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European Semester 2025 mainstreaming disability equality

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European Disability Expertise (EDE) provides independent scientific support to the Commission's Policy Unit responsible for disability issues. It aims to mainstream disability equality in EU policy processes, including implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

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³ For an introduction to the Semester process, see <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/european-semester/how-european-semester-works/>.

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1 Introduction to the 2025 Semester

The European Semester, established in 2010, is the EU's framework for coordinating Member States' economic and fiscal policies while systematically integrating employment and social policy objectives. This process of open coordination has also been used to monitor progress on priorities set by successive EU strategic agendas. Following the conclusion of the Lisbon Strategy (2000-2010), the Europe 2020 Strategy (2010-2020) shaped the Semester's early focus, emphasising recovery from the 2008 financial crisis and promoting inclusive growth.

Policy subsequently proceeded under the Strategic Agenda 2019-2024 which, in the context of providing broader political guidance at the EU level, also included the promotion of the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR), adopted in 2017. During this period, the COVID-19 pandemic prompted further adaptation, leading to the alignment of the Semester with the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), to ensure that reforms and investments under the fund (2021-2026) are coordinated with broader EU economic and social policy objectives. The current Strategic Agenda 2024-2029 emphasises emerging priorities such as security, competitiveness and resilience, while maintaining the implementation of the EPSR as a central objective of EU policy.

In April 2023, the European Commission proposed the most comprehensive reform of the EU's economic governance rules since the aftermath of the economic and financial crisis.⁴ As part of the new economic governance framework, the National Reform Programmes (NRPs) were replaced by Medium-Term Fiscal-Structural Plans (MTPs) as of 30 April 2024. The first plans were submitted to the European Commission in autumn 2024, making the 2024 Semester a transition year during which some Member States continued to publish their NRPs, while others submitted their MTPs. The Council endorsed the first MTPs in January 2025, while Commission Country Reports (CRs) and Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs) were published as part of the Spring Package in 2025.

The European Pillar of Social Rights has been embedded in the European Semester since 2017. Stakeholders, social partners and civil society adopted the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan and committed to 2030 social targets in Porto in May 2021.⁵ The Action Plan was also welcomed at the Porto Social Summit by the EU Heads of State and Government. It set three new measurable social targets for 2030. The revised Social Scoreboard notably includes the disability employment gap as one of its indicators.⁶ At the June 2021 Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) meeting, the Ministers of Employment and Social Affairs committed to the implementation of the Action Plan and to setting national targets that contribute to the common targets. In June 2025, the European Commission launched a consultation on a new Action Plan to accelerate implementation of the Pillar, to account for significant changes in the socio-economic, demographic and geopolitical context since the first plan was adopted in 2021.⁷

In March 2021, the European Commission adopted the European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030, aiming to promote equal opportunities and full inclusion for persons with disabilities in Europe and globally.⁸ The Strategy provides the policy framework for the European Commission to implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD), which has been ratified

⁴ 'New economic governance framework', https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/economic-and-fiscal-governance/evolution-eu-economic-governance/new-economic-governance-framework_en.

⁵ European Commission (2021), *The European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan*, <https://op.europa.eu/webpub/empl/european-pillar-of-social-rights/en/>.

⁶ Eurostat (undated), 'Social Scoreboard', <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/dashboard/social-scoreboard/>.

⁷ European Commission (2025), 'Commission seeks views on new Action Plan to implement the European Pillar of Social Rights', 18 June 2025, https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/commission-seeks-views-new-action-plan-implement-european-pillar-social-rights-2025-06-18_en.

⁸ European Commission (2021), 'Union of equality: Strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities 2021-2030', Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, COM(2021) 101 final, 3 March 2021, <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1484&langId=en>.

by the EU and all its 27 Member States.⁹ By the end of 2024, almost all the flagship initiatives of the Strategy had been implemented, along with the other policy actions the European Commission committed to in the Strategy.¹⁰ In addition, during a European Parliament debate on 19 December 2024, the European Commission indicated plans to review and update the Strategy with new flagship initiatives to further advance disability rights, reflecting evolving socio-economic and demographic challenges.¹¹

Despite significant efforts under the European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 to implement the Convention across the EU, persistent gaps remain between persons with and without disabilities, for example in areas such as poverty, access to employment, inclusive education, housing and healthcare services. In April 2025, the UN CRPD Committee issued new Concluding Observations for the EU, providing recommendations to further strengthen EU policies in support of the UN CRPD.¹²

From a disability perspective, the Semester process should give due regard to mainstreaming disability equality in all its aspects. Disability equality gaps and data should be visible at each stage of the policy cycle, and their coverage should align, wherever possible, with the European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030, with national disability strategies and actions plans, and with the implementation of the CRPD in Europe. These are the key challenges addressed in this synthesis report.

Over the past decade, there have been improvements in the extent to which Member States and the EU have mainstreamed disability equality in the Semester process.¹³ Annual reporting by the European Disability Expertise¹⁴ (formerly known as Academic Network of European Disability experts (ANED)) has helped the Commission to raise the profile of disability data in its Country Reports, which supported EU implementation of the CRPD and helped to increase Member States' attention to disability policies.¹⁵ An increasing level of disability mainstreaming has also been evident in Semester documents (e.g. in the Joint Employment Report), partly thanks to the inclusion of the indicator on the disability employment gap.

The current long-term budget (Multiannual Financial Framework, MFF) for 2021-2027 adopted in December 2020 and revised in 2023 to address new priorities such as support for Ukraine, migration management and competitiveness, together with the NextGenerationEU recovery instrument, amounted to more than EUR 2 trillion.¹⁶ The largest spending area of these combined resources supports 'Cohesion, Resilience and Values' among EU Member States. This includes the European Social Fund+ (ESF+), which finances actions to combat poverty and exclusion, fight discrimination and help the most disadvantaged groups, including persons with disabilities, to gain access to the labour market, as well as the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), the main instrument of NextGenerationEU, which remains under implementation until 2026.¹⁷

⁹ United Nations (2006), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), <https://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf>.

¹⁰ Birtha, M. (2024), *The EU Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 – Achievements and perspectives*, Briefing, Brussels, European Parliament, Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, Directorate-General for Internal Policies, PE 767.095.

¹¹ European Platform for Rehabilitation (2024), 'European Commission to update the EU Disability Rights Strategy', 19 December 2024, <https://www.epr.eu/european-commission-to-update-the-eu-disability-rights-strategy/>.

¹² United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2025), 'Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of the European Union', CRPD/C/EU/CO/2-3, adopted at the Committee's 780th meeting on 18 March 2025, <https://docs.un.org/en/CRPD/C/EU/CO/2-3>.

¹³ Priestley, M. (2012), 'Disability policies and the open method of co-ordination', in: Quinn, G. and Waddington, L. (eds), *European yearbook of disability law*, Vol. 3, pp. 7-34.

¹⁴ 'European Disability Expertise', <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1532&langId=en>.

¹⁵ European Commission and Priestley, M. (2023), *European Semester 2022: Mainstreaming disability equality*, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/4d7174dc-8438-11ee-99ba-01aa75ed71a1/language-en>.

¹⁶ European Union (undated), 'NextGenerationEU: Make it real', https://next-generation-eu.europa.eu/index_en.

¹⁷ European Commission (2021), 'Headings: expenditure categories', https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/2021-2027/spending/headings_en.

Ongoing investments include major systemic and infrastructure investments of relevance to the inclusion of persons with disabilities. In recent years, EU Member States have been dealing with several interlinked crises (the COVID-19 pandemic, energy and inflation crises and geopolitical instability) while simultaneously addressing global megatrends such as ageing, climate change, digital transition and migration. When addressing these issues through EU-funded investments, priorities should not fail to address accessibility and inclusion for persons with disabilities who are disproportionately affected by these crises. Disability mainstreaming is an important way to uphold the rights outlined in the UN CRPD across policies and programmes. While EDE country reports include some examples of investments that support persons with disabilities, it remains difficult to obtain detailed information on the extent to which Recovery and Resilience Plans (RRPs) and cohesion policy funds have benefited this group. The upcoming discussions on the post-2027 MFF provide an opportunity to strengthen disability-inclusive funding frameworks and ensure that accessibility becomes a systematic priority in EU investments.

This synthesis report sets the analytical scene for the next Semester cycle, drawing on newly available Eurostat data for 2025, document packages from the Autumn and Spring Packages of the 2024/2025 Semester cycle, and national reviews carried out by EDE country experts in 2025, which provide a structured overview of each Member State's progress in implementing disability-inclusive policies and offer expert analysis on gaps and challenges. Therefore, this report provides a basis for the preparation of new EDE country fiches and informs Commission input to the 2026 policy cycle, helping to ensure that disability equality is mainstreamed in EU economic and social governance.

The report is structured as follows. Section 1 introduces the 2025 European Semester, the European Pillar of Social Rights 2030 targets and other relevant EU strategies, as well as challenges identified in the 2025 EDE country fiches¹⁸. Section 2 provides an analysis of the 2024/2025 Semester documents, including the Autumn and Spring Packages, National MTPs, Commission Country Reports and Country-Specific Recommendations. It also focuses on investment priorities and the role of cohesion policy and RRF funds for disability inclusion. Section 3 reviews progress on EU and national disability strategies, including the European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030, and Member States' national strategies and action plans. Section 4 summarises Member States' participation in UN processes, including information requested in the List of Issues and recommendations from the UN CRPD Committee. Finally, Section 5 presents trends in key indicators for persons with disabilities, including labour market inclusion, poverty reduction, and education and skills development, integrating statistical data from Eurostat's EU-SILC with indicative policy examples using information from the latest national fiches.

1.1 EPSR 2030 headline targets and other relevant EU strategies

In June 2022 the employment and social affairs ministers of the EU Member States presented their national targets for 2030 to achieve the EU 2030 headline targets.¹⁹ The three headline targets mirror the social concerns of the Semester and the thematic priorities of the disability country fiches prepared by EDE (with employment, skills and poverty or social exclusion):

- at least 78 % of people aged 20 to 64 should be in employment;
- at least 60 % of all adults should participate in training every year; and
- the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion should be reduced by at least 15 million, including at least 5 million children, compared to 2019.

¹⁸ While referred to as the 2025 EDE country fiches, the data presented in these fiches relate to 2023, which is the latest year for which comparable data were available at the time of preparation.

¹⁹ European Commission (2022), *State of play on the national targets for 2030*, released 16 June 2022, <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=25728&langId=en>.

It is an important achievement for disability equality mainstreaming that, since 2021, the Revised Social Scoreboard contains a specific indicator for the disability employment gap, with supporting data increasingly disaggregated by disability status where relevant for complementary analysis.²⁰ The EDE country fiches include statistical annexes consistent with the methodology of the former EU 2020 headline indicators, based on the EDE statistical reports. The 2024 Social Scoreboard continues to monitor progress towards these targets, providing updated information on employment, training and social inclusion, including trends in the disability employment gap. A situational analysis is provided later in this synthesis report in relation to selected questions and challenges arising from the employment, poverty and education data.

1.2 Challenges identified in the 2025 EDE country fiches

The following issues were among those highlighted by experts in the 2025 EDE country reports:

Table 1: Challenges identified in 2025 EDE country fiches

MS	Labour market	Social policies	Education and skills
AT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persons with disabilities, especially persons in sheltered workplaces, face significantly higher unemployment than persons without disabilities. The quota system remains largely ineffective in promoting employment of persons with disabilities in the open labour market. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No recent progress on deinstitutionalisation despite its higher costs and lower outcomes compared to community-based care. Positive steps to improve access to personal assistance lack legal anchoring. Disability-related inequalities are not yet adequately addressed in healthcare reforms, including telehealth and primary care expansion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persistent disability-related inequalities in educational outcomes, such as early school-leaving. Children with disabilities are still often placed in special educational settings, which limits their opportunities for inclusion and future employment. Inclusive education is not clearly prioritised in current reform plans and does not address early childhood education and life-long learning for persons with disabilities.
BE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The employment gap between persons with and without disabilities remains one of the highest in the EU and shows little sign of narrowing. The national target to reduce this gap is unlikely to be achieved without substantial policy reform. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slow progress towards deinstitutionalisation, and some policy decisions (e.g. loss of personal assistance budgets) undermine the right to live independently and participate in the community for many persons with disabilities. While some regions maintain support systems, insufficient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Segregation in education persists with the number of students in special education increasing (except in the German-speaking Community). The expansion of inclusive education remains uneven across regions and communities. Only the Flemish regional government has committed to a

²⁰ European Commission (undated), Revised Social Scoreboard, <https://op.europa.eu/webpub/empl/european-pillar-of-social-rights/en/#annex2>.

MS	Labour market	Social policies	Education and skills
		<p>funding and long waiting lists severely limit access to personal assistance.</p>	<p>long-term vision for inclusion while others lack comprehensive plans, especially for learners with intellectual disabilities.</p>
BG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the biggest disability employment gaps in the EU. • Most employment measures support employers and not persons with disabilities to find a job in the open labour market (e.g. through vocational training or reasonable accommodation). • Very limited progress reported on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in employment, despite significant investment and policy measures in recent years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very high at risk of poverty or social exclusion (AROPE) rate for working age persons with disabilities. • Difficulties in accessing assistive devices and the lack of sufficiently trained personal assistants lead to inadequate provision of community-based support services. • Deinstitutionalisation of children and adults with disabilities is criticised for being more a re-institutionalisation in new family-type accommodation centres/residential centres and the number and qualification of staff in the new services is insufficient. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people with disabilities leave education earlier than students without disabilities and are much less likely to complete tertiary education. • Inclusive education remains a challenge due to discrimination, lack of competence and slow introduction of functional assessment of the children. • Lack of data on the number of students with disabilities enrolled in education.
CY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persons with disabilities face lower employment and activity rates and higher unemployment than persons without disabilities. • Progress remains slow, especially in data collection, digital skills development and inclusion in the private sector. • The implementation of the National Disability Action Plan 2024-2028 is limited, more efforts needed to collect disability-specific data, develop sustainable policies and ensure coordinated transition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persons with disabilities continue to face significant risk of poverty and social exclusion, with notable gaps in income and access to social benefits. • Challenges persist, regarding the separation of the disability allowance from the Guaranteed Minimum Income. • Training gaps and a medicalised view of disability is prevalent in healthcare services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young persons with disabilities face disproportionately high early school leaving rates and lower tertiary education attainment, falling short of EU targets. • Structural segregation, lack of institutionalised learning support and non-compulsory teacher training undermine ongoing policy efforts (e.g. Autism Strategy). • Investments target expanding special education, rather than

MS	Labour market	Social policies	Education and skills
	pathways from education to work.		transitioning to inclusive education.
CZ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited data and research-based evidence especially regarding trends in participation of persons with disabilities in the open labour market hinder effective policymaking and understanding of the barriers to employment for persons with disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National strategies for developing community and home-based support do not provide sufficient encouragement for service providers and residential facilities for persons with disabilities to pursue deinstitutionalisation. Ongoing digital transformation of public services is hampered by limited accessibility of information and application processes for persons with disabilities, reducing their access to social services and support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young persons with disabilities are more likely to leave school early and less likely to attain tertiary education compared to their peers without disabilities. There is a shortage of school psychologists and special educators, affecting the quality of support for pupils with disabilities in the mainstream education system.
DE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High share of sheltered workshops for persons with disabilities which does not provide them with employee status, and they are not entitled to the national minimum wage. Sheltered workshops have not succeeded in opening pathways to the open labour market. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long-term care benefit inequities and gaps in private health insurance access persist disadvantaging persons with disabilities. Pensions for those with reduced earning capacity often fail to meet a minimum standard of living. Insufficient barrier-free housing and needs-based assistance for services limit possibilities for persons with disabilities to live independently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of pupils with disabilities in mainstream education is hindered by inadequate infrastructure (e.g. space, equipment) and staffing. There is a significant lack of disability-related data and analysis on general and vocational continuing education.
DK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persons with severe disabilities continue to face barriers to employment and have less access to inclusive labour market opportunities than those with minor disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persons with disabilities living in large institutions are less able to have their specific needs met, highlighting the need to expand the availability of smaller, community-based homes that can 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young persons with disabilities are more likely to leave school early and the not in education, employment of training (NEET) rate is twice as large as for those without disabilities.

MS	Labour market	Social policies	Education and skills
		provide more tailored and person-centred support for persons with disabilities.	
EE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rising unemployment among persons with disabilities (reaching its highest level since 2012), despite state efforts to reform work-related services. • Cost-cutting and efficiency measures risk undermining service quality, with current trends reinforcing exclusion rather than improving access to employment. • Lack of sustained funding for supported employment, particularly affecting persons with mental and intellectual disabilities who rely heavily on these services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistently high and rising at risk of poverty (AROP) rate for persons with disabilities, both before and after social transfers, especially among working-age adults. • Declining recognition of disability status because of tighter disability assessments affects access to support. • The deinstitutionalisation process remains incomplete, with necessary reforms still pending in the medium term, limiting access to community-based care and independent living. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early school leaving rates among young adults with disabilities remain twice as high as their peers without disabilities and well above the EU 2030 target. • Inclusion of young persons with disabilities in vocational education is hindered by lack of monitoring of disability-specific targets and severe personnel shortages in vocational institutions. • Weak integration between education, social and labour market systems leaves students with special needs without adequate support or clear pathways into employment.
EL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High disability employment gap. • Persons with disabilities are overrepresented among the long-term unemployed and, when employed, are mostly in jobs requiring lower educational attainment. • High proportion of young persons with disabilities NEET. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider disability poverty gap for working-age persons with disabilities than in 2023. • High electricity costs (above EU average) and housing costs have a negative impact on independent living for persons with disabilities. • Incompatibility between income protection and disability cash benefits and measures to support the labour market participation of persons with disabilities. • Persons with disabilities aged 65 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient implementation of inclusive education policies, inaccessible learning environments.

MS	Labour market	Social policies	Education and skills
		and older face challenges to access home-based long-term care.	
ES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low employment rates among young persons with disabilities (16-24) falling below the EU average. • Persistent unemployment and gender disparities among persons with disabilities, with women with disabilities facing greater disadvantage and a wider gender employment gap than the EU average. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High risk of poverty among persons with disabilities, especially among working age adults. • Rising unmet medical needs for both working-age individuals and older adults indicating growing barriers to healthcare access. • There is ongoing need for inclusive investments in areas like community living, deinstitutionalisation and accessible, affordable housing that meets universal design standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early school leaving rates among young persons with disabilities are higher compared to the EU average, particularly in the 18-29 age group. • Mismatch between qualifications and skills demanded in the labour market means that persons with disabilities often lack employment opportunities that align with their educational profiles.
FI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No significant improvement reported in employment opportunities for persons with disabilities as they continue to face challenges in participating in the open labour market. • Ongoing discrimination and lack of accessibility continue to act as major barriers to hiring and retention. • Absence of concrete targets for action (e.g. removal of employment targets for persons with disabilities in the RRP). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Austerity measures are severely weakening disability services and support structures, especially at the local level, impacting both public providers and disability organisations. • Persons with disabilities are disproportionately affected by funding cuts leading to reduced access to essential care and increased social exclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower educational attainment among persons with disabilities, particularly in tertiary education, despite extended compulsory schooling. • Inclusive education is often limited to physical integration without adequate support or reasonable accommodations, an issue worsened by austerity measures.
FR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour market access remains difficult for persons with disabilities, highlighting ongoing structural barriers. • Existing policies (e.g. job retention, financial incentives, support and awareness) have had limited success in improving the employment situation of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant poverty risk persists for persons with disabilities. • Alternative support to address impairment-related expenses while promoting autonomy and social inclusion remains a key challenge. • Recent regulatory changes support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young persons with disabilities experience higher early school leaving and are often placed in special education settings, though this trend is slowly declining. • Better-adapted learning environments (e.g. trained teachers, stable support teams), coordinated

MS	Labour market	Social policies	Education and skills
	<p>persons with disabilities.</p>	<p>deinstitutionalisation but also show signs of regression, hindering progress.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited resources and managerial constraints mean independent living is only partially realised, affecting full inclusion. 	<p>health and social care involvement, and efficient allocation and organisation of resources remain critical to effectively support inclusion in mainstream education.</p>
HR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One of the highest disability employment gaps in the EU which continued to widen, despite significant policy efforts in place (e.g. quota, incentives for employers etc.). Lack of adequate skills of potential employees and lack of willingness of employers to hire persons with disabilities. Lack of coordination of educational, social and employment policy measures for persons with disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very high and increasing AROP rate for persons with disabilities. Insufficient resources to implement measures and maintain good quality in newly established social support services. Low wages and poor working conditions lead to shortages of personal assistants and consequently to inadequate service quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persons with disabilities continue to face significant educational disparities, including higher early school leaving rates and lower tertiary education completion than persons without disabilities. Lack of inclusion of children with disabilities in early education (kindergartens). Adequate support services and accessibility across all levels of education are still missing.
HU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The disability employment gap remains high, exceeding the EU average. The lack of well-designed active labour market policies continues to be a major barrier to making meaningful progress in improving employment outcomes for persons with disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenges in social and health care access, including staff shortages, outdated infrastructure and rights violations, continue to affect persons with disabilities despite increased public attention and oversight. A persistent shortage of expert personnel in the state care system remains a major challenge in the context of future deinstitutionalisation efforts. Limited reform of cash benefits and social support measures, apart from a few changes (e.g. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structural issues in the education system, including teacher shortages, high workloads and limited support services like school and kindergarten psychologists, along with persistent regional disparities in inclusion, remain largely unresolved hindering access to quality, and even basic, education. The increasing number of students with special educational needs demands targeted interventions and support, which are currently not given sufficient priority.

MS	Labour market	Social policies	Education and skills
		increased allowances for home care of children).	
IE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the largest disability employment gaps in the EU despite high overall employment rates. • There is currently no comprehensive employment strategy (expired in 2024). • While eligibility for the Wage Subsidy Scheme expanded, stagnant pay rates limit its effectiveness in improving employment conditions for persons with disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of a new disability strategy (since 2022), along with limited permanent financial supports (e.g. no cost-of-disability payment), and poor consultation with persons with disabilities hinder inclusive policymaking and anti-poverty efforts. • Disability funding remains focused on maintaining existing institutional services, leaving limited resources for community-based supports. • Targeted investment in accessible housing for persons with disabilities is critical, given its wide-ranging impacts (e.g. on employment, education etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansion of special classes and segregated third-level courses conflicts with the UN CRPD, undermining commitments to inclusive education. • Long waiting lists (up to four years) for needs assessments result in delay for essential support and services for children with disabilities.
IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special attention is needed for persons with severe disabilities, whose inclusion in the labour market remains a significant challenge and requires targeted, thoughtful measures during reform implementation. • Workplace inclusion of persons with disabilities requires more attention in labour market reform discussions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the roll-out of deinstitutionalisation projects throughout all regions, enhancing community-based services and reducing the strain on informal caregivers need special attention. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rise in support teachers has not kept pace with the growing number of students with disabilities, leaving some areas unable to meet demand and ensure adequate support. • Further investments are needed to improve school accessibility, ensure timely individualised education plans and provide additional professional support alongside teachers to uphold the right to inclusive education.
LT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the largest disability employment gaps in the EU, with little to no improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AROP rate for persons with disabilities is the highest in the EU. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of pupils with disabilities in general education shows little

MS	Labour market	Social policies	Education and skills
	<p>in the employment rate of persons with disabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There has been limited progress in integrating persons with disabilities into the open labour market. • Existing supported employment initiatives are inadequate and there is an urgent need to develop and implement more effective solutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low social protection spending and poorly targeted, insufficient disability benefits. • Slow progress in community-based living and deinstitutionalisation. • The long-term care system suffers from inadequate financing, insufficient homecare services and a shortage of qualified staff. 	<p>improvement in enrolment under inclusive models.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National programmes lack clear timelines, targets and indicators, hindering measurable progress. • Physical accessibility of schools remains severely limited.
LU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inaccessible workplaces, limited support services, and employer non-compliance with legal hiring quotas, particularly in the private sector, are reported as main barriers to increasing employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. • Lack of an independent monitoring and enforcement body, despite UN CRPD Committee recommendations, leaves labour quota violations largely unchecked. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite progress in deinstitutionalisation through more autonomous living arrangements, many persons with disabilities continue to live in institutions, highlighting the need for further efforts to support independent living. • Timely implementation of planned healthcare actions remains crucial to improve access and outcomes for persons with disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational attainment remains lower for persons with disabilities compared to those without, highlighting ongoing inequalities in access to inclusive education.
LV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The employment rate of persons with mental disabilities are particularly low, highlighting the need for individualised support in public employment services provision. • There is a need for more targeted financial support for labour integration social enterprises. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk of poverty and social exclusion, especially higher in-work AROP rate, for persons with disabilities remains a challenge. • Sustainable funding for the development and maintenance of health and social care services needs to be ensured in order to support the shift towards more inclusive, community-based care models. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of explicit recognition of learners with disabilities as a distinct target group in education policy plans and projects.
MT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No tangible improvements are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significantly higher poverty and social 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High early school leaving and low

MS	Labour market	Social policies	Education and skills
	<p>reported in the employment outcomes of persons with disabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a particularly wide disability employment gap among women with disabilities. • Persistent barriers to labour market inclusion include inaccessible education and training pathways, limited active labour market policies and inadequate workplace accommodations. 	<p>exclusion rates among persons with than without disabilities, especially for older adults and women.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support systems are limited, with a strong focus on pensions and healthcare but insufficient investment in disability services, housing, family support and unemployment assistance. • Access to adequate care and independent living is an ongoing concern. 	<p>tertiary education completion among young adults with disabilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are limited post-compulsory education options, particularly for students with intellectual disabilities, contributing to long-term exclusion from further learning and employment opportunities. • Uneven implementation of inclusive education practices, with success heavily dependent on the availability of learning support educators and school-level support structures.
NL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wage-subsidised jobs for persons with disabilities are mostly short-term, low-paid and require benefit top-ups. • Current labour market policies overlook the disability perspective, with unadapted workplaces, low employer motivation to invest in upskilling or productivity and widespread employer indifference even in a tight labour market. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persons with disabilities face persistent income insecurity, due to reliance on supplementary benefits even when employed and additional disability-related costs that reduce their net income below minimum levels. • Lack of consistent monitoring and data analysis on income levels and trends hinders the ability to identify root causes and develop effective policy responses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The funding system continues to favour special schools, undermining efforts to reduce admissions to special education and limiting resources for inclusive practices in mainstream schools. • Lack of targeted policies to address underachievement and ability-based separation in primary and secondary education perpetuates educational inequality for students with disabilities.
PL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The disability employment gap is one of the largest in the EU and increasing. • Together with the low employment rate among persons with disabilities, these gaps highlight systemic exclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persons with disabilities continue to be among the most vulnerable groups facing high risks of poverty and social exclusion. • Social protection policies require stronger targeting to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High early school leaving and very low higher education graduation rates among young adults with disabilities indicate persistent barriers despite ongoing investments.

MS	Labour market	Social policies	Education and skills
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is lack of a comprehensive employment strategy, including the timely roll-out of the planned supported employment scheme, to address persistent labour market barriers faced by persons with disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> effectively address persisting inequalities and support implementation of ongoing reform efforts (e.g. disability assessment, personal assistance). Higher unmet medical needs among persons with disabilities remains a concern. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of bilingual education for Deaf children is a critical gap in inclusive and accessible learning opportunities. Implementing measures to safeguard pupils with disabilities against school violence requires urgent attention.
PT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persistent disability employment gap still exists, hence continued policy efforts are needed. Between 2023 and 2024, the unemployment rate of persons with disabilities increased. Since 2015, the employment quota system has led to a 112 % increase in private-sector employment of persons with disabilities but persons with cancer diagnoses are also counted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working-age persons with disabilities continue to experience significantly higher poverty and social exclusion rates than those without disabilities. No information on a new National Strategy for Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities post-2025. Access to the Independent Living Support Scheme is uneven across the country, so enhancing social support services and community-based housing for persons with disabilities should be a continued effort and closely monitored. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early school leaving rates for persons with disabilities aged 18-24 is more than double than for those without disabilities. Tertiary education completion rates are also lower for persons with disabilities. Lack of adequate human and material resources to support inclusive education. RRP lacks specific disability-focused educational measures.
RO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highest disability employment gap in the EU. Low compliance with legal quotas and limited awareness of support measures among employers result in insufficient employer engagement to hire and retain persons with disabilities. Participation of persons with disabilities in vocational training and employment programmes is very 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persons with disabilities face a very high risk of poverty and social exclusion due to low employment rates and inadequate disability benefits (further eroded by frozen indexation). There is persistent reliance on institutional care with slow progress in developing essential community-based services like crisis and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High early school leaving and low tertiary education rates among persons with disabilities are key challenges. Implementation of inclusive education is hindered by underfunding, staff shortages and insufficient support in mainstream schools, with therapeutic resources concentrated in special education,

MS	Labour market	Social policies	Education and skills
	<p>low, increasing the risk of informal or exploitative work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation gaps and lack of monitoring risk undermining existing strategic initiatives and funding aimed at improving the employment situation of persons with disabilities. 	<p>respite care, alongside continued reports of neglect and abuse.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of national strategies remains uneven and lacks transparent monitoring and accountability mechanisms. 	<p>reinforcing segregation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of mandatory inclusion structures in higher education.
SE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The disability employment gap remains high with an even larger gap for individuals with reduced work capacity. Notable gender disparities exist within employment outcomes for persons with disabilities, highlighting the need for targeted policy responses. Decline in participation in wage subsidy programmes, despite underutilised budget allocations for these initiatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The poverty risk rate for working age persons with disabilities increased between 2023 and 2024, highlighting ongoing financial disadvantages. Decreasing availability of personal assistance and municipal support services undermines independent living for persons with disabilities. Persons with disabilities experience poorer health and face unequal access to healthcare compared to the general population. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The disability gap in education remains wide, with persistent barriers such as insufficient support and lack of reasonable accommodations. Identification of students with disabilities in mainstream schools is limited (i.e. schools are generally not allowed to record disability or health data unless students are in adapted schooling or receive special teaching support). There is a lack of data on the achievement of educational targets for students with disabilities, hindering effective monitoring and policy development.
SI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structural barriers in the labour market persist for persons with disabilities, including low digital literacy, limited workplace accommodations and ongoing segregation in employment settings. A systemic shift is needed to normalise inclusive employment in mainstream environments, supported by tailored vocational rehabilitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Older persons with disabilities face a high risk of poverty and social exclusion. There is a risk of sustaining parallel institutional structures alongside deinstitutionalisation efforts, highlighting the need to prioritise accessible, community-based services, integrated long-term care and personal assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant education and skills gaps persist, with high early school leaving rates and low tertiary education attainment among young persons with disabilities. Inclusive education is unevenly implemented and access to vocational training and adult learning remains limited particularly in rural areas.

MS	Labour market	Social policies	Education and skills
	<p>and reasonable accommodations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to the public health system has declined, with longer waiting lists and inadequate responses to the continuing health needs of persons with disabilities across all age groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak education-to-employment transitions and insufficient Sign Language provision further disadvantage certain groups of persons with disabilities.
SK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant regional disparities in employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fragmentation of early childhood intervention and lack of effective cooperation between social, health and education services hinders support for children with disabilities and smooth transitions between services. • Continued reliance on residential care as a common form of support for persons with disabilities, highlighting the need to develop and scale up community-based alternatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training opportunities for pedagogical assistants need to be expanded and the number of state-funded PA positions increased in order to ensure effective individual support for pupils with disabilities across all levels of education.

2 Analysis of the 2024/2025 Semester documents

2.1 The Autumn Package (2024)

With the publication of the 2024 Autumn Package, the European Commission formally launched the first Semester under the reformed economic governance framework, signalling a new phase in EU fiscal and macroeconomic coordination. The Package was published in two batches, in November 2024 and December 2024, and includes key Semester documents such as the Recommendation for the Euro Area, the Alert Mechanism Report, the Commission opinions on draft budgetary plans, assessments of MTPs, post-programme surveillance reports, the proposal for the Joint Employment Report and a document entitled *Bringing the new economic governance framework to life*, which explains how the new economic governance framework operates. Notably, unlike in previous years, the package does not include a standalone Annual Sustainable Growth Survey (ASGS).²¹

The new economic governance framework is designed to promote Member States' debt sustainability and support sustainable and inclusive growth. The Commission's communication on the Autumn Package emphasises debt sustainability and competitiveness and refers ex ante to the Competitiveness Compass²² (published in January 2025), which built on the three pillars of the Draghi Report:²³ (i) closing the innovation gap with the US and China; (ii) advancing a joint plan for decarbonisation and competitiveness to accelerate the green transition while reducing energy costs; and (iii) increasing security and reducing dependencies. Sustainable and inclusive growth is highlighted as a cross-cutting enabler and the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR) is mentioned throughout the communication as a guiding principle.

While disability is scarcely referenced in the main communication documents, the Joint Employment Report (JER) provides important monitoring of key employment and social indicators, including the disability employment gap, ensuring visibility of employment and social challenges for persons with disabilities, and contributing to the implementation of the EPSR and the EU Disability Strategy 2021-2030. The broader framework also addresses macroeconomic imbalances that can affect social outcomes, including for persons with disabilities, although the latter are not always explicitly highlighted in the Commission communication documents, with some exceptions (such as the two references in the '2025 Recommendation on the economic policy of the euro area' regarding the need to increase labour market participation of persons with disabilities).

The Autumn Package documents also take stock of the ongoing implementation of Recovery and Resilience Plans (RRPs) and cohesion policy programmes, exploring complementarities in funding and policy outcomes. From a disability perspective, these investments present opportunities to improve access to employment, services and infrastructure for persons with disabilities, provided that projects are disability-inclusive and compliant with the UN CRPD. Member States' Medium-Term Plans indicate intentions to maintain or increase investment over the plan horizon, reinforcing the potential for RRP and cohesion policy to contribute to inclusive social outcomes. As was noted in the two previous EDE synthesis reports, the rapid deployment of substantial financial investment under RRP poses both opportunities and risks for persons with disabilities; funding must be well targeted to stimulate recovery, yet it must be fair and inclusive in its impact.²⁴ EDE country experts were asked to provide examples, wherever possible, of how persons with disabilities benefited from the RRP and how actions under the RRP interact with cohesion

²¹ European Commission (2024), 'European Semester Autumn Package', https://commission.europa.eu/publications/2025-european-semester-autumn-package_en.

²² European Commission (2025), 'Competitiveness Compass', https://commission.europa.eu/topics/eu-competitiveness/competitiveness-compass_en.

²³ European Commission (2024), 'The Draghi report on EU competitiveness', https://commission.europa.eu/topics/eu-competitiveness/draghi-report_en.

²⁴ European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, and Priestley, M. (2023), *European Semester 2022: Mainstreaming disability equality*, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2767/480741>.

policy reforms. While access to data proved to be difficult, some examples are provided in the relevant chapter of this synthesis report (see Chapter 2.3).

2.1.1 The Joint Employment Report

Within the Autumn Package, the Proposal for a Joint Employment Report (JER) is a key document.²⁵ It provides an annual overview of key employment and social developments across the EU, reviews Member States' recent policies, in line with the Employment Guidelines, and identifies priority areas for policy action. Based on the proposal, the final report is adopted by the EPSCO Council each spring.

From the disability perspective, the JER serves as valuable evidence of the EU's progress in disability equality mainstreaming. As a marker of progress, the number of references in the JER to the situation of persons with disabilities, or to disability policies, has increased over the years. This is largely due to the inclusion of the disability employment gap indicator in the Social Scoreboard which has been a significant achievement for disability equality mainstreaming. The JER for the 2025 Semester (published in December 2024) contained 108 references to persons with disabilities (for comparison there were 145 references in 2024, 106 references in 2022 and 73 references in 2020).

The JER 2025 highlights that persons with disabilities continue to face significant barriers in accessing the labour market and disability remains a key reason for labour market inactivity. Drawing on Eurostat data, it shows that employment and labour force participation rates for persons with disabilities remain well below the EU averages and, while trends vary across Member States, there is little overall improvement in the disability employment gap.

The JER underscores the continued implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights as a policy priority to promote upward social convergence in the EU. To provide a more systematic analysis of employment and social developments in the Member States, the Commission proposal for the JER 2025 includes a strong country focus in the form of a country-by-country analysis, based on the principles of a Social Convergence Framework. The first stage provides an analysis of Member States' labour market, skills and social challenges in order to identify potential risks to upward social convergence that require deeper analysis at a second stage.²⁶

Persons with disabilities are mentioned in the first-stage analysis of 20 out of the 27 Member States. In 9 Member States, the disability employment gap was mentioned because it had worsened or remained critical. These were Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland and Romania. The particularly high rate of poverty among persons with disabilities was explicitly mentioned in the cases of Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Hungary, Ireland and Lithuania.

The Council's 2024 Decision on the Employment Guidelines²⁷ reaffirmed the EU's commitment to disability inclusion in labour market and education policies. It emphasised that,

'The potential of persons with disabilities to contribute to economic growth and social development should be further realised in line with the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities which invited Member States to set up employment and adult learning targets for persons with disabilities.' (p. 5)

²⁵ European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, *Joint Employment Report 2025 – Commission proposal*, Publications Office of the European Union, 2024, <https://op.europa.eu/s/AaCl>.

²⁶ A more detailed second-stage analysis was published by the Commission services in April 2025 for ten Member States (Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Romania and Spain).

²⁷ Council Decision (EU) 2024/3134 of 2 December 2024 on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dec/2024/3134/oj>.

Furthermore, the Guidelines underlined that:

'Discrimination in all its forms should be tackled, gender equality ensured and employment of groups that are underrepresented in the labour market supported. Equal access and opportunities for all should be ensured and poverty and social exclusion, in particular that of children, persons with disabilities and the Roma people, should be reduced, in particular by ensuring an effective functioning of labour markets and adequate and inclusive social protection systems, as set out in the Council Recommendation of 8 November 2019 and the Council Recommendation of 30 January 2023. In addition, barriers to inclusive and future-oriented education, training, lifelong learning and labour-market participation should be removed. Member States should invest in early childhood education and care, in line with the European Child Guarantee and the Council Recommendation on the 'Barcelona targets for 2030', in making vocational education and training more attractive and inclusive, in line with the Council Recommendation of 24 November 2020, and in digital and green skills, in line with the Digital Education Action Plan and the Recommendations on learning for the green transition and sustainable development, and on Pathways for School Success.' (p. 5)

Several specific guidelines further highlight the need for targeted support for persons with disabilities. Under Guideline 6: Enhancing labour supply and improving access to employment, lifelong acquisition of skills and competences, Member States are urged to take concrete action:

'Member States should also support a work environment adapted for persons with disabilities, including through targeted financial and technical support, information and awareness raising, and services that enable them to participate in the labour market and in society.' (p. 10)

This focus continues under Guideline 7, emphasising effective inclusion of various underrepresented and vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities:

'Policies should aim to improve and support labour-market participation, matching and transitions, also in light of demographic change, and including in disadvantaged regions. Member States should effectively activate and enable those who can participate in the labour market, especially under-represented groups, such as women and young people, as well as people in vulnerable situations, such as lower-skilled people and the long-term unemployed, persons with disabilities, people with a migrant background, including persons under a temporary protection status, people from marginalised Roma communities and older workers.' (p. 10).

Finally, Guideline 8 on Promoting equal opportunities for all, fostering social inclusion and fighting poverty further elaborates on the importance of non-discrimination across social policy areas, stating that Member States:

'should ensure equal treatment with regard to employment, assistance to jobseekers, social protection, healthcare, early childhood education and care, long-term care, education and access to goods and services, including housing, regardless of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.' (p. 12).

Moreover, the same guideline calls for the specific needs of persons with disabilities to be addressed in housing policy and investments:

'Member States should, where appropriate, make effective use of EU funding and technical support to invest in social housing or housing assistance, housing renovation and accompanying services and address the urgent need for affordable and adequate housing. The specific needs of persons with disabilities, including accessibility, should be taken into account in relation to those services.' (p 12).

The JER references Eurostat data showing that in 2023, 'the AROPE rate remained very high for persons with disabilities (28.8 %), well above the EU average (21.3 %)' (p. 30). The JER further notes a decrease in the impact of social transfers on poverty reduction reinforcing the critical need to intensify efforts aimed at ensuring adequate income support and broadening coverage – both of which are relevant for persons with disabilities.

The report also draws attention to the strong link between early school leaving, low employment and higher poverty risks for persons with disabilities. It highlights in particular young persons with disabilities who are at a higher risk of leaving education and training prematurely, thereby limiting their future opportunities in the labour market and contributing to their higher exposure to poverty and social exclusion.

In response to these challenges, the JER emphasises the need to enhance access to high-quality employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, while safeguarding disability-related entitlements. It also stresses the importance of closely monitoring the implementation of the Council Recommendation on minimum income support for active inclusion during the upcoming European Semester cycle and beyond.

2.2 The Spring Package (2025)

In June 2025, the European Commission published the Country Reports (CRs) (prepared by the Commission) and the Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs). Each year, the EDE country fiches provide an assessment of disability issues arising from the plans submitted by the Member States and from the Commission's responses to them. These reports are prepared by national experts in the EDE network, based on their analyses of the information currently available.

As was documented in previous Semester synthesis reports prepared by ANED/EDE, there has been increasing recognition of the situation of persons with disabilities in the Semester document packages. In 2025, all 27 of the Commission's Semester Country Reports included the disability employment gap as part of the Social Scoreboard as well as further explicit references to disability issues. The number of CSRs referring explicitly to disability in 2025 rose to ten, which again demonstrates increased attention compared to 2022 when there were only five or six passing references (for reference, in 2019 there were 18).²⁸ Considering the persistent inequality gaps persons with disabilities face, the next cycle should reinforce the focus on disability equality mainstreaming, including in the CSRs.

The Commission Communication on the 2025 Spring Package²⁹ included three references to disability (in 2024, there were two references). It underlined the importance of increasing the labour market participation of persons with disabilities (along with other marginalised groups), particularly in the context of a shrinking working-age population, calling for a comprehensive approach to remove barriers to employment. This should include ensuring access to high-quality and affordable early childhood education and care, social and long-term care services and improving working conditions. For persons with disabilities specifically, this also means providing adequate workplace adaptations. The Commission also acknowledged that high housing costs and rents pose particular challenges for persons with disabilities in terms of living independently.

2.2.1 National medium-term fiscal-structural plans (MTPs)

Medium-Term Fiscal-Structural Plans (MTPs), also referred to as Medium-Term Plans, are at the centre of the reformed economic governance framework, replacing the National Reform Programmes (NRPs). They are designed to enhance the coordination of national fiscal policies with EU-level objectives, focusing on the sustainability of public finances

²⁸ The ten Member States that received CSRs with reference to disability are: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Malta and Poland.

