employers, increasing the chances of successful outcomes for people with ASD. A safe environment, both physically and psychologically, besides being critical, can help individuals with ASD to prosper.
Support systems	Peer support and mental health programs are encouraged as they guide people with ASD in a significant change. People with ASD struggle with deviation from routine, and support can ease the stress and anxiety associated.

Note: adapted text into table From: Dreaver, J., Thompson, C., Girdler, S., Adolfsson, M., Black, M. H., & Falkmer, M. (2020). Success Factors Enabling Employment for Adults on the Autism Spectrum from Employers’ Perspective. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 50(5), 1657–1667. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-019-03923-3>

Changes before the interview stage were also identified as crucial. Scott et al. (2019) emphasised that changes should begin with the job announcement, as it is often the initial point of contact for job seekers. Traditional methods rely on vague language and general skills, such as “social-communication skills,” which may not be relevant to the specific role. Job announcements should prioritise clarity and brevity, focusing on identifying essential skills and experience while acknowledging additional qualifications respectfully. Such requirements can keep individuals with ASD from applying,

as they may interpret descriptions literally. A better understanding of these challenges encourages the development of inclusive and equitable recruitment practices. This study uses a qualitative meta-analysis to explore how organisations promote the recruitment and selection of employees with autism spectrum disorder. It also aims to identify current challenges and develop strategies that foster an environment where individuals with ASD can thrive and receive recognition.

By understanding these challenges, we can try to create practices for inclusivity and equal opportunities within organisations. The present study is a qualitative meta-analysis and aims to answer the following research question: “How is the recruitment and selection of employees with autism spectrum disorder promoted?”. It also seeks to identify existing challenges and pave the way for informed strategies to create an environment where people with ASD can prosper and are recognised and valued.

Methodology

We conducted this study using a qualitative meta-analysis (QMA), a research method that relies on secondary data analysis. QMA involves qualitatively analysing and synthesising the findings from previously published primary studies, so it will not discover new empirical observations. The main focus is to identify patterns in research methods, spot recurring issues in the literature, generate new insights and suggest directions for future research (APA, 2020). As QMA can help identify common methodological challenges and allows a deeper understanding of the complexities regarding a subject by going beyond what quantitative methods alone can offer (Kant et al., 2023), it proved to be an asset to Human Resource Management (HRM) and to the development of this study.

One of the first steps in a QMA is to define the research question. The research question is the primary factor determining the scope of the study and which concepts or types of interventions will be examined. It will set the limits for what will be included in the analysis and guide the selection of relevant variables and interventions the study will focus on (Hansen et al., 2022). We aimed to explore the integration of individuals diagnosed with ASD into the labour market, especially examining how organisations adapt to their unique needs. The limited number of comprehensive studies on the chosen topic led me to formulate a straightforward "how" research question, which inherently demands a deeper understanding and depth of the study. The research question, "How is the recruitment and selection of employees with autism spectrum disorder promoted?" aimed at the existing literature to explore the integration of individuals diagnosed with ASD into the labour market, especially examining how organisations adapt to their unique needs.

QMA reliability and rigour depend on compliant research protocols. APA (2020*) defends all studies using qualitative methods must demonstrate transparency:

1. Time adequacy
2. Evidence-supported data
3. Meaningful and insightful study contributions
4. Contextualised findings

5. Well-presented findings
6. Consistency of analysis
7. Detailed analytical procedures to support the claims

The protocol is essential for the construction of the sample, which comprises primary studies relevant to the chosen theme. Given that this study falls within the broader theme of Neurodiversity, it was crucial to clearly define the research boundaries from the outset. We began by defining a topic and its rationale, ensuring that all decisions aligned with the research question. It served as a base for our study, helping to identify key concepts and relationships and providing a structured approach to develop the main theme. Through a clear theoretical framework, meticulous planning and transparency were fundamental to guarantee integrity and reliability (Shamseer et al., 2015). The protocol makes it possible to define all phases of the research, including the search terms and databases, to limit bias.

According to the research question, “How is the recruitment and selection of employees with autism spectrum disorder promoted?” the keywords used were “autism spectrum disorder”, “recruitment and selection”, “labour market”, “laws and legislations”, “human resources”, “neurodiversity”, “employment” and “disability”. These keywords led to the development of the search key expressions: (“human resources” AND “labour market”), (“neurodiversity” AND “recruitment and selection”), (“recruitment and selection” AND “autism spectrum disorder”), (“employment” AND “autism spectrum disorder”), (“laws and legislation” AND “autism spectrum disorder”), (“laws and legislation” AND “disability”), (“disability” AND “employment”). As our research theme is related to numerous categories, such as social sciences, legal studies, and health, we chose EBSCO Discovery Service and Web of Science, known for their high volume of high-content articles. Google Scholar was excluded as the tool does not equally cover results from all areas of knowledge, presenting an exceptionally high deficit in the humanities field. They allowed us to perform advanced research, narrowing it down and leaving us only relevant articles.

To construct the QMA sample, we needed to define inclusion and exclusion criteria. First, we considered the publication date, the geography scope, language considerations, source selection, and target population.

- **Publication date:** To ensure current relevance, articles were selected with a publication date after 2016. The date would have to be between 01/01/2016 and 27/01/2024.
- **Geographic Scope:** Considering the European context of the research, we considered studies conducted in the specific location to enhance the homogeneity of realities. Only the United States of America was covered in recruitment and selection, as it is at the forefront of studies and essential for the study.
- **Language Consideration:** The study's researchers screened articles in English and Portuguese, aligning with the languages spoken by them.
- **Source Selection:** We included scientific newspapers and magazines in the sample of empirical studies.
- **Target population:** The focus encompassed all individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.

Since time was a scarce resource, we had to decide on exclusion criteria so that we could be left only with a relevant small sample of articles. We limited the articles whose titles directly aligned with the theme we were exploring.

- **Incomplete Studies:** We omitted articles that presented only abstracts because they could not adequately represent the entirety of the research.
- **Theme relevance:** Part of the process involved excluding articles that did not align with the research theme despite having a relevant keyword in their title.
- **Academic relevance exclusion:** Master's and doctoral theses, dissertations, books and internship reports as they are not considered relevant in the educational field (grey literature).

To ensure the quality of the sample, we considered only academic journals reviewed by peers in 2 databases, EBSCO Discovery Service and Web of Science. We delimited the publication date between 01.01.2016 and 01.27.2024 and restricted it to only European studies. Only articles in English or Portuguese were considered, enabling the number of results to decrease

slightly. Our results were 440 articles in EBSCO Discovery Service and 492 in Web of Science. Our sample came to be of 932 articles.

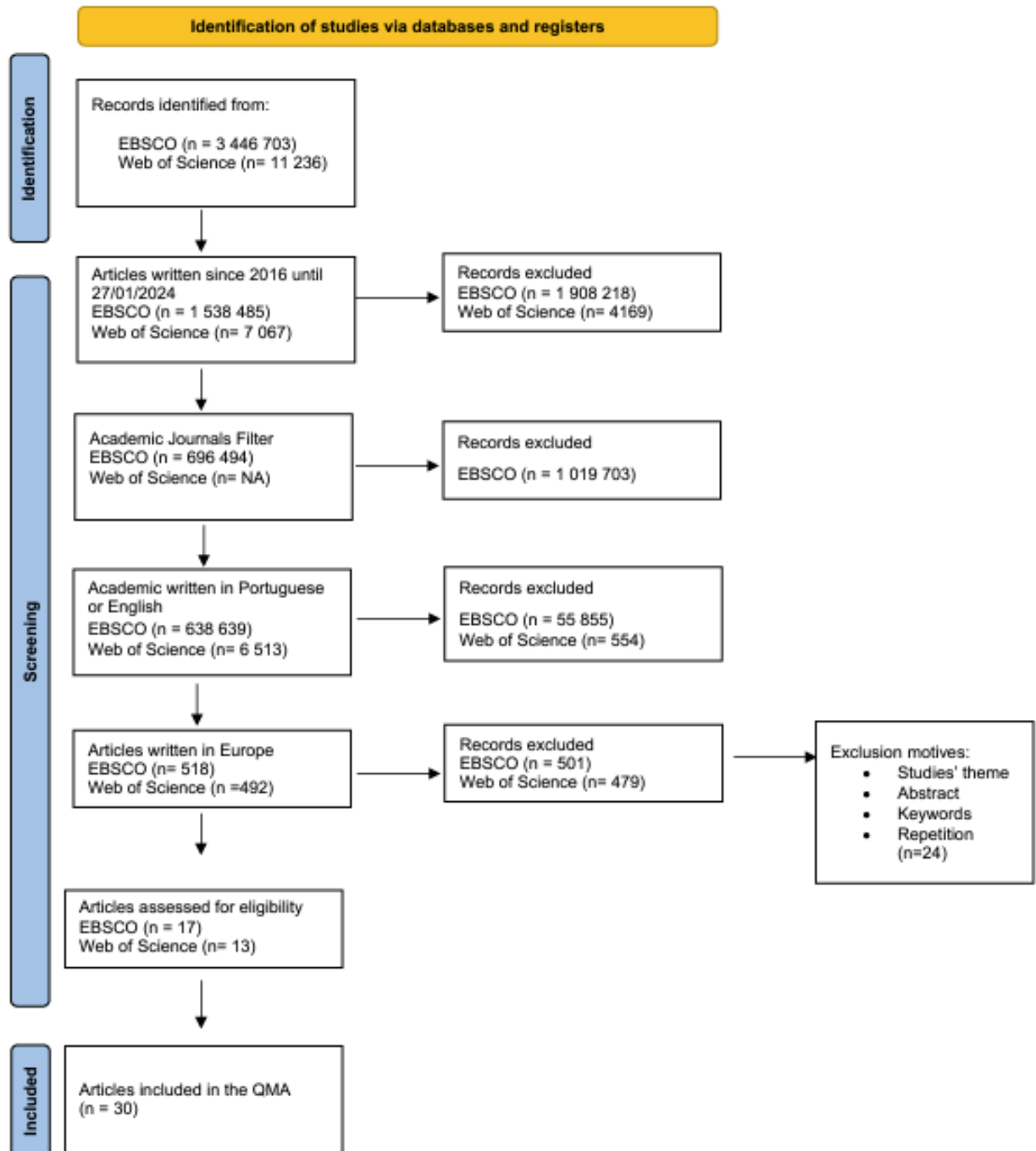
Table 2: Number of articles found in the first search

Research (Made on 27/01/2024)	Data Base	
	EBSCO	WebOfScience
"Human Resources" AND "Labour Market"	106	180
"Neurodiversity" AND "Recruitment"	19	13
"Recruitment and Selection" AND "Autism Spectrum Disorder"	26	130
"Employment" AND "Autism Spectrum Disorder"	52	50
"Laws and Legislation" AND "Autism Spectrum Disorder"	57	63
"Laws and Legislation" AND "Disability"	180	56
	440	492
	n = 932	

The Prisma Diagram helped us map out the number of records identified, included and excluded and the reasons for exclusions (Liberati et al., 2009). It is a four-phase flow diagram and aims to document all stages of a literature selection process and, thus, support all decisions made. We inserted it below to support that each exclusion criterion helped narrow the search to only relevant articles.

Figure 1
Selection process based on the PRISMA Diagram

PRISMA 2020 flow diagram for new systematic reviews which included searches of databases and registers only



Note: From: Page MJ, McKenzie JE, Bossuyt PM, Boutron I, Hoffmann TC, Mulrow CD, et al. The PRISMA 2020 statement: an updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *BMJ* 2021;372:n71. Doi: 10.1136/bmj.n71

The Prisma Diagram clarifies the whole process and the decisions made from the primary research until the final sample of the meta-analysis. It provides a visual representation of the process by which studies are identified, chosen, excluded, and included (Moher et al., 2009). The fundamental goal of the Prisma Diagram is to help authors improve their systematic reviews and meta-analyses.