²⁹ European Commission (2025), '2025 European Semester: Spring Package Communication' COM(2025) 200 final, https://commission.europa.eu/publications/2025-european-semester-spring-package-communication_en.

while supporting sustainable and inclusive growth. MTPs set out the Member State’s fiscal path as well as priority public investments and reforms for four or five years, depending on the regular length of the respective legislative term.³⁰

MTPs cover broader reforms and investments, including those addressing common Union priorities. As such, MTPs play an indirect but important role in ensuring that public spending and reforms contribute to inclusive growth by aligning national fiscal policies with broader EU objectives. This includes potential support for social inclusion through the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights and the EU Disability Strategy 2021-2030. References to disability policies in the MTPs, as summarised in each 2025 EDE country fiche, are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of references to disability policies in the MTPs

MS	Key points of relevance to disability
AT	‘The MTP of Austria does not mention disability.’
BE	<p>‘In line with the reform of the sickness pension for statutory civil servants in the “Temporary Disability for Civil Servants” (TAVA) scheme, which has already been decided, new inflows into the system will be stopped from 1 January 2026, ensuring that the system will eventually be completely phased out at the federal, regional, and local levels. A transition to disability and invalidity insurance, consistent with private sector provisions, will be implemented for federal civil servants.’</p> <p>‘In the German-speaking Community, a better balance between family and professional life enhances employability and strengthens the region. To achieve this, there is a need for childcare facilities that are financially and geographically accessible, flexible childcare hours, and better support for parents of children with disabilities. For persons with disabilities, the government plans to invest in day centres, leisure activities for children who need support, housing projects for adults with disabilities, and other specific initiatives.’</p>
BG	<p>The Updated medium-term fiscal plan for 2025-2028 mentions persons with disabilities 25 times in relation to: increase of social benefits, pensions, salaries of personal assistants (p. 26); tax reduction for parents of children with disabilities (p. 45); and the budget of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy for 2025, which provides for additional expenses of EUR 290 million for benefits and compensation, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EUR 184.3 million due to the effect of raising the monthly minimum wage from EUR 467 to EUR 539, including EUR 182 million for the remuneration of personal assistants under the Personal Assistance Act; • EUR 105.5 million for social benefits linked to the new amount determined for the poverty line for 2025 (from EUR 263 to EUR 319), including EUR 89 million additional costs for financial support under the Persons with Disabilities Act (p. 58). <p>The strategic goals: ensuring access to effective social support, expanding opportunities for independent living in an accessible environment, involving disability organisations in social inclusion (p. 61); rewarding athletes with disabilities for their achievements (p. 80); and the delayed closure of the last large institutions for babies (of the 20 planned centres for children with disabilities needing permanent medical care, six have been built, five of which are operational. These are insufficient to serve all children from institutions. As a result, by 31 December 2024, alternative care could not be arranged for all.</p>

³⁰ European Commission (2024), Medium-Term Fiscal-Structural Plans – overview, European Commission, Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/economic-and-fiscal-governance/stability-and-growth-pact/preventive-arm/national-medium-term-fiscal-structural-plans_en.

MS	Key points of relevance to disability
	Therefore, extending the institutions' operation until 31 December 2025 remains the only viable option) (p. 137).
CY	<p>Disability is reflected mainly in 'Section 7.2. Reforms and investments addressing Country Specific Recommendations' covering those for 2024 and earlier. Specifically, the following reforms and investments refer to disability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • '30. Establishment of home structures for children, adolescents with conduct disorders, persons with disabilities and people in need of long-term care' (p. 39). This includes the establishment or renovation of structures, following a draft agreement between the Department for Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (DSIPD) and the Cyprus Land Development Corporation (CLDC), submitted to the Law Office in November 2023. The designs for five buildings for persons with disabilities have been completed, pending final permits. The investment responds to Country Specific Recommendations 2020.1, and is funded by RRF C.213, under the Social and Economic Resilience priority. • '51. Transition of students with disabilities to Higher Education, including accessibility and support' (p. 47). This investment includes provision of reasonable accommodation, specifically in exam procedures for admission to public universities in Cyprus and Greece (i.e. extra examination time, simplification of language, exemption from spelling and grammar requirements, essay explanations and short breaks) (responding to CSR 2019.3), under the Social and Economic Resilience priority.
CZ	<p>'- Reforms and Investments mentions that a draft revision of the protected labour market is under preparation to streamline the provision of the contribution to the employment of persons with disabilities on the sheltered labour market and to prevent the most serious excesses in the provision of this socially necessary support.</p> <p>-The streamlining of public employment services in terms of making the services of the Labour Office more accessible and reducing the bureaucratic burden through digitalisation (p. 27).</p> <p>- Housing affordability in the Czech Republic is a persistent systemic problem. For low-income groups, the issue is even more pressing due to the lack of a legal framework for providing systemic support for social housing (p. 28).</p> <p>- Concerning education, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports plans to fund school psychologists and school special educators from the state budget starting in 2025 (p. 26).'</p>
DE	<p>'The mainstreaming of disability equality is hardly considered in the 2025 MTP and there are only a few indirect references to it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of barrier-free mobility in Germany is emphasised, and a need for investment is seen here (p. 53). • Barrier-free access to electronic administrative services will be implemented by law (p. 71). • Early childhood education should be modernised through inclusion and digitalisation (p. 68).'
DK	<p>'Denmark's Fiscal and Structural Policy Plan 2024 (MTP) addresses issues related to disability in two ways. One (table 3.3, p. 28) involves a reform of student support. Various measures have previously been implemented with the aim of encouraging students to complete their studies quickly, and these have now been supplemented by a limit on student support. This means that from January 2027, a maximum of 58 SU-credits (equivalent to 5 years of student support) for higher education can be received, which corresponds to five years of study. Recipients of disability allowances and single parents can, however, receive support for a further two years.</p>

MS	Key points of relevance to disability
	<p>The other (MTP, table 3.4, p. 31) concerns a broad political agreement on future support for persons with disabilities that the government has developed in cooperation with the most important stakeholders in the disability field. As will be explained in section 2.3, this is not an agreement with stakeholders, but only between the broad majority of political parties, because the main stakeholders refused to sign it. The aim of this agreement is to achieve sustainable development so that the goals can be achieved without overspending.</p> <p>In the Council's approval of Denmark's national medium-term fiscal-structural plan, point 24 mentions that the plan includes a range of initiatives on equal opportunities and access to the labour market, as well as measures to improve working environments. These benefit everyone, and persons with disabilities even more so. The plan also includes measures in the health field, such as investment in psychiatry, and a reform of the long-term care sector and training staff to cater for persons with disabilities.'</p>
EE	<p>'The main aims mentioned in the MTP related to persons with disabilities: (1) Finalise the reorganisation of the special care system by 2027 and reorganize another 5 special care service providers who provide services for a total of 390 persons to improve the living conditions and meet the modern requirements; (2) Reorganization of the rehabilitation system to make the rehabilitation services more responsive to clients' needs, improve access to services and facilitate the provision of services in an integrated manner. (3) The integration of the social and health care sectors. The health services organisation model is planned to be updated, to focus on integrated human-centred services in the social and health sectors in cooperation with local government units and the development of event-based services.'</p>
EL	<p>'The MTP incorporates the disability perspective in major current reforms, especially in the areas of employment, education, health access and housing, along with targeted reform in the area of social protection. These are in most cases funded under the RRP. Reforms relevant from a disability perspective, and in relation to current Semester priorities, are: The reform of Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs) (funded under the RRF), The 'Disability' reform (RRF), The Social Housing programme, The Diversity Awareness (RRF), Inclusion in Education (MFF).'</p>
ES	<p>'Spain's national medium-term fiscal-structural plan (MTP) does not contain any references to persons with disabilities or disadvantaged groups.'</p>
FI	<p>'Persons with disabilities are not mentioned in the Finnish MTPs.'</p>
FR	<p>'The national medium-term fiscal-structural plan (MTP) does not mention disability nor accessibility.'</p>
HR	<p>'A Council Recommendation from 2025 endorsing the National medium-term fiscal-structural plan of Croatia includes RRP measures on adapting fully autonomous and electric vehicles and infrastructure to the needs of passengers with disabilities, further addressing the 2020 CSR on increasing access to digital infrastructure and services. (p. 9/11)'</p>
HU	<p>'In the medium-term fiscal plan there is no specific mention of issues, problems or measures regarding persons with disabilities.'</p>
IE	<p>'The MTP for Ireland makes just three references to disability. The first is to mention a new target in Pathways to Work 2021-2025, Ireland's national employment services strategy, for the employment of persons with disabilities. The MTP does not indicate what the target is. The second mention of disability is a statement that work on the next National Disability Strategy is underway, but no date is given for its launch. The final reference to disability is in relation to childcare and the Better Start Access and Inclusion Model (AIM), a programme to promote inclusion and to ensure that children with disabilities can meaningfully participate in the free pre-school Early Childhood Care and</p>

MS	Key points of relevance to disability
	Education (ECCE) programme in mainstream pre-school settings (see Section 5.2). It is particularly concerning that there is no mention of disability, accessibility or universal design in the section on Housing, as such consideration is essential for future-proofing housing developments and ensuring supply for persons with disabilities and an ageing population.’
IT	<p>‘The medium-term structural and fiscal plan for 2025–2029 includes two measures directly related to disability. The first is in the section dedicated to “Family, birth rate and reduction of social and territorial gaps”; the second is in the section relating to “Better education and training to ensure greater opportunities and skills in accessing the labour market”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first measure concerns the Single and Universal Allowance (AUU), paid monthly for each dependent child with variable amounts and without age limits for children with disabilities. With this measure, the Government intends to intensify efforts to counter the negative demographic trend, expand the system of assistance and support for families and create an economic, social and employment context favourable to births. • As for the second aspect, the RRP has increased the number and skills of teaching staff in schools of all levels. The RRP has introduced a new model for recruiting teaching staff, which combats the phenomenon of school precariousness and provides for continuous training courses and an incentive system based on an evaluation of merit. Thanks to these interventions, the Medium Plan foresees that, by 2026, 70 000 new teachers, hired on a permanent basis according to the new model, will be included in primary and secondary schools and in support of students with disabilities (p. 128).’
LT	<p>‘The MTP reflects disability primarily through its social policy and inclusion reforms, particularly in the context of: Disability assessment reform, which came into force from 1 January 2024. The objective of the reform is to ensure that persons with disabilities have equal opportunities in all areas of life – work, home, community and education; Social housing and accessibility; Healthcare and long-term care; Active labour market policies; Increasing the quality of social services.’</p>
LU	<p>‘The MTP contains measures aimed either directly at persons with disabilities: 1. Individual autonomy for persons with disabilities (The government is intensifying efforts to enable people with disabilities to live as independently as possible. A study on socio-pedagogical support and a survey of the needs of people with disabilities are underway, with plans to create a personal assistance budget); 2. 3rd National Action Plan for the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (The government will continue implementing measures from the 2019-2024 National Action Plan and develop a 3rd National Action Plan to set concrete objectives and actions for supporting people with disabilities); 3. The government aims to strengthen partnerships for Social inclusion income (REVIS) beneficiaries, focusing on community service work measures, collaboration with organizations supporting older persons and persons with disabilities, and state entities in order to better prepare for the eventual transition to the labour market.’</p>
LV	<p>‘In the Fiscal Structural Plan of Latvia for 2025-2028, persons with disabilities are listed in the “Reform and Investments” section, in the table on measures, reforms and investments that are being implemented. Among the measures included in the social protection and security policy area are “Support for persons with disabilities”, with the goal of “Improving material support for persons with disabilities” and an implementation period starting in January 2024, as an open-ended measure to meet 2019(2); 2020(2); 2022(1); 2023(1); 2024(1) CSR with funding from the state budget, and measures on</p>

MS	Key points of relevance to disability
	<p>the accessibility of state and municipal buildings, with an implementation period from 2022 to 2026, half-year I, with RRF funding. As part of the new measures, an “increase in the non-taxable minimum for pensioners” is indicated.’</p>
MT	<p>‘Social Protection Measures: “The Government remains committed to fine-tune social assistance programmes and to amend, as need be, the different benefits to reflect the changing realities and changes in the social and economic dimension. Recent initiatives include the increase in the Carers’ Grant for parents of severely disabled children over 16 and the Carer at Home Scheme ... In 2024, both allowances were adjusted by the full Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA), whilst the Increased Severe Disability Allowance, is at par with the net national minimum wage.” (p.24, Section 7.1.4.3)</p> <p>Inclusive Education and Employment: Malta’s disability inclusion framework demonstrates comprehensive policy coordination addressing educational, employment, and social participation barriers simultaneously. The approach integrates European commitments, UN Convention compliance and Sustainable Development Goals alignment into domestic strategies spanning multiple ministries and agencies. Implementation mechanisms include stakeholder collaboration through specialised forums, evidence-based policy development from EU-funded research projects, and targeted interventions addressing specific populations like individuals with autism, intellectual impairments or mental health conditions. The strategy emphasises systemic change through inclusive education reforms, employer engagement initiatives, technological innovation, and community-based support programmes, creating sustainable pathways for workforce participation while promoting broader social inclusion objectives (p.43, Section 7.3.3).’</p>
NL	<p>‘The national medium-term fiscal-structural plan presents measures to lower taxes for persons with paid work as the solution to labour market shortages and for persons at risk of poverty. A higher income is supposed to stimulate persons receiving a benefit (including a disability benefit) to seek paid work and for persons working part time to work more hours. The fiscal-structural plan gives an update on measures to reduce segmentation in the labour market and to enhance basic skills and upskilling of workers. These themes are of relevance to persons working at the margins of the labour market, including many persons with disabilities. However, it is notable that almost none of these measures are specifically aimed at persons with disabilities.</p> <p>The plan to reduce (fiscal) incentives for the self-employed without employees has been completed. The measure to promote adequate social protection for the self-employed by introducing an obligatory insurance against incapacity has not yet materialised as a law proposal has been temporarily withdrawn and will not be sent to Parliament before 2026. An action plan to tackle bogus self-employment and to reduce incentives to use flexible or temporary contracts was introduced in Parliament at the end of 2024 and is being implemented in 2025. A moratorium on enforcing a law on banning bogus self-employment has been lifted as of 2025.’</p>
PL	<p>‘On 8 October 2024, the Council of Ministers adopted the Medium-Term Fiscal-Structural Plan for the years 2025–2028. The document does not explicitly refer to disability at any point.</p> <p>On 29 April 2025, the Council of Ministers adopted the first Annual Progress Report on the implementation of the “Medium-Term Fiscal-Structural Plan for 2025–2028”. The report explicitly relates to disability in the sections on reforms and investments and in the annexes.’</p> <p>In the report’s section on Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Poland, the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</p>

MS	Key points of relevance to disability
	2021–2030 is mentioned as aiming to ‘boost their employment in an open, accessible working environment, ensuring equality in access to employment’.
PT	‘Persons with disabilities are only once mentioned in the whole document (in Table I.4 Aligning the strategic challenges of the GOs 2024-2028 with the European Pillar of Social Rights, p. 49).’
RO	‘Romania’s National Medium-Term Fiscal-Structural Plan (MTP) contains no specific or direct measures for persons with disabilities or other vulnerable groups.’
SE	‘The Swedish MTP contains only one reference to disability. It concerns the PES Enhanced Support programme, which aims to effectively connect long-term unemployed individuals with employers. The goal is for individuals to transition into employment or begin regular training. These activities must be based on evidence-based methods and proven experience. They may also include collaboration with other entities, such as municipalities, to facilitate more effective transitions to training. Priority will be given to individuals who have been unemployed for over two years, including foreign-born women and individuals with disabilities that result in reduced work capacity. PES must submit a report on the project by 17 March 2025 (p. 36).’
SI	‘Slovenia’s MTP largely overlooks the specific needs, rights and lived realities of persons with disabilities, despite these groups being disproportionately affected by the structural transitions these plans intend to address. This means missing a critical opportunity to align Slovenia’s reforms with CRPD obligations and the EU Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021–2030.’
SK	<p>‘In the Medium-term fiscal-structural plans (MTPs) the following issues, particularly in education, are directly linked to disability issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific measures have been introduced to eliminate segregation and to support inclusive education (p. 19); • Reform 6 of the MTP involves supporting the optimal development of children with disabilities from an early age and enhancing desegregation and inclusive education (p. 22); • Reform 13 involves redefining special educational needs and preparing materials to teach and support children and pupils with special educational needs (p. 24); • Common priorities in the MTP under social and economic resilience, including the European Pillar of Social Rights, include support for measures to increase the inclusion of children with special educational needs and children from marginalised Roma communities (p. 41); • Investment 5 is also relevant for persons with disabilities to increase the attendance of children with disabilities in pre-primary education. It involves expanding pre-school capacity to create the conditions for a legal entitlement to pre-primary education from the age of four, and later from the age of three (p. 24).’

2.3 The Commission Country Reports

The analytical phase of the Semester includes Country Reports (CRs) prepared by Commission staff. The most recent ones were published in June 2025.³¹ These reports highlight key challenges, gaps and promising practices that feed into the consideration of recommendations to the Member States. Increasing the attention given to disability equality in these analytical reports in recent years and enhancing the quality of analysis are important for mainstreaming disability in the Semester process.

Since 2022, all the CRs refer to the disability employment gap indicator in the Social Scoreboard supporting the European Pillar of Social Rights, which classifies Member States’

³¹ European Commission (2025), ‘2025 European Semester: Country Reports’, https://economy-finance.ec.europa.eu/publications/2025-european-semester-country-reports_en.

performance on a seven-point scale (from ‘critical situation’ to ‘best performers’). This has been an important step forwards in disability equality mainstreaming for the Semester. The number of direct text references has also increased considerably over the last ten years (even without considering the Scoreboard indicator on the disability employment gap). Table 3 shows the ways in which disability was explicitly referred to in each of the 2025 CRs.

Most of the references to persons with disabilities in the CRs relate to the disability employment gap and the difficulties they face in entering the labour market. The importance of investing in skills development (upskilling and reskilling), including digital skills, for persons with disabilities was mentioned in a number of CRs, such as for Cyprus, Hungary, Ireland and Malta. It is now quite clearly articulated as a policy objective to fill existing labour shortages through the activation of persons with disabilities, along with other underrepresented, long-term unemployed groups such as Roma people and young people not in education, employment or training (NEET).

The high rates of poverty and social exclusion among persons with disabilities was another recurring topic in the 2025 CRs, often linked to the economic inactivity of persons with disabilities and the inadequacy of social benefits. ESF+ funded active inclusion programmes, anti-poverty and social inclusion measures directly supporting persons with disabilities, such as access to early childhood education and care (ECEC), health and social care services, were highlighted for Belgium, Cyprus, Malta, and Poland.

As part of the RRP reforms, Czechia has introduced a new law on long-term care, while in Italy, efforts are underway to improve access to digital services for persons with disabilities. In Malta, the RRP targets several educational and accessibility goals, including strengthening basic literacy, preventing early school dropout, enhancing digital learning and upgrading accessibility for students with disabilities. Meanwhile, Bulgaria’s RRP includes a range of reforms and investments aimed at promoting fairness and social policy. These include initiatives to support social inclusion and personal mobility for individuals with permanent disabilities, the development of the social and solidarity economy through support for relevant businesses and organisations, and reforms to the minimum income scheme.

Table 3: Disability references in the 2025 Country Reports

MS	Disability employment gap	Example extracts from the Country Report
AT	2023: On average 2024: Better than average	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The headline statement on labour market tightness specifically identifies the need to improve the labour market participation of persons with disabilities. • ‘...in 2024 more than 40 % of women cited care of adults with disabilities or children as a reason for working part-time’ which has important implications for disability policy. • ‘...21.5 % of persons with disabilities in Austria were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2023’, which is above the rate for the total population. • Climate-related health risks disproportionately affect individuals with chronic illnesses or disabilities, including stress, prolonged allergy seasons and new infectious diseases.
BE	2023: Critical situation	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p>

MS	Disability employment gap	Example extracts from the Country Report
	2024: To watch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major challenges persist in the labour market for persons with disabilities and those on long-term sick leave. The disability employment gap remains high and the NEET rate for young persons with disabilities was also high at 27.2 % in 2022. • Public services fell short of their 3 % disability employment goal, reaching only 1.44 % in 2023. • Measures to improve their employment include reforms to benefit-work combination rules and new financial aid schemes, particularly in the Brussels Capital Region, supported by ESF+ and RRF. • People in a more vulnerable situation on the labour market, such as those with disabilities, experience a higher risk of poverty and social exclusion linked to their lower employment. • Housing cost overburden remains relatively low, despite gradual increases over the past decade and long waiting times to access social housing. Individuals over 16 years of age with disabilities suffer an above EU average housing cost overburden (12.0 % vs 10.4 %).
BG	2023: Critical situation 2024: Weak but improving	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities face greater barriers to employment. The disability employment gap was one of the highest in the EU in 2024. Of young persons with disabilities, 52 % were NEET in 2022. So far, Bulgaria has not set an employment target for persons with disabilities. • Underrepresentation of some groups due to low capacity of active labour market policies, particularly Roma, persons with disabilities, young people and people with low levels of education. • Despite progress in reducing overall poverty risks and inequalities, significant challenges persist, particularly for vulnerable groups such as children, older persons, persons with disabilities and Roma. • More sustainable, holistic and multisectoral initiatives could help effectively address the challenges faced by children, persons with disabilities, Roma and the rural population. • Amid a rapidly ageing population, access to long-term care services for older people and persons with disabilities remains limited. Spending on long-term care (LTC) was among the lowest in the EU (0.5 % of GDP compared to 1.7 % in the EU) and largely concentrated on residential care. In addition, there is a shortage of social care workers, due to factors such as ageing and emigration. • The RRP contains several reforms and investments related to fairness and social policies, including social inclusion initiatives promoting personal mobility and accessibility for persons with permanent disabilities, promotion of the social economy through assistance for the development of social and solidarity economy businesses and organisations, and reforms to the minimum income system. • The EU Technical Support Instrument (TSI) assisted with measures to improve the quality of early childhood

MS	Disability employment gap	Example extracts from the Country Report
CY	2023: On average 2024: On average	<p>education and care and to reform the educational curriculum to ensure quality and excellence.</p> <p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persons with disabilities continue to face persistent employment challenges and they are among the groups that are much less integrated into the labour market. • There is a need to extend employer support programmes, including the disability quota system for the private sector, and more disability-targeted employment incentive schemes. • ESF+ allocation for social inclusion and social cohesion also includes the provision of home and other care services for persons with disabilities. • Efforts to increase the attractiveness of vocational training specifically for digital skills development for persons with disabilities need to be strengthened. The action plan for the green and digital transitions developed targets for persons with disabilities among other groups. • Deteriorating education prospects for students with disabilities are also mentioned. • In housing and energy, reduced electricity tariffs and financial support for solar energy systems have been targeted at the living spaces of persons with disabilities since 2022.
CZ	2023: On average 2024: Better than average	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disadvantaged groups, including Ukrainian refugees, people of Roma heritage and persons with disabilities, struggle to access jobs. • 'In December 2024, Czechia set an employment goal of 45 % for persons with disabilities.' • '...in 2024, Czechia approved measures to support social enterprises, cooperatives and non-profits employing persons with disabilities by providing access to funding and improving regulatory conditions.' • There are also indirect references to disability issues related to social housing, the deinstitutionalisation process and a new long-term care law (as part of the RRP).
DE	2023: On average 2024: Better than average	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • '...the disability employment gap has decreased from 24.2 pps in 2022 to 22.6 pps in 2023', while the EU average is 21.5 pps. • '...persons with disabilities face greater social challenges' than persons without disabilities. • '39.5 % of persons with severe disabilities were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2023, higher than the EU average (35.6 %) and on the rise since 2021 (31 %). This is a gap of 18.3 pps compared with persons without disabilities.'
DK	2023: Missing categorisation	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p>

MS	Disability employment gap	Example extracts from the Country Report
	2024: On average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although persons with disabilities have higher employment rates in Denmark than in many other EU countries, they still face barriers. • The disability employment gap has grown and is above the EU average; 38 % of the NEET group has a disability and no targets have been set for the employment of persons with disabilities. • Denmark's strong welfare system can tackle poverty and social exclusion, which it keeps at bay through social transfers. However, persons with disabilities still face unequal conditions, and more needs to be done to alleviate this situation. 'The AROPE rate for persons with disabilities has been increasing' but is still below the EU average. • The housing cost overburden rate is significantly above the EU average and for persons with disabilities it is twice this average. • '...the national audit office has published a report on digital accessibility' to promote accessibility for persons with disabilities.
EE	2023: Better than average 2024: Better than average	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'After rising sharply in 2022, the disability employment gap narrowed by 6 pps in 2023 and stabilised in 2024, below the EU average (20.8 pps vs 24 pps in 2024).' • 'Estonia set the target for the employment rate of persons with disabilities at 52 % by 2030.' • 'The proportion of older people, single-person households and persons with disabilities at risk of poverty or social exclusion remains high, due to low social spending and low impact of social transfers (excluding pensions) on poverty reduction. While Estonia has taken steps to address the challenges, they do not appear to be sufficient to reduce poverty for some groups.' • 'Unmet needs are twice as high for persons with disabilities, mostly as a result of regional disparities in access to services.' • 'The dropout rate is also higher for people with disabilities.'
EL	2023: On average 2024: On average	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'To date, Greece has not set an employment target for persons with disabilities. The disability employment gap stood at 28.5 pps in 2024, 4.5 pps higher than the EU average.' • 'Although employment continues to increase, the Greek unemployment rate, including long-term unemployment, remains among the highest in the EU. Unemployment in Greece disproportionately affects women, young people, and persons with disabilities.' • 'The share of people at risk of poverty, severely materially and socially deprived, or living in a household with very low work intensity is high, particularly among third-country nationals, Roma, and persons with disabilities.' • 'The low availability and affordability of quality non-residential community-based care is delaying the

MS	Disability employment gap	Example extracts from the Country Report
ES	2023: Best performers 2024: To watch	<p>deinstitutionalisation process and the transition to independent living of persons with disabilities.'</p> <p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The employment gap between persons with and without disabilities remains wide, underlining persistent structural inequalities in access to work. • Persons with disabilities still encounter serious obstacles to labour market participation, and targeted policies have not yet proven sufficiently effective to overcome these barriers. • Learners with disabilities continue to face barriers to accessing inclusive, high-quality education, and ensuring smooth transitions from school to the labour market remains a pressing challenge. • Components of the national recovery plan include actions to enhance accessibility and digital participation for persons with disabilities, particularly in education and public services.
FI	2023: Better than average 2024: Better than average	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With regard to maintaining a high employment rate amid an ageing population and a declining working-age population, inactive persons with disabilities, and others outside the labour force, would contribute to achieving higher employment levels. • Disability is also referenced in the context of the reduction in the staff-to-patient ratio for 24-hour long-term care services for older people, which was lowered from 0.65 to 0.6 in January 2025. This highlights the importance of carefully considering the support needs of older individuals. • 24.4 % of persons with disabilities are at risk of poverty and social exclusion and the increase in the share of people reporting unmet needs for medical care indicates a deterioration in access to care which is especially concerning for persons with disabilities, who are more likely to require regular medical support.
FR	2023: Better than average 2024: Better than average	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2023 'full employment law', overhauling the public employment service, 'aims to improve the support provided to job seekers and persons with disabilities. It also includes the automatic registration of approximately 1.2 million minimum income beneficiaries with the PES and ties the allowance payment to the completion of 15 to 20 hours of activity per week. Ensuring adequate resources for the PES is essential for engaging with and providing personalised guidance to the newly registered minimum-income beneficiaries. • 'More than one in four persons with disabilities faced a risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2024 (28.4 %)' which is 'slightly below the EU average of 28.8 %, but 12.4 pps higher than for those without disabilities.' As noted in the CR, 'educational attainment and employment status are key determinants of poverty risks'.

MS	Disability employment gap	Example extracts from the Country Report
HR	2023: Critical situation 2024: Critical situation	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'The employment situation for persons with disabilities is particularly concerning. The disability employment gap increased significantly over two consecutive years, rising from 28.7 pps in 2021 to 41.0 pps in 2024, well above the EU average of 24.0 pps.' • 'In 2022, almost half of young persons with disabilities were not in employment, education or training...' • 'Croatia has not yet set a target for the employment of persons with disabilities.' • Persons with disabilities face higher and increasing poverty rates. • Long-term care services outside institutions are very limited, which affects the deinstitutionalisation process. 'It also leads to a high proportion of informal carers delivering intensive informal care.'
HU	2023: To watch 2024: On average	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'The disability employment gap decreased by 2.4 pps in 2024 but remains high, at 27.2 pps. Almost 40 % of young persons with disabilities are NEETs (2022) (204). To improve the situation, Hungary recently set an employment target for persons with disabilities.' • 'Early school leaving remains above the EU average, particularly among persons with disabilities...' • 'Poverty and social exclusion are on the rise, reversing long-standing positive trends... The effects were significantly more pronounced for persons with disabilities and people from the Roma community, who often have a low level of education and are under-represented on the jobs market.' • '...a low and declining impact of the Active Labour Market Policy (ALMP) system and the lack of an integrated service provision, as reflected in the significant underrepresentation of certain groups in the labour market - particularly Roma communities, persons with lower levels of educational attainment and persons with disabilities.' • 'Hungary would benefit from [measures] ...to support upward social convergence, improving the participation on the jobs market of vulnerable groups, including Roma and persons with disabilities by reskilling and upskilling and strengthening the capacity of the public employment service to provide training and comprehensive support services.'
IE	2023: Critical situation 2024: Critical situation	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Despite improvements, Ireland has still one of the highest disability employment gaps in the EU (36.7 % vs 21.5 %).' • 'Targeted measures, like the "early engagement" process, whereby the Irish public employment service actively engages with people with disabilities helped many people find employment.' • 'The percentages of single parents (48.2 %) and persons with disabilities (32.7 %) at risk of poverty or social

MS	Disability employment gap	Example extracts from the Country Report
		<p>exclusion are above the respective EU averages (41.3 % and 28.8 %).’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Children from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, including Travellers and Roma, and students with disabilities have lower educational outcomes, which is also reflected in the higher early school-leaving rate.’ • ‘The recent investments in new special schools for students with disabilities risk increasing educational segregation.’ • ‘Inclusive measures in mainstream schools and classes would better address the needs of students with disabilities, families and schools, and would contribute to social cohesion.’ • ‘To foster competitiveness, sustainability and social fairness, Ireland would benefit from... strengthening labour market and social inclusion of disadvantaged groups, in particular persons with disabilities and single parents, by putting in place better targeted outreach and upskilling.’
IT	2023: Best performers 2024: To watch	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable groups (low-skilled adults, direct descendants of migrants and persons with disabilities) still face significant obstacles to labour market integration. • The disability employment gap has widened, from 15.9 pps in 2023 to 25.1 pps in 2024. • The report calls for structural reforms in this area and to establish a target for the employment of persons with disabilities. • The reforms envisaged in the RRP aim to simplify, by June 2026, numerous administrative procedures related to citizens’ interactions with public administration which include procedures related to support for persons with disabilities and access to digital services. These reforms have a potentially very significant impact on the quality of life of persons with disabilities.
LT	2023: Critical situation 2024: Critical situation	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Lithuania has one of the highest disability employment gaps in the EU, which is further exacerbated by the low adequacy of disability benefits.’ • ‘People with disabilities in Lithuania face the highest at-risk-of-poverty rate in the EU in 2024 (38.2 % vs 20.7 %), which reflects their low employment rates.’
LU	2023: To watch 2024: Better than average	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities... continue to face obstacles to labour market integration’ even if ‘the disability employment gap narrowed from 23.7 pps in 2023 to 19.1 pps in 2024, below the EU average.’ • ‘Barriers include a lack of adapted workplaces, private-sector failing to comply with legal hiring quotas (only 12 of companies meet this obligation) and weak enforcement mechanisms.’ • ‘Measures to help narrow the disability employment gap could include continued awareness-raising, mentoring and de-stigmatisation campaigns, additional incentives for

MS	Disability employment gap	Example extracts from the Country Report
		<p>companies who meet disability quotas, offer training or adapt workplaces (and/or penalties for those who do not) and the setting of nationwide employment targets.'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Fear of stigmatisation may discourage people from disclosing disabilities which are not always visible, leading to underreporting.'
LV	2023: Better than average 2024: Better than average	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'The disability employment gap stood at 21.3 pps in 2024, almost 3 pps below the EU average, but has been increasing by almost 3 pps since 2023.' 'According to 2022 data, 34.3 % of young persons with disabilities in Latvia were not in employment, education or training. As for adults with a disability, 60 % were in employment, compared with 77.4 % for adults overall.' It is necessary to increase the activation of persons with disabilities, a group 'which faces a high risk of social exclusion and poverty'. '38.5 % of persons with disabilities were at risk of poverty and social exclusion in 2023, 19.4 pps higher than those without disabilities. Moreover, over 50 % of persons with severe disabilities were at risk of poverty and social exclusion in Latvia in the same year, which was one of the highest rates in the EU.' 'Latvia has progressed well in recent years in terms of implementing a social economy' and there was 'a significant increase in the number of persons with disabilities working in social enterprises, from 53 in 2020 to 152 in 2024.' The report also recommends continuing to 'invest in workplace adaptations, and the improvement of accessibility to public and private buildings and to support subsidised employment to activate persons with a disability, which has so far had a high success rate.'
MT	2023: Better than average 2024: On average	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persons with disabilities remain significantly underrepresented in the workforce, with women facing especially wide employment gaps that exceed EU averages. There is a need for more comprehensive active labour market policies, including targeted reskilling and mandatory workplace accommodations, to fully utilise this workforce potential. The most vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, experience heightened poverty risks. The social protection system allocates relatively modest resources with an emphasis on pensions and healthcare rather than broader support mechanisms for families, disability services, housing or unemployment assistance. The ESF+ in Malta dedicates 26.1 % of its budget to social inclusion, including training for vulnerable groups, skills development and active inclusion for persons with a disability. Malta has dedicated 43 % of its ESF+ budget to enhancing educational quality and inclusion, while the RRP targets

MS	Disability employment gap	Example extracts from the Country Report
		fundamental literacy improvement, early dropout prevention, digital learning enhancement and accessibility upgrades for students with disabilities.
NL	2023: On average 2024: Better than average	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although the disability employment gap narrowed in 2024, persons with disabilities ‘encounter difficulties in finding quality jobs’. They often work on flexible and temporary contracts in low-skilled and low-paid jobs. • In 2024, the overall at-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion rate in the Netherlands was 15.4 %, but for persons with disabilities this was 22 % due to ‘their overrepresentation in precarious, flexible contracts, a lack of recognition of qualifications, reduced job opportunities, in-work poverty and discrimination’. • ‘...the Dutch school system shows the strongest ability-based separation of students among all EU countries.’
PL	2023: Critical situation 2024: Critical situation	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The disability employment gap ‘has widened further in recent years to 35.6 % and is one of the largest in the EU’. • There is a ‘lack of knowledge and skills among employers on how to integrate persons with disabilities in the workplace’. • ‘The proportion of young people (aged 16–29) not in employment, education or training (NEETs) with disabilities (40 %) is one of the highest in the EU.’ • ‘Persons with disabilities are also at the highest rate of poverty and social exclusion, at 25.5 %, which is linked to their lower educational attainment and employment, and high disability employment gap.’ • ‘To boost competitiveness, sustainability and social fairness, Poland would benefit from increasing labour market participation of persons with disabilities and women by better targeting measures to support disadvantaged groups, continuing to improve the quality of and access to formal home- and community-based long-term care and early childhood education and care’. • ‘To increase childcare accessibility, EUR 1.3 billion from ESF+ and the RRF will create 100 000 new places, including specialised care for children with a disability.’
PT	2023: Best performers 2024: Good but to monitor	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment rates among persons with disabilities remain significantly lower than those of the general population and the disability employment gap widened by 7.3 pps between 2023 and 2024, reaching 21.3 %. • There is a new package of active labour market policies, which includes measures targeted at persons with disabilities, among other vulnerable groups. • Persons with disabilities are at higher risk of poverty than those without disabilities. Social benefits have ‘limited capacity... to reduce poverty and inequality’, which ‘pose risks for Portugal’s sustainable and inclusive growth and prosperity’.

MS	Disability employment gap	Example extracts from the Country Report
RO	2023: To watch 2024: Critical situation	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The disability employment gap remained among the highest in the EU (44.8 pps) and the activity rate of persons with disabilities was just 47.8 %. Young people with disabilities are particularly affected, with 46.3 % not in employment, education or training. Early leavers from education and training, young people not in employment, education or training are also marked as critical. • Of the 17 775 unemployed people enrolled on training courses offered by PES in 2024, only 44 were persons with disabilities (0.24 % of the total participants), with other marginalised groups also being under-represented. Women, NEETs and persons with disabilities who participate in ALMP measures also appear to have less success in getting work compared to other job seekers. • Nearly 50 % of persons with severe disabilities were at risk of poverty or social exclusion, far above the EU average. This is also linked to the low employment rate of persons with disabilities and a significant disability employment gap. • Low availability and affordability of quality non-residential, community-based care delay the deinstitutionalisation and transition to independent living of persons with disabilities. As of November 2024, out of the 124 centres providing services to persons with disabilities, only four were located in rural areas, while six out of the 41 counties lacked a registered centre within their territory.
SE	2023: On average 2024: On average	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disability is mentioned in relation to the risk of long-term unemployment, NEETs, income inequality and social protection (AROEPE). • Persons with disabilities are mentioned as the primary example of vulnerable groups in the labour market and in education. • There are persistent 'difficulties for persons from vulnerable groups, such as persons with disabilities, to find a job'.
SI	2023: Best performers 2024: Best performers	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The disability employment gap is included in the EU Social Scoreboard and referenced in the Country Report.
SK	2023: On average 2024: On average	<p>Direct references to disability in the Country Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Lower-skilled workers, young people and marginalised Roma communities are often inactive on the labour market.' • 'Although the gap in employment between persons with and without disabilities is narrowing, it remains significant at 22.1 percentage points (pps) (vs the EU average of 21.5 pps in 2022).' • 'Slovakia has not yet set an employment target for persons with disabilities.' • 'A third of young persons with disabilities is in the NEETs category.'

Notes: The Social Scoreboard categorisation of the Disability Employment Gap for 2023 is based on the European Commission’s Joint Employment Report 2025, Table 1.4.1 p.30. In the case of Denmark, the categorisation was missing. The Social Scoreboard categorisation of the Disability Employment Gap for 2024 is based on the 2025 Country Reports.

2.4 The Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs)

Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs) were published for all Member States in June 2025.³² Disability is explicitly referenced in ten CSR fiches: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Malta and Poland. Among these, Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia and Ireland include direct references to disability within the recommendations themselves, whereas in the remaining countries, disability is mentioned only in the recitals.

The majority of CSR references concerning persons with disabilities focus on their participation in the labour market, with eight of the ten CSRs that directly mention disability addressing this issue. The CSRs for Bulgaria, Croatia, Lithuania and Poland highlight the significant disability employment gap and in addition, for Croatia and Lithuania, as well as for Ireland, the low employment rate among persons with disabilities is emphasised. In Poland’s case, the high NEET rate among young persons with disabilities is also noted. The CSRs for Belgium, Greece and Hungary point to challenges in labour market integration and the difficulty persons with disabilities face in accessing stable and secure employment. The recommendations for Belgium and Bulgaria specifically call for more effective and better-targeted active labour market policies for persons with disabilities.

Six of the ten CSRs mention disability in reference to poverty and social exclusion, specifically in relation to shortcomings in the social protection system. These are the CSRs for Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Hungary, Ireland and Lithuania. In Estonia’s case, disability is explicitly mentioned in the recommendations, stressing the need for adequate benefits to strengthen social protection for persons with disabilities.

Disability is also referenced in relation to education and skills in four CSRs. The CSRs for Malta and Poland highlight inequalities in educational outcomes and accessing quality education. In Hungary, barriers to reskilling and upskilling opportunities are noted. Ireland’s CSR calls for more targeted outreach and upskilling measures to support both labour market inclusion and social inclusion of persons with disabilities.

There are other recommendations relevant for persons with disabilities (see Table 4). For example, the CSRs for Finland, Italy and Latvia call for improved access to formal home care and community-based long-term care, an issue of particular importance for enabling persons with disabilities to live independently.

Other examples of relevance for children and adults with disabilities include recommendations related to the provision of and access to early childhood education and care (ECEC) (e.g. in the cases of Austria, and France), healthcare (such as in Latvia, Portugal and Slovakia) and housing (e.g. in Denmark, Spain and Sweden), as well as the importance of integrated services, highlighted in the case of Romania.

Table 4: Disability references in the 2025 CSRs

MS	Direct reference to disability	Country-Specific Recommendation
AT	No	Key recommendations of relevance in the CSR include:

³² European Commission (2025), ‘2025 European Semester: Country Specific Recommendations / Commission Recommendations’, https://commission.europa.eu/publications/2025-european-semester-country-specific-recommendations-commission-recommendations_en.

MS	Direct reference to disability	Country-Specific Recommendation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Improve labour market outcomes for older workers and for disadvantaged groups, such as low-skilled job seekers and people with a migrant background, and raise the levels of basic skills, starting from an early age, notably at school level.” “Take decisive action to safeguard the sustainability of public finances, including by improving the fiscal sustainability of the healthcare, long-term care and pension systems, by, among other things, streamlining underused hospital infrastructure, improving the cost-effectiveness of healthcare and long-term care,..”. “Create incentives to boost the numbers of hours worked overall and the full-time labour market participation of women, including by improving quality and availability of childcare services.”
BE	Yes	The CSR mentions disability in reference to ongoing labour market integration challenges for disadvantaged groups, such as persons with disabilities In the recommendations , it calls to “Strengthen the effectiveness and targeting of active labour market policies to further integrate disadvantaged groups into the labour market, in particular people with a low level of education, older workers, people with a migrant background and persons with disabilities.”
BG	Yes	The CSR mentions disability in relation to the high disability employment gap and the high poverty and social exclusion rate among persons with disabilities. In the recommendations , it calls to “Address labour shortages, by effectively implementing measures to increase the employment level of persons with disabilities, people with a lower level of education, Roma and inactive persons.”
CY	No	Key recommendations of relevance in the CSR include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “...scale up efforts in leveraging private financing for energy efficiency improvements and renovations, especially of worst-performing buildings exposing vulnerable consumers to energy poverty”. “Address labour shortages and skills mismatches by strengthening labour market participation of young people, further increasing the capacity and attractiveness of vocational education and training as well as promoting adult learning. Step up policy efforts to strengthen green and digital skills.”
CZ	No	Key recommendations of relevance in the CSR include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “...reduce labour shortages by addressing skills mismatches, simplifying the recognition of foreign qualifications and increasing the labour market participation of underrepresented groups.” “Expand access to general secondary education, enable students to transition between general and vocational education, and provide more support for disadvantaged schools and pupils, including Roma.”
DE	No	Key recommendations of relevance in the CSR include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Improve education outcomes, including by promoting excellence and providing targeted support to disadvantaged groups.” “Improve the availability and quality of early childhood education and care and whole-day schools to encourage carers,

MS	Direct reference to disability	Country-Specific Recommendation
		often women, to work and to promote equal opportunities for all children.” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Improve the conditions for housing investments by simplifying regulation and procedures, reviewing rental law and mobilising additional building land, with the concurrent aim of tackling the housing affordability challenges.”
DK	No	Key recommendations of relevance in the CSR include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Address the skills shortages to meet labour market needs, including by stepping up action to tackle attainment inequalities in education and training and to ensure the provision and acquisition of the skills needed for the green and digital transition.” “Implement measures to improve the affordability of housing.”
EE	Yes	The CSR mentions disability in reference to poverty and social exclusion which remain particularly high for persons with disabilities. In the recommendations , it calls to “Reduce the risk of poverty by strengthening social protection for older people, single-person households and people with disabilities by increasing the adequacy and efficiency of the benefit system”.
EL	Yes	The CSR mentions disability in reference to difficulties faced by vulnerable groups, such as persons with disabilities, in accessing the labour market: “...vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, third-country nationals or Roma face difficulties in accessing the job market.” <p>Key recommendations of relevance include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Increase the rate of women and vulnerable groups in work or looking for work, and help more young people find work by promoting more flexible work arrangements, expanding formal early childhood care and education and long-term care, reinforcing active labour market policies, and tackling skill mismatches.” “Address poverty and social exclusion by further increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the social protection system.”
ES	No	Key recommendations of relevance in the CSR include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Address child poverty, while also improving the efficiency, coverage and adequacy of social transfers and social assistance.” “Reduce skills shortages and mismatches by strengthening dual vocational education and training, and by increasing lifelong learning, in particular for the low-skilled. Improve basic skills and address early school leaving, taking into account regional disparities.” “Strengthen the provision of social and affordable housing.”
FI	No	Key recommendations of relevance in the CSR include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Strengthen active labour market policies for all and address skills shortages by reskilling and upskilling the workforce and widening the higher-education offer, in particular for the skills most in demand in the labour market.” “Pursue the reform of

MS	Direct reference to disability	Country-Specific Recommendation
		<p>the social security system to increase the efficiency of the social benefits system, improve incentives to work and support the long-term sustainability of public finances, while addressing the needs of the vulnerable groups.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Ensure that the reform of social and healthcare services: i) improves the delivery and cost-effectiveness of and access to social and healthcare services, including long-term care, and ii) addresses inefficiencies.”
FR	No	<p>Key recommendations of relevance in the CSR include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Further address skills shortages by supporting access to training for low-skilled and older people and improving the labour market relevance of the training offer.” • “Prevent and reduce child poverty, by removing barriers that hinder parents’ labour market integration and access to quality early childhood education and care for the most disadvantaged households.” “Improve educational outcomes and reduce inequalities in education including by ensuring that all disadvantaged students benefit from improved educational support.”
HR	Yes	<p>The CSR mentions disability in reference to the high poverty rate and low employment rate of persons with disabilities and the widening disability employment gap:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “...the employment rate remains below the EU average, particularly for vulnerable groups such as older people, low-skilled workers, and persons with disabilities. The disability employment gap has widened considerably, increasing the risk of poverty and social exclusion for disadvantaged groups.” • “Poverty and income inequality rates are still high, particularly among older people, persons with disabilities and those living in rural areas.”
HU	Yes	<p>The CSR mentions disability in reference to rising poverty and social exclusion among persons with disabilities and the continued barriers faced by some disadvantaged groups, such as persons with disabilities, to accessing reskilling and upskilling opportunities and secure and stable employment.</p> <p>Key recommendations of relevance include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Improve education outcomes and tertiary attainment rate, and increase the participation of disadvantaged groups, particularly Roma, in quality mainstream education”. • “Increase access to effective active labour market measures, in particular by providing upskilling and reskilling opportunities to the most disadvantaged groups”. • “Improve the adequacy of social assistance and unemployment benefits, and ensure access to essential services for all.”
IE	Yes	<p>The CSR mentions disability in reference to the low employment rate and high poverty risk for persons with disabilities and the need to help disadvantaged groups, such as persons with disabilities, to exit poverty and meet labour market needs, in particular by investing in skills. In the recommendations, it calls to “Strengthen the labour market and social inclusion of disadvantaged</p>

MS	Direct reference to disability	Country-Specific Recommendation
		groups, in particular persons with disabilities and single parents, by putting in place better targeted outreach and upskilling.”
IT	No	Key recommendations of relevance in the CSR include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Promote job quality and reduce labour market segmentation, also to support adequate wages, and increase labour market participation, in particular for underrepresented groups, including by further strengthening active labour market policies and improving affordable access to quality child- and long-term care, taking into account regional disparities.” • “Improve educational outcomes, with a focus on disadvantaged students, including by strengthening basic skills.”
LT	Yes	The CSR mentions disability in reference to the low employment rate of persons with disabilities and the very large disability employment gap, as well as with regards to the high AROP rate faced by this group linked to the low adequacy of disability benefits and limited efficiency of social protection spending, particularly on sickness and disability policies. <p>Key recommendations of relevance include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Address the skills mismatch by increasing the labour market relevance of higher education, promoting the acquisition of green skills, improving adult learning including for unemployed people, low-skilled people and other vulnerable groups, and increasing the coverage of active labour market policies through improved incentives to participate.” • “Address income inequality, poverty and social exclusion by increasing the coverage, adequacy and effectiveness of the social protection system”. “Improve the quality, equity and efficiency of the general education system”.
LU	No	Key recommendations of relevance in the CSR include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Improve performance and ensure equal opportunities in schools, including by adopting a national school quality framework and an external school evaluation system, and by adapting teaching to the needs of disadvantaged students and those from various linguistic backgrounds.”
LV	No	Key recommendations of relevance in the CSR include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Address labour and skills shortages, [...] including through targeted upskilling and reskilling and improved working conditions.” • “Strengthen social protection to reduce inequality, including by improving the adequacy of old-age pensions and the access to quality social services, notably home care”. “Strengthen the adequacy and accessibility of the health system to improve health outcomes, including by providing additional human and financial resources, broadening the statutory benefits package and reducing out-of-pocket payments.”
MT	Yes	The CSR mentions disability in reference to inequities in accessing quality education due to systemic shortcomings of the education system that disproportionately affect students with disabilities.

MS	Direct reference to disability	Country-Specific Recommendation
		Key recommendations of relevance include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Strengthen the inclusiveness of education and training.”
NL	No	Key recommendations of relevance in the CSR include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Adopt and implement measures to reduce incentives to use flexible and temporary contracts.” • “Implement comprehensive measures to address labour and skills shortages, including by tapping into underused labour potential, by strengthening upskilling and reskilling opportunities for all through targeted and tailored active labour market policies”.
PL	Yes	The CSR mentions disability in reference to the high disability employment gap, the large education gap and NEET rates among young persons with disabilities, and the need for more inclusive education and labour market. <p>Key recommendations of relevance include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Take steps to increase the participation of disadvantaged groups in the labour market, including through effective education to employment transitions.” “Foster quality and inclusive education and skills relevant to the labour market.”
PT	No	Key recommendations of relevance in the CSR include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Ensure equal access to quality health and long-term care.”
RO	No	Key recommendations of relevance in the CSR include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Strengthen labour market participation of women and young people through improving effectiveness of active labour market policies and participation in early childhood education and care.” • “Tackle skills shortages by boosting basic skills and labour market relevant skills of the workforce”. “Reduce poverty and social exclusion risks by extending social protection and improving its effectiveness, including through better access to quality essential and enabling services, focusing on integrated social, health, educational and employment services, in particular for Roma and other disadvantaged groups”.
SE	No	Key recommendations of relevance in the CSR include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Improve educational performance, including of students from disadvantaged socioeconomic and migrant backgrounds, by addressing the persistent shortage of qualified teachers, by ensuring equal access opportunities to the schooling system and by further supporting the transition of students to upper secondary school.” • “Develop the skills of the labour force, particularly those from disadvantaged socioeconomic and migrant backgrounds, through targeted policy measures and resources to improve their integration into the labour market.” • “Improve the efficiency of the housing market, including by introducing reforms in the rental market.”
SI	No	Key recommendations of relevance in the CSR include:

MS	Direct reference to disability	Country-Specific Recommendation
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Address labour shortages by stepping up the provision and acquisition of skills and competences, including basic skills among pupils and those relevant for the green and digital transition.” “Boost lifelong learning and training, especially for low-skilled and older workers.”
SK	No	<p>Key recommendations of relevance in the CSR include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Strengthen the labour market participation of underrepresented groups”. “Strengthen the teaching of basic skills, including for children from disadvantaged backgrounds notably in marginalised Roma communities, while ensuring equal and inclusive access to quality education at all levels.” “Improve primary care provision, especially for vulnerable people, and expand preventive healthcare measures.” “Ensure affordable and quality long-term care.”

2.5 Update on investment priorities in relation to disability

2.5.1 The role of cohesion policy funds

During the past decade disability equality has been mainstreamed during the use of EU Structural Funds.^{33, 34} Funds provided by the European Union facilitated access to rights and the social inclusion of persons with disabilities by developing community-based services (Article 19 CRPD), providing vocational training and employment opportunities (Article 27 CRPD) and creating accessible physical and digital environments (Article 9 CRPD), among others.

To support the implementation of the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 and of the UN CRPD, the EU continues to promote the use of EU funding by the Member States as provided for in the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027. For example, in November 2024, the European Commission released a toolkit on using the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) for staff training in independent living support and adopted broader guidance on independent living and inclusion in the community for persons with disabilities, providing practical recommendations for Member States on utilising EU funding to promote the right to live independently and access community-based services.^{35, 36}

In addition, the Common Provisions Regulation³⁷ for shared management funds includes a horizontal enabling condition on the ‘Implementation and application of the United Nations

³³ Quinn, G. and Doyle, S. (2012), ‘Taking the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities seriously: The past and future of the EU Structural Funds as a tool to achieve community living’, *Equal Rights Review*, No. 9, pp. 69–94.

³⁴ McEvoy, E. (2020), ‘EU Structural and Investment Funds and disability’, in: *Research handbook on EU disability law*, Cheltenham, Edward Elgar Publishing.

³⁵ European Commission (2024), ‘Toolkit: Using the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) for staff training in independent living support’, https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/toolkit-using-european-social-fund-plus-esf-staff-training-independent-living-support_en.

³⁶ European Commission (2025), *Guidance on independent living*, https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/commission-adopts-guidance-independent-living-persons-disabilities-2024-11-20_en.

³⁷ Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy, OJ L 231, 30.6.2021, pp. 159-706.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) in accordance with Council Decision 2010/48/EC'. For the fulfilment of the UN CRPD-related conditionality, Annex III requires that Member States put in place a national framework for the implementation of the UN CRPD that includes:

- objectives with measurable goals, data collection and monitoring mechanisms;
- arrangements to ensure that the accessibility policy, legislation and standards are properly reflected in the preparation and implementation of the programmes; and
- reporting arrangements to the monitoring committee regarding cases of non-compliance of operations supported by the funds with the UN CRPD.

EU Cohesion Funds continue to support persons with disabilities across the EU. It is beyond the scope of the EDE Semester country reports to provide a comprehensive overview of EU Cohesion Policy Funds projects that target or are relevant for persons with disabilities in the 2021–2027 period.³⁸ However, country experts mention some ongoing investments that can serve as an indication of Member States' priorities. Countries where the disability employment and poverty (social exclusion) gaps are the widest should be encouraged to launch calls for proposals with the aim of improving the situation of persons with disabilities.

The four main areas of ongoing investment from ESF+ that are directly relevant to persons with disabilities as mentioned in the EDE country reports are:

- labour market participation of persons with disabilities;
- deinstitutionalisation/transition to community-based care services;
- training for employees of social and care services; and
- improving access to inclusive education.

Examples of cohesion-policy-funded initiatives illustrate how EU resources continue to support the inclusion of persons with disabilities across Member States. In France, ESF+ has co-funded initiatives such as the TUMO Centre in Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, which develops digital skills among young people, including those with disabilities, to improve professional integration. Similarly, the ERDF-supported CAPACITI project in France, Luxembourg, Belgium and Germany strengthens children's access and participation, including those with disabilities, in the exercise of their rights.

In Croatia, ESF+ investments provide social services and assistance in daily life for adults with disabilities and older persons, supporting deinstitutionalisation and community-based care. Measures such as the expansion of local social services networks and the development of non-institutional care for children and adults with disabilities illustrate how Cohesion Funds strengthen inclusion and independent living.

Slovenia has also mobilised Cohesion Funds for disability-focused projects such as Active Inclusion – Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Sport, the nationwide awareness campaign on social inclusion, and improving accessibility of goods and services through the European Disability Card.

Despite these investments, a series of fundamental rights issues have been identified in recent years by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), legal scholars, and the European Ombudsman in relation to the use of EU funds, such as investment in segregating facilities for different vulnerable groups (e.g. persons with disabilities, Roma people, children or refugees). Notably, some country fiches this year (including but not limited to Bulgaria and Czechia) cite NGO reports and anecdotal evidence indicating that structural funds have supported projects reinforcing institutional care models rather than inclusive, community-based alternatives. Continued efforts are required to ensure that Cohesion Fund

³⁸ Such an assessment could take place as a flagship initiative of the EU Disability Strategy 2021-2030 post-2024. It would be interesting to know how ESIF-funded projects, e.g. on deinstitutionalisation, have impacted the lives of persons with disabilities.

investments systematically align with broader European strategic priorities, such as accessibility and independent living in the community.

Other project implementation challenges identified in the country fiches include delays in project execution, coordination difficulties between national and local authorities and gaps in the collection of disability-specific data. These issues, observed in several countries, highlight the importance of monitoring frameworks and adaptive management to ensure that Cohesion Fund investments translate into tangible improvements in accessibility, inclusion and participation for persons with disabilities.

2.5.2 Investments under the Recovery and Resilience Facility

Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) investments across the EU continue to offer significant opportunities to support persons with disabilities, but also pose risks if investments are not disability-inclusive. Evidence from the 2024-2025 national fiches shows considerable variation in how RRFs address disability. The extent and effectiveness of the relevant investments also differ widely.

For instance, Belgium has funded accessible train stations and inclusive housing initiatives, while Greece has introduced personal assistance, targeted employment programmes and community-based independent living support. Italy's RRF measures promote inclusive housing, assistive technologies and digital participation, while Slovenia has invested in long-term care reforms and cohesion-funded projects that enhance accessibility and social inclusion. These examples illustrate the potential of RRF funding to advance disability inclusion when projects are explicitly designed with accessibility, autonomy and community-based services in mind.

In a number of Member States, however, country experts observed either no explicit references to disability or more general initiatives across a wide range of areas that could potentially benefit this group only indirectly. When policies are not explicitly designed with persons with disabilities in mind, or developed without meaningful consultation with the disability community, their effectiveness is jeopardised.

Furthermore, special attention should be given to the lack of coordination between planned investments and both national and international disability policy objectives and strategies. Such lack of coordination may unintentionally undermine deinstitutionalisation and general social and economic participation on equal terms. Ultimately, it represents a missed opportunity to leverage RRF investments to systematically advance inclusion, accessibility and equality by aligning EU-level commitments, including the European Disability Rights Strategy and the UN CRPD.

Indicatively, in Ireland, RRF investments provide benefits for persons with disabilities, such as upgrades to public buildings, rail infrastructure and digital education initiatives. These measures have the potential to improve accessibility and participation, but the lack of information on explicit accessibility requirements or disability-specific targets is a point noted in the country fiche as a potential limitation.

Slovenia presents a more integrated approach, with RRF-funded measures supporting long-term care reforms, community-based social services, accessible housing and inclusive education for children with special needs. While these investments address several structural barriers, the lack of systematic disability-specific targets and the de facto prioritisation of community-based over institutional care may reduce the effectiveness of the measures and risks fragmented service delivery, according to the country fiche.

Portugal illustrates a key tension in aligning RRF investments with national policy goals. While the country's Medium-Term Fiscal-Structural Plan identifies the avoidance of institutionalisation of older people and persons with disabilities as a priority, RRF-funded investments under the New Generation of Equipment and Social Care Services initiative

continue to create residential facility places, reflecting a dissonance between stated objectives and funded interventions.

Even in Sweden, which provides a relatively strong example, some shortcomings are evident. The country fiche reports that disability is explicitly referenced 12 times in the RRP, primarily in employment, education and adapted housing. For instance, employment services offer wage subsidies and work-oriented programmes, while grants support special educational needs and accessible school facilities. However, country experts highlight that monitoring of outcomes with respect to some measures is subject to limitations, while other measures treat disability indirectly, which may reduce the potential impact on labour market inclusion, education and digital accessibility.

Overall, these examples highlight both the potential and the limitations of RRF investments in advancing disability inclusion. Although some measures specifically support independent living, inclusive education, accessible infrastructure and employability, in many cases, disability is treated implicitly and investments are not systematically aligned with rights-based principles or monitored for outcomes. This raises a broader question regarding the alignment of RRF-funded initiatives with national and EU-level policy objectives, particularly in the context of an anticipated shift away from cohesion policy towards RRF investments.

Last but not least, the European Parliament, in its resolution of 18 June 2025, highlights the importance of redirecting unused RRF funds to promote social, economic and territorial cohesion, including investments that enhance accessibility and the inclusion of vulnerable groups.³⁹ This underscores the need for RRF investments to be results-oriented and aligned with both national and EU-level objectives, including disability rights and the UN CRPD.

³⁹ European Parliament (2025), *Implementation report on the Recovery and Resilience Facility*, 18 June 2025, P10_TA(2025)0128, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-10-2025-0128_EN.html.

3 Update on EU and national disability strategies

3.1 The EU Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030

In March 2021, the European Commission adopted the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 with the aim of promoting equal opportunities and full inclusion for persons with disabilities in Europe and around the world.⁴⁰ The Strategy is the policy framework for the European Commission to implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The UN CRPD⁴¹ is ratified by the EU and all its 27 Member States and the implementation is in progress, albeit at a varying pace in different Member States. The Strategy is also part of the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights and, in particular, Principle 17 on the inclusion of persons with disabilities.

The Strategy includes seven flagship initiatives:

1. AccessibleEU: a European resource centre to enhance coherence in accessibility policies and facilitate access to relevant knowledge.
2. European Disability Card: introduced to promote mutual recognition of disability status across Member States.
3. Guidance on Independent Living: recommendations to improve independent living and community inclusion for persons with disabilities.
4. Social Services of Excellence Framework: a framework to enhance the quality of social services for persons with disabilities.
5. Disability Employment Package: measures to improve labour market outcomes for persons with disabilities.
6. Disability Platform: a platform to facilitate dialogue and exchange among stakeholders.
7. Renewed HR Strategy: actions to promote diversity and inclusion within the European Commission.

As of September 2025, six of these flagship initiatives (AccessibleEU, European Disability Card, Guidance on independent living and inclusion in the community, Disability Employment Package, Disability Platform and the renewed European Commission HR Strategy) had already been completed.⁴² The Social Services of Excellence Framework remains under development.

Among these initiatives, the Council Directive establishing the European Disability Card, together with the European Parking Card for Persons with Disabilities, is the only legislation adopted under the Strategy so far.⁴³ All the other flagship initiatives of the Strategy are soft law that either provide guidance and support to Member States to implement the UN CRPD or facilitate the internal implementation of the Convention by EU institutions. AccessibleEU facilitates the implementation of EU legislation on accessibility, such as the European Accessibility Act, which is now in the implementation phase in all Member States. Since late 2024, further key developments advanced the Strategy's objectives: the first AccessibleEU monitoring report⁴⁴ was published and Guidance on Independent Living⁴⁵ was

⁴⁰ European Commission (2021), 'Union of equality: Strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities 2021-2030', Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, COM(2021) 101 final, 3 March 2021, <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1484&langId=en>.

⁴¹ United Nations (2006), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), <https://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf>.

⁴² The European Commission publishes the progress achieved on its actions in the Strategy: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1552&langId=en>.

⁴³ Directive (EU) 2024/2841 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2024 establishing the European Disability Card and the European Parking Card for persons with disabilities, *OJ L 2024/2841*, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/2841/oj/eng>.

⁴⁴ European Commission (2024), *AccessibleEU final report – Executive summary*, AccessibleEU Centre, https://accessible-eu-centre.ec.europa.eu/document/download/de214982-d631-48df-b254-b2b92317f505_en?filename=ACCESSIBLEEU+EX+SUMM+2024_English_Acc.pdf.

⁴⁵ European Commission (2025), 'Guidance on independent living', European Commission, <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=27899&langId=en>.

issued to support deinstitutionalisation and community-based care in the context of EU funding.

Beyond the flagship initiatives, the European Commission made other commitments in the Strategy, most of which had been implemented by 2024.⁴⁶ The European Commission is expected to propose new initiatives for the remaining period of the Strategy until 2030 and data and trends presented in this synthesis report will hopefully contribute to identifying areas for new key actions. Although the European Semester traditionally has a strong focus on employment and labour market dynamics, links to poverty and education indicators are increasingly present to better understand the reasons behind the persistent exclusion of persons with disabilities from the labour market. This complements the other priorities of the Strategy which are also relevant to the Semester analysis, including:

- developing independent living and reinforcing community-based services;
- developing new skills for new jobs;
- fostering access to quality and sustainable jobs;
- consolidating social protection systems;
- equal access to social protection, healthcare, education and goods and services, including housing;
- inclusive and accessible education; and
- sustainable and equal access to healthcare.

In April 2025, the CRPD Committee issued its new Concluding Observations on the EU, following the dialogue held in Geneva in March 2025. These Observations form authoritative guidance for the EU's law and policymaking, identifying gaps and setting priorities for future action in line with the Convention. The Committee underlined the need for the EU to strengthen disability mainstreaming across all laws and policies, to ensure that EU funding instruments are fully compliant with the CRPD, and to revise its internal monitoring framework under the Convention to make it more robust and participatory. These recommendations complement the EU Disability Strategy 2021-2030, by highlighting areas where further efforts are required to close persistent gaps, and will guide both EU institutions and Member States in implementing the CRPD in the years to come.⁴⁷

3.2 National disability strategies and action plans

Following the adoption of the EU Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030, many Member States adopted or updated national disability strategies and action plans between 2021 and 2024. Some of the latest developments since late 2024 included the preparation of Belgium's Federal Disability Action Plan for 2025-2029, the approval in Cyprus of an enhanced National Disability Strategy 2018-2028 and Action Plan, the publication of the third Action Plan in Finland, and the implementation by the end of 2025 of a new Action Plan for the National Disability Programme in Hungary.

In previous cycles, visibility of national disability strategies and action plans was assessed by examining references in the National Reform Programmes (NRPs). With the 2025 Semester reform, NRPs have been replaced by Medium-Term Fiscal-Structural Plans (MTPs). These new plans place greater emphasis on fiscal sustainability and expenditure paths, therefore they are less likely to include explicit references to disability strategies, including because many national strategies and action plans had already been adopted in recent years and governments may see little reason to restate them in their MTPs. This suggests that although national disability policy frameworks remain important, their visibility in the Semester process may now depend more on broader references to social

⁴⁶ For further information, see European Parliament Briefing, requested by the PETI Committee, Birtha, M. (2024), *The EU Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 - Achievements and perspectives*, European Parliament Policy Department for Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, Directorate-General for Internal Policies PE 767.095.

⁴⁷ United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2025), 'Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of the European Union', CRPD/C/EU/CO/2-3, adopted at the Committee's 780th meeting on 18 March 2025, <https://docs.un.org/en/CRPD/C/EU/CO/2-3>.

investment and reforms. However, a number of countries mentioned their national disability strategies or action plans in the 2024/2025 MTPs, including Poland, Ireland and Luxembourg, amongst others.

Table 5: Status of national disability strategies and action plans in 2025

MS	National DAP	Details
AT	<u>National Action Plan on Disability 2022-2030</u>	The Federal Government of Austria adopted a new National Action Plan on Disability 2022-2030 in 2022. The tender to conduct the evaluation was published in September 2024, but no outcome had been publicly announced as of mid-July 2025.
BE	<u>Interfederal Plan 2022-2030</u>	The new Federal Government has begun to develop a new Federal Disability Action Plan for 2025-2029. The National High Council for Persons with Disabilities and Unia, an independent Belgian mechanism under Article 33.2 CRPD, are involved in the development and will be involved in the monitoring process. The new plan will be submitted to the Council of Ministers at the end of 2025.
BG	<u>National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities (2021-2030)</u>	A new National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 was adopted by the Council of Ministers in December 2020.
CY	<u>National Disability Strategy and National Disability Action Plan 2024-2028.</u>	In December 2024, the Council of Ministers approved an enhanced National Disability Strategy 2018-2028 and its fourth Action Plan (2024-2028), available in one consolidated document.
CZ	<u>National Plan for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2021-2025</u>	The National Plan for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2021-2025 was approved by the Government in July 2020, following broadly the structure of the UN CRPD. This includes 17 themes. An implementation report is evaluated every year.
DE	<u>National Action Plan for the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2.0 (2016-2021) 2023 update</u>	The National Action Plan for the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2.0 from 2016 (NAP 2.0) was updated in May 2021 and March 2023 with the Status Report on the National Action Plan on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The NAP 2.0 is to be continuously updated in order to create more transparency and topicality in relation to current issues. However, the German Institute for Human Rights criticises the lack of development of a NAP 3.0 after five years, which was due in 2021.
DK	<u>Disability Policy Action Plan 2013</u>	The most recent national disability action plan was drawn up in 2013 and the Danish Institute for Human Rights has since called for a new national disability action plan. This has not happened, but in 2023 the Government formed a cooperation forum, Sammen om Handicap (Together on Disability).
EE	<u>Welfare Development Plan 2023-2030</u>	The main strategy document related to disability in Estonia is the Welfare Development Plan 2023-2030, adopted in 2023.

MS	National DAP	Details
EL	<u>National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2024-2030</u>	The National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2024-2030 was finalised in April 2024 following public consultation. It is largely aligned with disability-related policy reforms as outlined in the national medium-term fiscal-structural plan, with key actions funded through the RRF and Social Cohesion Funds. Similarly, the Country Report 2025 notes that the new Strategy serves to 'coordinate efforts to improve the... social inclusion and protection [of persons with disabilities]'
ES	<u>Spanish Disability Strategy 2022-2030</u>	The Spanish Disability Strategy (SDS) 2022-2030 was approved in May 2022. It addresses seven strategic challenges: (1) Active citizenship and full exercise of human rights; (2) Social inclusion and participation; (3) Personal autonomy and independent living; (4) Support for families; (5) Equality and diversity; (6) Universal design and accessibility; and (7) Territorial cohesion, data and statistics, governance and civil dialogue, leadership and cooperation, innovation and digitisation, and sustainable development.
FI	<u>National Action Plan on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) 2023-2027</u>	A National Action Plan on the UN CRPD was prepared for 2018-2019 by the Advisory Board for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (VANE), following consultation. The third action plan, covering 2023-2027, was published on 10 December 2024. The new action plan, which is largely based on findings from a <u>study commissioned by VANE</u> , includes 68 goals and 75 actions.
FR	<u>Interministerial Committee on Disability (CIH)</u>	In France, national disability action plans are monitored by the interministerial policy developed by the Interministerial Committee on Disability (<i>Comité interministériel du handicap</i> , CIH). While policy responsibility is devolved to each ministry and coordinated by this body, which means that disability policy is considered as a crucial part of every ministerial or interministerial policy as recommended in the European Union's Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the CIH provides general guidelines intended for all ministries.
HR	<u>National Strategy for the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2021-2027</u>	A new National Plan for the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2021-2027 was adopted in December 2021, with a corresponding Action Plan for the <u>Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities for the period 2021-2024</u> .
HU	<u>National Disability Programme (2015-2025)</u>	The National Disability Programme (ONP) was developed for the decade 2015-2025. The latest action plan was adopted in 2024 for the period 2024-2025 with an implementation deadline of 31 December 2025.

MS	National DAP	Details
IE	<u>National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021</u>	Ireland does not currently have a National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS). The most recent NDIS expired in 2022. As of June 2025, the successor strategy was still in development, and the responsible Government minister could not give a date for its launch. Elements of the expired NDIS remain as current policy targets and are discussed later in this report.
IT	<u>Second biennial action programme for the promotion of the rights and integration of persons with disabilities</u>	The more recent disability action plan refers to the second biennial action programme for the promotion of the rights and integration of persons with disabilities which was approved in 2017 and has not yet expired. Following public consultation and a national conference on disability policies in December 2021, a third action programme is anticipated; as required by Law No. 18 of 3 March 2009 (as amended in 2023), the third action programme will have a duration of three years.
LT	<u>2024-2026 Action Plan for the Social Integration of Disabled Persons</u>	The implementation of the 2024-2026 Action Plan for the Social Integration of Disabled Persons is coordinated by the Ministry of Social Security and Labour.
LU	<u>National action plan for the implementation of the CRPD 2019-2024</u>	A national action plan for the implementation of the CRPD 2019-2024 was published in 2020.
LV	<u>Plan Promoting Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities for 2024-2027</u>	The objective of the Plan Promoting Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities for 2024-2027 is to promote the development of a support system oriented towards the needs of persons with disabilities at the cross-sectoral level.
MT	<u>Freedom to Live, Malta's 2021-2030 National Strategy on the Rights of Disabled Persons</u>	A National Policy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was published in 2014. Following consultations, a National Strategy on the Rights of Disabled Persons 2021-2030, Freedom to Live, was launched in September 2021.
NL	<u>National Strategy for the implementation of UN CRPD</u>	A new action plan to implement the CRPD, called the National Strategy for the implementation of UN CRPD, was published in January 2024.
PL	<u>Strategy for Persons with Disabilities (2021-2030)</u>	The Strategy for Persons with Disabilities (2021-2030) is the main document envisioning the national disability action plans, covering several domains including independent living, accessibility, education, employment, living conditions and social protection, health, awareness-raising and coordination. The Government Plenipotentiary for Persons with Disabilities is responsible for coordinating the implementation of the strategy, as well as for monitoring its implementation.
PT	<u>National Strategy for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2025</u>	The most recent action plan is the National Strategy for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2025, which was adopted in August 2021, following a period of public consultation at the end of 2020.
RO	<u>National Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2022-2027)</u>	Romania has adopted a National Strategy on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2022-2027) as well as a National Strategy on preventing the

MS	National DAP	Details
		<u>institutionalisation of adults with disabilities and accelerating the deinstitutionalisation process (2022-2030).</u>
SE	<u>Strategy for systematic follow-up of disability policy in 2021–2031</u>	A National Strategy for Disability Policy was adopted in 2021, taking the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) as a starting point and with sectoral actions for the period 2021-2031.
SI	<u>Action Programme for People with Disabilities 2022-2030</u>	The Action Programme for People with Disabilities 2022-2030 has 120 measures across 13 goals, including expanding community-based services, promoting inclusive education, ensuring workplace adjustments and strengthening anti-discrimination frameworks.
SK	<u>Improving Living Conditions of Persons with Disabilities for 2021-2030</u>	The disability strategy in Slovakia refers to the National Programme on Improving the Living Conditions of Persons with Disabilities for 2021-2030, approved by the Government. The programme is to be regularly updated every two years, with the first review in 2024.

4 Update on Member States' participation in the UN processes

Table 6: Summary of progress in the CRPD review cycle

MS	Concluding Observations	Most recent state response	Most recent UN Committee response
AT	2023	2019	2023 Concluding Observations
BE	2024	2020	2024 Concluding Observations
BG	2018	2014	2018 Concluding Observations
CY	2017	2018	2017 Concluding Observations
CZ	2015	2016	2019 List of issues
DE	2023	2019	2023 Concluding Observations
DK	2024	2020	2024 Concluding Observations
EE	2021	2019	2021 Concluding Observations
EL	2019	2019	2019 Concluding Observations
ES	2019	2018	2019 Concluding Observations
FI	Not yet scheduled	2024	Not yet scheduled
FR	2021	2016	2021 Concluding Observations
HR	2015	2011	2020 List of issues
HU	2022	2025	2022 Concluding Observations
IE	Not yet scheduled	2021	Not yet scheduled
IT	2016	2017	2016 Concluding Observations
LT	2016	2023	2023 List of issues
LU	2017	2018	2017 Concluding Observations
LV	2017	2021	2017 Concluding Observations
MT	2018	2018	2018 Concluding Observations
NL	2024	2022	2024 Concluding Observations
PL	2018	2018	2018 Concluding Observations
PT	2016	2017	2016 Concluding Observations
RO	Not yet scheduled	2022	Not yet scheduled
SE	2024		2024 Concluding Observations
SI	2018	2024	2023 List of issues
SK	2016	2020	2019 List of issues

Source: data from United Nations Human Rights Treat Body Database (August 2025)

4.1 Information recently requested from Member States in the List of Issues

4.1.1 Information about the labour market inclusion of persons with disabilities

Table 7: Examples of employment information requested in the CRPD review process

MS	Source	Information requested on employment (Article 27 CRPD and SDG Goal 8.5)
AT	2018 List of issues prior to reporting	42. Please provide information on measures taken to enhance programmes for the employment of persons with disabilities in the open labour market and to narrow the employment and gender pay gaps. Please provide specific information on measures taken to promote the transition of persons with disabilities from sheltered employment to the open labour market. Furthermore, please provide information on measures

MS	Source	Information requested on employment (Article 27 CRPD and SDG Goal 8.5)
		taken to ensure that social insurance contributions are made for such persons. Please provide information on measures taken to implement target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals.
BE	2019 List of issues prior to reporting	25. Please provide information on measures taken to: (a) Enhance programmes to increase the employment rate of persons with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities, in both the private and the public sectors; (b) Facilitate the transition of persons with disabilities from unemployment or from employment in sheltered workshops to employment in the open labour market; (c) Tackle barriers and discrimination against persons with disabilities in the recruitment process and the workplace, including instances involving a lack of reasonable accommodation.
CZ	2019 List of issues prior to reporting	22. Please provide information on: (a) Employment rates among persons with disabilities, disaggregated by age, sex and impairment type, in both the open labour market and sheltered employment; (b) Measures taken to promote the employment of persons with disabilities in the open labour market, particularly through the prohibition of discrimination on multiple or intersectional grounds, in accordance with Council Directive 2000/78/EC establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation; (c) The availability of supported employment programmes and vocational and professional rehabilitation programmes, as outlined as an objective in the National Plan for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2015-2020, especially with reference to the availability of work in rural and urban areas; (d) Whether some persons with disabilities (those considered as having the third degree of disability) can still only register as 'interested for work' and not as 'job seeking', and on the reasons for such a distinction.
DK	2019 List of issues prior to reporting	25. Please provide: (a) Information on measures taken to significantly increase the percentage of persons with disabilities working in the open labour market in Greenland and to close the employment gap for persons with disabilities; (b) Information on measures to combat prejudices preventing persons with disabilities from accessing the labour market; (c) Statistics and data for the reporting period under review, comparable on an annual basis, on the status of persons, with or without disabilities, with regard to unemployment, underemployment and multiple employment, and on persons not currently involved in any form of education, employment or training, disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity, urban or rural residence and family status.
HR	2020 List of issues prior to reporting	25. Please provide information on the efforts made to eliminate stigma, barriers and discrimination in the recruitment process and the steps undertaken to increase the employment of persons with disabilities in the open labour market in both the public and private sectors. Please also elaborate on: (a) The status of development of an action plan for the employment of persons with disabilities; (b) Results achieved through the implementation of the new Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment of Disabled Persons Act (2015), including data; (c) The sanctions taken for non-compliance of mandatory quotas and for the denial of reasonable accommodation.

MS	Source	Information requested on employment (Article 27 CRPD and SDG Goal 8.5)
FI	2023 List of issues	24. Please inform the Committee about: (a) Actions adopted to prevent and punish discrimination against persons with disabilities in work and employment and the progress made in promoting employment opportunities for them in the open labour market, in both the public and the private sectors, and in mainland Finland and Åland; (b) Efforts to implement the 'linear model' to increase employment opportunities for persons with disabilities and balance earned income with the disability pension; (c) Steps taken to support persons with disabilities, in particular persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, to exercise their right to freely choose or accept employment in work environments that are open, inclusive and accessible to them; (d) Measures taken in workplaces to ensure the accessibility of work environments and the provision of reasonable accommodation and supports on the basis of individual requirements; (e) Initiatives introduced to strengthen the involvement of persons with disabilities in entrepreneurship and ensure their access to financial support, technical advice, digital tools and technical and professional orientation programmes outside sheltered employment; (f) Efforts made to improve the collection of data on persons with disabilities employed in the public and private sectors, including by ensuring that such data are disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity, type of impairment and place of residence.
LT	2023 List of issues	23. Please provide information on measures taken: (a) To develop more programmes aimed at increasing the employment rate of persons with disabilities, especially women with disabilities, in both the private and public sectors; (b) To facilitate the transition of persons with disabilities from unemployment or work in sheltered workshops to employment in the open labour market; (c) To counter barriers and discrimination faced by persons with disabilities in the recruitment process and the workplace, including cases involving a lack of reasonable accommodation; (d) To develop skills related to employment among youth and young adults with disabilities; (e) To adopt plans of action to restore jobs and employment opportunities to persons with disabilities following the COVID-19 pandemic.
NL	2022 List of issues	25. Please provide information on: (a) Employment rates among persons with disabilities, disaggregated by age, sex and impairment type, in both the open labour market and sheltered employment, as well as on unemployed persons with disabilities; (b) Measures taken to promote inclusive employment of persons with disabilities in the open labour market, including the quota system that was initiated in 2018, and on measures taken to ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities in the workplace and in the open labour market; (c) The definition of 'people with occupational disabilities' as mentioned in paragraph 291 of the State party report; (d) Measures taken to reduce the unemployment rate of persons with disabilities and to narrow the gender pay gap faced by women with disabilities.
SI	2023 List of issues prior to reporting	25. Please provide information on: (a) Measures taken or planned to increase the employment of persons with disabilities in the public and private sectors, including measures to facilitate their transition from unemployment or work in sheltered

MS	Source	Information requested on employment (Article 27 CRPD and SDG Goal 8.5)
		workshops to employment in the open labour market; (b) Incentives provided to employers for employing persons with disabilities, and mechanisms for monitoring the provision of support, particularly of support based on the code of enterprises for employing workers with disabilities in the Standard Classification of Activities; (c) Steps taken to protect persons with disabilities from all forms of discrimination in public and private employment, including measures to eliminate barriers in the recruitment process and the workplace, including through the provision of reasonable accommodation; (d) Plans to guarantee equal payment for work of equal value to all persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others, and to adopt measures to eliminate the gender gap in employment, including the gender pay gap.
SK	2019 List of issues prior to reporting	26. Please provide information on the measures taken to increase the employment rate of persons with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities, in the open labour market, and on the national targets for creating employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. Please also provide information on measures taken to: (a) Ensure the transition of persons with disabilities, including those in the process of moving from institutions into the community, from unemployment or employment in sheltered workshops to employment in the open labour market; (b) Eliminate barriers and discrimination against persons with disabilities in the recruitment process and the workplace, including instances involving the denial of individualized measures.

4.1.2 Information about social policies and healthcare

Table 8: Examples of social protection information requested in the CRPD review process

MS	Source	Information requested on standard of living and social protection (Article 28 CRPD)
AT	2018 List of issues prior to reporting	NA
BE	2019 List of issues prior to reporting	26. Please describe measures taken to: (a) Mainstream disability in poverty and homelessness reduction strategies. Please focus in particular on the situation of women, children and older persons with disabilities; (b) Ensure that social protection and support services are provided to persons with disabilities, taking into account additional costs related to disability; (c) Eliminate the current backlog of applications for social protection measures to the Directorate-General for Persons with Disabilities of the Federal Public Service for Social Security.
CZ	2019 List of issues prior to reporting	23. Please provide information on measures taken to: (a) Revise benefit and pension legislation and policy concerning persons with disabilities and their families, in particular to bring the concept of disability and the assessment criteria used to calculate social protection entitlements, such as the disability pension, into line with the Convention; (b) Reintroduce the additional social allowance to bring the standard of living of families with children with disabilities above subsistence level.

MS	Source	Information requested on standard of living and social protection (Article 28 CRPD)
DK	2019 List of issues prior to reporting	26. Please provide information on: (a) The early retirement reform under Act No. 574 of 2014 amending the Act on Social Pensions and any impact assessments carried out on persons with disabilities under the age of 40 for accessing early retirement pension; (b) Measures adopted to grant non-contributory pensions to persons with disabilities, including those who require more intensive support; (c) Assessments of the impact that the ceiling on entitlements provided under the social security system has had on the living conditions of persons with disabilities, including information on disproportionate impact in relation to type of impairment, gender and age; (d) Persons with disabilities who have been awarded early retirement pensions since the entry into force of the early retirement pension regime; on the household income levels of persons with disabilities, compared with those of the general population since 2014; and on persons with disabilities receiving compensation under the Danish unemployment insurance scheme, in the form of disaggregated data.
HR	2020 List of issues prior to reporting	26. Please inform the Committee about the efforts made to develop a disability assessment that fully incorporates a human rights model of disability and whether the design of the disability assessment method has been undertaken in a systematic, consistent and transparent manner through the participation of organizations of persons with disabilities. 27. Please elaborate on the measures to combat poverty among persons with disabilities, in particular among persons with disabilities of Roma origin and in rural and remote areas. 28. Please provide information on: (a) The measures taken to implement the provisions of the Social Benefit Act in order to ensure its full enjoyment by persons with disabilities, irrespective of the cause of their impairment, in all counties and municipalities; (b) The provisions of the social protection schemes to ensure that all persons with disabilities are provided with support for equipment, such as hearing aids, mobility aids and assistive technologies; (c) The steps taken by the State party to increase pension, social welfare and other benefits for both civilian and veteran persons with disabilities throughout the country, including for parents of children with disabilities.
FI	2023 List of issues	25. Please provide information on: (a) Measures taken to ensure adequate levels of social protection and efforts made to reduce poverty among persons with disabilities; (b) The extent to which disability allowances adequately cover the living costs of persons with disabilities and the steps taken to streamline the application process and reduce processing times to facilitate access to those entitlements; (c) The impact of the reform of the social welfare system on persons with disabilities, and the transfer of responsibility for the organization of services to the welfare service counties; (d) The number of persons who have been entitled to disability benefits from the Social Insurance Institution (Kela) since 2016, disaggregated by age, sex, type of impairment, type of entitlement and place of residence.
LT	2023 List of issues	24. With reference to information indicating that persons with disabilities are disproportionately affected by poverty, please describe measures taken: (a) To eliminate situations of poverty affecting persons with disabilities and to mainstream disability in strategies to reduce poverty and homelessness, including the ways in which the situation of women and girls with disabilities and of

MS	Source	Information requested on standard of living and social protection (Article 28 CRPD)
		children and older persons with disabilities is addressed is such strategies; (b) To ensure that social protection and support services are provided to persons with disabilities, taking into account the additional costs related to disability.
NL	2022 List of issues	26. Please provide information on measures taken to: (a) Include disability in the collection and publication of data concerning poverty and social protection, disaggregated by sex, age, level of education, ethnicity and national origin, type of impairment and type of residence; (b) Tackle the income inequality faced by persons with disabilities; (c) Address homelessness among persons with psychosocial disabilities.
SI	2023 List of issues prior to reporting	26. Please provide information on: (a) Social protection measures taken or planned to address the high level of poverty among persons with disabilities, particularly persons with psychosocial and/or intellectual disabilities, women with disabilities and older persons with disabilities, including on remedial measures against the negative impact of fiscal and budgetary measures addressing the economic crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic; (b) National strategies and policies aimed at increasing the availability and accessibility of public housing, including social housing, for persons with disabilities; (c) Effective and expeditious remedies against decisions of administrative bodies on persons with disabilities, particularly decisions of the Pension and Disability Insurance Institute of Slovenia and of the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities; (d) The legal framework of the disability pension and insurance scheme and its impact on persons with disabilities. Please include information on whether persons with disabilities may be mandated to bear a part or all of their disability-related costs, in all areas of life, and specify the income taxation of disability benefits, particularly of persons with disabilities living in poverty, and further include information on measures taken or planned to address any gaps in the disability insurance system, including gaps between graduation from school and entering the work force and in other situations where there is no 'sufficient involvement with the insurance'.
SK	2019 List of issues prior to reporting	27. Please inform on the measures taken to: (a) Mainstream disability inclusion in strategies to address poverty, with a particular focus on the policies addressing the situation of women, children and older persons with disabilities; (b) Develop public housing programmes that are accessible to and affordable for persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others; (c) Ensure that all social protection schemes and support services are provided to persons with disabilities without discrimination related to age, gender or socioeconomic status, and ensure the coverage of disability-related extra costs and disability-related schemes after the age of 65 years; (d) Collect statistical data on poverty, disaggregated by disability, age, gender, place of residence and geographical location, and provide the Committee with the available figures.