Content Analysis

To answer the research question, “How is the recruitment and selection of employees with autism spectrum disorder promoted?” we needed to analyse the final articles. We chose content analysis to do so, as it allows us to transform a large amount of text into an organised and concise summary of key results (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017). Content analysis is a method of processing and analysing information collected via systematic and objective means to make valid inferences about verbal, visual or written data and to describe or quantify research (Lanza, 2018). This analysis enables critical comprehension of the article’s content and its meaning. The content analysis technique includes three steps (Bardin, 2011): pre-analysis, material exploration and treatment, and results interpretation. In the pre-analysis stage, we aim to analyse and organise articles. In the second phase, we strive to define different categories in which we place every article by theme and subtheme. Lastly, we emphasise and interpret the results and each article’s main conclusion.

As shown in Table 3, we based our research on well-defined themes and subthemes:

Table 3
Identification of Themes and Subthemes in Articles Included in the Systematic Literature Review

Themes	Subthemes	Articles
	Neurodiversity	“Disability and employment- overview and highlights
		"Access to employment: A comparison of autistic, neurodivergent and neurotypical adults’ experiences of hiring processes in the United Kingdom"
		"The disability employment gap in European countries: What is the role of labour market policy?"

ASD in labour market		"Understanding work inclusion: Analysis of the perspectives of people with intellectual disabilities on employment in the Icelandic labor market"
		"Striving to work and overcoming barriers: Employment strategies and successes of people with disabilities."
		"How Do Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder Participate in the Labor Market? A German Multi-center Survey"
	Discrimination	"Remaining in Workforce - Employment Barriers for People with Disabilities in a Swedish Context."
		"Autism and Overcoming Job Barriers: Comparing Job-Related Barriers and Possible Solutions in and outside of Autism-Specific Employment"
		"Factors impacting employment for people with autism spectrum disorder: A scoping review"
		"Selection bias on intellectual ability in autism research: a cross-sectional review and meta-analysis"

	<p>Disability</p>	<p>"The Classification of Employment in Polish Labour Law."</p>
		<p>"Quotas, and Anti-discrimination Policies Relating to Autism in the EU: Scoping Review and Policy Mapping in Germany, France, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Slovakia, Poland, and Romania."</p>
		<p>"Cherry Picking Disability Rights? Swedish Disability Policy on Employment, Health and Participation."</p>
		<p>"The notion of "person with a disability" in employment discrimination law - an analysis of laws in Hungary and the United States."</p>
		<p>"Protection of incapacitated persons: evolution of law and fundamental rights"</p>
		<p>"Perspectives of employers about hiring individuals with autism spectrum disorder: Evaluating a cohort of employers engaged in a job-readiness initiative"</p>
		<p>"Flipping the script: Bringing an organizational</p>

Inclusion and Diversity	Inclusive employment	perspective to the study of autism at work"
		"A qualitative analysis of employer perspectives on the hiring and employment of adults with autism spectrum disorder"
		"Disclosing an autism diagnosis improves ratings of candidate performance in employment interviews"
		"An Evaluation of a Social Skills Intervention for Adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder and Intellectual Disabilities preparing for Employment in Ireland: A Pilot Study"
		"Enhancing Resilience in Autistic Adults Using Community-based Participatory Research: A Novel HRD Intervention in Employment Service Provision"
	ASD awareness training	"Process evaluation of an autism-specific workplace tool for employers "
		"Evidence-based job retention interventions for people with disabilities: A narrative literature review"
		"The effectiveness of employer practices to recruit, hire, and retain employees with

		disabilities: Supervisor perspectives"
		"Disability, diversity, and corporate social responsibility: Learning from recognized leaders in inclusion"
		"Inclusive Communication Model Supporting the Employment Cycle of Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders"
	Inclusive Recruitment and Selection	"Disability, Human Resources and Behavioral Economics: The Labour Inclusion Case of Ilunion Hotels of the Costa del Sol (Spain)"
		"Workforce diversity management: a systematic literature review"
		"Harmonising accessibility in the EU single market: Challenges for making the European Accessibility act work!"
		"Reconceptualising 'reasonable adjustments' for the successful employment of autistic women"

Results presentation and discussion

The main goal of this work was to answer the research question, “How is the recruitment and selection of employees with autism spectrum disorder promoted?”. For this purpose, the chosen method was a qualitative meta-analysis, and we gathered results from 30 articles after applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria to our search. They are the image of the challenges faced by people with ASD, the practices to be adopted by organisations, and the paths already covered. They approach a heterogeneity of legal realities to achieve one favourable to this group. The increase in diagnoses calls for inclusive and positive practices for neurodiversity in organisations.

This study focussed on two time periods, until 2018 and after 2018, to explore the recruitment and selection of people with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Until 2018, research focused on characterising Asperger's Syndrome, updated in 2013 to ASD, its categorisation, and how organisations could be inclusive towards individuals with ASD. After 2018, the research direction changed and aimed towards understanding the obstacles that prevented organisations from being inclusive. However, one topic continues to be researched, and its importance is central: the categorisation of ASD.

Over the last six years, research has maintained the main themes being explored regarding neurodiversity and inclusion in organisations. It has focused on understanding and creating awareness in organisations, inclusive and neurodiverse programs, and inclusive laws that back up hiring practices. Despite some progress and improvements, unemployment rates for people with ASD remain high, and studies fail to present practical solutions. Changes seem to focus on more trivial things than practical ones that can benefit them. Table 4 summarises Appendix A, which contains the content analysis process, identifying its themes, subthemes, definitions and exemplary excerpts.