Table 9: Examples of healthcare information requested in the CRPD review process

MS	Source	Information requested on health (Article 25 CRPD)
AT	2018 List of issues prior to reporting	NA

MS	Source	Information requested on health (Article 25 CRPD)
BE	2019 List of issues prior to reporting	23. Please provide information on measures taken to: (a) Ensure that health-care facilities and services, including specialist services, are accessible and affordable to all persons with disabilities; (b) Train health professionals and support personnel on the human rights model of disability and on measures taken to end discriminatory and negative attitudes towards and the stereotyping of persons with disabilities, particularly persons with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities.
CZ	2019 List of issues prior to reporting	21. Please provide information on measures taken to: (a) Train and raise awareness among health-care professionals on the rights of persons with disabilities; (b) Ensure that information and communications regarding health-care services are available in accessible formats to all persons with disabilities, including persons with intellectual disabilities and persons who are blind or deaf, in both urban and rural communities; (c) Provide access to full health-care and rehabilitative services, including sexual and reproductive health services, for persons with disabilities in their communities.
DK	2019 List of issues prior to reporting	23. Please provide information on: (a) Measures to improve access to health facilities and services used by persons with disabilities, including sexual and reproductive health-care services and cervical cancer screening for women with disabilities, women with cerebral palsy and women with intellectual disabilities; (b) Measures to reduce the high mortality rates among persons with psychosocial disabilities, including through early detection and health checks; (c) Measures to ensure coverage of hearing aid treatment by the health-care system; (d) Measures taken to meet the transport requirements of persons with disabilities in accessing health-care facilities and to provide emergency facilities for persons with psychosocial disabilities in the Faroe Islands.
HR	2020 List of issues prior to reporting	24. Please provide information on: (a) The efforts undertaken to provide for persons with disabilities to have access to health insurance and services on an equal basis with others, including public and private health services and equipment that are affordable, accessible and of good quality; (b) The measures taken for training health professionals and support personnel to raise awareness of the human rights model of disability; (c) Whether mental and psychosocial health services, including sexual and reproductive health services, are accessible for women and girls with disabilities in both urban and rural areas.
FI	2023 List of issues	22. Please inform the Committee about: (a) Actions adopted to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to the highest attainable standard of health-care services and products in the public and private sectors, on an equal basis with others, in mainland Finland and Åland; (b) How age-appropriate sexual and reproductive health services and comprehensive sexuality education are provided to all persons with disabilities, in particular women and girls with disabilities; (c) Measures taken to ensure the accessibility of health-care facilities, equipment and information and communications technologies, including Braille, sign language, Easy Read and augmentative and alternative communication, in the health-care system; (d) The periodic training provided to health-care personnel on the human rights model of disability, autonomy and the requirements of persons with disabilities, and the measures taken to evaluate the impact of such training; (e) The availability of community-based mental health services

MS	Source	Information requested on health (Article 25 CRPD)
		throughout the territory of the State party, in particular for children and young persons with disabilities.
LT	2023 List of issues	21. Please provide information on: (a) Measures taken to ensure that health-care facilities and services, including specialist services, are accessible and affordable to all persons with disabilities; (b) Measures for ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health care and rights by women and girls with disabilities, including accessible equipment at the municipal level and information on sexual and reproductive health in accessible formats; (c) Measures taken to train health-care professionals and support personnel, including persons with disabilities, on the human rights model of disability in order to end discriminatory and negative attitudes in health-care settings towards persons with disabilities, which especially affect persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with psychosocial disabilities.
NL	2022 List of issues	24. Please provide information on measures taken to: (a) Ensure access for all persons with disabilities to health care, including gynaecological, dental and other health-care services, facilities, amenities and equipment, including through the provision of specific accessible amenities and equipment for women and girls with disabilities; (b) Reduce the waiting time necessary to access health-care services, in particular for persons with psychosocial disabilities; (c) Facilitate training and the promulgation of an ethical standard for health-care professionals, with a view to providing health-care services for persons with disabilities that are of the same quality as those provided to others, including through raising awareness of the human rights, dignity, autonomy and requirements of all persons with disabilities.
SI	2023 List of issues prior to reporting	23. Please provide information on: (a) Measures taken or planned to ensure the physical and communicative accessibility of health-care facilities and services, and their affordability, including of specialist services and palliative care, for all persons with disabilities; and on the impact of the implementation of the Long-term Care Act on persons with disabilities; (b) Steps taken or planned to ensure access to sexual and reproductive health services for all persons with disabilities, especially women and girls with disabilities and persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, including information in accessible formats on sexual and reproductive health; (c) Measures taken or planned to ensure access to dental care, especially ensuring the availability of general anaesthesia, for all persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities; (d) Steps taken or planned to train health-care professionals and support personnel on the human rights model of disability, including training on the various requirements of persons with disabilities and on their rights and means of accessible communication. Please also provide information on any measures addressing the staff shortage of social care and health-care professionals; (e) The announced health-care legislation reform and its protection of the rights of persons with disabilities, and on the close consultation with and active involvement of persons with disabilities through their representative organizations in the development and implementation of health-care policy and legislation.
SK	2019 List of issues prior to reporting	24. Please provide information on measures taken to: (a) Ensure that health-care facilities, services and equipment, including specialist services, are accessible and affordable to all persons with disabilities, in particular persons requiring high levels of support;

MS	Source	Information requested on health (Article 25 CRPD)
		(b) Train health professionals and support personnel on the human rights model of disability, and prevent discriminatory and negative attitudes and stereotypes against persons with disabilities, particularly with regard to persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities; (c) Ensure equal access to sexual and reproductive health information and services for women and girls with disabilities.

Table 10: Examples of independent living information requested in the CRPD review process

MS	Source	Information requested on independent living (Article 19 CRPD)
AT	2018 List of issues prior to reporting	<p>37. Please provide information on measures taken, including the provision of adequate funding, to enable the diversity of persons with disabilities to enjoy their right to freely choose their residence on an equal basis with others and to access a full range of in-home and other community services for daily life, including personal assistance.</p> <p>38. Please provide information on the use of European Union structural funds and national funds, including precise data on funds provided for personal assistance, in line with general comment No. 5 (2017) on living independently and being included in the community, and other support services in communities, including support for the deinstitutionalization of boys and girls with disabilities.</p> <p>39. Please indicate: (a) The number of residential homes for persons with disabilities in the State party, disaggregated by the number of residents in each of the homes; (b) The number of persons with disabilities placed in residential homes for older persons with disabilities.</p>
BE	2019 List of issues prior to reporting	<p>18. Please provide information on: (a) Steps taken to implement disability action plans at the federal, regional and community levels to ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy the right to independent living and to be included in the community, and to implement plans to eliminate waiting lists for access to personal assistance budgets and other services and support; (b) Steps taken to implement an effective deinstitutionalization strategy, with a clear time frame, for all persons living in institutions. Please include the number of persons with disabilities who have been deinstitutionalized so far, and provide details of their current situation; (c) Measures taken to enable all persons with disabilities to enjoy their right to freely choose their residence on an equal basis with others, and to access a full range of in-home and other community services for day-to-day living, including personal assistance; (d) The use of European Structural and Investment Funds and national funds for personal assistance and independent living. Please include precise data, in absolute and relative numbers, on the funds provided.</p>
CZ	2019 List of issues prior to reporting	<p>16. Please provide information on: (a) Steps taken to achieve deinstitutionalization, including details on the time frame within which the full deinstitutionalization of all persons with disabilities (particularly children under 3 years of age, persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities and older persons with disabilities) will be achieved; (b) The use of financial resources, including European Structural and Investment Funds, and on the transition plans to enable persons with disabilities to freely choose their living arrangements in the community. Please provide an update on the</p>

MS	Source	Information requested on independent living (Article 19 CRPD)
		completion of actions to support independent living, as set out under objectives 6.1 to 6.15 of the National Plan for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2015-2020; (c) The availability and accessibility of community-based services for persons with disabilities, including housing services, an open labour market, social services and human rights-based mental health care. Please indicate whether coverage of these services is sufficient and detail measures to ensure their sustainability.
DK	2019 List of issues prior to reporting	18. Please provide information on measures taken to: (a) Recognize the individual right of persons with disabilities to live independently and to be included in the community, and to ensure that they can freely make choices regarding their living arrangements, including in living areas and facilities that are currently under the control of public authorities and not open to the public; (b) Prevent the development of institutionalized living environments, including measures to end the building of and investment in large-scale closed institution-like residences (CRPD/C/DNK/CO/1, para. 43); (c) Repeal sections in the Consolidation Act on Social Services of 2015, as amended in 2017, that permit the forced relocation of persons with disabilities to assisted living facilities, thus denying them the opportunity to choose their place of residence; (d) Provide persons with disabilities with individualized support for independent living based on individual assessments at the municipal level, with disaggregated data about access to personal assistance and in-kind or in-cash forms of support, including personal budgets; (e) Adopt strategies and allocate resources to ensure accessible housing for persons with disabilities in all housing sectors in the Faroe Islands.
HR	2020 List of issues prior to reporting	19. In reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations (CRPD/C/HRV/CO/1, para. 30), please inform the Committee about: (a) The personal assistance and community-based services available to persons with disabilities who require them; (b) The progress made with respect to the operational plan for deinstitutionalization, particularly in the case of persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities in 24-hour living spaces, in psychiatric hospitals, those living in family homes for more than 20 persons and those living in adult foster families. 20. Please provide information on whether the use of the European Union structural and investment funds is directed to deinstitutionalization and ensuring independent living in the community for persons with disabilities. Please inform the Committee about: (a) The provisions made to ensure their active participation in decision-making, including for the exercise of their choice regarding with whom, how and where to live; (b) The steps taken to amend the Social Welfare Act to prohibit a guardian from having the authority to place a person in any institution or in any other living arrangement without that person's consent; (c) The allocation of personnel, technical and financial means for support services enabling independent life and community inclusion at the national and local level.
FI	2023 List of issues	16. Please provide information on: (a) Actions adopted to accelerate deinstitutionalization for all persons with disabilities, in particular children and older persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, and to avoid institutionalization in group homes; (b) Measures taken to provide community-based support and ensure a sufficient number of trained personnel, an adequate budget and coordination of such support; (c) Efforts made to strengthen in-

MS	Source	Information requested on independent living (Article 19 CRPD)
		<p>home support and personal assistance, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations, in those endeavours; (d) The resources allocated to the welfare service counties and municipalities for the provision of support through high-quality personal assistance, taking into account the requirements of the individual concerned, and an appropriate number of hours of support, including for leisure activities. Please indicate the number of persons with disabilities who have received personal assistance since 2016, disaggregated by year, sex, age, type of impairment and municipality of residence; (e) The funding and programmes available for the development of accessible and affordable housing in the community; (f) The implementation of the Views adopted by the Committee concerning communication No. 46/2018, which related to the eligibility criteria for personal assistance; (g) The number of children with disabilities who have lived in institutions or care facilities since 2016, disaggregated by type of impairment, age, gender and ethnicity, and the actions taken to end their institutionalization and guarantee their right to family life on an equal basis with other children.</p>
LT	2023 List of issues	<p>16. Please provide information on: (a) Steps taken to implement action plans for persons with disabilities at the national, county and municipal levels and to ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy their right to live independently and to be included in the community; (b) Measures taken to allow all persons with disabilities to enjoy the right to freely choose their residence on an equal basis with others and to access a wide range of support services at home and in the community for day-to-day life, such as personal assistance, including for persons with disabilities requiring higher levels of support; (c) The number of children with disabilities not living with their families, including those living in institutions, and the financial and other resources invested to ensure their deinstitutionalization and transition to life in the community; (d) Steps taken to implement an effective deinstitutionalization strategy, with a clear time frame, for the approximately 6,000 persons with disabilities still living in residential institutions, following the criteria set out in the Committee’s general comment No. 5 (2017) on living independently and being included in the community and its guidelines on deinstitutionalization, including in emergencies. Please include the number of persons with disabilities who have been part of deinstitutionalization programmes and provide details about their current situation, support for their transition from institutions to life in the community and the involvement of organizations of persons with disabilities in such programmes; (e) The use of European structural and investment funds and national funds for personal assistance and independent living in the community and on measures to redirect funds from large and small congregated settings, including group or family-like homes, to support for living in the community. Please include accurate data, in absolute and relative terms, on the funds provided.</p>
NL	2022 List of issues	<p>17. Please provide information on: (a) Steps taken to develop a deinstitutionalization policy, including details on the time frame within which the full deinstitutionalization of all persons with disabilities, in particular children with disabilities, persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with psychosocial disabilities, will be achieved, and measures to facilitate their full inclusion and</p>

MS	Source	Information requested on independent living (Article 19 CRPD)
		<p>participation in the community; (b) The availability of housing and the extent to which it ensures the right of persons with disabilities to freely choose their living arrangements in the community and their right to choose where and with whom to live, including for persons placed under substitute decision-making regimes; (c) Measures taken to ensure that personal assistance programmes provide persons with disabilities, including persons who are still under substitute decision-making regimes, with sufficient financial assistance to allow them to live independently in the community, and to ensure that the differences in criteria applied by municipal authorities are reduced to a minimum; (d) The number of persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, who are still living in residential institutions.</p>
SI	2023 List of issues prior to reporting	<p>18. Please provide information on: (a) Any relevant policy, strategy, action plan or measures at the national level aimed at deinstitutionalization, with their respective timeline, and on measures preventing trans- or re-institutionalization, including in smaller institutional settings, and on the function, tasks, powers, personal composition and funding of the Deinstitutionalization Task Force. Please also provide information on close consultation with and the active involvement of persons with disabilities through their organizations in the elaboration and implementation of such policies, strategies, action plans or measures, and in the Deinstitutionalization Task Force; (b) Support services at home and in the community, allowing persons with disabilities to enjoy their right to live independently and to freely choose their place of residence, such as specific measures, personal assistance, reasonable accommodation or long-term health services, as well as the funding of these measures; please also provide information about the application of the Personal Assistance Act and about its results in practice; (c) Measures taken or planned to render the housing policy inclusive, and the close consultation with and active involvement of persons with disabilities through their organizations in the drafting and monitoring of that policy; (d) Data and statistics on persons with disabilities still in institutional settings, disaggregated by age, gender, and type of impairment, and on measures facilitating their transition from institutions to life in the community; (e) The use of European and national funds for the maintenance and building of institutional facilities for persons with disabilities, and on any measures ensuring that such funds are used to promote community living and community-based support services. Please include current data on the use of such funds.</p>
SK	2019 List of issues prior to reporting	<p>19. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations (paras. 56 and 58), please provide information on: (a) Progress made in the deinstitutionalization process of persons with disabilities, as evidenced by data disaggregated by age, sex and ethnicity, as well as on persons who have been deinstitutionalized and on the number of persons who have regained their legal capacity as a result of the deinstitutionalization process; (b) Individualized supports, such as personal assistance, available to persons with disabilities, including those deinstitutionalized in the last five years, who live in the community, and on the personnel and the technical and financial means allocated to such support services at the national and local levels; (c) Measures taken to prevent the reinstitutionalisation of persons with disabilities, including older persons with disabilities in small congregated settings, such as</p>

MS	Source	Information requested on independent living (Article 19 CRPD)
		group homes; (d) Measures taken to redirect budget allocations for institutions, including those allocations from the European Structural and Investment Funds, towards initiatives that provide support for inclusion in the community, and to ensure accessibility of mainstream community services at the municipal level. Please provide information about any national targets to increase accessibility of community services and on the indicators of progress.

4.1.3 Information about education and training

Table 11: Examples of education information requested in the CRPD review process

MS	Source	Information requested on education (Article 24 CRPD and SDG 4)
AT	2018 List of issues prior to reporting	41. Please provide information on the funding available to provide reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities based on individual requirements, to provide students with disabilities with the support they require within the mainstream education system, and to continue training teachers and all other educational and non-teaching staff to accommodate quality inclusive educational settings, in line with general comment No. 4 (2016) on the right to inclusive education. Please indicate what measures are taken to promote and encourage the training and hiring of teachers with disabilities. Please provide information on measures taken to implement targets 4.5 and 4 (a) of the Sustainable Development Goals.
BE	2019 List of issues prior to reporting	22. Please provide information on: (a) Steps taken to adopt and implement a coherent and inclusive education strategy, in all communities of the State party, to transform the parallel-track education system, which includes special education, into a quality, inclusive system that provides support in the mainstream system for all children with disabilities, including children with intellectual disabilities. Please include information on the benchmarks, baselines and indicators used for the strategy, and on the resources allocated to its implementation; (b) The financial, material and human resources available to provide individualized support for students with disabilities, and on the applicable accessibility standards within the framework of inclusive education; (c) Measures taken to promote and encourage the training and hiring of teachers with disabilities.
CZ	2019 List of issues prior to reporting	20. Please provide updated information on: (a) The implementation of the amended School Act (Act No. 561/2004 Coll., amended by Act No. 82/2015 Coll.) to ensure the right to inclusive education; (b) The allocation of financial, technical and human resources to ensure the right of all children with disabilities, including Roma children with disabilities, to a high-quality, inclusive education, and to provide teachers with training that fosters inclusive education, in both rural and urban settings, with Braille and sign language interpretation made available; (c) Efforts to transform segregated education into an inclusive education environment in both urban and rural areas, particularly for persons with intellectual disabilities or autism and deafblind persons. Please also provide an update on the achievement of objectives 10.1 to 10.32 of the National Plan for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2015–2020.

MS	Source	Information requested on education (Article 24 CRPD and SDG 4)
DK	2019 List of issues prior to reporting	22. Please provide information on: (a) Measures taken to include all children with disabilities in the inclusive education system, including in compulsory education, and to provide the required support and accommodation, in particular for autistic children and children requiring high levels of support; (b) Steps taken to train teachers and other members of school staff and to equip them with inclusive education skills, methodological knowledge and expertise to facilitate access by pupils with disabilities to inclusive education, and on the human, technical and financial resources provided to schools, including in Greenland and the Faroe Islands; (c) Measures to tackle the low educational outcomes of persons with disabilities, including in vocational training; (d) The number and percentage of children with disabilities with access to inclusive quality education, disaggregated by age and sex, type of impairment, type of school and municipality; (e) Awareness-raising and the effective dissemination of the Committee's general comment No. 4 (2016) on the right to inclusive education among professionals, in close partnership with representative organizations of persons with disabilities.
HR	2020 List of issues prior to reporting	47. The Committee recommends that the State party formulate a comprehensive inclusive education policy with strategies for promoting a culture of inclusion in mainstream education, including individualized human-rights based assessments of educational requirements and necessary accommodation, support for teachers, respect for diversity in ensuring the rights to equality and non-discrimination, and the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in society.'
FI	2023 List of issues	21. Please provide information on: (a) Measures taken to implement a comprehensive inclusive education strategy in mainland Finland and Åland at all levels of education; (b) The accessibility of the physical environment and information and communications in regular schools and higher education settings; (c) Measures taken to ensure that students with disabilities, regardless of type of impairment, have access to individualized support, inclusive learning methodologies and materials, adaptive learning environments and reasonable accommodation, such as textbooks in Braille, Easy Read and accessible electronic formats and sign language interpreters; (d) The training provided for teachers and non-teaching education personnel, including school counsellors, on inclusive education and measures taken to raise awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities in order to reduce stigma, discrimination and bullying in all educational settings; (e) Efforts to overcome disparities in access to early childhood, primary, secondary and higher education; (f) Initiatives to broaden the range of fields of study in vocational education; (g) The number of children with disabilities who have had access to education since 2016, disaggregated by age, sex, type of impairment, type of school and municipality.
LT	2023 List of issues	20. Please provide information on: (a) Steps taken to adopt and implement a coherent and inclusive education strategy in all the country's municipalities to transform the parallel education system, which includes special education, into a high-quality and inclusive system that provides support for the mainstreaming of persons with disabilities into regular educational settings. Please include information on the strategy's benchmarks, baselines and indicators, on the resources allocated to its implementation and on

MS	Source	Information requested on education (Article 24 CRPD and SDG 4)
		the plans for improving accessibility in existing schools for all persons with disabilities, regardless of type of impairment; (b) The financial, material and human resources available to provide individual support to students with disabilities and the accessibility standards applicable under the framework of inclusive education in the private and public sectors; (c) Steps taken to promote and encourage the training and employment of teachers with disabilities; (d) Measures to reduce stigma towards children with disabilities in the education system and to provide information and assistance to the parents of children with disabilities who fear the inclusion of their children in regular education; (e) Measures to provide reasonable accommodation to all students with disabilities in the general education system.
NL	2022 List of issues	22. Please provide information on: (a) Plans to discontinue the dual education system and implement the inclusive education system, and plans to build a strategy with clear targets and an allocated budget for inclusive education for all children with disabilities; (b) Plans to recognize the denial of access to education in general schools for a child with disabilities as a form of discrimination; (c) Measures taken to ensure access for all children with disabilities to general schools in their communities, and to ensure the necessary support, in particular the provision of reasonable accommodation, for children with disabilities in the general education system; (d) Measures taken to ensure access to inclusive tertiary education, including vocational and higher education, for children and adults with disabilities; (e) Training provided to general education teachers on the rights of children with disabilities to inclusive education, and on inclusive education methods and augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, education techniques and materials; (f) Data, disaggregated by age, sex and type of impairment, on children with disabilities in special education settings, including in special education schools and special education classes within the general education system, as well as on children with disabilities in the general education system.
SI	2023 List of issues prior to reporting	22. Please provide information on: (a) Steps taken or planned to adopt and implement an inclusive education strategy at all levels of education, from kindergarten to tertiary education, and to implement the European Union youth and mobility programmes, including the improvement of accessibility of existing schools for all students with disabilities. Please include information on an eventual strategy's time frame and monitoring mechanisms and indicators, and on the resources allocated for its implementation, as well as on the implementation of the Act Regulating the Integrated Treatment of Preschool Children with Special Needs, including the percentage of children with disabilities in inclusive preschool; (b) The recognition of a legally enforceable right to inclusive education for all students with disabilities, and a respective obligation by the State party; (c) Measures taken or planned to provide reasonable accommodation and individual support to students with disabilities at all levels of the education system, in the public and private sectors, as well as on the financial, material and human resources available in this regard; (d) Transport services for students with disabilities from their place of residence to their education facilities, particularly on the kindergarten and primary education levels; (e) Steps taken or

MS	Source	Information requested on education (Article 24 CRPD and SDG 4)
		planned to promote and encourage the training and employment of teachers with disabilities, and for training and awareness-raising of all teachers about inclusive education, curriculum accommodation and teaching methods for students with disabilities.
SK	2019 List of issues prior to reporting	17. Please provide information about: (a) Measures taken to include all children with disabilities in their nearest mainstream education school and ensure the availability of the necessary support; (b) Steps taken to abolish the provision of the Education Act allowing schools to deny a place to pupils with disabilities when taking them would involve significant organizational or financial difficulties, and to allocate sufficient human, technical and financial support to schools; (c) The number and percentage of children with disabilities with access to education, disaggregated by age and sex, type of impairment, type of school, and municipality.

4.2 UN recommendations to Member States

4.2.1 Recommendations relevant to employment

Table 12: UN Recommendations to Member States under Article 27 CRPD (work and employment)

MS	Year	Recommendations (employment)
AT	2023	64. The Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Further develop and implement the projects in the National Action Plan on Disability for the period 2022–2030, in close consultation with and the active involvement of persons with disabilities, including women with disabilities, and incorporate specific measures into the Plan, endowed with adequate resources, time frames and monitoring mechanisms, ensuring the transition from segregated employment to employment on the open labour market for all persons with disabilities; (b) Render the assessment of the ability to work compliant with the human rights model of disability, do not apply it to children, re-evaluate assessments periodically, provide an effective remedy against assessments, ensure that persons with disabilities retain their social security status, including health and pension insurance, irrespective of the outcome of the assessment, and apply that status retroactively to persons with disabilities already assessed as 'unfit for work'; (c) Ensure equal payment for work of equal value to all persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others, adopt measures to eliminate the gender gap in employment, including pay, and secure the provision of employment contracts or the conferment of the legal status of employee, and recognition as self-employed, for all persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others; (d) Harmonize disability benefits with payment from gainful employment, avoiding negative repercussions on disability benefits from taking up employment; (e) Ground the prerequisites for the provision of reasonable accommodation in the workplace, including personal assistance, in the human rights model of disability, as enshrined in the Convention; (f) Provide inclusive vocational orientation and training to persons with disabilities, in particular young persons with disabilities.
BE	2024	55. The Committee recommends that the State party, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations: (a) Develop and implement a strategy and action plan, applicable at the federal and regional levels, to facilitate the transition of persons with disabilities, including women with disabilities, from unemployment, or

		from employment in sheltered workshops, to inclusive employment in the open labour market; (b) Promote employment opportunities and strengthen programmes to increase the employment rate of persons with disabilities, including women with disabilities, in both the private and the public sectors, and improve assistance for finding, obtaining, maintaining and returning to employment; (c) Adopt effective legal mechanisms to implement and monitor implementation of the Act of 10 May 2007 on combating certain forms of discrimination, including denial of reasonable accommodation, including complaint mechanisms; (d) Effectively implement the policy on the reintegration of persons after a period of long-term work incapacity; (e) Ensure that persons with hearing impairments, in particular French speaking persons, have effective access to training in professional sign language interpretation.
BG	2018	58. The Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Adopt a policy framework and a strategy to promote employment for persons with disabilities in the open labour market, including by increasing resources for it, with the aim to facilitate transition from sheltered employment to the open labour market; (b) Recognize in its legal and policy framework the right of persons with disabilities to reasonable accommodation at the workplace; (c) Raise awareness among public and private companies about reasonable accommodation at work; (d) Strengthen training programmes for persons with disabilities on skills that are required in the open labour market and skills in entrepreneurship, and collect disaggregated and targeted data about the participation of women and men with disabilities in programmes and the outcome of training for them.
CY	2017	54. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure access to employment in the open labour market, including by ensuring that the private sector is also covered by a quota system and by ensuring equal pay for work of equal value in all settings for all persons with disabilities being guided by target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals. It furthermore recommends that the State party collect data on the employment of persons with disabilities, disaggregated by gender, age and type of impairment.
CZ	2015	52. The Committee calls upon the State party to ensure the same wage for all persons with disabilities, regardless of their disability classification. It also urges the State party to develop measures, intensify efforts and allocate sufficient resources to promoting the employment in the open labour market of persons with disabilities, especially women.
DE	2023	62. With reference to its general comment No. 8 (2022) and recalling the recommendations of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Develop, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of organizations of persons with disabilities, an action plan to promote the transition of persons with disabilities in sheltered workshops to the open labour market across the Länder that sets forth a suitable allocation of resources and specific time frame; (b) Enforce the implementation of the quotas of employment for persons with disabilities in both the public and the private sectors, including through measures more effective than the current compensatory levy, and ensure the accessibility of and reasonable accommodation in workplaces; (c) Restructure the vocational training system and take measures to ensure accessibility and inclusiveness, including through the establishment of a complaints mechanism to investigate discriminatory practices on the basis of disability in the field of vocational rehabilitation and work.

DK	2024	72. The Committee recommends that the Kingdom of Denmark, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations, adopt a long-term employment strategy to promote the full inclusion of persons with disabilities, including women with disabilities, in the open labour market, including: (a) Targeted, time-bound and financed action plans across all sectors of the economy; (b) Awareness-raising measures to combat prejudice against persons with disabilities; (c) Training of staff in the employment system, including human resources personnel and career advisors, in specialized knowledge of disability; (d) The provision of disability-responsive support to persons with disabilities in their search for employment and in their efforts toward entrepreneurship; (e) The possibility for older employees with disabilities who have not yet reached retirement age to stay in the workforce.
EE	2021	53. The Committee recommends that the State party, in line with target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals: (a) Strengthen measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to work and employment in the open labour market and to inclusive work environments, including persons with disabilities taking part in deinstitutionalization processes, persons with disabilities living in rural areas, persons with intellectual disabilities, persons with hearing impairments and persons with psychosocial disabilities; (b) Adopt a strategy to abolish sheltered employment. The State party should review the labour conditions of all persons with disabilities and ensure that persons with disabilities are not paid below the minimum wage; (c) Adopt measures, alongside the work ability reform, to combat attitudinal barriers among employers and adopt an action plan to assess periodically accessibility in the workplace, including access to transportation, alternative means of information and communication, sign language and speech-to-text interpretation and pictograms for job seekers and employees. The State party should adopt policies and procedures that establish and support the development of infrastructure for the provision of personal assistance in the workplace; (d) Ensure that the right to seek reasonable accommodation in the workplace is recognized for employees in the public and private sectors; (e) Develop a comprehensive system of vocational and professional training for persons with disabilities and for their effective transition from vocational and tertiary education to work in the open labour market.
EL	2019	39. The Committee recommends that the State party take effective measures to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities, in the open labour market, with a view to achieving target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals. It also recommends that the State party ensure the provision of specific measures and individualized support in the workplace; promote among employers the right of persons with disabilities to employment on an equal basis with others; and mainstream the disability dimension in all employment policies, measures and programmes, including in the policy design of the Greek Manpower Employment Organization.
ES	2019	51. The Committee recommends that the State party, in line with target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals: (a) Analyse and modify legislation, regulations and policies to promote the employment of persons with disabilities in the public and private sectors, with particular emphasis on women with disabilities and persons with disabilities living in rural areas; (b) Ensure that reasonable accommodation is available and accessible for persons with

		disabilities with administrative safeguards, especially in cases of accidents that have led to disabilities in the workplace; (c) Adopt concrete measures to fully implement the legal quota established in the revised text of Act No. 9/2017 on public sector contracts.
FR	2021	55. The Committee recommends that, in line with target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the State party: (a) Move towards eradicating all forms of segregated work, strengthen measures to effectively abolish sheltered employment and adopt a time-bound policy and benchmarks to ensure that all persons with disabilities have access to work and employment in the open labour market, regardless of the type of impairment or level of support required, and their meaningful inclusion in work environments, in the private and public sectors; (b) Review the labour conditions of all persons with disabilities and ensure that persons with disabilities are not paid below the minimum wage; (c) Promote the employment of women with disabilities in the open labour market, ensuring that they are informed about and can effectively seek individualized support through the provision of reasonable accommodation, and have access to effective measures to balance work and family life; (d) Develop awareness-raising campaigns aimed at promoting the participation of women with disabilities in employment and at shifting attitudinal barriers to the recognition of the capacities of women with disabilities and their contribution to all domains of work in the open labour market, on an equal basis with others; (e) Ensure that persons with disabilities have access to general technical and vocational guidance programmes, vocational and continuing training, and to guidance towards employment on an equal basis with others, and adopt measures to support the careers of persons with disabilities who wish to work as researchers through multi-year planning in research establishments; (f) Ensure that the right to seek individualized support through the provision of reasonable accommodation in the workplace is recognized by employees in the public and private sectors, and strengthen measures to inform and facilitate the recognition of reasonable accommodation for employees in the workplace.
HR	2015	42. The Committee recommends that the State party develop and implement, in cooperation with organizations of persons with disabilities, a plan of action to increase the employment of persons with disabilities in the open labour market. It recommends that the quota system is complemented with other incentives for employers to hire persons with disabilities. Disincentives to employment for persons with disabilities should be analysed and remedied. Reasonable accommodation, including supported employment with personal assistance, and the accessibility of the workplace, should be regulated and monitored.
HU	2022	53. The Committee recommends that in line with target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the State party: (a) Revise the existing legislation and measures of support for the employment of persons with disabilities and take comprehensive measures aimed at effectively supporting the work and employment of persons with disabilities in the open labour market and in inclusive work environments; (b) Adopt legislative and policy measures to protect the rights of persons with disabilities to just and favourable conditions of work, and ensure that persons with disabilities are not paid below the minimum wage and are provided with work contracts and equal remuneration for work on an equal basis with others; (c) Redirect the allocations for the employment of person with disabilities from sheltered employment to support the employment of persons with disabilities, including of persons who require higher levels of support

		and deinstitutionalized persons, and ensure that the right to seek reasonable accommodation in the workplace is recognized for employees in the public and private sectors; (d) Monitor, in close consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities, the accessibility of workplaces across the State party and adopt an action plan with the aim of outlining measures, with time frames and adequate budgets, to ensure reasonable accommodation in and the accessibility of workplaces, including access to transportation.
IT	2016	70. The Committee recommends that the State party be guided by article 27 of the Convention in implementing targets 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals; and that it ensure the achievement of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value. In addition, the State party must implement special measures to address the low level of employment for women with disabilities. It also recommends that the State party remove any legislation limiting the rights of persons with disabilities to perform any profession on the grounds of their disability.
LT	2016	52. The Committee recommends that the State party, in close collaboration with representative organizations of persons with disabilities, eliminate the concept of 'working incapacity' of persons with disabilities and develop and implement efficient strategies and programmes aimed at increasing the employment rate of persons with disabilities in the open labour market, by eliminating segregated work environments and investing in promoting vocational training, access to appropriately adjusted workplaces, the provision of reasonable accommodation and the training of private and public employers, as set out in target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals.
LU	2017	47. The Committee recommends that the State party adopt measures to phase out sheltered workshops, with a time-bound schedule and plan for transfer of those currently employed in sheltered workshops into the open labour market, and increase the level of employment of persons with disabilities in the open labour market, in line with the Convention and in view of target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, and that it ensure the achievement of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value. It also recommends that the State party: (a) Designate an entity for monitoring and sanctioning non-compliance of labour quotas in both the private and public sectors; (b) Take measures to ensure the effective monitoring of the provision of reasonable accommodation, with appropriate remedies for the denial of requests; (c) Provide vocational and professional training and provide incentives for the self-employment of persons with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities.
LV	2017	47. The Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Ensure support for the employment of all persons with disabilities in the open labour market in inclusive employment settings on an equal basis with others; (b) Pay attention to the links between article 27 of the Convention and target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals.
MT	2018	40. The Committee recommends that the State party adopt further enforcement mechanisms and incentives to ensure the implementation of the quota system under articles 15 and 16 of the Persons with Disability (Employment) Act and other measures to support persons with disabilities to work in the open labour market, in accordance with the Convention and target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, and ensure the achievement of full and productive employment and decent work for all. It also recommends that the State party: (a) Amend article 17 (3) of its Constitution to bring it in conformity with

		<p>article 27 of the Convention; (b) Review the quota system under the Persons with Disability (Employment) Act in order to make it applicable to enterprises with less than 20 employees; (c) Replace any assessment of suitability to work with an assessment that considers the needs and requirements for reasonable accommodation at work for persons with disabilities; (d) Step up efforts to raise awareness among employers on the rights of persons with disabilities to work in the open labour market, in particular the provision of reasonable accommodation, and on the benefits of employing persons with disabilities.</p>
NL	2024	<p>60. The Committee recommends that the State party, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations: (a) Review national legislation to address the systemic and structural barriers experienced by persons with disabilities, in particular women and young persons with disabilities and persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, and take measures to increase the number of persons with disabilities in the open labour market; (b) Enforce the implementation of agreements on targets for the employment of persons with disabilities in both the public and the private sectors and strengthen measures to ensure the accessibility of, and provision of reasonable accommodation at, workplaces, including by raising awareness among employers about their obligations and providing resources to facilitate the provision of reasonable accommodations; (c) Amend legislation to make appropriate reference to persons with disabilities instead of using the term “occupational disability” in the context of the labour market; (d) Take all steps necessary to align programmes, policies and legislation relating to the labour market to reflect the human rights model of disability, including by ending the current practice of using sheltered workshops.</p>
PL	2018	<p>48. The Committee recommends that the State party develop legislation and measures for the employment of persons with disabilities in the open labour market, and that it in particular: (a) Promote the work and employment of women with disabilities, and ensure equal income, particularly in rural areas; (b) Promote decent work for persons with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities, in public and private sectors and provide specific incentives and support for reasonable accommodation, including individual assistance for employing persons with a wide range of disabilities; (c) Ensure that the employment quota of 6 per cent for persons with disabilities is reached in all sectors, in particular in the public administration sector; (d) Ensure that open labour market activation programmes effectively include all persons with disabilities.</p>
PT	2016	<p>52. The Committee recommends that the State party, in close consultation with organizations representing persons with disabilities, review its public- and private-sector labour legislation to bring it into line with the Convention and that it take measures to enforce the law and apply the stipulated penalties for non-compliance. The Committee also recommends that it do away with segregated working environments, that it review the legislation regulating the Occupational Activity Centres from a human rights perspective to bring them into line with the Convention and that it steps up efforts to promote access to the regular labour market for persons with intellectual disabilities and autism. The State party should promote corporate social responsibility in connection with the employment of persons with disabilities. The Committee recommends that the State party consider the links between article 27 of the Convention and target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, with a view to</p>

		achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.
SE	2014	58. With reference to its general comment No. 8 (2022), the Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Review the existing national legislation to address systemic, intersectional and structural barriers experienced by persons with disabilities, in particular women with disabilities, young persons with disabilities, national minorities with disabilities, migrants with disabilities and persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, and take measures to increase the number of persons with disabilities in open labour market and review the assessment of reduced capacity to work; (b) Enforce the implementation of the quotas of employment for persons with disabilities in both the public and the private sectors and ensure the accessibility of and reasonable accommodation in workplaces; (c) Strengthen the vocational and professional training system and take measures to ensure accessibility and inclusiveness, including through the establishment of a complaint mechanism to investigate discriminatory practices on the basis of disability in the field of vocational rehabilitation and work, and ensure the effective transition from vocational and tertiary education to work in the open labour market.
SI	2018	46. The Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Adopt measures aimed at promoting an inclusive, open and accessible labour market in all sectors for all persons with disabilities; (b) Create specific incentives for employers and provide reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities, particularly for persons with intellectual disabilities, aimed at facilitating their inclusion in the open labour market; (c) Ensure the safeguarding of all incomes, including disability pensions for self-employed persons with disabilities; (d) Ensure equal requirements for employment quotas in the public administration and information services and other work sectors, and monitor their implementation. The State party should collect data on compliance with the quota system and provide for adequate sanctions in cases of non-compliance.
SK	2016	74. The Committee recommends that the State party step up efforts on the transition from sheltered workshops to an open labour market for all. The process must include an action plan, timetable, budget and training for public and private sector employers, including on the provision of reasonable accommodation. The Committee also recommends that the State party pay attention to the links between article 27 of the Convention and target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

4.2.2 Recommendations relevant to social policies and healthcare

Table 13: UN Recommendations to Member States under Article 28 CRPD (social protection)

MS	Year	Recommendations (social protection)
AT	2023	66. The Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Take effective measures, including full coverage by the social security scheme, to eradicate poverty among persons with disabilities; (b) Provide access to disability support schemes for refugees with disabilities and persons with disabilities in refugee-like situations, including persons with disabilities under temporary protection, preventing them from falling into poverty.
BE	2024	59. The Committee recommends that the State party, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations: (a) Ensure that the income of persons with disabilities is sufficient to lead their life with dignity, including by maintaining the full allowance covering disability related costs when they enter employment; (b) Mainstream disability into poverty and homelessness reduction strategies in the next federal anti-poverty plan, and adopt regional action plans to combat poverty, in particular to address the situation of women and children with disabilities and older persons with disabilities, and set up monitoring mechanisms to ensure their effective implementation.
BG	2018	60. The Committee recommends that the State party revise the criteria for assessing the degree of impairment, incorporate the human rights model of disability in the assessment process, and ensure that persons with disabilities continue to enjoy an adequate standard of living. It also calls upon the State party to intensify its efforts to ensure that all persons with disabilities can meet the additional costs of disability, including by increasing budget allocations and resources accordingly.
CY	2017	56. The Committee recommends that the State party implement progressively measures to ensure adequate income of persons with disabilities in order to reduce significantly the pay gap between persons with and without disabilities, regardless of gender, ethnic origin or age, and that it abolish the requirement of user payment for social services and support and partial payment for disability-related expenses and assistive devices, being guided by target 10.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the State party identify a social protection floor that is not affected by expenses for disability-related costs and assistive devices and user payments for social services and support, in order to alleviate the socioeconomic disadvantages that result from the exclusion experienced by persons with disabilities.
CZ	2015	54. The Committee calls upon the State party to review the legislation on the provision of benefits to persons with disabilities, with genuine participation of persons with disabilities, to reintroduce the additional social allowance in order to bring the standard of living of families with children with disabilities above the subsistence level. The State party should also broaden the range of and facilitate access to assistive devices for children with disabilities, regardless of age.
DE	2023	64. The Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Take all necessary measures to address the increased risk of poverty among persons with disabilities and mainstream disability into all studies, research, policies and plans related to poverty reduction; (b) Revise benefit assessment rules for persons with disabilities in order to meet the individual support requirements of persons with disabilities; (c)

		Revise the integration assistance benefits of persons with disabilities to allow for savings on an equal basis with others and guarantee their financial security in old age.
DK	2024	74. The Committee recommends that, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations: (a) Denmark revise the Social Services Act to ensure that persons with disabilities, including persons with disabilities who have reached retirement age, keep their benefits for disability-related expenses and the provision of personal assistance; (b) The Faroe Islands and Greenland enact analogous legislation.
EE	2021	55. Taking into account the links between article 28 of the Convention and target 1.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Mainstream the rights of persons with disabilities into the national strategy for poverty eradication, including by taking concrete, expeditious measures and by earmarking budgets to address situations of disadvantage and exclusion concerning older persons with disabilities, in particular older women with disabilities; (b) Prioritize persons with disabilities in the socioeconomic response to the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure access to appropriate and affordable services and facilities for the general population, assistance, transportation and public housing programmes for persons with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities.
EL	2019	41. The Committee recommends that the State party revise the relevant legal provisions and practices on welfare allowances, benefits, pensions and tax exemptions for persons with disabilities, harmonizing the existing rules and repealing discriminatory rules and practices, including in the disability certification system. The Committee also recommends that the State party ensure the effective implementation of the existing social protection framework, and progressively develop further measures to ensure an adequate standard of living for persons with disabilities.
ES	2019	53. The Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Ensure that the national strategy for reducing poverty incorporates a disability perspective, including specific measures and an allocated budget; (b) Repeal the co-payments system for all services necessary for living independently in the community and ensure that persons with disabilities have full access to those services.
FR	2021	57. Taking into account the links between article 28 of the Convention and target 1.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Assess the implementation of disability legislation and policies at the national and regional levels with the aim of ensuring equal access to support for persons with disabilities regardless of their age, and streamline procedures at the municipal level to provide persons with disabilities with support. The State party should provide persons with disabilities with information about their rights and entitlements in accessible formats, including Easy Read; (b) Review the provisions concerning the allocation and the amount of the adult disability allowance in consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities; (c) Streamline social security support systems to ensure that they are accessible to all persons with disabilities, as a measure to tackle poverty; (d) Design and implement programmes to establish accessible housing and reinforce human rights-based support schemes for all persons with disabilities to cover disability-related expenses and to enable them to gain access to an adequate standard of living.

HR	2015	44. The Committee recommends that poverty reduction programmes be strengthened. It also recommends that benefits aimed at alleviating increased costs arising from disability should be based on an assessment of the individual's support needs and should disregard any financial assets test.
HU	2022	55. The Committee recommends that the State Party take appropriate legislative steps to: (a) Recognize the right of persons with disabilities to an adequate standard of living for them and their families and to progressive improvement in their living conditions through decent disability allowances and benefits and accessible and available housing and services in the community; (b) Redress the negative impacts of the reform of the disability benefits schemes in 2012 and ensure that persons with disabilities are compensated for the damage caused by the reform; (c) Revise the disability entitlement system to make it accessible and easy to use for all persons with disabilities, through the provision of alternative and augmentative modes of information and communication.
IT	2016	72. The Committee recommends that the State party expedite constitutional reform to homogenize social protection interventions and policies throughout the national territory; expedite the adoption and implementation of the Minimum Standards of Social Assistance; conduct assessments of the impact of austerity measures on children and adults with disabilities; and prevent any further reduction in resources that could increase levels of poverty. It also recommends that the State party be guided by article 28 of the Convention in implementing target 10.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, including by mainstreaming disability in its poverty reduction policies.
LT	2016	54. The Committee recommends that the State party adopt new policies that secure income levels among persons with disabilities and their families that are adequate and equal to the income levels of others, and that take into account additional disability-related costs. 56. The Committee recommends that the State party take steps to secure that persons with disabilities and their families are not disproportionately affected by budget cuts and to ensure an adequate standard of living through income support and social security, taking note of target 1.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals, which calls on States to implement appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors.
LU	2017	49. The Committee recommends that the State party collect data on the socioeconomic situation of persons with disabilities to design appropriate policies to ensure an adequate standard of living for persons with disabilities and their families. It also recommends that the State party: (a) Ensure that social protection policies and programmes secure income levels by taking into account the additional costs related to disability; (b) Guarantee that persons with disabilities have access to sufficient community-based social services, public housing programmes and support services for living independently respectful of the rights, will and preferences of persons with disabilities; (c) Pay attention to the links between article 28 of the Convention and target 1.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals, which calls upon States to implement appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors.
LV	2017	49. The Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Ensure an adequate standard of living for persons with disabilities and their families, by guaranteeing, inter alia, that social protection and

		poverty reduction programmes take into account the additional costs related to disability; (b) Pay attention to the links between article 28 of the Convention and target 1.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals.
MT	2018	There was no recommendation on Article 28.
NL	2024	62. The Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Address the increased risk of poverty among persons with disabilities and mainstream disability into all studies, research initiatives, policies and plans related to poverty reduction, using the human rights model of disability; (b) Ensure equal access for persons with disabilities, in particular persons with psychosocial and/or intellectual disabilities, to homes for homeless persons and develop comprehensive, multidisciplinary programmes for homeless individuals that are tailored to persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities; (c) Ensure that disability is the main factor in the recognition and calculation of assistance for disability-related expenses and the social allowances provided for and personal contributions required from persons with disabilities, avoiding means-tested benefits based on household income.
PL	2018	50. Taking into account the links between article 28 of the Convention and target 1.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Emphasize the rights of persons with disabilities, particularly of women with disabilities, and mainstream them into the national strategy for reducing poverty with concrete measures and relevant budget; (b) Ensure that the employment of persons with disabilities does not make them ineligible for disability-related protection schemes, such as disability allowances; (c) Collect disaggregated data on the poverty of persons with disabilities, and monitor the effectiveness of social security mechanisms designed to combat poverty; (d) Ensure specific measures to ensure access to housing for persons with disabilities; (e) Ensure that the term 'public housing' is translated correctly in the Polish-language version of the Convention.
PT	2016	54. The Committee recommends that the State party, in cooperation with organizations representing persons with disabilities, take the following measures: (a) Urgently review austerity measures to prevent further negative and regressive effects on the standard of living and social protection of persons with disabilities by taking steps that enable them to be included in the community; (b) Provide support services for living independently and residential homes respectful of the rights of persons with disabilities, their wishes and preferences, in addition to providing cash subsidies to make it possible for unemployed persons with disabilities and without family support to have a decent standard of living; (c) Step up efforts, in line with the human rights approach of the Convention, to strengthen the right to a decent standard of living and the social protection of persons with disabilities who are living in poverty and extreme poverty, allocating funds sufficient for that purpose; (d) Consider the links between article 28 of the Convention and target 10.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals in order to empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of their disability.
SE	2014	60. Recalling the links between article 28 of the Convention and target 10.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, which seek to empower and to promote the economic inclusion of all persons, irrespective of disability status, the Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Take all measures necessary to address the increased risk of poverty among persons with disabilities and

		mainstream disability into all studies, research, policies and plans related to poverty reduction; (b) Ensure equal access to support by persons with disabilities, across all regions and municipalities, and simplify procedures for the submission of applications for support; (c) Provide access to disability support schemes for asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants with disabilities, including persons with disabilities under temporary protection in order to prevent them from falling into poverty.
SI	2018	48. In the light of the links between article 28 of the Convention and target 1.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of social protection and poverty reduction programmes for persons with disabilities, especially persons with psychosocial and/or intellectual disabilities; (b) Restore all support measures curtailed under the austerity policy and prevent any hardship that may be faced by persons with disabilities whose income was reduced as a result of that policy; (c) Ensure the accessibility of public housing for persons with disabilities, disseminate information about available and affordable housing in accessible formats and engage with the private sector with a view to promoting the development of accessible housing units; (d) Implement positive measures to provide taxation relief in respect of pensions and disability insurance for persons with disabilities living in poverty; (e) Recognize the right of persons with disabilities to receive a full disability pension and insurance through the relevant legal and administrative mechanisms; (f) Ensure a dignified and inclusive social protection system for older persons with disabilities.
SK	2016	76. The Committee recommends that the State party provide an adequate standard of living to persons with disabilities, including those from an ethnic minority background and those over the age of 65, and ensure that social protection schemes are regularly monitored to track the alleviation of poverty. The Committee also recommends that the State party pay attention to the links between article 28 of the Convention and target 10.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Table 14: UN Recommendations to Member States under Article 19 CRPD (living independently)

MS	Year	Recommendations (independent living)
AT	2023	48. Recalling its general comment No. 5 (2017) and its guidelines on deinstitutionalization, including in emergencies, the Committee recommends that the State party : (a) Establish a comprehensive, nationwide deinstitutionalization strategy, with benchmarks, time frames and funding, encompassing the competencies of the federal Government, the Länder and the municipalities, and ensure close consultation with and the active involvement of organizations of persons with disabilities in all deinstitutionalization processes; (b) Enact legislation, at the federal, Länder and – if appropriate – municipal levels, providing the requisite legal bases to end the institutionalization of persons with disabilities and to provide adequate accessible housing and support services for persons with disabilities to live independently in the community, and implement it expeditiously; (c) Guarantee an enforceable legal right to adequate financial, technical and personal support to live independently in the community; (d) Urge the participation of all Länder in the pilot project to harmonize personal assistance regulations; (e) Refrain from any further investment, including through European Funds, in existing or new institutions for persons with disabilities and allocate appropriate financial,

		technical and educational resources to foster the right to independent living of all persons with disabilities.
BE	2024	39. The Committee recommends that the State party, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations: (a) Devise and enact an effective strategy for deinstitutionalization, with time frames, goals, funding and monitoring, offering various forms of housing to provide persons with disabilities with real choice as to how and where they live; ensure that community-based services are available; and ensure that persons with disabilities, including persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, can effectively exercise their right to live independently and be included in the community; (b) Ensure sufficient administrative and financial resources for personal assistance to live independently and be included in society in order to abolish waiting lists in all regions, and provide information in accessible formats on how to obtain access to personal assistance; (c) Provide the support necessary to children with disabilities and their caregivers to allow them access to non-segregated services – for example, in school, leisure and accommodation – on an equal basis with other children; (d) Cease the practice of actively promoting the placement in psychiatric hospitals and other institutions in the State party of persons with disabilities who reside in France.
BG	2018	The Committee, in accordance with its general comment No. 5, recommends that the State party: (a) Accelerate the transition process to ensure that all persons with disabilities living in any form of institution, such as psychiatric hospital units or in small community-based group homes, have the right to live independently within the community with choices equal to those of other persons; in the deinstitutionalization process, the State party should focus on the situation of persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities, and children and elderly persons with disabilities; (b) Allocate greater resources for developing individualized support services for persons with disabilities, regardless of the type of impairment or age; such services should include peer support and personal assistance; (c) Adopt legislation on individualized and self-managed personal assistance and social and support services, recognizing the right to live independently and be included in the community as a subjective right for all persons with disabilities, regardless of their impairment or required level of support; (d) Implement a procedure to consult in a meaningful and disability-sensitive manner with organizations of persons with disabilities on all aspects of the implementation of article 19, including deinstitutionalization strategies and processes; (e) Allocate national financial resources and those provided by the European Union to promote the inclusion of persons with disabilities in society, and introduce efficient remedies and guidelines to avoid spending national and international funds on establishing infrastructure, housing and/or services that are not accessible or affordable to all persons with disabilities.
CY	2017	The Committee recommends that the State party, in close collaboration with representative organizations of persons with disabilities, and in line with article 4 (3) of the Convention: (a) Develop and implement safeguards securing the right to independent living; (b) Adopt and immediately implement an adequately funded deinstitutionalization strategy; (c) Redirect resources allocated to institutionalization and earmark and allocate them to community-based services and increase the budget enabling persons with disabilities to live independently across the State party with access to individually assessed and adequate services, including personal assistance, within the community.
CZ	2015	40. The Committee recommends that the State party take all measures necessary to ensure that policy processes for deinstitutionalization, including the development of the National Plan on Promoting Equal

		<p>Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities 2015–2020, have a clear timeline and concrete benchmarks for implementation that are monitored effectively at regular intervals. In particular, the Committee urges the State party to abolish the placement of children under 3 years of age in institutionalized care as soon as possible.</p>
DE	2023	<p>44. Recalling its general comment No. 5 (2017), its guidelines on deinstitutionalization, including in emergencies, and the report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities on the transformation of services for persons with disabilities, the Committee recommends that the State party, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities: (a) Develop a comprehensive deinstitutionalization strategy to end, as a matter of priority, the institutionalization of persons with disabilities, including in small residential homes, with measures to prevent trans institutionalization and to support the transition from institutions to life in the community, with specific time frames, human, technical and financial resources and clear responsibilities for implementation and monitoring; (b) Develop measures to remove barriers for persons with disabilities to choose where and with whom they live, including by committing to increase the supply of affordable and accessible housing, establishing personal assistance supports and services, removing additional cost requirements and the forced pooling of inclusion benefits and services, reducing the complexity of utilizing personal budgets and basing benefit allowances on individual requirements rather than shared accommodation.</p>
DK	2024	<p>53. The Committee recommends that the Kingdom of Denmark, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations: (a) Adopt multisectoral strategies on deinstitutionalization concerning all persons with disabilities, including women and children with disabilities and persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, with specific time frames and the requisite financial resources, ensuring that persons with disabilities have access to housing alternatives in their communities that are in keeping with their will and preference; (b) Take measures to close existing institution-like residences, including group homes, and to prevent the relocation of persons with disabilities without their free and informed personal consent; (c) Ensure that municipalities guarantee the right of all persons with disabilities to choose their place of residence, regardless of type of impairment or the complexity of support required, and provide the support required by persons with disabilities to participate in education, employment, cultural activities and social life and ensure that support is not dependent on reassessment.</p>
EE	2021	<p>39. The Committee recalls its general comment No. 5 (2017) and recommends that the State party: (a) Adopt a strategy that includes awareness-raising activities to promote understanding of the right to choose and self-determination of persons with disabilities concerning their living arrangements, the right not to be obliged to live in a particular living arrangement and the value of inclusion in, as opposed to segregation from, the community; (b) Enact a moratorium on the institutionalization of persons with disabilities, revise its deinstitutionalization strategy, redirect the use of public funds, including the European regional development funds, to the development of individualized support for living independently and ensure that programmes based on congregated settings, such as 'home-like institutions', 'family type houses' and 'special care villages', are amended so as to prioritize inclusion in the community; (c) Develop a system for self-managed personal assistance that includes person-directed tools for supporting living independently in the community in accordance with an individual's requirements and preferences; (d) Set up a time frame and benchmarks for achieving the accessibility of</p>

		mainstream services for the general population by persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others.
EL	2019	29. The Committee recommends that, in line with its general comment No. 5 (2017) on living independently and being included in the community, the State party: (a) Adopt a comprehensive national strategy with clear time-bound measures and sufficient funds for effective deinstitutionalization at all levels; (b) Ensure the active involvement of persons with disabilities through their representative organizations in the development of independent living strategies and schemes that provide accessible community-based services, especially at the local level.
ES	2019	38. With reference to the Committee's general comment No. 5 (2017) on living independently and being included in the community, the Committee recommends that the State party, in consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities: (a) Recognize the right to personal assistance in law, ensuring that all persons with disabilities are entitled to personal assistance, with individualized criteria for their independent living in the community and with access to a wide range of person-directed or user-led support and the self-management of service delivery; (b) Discontinue the use of public funds to build residential institutions for persons with disabilities and invest in independent living arrangements in the community and in all general services to make those arrangements inclusive, guaranteeing their accessibility and availability for all persons with disabilities, to enable their inclusion and participation in all spheres of life; (c) Design, adopt and implement a comprehensive deinstitutionalization strategy and implement safeguards to ensure the right to live independently and be included in the community across all regions, by redirecting resources from institutions to community-based services and increasing budgetary support for persons with disabilities to enhance their equal access to services, including personal assistance.
FR	2021	41. The Committee recalls its general comment No. 5 (2017) on living independently and being included in the community, and recommends that the State party, in consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities: (a) End the institutionalization of children and adults with disabilities, including in small residential homes, and launch a national strategy and action plans to end the institutionalization of persons with disabilities, with time-bound benchmarks, human, technical and financial resources, responsibilities for implementation and monitoring, and measures to support the transition from institutions to life in the community; (b) Ensure the implementation of the agreement concerning the moratorium on placing persons with disabilities in Belgian institutions, and strengthen measures to support families of children with disabilities and to uphold the right of persons with disabilities to live independently and in the community; (c) Recognize the right to live independently and to be included in the community in legislation and take measures to implement it, and develop awareness-raising measures, including campaigns, about it and about the harmful effects of institutionalization on persons with disabilities; (d) Ensure the availability of support to live independently and in the community, such as user-led budgets and personalized support, and enable persons with disabilities to exercise choice and control over their lives and to make decisions concerning where and with whom to live, as outlined in general comment No. 5 (2017); (e) Adopt measures to ensure the access of persons with disabilities to affordable and accessible housing on the basis of individual choice and outside any type of congregated premises; (f) Establish a time frame and benchmarks for achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities to mainstream community services, such as education, health, work and employment.

HR	2015	30. The Committee recommends that the process of deinstitutionalization include all residential institutions and foster homes for all persons with disabilities. It recommends that a legal framework be adopted to provide for entitlement to personal assistance services in the community and that a process be initiated to make local communities and mainstream services accessible to persons with disabilities.
HU	2022	41. Recalling its general comment No. 5 (2017), the Committee reiterates the recommendations set out in its report on the inquiry concerning Hungary under article 6 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention, urging the State party to: (a) Discontinue the institutionalization of children with disabilities and ensure their right to a family life by redirecting investments from institutions into support measures for families and the provision of inclusive community services, such as inclusive early intervention, across the State party; (b) Ensure independent monitoring of the deinstitutionalization of children with disabilities and independent methodological support for that process, with the close involvement of disability rights organizations; (c) Revise its deinstitutionalization strategy with the aim of redefining its objectives; (d) Redesign its measures and redirect its efforts and budgets into community-based support services, including personal assistance, with the aim of providing for persons with disabilities to live independently in the community equally with others, regardless of their type of impairment, guarantee that community services and facilities for the general population are available for persons with disabilities and ensure that persons with disabilities have the opportunity and right to choose their place of residence on an equal basis with others in the community.
IT	2016	48. The Committee recommends that the State party implement safeguards to retain the right to autonomous independent living across all regions, and redirect resources from institutionalization to community-based services and increase budget support to enable persons with disabilities to live independently across the country and have equal access to services, including personal assistance.
LT	2016	40. The Committee recommends that the State party, in close collaboration with organizations of persons with disabilities: (a) Adopt an adequately funded strategy for deinstitutionalization ensuring a range of community-based services for the social inclusion of persons with disabilities, including for children with intellectual and/or psychosocial impairments, including their right to live independently in the community, with the possibility of individualized personal assistance support services in their home; (b) Effectively implement the action plan for the implementation of the national programme for the social integration of persons with disabilities for the period 2013-2019 at all levels of the State; (c) Adopt a moratorium on new admissions of children into institutionalized care; (d) Eliminate excessive waiting time for receiving support services by investing in developing new services and rendering existing services accessible and inclusive and ensure that persons with disabilities have access to sufficient financial resources for independent living and improved access to accessible services in the community. 42. The Committee recommends that the State party further prioritize investing in a social service system for independent living in the community, and immediately refrain from using national and structural funds of the European Union to renovate, maintain or construct residential institutions for persons with disabilities.
LU	2017	37. The Committee recommends that the State party take into account its general comment No. 5 (2017) on living independently and being included in the community, and: (a) Adopt the legal and other measures necessary, including repealing Reform Act 7014 and relevant disability insurance systems, replacing them by legislation promoting the right to independent

		<p>living and being included in the community, providing for, among others, personal assistance and clarifying the responsibilities and resource allocations of central and local authorities; (b) Develop and implement an effective deinstitutionalization plan, with a clear time frame and benchmarks, involving persons with disabilities through their representative organizations in all stages; (c) Adopt the measures necessary to ensure that persons with disabilities have a legal entitlement to a sufficient personal budget for independent living, which takes into account the additional costs related to disability and, at the same time, redirect resources from institutionalization to community-based services, while increasing the availability of personal assistance.</p>
LV	2017	<p>31. The Committee urges the State party to: (a) Expedite the complete deinstitutionalization of all persons with disabilities within a set time frame in order to close all remaining institutions, both those run by the State and the municipalities, ensuring that residents are not subject to transinstitutionalization; (b) Reinforce the engagement of municipalities in implementing the deinstitutionalization strategy, including through raising awareness about independent community-based living for persons with disabilities and ensuring sustainable provision of services to promote independent living following termination of European structural funds; (c) Ensure the provision of quality personal assistance that takes into account the individual needs of persons with disabilities and ensures their social inclusion and participation.</p>
MT	2018	<p>30. The Committee recommends that the State party take into account its general comment No. 5 (2017) and: (a) Ensure that existing residential institutions that contribute to the isolation of persons with disabilities are closed and that the provision of appropriate community-based services is strengthened; (b) Ensure that all projects supported by public funds are carried out in a community setting, do not contribute to isolation of persons with disabilities, are monitored by organizations of persons with disabilities and are provided with sustainable continuous funding; (c) Adopt the legal and other measures, such as the planned bill on personal autonomy and the bill on the Convention, necessary to make article 19 of the Convention justiciable; (d) Ensure that financial and other measures are in place to allow persons with disabilities to be provided with personal assistance and that personnel supporting persons with disabilities in the community are appropriately trained, if necessary.</p>
NL	2024	<p>44. The Committee recommends that the State party, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations: (a) Develop and implement a clear strategy and a comprehensive action plan to end, as a matter of priority, the institutionalization of all persons with disabilities, including in small residential homes, and to support the transition of adults and children with disabilities to community-based settings, with specific time frames, sufficient human, technical and financial resources, and clear responsibilities for implementation and independent monitoring; (b) Develop plans and implement existing programmes to provide and strengthen community-based services, including by developing mental health services and personal assistance in the community, and make existing services accessible to all persons with disabilities living in the community; (c) Increase efforts, at all levels of government, to end the shortage of affordable and accessible housing for persons with disabilities; (d) Enhance knowledge and awareness of inclusive housing and living arrangements and the right of persons with disabilities to live independently; harmonize regulations and procedures across municipalities and reduce obstacles to ensure that persons with disabilities face minimal disruptions when moving within or between municipalities; and render the application process for support services in municipalities fully accessible</p>

		and ensure that persons with disabilities have timely access to the support necessary to live independently; (e) Re-examine the allocation of funds, including the regional funds obtained from the European Union, dedicated to the provision of support services for persons with disabilities, to ensure the full implementation of the right to live independently.
PL	2018	33. With reference to general comment No. 5 (2017) on living independently and being included in the community, the Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Design and adopt concrete action plans for deinstitutionalization and time-bound transition to independent living schemes for persons with disabilities within the community, and ensure that adequate funding is allocated to this process after the termination of European Union funds allocated specifically to this purpose; (b) Adopt legal frameworks and allocate a sustainable budget for providing persons with disabilities with personal assistance within the framework of individualized and inclusive support arrangements; (c) Ensure the spending of European Union funds allocated to deinstitutionalization on measures that are consistent with the provisions of the Convention, and that such spending is monitored, with the effective participation of persons with disabilities and/or their representative organizations, to ensure that such spending is in line with the requirements of persons with disabilities themselves; (d) Ensure that the term 'community' is translated correctly in the Polish-language version of the Convention.
PT	2016	39. The Committee recommends that the State party, in close consultation with organizations representing persons with disabilities, adopt a national strategy for living independently, including increased investment to facilitate living independently in the community rather than in institutions, that it regulate personal assistance and that it increase the availability of sign language interpreters and fingerspelling systems in public services. It also urges the State party to establish support services in the community for persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities.
SE	2014	42. Recalling its general comment No. 5 (2017), its guidelines on deinstitutionalization, including in emergencies, and the report of the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities on the transformation of services for persons with disabilities, the Committee recommends that the State party, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities, take immediate action to develop and implement a national deinstitutionalization strategy that includes the following: (a) Legislative, administrative, policy and other measures to ensure nationally consistent access to individualized personal assistance and support to all persons with disabilities, including the 1,500 persons with disabilities who lost personal assistance between 2015 and 2022, and to persons with disabilities over the age of 66; (b) Independent monitoring of institutions until they are closed; (c) Relevant policies to close existing institutions and to prevent the reinstitutionalization of persons with disabilities; (d) Measures to strengthen the support system for children with disabilities to live with their families or grow up in family environments instead of institutions; (e) Measures to remove barriers for persons with disabilities to choose where and with whom they live, including an increase in the supply of safe, affordable and accessible community-based housing.
SI	2018	32. With reference to the Committee's general comment No. 5 (2017) on living independently and being included in the community, the Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Adopt and implement a strategy and action plan, within a time frame, aimed at deinstitutionalization; (b) Prevent any form of reinstitutionalization and provide sufficient funding for developing community-based independent living schemes; (c) Allocate sufficient resources to ensure that services in the community are available, accessible, affordable, acceptable and accommodating of persons with

		disabilities, so that such persons may exercise their right to live independently and be included in their communities, in both urban and rural areas; (d) Strengthen the national and municipal capacity to implement deinstitutionalization, in close cooperation with organizations of persons with disabilities.
SK	2016	<p>56. The Committee recommends that the State party provide and implement a timetable to ensure that the implementation of the deinstitutionalization process is expedited, including by putting in place specific additional measures to ensure that community-based services are strengthened for all persons with disabilities, in particular women with disabilities and older persons with disabilities. Furthermore, the State party should ensure that the use of European structural and investment funds complies with article 19 and that new follow-up national action plans on the transition from institutional settings to community-based support are initiated with the comprehensive involvement of organizations of persons with disabilities and civil society organizations, including in the area of monitoring. The Committee also recommends that the State party no longer allocate resources from the national budget to institutions and that it reallocate resources into community-based services in accordance with the investment priorities of the European Regional Development Fund (art. 5.9 (a) of European Union regulation No. 1303/2013 .</p> <p>58. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure the equal distribution of resources for social care, with an emphasis on community-based services. The Committee also recommends that the State party ensure that community-based social services and home-care services are available in all geographic regions and rural areas, and that funds are allocated to persons with disabilities who require them, especially those who are unemployed or in low-wage employment.</p>

Table 15: UN Recommendations to Member States under Article 25 CRPD (health)

MS	Year	Recommendations (Health)
AT	2023	The Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Significantly improve access to community-based mental health services for persons with disabilities, in particular children with disabilities, and collect data on the provision of such services and their results, disaggregated by age, sex, region and type of impairment; (b) Ensure access for women and girls with disabilities, in particular women and girls with disabilities still in institutions, to sexual and reproductive health services, including contraception, and sex education; (c) Provide quality sign language interpretation in health services for persons with disabilities, including refugees and stateless persons with disabilities and persons with disabilities in refugee-like situations; (d) Effectively guarantee the accessibility, including physical accessibility, of health facilities and services.
BE	2024	51. The Committee recommends the State party, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations: (a) Extend mandatory accessibility standards to all medical and paramedical infrastructure and health services, and render them age- and gender-responsive; (b) Establish a framework that ensures that persons with disabilities can effectively give their free and informed personal consent with regard to any medical procedure or intervention, including through the provision of all information on healthcare and treatment in accessible formats; (c) Ensure that persons with disabilities have access to healthcare on an equal basis with others and at an affordable cost, including by granting specific benefits to financially disadvantaged people with disabilities and by integrating such benefits into the overall benefits system across the regions; (d) Ensure that the human rights model of disability and respect

		for the dignity, autonomy and requirements of persons with disabilities are systematically included in the curricula for the training of all medical and health professionals.
BG	2018	<p>51. The Committee notes with concern the lack of training for health-care professionals on the human rights of persons with disabilities, in particular persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities. It is also concerned about the lack of accessible information and services on sexual and reproductive health and the rights of women with disabilities.</p> <p>52. The Committee recommends that the State party raise awareness of the human rights model of disability among all health professionals, including by providing training on the right to free and informed consent, and take note of article 25 of the Convention in the implementation of target 3 of the Sustainable Development Goals. It also recommends that the State party adopt a policy framework and a time-bound strategy to provide women with disabilities with accessible sexual and reproductive health care and information, and with services appropriate to their age. The Committee notes with concern the limited access of persons with disabilities, in particular those with chronic, genetic and rare diseases, to diagnostics, health care and medical rehabilitation.</p> <p>54. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that persons with disabilities, in particular those with chronic, genetic and rare diseases, have access to diagnostics, health care and medical rehabilitation.</p>
CY	2017	<p>52. The Committee recommends that the State party, in close collaboration with representative organizations of persons with disabilities with a special focus on the collaboration with women and girls with disabilities, and in line with article 4 (3) of the Convention, ensure accessibility to health services and facilities, and to information and communication regarding sexual and reproductive health rights and services on an equal basis with others, and that the health personnel be educated and trained on the rights of persons with disabilities. The Committee also recommends that the State party strengthen and implement mechanisms to combat discrimination and stereotyping in line with general comment No. 3 (2016) and targets 3.7, 3.8 and 5.6 of the Sustainable Development Goals in the field of access to health services. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the State party apply a human rights-based approach to disability in the provision of health services to persons with disabilities.</p>
CZ	2015	<p>50. The Committee calls upon the State party to intensify its efforts to make information on health care accessible for persons with disabilities and parents of boys and girls with disabilities, including by making information on relevant services available and accessible to persons with disabilities and their families and by providing sufficient sign language interpreters to deaf persons when they seek health care.</p>
DE	2023	<p>58. The Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Take measures to guarantee the availability and accessibility of health services across the Länder, in particular for women with disabilities and in rural areas, without discrimination, by identifying and removing barriers and providing accessible medical equipment; (b) Strengthen mechanisms for the regular training of health professionals about human rights, dignity, autonomy and the requirements of persons with disabilities; (c) Enforce regulations on the legal protection of persons with disabilities against discrimination in health-care services and define standardized protocols concerning the delivery of medical information to persons with disabilities and their free and informed consent for medical interventions in accordance with the Convention and the Committee's general comment No. 1 (2014); (d) Ensure that asylum-seekers with disabilities have access to</p>

		comprehensive health services upon their arrival, on an equal basis with others.
DK	2024	68. Recalling its previous recommendations, the Committee recommends that the Kingdom of Denmark ensure that persons with disabilities, in particular persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, have access on an equal basis with others to the highest attainable standard of health. It also recommends that the State party take measures, including outreach and accessibility measures, to increase the participation of persons with disabilities in public health programmes such as screenings for cervical cancer, breast cancer and bowel cancer.
EE	2021	49. Taking into account the links between article 25 of the Convention and targets 3.7 and 3.8 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Strengthen action plans to ensure the accessibility and availability of health-care services and equipment for persons with disabilities; (b) Provide women and girls with disabilities with access to sexual and reproductive health care and services and ensure supported decision-making for women with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities so that they can reaffirm their sexual and reproductive autonomy and self-determination; (c) Develop training for health-care professionals on the rights of persons with disabilities, including their skills, support measures and information and communication means and methods; (d) Allocate human, technical and financial resources for the development of quality health services and for health-related supervision for persons requiring higher levels of support; (e) Provide all persons with disabilities with access to all the health-care services available for the general population during the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring priority access to diagnostic, vaccination and recovery treatments; (f) Ensure that persons with disabilities can gain access to medical services on the basis of their free and informed consent.
EL	2019	37. The Committee recommends that, taking into account targets 3.7 and 3.8 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the State party: (a) Put in place a stable, continuous, long-term strategy containing effective and harmonized measures to guarantee persons with disabilities access to health services; (b) Effectively monitor the implementation of the provision of health services by health service providers to persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others. The Committee also recommends that the State party render health facilities, equipment and instruments accessible, particularly to ensure that women and girls with disabilities have access to sexual and reproductive health services in urban and rural areas.
ES	2019	49. The Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Ensure the accessibility and availability of health-care services for all persons with disabilities, particularly in rural areas; (b) Ensure that persons with disabilities have accessible information and that health-care services are provided with alternative means of communication, such as sign language interpretation, Braille, Easy Read and all required augmentative means for that purpose; (c) Guarantee universal access to accessible sexual and reproductive health-care services, including family planning, and information and education, particularly for women and girls with disabilities, and integrate the right to reproductive health into national strategies and programmes, as set out in target 3.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals.
FR	2021	53. Taking into account the links between article 25 of the Convention and targets 3.7 and 3.8 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Ensure priority and equal access for persons with disabilities and their networks to vaccines against COVID-19 and the accessibility of health services for persons with disabilities, particularly by developing public health programmes to reach

		<p>out to the most marginalized persons with disabilities and by providing accessible transportation to health-care centres, including vaccination centres; (b) Ensure the development of and promote investment in universal design of medical devices, equipment and health-care facilities and reinforce measures to provide persons with disabilities with information about health care in accessible formats; (c) Ensure that plans for recovery include measures to guarantee the access of persons with disabilities to health care, paying particular attention to persons still in institutions and those in penitentiary facilities; (d) Provide women and girls with disabilities with appropriate and accessible sexual and reproductive health care, and consult with organizations of women with disabilities about gaps and measures to ensure progress in this regard; (e) Develop awareness-raising and training programmes, including in health-related higher education curricula, for medical and health administrative staff about diversity and the rights of persons with disabilities, in close cooperation with organizations of persons with disabilities.</p>
HR	2015	<p>38. The Committee recommends that further efforts be made to ensure that people with disabilities who do not have compulsory health-care insurance have access to health-care facilities. The Committee also recommends that access to mainstream health services, including sexual and reproductive health services, are made accessible to people with disabilities, especially in rural areas. It also recommends that health professionals in mainstream health services are urgently trained in treating persons with disabilities and respecting the rights enshrined in the Convention.</p>
HU	2022	<p>51. Taking into account the links between article 25 of the Convention and targets 3.7 and 3.8 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Develop action plans to ensure the accessibility and availability of health-care facilities, services and equipment for persons with disabilities across the State Party, with a specific emphasis on the sexual and reproductive health of women with disabilities, as well as on accessible information and communication for autistic persons, persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with visual and hearing impairments in general treatment in the health-care system; (b) Develop training programmes, including in universities and in-service training curricula, for health-care professionals on the needs and rights of persons with disabilities.</p>
IT	2016	<p>62. The Committee recommends that the State party, in close collaboration with organizations representing persons with disabilities and particularly those representing women with disabilities, ensure accessibility to facilities and equipment, information and communications regarding sexual and reproductive health services, and that it provide training to health personnel about the rights of persons with disabilities. It also recommends that the State party strengthen mechanisms to combat discrimination and stereotyping in line with its general comment No. 3.</p> <p>64. The Committee recommends that the State party abolish all laws that permit medical treatment, including sterilization, consented by a third party (parent or guardian) without the free and informed consent of the person, and that it provide related high-quality training to health professionals.</p> <p>66. The Committee recommends that the State party expedite the adoption, funding and implementation of Minimum Standards of Health Care so all children have access to early identification and intervention according to their requirements. The Committee recommends that the State party take into account article 25 of the Convention while implementing targets 3.7 and 3.8 of the Sustainable Development Goals.</p>
LT	2016	<p>50. The Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Take appropriate legislative measures to secure access for persons with</p>

		disabilities to free and affordable health-related habilitation and rehabilitation goods and services; (b) Train health personnel on the human rights model of disability, including on the right to free and informed consent, and ensure the accessibility of health-care facilities and equipment to ensure that all such facilities and equipment, including in hospitals and in the practices of dentists, gynaecologists and obstetricians, are accessible to persons with disabilities, regardless of their impairments; (c) Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including family planning, information and education, and ensure also the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes as set out in target 3.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals.
LU	2017	45. The Committee recommends that the State party take measures to ensure the accessibility of health-care services and facilities in the community, particularly persons with intellectual disabilities or psychosocial disabilities and those that require extensive support. Specifically, it recommends that the State party: (a) Raise awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities under the Convention among medical professionals through training and the promulgation of ethical standards; (b) Take measures to provide persons with disabilities, especially women, with information in accessible formats, on accessible health-care services and facilities, including in the area of sexual and reproductive health.
LV	2017	43. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure the availability, adequacy and accessibility of general health-care services and facilities for all persons with disabilities throughout the country.
MT	2018	38. The Committee urges the State party to withdraw its interpretative declaration on article 25 (a) of the Convention in order to allow persons with disabilities to enjoy the right to health on an equal basis with others.
NL	2024	56. The Committee recommends that the State party, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations: (a) Withdraw the interpretative declaration to article 25 of the Convention so that persons with disabilities can fully enjoy their right to healthcare; (b) Ensure that medical interventions are based on the will and preference of persons with disabilities and respect their right to self-determination; (c) Ensure that pregnant women undergoing prenatal screening for the detection of fetal impairments can make fully informed decisions on their pregnancy without undue influence; (d) Ensure that all persons with disabilities, in particular persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, persons with disabilities still living in institutions and children and women with disabilities, have access to healthcare services in a timely manner, reduce waiting times for access to healthcare services and increase community-based mental healthcare services; (e) Provide comprehensive training for healthcare professionals on the rights of persons with disabilities and the requirement for accessibility and reasonable accommodation in all aspects of healthcare provision and on the recognition, understanding and treatment of different types of impairments; and implement mandatory training programmes for healthcare providers to improve their awareness of and attitudes towards persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, addressing negative stereotypes and promoting a more inclusive and respectful approach; (f) Improve the accessibility of healthcare services and offer assistance to persons with disabilities and their families in navigating the healthcare system.
PL	2018	44. The Committee recommends that the State party withdraw its reservation to article 25 (a) of the Convention, and that it:(a) Ensure access to health services by all persons with disabilities, and the

		<p>availability of such services, regardless of the type of impairment;(b) Take measures to ensure universal coverage of health services for all women and girls with disabilities, including by providing information in accessible formats on their sexual and reproductive health and rights, gynaecological services, perinatal care and adapted health-care equipment, such as gynaecological rooms;(c) Take measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to high-quality health-care products at an affordable price, and to eliminate the differences in health-care coverage for different groups of persons with disabilities;(d) Conduct training to ensure that health-care practitioners are aware of the rights of persons with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities, under the Convention; (e) Take the measures necessary to ensure that the autonomy and decisions of women with disabilities are respected, that women’s rights in relation to reproductive health are secured, that access to safe abortion is provided, and that women with disabilities are protected from forced sterilization and forced abortion; (f) Ensure that the implementation of the National Mental Health Programme results in increasing access to community-based health services for persons with psychosocial disabilities, and provide adequate resources to these services.</p>
PT	2016	<p>50. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have unrestricted access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health care, by explicitly prohibiting discrimination on grounds of disability in its legislation, ensuring the universal accessibility of its programmes and services in both urban and rural areas and providing health professionals with adequate training. The primary prevention of disability should also be excluded from health programmes.</p>
SE	2014	<p>54. Recalling the link between article 25 of the Convention and targets 3.7 and 3.8 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Take measures to ensure that all persons with disabilities, in particular persons with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, persons with disabilities living in remote areas, persons with disabilities still living in institutions and children and women with disabilities, have access to information on an equal basis with others and to affordable, accessible, high-quality and culturally sensitive medical equipment and health services, including sexual, reproductive and mental health services; (b) Strengthen the requirements for the systematic participation of persons with disabilities in the planning, design, monitoring and evaluation of accessibility, care processes and working methods in health care and strengthen the implementation of the human rights model of disability.</p>
SI	2018	<p>42. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure the accessibility and availability of health services for all persons with disabilities, whatever their impairment and wherever they live, whether in institutions or elsewhere. It also recommends that the State party ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including family planning, information and education, and integrate the right to reproductive health into national strategies and programmes, as set out in target 3.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Committee further recommends that the State party pay due attention to the links between article 25 of the Convention and target 3.8 of the Sustainable Development Goals and ensure the implementation of the Health Care and Health Insurance Act.</p>
SK	2016	<p>70. The Committee recommends that the State party remove physical, information and communication barriers to gaining access to health-care services, and that medical services and treatment be provided on the basis of the free, prior and informed consent of all persons with</p>

	disabilities. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the State party provide training for all health and social care personnel on the rights enshrined in the Convention.
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4.2.3 Recommendations relevant to education and training

Table 16: UN Recommendations to Member States under Article 24 CRPD (education)

MS	Year	Recommendations (Education)
AT	2023	58. Recalling its general comment No. 4 (2016), the Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Promptly end the expansion of and phase out the segregated school system, ensure transition resources, including funding, from segregated education to inclusive education, develop a nationwide strategy for inclusive education that encompasses all education systems at all levels of education, including those of the Länder and the municipalities, establish inclusive education policies and guidelines, including at the level of the Länder and the municipalities, develop harmonized inclusive education curricula, in close consultation with and the active involvement of organizations of persons with disabilities, and implement the strategy in a timely manner; (b) Redevelop and expand teacher training for inclusive education; (c) Provide reasonable accommodation, including personal assistance, for students with disabilities at all levels of education; (d) Render administrative procedures for access to inclusive education fully accessible, easy to navigate and quick; (e) Take measures at all federal levels, including the municipalities, to ensure access by all children with disabilities to extracurricular pedagogical supervision services, such as complementary care facilities; (f) Enact legislation providing for an enforceable, legal right of all children with disabilities to attend inclusive education, including at the secondary and tertiary levels; (g) Recognize Austrian Sign Language in education and effectively implement it as a language of instruction in schools and as a subject to be taught; (h) Comprehensively collect data on inclusive and non-inclusive education of all children with disabilities, disaggregated by sex, age, level of education, region and type of impairment, and on financial, organizational, educational and political measures taken to implement inclusive education in accordance with the Convention.
BE	2024	49. The Committee recommends that the State party, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations: (a) Remove the barriers and address the challenges that have prevented effective transition from special education to inclusive mainstream education, by, inter alia, raising awareness of the right to inclusive education, combating negative attitudes towards and low expectations of students with disabilities, promoting research on inclusive education methodologies and defining best practices for inclusive educational facilities in the State party; (b) Develop a comprehensive transition plan and strategy, including a detailed timeline and the requisite funding, to promote coordinated quality inclusive education across different policy areas, with specific steps outlined to evolve towards a quality inclusive education system; (c) Make training on inclusive education and its implementation mandatory for all teaching and non-teaching personnel in all schools, and train and employ a sufficient number of qualified professionals to support students with disabilities, including students with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities; (d) Provide reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities at all educational levels, including tertiary education.
BG	2018	50. The Committee recommends that the State party, in accordance with general comment No. 4 (2016) on the right to inclusive education:(a) Replace segregated education systems with quality inclusive education; (b)