Table 4
Process of Categorizing Articles in the Systematic Literature Review and Presentation of Exemplary Excerpts

Themes	Subthemes	Definitions	Exemplary Excerpts
ASD in labour market	Autism Spectrum Disorder	“Autism spectrum disorder is a term used to describe a constellation of early-appearing social communication deficits and repetitive sensory-motor behaviours associated with a strong genetic component as well as other causes (Lord et al., 2018).”	“ASD is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterised by reduced social interaction, communication impairments and inflexible behaviour (Celis Alcalá & Georgina Ochoa Madrigal, 2022).”
	Neurodiversity	"Refers to the diversity of all people, but it is often used in the context of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), as well as other neurological or developmental conditions such as ADHD or learning disabilities (Baumer et al., 2021)."	"Neurodiversity relates to naturally occurring differences in individuals' neurology (Dwyer, 2022; Ne'eman & Pellicano, 2022). People who display a different neurology to the general population are considered neurodivergent. The term (...) encompasses a range of diagnoses including autism (...) (Davies, 2018)"
	Discrimination	“Discrimination is the unfair or prejudicial treatment of people and groups based on characteristics such as race, gender, age, or sexual orientation (Leymat,2011).”	"People with disabilities have throughout history faced discrimination and negative attitudes that have impact on productivity and employment (...) Furthermore, welfare authorities have to improve their understanding of how to create anti-discriminatory practices, instead of individualising discrimination by viewing it as connected to the individual's identity rather than unjust aspects of the welfare system (Östlund & Johansson, 2018)."
	Disability	" a condition caused by an illness medically diagnosed as curable or incurable where that illness entails a limitation which results in particular from physical, mental or psychological impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder the full and	"(...) CJEU defined the concept of disability in the following way: disability is "a limitation which results, in particular, from physical, mental or psychological impairments and which hinders the participation of the person concerned in professional life (Bedo, 2021)."

		effective participation of the person concerned in professional life on an equal basis with other workers, and the limitation is a long-term one” (Bedo, 2021).	
	Inclusive employment	“all activities, which enable an individual to gain access to decent remunerated work (Jabbie et al., 2021).”	"Employment represents an important life transition and community inclusion opportunity. There are many positive outcomes associated with employment for individuals with ASD, such as increased cognitive functioning (Walsh et al., 2018)."
	ASD awareness training	“DT programs go by many names and range from diversity and inclusion certification programs at accredited universities to bias training via online modules and consultation services from diversity, equity, and inclusion experts (Devine et al., 2014).”	"(...)Consequently, employment providers and rehabilitation counsellors may often overlook job retention skills as an essential training component of their services. Job retention is defined as a continuously held position at the same employer earning a competitive wage(...) (Thomas & Morgan, 2021)."
	Inclusive Recruitment and Selection	“Inclusive recruitment and selection is the process of creating a hiring strategy that actively seeks to eliminate barriers for diverse candidates, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of background, gender, race, disability, or other personal characteristics, have an equal opportunity to participate (CIPD,2012).”	"Their principal objective is to adapt and overcome the main barriers, obstacles and difficulties that workers with disabilities use to have in the process of incorporation to an employment in these companies (...) (Bunt et al., 2020)".

How Language Has Shaped Our Understanding of Autism

Early studies conducted by Kanner and Asperger believed autism was, in fact, a manifestation of psychosis or schizophrenia in childhood. However, as the understanding of autism evolved, so did the criteria for diagnosing it. The DSM played a crucial role in this evolution, and in DSM III, autism was distinguished from childhood schizophrenia through differentiating diagnostic criteria (King et al., 2014) and autism was only included in DSM IV. Wing (1981) introduced the term “Asperger’s Syndrome” in 1976 after retrieving an article on autism by Hans Asperger. She was also a pioneer in arguing that autism should be part of “a wider group of conditions which have, in common, impairment of the development of social interaction, communication and imagination” (Evans, 2013). This perspective led to debates that set the stage for what is now known as Autism Spectrum Disorder. DSM-5, published in 2013, replaced previously identified categories with a single diagnosis: ASD (Lord et al., 2018). The shift reflected a growing consensus that autism represents a range of severities and that the diagnosis should be inclusive.

Discrimination and Intersectionality

Researchers have been exploring the challenges that people with ASD face in the labour market. Experts estimate that 80% of autistic people worldwide are unemployed, with higher unemployment rates for autistic people than for other disability groups (Davies et al., 2023). Discrimination and intersectionality form the basis of the challenges they encounter. Misconceptions and stereotypes are important causes of discrimination. Ribolsi et al., (2022) concluded that studies linking schizophrenia and ASD can cause harm to people with ASD if the reader is not informed about the topic. These challenges are highlighted when multiple aspects of someone’s identity intersect, amplifying the discrimination experienced.

Intersectionality, as mentioned before, refers to how different aspects of a person’s identity intersect and contribute to discrimination. For someone with ASD, factors such as gender, socioeconomic status, political beliefs, or race intersect with their disability, compounding the discrimination they face. A crucial instrument that addresses discrimination against people with disabilities

was created in the European Union, “The Employment Equality Directive”, as it acknowledges and guarantees equal opportunities, prohibiting discrimination (Bedo, 2021).

Disability Rights and Gender Bias

Historically, a form of stereotyping around gender was developed as autism has been typically considered a “male” disorder. It led to a lack of recognition of autism in women, causing more men than women to be diagnosed, as women’s characteristics often do not fit the diagnostic standards. This discrepancy creates additional obstacles for autistic women when entering the labour market and accessing new opportunities (Gemma, 2023). Anti-discrimination legislation has evolved significantly, focusing on themes like gender bias. The “Employment Equality Directive” (Council of the European Union, 2000) established a general work path to ensure equal treatment in the labour market, and further studies have been published to guide organisations on their way to equality and inclusion (European Commission, 2020). Despite these advancements, continued efforts are essential to address the challenges faced by women with ASD.

Laws protecting the rights of people with disabilities to employment and equal participation resulted from years of work and awareness. In 1997, Article 13 of the Treaty established the foundation for a comprehensive disability policy by recognising the human right not to suffer from discrimination, specifically due to disabilities (Lecerf, 2023). However, the implementation of laws aimed to promote the employment of people with disabilities is inadequate. If not coordinated with stakeholders, these laws become ineffective because policies often fail to prioritise the needs of working individuals with disabilities in the design of welfare services, making it impossible to comply with their work schedules (Östlund & Johansson, 2018). These laws must be enacted, effective, and aligned practically with reality to ensure equality.