		Raise awareness of the advantages of quality inclusive education for society, in particular for teachers and other education staff, and also for parents of children without disabilities; (c) Intensify its efforts to ensure quality inclusive education and the provision of reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities in mainstream schools, including by allocating sufficient human, technical and financial resources for it; (d) Collect data on the number of children and young people with disabilities not currently enrolled in any form of education, disaggregated by age, sex, type of impairment and place of residence, and develop a strategy to include these children in the mainstream education system.
CY	2017	The Committee recommends that the State party:(a) Decide upon a clear legislative scope of inclusive education and monitor its implementation with a view to fully replacing segregated education by inclusive education; (b) Adopt a clear, targeted and adequately funded plan of action that includes access to reasonable accommodation and adequate teacher education and training, and progressively ensure that children and adult learners with disabilities are able to exercise their right to inclusive education; (c) Be guided by general comment No. 4 (2016) and targets 4.5 and 4 (a) of the Sustainable Development Goals in ensuring equal access to all levels and types of education, education facilities and vocational training by persons with disabilities.
CZ	2015	48. The Committee recommends that the State party implement the amended School Act, incorporate inclusive education as the guiding principle of the education system and ensure the admission of children with disabilities in mainstream schools. in line with article 24 of the Convention. The Committee calls upon the State party to intensify its efforts and to allocate sufficient financial and human resources for reasonable accommodations that will enable boys and girls with disabilities, including intellectual disabilities and autism, and deaf-blind children, to receive inclusive quality education.
DE	2023	54. Recalling its general comment No. 4 (2016), the Committee recommends that the State party, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of students with disabilities, their families and representative organizations: (a) Develop a comprehensive plan to accelerate the transition from special schooling to inclusive education at the Länder and municipal levels, with specific time frames, human, technical and financial resource allocations and clear responsibilities for implementation and monitoring; (b) Implement awareness-raising and educational campaigns to promote inclusive education at the community level and among the relevant authorities; (c) Ensure that children with disabilities can attend mainstream schools, including by enhancing accessibility and accommodation for all kinds of disabilities and providing appropriate arrangements for transportation, in particular in rural areas; (d) Guarantee ongoing training for teachers and non-teaching staff on inclusive education at all levels, including training in sign language and other accessible formats of communication, and develop a monitoring system to eliminate all forms of direct and indirect discrimination against children with disabilities and their families.55. The Committee is concerned about the lack of data on the access of refugee children with disabilities to education and to mainstream schools. 56. The Committee recommends that the State party allocate sufficient resources for the regular collection of data, disaggregated by sex and type of disability, on the number and proportion of refugee children with disabilities who access education and are enrolled in mainstream and special schools, as well as on dropout rates.
DK	2024	66. Recalling its general comment No. 4 (2016) on the right to inclusive education, the Committee recommends that the Kingdom of Denmark, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities, through their representative organizations: (a) Include children

		with disabilities in quality inclusive education, and remove the barriers that have prevented effective transition from special education to quality inclusive education; (b) Address attitudinal barriers preventing the inclusion of children with disabilities in education, including by improving qualifications for teachers in inclusive education methodologies and training tools, and undertaking organizational changes in schools and system-wide; (c) Provide the requisite support structures, including with regard to sign language; (d) Produce a set of national guidelines for the early identification of the risk of students with disabilities dropping out of school and ensure access to education for children with disabilities on an equal basis with others, including by ensuring that students with disabilities have the opportunity to take vocational education and disability-responsive training.
EE	2021	47. Recalling its general comment No. 4 (2016) and target 4.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Develop a strategy for implementing quality, inclusive education with specific targets, timelines and a budget and share responsibilities between the national and municipal levels; (b) Establish a policy framework that recognizes the right of persons with disabilities to seek individualized support as reasonable accommodation in education, when so required; (c) Ensure that education is an area of life covered by anti-discrimination legislation and policies and that the denial of reasonable accommodation is included as a form of discrimination; (d) Provide students with disabilities with assistive compensatory aids and learning materials in alternative and accessible formats, such as inclusive digital access, modes and means of communication, including Easy Read, communication aids and assistive and information technology, and make sure that there are enough teachers fluent in Estonian sign language; (e) Take measures, including the provision of technical equipment and the adoption of regulations, to ensure that children with disabilities, especially those in rural areas and those facing economic hardship, receive the individualized support they need, within a quality, inclusive education system, during the COVID-19 pandemic and guarantee for children with chronic diseases equal access to school.
EL	2019	35. Recalling its general comment No. 4 (2016) on the right to inclusive education, and taking into account Sustainable Development Goal 4, especially targets 4.5 and 4.a, the Committee recommends that the State party increase its efforts to guarantee inclusive education, and in particular that it: (a) Adopt and implement a coherent strategy on inclusive education in the mainstream educational system; (b) Ensure the accessibility of school and university environments, in line with the Convention, by promoting universal design, the provision of specific measures and individualized support, such as accessible and adapted materials, inclusive curricula, inclusive information and communication technologies for pupils and students with disabilities, and digital pedagogy; (c) Immediately ensure access to formal education for all refugee, asylum-seeking and migrant children with disabilities, and for Roma children with disabilities; (d) Allocate effective and sufficient financial and material resources and adequately and regularly trained personnel, including persons with disabilities, to effectively guarantee inclusive education; (e) Incorporate inclusive education training into higher education curricula for trainee teachers, and into training programmes for current teaching staff, with an adequate budget.
ES	2019	46. Recalling its general comment No. 4 (2016) on the right to inclusive education and targets 4.5 and 4.A of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee reiterates the recommendations provided in its report on the inquiry concerning Spain under article 6 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention (CRPD/C/20/3), urging the State party to expedite legislative reform in line with the Convention, in order to clearly define inclusion and

		<p>its specific objectives at each educational level. The Committee recommends that the State party take measures to view inclusive education as a right, and grant all students with disabilities, regardless of their personal characteristics, the right to access inclusive learning opportunities in the mainstream education system, with access to support services as required. The Committee also recommends that the State party implement all other recommendations contained in the report on the inquiry.</p> <p>47. The Committee recommends that the State party formulate a comprehensive inclusive education policy with strategies for promoting a culture of inclusion in mainstream education, including individualized human-rights based assessments of educational requirements and necessary accommodation, support for teachers, respect for diversity in ensuring the rights to equality and non-discrimination, and the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in society.</p>
FR	2021	<p>51. The Committee recalls its general comment No. 4 (2016) on the right to inclusive education and targets 4.5 and 4.a of the Sustainable Development Goals and recommends that the State party strengthen measures to attain quality, inclusive education for all children with disabilities, including in the overseas territories. The State party should promptly implement the recommendations issued by the Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities in this regard. The Committee also recommends that the State party: (a) Develop systems to collect data on children with disabilities disaggregated by age, place of residence, sex and ethnic background, including information about the percentage of enrolment in and attendance at school, and ensure that Roma, asylum-seeking and refugee children with disabilities and children with disabilities who are in an irregular migration situation have effective access to education; (b) Adopt systems for parents and legal tutors to complain and seek redress in cases of refusal to admit their children to a school on the basis of disability; (c) Develop a framework recognizing the right of children with disabilities to seek individualized support through the provision of reasonable accommodation to meet their individual educational requirements, including accommodations in the context of examinations for children with disabilities, particularly autistic children and children with Down syndrome; (d) Adopt programmes at the municipal level and involving public and private actors to provide support for children with disabilities in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic; (e) Ensure that education in French Sign Language is provided at early stages of education and promote the deaf culture in inclusive educational environments; (f) Ensure the effective learning, teaching and use of Braille and Easy Read for persons who are blind and visually impaired and persons with intellectual disabilities; (g) Take measures to eliminate abuse against and bullying of children with disabilities in schools; (h) Adopt programmes with specific goals and time frames in order to promote the access of persons with disabilities to higher education, ensuring that young persons with disabilities can seek individualized support through the provision of reasonable accommodation in tertiary education, including to facilitate their international mobility, and access to sign languages.</p>
HR	2015	<p>36. The Committee recommends that the State party take immediate steps to ensure that all persons with disabilities have access to inclusive quality primary, secondary and tertiary education and that reasonable accommodation is provided in mainstream education. It also recommends establishing the principle that exclusionary and segregated education is discriminatory. It recommends that teachers and other professionals receive training on inclusive education and that all secondary education facilities be made accessible to persons with disabilities.</p>
HU	2022	<p>49. Recalling its general comment No. 4 (2016) and target 4.5 and indicator 4.a of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends</p>

		that the State party: (a) Revise its Public Education Act with the aim of eliminating all discriminatory provisions regarding the education of children with disabilities and explicitly provide for quality inclusive education to ensure that no child with disabilities is excluded from the general education system on the basis of impairment; (b) Ensure access to the general education system in the community and provide the necessary reasonable accommodations for all children with disabilities on an equal basis with other children; (c) Guarantee access to regular education facilities and transportation for children with physical disabilities in their communities across the State party; (d) Provide comprehensive and focused training for general education teachers and administrative staff on the principles and methods of inclusive education, the capacities of children with disabilities and the individualized support measures required by children with disabilities; (e) Provide access to the general education for deaf and hard-of-hearing children and promote bilingual education opportunities within an inclusive educational setting, particularly through quality sign language and other support that is required; (f) Ensure the accessibility of regular vocational education facilities and programmes for all children with disabilities, particularly for autistic children and children with intellectual disabilities, through measures of universal design and reasonable accommodation; (g) Take measures aimed at ensuring access to inclusive, high-quality and free primary, secondary and vocational education for children with disabilities, including Roma children, on an equal basis with others.
IT	2016	<p>56. The Committee recommends that the State party implement an action plan – with sufficient resources, timelines and specific goals – aimed at monitoring the implementation of laws, decrees and regulations to improve the quality of inclusive education in classrooms, support provisions and teacher training across all levels. It also recommends that the State party be guided by article 24 of the Convention, including its general comment No. 4 (2016) on the right to inclusive education, in implementing targets 4.5 and 4 (a) of the Sustainable Development Goals, to ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training, and build and upgrade education facilities that are disability-sensitive and safe.</p> <p>58. The Committee recommends that the State party monitor and provide highly qualified sign language interpreters for any deaf child who requests such assistance, and to desist from recommending general communication assistants as an exclusive alternative. 60. The committee recommends that the State party undertake, through legislative and other measures, including the newly drafted decree on education, to guarantee the availability of accessible learning materials and the provision of assistive technology in a timely manner in order to ensure inclusive and quality education in the mainstream setting.</p>
LT	2016	<p>46. The Committee recommends that the State party adopt and implement a coherent strategy on inclusive education in the mainstream educational system in accordance with article 24 of the Convention and with reference to Sustainable Development Goal 4, especially its targets 4.5 and 4.8. Through such a strategy, the State party should: (a) Ensure the accessibility of school environments, the provision of reasonable accommodation, accessible and adapted materials and curricula, and the compulsory pre-service and in-service training of all teachers on inclusive education; (b) Secure a sufficient number of accessible means of transport to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities; (c) Set clear timelines, targets, baselines and indicators to secure time-bound and measurable progress; (d) Allocate effective and adequate financial, material and adequately trained human resources.</p>

		<p>47. The Committee recommends that the State party guarantee a legally enforceable right to inclusive, quality and free primary education and to affordable secondary education on an equal basis with others.</p> <p>48. The Committee also recommends that the State party facilitate access for persons with disabilities to tertiary education and vocational training, including through the provision of reasonable accommodation in higher education.</p>
LU	2017	<p>43. Recalling its general comment No. 4 (2016) on the right to inclusive education and Sustainable Development Goal 4, especially its targets 4.5 and 4.a, the Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Amend the laws on education to ensure that no student is refused admission to mainstream schools on the basis of disability, ensure accessibility and allocate the resources necessary to guarantee reasonable accommodation, including assistant support staff, including pre-school and tertiary education and the private sector; (b) Adopt a legally defined procedure for the provision of reasonable accommodation at all levels of education and allocate the resources necessary to guarantee reasonable accommodation according to individual requirements in consultation with the person concerned; (c) Design and implement an action plan on inclusive education with sufficient resources, timelines and specific goals; (d) Increase awareness-raising initiatives, including training on inclusive education and its implementation mandatory for teachers, support teachers and non-teaching education personnel; (e) Increase data collection on, among others, the implementation of education laws and policies, and accessibility of school infrastructures, information and communications, including information and communications technology, to inform inclusive education policies.</p>
LV	2017	<p>41. Recalling its general comment No. 4 (2016) on the right to inclusive education and Sustainable Development Goal 4, especially targets 4.5 and 4 (a) thereof, the Committee urges the State party to ensure that no child is refused admission to mainstream schools on the basis of disability, and that it further allocate the resources necessary to guarantee reasonable accommodation to facilitate the accessibility of all students with disabilities to quality, inclusive education, including in preschool, tertiary and lifelong learning institutions.</p>
MT	2018	<p>36. Recalling its general comment No. 4 (2016) on the right to inclusive education and Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially targets 4.5 and 4.a, the Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Ensure the implementation of its laws on education, and accelerate the adoption process of the bill on the Convention, to ensure that violations of the rights under article 24 of the Convention become justiciable in the State party; (b) Adopt measures to ensure that students with disabilities, including students with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities, are provided with reasonable accommodation at all levels of education, and allocate the resources necessary to guarantee reasonable accommodation according to individual requirements in consultation with the person concerned, including the provision of learning support educators and their replacements when they are absent; (c) Ensure accessible mechanisms for accountability and redress in cases in which educational institutions, such as childcare centres and summer schools, or teachers discriminate against students on the basis of their disability; (d) Review the curriculum of students with disabilities through individualized education plans to ensure that the curricula allow them to learn the skills required to access the job market on an equal basis with others; (e) Carry out research on the extent to which accessibility standards are being complied with in the State party to obtain a full understanding of the barriers persons with disabilities face in the education system and the solutions required to enable their full participation, and to make research findings on the socioeconomic and</p>

		cultural benefits of inclusive education available to all relevant stakeholders.
NL	2024	54. Recalling its general comment No. 4 (2016) and targets 4.5 and 4.a of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of persons with disabilities, including learners with disabilities, through their representative organizations, and their families: (a) Work towards a fully inclusive education system for all children, including children with intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities and autistic children, that ends specialized education; review the current implementation plan; and establish concrete objectives, timelines and evaluation mechanisms to ensure an effective transition towards inclusive education; (b) Take immediate measures to reduce the number of children placed in special education by increasing the capacity of mainstream schools to accommodate students with disabilities, providing adequate resources and support, including training, to mainstream schools to facilitate inclusion; and amend national legislation on exemptions from compulsory education for children with disabilities, including children with physical or intellectual and/or psychosocial disabilities, with high support requirements, ensuring that all children with disabilities can exercise their right to education; (c) Improve the curricula and teaching methods used by mainstream education teachers with regard to the rights of children with disabilities to inclusive education and inclusive education methods of teaching; (d) Ensure that mainstream schools are fully accessible and provide reasonable accommodation for all students with disabilities, in particular deaf students and students with hearing impairments; (e) Ensure access to inclusive tertiary education, including vocational and higher education, for children and adults with disabilities.
PL	2018	42. Recalling its general comment No. 4 (2016) on the right to inclusive education and Sustainable Development Goal 4, targets 4.5 and 4 (a), the Committee recommends that the State party:(a) Enact specific provisions to support the implementation of reasonable accommodation, individualized learning curriculum and inclusive classroom teaching in accessible learning environments;(b) Support measures for schools, including support for teachers, to advance inclusive education for students with moderate or severe disabilities;(c) Raise awareness among parents of non-disabled children about the advantages of inclusive education for all, and provide training for school masters and teachers on inclusive education methods and best practices.
PT	2016	45. The Committee recommends that the State party, in close consultation with organizations representing persons with disabilities, review its legislation on education to bring it into line with the Convention and take measures to provide additional resources and materials to facilitate access to and enjoyment of inclusive education of high quality for all students with disabilities, providing public schools with the resources they need to ensure the inclusion of all students with disabilities in ordinary classrooms. 46. The Committee recommends that the State party consider the relationship between article 24 of the Convention and targets 4.5 and 4.a of the Sustainable Development Goals to ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training, as well as to build and upgrade education facilities to make them disability-sensitive and safe. 48. The Committee recommends that the State party introduce in its legislation regulations on the access of students with disabilities to higher education and vocational training on an equal basis with other students, while providing reasonable accommodation and the required support services.
SE	2014	52. Recalling its general comment No. 4 (2016) and targets 4.5 and 4.a of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the

		State party, in close consultation with and with the active involvement of organizations of persons with disabilities, learners with disabilities and their families: (a) Develop a national inclusive education strategy to transition from segregated education to inclusive education and establish a mechanism to monitor and enforce the implementation of national legislation on inclusive education; (b) Ensure that children with disabilities can attend mainstream schools, including by enhancing accessibility and reasonable accommodation for all kinds of disabilities and providing appropriate arrangements for transportation, in particular in remote areas; (c) Provide students with disabilities with assistive compensatory aids and learning materials in alternative and accessible formats, such as inclusive digital access, modes and means of communication, including Easy Read, communication aids and assistive and information technology, and ensure that there are enough teachers fluent in Swedish sign language; (d) Guarantee ongoing training for teachers and non-teaching staff on inclusive education at all levels, including training in sign language and other accessible formats of communication, and develop a monitoring system to eliminate all forms of direct and indirect discrimination against children with disabilities and their families; (e) Allocate further resources to provide reasonable accommodation and dedicated assistance programmes in higher education institutions, including professional training for students with all types of disabilities.
SI	2018	40. Recalling its general comment No. 4 (2016) on the right to inclusive education and targets 4.5 and 4.a of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recommends that the State party : (a) Recognize the right of all children with disabilities to inclusive education and abandon segregated education schemes; (b) Adopt a strategy and action plan with a clear time frame for the implementation of inclusive education at all levels for all children with disabilities and, further, establish a comprehensive monitoring system to assess the progress of inclusive education; (c) Strengthen the capacity of inclusive schools to train teachers in inclusive education, curriculum accommodation and teaching methods. The State party should enhance the quality of educational support by adopting an individualized approach to children with disabilities and their capacity-building; (d) Provide lifelong learning for persons with disabilities and ensure accessibility and reasonable accommodation in all tertiary education institutions, including vocational and higher education schools; (e) Provide transport services for students with disabilities from their place of residence to their education facilities.
SK	2016	1. The Committee recommends that the State party pay attention to the links between article 24 of the Convention and targets 4.5 and 4 (a) of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Committee also recommends that the State party: (a) Introduce an enforceable right to inclusive and quality education in the Education Act, including by defining inclusive education in accordance with the Incheon Declaration on education 2030: towards inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and Sustainable Development Goal No. 4; (b) Adopt a legally binding plan for the transition from segregated schools into inclusive education at all levels, including by setting timelines, identifying responsible authorities, and allocating adequate resources; (c) Ensure that all children with disabilities who so require have access to personal assistance and allocate resources for this purpose; (d) Ensure available, accessible and inclusive preschool education for all children with disabilities; (e) Put an end to the process of placing Roma children in segregated schools for children with disabilities on the basis of their ethnic background.

5 Trends and policies relevant to disability

Unless specified, the summary statistics presented in this report are drawn from the 2023 European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions survey (EU-SILC 2023) microdata⁴⁸ or from corresponding tables published in the Eurostat disability database⁴⁹ (2023 and 2024). The EU-SILC 2023 provides a snapshot in 2023 with 2022 as the income reference year.

The sample does not include people living in collective households and institutions. Disability is operationalised as an activity limitation corresponding to the Global Activity Limitation Indicator (GALI). The proxy used to identify persons with disabilities is part of the Minimum European Health Module⁵⁰ and is collected annually in EU-SILC.

Since 2021, the activity limitation question (PH030) has consisted of a main question and a follow-up question. The main question is 'Are you limited because of a health problem in activities people usually do?' with the answer options of 'Severely limited', 'Limited but not severely' and 'Not limited at all'. If the answer to the question is 'Severely limited' or 'Limited but not severely' the person is asked 'Have you been limited for at least the past six months?'. A self-evaluated 'some' or 'severe' activity limitation in the past six months has been used as a proxy for disability.⁵¹ Response rates to this question vary between countries and national data sources are added in the country fiches for comparison and context.

Due to the exclusion of persons living in collective households and in institutions, EU-SILC estimates may underestimate the number of persons with disabilities, especially among persons aged at least 65 years. These methodological issues are analysed and explained in some detail in past annual statistical reports published by ANED⁵² and summarised in the most recent EDE statistical report.⁵³ The underpinning concepts and implementation are also explained on the Eurostat homepage.⁵⁴

The chapter presents trends in the situation of persons with disabilities regarding inclusion in the labour market, poverty reduction and skill developments in 2023 and, depending on data availability, in 2024. In addition, it provides indicative policy examples relevant to disability inclusion, based on the information compiled by EDE country experts in the 2025 national fiches.

5.1 Prevalence of activity limitation

The tables and charts here show the most recent data available for the EU27. In most cases, this requires an analysis of microdata that is two years old (e.g. presenting EU-SILC estimates from 2023 in 2025). The main indicators may be updated during the policy cycle to include the latest year's estimates for some items published as tables by Eurostat (notably for estimates of poverty or social exclusion).

⁴⁸ EU-SILC 2023, release September 2024, DOI: 10.2907/EUSILC2004-2023, see https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/203647/20298610/EUSILC_DOI_2024_release_1.pdf/6bd8e55d-47eb-3fde-cbdb-0440d3cc9ac7?t=1730712751843.

⁴⁹ See <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/disability/database>.

⁵⁰ See [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Minimum_European_Health_Module_\(MEHM\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Glossary:Minimum_European_Health_Module_(MEHM)).

⁵¹ EU-SILC (2023), *Methodological guidelines and description of EU-SILC target variables 2023 operation (Version 5)*, p. 328f.

⁵² Academic Network of European Disability Experts (2020) 'Statistical indicators', <http://www.disability-europe.net/theme/statistical-indicators>.

⁵³ European Commission and Grammenos, S. (2025), *European comparative data on persons with disabilities – Equal opportunities, fair working conditions, social protection and inclusion – Analysis and trends – Data 2022*, Publications Office of the European Union / human european consultancy, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2767/7901991>.

⁵⁴ Eurostat (2015), 'Disability statistics introduced', https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Disability_statistics_introduced.

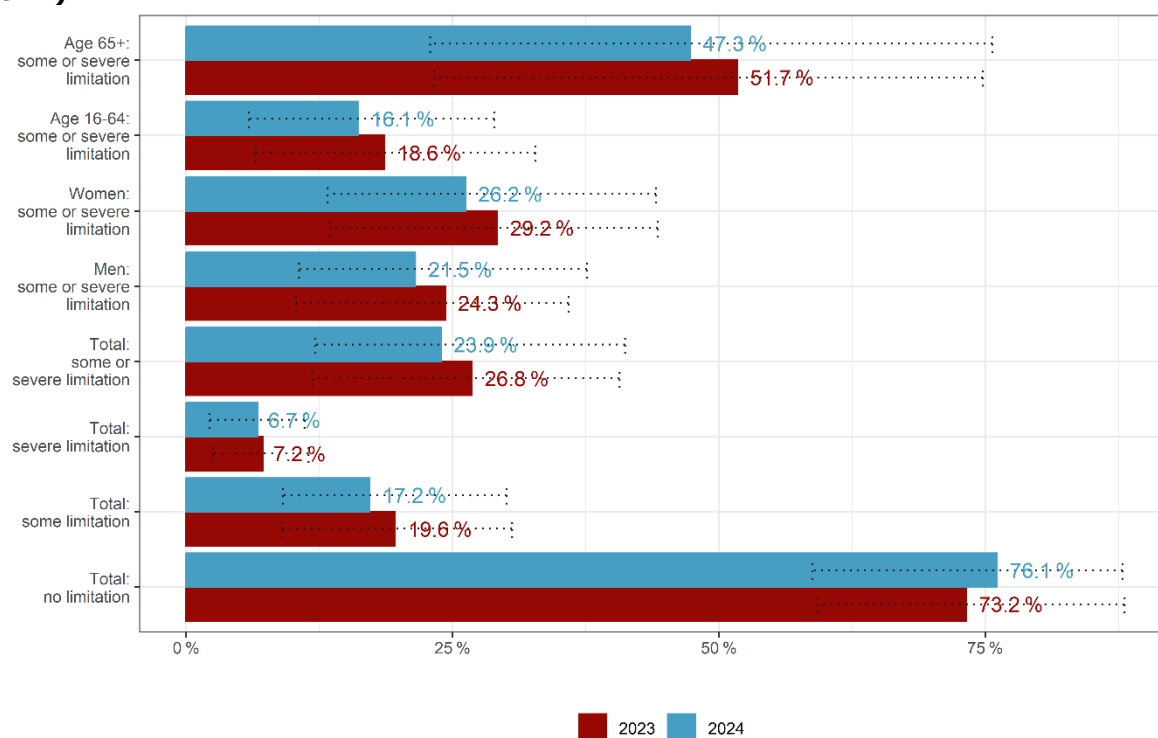
Disability prevalence data is routinely published by Eurostat and includes estimations for all 27 Member States in 2023 and 2024.⁵⁵ Figure 1 disaggregates the EU27 average activity limitation prevalence by level of activity limitation, gender and main age group for 2023 and 2024.

The data show a decrease in the overall proportion of the EU population, aged at least 16 and living in private households, who report 'some or severe activity limitation'. On this measure in 2024, persons with disabilities made up around one quarter of the EU population aged at least 16 (23.9 %) and slightly more in 2023 (26.8 %). A decrease of 2.9 pps from 2023 to 2024 and of 0.2 pps from 2022 to 2023 can be observed. The prevalence rate of severe activity limitations also decreased slightly from 7.2 % in 2022 and 2023 to 6.7 % in 2024. Disaggregating the general disability prevalence rate in 2024 by age group, just below one half of the population aged 65 and over (47.3 %) reported some or severe activity limitations compared to 16.1 % of the working age population (16-64 years). Compared to 2023, a decrease in the average prevalence rate for both age groups can be observed (16-64 years: -2.5 pps; 65+ years: -4.4 pps). The prevalence rate among men and women decreased for both from 2023 to 2024. However, the disability prevalence rate among women (26.2 %) remains higher than among men (21.5 %) in 2024. On average, we observe a higher disability prevalence among older persons and women, this coincides with the gendered pattern of ageing.

Disability data on the population of children under the age of 16 years are not collected annually in EU-SILC and no data are collected from adults living in congregate households (such as residential care homes and hospitals). Persons with disabilities may be over-represented in the latter group. Although estimates of disability prevalence from general household survey data should be treated with caution, they do evidence, consistently, that a large group of EU citizens are affected, and they underline the policy significance of disability issues for the EU and its Member States.

In subsequent tables, these prevalence rates are used as a proxy to estimate 'disability' equality in the main policy areas of employment, education and poverty risk. Tables are presented by disaggregating the estimated proportion of people who report and do not report activity limitations for each indicator (among those who are employed, unemployed, at risk of poverty, etc.).

⁵⁵ Eurostat (2025), 'Level of disability (activity limitation) by sex, age and income quintile' (online data code: HLTH_SILC_12), https://doi.org/10.2908/HLTH_SILC_12.

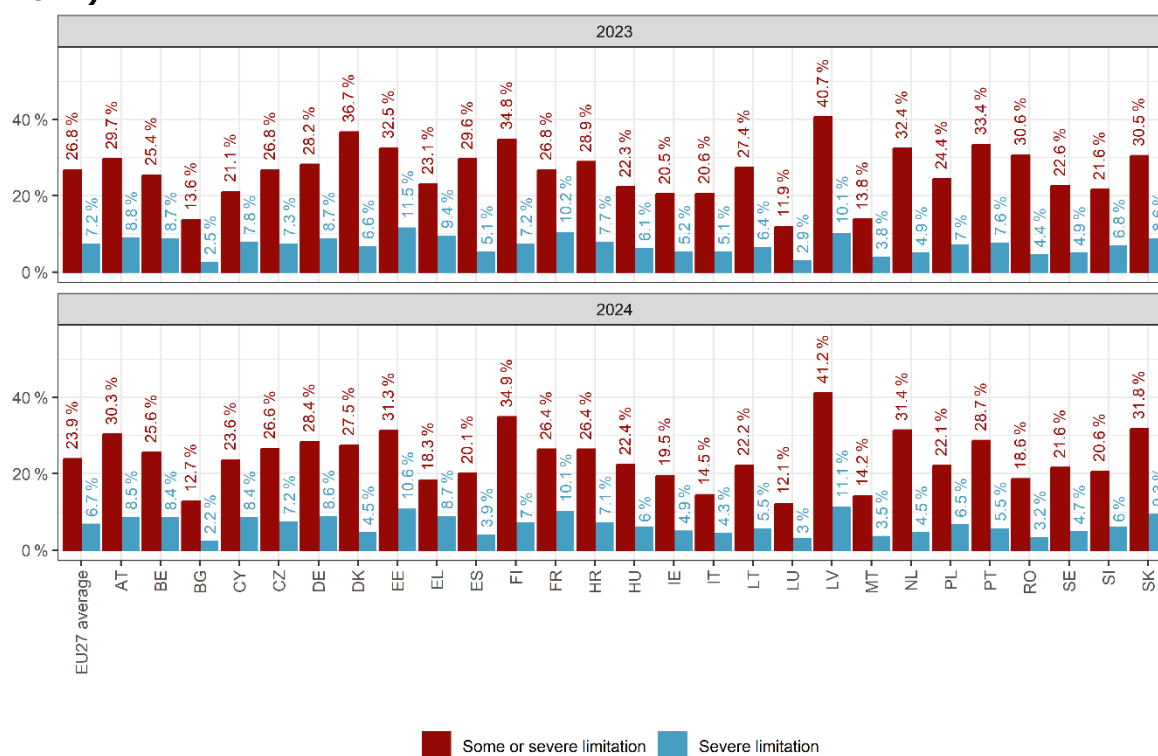
Figure 1: Self-reported activity limitation (age 16+) – EU27 average (2023 & 2024)

Source: Eurostat [hlth_silc_12], extracted on 2025-05-26
 Note: horizontal dotted lines indicate range (minimum and maximum)

5.1.1 Variation in prevalence estimates

The range of prevalence estimates for EU Member States in 2023 and 2024 is shown in Figure 2. EU Member States show a large variation in the share of persons reporting 'some or severe' or only 'severe' activity limitations. The standard deviation and range of prevalence rates among EU Member States increased from 2022 to 2023 and remained stable afterwards. There is less variation among Member States in the estimate for persons declaring 'severe' limitation in activities.

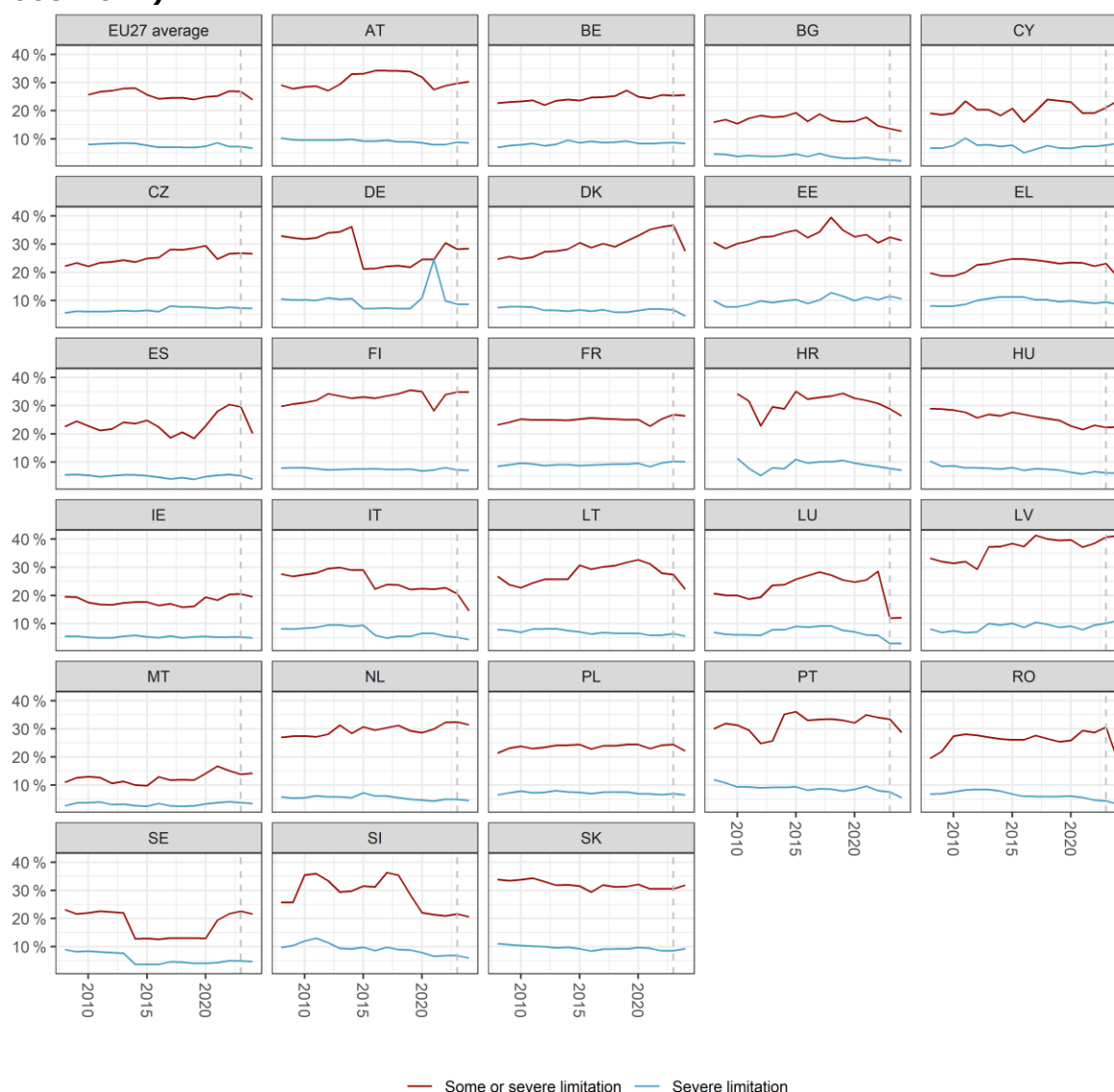
Estimates of disability prevalence based on self-reporting are prone to variation between countries and age groups, which may be due to differences in survey methodology, sampling or cultural-linguistic responses to questioning about health and disabilities. This variation is discussed in the EDE statistical report but, to summarise, we can observe variation in both the estimated rate of prevalence and its range of variation per country and over time. There are also some distinct time-series breaks within individual countries, resulting from changes in national methodology.

Figure 2. Prevalence of activity limitation level (age 16+) by Member State (2023 & 2024)


Source: Eurostat [hlth_silc_12], extracted on 2025-05-28

Figure 3 plots the annual national averages for all available observations from the past 15 years (2008 to 2024) for those with 'severe' and 'some or severe' activity limitations. The lowest observed prevalence rate for some or severe activity limitation was 9.8 % in Malta in 2015 and the highest 41.3 % in Latvia in 2012. The widest in-country variation was in Luxembourg, due to a sharp decline in 2023 compared to 2022. The estimates for Luxembourg between 2020 and 2022 were affected by breaks in time series, which might explain the sudden change. This and other countries' anomalies are explained in the EDE statistical report and previous ANED reports.

The range of the prevalence of persons with severe activity limitations is narrower. However, there are also several anomalies, such as Germany's wide in-country variance, due to a change of methodology (with similar anomalies affecting Sweden). It is worth noting that, while there is wide variation in the rate within and between countries, the ranking of countries on this indicator is much less variable.

Figure 3: Development of activity limitation level (age 16+) by Member State (2008-2024)

Source: Eurostat [hlth_silc_12], extracted on 2025-05-26
 Note: dashed line indicates year 2023

Variation in disability prevalence estimates is a well-known phenomenon in social surveys.⁵⁶ For example, using the Washington Group Short Set questions may underestimate inequalities on some outcome measures compared to the GALI survey measure.⁵⁷ Such discussions lead to some speculation about the impact that prevalence estimates may have on other dependent variables when used as input for cross-national comparisons (e.g. when estimating disability employment rates or disability poverty rates). These impacts of cross-country variation in prevalence are examined later but, overall, do not appear to invalidate broad comparisons if they are considered and controlled as a contributory factor in the analysis.

⁵⁶ Mitra, S., & Sambamoorthi, U. (2014), 'Disability prevalence among adults: estimates for 54 countries and progress toward a global estimate', *Disability and rehabilitation*, 36(11), 940-947.

⁵⁷ Amilon, A., Hansen, K. M., Kjær, A. A., & Steffensen, T. (2021), 'Estimating disability prevalence and disability-related inequalities: Does the choice of measure matter?', *Social Science & Medicine*, 272, 113740.

5.2 Disability and inclusion in the labour market

The following analysis draws on the summary statistical tables produced from EU-SILC data by EDE to inform Commission input to the Semester process (and consistent with those produced for ANED since 2008 for the same purpose). Continuity of reporting assists in establishing general patterns and trends, and in controlling for some data variability effects between years. The inclusion of GALI items every second year into the harmonised core of the Labour Force Survey (LFS) presents new, and greatly enhanced, opportunities for disaggregation and analysis. However, the current biennial cycle does not provide the regular data needed for the annual EDE reports.

5.2.1 Strategic context

Article 27 of the UN CRPD refers to a wide range of policy steps that need to be taken, including the prohibition of disability discrimination in 'all matters concerning all forms of employment', protecting 'just and favourable conditions of work' and 'labour and trade union rights', promoting equal opportunities in work and training, ensuring 'reasonable accommodation' is provided in the workplace, and ensuring access to employment in the 'open labour market'.⁵⁸ In its Concluding Observations (COs) across recent review cycles, the UN CRPD Committee has consistently underlined that States Parties should review and adapt their national legislation and disability action plans to bring them into line with Article 27 obligations.

In October 2022, the UN CRPD Committee published a General Comment on Article 27.⁵⁹ The General Comment outlines several concerns. The Committee has consistently raised issues that legislation and policies of States Parties fail to recognise persons with disabilities as rights holders and instead define them primarily by their impairments. This approach perpetuates discriminatory treatment and the exclusion of persons with disabilities, normalising a medically driven, incapacity-based view of disability. Such ableism prevents States parties from addressing entrenched barriers, including stereotypes and stigmas, which hinder the ability of persons with disabilities to work on an equal basis with others. To address these concerns, the Committee recommends that States parties adopt the human rights model of disability. This model, as elaborated in General Comment No. 6 (2018)⁶⁰ on equality and non-discrimination, views disability as a social construct, values impairments as part of human diversity and dignity, and rejects impairments as valid grounds for denying or restricting human rights. In this context, in its General Comment No. 8 (2022) the Committee emphasises the following core obligation for Member States:

'63. States parties have an immediate, minimum core obligation to ensure the satisfaction of, at the very least, minimum essential levels of the right of persons with disabilities to work and employment. In the context of article 27, this core obligation encompasses the obligation to ensure non-discrimination and equal protection of employment.'

The core obligation has also been reflected in the COs for certain countries published since 2022, where the UN CRPD Committee recommends that they update their legislation and Disability Action Plans to be compliant with a human rights approach and the above-mentioned core obligation. For the EU itself, the 2025 COs similarly reiterate these obligations, highlighting the need to address segregated employment, ensure reasonable

⁵⁸ Article 27 of the Convention incorporates several interdependent and interrelated rights within the right to work. Specifically, Article 27(1)(b) ensures that persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others, are entitled to just and favourable working conditions, including safe workplaces and protection from harassment. Meanwhile, Article 27(1)(c) highlights the collective aspect of the right to work, guaranteeing that persons with disabilities can exercise their labour and trade union rights equally with others.

⁵⁹ UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2022), General Comment No. 8 (2022) on the Right of Persons with Disabilities to Work and Employment, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/general-comments-and-recommendations/crpdqc8-general-comment-no-8-2022-right-persons>.

⁶⁰ United Nations (2018), General Comment No. 6 (2018) on Equality and Non-Discrimination, CRPD/C/GC/6, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/general-comments-and-recommendations/general-comment-no6-equality-and-non-discrimination>.

accommodation, eliminate discrimination and support implementation of the Disability Employment Package and related legislation.⁶¹

The EU Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030⁶² builds on the Employment Equality Directive⁶³ and the European Pillar of Social Rights, emphasising the right to participate in the labour market free from discrimination and with access to an adapted work environment. It highlights that employment is key to achieving economic independence and social inclusion (p.13). In 2021, the European Commission reported on the Directive's implementation alongside the Racial Equality Directive, situating the disability strategy within broader frameworks addressing gender equality, anti-racism and LGBTIQ equality, strengthening the Charter and implementing the Social Pillar. Furthermore, in December 2024, the European Commission announced during a debate in the European Parliament that it will propose new actions and flagship initiatives for the EU Disability Rights Strategy in 2025, with employment being emphasised as a key priority.

The Disability Employment Package – completed in 2024 – continues to support Member States in fostering social inclusion and economic independence for persons with disabilities through employment. In 2025, key developments include the publication of the European Commission's Study on Alternative Employment Models (April 2025),⁶⁴ which reviews sheltered employment, work integration social enterprises (WISEs) and supported employment models, providing tools to better understand and potentially recognise these approaches. A Social Innovation Call for Proposals (open until October 2025) has also been launched to fund transnational projects that transfer and scale up social innovations related to the Disability Employment Package.⁶⁵

In parallel, the European Disability Card and European Parking Card were formally adopted by the Council in 2024,⁶⁶ alongside the Commission's Guidance on Independent Living in 2025⁶⁷ to support the right of persons with disabilities to live independently and be included in the community. In 2025, Member States are in the process of transposing the Disability Card and Parking Card Directive into national law, with full functionality across the EU expected by June 2028, and the European Commission is set to adopt a delegated act specifying the cards' digital features by the end of the year. In addition, the first AccessibleEU monitoring report was published in 2025,⁶⁸ providing an overview of progress in implementing EU accessibility legislation and supporting the Strategy's objectives in improving accessibility across the Union.

⁶¹ United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2025), 'Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of the European Union', CRPD/C/EU/CO/2-3, adopted at the Committee's 780th meeting on 18 March 2025, <https://docs.un.org/en/CRPD/C/EU/CO/2-3>.

⁶² European Commission (2021), 'Union of equality: Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030', Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, COM(2021) 101 final, 3 March 2021, <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1484&langId=en>.

⁶³ Council Directive 2000/78/EC of 27 November 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, OJ L 303, 2 December 2000, pp. 16–22, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32000L0078>.

⁶⁴ European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Empirica, and Sozialhelden e.V. (2025), *Study on alternative employment models for persons with disabilities – Set-up, working conditions and pathways to the open labour market in inclusive enterprises and sheltered workshops*, Annex 1: Country Case Studies, Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2767/5824702>.

⁶⁵ See: <https://socialinnovationplus.eu/call/esf-si-2025-dep-01/>.

⁶⁶ Directive (EU) 2024/2841 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2024 establishing the European Disability Card and the European Parking Card for persons with disabilities, OJ L 2024/2841, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/2841/oj/eng>.

⁶⁷ European Commission (2025), 'Guidance on independent living', European Commission, <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=27899&langId=en>.

⁶⁸ European Commission (2024), *AccessibleEU final report – Executive summary*, AccessibleEU Centre, https://accessible-eu-centre.ec.europa.eu/document/download/de214982-d631-48df-b254-b2b92317f505_en?filename=ACCESSIBLEEU+EX+SUMM+2024_English_Acc.pdf.

The most recent Council Conclusions on disability employment date from December 2024.⁶⁹ Despite progress in promoting the employment and social inclusion of persons with disabilities, the Council urged Member States to take further actions, including adopting national employment targets, fostering a non-discriminatory approach to labour market participation and strengthening national frameworks for reasonable accommodation. Additionally, it emphasised the need to enhance rehabilitation services and improve data collection, as also recommended by UN CRPD General Comment No. 8 (2022), and called on the European Commission to prepare a report on the implementation progress of the EU Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and to monitor the employment status of persons with disabilities.

These concerns, together with the recommendations of the UN CRPD Committee in its 2025 Concluding Observations, should be fully taken into account in the ongoing implementation and the planned update of the EU Disability Strategy. EU-level initiatives in 2025, such as the European Semester Spring Package with country-specific recommendations, the AccessibleEU monitoring report and the Commission's Study on Alternative Employment Models and Social Innovation Call, are already moving in this direction.

5.2.2 Employment

Data on the employment situation of persons with disabilities is presented in the EDE statistical review accompanying this synthesis report, using the most recent disability microdata from 2023. Some individual Member States do report on the employment situation of persons with disabilities from national labour surveys or public registers and, where available, this should be shown in country fiches for comparison.

The following tables use data from EU-SILC to calculate employment rates for persons with some or severe activity limitation and, for comparison, also for the general population as well as for persons without activity limitations. Employment rates at the EU level are generally calculated using EU-LFS data. There is some variation between estimations based on EU-LFS and those based on EU-SILC. The two surveys adopt different definitions of employment and EU-SILC produces an estimated employment rate for the general population that averages slightly lower than the LFS estimate,⁷⁰ but the evolution of the two surveys has remained strongly correlated over the past decade and previous findings have proved sufficiently consistent to justify their reliability as indicators of significant gaps and trends. Nevertheless, measurement differences between surveys are larger in some Member States than others.

Eurostat has published retrospective statistics on the disability employment gap, in percentage points (pps), using EU-SILC data (but it did not publish the employment rates from which the gap was calculated).⁷¹ This estimation used a slightly different data definition of employment (employment status in the last 12 months) from the estimates produced by EDE and ANED (self-defined current working status).⁷² This is the measure used in the Social Scoreboard for the disability employment gap in 2023 and cited in the Commission Country Reports.