Globalisation Outpacing Law

Increasing globalisation and social changes have facilitated the free movement of labour, resulting in a more diverse workforce (Seliverstova, 2021). However, implementing anti-discrimination laws has little impact (van der Zwan

& de Beer, 2021), as jurisprudence cannot keep pace with changing employment practices (Świątkowski & Wujczyk, 2016). A significant issue is the insufficient enforcement mechanisms, which place the burden of proof on employees, making it challenging to prove discrimination cases (Fauzi et al., 2024). Fisk (2015) states that it is crucial to shift some burden of proof to employers as it helps address the intrinsic power imbalance between employers and employees. Discrimination in the labour market can take many forms, and addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach. There is a growing awareness of social exclusion generally suffered by people with disabilities (Seliverstova, 2021), and it is necessary to focus on possible strategies that human resources can have to overcome the situation. Member states have taken different approaches to increase employment rates (Bunt et al., 2020), but the extent of benefits adopted to increase employment rates is not fully known.

Inclusion in ASD

Recent studies indicate a prevalence of approximately 1 in 100 individuals diagnosed with ASD (Zeidan et al., 2022). Considering the global population of approximately 8 billion people, the updated prevalence suggests that around 80 million individuals worldwide may be diagnosed with ASD. This significant number emphasises the need for practical, inclusive recruitment and selection practices.

Job interviews are the most commonly used employee selection method, making it rare for someone to be hired without participating in one. Success often depends not only on the candidate's qualifications but also on their ability to appear likeable and sociable. As people diagnosed with ASD show impairments in communication skills, interviews can be a significant challenge when entering the job market (Lorenz et al., 2016). "Traditional "interviews rely on social and communication skills, often putting candidates diagnosed with ASD at a disadvantage, as they can be perceived as ill-suited for the job by someone unfamiliar with ASD.

Organisations can play an essential role in bridging the employment gap for individuals with ASD and creating an environment that recognises and

values individual strengths. Eurostat is an example, providing studies and strategies organisations can use to plan and implement these inclusive practices effectively (Union of Equality: Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030, 2021). Basing their actions on well-researched data ensures each step is designed to support these individuals. Implementing diverse, inclusive practices allows organisations to reach diversity and unlock the potential of individuals who may be overlooked due to traditional hiring processes.

In addition to strategic planning and data-driven approaches, direct initiatives can benefit companies. People diagnosed with ASD often struggle with practical barriers to the hiring process, as they need, in many cases, a structured daily life. Attending an employment interview requires deviation from routine, and it can be a stress source. Additionally, they can experience sensory sensitivities such as luminosity and sounds, which can increase discomfort during interviews and affect performance (Davies et al., 2023). Telematic interviews can be beneficial as they are in a familiar setting and can control their surroundings, reducing their anxiety. Also, their social pressure is reduced as they avoid face-to-face communication. This gradual exposure allows them to build confidence in transitioning to in-person interviews and to get used to new people and routines.

Studies show that organisations and candidates should adjust to decrease unemployment rates. Beyond adapting interview formats, the literature suggests revealing the diagnosis can be helpful as it justifies the atypical behaviour and improves perceptions (Norris et al., 2024). Disclosure is crucial as it allows necessary accommodations to be implemented (Vornholt et al., 2018). Recent studies have found that people with ASD often find it difficult to address their disability during interviews (Albright et al., 2020). It is the responsibility of Human Resources professionals to help ensure this discomfort is decreased. Learning work-related skills, especially interpersonal skills, is vital to promote the transition to work (Walsh et al., 2018). Human Resources must have the skills to adapt and work with anyone, regardless of their singularity.

Disclosing the diagnosis also allows employers to focus on the employee's strengths. For this to be possible, interviewers must be familiar with

ASD and its characteristics. Human resource development provides interviewers with the necessary skills to support the recruitment and inclusion of employees with ASD (Hafsteinsdóttir & Hardonk, 2023). Contact training can also be beneficial as it puts employers in the field, exposes them to situations, and raises awareness (Maslahati et al., 2022). This training also allows them to improve communication strategies and leverage employees' skills with ASD. Organisations that employ people with ASD have recognised the benefits of neurodiversity, but those benefits are not shared in a way that makes a difference (Davies et al., 2023). Also, studies rarely include what affects employment outcomes: workplace environments (Vogus & Taylor, 2018). By addressing these factors, organisations can create more inclusive workplaces that fully harness the potential of employees with ASD.

The literature presents some solutions that human resources can implement to benefit individuals diagnosed with ASD. As mentioned, the first step is focused on the recruitment stage, where the HR professional must find a candidate who will perform high-quality work, regardless of the required accommodations. This work can be facilitated through a job description written simply and objectively, explaining the job's daily tasks, needs, duties, and responsibilities (Tomczak et al., 2021). The correct match between the employee and the job increases the chances of successful hiring (Nicholas et al., 2019). In the recruitment process, the human resources department can benefit from partnerships with disability organisations to help recruit qualified candidates with ASD (Phillips et al., 2019). The literature suggests adjusting the interview method is a beneficial improvement for people with ASD and can be achieved with solutions like the ones below (Chang et al., 2023):

1. Knowing what to expect beforehand: candidates diagnosed with ASD react positively to a clear understanding of the interview process and expectations. Prior preparation is fundamental, as people with ASD struggle to leave their daily routine. Not knowing what to expect is detrimental to them.
2. Interpreting questions and comments: Communication impairments can make understanding some interview questions challenging.

Vague or hypothetical questions are especially difficult since no direct correct answer exists.

3. Flexibility and modifications: interviewers should focus on a candidate's professional skills instead of social ones. Flexibility is crucial for the interview environment, allowing candidates to be confident and comfortable.
4. Providing Feedback: Feedback after an interview is essential for individuals with ASD, as it helps them prepare and improve for future recruitment processes.

Since COVID-19, organisations have had to adapt their working methods to hybrid or 100% home office. The literature, however, reveals a gap in understanding recruitment practices during that time concerning individuals with ASD. As they often experience increased anxiety in unfamiliar situations, the telematic interview format could offer a more controlled and predictable environment. While the shift to virtual interviews presented some apparent advantages, it blurred the lines between personal and professional spaces. Understanding the benefits of home interviews and the challenges for candidates diagnosed with ASD would be relevant to better adapt recruitment processes.

Practicality and awareness can be considered the main pillars missing so that organisations can be inclusive and neurodivergent. The current focus is global laws that are inclusive and general. However, each country has its reality, and laws must be adapted to it. The shift cannot just be about compliance or benevolence but also reality and practicality. Human Resources must work on inclusion and awareness, aiming to mitigate inherent challenges.

Conclusion

This research delved into the recruitment and selection processes of employees with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), highlighting the main barriers and suggesting solutions for inclusion in the labour market. Through a qualitative meta-analysis, we explored several studies to understand how organisations integrate individuals with ASD, focusing on the need for customised HR practices, legislative support and employer education. The results arise from a sample of 30 articles collected from databases such as EBSCO Discovery Service and Web Of Science between 2024 and 2016.

The collected sample allowed the research to focus on addressing the question, “How is the recruitment and selection of employees with autism spectrum disorder promoted?”. It was centred around three main themes. A primary theme was the categorisation of ASD, as it plays a crucial role in guiding companies that must comply with specific legal obligations. Establishing a clear categorisation and corresponding legal framework was essential as it provided a foundation for initial engagement with organisations seeking to employ individuals with ASD. However, a significant challenge arises from the discrepancy between medical and organisational categorisations of ASD. While both the DSM-5 and ICD-11 classify ASD as a mental disorder, organisations typically categorise ASD as a disability. This discrepancy creates legal and practical challenges, as ASD is not universally recognised as a disability under all legal frameworks, leaving individuals with ASD more vulnerable to discrimination and the complex dynamics of intersectionality. Addressing this incongruity is critical to creating more inclusive and equitable recruitment and selection practices for individuals with ASD.

The law’s practicality does not seem to be considered when they are produced. In Portugal, Law 4/2019 from *Diário da República* establishes the employment quota system for people with disabilities with incapacity equal or greater than 60%. As mentioned, ASD is a neurodevelopmental disability that has severity degrees. Since only “high-functioning autism” is considered to be part of the job market, we can conclude that the level of disability does not reach 60%. A disability level of 60% of a neurodevelopmental disability may not be eligible for the job market, as the impairments are more severe. Law 4/2019

is mainly focused on physical disabilities, leaving a gap to fill for mental disabilities. Disabilities below 60% still face challenges that should be included in the law and lack legal framing.

While anti-discrimination laws aim to address these issues, their effectiveness is limited by the rapid changes brought about by globalisation, which often renders these laws outdated and insufficiently responsive to emerging challenges. Furthermore, the very essence of these laws is questionable, as they often fail to address the nuanced realities of intersectional discrimination. Studies consistently reveal biases in selection and recruitment processes, leading to the under-recruitment of individuals diagnosed with ASD, with women with ASD being mainly overlooked (Russell et al., 2019). This underrepresentation indicates that existing anti-discrimination legislation does not fully capture the complexity of biases, nor does it effectively prevent discriminatory practices. The difficulty in proving discrimination remains a significant barrier to enforcing these laws, as discrimination is often subtle, implicit, or systemic rather than overt. Laws alone are insufficient to ensure real inclusion and anti-discrimination; robust, proactive measures within organisations must accompany them. Studies show that legislation is necessary but not enough to create meaningful change. Without additional efforts, inclusive workplaces will not be possible.

Therefore, we explored practical solutions that would help Human Resources become more inclusive and diverse in recruiting and selecting individuals with ASD. Knowledge was identified as the main driver of change, as it enables HR professionals to gain a deeper understanding of the unique strengths and areas for improvement of individuals with ASD. This knowledge equips HR to create tailored strategies that leverage the abilities of ASD individuals, transforming potential challenges into opportunities and ensuring these individuals are recognised as valuable assets within the organisation. However, the existing literature fails to present specific training guidelines that the Human Resources Department must have. While general recommendations are provided, such as collaborating with specialised institutions and engaging in contact training to increase awareness and sensitivity, these suggestions lack actionable details. Moreover, despite some progress, there remains a need for

more evidence-based practices that directly support the inclusion of individuals with ASD in the labour market.

Moreover, understanding how to adapt to more flexible contractual legal frameworks. Possibilities of adjusting job positions by adopting a hybrid or flexible work regime that allows candidates to choose the location where they feel most comfortable, thereby increasing their chances of success. Approaches like this not only align with diversity and inclusion goals but also tap into the full potential of a talented and diverse workforce

The study presents some limitations:

- Geographic delimitation: Europe as an exclusion criterion for sample construction can be seen as a limit since the United States of America seems to be at the forefront of this issue. However, the organisational reality differs from Europe's, so its consideration would be appropriate.
- Language restriction: Articles not written in Portuguese or English were excluded, leaving out potentially relevant articles. Although English has since become the globally accepted language for creating academic articles, Hans Asperger and Leo Kanner were both Austrian and so were their articles.
- Database Selection: The databases used are another limit, as they were those made available by the school.

A possible solution to future research would be developing base models that would guide Human Resources Departments on initially approaching individuals with ASD. It would provide them a structured framework that outlines how to communicate best and tailor strategies to the unique characteristics of individuals with ASD. A simple script includes what questions an interviewer should and should not ask and how to handle a candidate's stressful moments. This script could improve the hiring process for individuals with ASD and help foster more inclusive work environments. It could also serve as a training tool to educate Human Resources professionals about the nuances of ASD and promote a better understanding of neurodiversity. Specialised institutions, autism organisations and societies, organisations that employ people with ASD

and psychologists could be involved in this document to make it accurate and reliable.