Figure 4 shows a breakdown of employment rate estimates at the EU level for women and men and for persons with different levels of activity limitation. The dashed lines indicate the range among EU Member States. A similar table is shown for each country in the EDE

⁶⁹ Council of the European Union (2024), *Council Conclusions on Disability Employment*, 5 December 2024, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2024/12/02/council-calls-for-greater-support-to-help-persons-with-disabilities-access-the-labour-market/>.

⁷⁰ This is due mainly to slight differences in definition and methodology, and of sampling and seasonal factors, which were demonstrated in previously published EDE and ANED statistical reports.

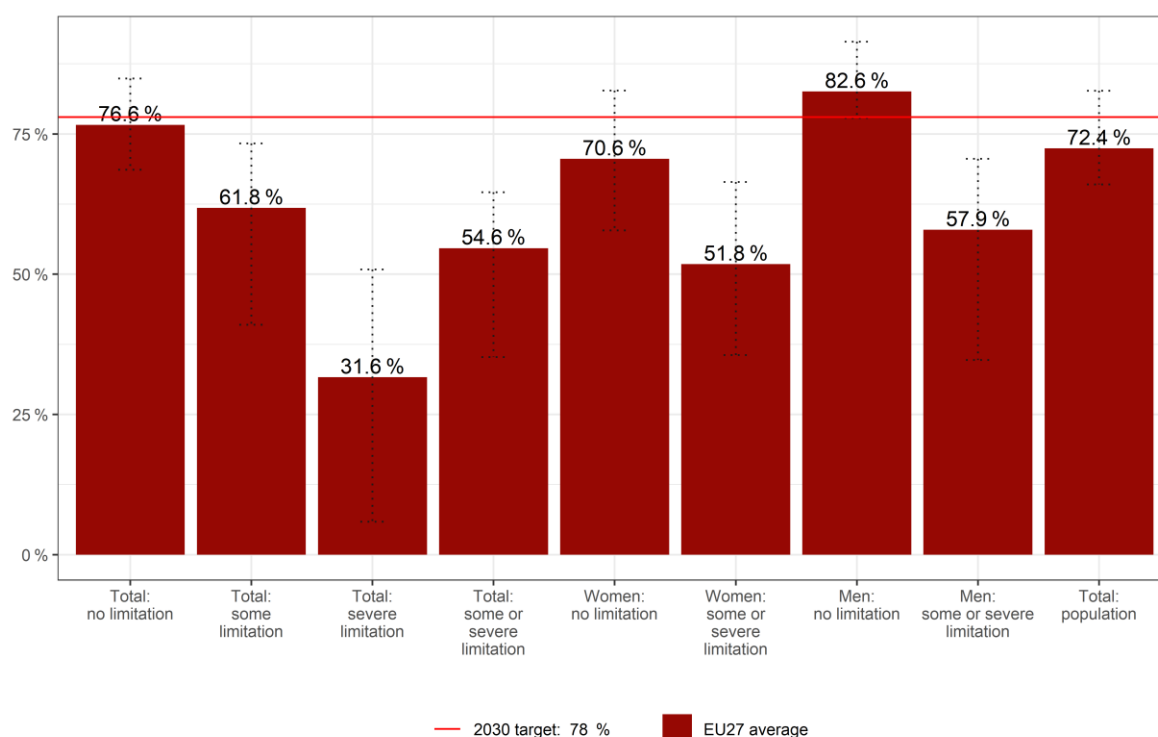
⁷¹ Disability employment gap by level of activity limitation and sex (source EU-SILC) (hlth_dlm200) https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/data/database?node_code=hlth_dlm200.

⁷² While the EDE estimates consider self-reported employment status (and age) at the date of the survey interview, the Scoreboard measure considers persons who were employed (salaried, non-salaried or other employed) for more than five months of the 12-month reference period.

country fiches, compared to the EU27 average. For continuity, this uses the same method as previous EDE and ANED fiches contributing to the Semester.

Using EDE's EU-SILC estimation, at the European level in 2023 the employment rate of persons with disabilities for the EU27 was about 54.6 % compared to 76.6 % for persons without activity limitations (on this measure, the total population employment rate in the EU was 72.4 % compared to 75.3 % in the EU-LFS for persons aged 20-64⁷³), as shown in Figure 4. On this measure, the EU employment rate of persons with disabilities increased marginally from 54.3 % in 2022 to 54.6 % in 2023.

Figure 4: Employment rate (age 20-64) by level of activity limitation and gender – EU27 average (2023)



Source: EU-SILC 2023 (release 2024 v1), own calculation
Note: vertical dotted lines indicate range (minimum and maximum)

The 2025 Joint Employment report and the Country Reports by the European Commission include the EU-SILC-based disability employment gap in 2023 as Social Scoreboard indicator. EU Member States are categorised according to the ranking of their disability employment gap in relation to the EU27 average (see Table 17). The categorisation of EU Member States is based on 2023 estimates, although 2024 estimates have become available in the meantime. Among the countries categorised as 'best performers', Slovenia recorded a 3.1 pps decrease in the disability employment gap from 2023 to 2024. The other 'best performers' (Italy, Portugal and Spain) recorded strong increases in their disability employment gap. The highest increase has been recorded for the 'to watch' country Romania from 29.2 pps to 44.8 pps. Austria, on the other hand, as an 'on average' country observed the strongest decrease from 26.1 pps in 2023 to 20.7 pps in 2024.

On average, the employment gap between persons with and without disabilities in the EU amounted to 21.5 pps in 2023 and increased by a further 2.5 pps in 2024. The disability employment gap remained stable from 2022 to 2023 and decreased from 2021 to 2022.

⁷³ Eurostat (2025), 'Employment rate by sex and age – annual data' [lfsi_emp_a], see https://doi.org/10.2908/LFSI_EMP_A.

The current 2024 disability employment gap of 24 pps resembles the pre-COVID-19 years. Since Eurostat does not publish the corresponding EU-SILC employment rates of persons with and without disabilities and the available LFS-employment figures by activity limitation level are only available in absolute terms, we cannot currently provide a conclusive explanation for the increase. However, the number of employed persons without disabilities increased from 2022 to 2024 by around 1.1 %, while the number of employed persons with disabilities decreased by around 0.45 %.⁷⁴

Table 17: Categorisation of 2023 disability employment gap (age 20-64) in the Social Scoreboard 2024 headline indicators

Member State	Social Scoreboard Categorisation (2023)	2023 disability employment gap (Eurostat)	2024 disability employment gap (Eurostat)	2023 disability employment gap (EDE)
EU27 average	EU27 average	21.5 pps	24 pps	22 pps
ES	Best performers	13.8 pps	23.4 pps	14.7 pps
IT	Best performers	15.9 pps	25.1 pps	14.7 pps
PT	Best performers	14 pps	21.3 pps	16.4 pps
SI	Best performers	17.3 pps	14.2 pps	19.8 pps
EE	Better than average	20.2 pps	20.8 pps	21.7 pps
FI	Better than average	19.4 pps	20.4 pps	20.7 pps
FR	Better than average	19.9 pps	22.4 pps	22.5 pps
LV	Better than average	18.5 pps	21.3 pps	17.7 pps
MT	Better than average	25.8 pps	25.3 pps	25.5 pps
AT	On average	26.1 pps	20.7 pps	26.7 pps
CY	On average	24.7 pps	24.5 pps	25.6 pps
CZ	On average	22.2 pps	21.7 pps	24.7 pps
DE	On average	22.6 pps	22 pps	22.3 pps
EL	On average	26 pps	28.5 pps	25.9 pps
NL	On average	23.8 pps	20.9 pps	23.5 pps
SE	On average	23.2 pps	22.9 pps	25.3 pps
SK	On average	22.1 pps	23.8 pps	21.5 pps
HU	To watch	29.6 pps	27.2 pps	30.3 pps
LU	To watch	23.7 pps	19.1 pps	26.9 pps
RO	To watch	29.2 pps	44.8 pps	27.6 pps
BE	Critical situations	33.6 pps	33.5 pps	32.6 pps
BG	Critical situations	39.5 pps	35.4 pps	41.4 pps
HR	Critical situations	39.2 pps	41 pps	40.5 pps
IE	Critical situations	36.7 pps	38.2 pps	37.3 pps
LT	Critical situations	32.4 pps	39.9 pps	34.3 pps
PL	Critical situations	33.9 pps	35.6 pps	34.4 pps
DK	missing categorisation	20.4 pps	26.1 pps	23.2 pps

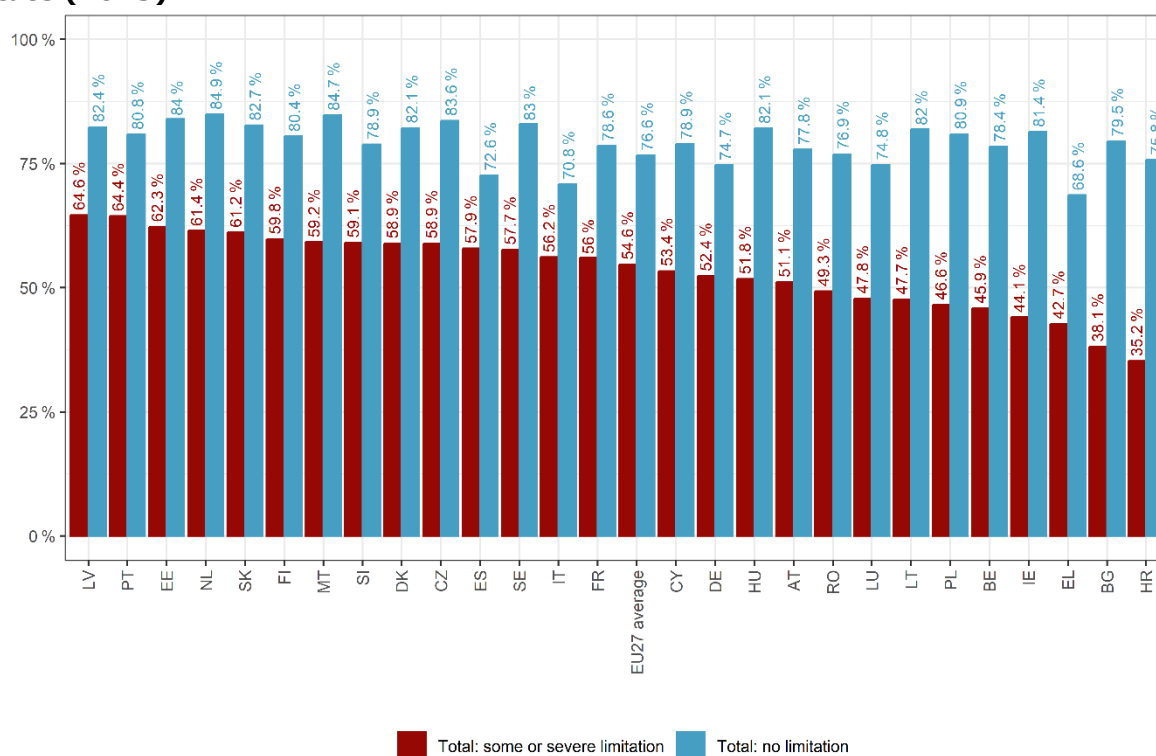
Source:

⁷⁴ These figures are based on LFS tables for 2022 and 2024 (https://doi.org/10.2908/LFSA_EGAIDL). Eurostat publishes the employment figures by activity limitation level only in absolute terms (unit 'thousand persons') and not as employment rates.

2023 EDE estimates: EU-SILC 2023 (release 2024 v1), own calculation
 2023 & 2024 Eurostat estimates: Eurostat [hlth_dlm200], extracted on 2025-05-26
 Social Scoreboard categorisation: European Commission (2025) Joint Employment Report 2025, Table 1.4.1 p.30
 The Social Scoreboard did not categorise Denmark; Germany 2023 – estimated; Croatia 2023 – break in time series; Poland – 2023 low reliability.

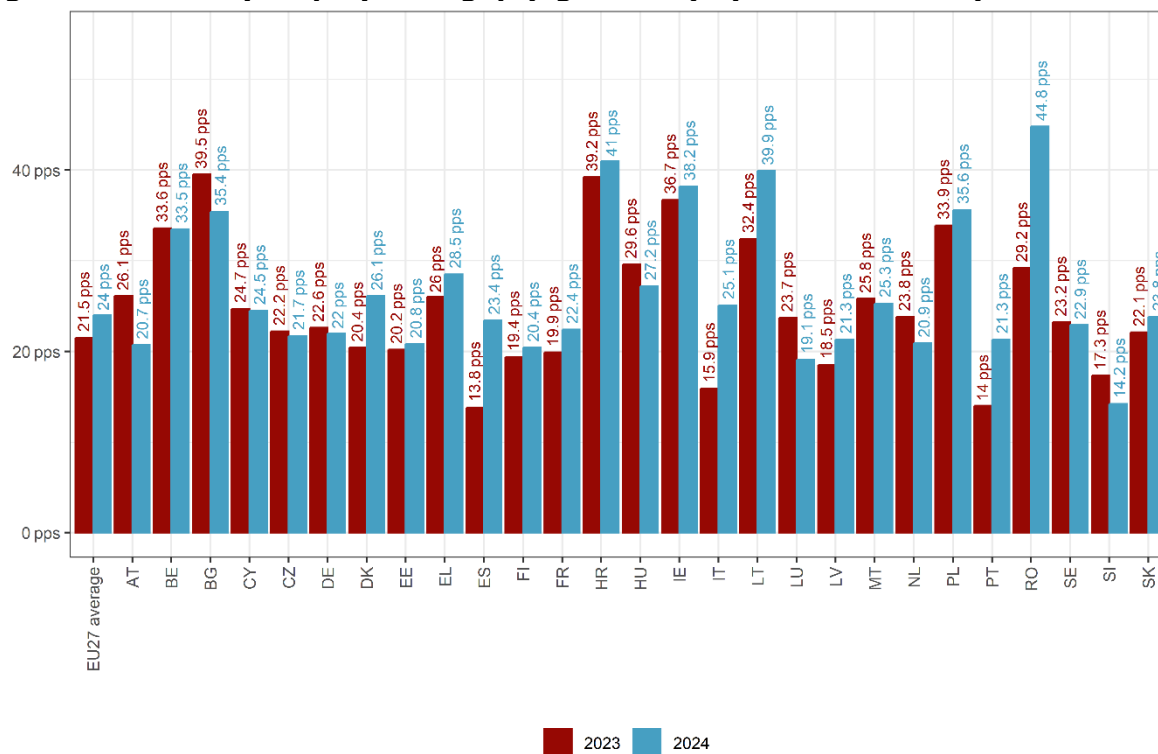
Employment rates were notably lower among persons with disabilities than among other persons in every EU Member State (Figure 5) in 2023, but the estimated disability employment gap varies widely between countries (as shown in Figure 6). The disability employment rate of persons with some or severe activity limitation was below 40 % in Bulgaria and Croatia, and above 60 % in Latvia, Portugal, Estonia, the Netherlands and Slovakia.

Figure 5: Employment rate (age 20-64) by level of activity limitation and Member State (2023)



Source: EU-SILC 2023 (release 2024 v1), own calculation

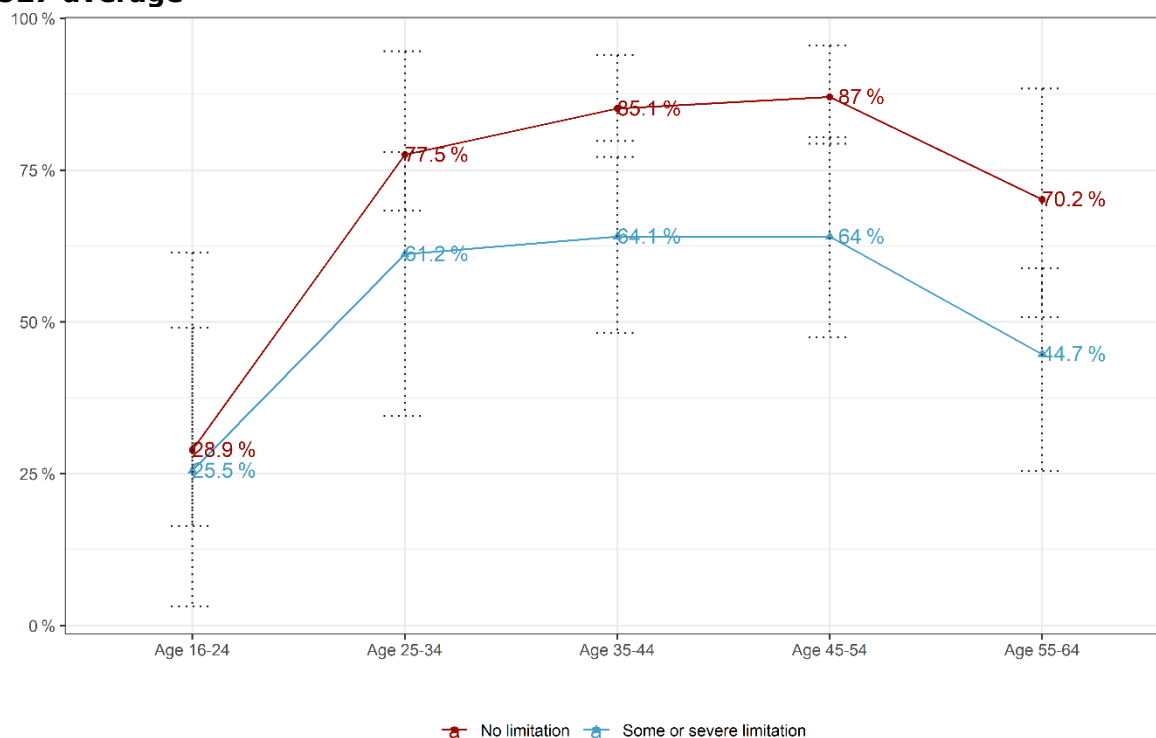
The disability employment gap estimates in Figure 6 correspond to the 2023 and 2024 estimates in the Social Scoreboard (Table 17). Bulgaria had the highest disability employment gap (39.5 pps) in 2023 and Romania (44.8 pps) in 2024. Spain (13.8 pps), closely followed by Portugal (14.0 pps), recorded the lowest disability employment gap in 2023. In 2024, Slovenia (14.2 pps), followed at a distance by Luxembourg (19.1 pps), had the lowest disability employment gaps. Generally, an increase in the standard deviation and range of disability employment gaps among EU Member States can be observed, especially due to the steep increase in Romania.

Figure 6: Disability employment gap (age 20-64) by Member State (2023 & 2024)


Source: Eurostat [tpepr_sp200], extracted on 2025-05-28

Figure 7 presents the employment rates of persons with and without disabilities by age groups. Persons aged 16-24 years have generally lower employment rates than the other age groups. The difference between persons with and without disabilities is also the smallest in this age group (25.5 % compared to 28.9 %). Compared to 2022, an increase of 5.3 pps in the employment rate of young persons with disabilities can be observed and a 2.8 pps increase for young persons without disabilities.

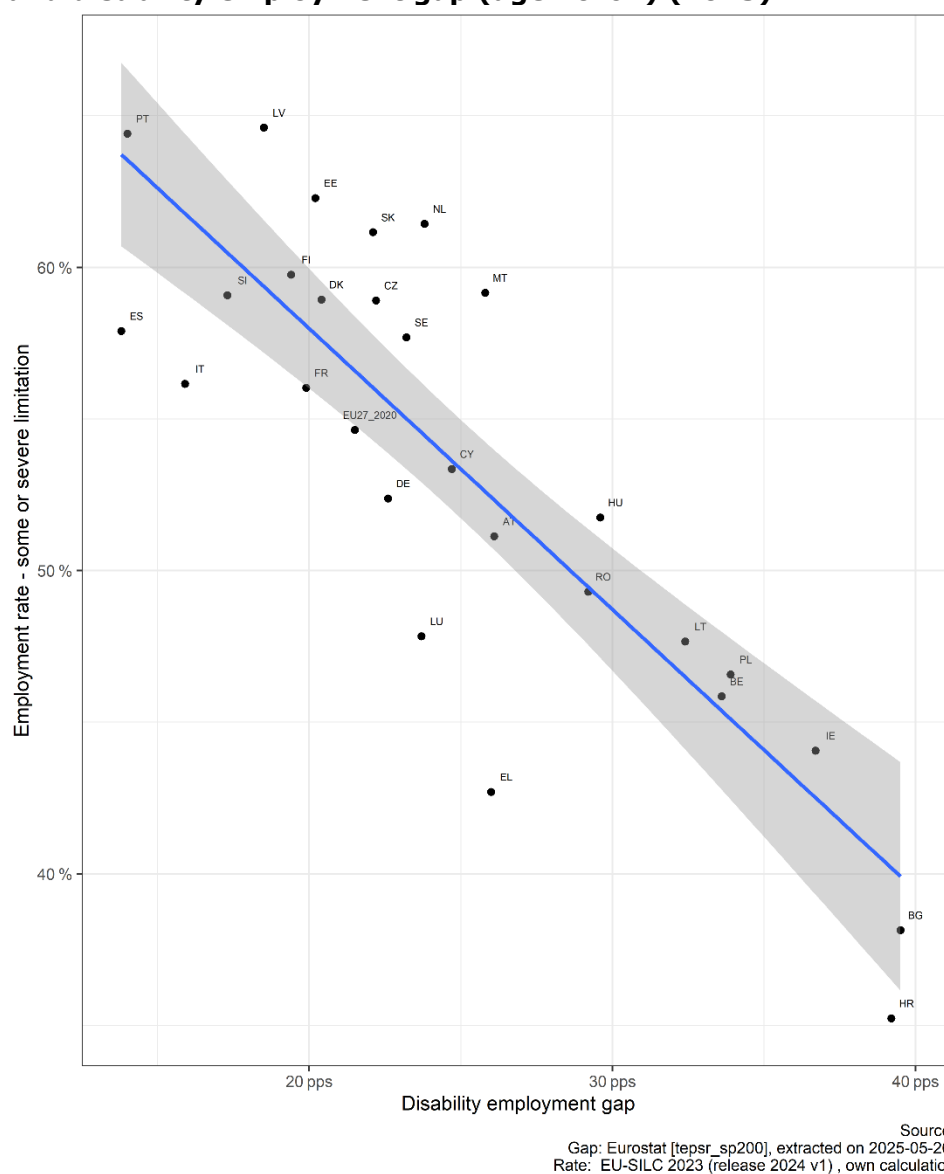
The employment rates of both groups increase with the subsequent age categories of 25-34, 35-44 and 45-54 years and in the oldest age group of 55-64 years decrease again. However, they do not increase at the same rate, thus the disability employment gap increases with the age groups up to around 25.5 pps. Persons with disabilities have their highest employment rate in the 35-44 age group (64.1 %), while persons without activity limitations have their peak employment rate in the 45-54 age group (87 %). The variation among EU Member States in the employment rate of persons with disabilities is the highest in the 16-24 age category, ranging from 3.2 % in Cyprus to 61.5 % in Malta. The figures for both countries need to be interpreted with caution, since they are both affected by a low number of observations (20 to 49) in this age group. In summary, we see comparable employment trajectories when comparing age groups over life-course, however, this is at a lower level for persons with disabilities.

Figure 7: Employment rate by age group and activity limitation level (2023) – EU27 average

Source: EU-SILC 2023 (release 2024 v1), own calculation
 Note: vertical dotted lines indicate range (minimum and maximum)

In general, countries that show a high disability employment rate might be expected to present a small disability employment gap on the Social Scoreboard. However, the two measures shown above are based on different employment conceptualisations and the gap is a relative measurement comparing persons with and without disabilities. As expected, Figure 8 shows a moderately strong inverse relationship with some outliers.⁷⁵ Portugal records a high employment rate of persons with disabilities and a narrow disability employment gap. On the other hand, Croatia and Bulgaria indicate low employment rates for persons with disabilities paired with high disability employment gaps. By contrast, Greece indicates a low employment rate but only a moderate disability employment gap (which might be explained by a low employment rate of persons without disabilities). Spain and Italy have smaller employment gaps than might be expected from their high employment rates for persons with disabilities. Conversely, a group of countries, but especially the Netherlands and Malta, indicate somewhat wider disability employment gaps than might be expected from their employment rate. This raises some questions about the most appropriate measures to consider in comparisons.

⁷⁵ 2023: $r=-0.851$, $p=1.875e^{-08}$, $R^2=0.724$.

Figure 8: Employment rate of persons with some or severe activity limitation (age 20-64) and disability employment gap (age 20-64) (2023)

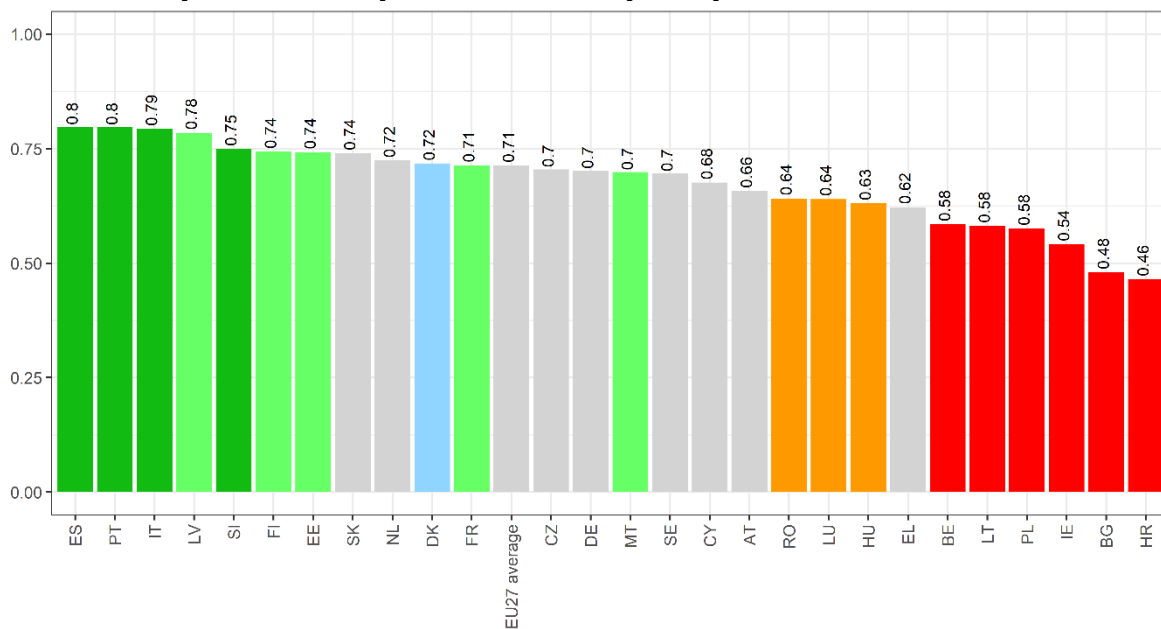
To contextualise the headline statistics, it is relevant to consider both the disability employment rate and the disability employment gap in relation to general labour market conditions in each country (the general availability of jobs) and to the reported prevalence of disability in each country (the proportion of persons reporting activity limitation in the survey). An apparently low disability employment rate in a country with weak labour market opportunities might not be surprising and a narrower disability employment gap might be predicted if job opportunities are also suppressed for persons without disabilities (e.g. in the years following the economic crisis of 2008 low disability employment rates in Greece and Spain were somewhat obscured by low general rates of employment, especially because of the high levels of youth unemployment). A wide disability employment gap in a country with generally weak employment opportunities merits further analysis and explanation. One way of controlling for context is to represent the chances of employment for persons with disabilities relative to persons without disabilities in each country, rather than the gap.⁷⁶ The employment rates used to estimate the disability employment rate for

⁷⁶ The relative employment chances of persons with disabilities are conceptualised in relation to the employment rate of persons without disabilities. A value of 1 would indicate that persons with and without disabilities have equal chances of employment and thus equal employment rates. This corresponds to an employment gap of 0 pps. A value of 0.5 indicates that persons with disabilities have half the likelihood of

the Social Scoreboard were not available, but this can be illustrated using employment rates estimated from the microdata.

The relative chances of being in employment for persons with disabilities, compared to other persons, ranged from approximately 0.8 in Spain to approximately 0.46 in Croatia. On average persons with disabilities in the EU have a 0.71 chance of employment compared to persons without disabilities and thus this figure remained stable compared to 2022. Using this measure does not have a large impact on the categorisation of 'Best performers' and 'Critical situations' used for the Social Scoreboard based on the 2023 disability employment gap, but it does alter the rankings, notably among those categorised as 'Better than average' and 'On average', as illustrated in Figure 9. The employment ratio indicator takes the employment level into consideration and not just the absolute gap between the employment rates of persons with and without disabilities. A wide employment gap is a significant concern and provides national authorities with a focus to narrow it. A low disability employment ratio might be a more reliable comparative indicator and provides national authorities with a focus to improve employment rates of persons both with and without disabilities.

Figure 9: Disability employment ratio (age 20-64) for persons with some or severe activity limitation by Member State (2023)



Social Scoreboard
 Disability employment gap: ■ EU27 average ■ Better than average ■ To watch ■ missing categorisation
■ Best performers ■ On average ■ Critical situations

Source: EU-SILC 2023 (release 2024 v1), own calculation

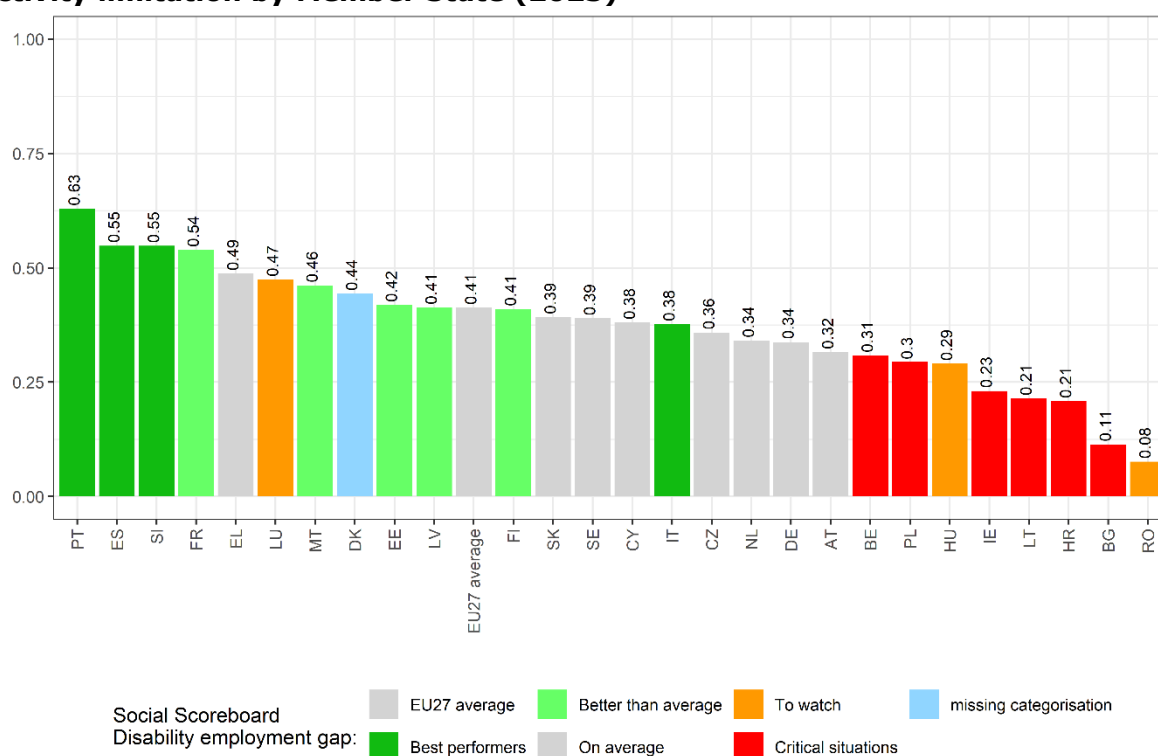
The sub-group of people with severe activity limitation is significant from a policy perspective because they are more likely to be impacted by disabling barriers to employment (e.g. inaccessibility or discriminatory attitudes) and by disability policies (e.g. the availability of disability benefits or target employment support). The employment chances of people reporting only severe activity limitation are significantly lower when compared to persons without disabilities. Additionally, the variation among countries is wider. In 2023, this disability employment ratio of persons with severe limitations varies from 0.63 in Portugal to 0.08 in Romania. This is shown in Figure 10 below. On average, persons with severe activity limitation in the EU have a 0.41 chance of being employed

being employed, based on the level of the employment rate of persons with disabilities in relation to the level of the employment rate of persons without disabilities.

compared to persons without activity limitation. The employment ratio for persons with severe activity limitation remained somewhat stable compared to 2022.

Taking the disability employment gap categorisation into account, the majority of 'Best performers' countries also lead the ranking of the disability employment ratio for persons with severe activity limitations, except for Italy. Italy shows a below average employment ratio of 0.38 for persons with severe activity limitations compared to a 0.79 employment ratio for persons with some or severe activity limitation. Countries categorised as 'Critical situations' remain at the end of the ranking, with the lowest employment ratios for persons with severe activity limitations. Luxembourg seems to be an outlier in this respect, categorised as 'To watch' but with an above average employment ratio for persons with severe activity limitations of 0.47.

Figure 10: Disability employment ratio (age 20-64) for persons with severe activity limitation by Member State (2023)



Source: EU-SILC 2023 (release 2024 v1), own calculation

5.2.3 Gender differences in disability employment rates and gaps

The largest gender differences among employment rates of men and women with disabilities in 2023 were recorded in Malta, Italy and Romania, but it is relevant to note that this gender gap is now minimal or even reversed in some Member States such as Estonia. On average, the absolute gender difference in employment rates of persons with some or severe activity limitation in 2023 was 6.14 pps which is a decrease of 0.92 pps from 2022.

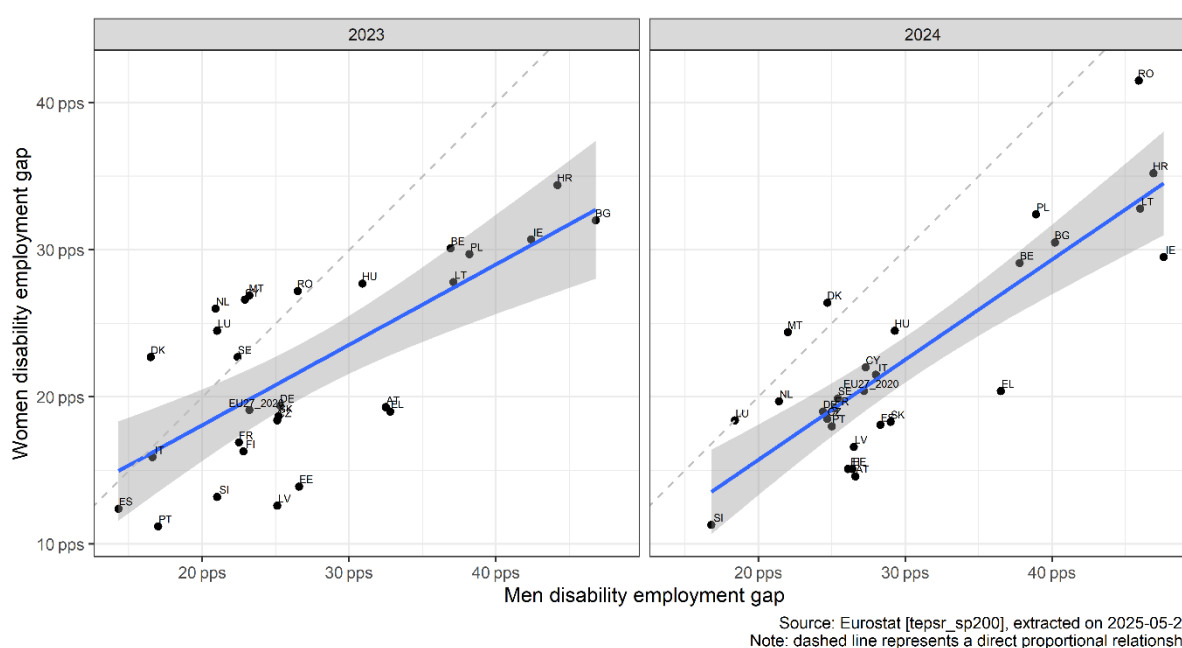
The indication is that the employment rate of women with disabilities has been rising faster than that of men with disabilities in most countries and might account for more of the narrowing in the overall disability employment gap in recent years. The 'feminisation' of contemporary labour markets is well known in general.⁷⁷ This is evident, for example, in the shift from (traditionally male) jobs in heavy industries towards (more traditionally

⁷⁷ Coyle, A. (2005), 'Changing times: flexibilization and the re-organization of work in feminized labour markets', *The Sociological Review*, 53(2_suppl), 73-88.

female) service sector jobs, accompanied by trends towards (more traditionally female) patterns of flexible, part-time and precarious employment.

Figure 11 shows the relationship between the disability employment gap for women and men with some or severe activity limitation in 2023 and 2024. The correlation is statistically significant in both years and explains around 50 % of the variance in 2023 and 70 % in 2024.⁷⁸ On average, the employment gap for women increases with the employment gap for men and vice versa. However, the relationship is not directly proportional. The disability employment gap is generally higher for men than for women in most EU member states, with some Member States deviating from this relationship. The number of countries with a higher disability employment gap among women than men decreased from 2023 to 2024 to only two countries, Malta and Denmark. Luxembourg is the only country with equal disability employment gaps of 18.4 pps for both women and men.

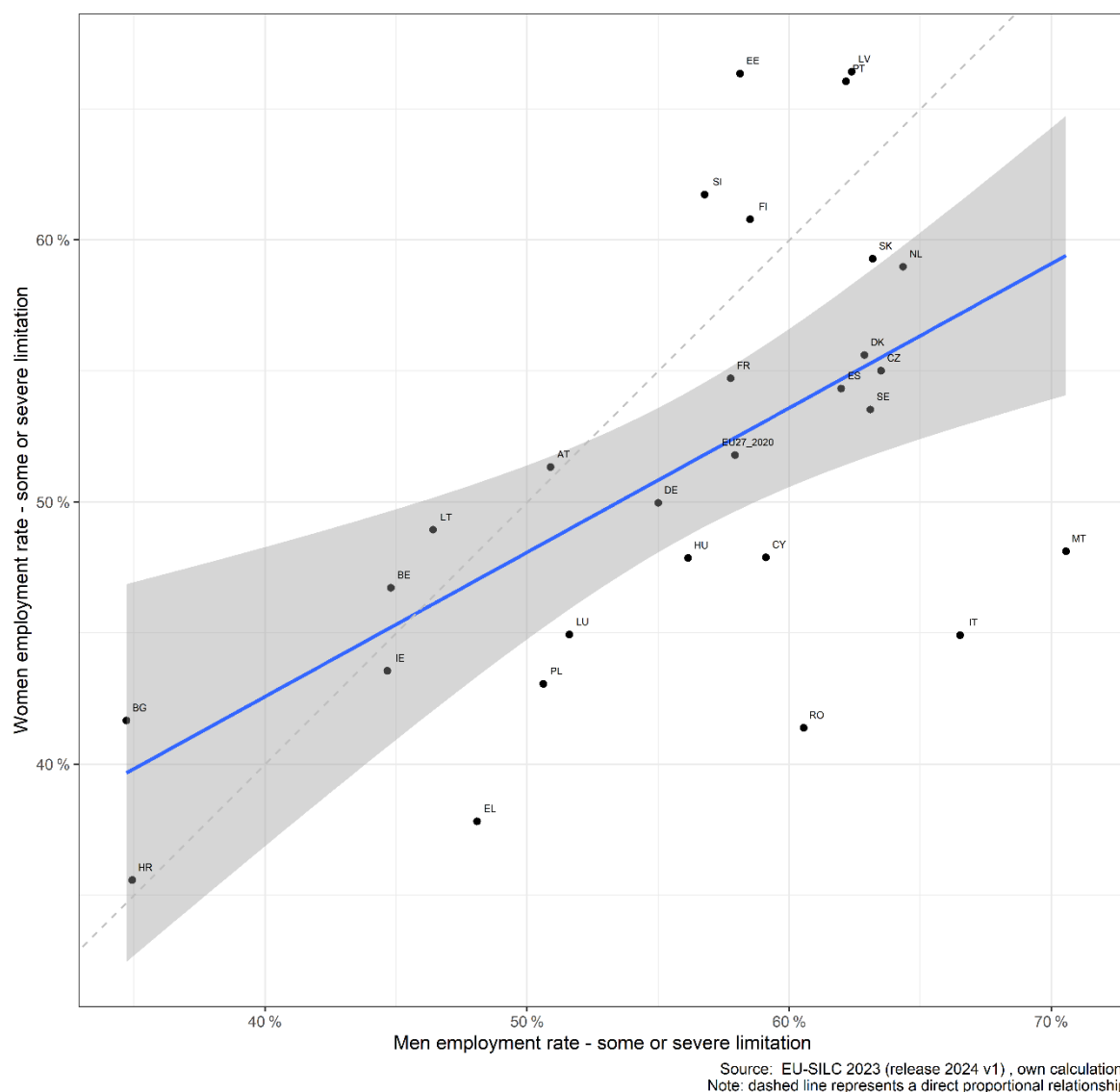
Figure 11: Disability employment gap (age 20-64) by gender (2023 & 2024)



The pattern of the gender differences in employment rates for women and men with some or severe activity limitation is less clear (Figure 12). The relationship remains significant but explains only 33 % of the variance.⁷⁹ The employment rate of men with activity limitation compared to women with activity limitation remains higher in most EU Member States. Generally, the employment rates of both women and men with disabilities are associated with an increase when the other increases. Most of the countries are, however, outside the 95 % confidence interval.

⁷⁸ 2023: $r=0.707$, $p=3.677e^{-05}$, $R^2=0.501$; 2024: $r=0.835$, $p=6.229e^{-08}$, $R^2=0.697$.

⁷⁹ 2022: $r=0.578$, $p=0.001582$, $R^2=0.334$.

Figure 12: Employment rate of persons with some or severe activity limitation (age 20-64) by gender (2023)

5.2.3.1 Controlling for variation in labour market conditions

Employment outcomes for persons with disabilities depend on various factors. These include personal factors, the availability of supportive policies and general labour market conditions, especially labour market changes due to external shocks such as COVID-19 and the previous financial crisis. The extent of the disability impact might depend, for example, on the degree of segmentation in the labour market (e.g. job protection in sheltered or quota-based employment), the effectiveness of non-discrimination sanctions, the amount of targeted support for jobseekers with disabilities (disability employment services and subsidies) and the accessibility of the environment (including public transport and workplaces).