In conclusion, this study focused on understanding how organisations could recruit and select people with ASD. As we searched, studies didn't seem to innovate much. The nomenclature was altered, but the categorisation did not clarify, and the law did not innovate. Changes are insufficient, which can hinder Human Resources knowledge, as information is not clear and concrete. Some studies present solutions to better accommodate people with ASD in the recruitment and selection process. It is known that the primary goal of every company should be to hire the best professional for the role, regardless of their characteristics. To accomplish that, future research should aim towards inclusion, having practicality and applicability as a basis. Continued efforts are essential to ensure equal opportunities and support for all, but legislation needs to fit into reality. As it remains a challenge for Human Resources professionals, this study highlighted the need for more detailed information so that organisations can leverage inclusion and neurodiversity.

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Appendix A

Appendix A Process of Categorizing Articles in the Systematic Literature Review and Presenting Example Excerpts

Themes	Subthemes	Definitions	Exemplary Excerpts
ASD in labour market	Autism Spectrum Disorder	<p>“Autism spectrum disorder is a term used to describe a constellation of early-appearing social communication deficits and repetitive sensory–motor behaviours associated with a strong genetic component as well as other causes (Lord et al., 2018).”</p>	<p>“Since first descriptions, the Autistischen Psychopathie was supposed to have a role in the search for precursors and early symptoms of schizophrenia (Dell’Osso et al., 2016).”</p>
			<p>“Such a spectrum model is consistent with the alternative, dimensional approach proposed by the DSM-5 for personality disorders (Section III-Emerging Measures and Models). According to this model, personality disorders represent maladaptive variants of personality traits that merge imperceptibly into normality and into one another, as well as spectra of personality dysfunctions on a continuum with other mental disorders (Dell’Osso et al., 2016).”</p>
			<p>“Kanner highlighted included a profound lack of affective contact with others, an anxiously obsessive desire for the preservations of sameness, a monotonous repetition of verbal and motor behavior, a fascination for objects, and mutism or language that did not seem intended to serve the purpose of interpersonal communication. Kanner also highlighted the lack of obvious congenital abnormalities common in children with comparable intellectual disabilities and the wide scatter of cognitive and motor abilities of the children whom he had seen (King et al., 2014).”</p>
			<p>“Many of these features were captured with the introduction of autistic disorder in the official diagnostic nomenclature in Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM)-III (King et al., 2014).”</p>
			<p>“In the years since the introduction of the DSM-IV criteria, advances in genetics coupled with a significant increase in the prevalence of PDDs laid the foundation for the changes that were incorporated in DSM-5 [12■■]. These changes included a change in name and dissolution of categories such that autistic disorder, Asperger’s, childhood disintegrative disorder, and PDD-NOS were all collapsed into autism spectrum disorder (King, 2014).”</p>

ASD in labour market	Autism Spectrum Disorder	<p>“Autism spectrum disorder is a term used to describe a constellation of early-appearing social communication deficits and repetitive sensory–motor behaviours associated with a strong genetic component as well as other causes (Lord et al., 2018).”</p>	<p>“According to Bleuler, autistic thinking was characterized by infantile wishes to avoid unsatisfying realities and replace them with fantasies and hallucinations. ‘Autism’ defined the subject’s symbolic ‘inner life’ and was not readily accessible to observers (Evans, 2013).”</p>
			<p>“The introduction of psychiatric classificatory models has previously been explored in relation to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM), in particular the introduction of DSM-III in 1980 (Grob, 1991; Mayes and Horowitz, 2005; Wilson, 1993). However, few people have explored this in relation to child psychology and psychiatry (Evans, 2013).”</p>
			<p>“Up until the 1950s, the concepts of childhood schizophrenia and autism were used to reframe central issues in child development based on the idea of infantile hallucination (Evans, 2013).”</p>
			<p>“Autism spectrum disorder is a term used to describe a constellation of early-appearing social communication deficits and repetitive sensory–motor behaviours associated with a strong genetic component as well as other causes (Lord et al., 2018).”</p>
			<p>“Since first descriptions, the Autistischen Psychopathie was supposed to have a role in the search for precursors and early symptoms of schizophrenia (Dell’Osso et al., 2016).”</p>
			<p>“Although individuals with ASD are very different from one another, the disorder is characterised by core features in two areas—social communication and restricted, repetitive sensory–motor behaviours—irrespective of culture, race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic group (Lord et al, 2018).”</p>
	Neurodiversity	<p>“Refers to the diversity of all people, but it is often used in the context of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), as well as other neurological or developmental conditions such as ADHD or learning</p>	<p>“Several self-advocacy and identity movements are associated with ASD. These movements generally emphasise respect for neurodiversity, strengths (such as attention to detail), and individual differences, and have called for ASD to be considered a condition rather than a disorder (Lord et al., 2018).”</p>
			<p>“Furthermore, given the observed disparities in interview success and employment outcomes for neurodivergent and neurotypical job candidates, there is a need for bolstering anecdotal evidence of employers interested in increasing the neurodiversity of their workforce (Chang et al., 2023).”</p>

ASD in labour market		disabilities (Baumer et al., 2021)."	"Among service providers, overcoming some rigidities in the employment interview was described as often being achieved through the employer's willingness to design neurodiversity-specific internship programs, or to engage with service providers during the recruitment process to facilitate a flexible and accommodating process and environment (Chang et al., 2023).
			"While all stakeholder groups indicated that self-advocacy could increase employer understanding and willingness to accommodate, most employers admitted that often neurodiversity awareness is lacking in organizations, and participants on the autism spectrum described feeling pressure and anxiety to "mask," or exhibit socially expected behaviors in work settings (Chang et al., 2023)."
	Discrimination	"Discrimination is the unfair or prejudicial treatment of people and groups based on characteristics such as race, gender, age, or sexual orientation (Leymat,2011)."	"People on the autism spectrum have higher levels of unemployment and underemployment than both people without disabilities and people with other types of disabilities, but there is an increase in the overall employment rate of people with disabilities (Chang et al., 2023)."
			"One known barrier to employment for people on the autism spectrum is successfully navigating employers' applicant screening, interviewing, and selection processes (Chang et al., 2023)."
			The concept of intersectionality was launched by Crenshaw in 1989 and is based on the idea that people have several individual statuses at the same time and that these statuses intersect in different ways. Intersecting statuses such as gender, race/ethnicity, class, and age have been considered in studies of intersectionality, and in recent years, disability has received some attention as a status to be studied (Witte et al., 2022)."
			"Autistic people are likely to face several hurdles during the hiring process. First, barriers exist in finding suitable employment opportunities. Indeed, the process of hearing about a job and deciding to apply can be – albeit unwittingly – biased against autistic people (Davies et al. 2023)."
		"conferring rights and in particular value to the neurodiversity condition, demanding recognition and acceptance (Jaarsma & Welin, 2012)."	

ASD in labour market			“The Employment Equality Directive is the most determinative EU instrument for addressing discrimination against people with disabilities. It acknowledges the importance of employment and occupation in "guaranteeing equal opportunities for all and contributing strongly to the full participation of citizens in economic, cultural and social life." (Bedo, 2021).”
	Disability	" a condition caused by an illness medically diagnosed as curable or incurable where that illness entails a limitation which results in particular from physical, mental or psychological impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder the full and effective participation of the person concerned in professional life on an equal basis with other workers, and the limitation is a long-term one” (Bedo, 2021).	“People with disabilities face chronically high levels of unemployment and underemployment (Buncher & Daston, 2022).”
			“the rate of employment for people of working age (21 to 64 years) with cognitive disabilities was 15.2 percent, but for the same age group without disabilities, the rate was 61.0 percent, making for a gap of 45.8 percentage points (Buncher & Daston, 2022).”
			“According to the United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, persons with disabilities have the same rights to work opportunities as the rest of the population, but people with different types of disabilities have fewer opportunities to attain competitive employment than the population at large, even though many persons with disabilities aspire to be employed (Buncher & Daston, 2022).”
			“The human rights model' signifies the paradigm shift from the medical model to the social model. However, it goes beyond the social model of disability and codifies a catalog of the human rights of people with disabilities (Bedo, 2021).”
			“The CRPD does not only provide a catalog of international human rights for people with disabilities but also encompasses both sets of human rights: civil and political as well as economic, social, and cultural rights (Bedo, 2021).”
			“Definitions, but includes seemingly a definition of people with disabilities under Article 1: "Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others (Bedo, 2021).”

ASD in labour market		" a condition caused by an illness medically diagnosed as curable or incurable where that illness entails a limitation which results in particular from physical, mental or psychological impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder the full and effective participation of the person concerned in professional life on an equal basis with other workers, and the limitation is a long-term one" (Bedo, 2021).	"In parallel with the CRPD, the paper considers that the broad determination of people with disabilities in employment discrimination law would be prominent, as it highlights equality at work by expanding individual capacity and ensures a decent living by improving inclusion in the workforce (Bedo, 2021)."
			"The concept of disability embraced in the CRPD promotes definitions being in line with the human rights model, which rejects the medical way of thinking of disability (Bedo, 2021)."
			"The most significant step in the Hungarian disability policy was the enactment of the Act XXVI of 1998 on the Rights and Equal Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities (hereinafter: Disability Act), which declared the whole set of rights of people with disabilities for the first time in Hungary (Bedo, 2021)."
			"CJEU defined the concept of disability in the following way: disability is "a limitation which results, in particular, from physical, mental or psychological impairments and which hinders the participation of the person concerned in professional life (Bedo, 2021)."
			"The CJEU stated that the concept of disability includes "a condition caused by an illness medically diagnosed as curable or incurable where that illness entails a limitation which results in particular from physical, mental or psychological impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder the full and effective participation of the person concerned in professional life on an equal basis with other workers, and the limitation is a long-term one." (Bedo, 2021)."
Inclusion and Diversity	Inclusive employment	"all activities, which enable an individual to gain access to decent remunerated work (Jabbie et al., 2021)."	"Employment represents an important life transition and community inclusion opportunity. There are many positive outcomes associated with employment for individuals with ASD, such as increased cognitive functioning (Walsh et al., 2018)."
			"Service providers and individuals on the autism spectrum recommended similar strategies to build an inclusive workplace, including awareness training and mentorship support to build personal familiarity (Chang et al., 2023)."
	ASD awareness training	"DT programs go by many names and range	"This included assumptions about making accommodations and/or modifications to the workplace to facilitate neurodivergent staff or

		from diversity and inclusion certification programs at accredited universities to bias training via online modules and consultation services from diversity, equity, and inclusion experts (Devine et al., 2014)."	anticipating costly trainings on diversity for other staff in the organization (Khan et al., 2023)."
			"In terms of non-discrimination, at this stage, diversity training focusing on neurodiversity is recommended for employees in all departments (Khan et al., 2023)."
			"Resource practices can be introduced to support the performance of neurodivergent employees, for example, through additional training and reconfiguring processes and job designs to cater to their skills, personalities, and requirements (Khan et al., 2023)."
	Inclusive Recruitment and Selection	"Inclusive recruitment and selection is the process of creating a hiring strategy that actively seeks to eliminate barriers for diverse candidates, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of background, gender, race, disability, or other personal characteristics, have an equal opportunity to participate (CIPD,2012)."	"many autistic people experience sensory sensitivities including sensitivities to certain sights and sounds, and without appropriate adjustments, the interview environment can be overwhelming (Davies et al.,2023)."
			"First, creating a neurodiverse workplace: neurodiversity in organizations depends on recruitment and selection as it is the point of entry into an organization (Khan et al., 2023)."
			"To create a neurodiverse workplace, the first step is investing in a recruitment and selection process that attracts potential applicants by signaling a commitment to neurodiversity (Khan et al., 2023)."