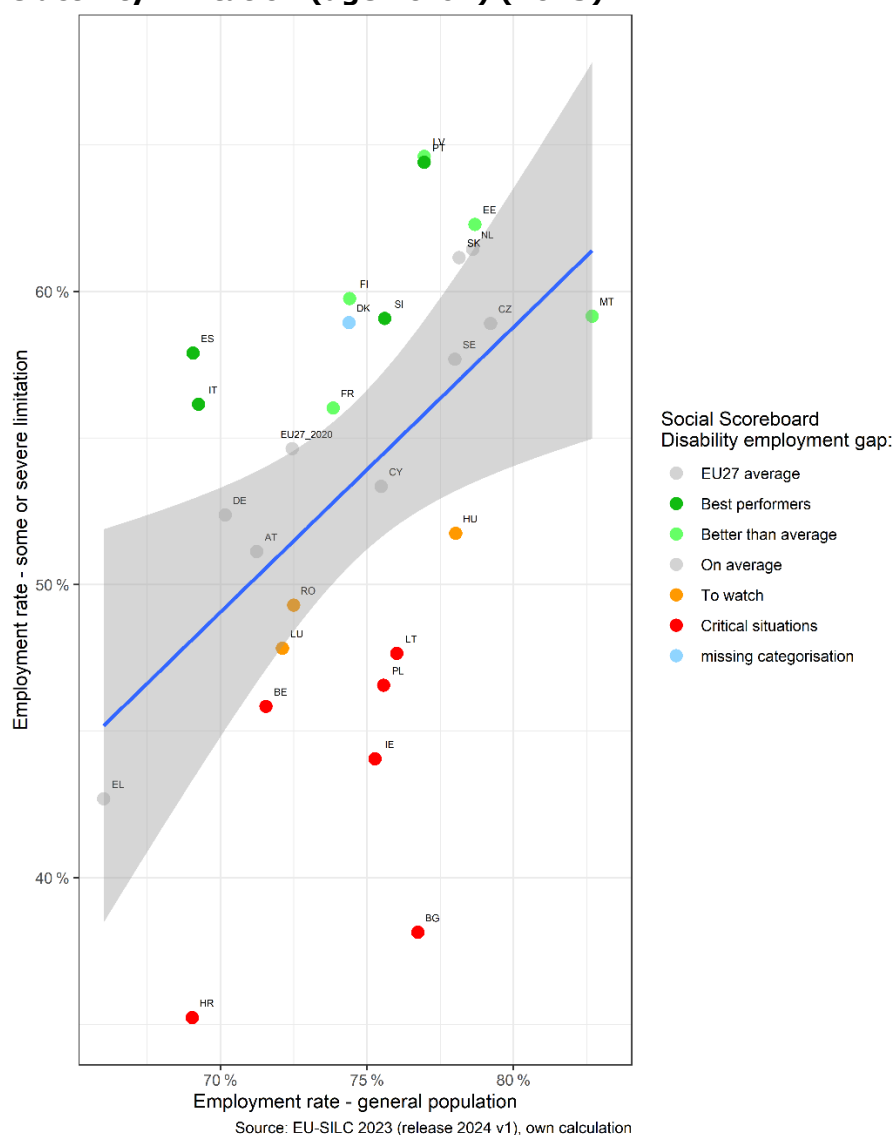
Such factors cannot be easily disaggregated from general labour market data and require country-level analysis of policy factors (which is provided in the EDE country fiches). Nevertheless, it is helpful to contextualise the employment chances of persons with disabilities in relation to general labour market conditions. This can be illustrated by plotting the disability employment rate in each country against the general employment rate (as shown in Figure 13), which indicates a weak positive association (i.e. countries with higher general employment rates tend to exhibit higher disability employment rates).

The correlation is statistically significant ($r=0.486$; $p=0.010$; $R^2=0.236$). However, it explains only 24 % of the variance.⁸⁰ This indicates a strong heterogeneity among EU Member States. Taking the Social Scoreboard categorisation into account, countries that are 'Best performers' have generally high employment rates for persons with disabilities but vary in their general employment rates. Countries categorised as 'Critical situations' have significantly lower employment rates for persons with disabilities which is not automatically paired with comparable lower general employment rates.

This general association had strengthened to some extent before the COVID-19 pandemic, consistent with the observation of a slowly narrowing disability employment gap until 2024. The recent rise in the average disability employment gap might indicate different labour market opportunities for persons with and without disabilities in the last year. The break in the trend needs further investigation of the changes in the employment rates of persons with and without disabilities, which will be possible with the availability of the latest SILC 2024 microdata to researchers.

Caution is needed at the country level as disability employment outcomes vary widely and most of the cases lie outside the predicted confidence bands for the trend (95 %). Nevertheless, the data raises interesting policy questions. Outlier country cases may merit further analysis since their divergence might be explained by a combination of policy factors or methodological factors (in sampling, data definition or response factors).

⁸⁰ Since persons with disabilities are included in rates it is worth noting the exclusive comparison between persons with and without disabilities ($r=0.431$; $p=0.025$; $R^2=0.185$). However, this tends to exaggerate the effect of differences in the prevalence of self-reported activity limitation between national surveys, which is addressed later.

Figure 13: General employment rate and employment rate of persons with some or severe activity limitation (age 20-64) (2023)

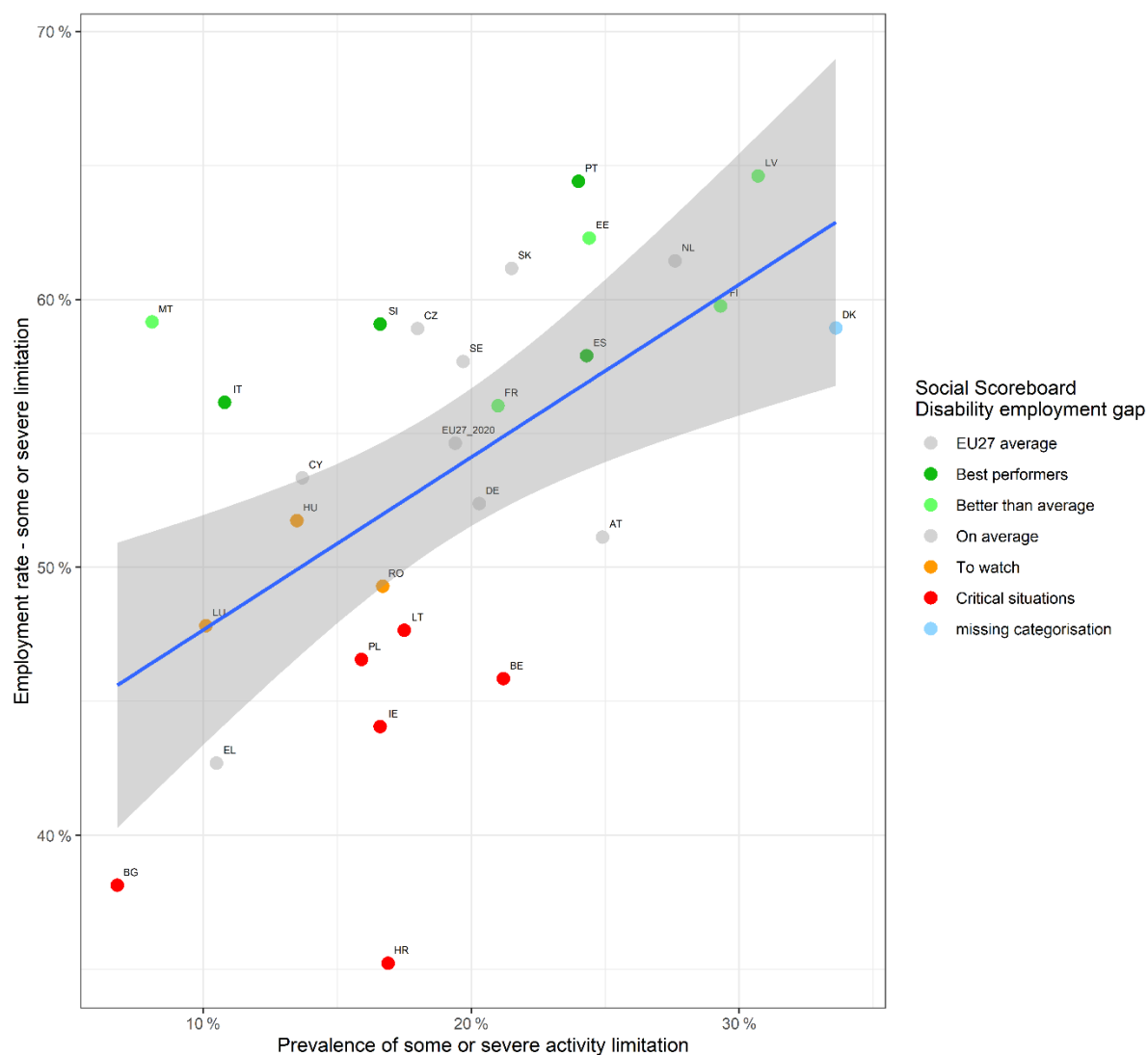
5.2.3.2 Controlling for variation in disability prevalence rates

Caution is needed concerning methodological anomalies and variations in the prevalence of self-reported activity limitation and its association with employment outcomes (i.e. countries with higher disability prevalence rates among working age people do tend to average higher disability employment rates too, but not consistently). One common assumption is that high rates of self-reported activity limitation might over-represent persons with moderate levels of activity limitation, with more positive participation outcomes (i.e. less disabled by societal barriers), and that low prevalence rates might over-represent people with more severe levels of activity limitation (and lower participation rates). In this case, countries with high prevalence rates might tend to indicate better than expected average outcomes for persons with disabilities and vice versa. This merits investigation to establish the possible effects.

Taking all EU27 Member States in 2023, there was a statistically significant but only moderate positive correlation between the reported prevalence of activity limitation in the 20-64 age group and the disability employment rate per country overall ($r=0.563$, $p=0.002$, $R^2=0.317$). This association is shown for 2023 in Figure 14 which illustrates the variance as well as the moderate association. Most countries are outside the 95 %-confidence interval. For example, although the 'Best performers' and 'Better than average'

countries have generally higher employment rates for persons with disabilities, they have varying prevalence rates. Likewise, Malta, Bulgaria, Greece, Luxembourg and Italy report low prevalence rates but widely varying disability employment rates and different disability employment gap categorisations.

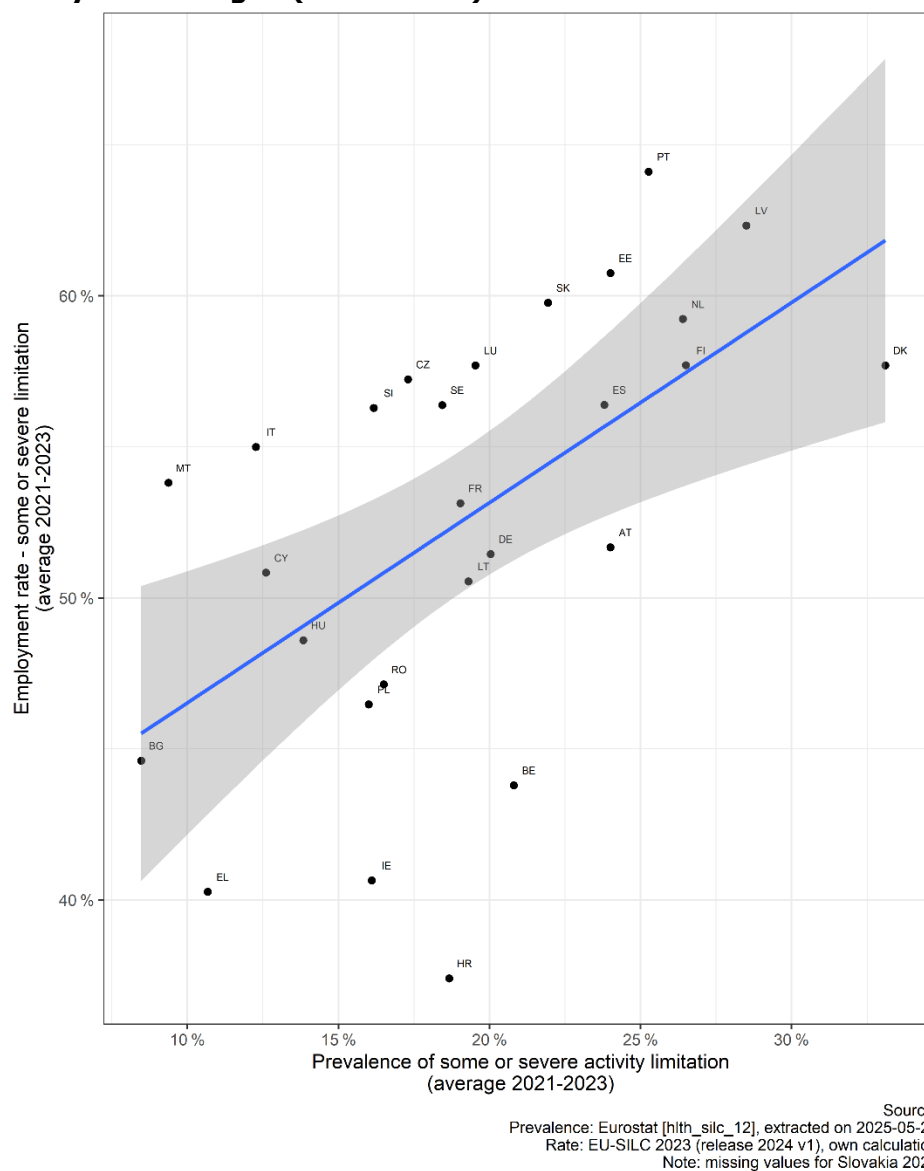
Figure 14: Employment rate of persons with some or severe activity limitation (age 20-64) and prevalence of some or severe activity limitation (age 20-64) (2023)



Source: Prevalence: Eurostat [hlth_silc_12], extracted on 2025-05-26
Rate: EU-SILC 2023 (release 2024 v1), own calculation

To control some of the fluctuation, Figure 15 shows the same relationship between the employment rate of persons with some or severe activity limitation and the prevalence rate of some or severe activity limitation as three-year averages (2021-2023). The positive association remains similar ($r=0.565$, $p=0.002$, $R^2=0.32$) and most of the countries are outside the 95 % confidence interval of the linear regression line. Greece, Ireland and Croatia seem to be stable outliers with low employment rates of persons with disabilities but with different levels of disability prevalence.

Figure 15: Employment rate of persons with some or severe activity limitation (age 20-64) and prevalence of some or severe activity limitation (age 20-64), using three-year averages (2021-2023)



A popular hypothesis to explain the prevalence effect, outlined earlier, is that estimated disability employment rates might be inflated optimistically in countries that over-report persons with low levels of activity limitation in the disability category (because such persons might be closer to the labour market and more likely to be in employment). Persons with some activity limitations have significantly higher employment rates than persons with severe activity limitations (see Figure 4).

In summary, it is important to be aware of a weak positive association between estimates of prevalence and estimates of employment outcomes, based on self-reporting in EU-SILC. It is also relevant to be aware of significant time series breaks within countries. Prevalence should be factored into modelling outcomes, as it varies between countries and years.

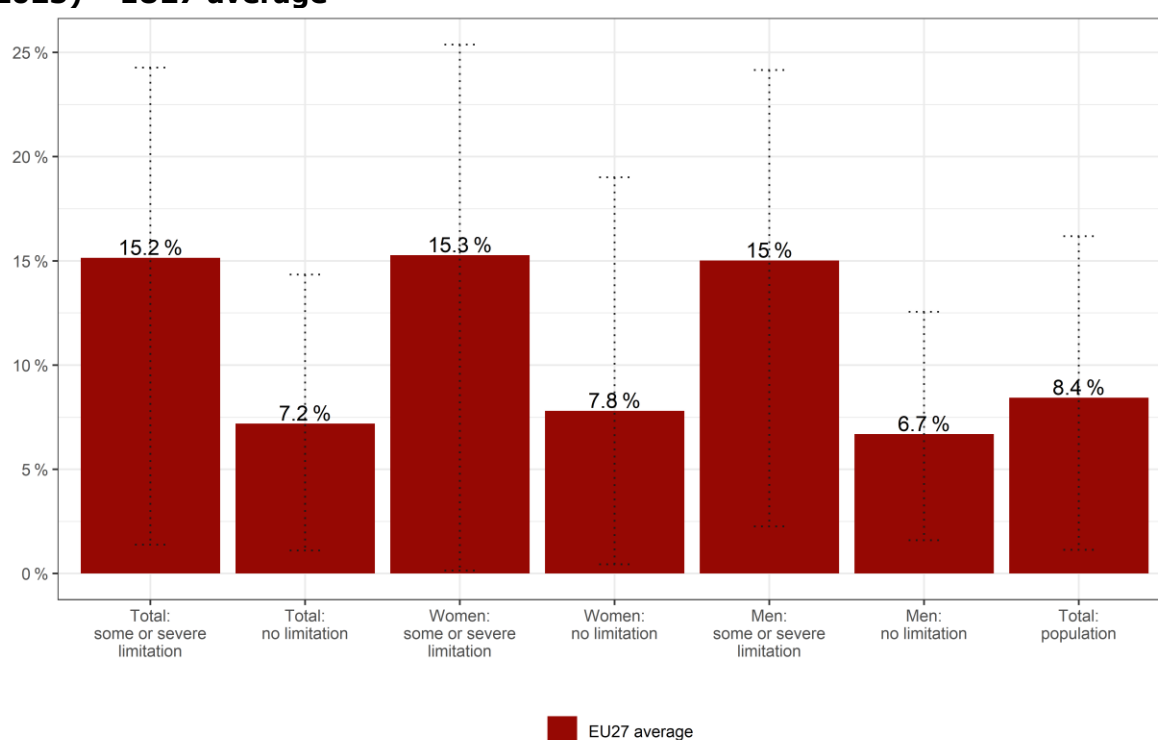
5.2.4 Unemployment

The challenges encountered when comparing disability employment rates are compounded for unemployment rates, for two reasons – the numbers of persons with disabilities in the unemployment category are much smaller and national administrative rules and definitions of 'unemployment' vary in relation to disability (e.g. whether people in vocational

'rehabilitation' programmes are counted as job seekers, trainees or employees). In some countries, only persons who are 'registered' with disabilities are counted by the employment service, while the EU-SILC data are self-reported. Figure 16 shows that the variation among EU members states is generally higher for persons with disabilities than for those without disabilities.

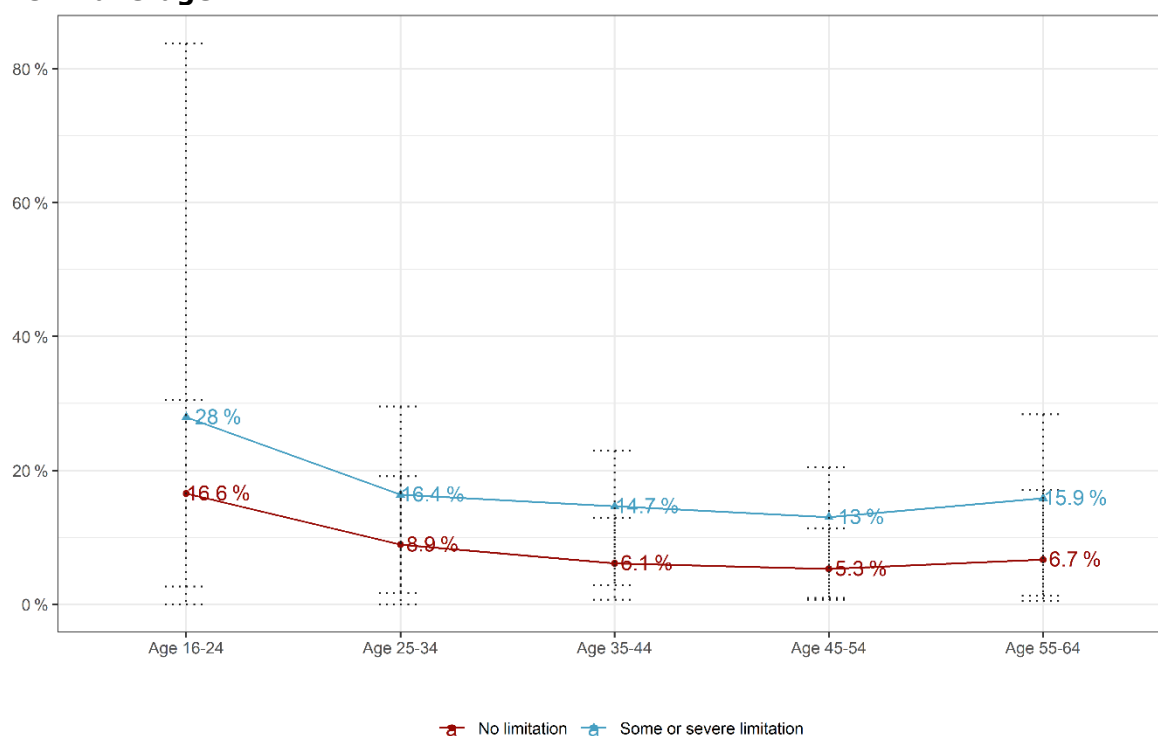
The unemployment rate for persons with disabilities in the EU was on average 15.2 % in 2023 compared to 7.2 % for persons without activity limitations. Comparing 2020 to 2022, a general improvement and thus a reduction in unemployment rates could be observed. Comparing 2022 with 2023, we observe only marginal changes and thus stability, while the unemployment rate of persons without disabilities decreased by 0.4 pps. The unemployment rates of women and men with disabilities are comparable (women: 15.3 %; men: 15 %). Among men and women without disabilities, there was a larger gender gap, with lower unemployment rates for men (around 1.1 pp lower).

Figure 16: Unemployment rate (age 20-64) by activity limitation level and gender (2023) – EU27 average



Source: EU-SILC 2023 (release 2024 v1), own calculation
Note: vertical dotted lines indicate range (minimum and maximum)

The pattern of unemployment rates by age groups deviates from the observed pattern for employment rates (Figure 17). The gap in unemployment rates between persons with and without disabilities is the highest in the 16-24 age group. The youth unemployment rate of persons with disabilities was 28 % in 2023, while the youth unemployment of persons without disabilities accounted for 16.6 %. For both groups, a reduction in the youth unemployment rate from 2022 to 2023 can be observed and the disability gap in this age group decreased. The unemployment rate for both groups and their corresponding disability gap decreases with the subsequent age groups until the age group of 55-64-years. In the oldest age group, the unemployment rate for both groups increases. This widens the disability gap again, but not to the same level as among the youngest age group. The variation among Member States in the unemployment rates of persons with disabilities is also the widest among the youngest age group, ranging from 0 % in Luxembourg and Slovakia to 83.8 % in Cyprus. Comparable to the caveat for the employment rates in this age group, the estimates for Luxembourg and Cyprus need to be interpreted with caution due to the low number of observations.

Figure 17: Unemployment rate by activity limitation level and age group (2023) – EU27 average

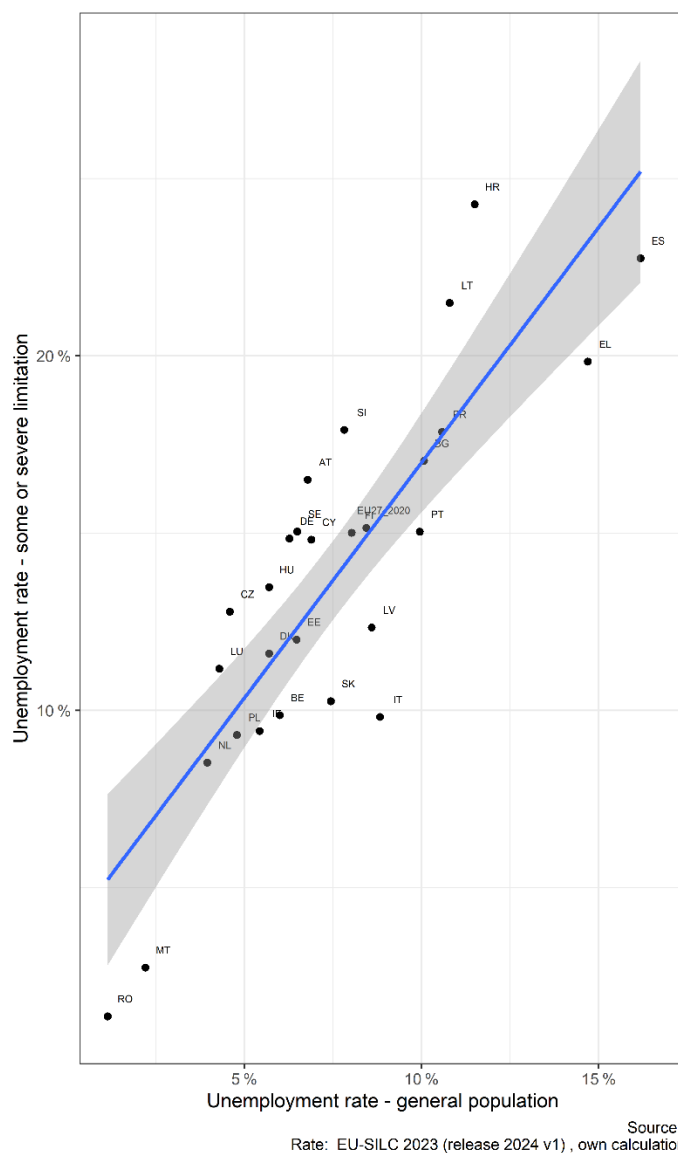
Source: EU-SILC 2023 (release 2024 v1), own calculation
 Note: vertical dotted lines indicate range (minimum and maximum)

Repeating the same type of indicative analysis provided for employment data, there is a strong positive association between the general unemployment rate and the rate for persons who declare activity limitations, which is also highly statistically significant ($r=0.846$; $p=2.8e-08$; $R^2=0.715$). The unemployment rate of persons with disabilities is on average higher in countries that have high general unemployment rates (Figure 18). The correlation between the disability and general rates is stronger for unemployment than for employment rates. There is no significant association between reported prevalence and unemployment rates.⁸¹

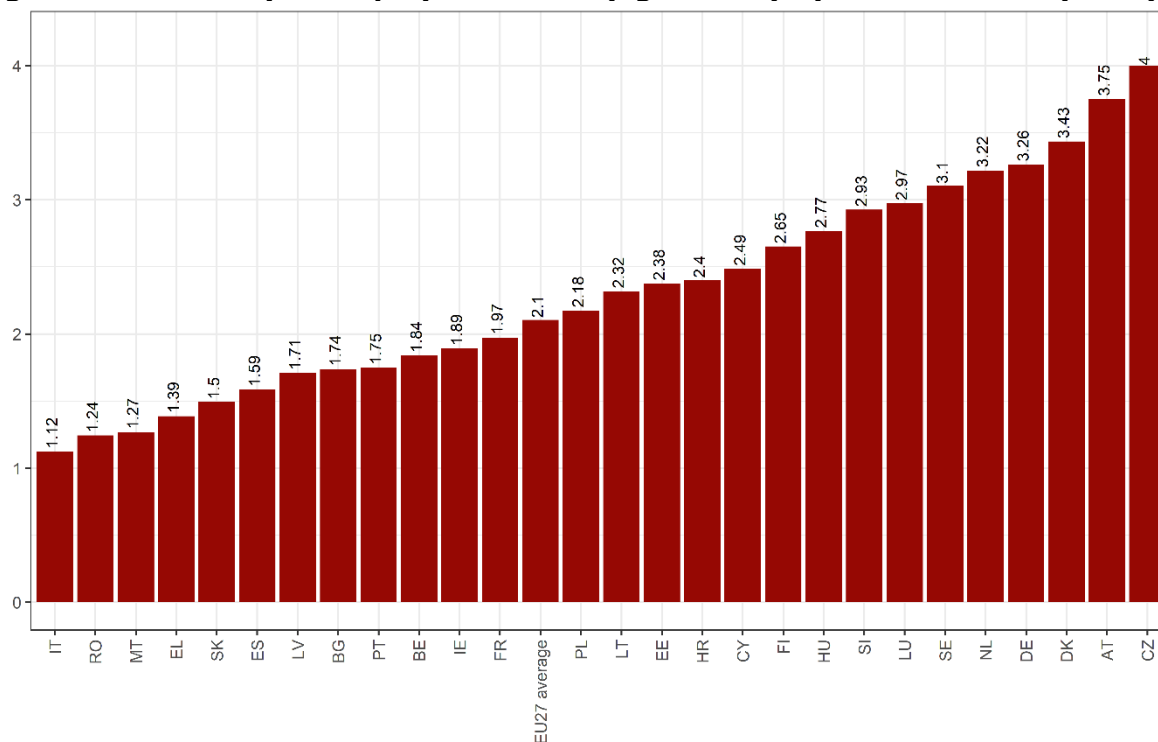
A group of countries (Croatia, Greece, Lithuania and Spain) recorded high general unemployment rates paired with high unemployment rates for persons with disabilities. At the other end, Romania and Malta have comparable low general unemployment rates and low unemployment rates for persons with disabilities. The analysis of country-level factors in the country fiches, including different policy approaches, provides better explanations for the divergent outcomes.

⁸¹ $r=-0.066$; $p=0.737$; $R^2=0.004$.

Figure 18: General population unemployment rate (age 20-64) and unemployment rate of persons with some or severe activity limitation (age 20-64) (2023)



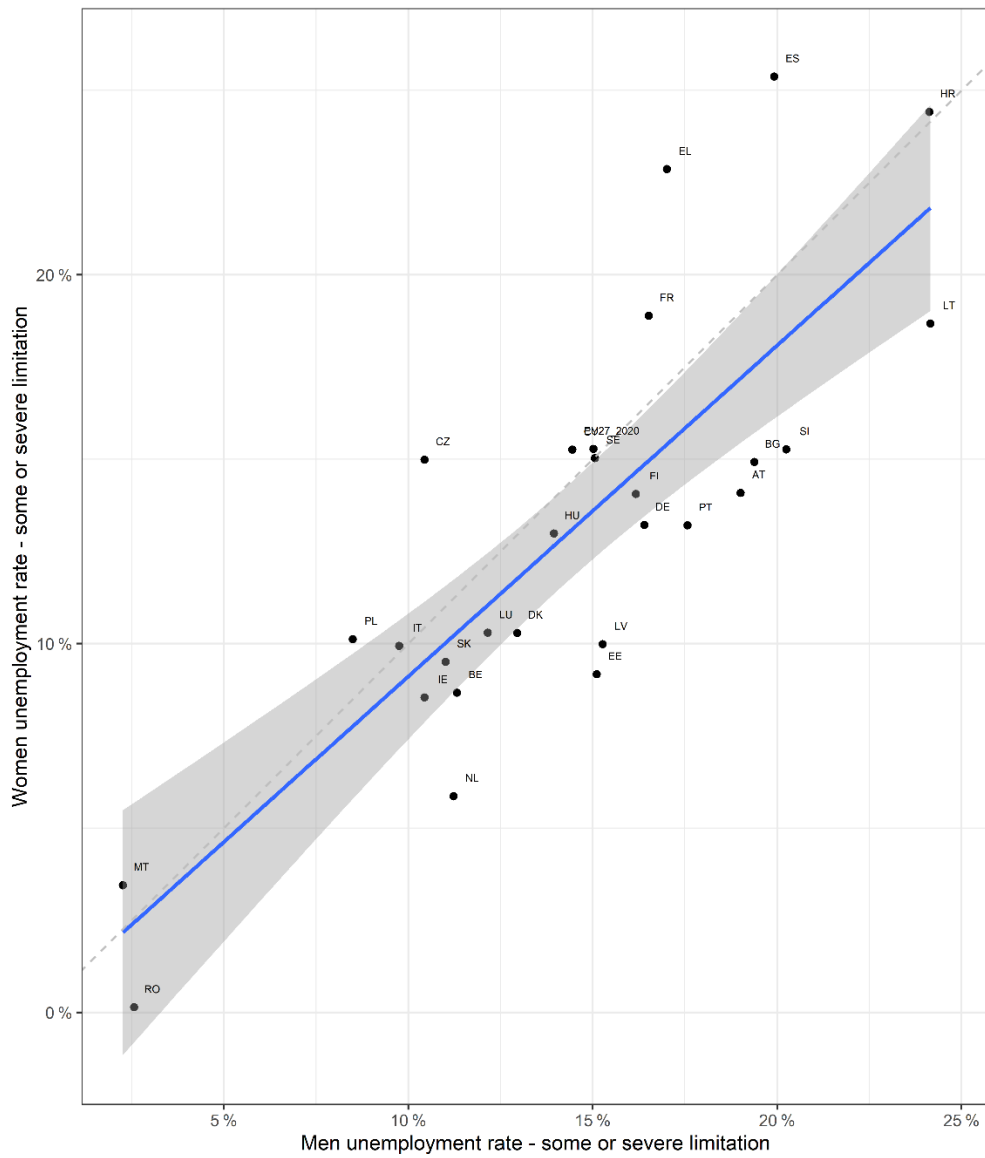
In 2023, the chance of being unemployed for persons with disabilities compared to persons without disabilities was on average more than twice as high (2.1). Figure 19 further illustrates the heterogeneity among EU Member States in the unemployment ratio of persons with and without disabilities. The unemployment rate for persons with disabilities in Czechia is four times higher than for persons without disabilities. This is caused by a comparable low general unemployment rate paired with a higher unemployment rate for persons with disabilities. Italy on the other hand has a 1.12 ratio and thus comparable unemployment rates for persons with and without disabilities. As with the case of employment, it is important to consider the possible effect of self-reported prevalence (which requires further analysis).

Figure 19: Disability unemployment ratio (age 20-64) by Member State (2023)

Source: EU-SILC 2023 (release 2024 v1) , own calculation

The general narrow gender gap in the average unemployment rate for persons with disabilities already indicated a strong association between the unemployment rates of men and women with disabilities. The association is positive and statistically significant ($r=0.821$; $p=1.563e-07$; $R^2=0.674$) and close to a directly proportional relationship (Figure 20). However, most countries have higher unemployment rate for men with disabilities than women with disabilities. The Netherlands, Latvia and Estonia have notably lower unemployment rates for women with disabilities compared to the unemployment rate for men with disabilities. Czechia, Greece and Spain, on the other hand, have lower unemployment rates for men with disabilities than for women with disabilities.

Figure 20: Unemployment rate of persons with some or severe activity limitation (age 20-64) by gender (2023)

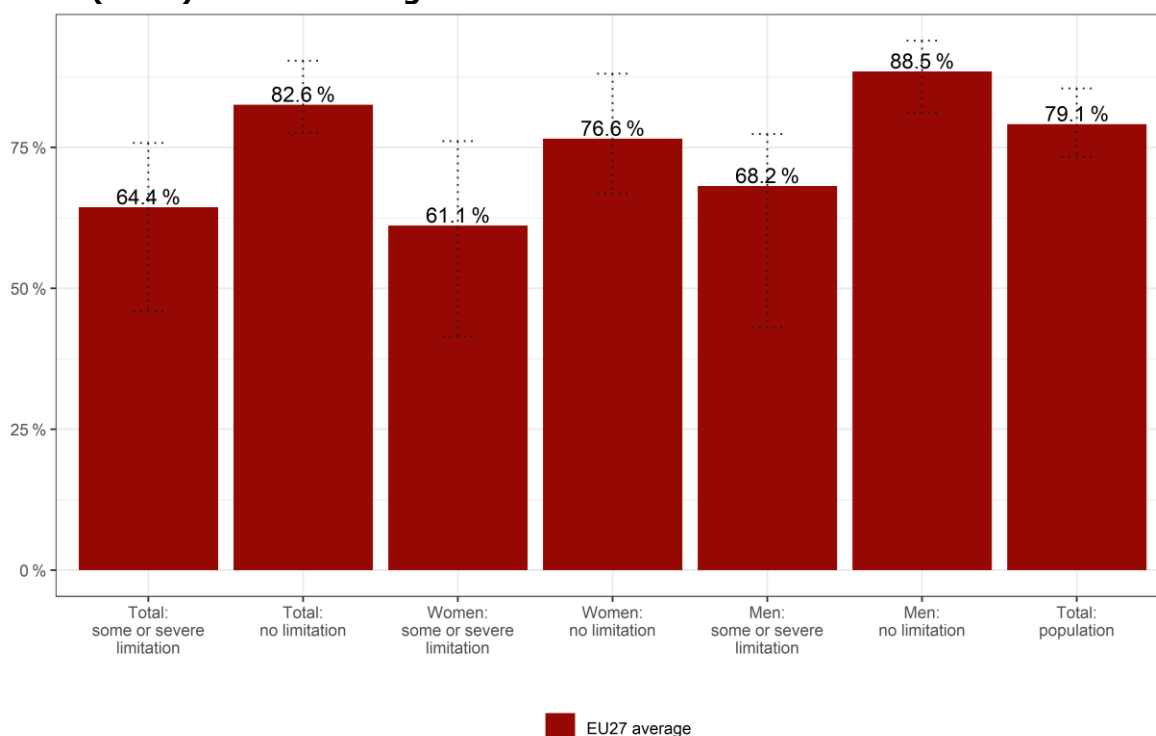


Source: EU-SILC 2023 (release 2024 v1) , own calculation
 Note: dashed line represents a direct proportional relationship

5.2.5 Economic activity

Across the EU and in every Member State (gendered) activity rates for working age persons with disabilities fall well below those for other persons in the population. There have been increases in economic activity, which may reflect improving labour market conditions and/or policy advances, but the key policy question is whether access to the labour market results in employment chances (rather than adding to unemployment). Figure 21 presents an overview of average economic activity rates for women and men at the EU level in 2023. Persons with disabilities had an economic activity rate of 64.4 % compared to 82.6 % of persons without disabilities. Women and men with disabilities both have lower activity rates than their counterparts without activity limitations. The disability gap is somewhat wider for men than for women. Women generally have lower economic activity rates than men.

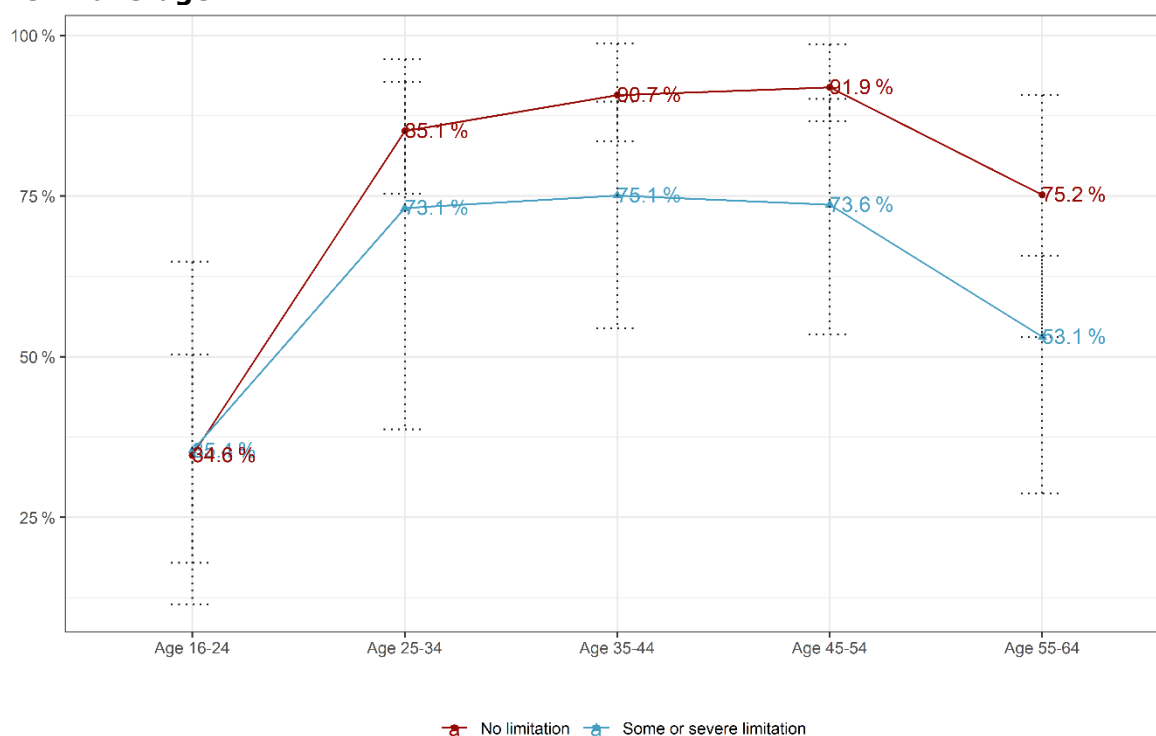
Figure 21: Economic activity rate (age 20-64) by level of activity limitation and gender (2023) – EU27 average



Source: EU-SILC 2023 (release 2024 v1), own calculation
Note: vertical dotted lines indicate range (minimum and maximum)

A familiar pattern is evident across the working age period, with an accentuation of exclusion among older workers (see Figure 22). Comparable to the employment rates, young people have the lowest activity rates and the smallest disability gap. The activity rates for young persons with and without disabilities are close to equal. In this age group persons with disabilities have a 0.74 pps higher economic activity rate. The gap in activity rates between persons with and without disabilities reverses and increases with the age groups. The disability gap increases up to 22.1 pps in the age group of 55-64-year-olds. This reinforces the tendency for an early exit from working life among workers who acquire disabilities later in their working careers (via disability or early retirement schemes). The extent of this gap varies between countries, as shown in the EDE country fiches.⁸²

⁸² Data for the youngest age group may be limited for some countries due to smaller sample sizes.

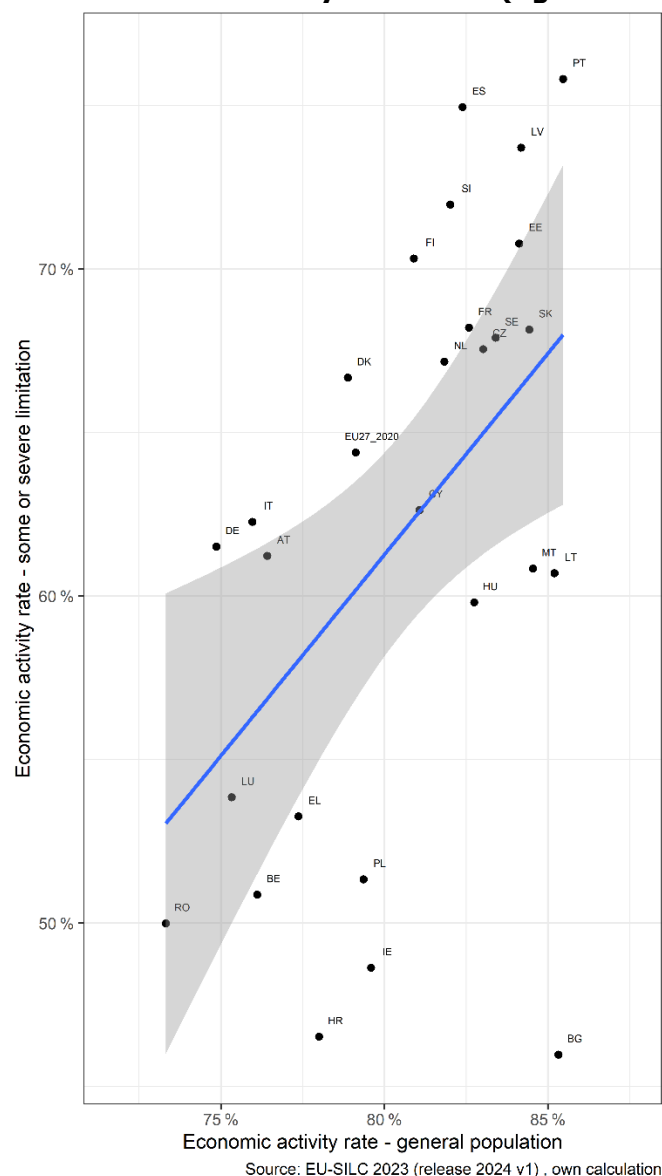
Figure 22: Economic activity rate by activity limitation level and age group (2023) – EU27 average

Source: EU-SILC 2023 (release 2024 v1), own calculation
 Note: vertical dotted lines indicate range (minimum and maximum)

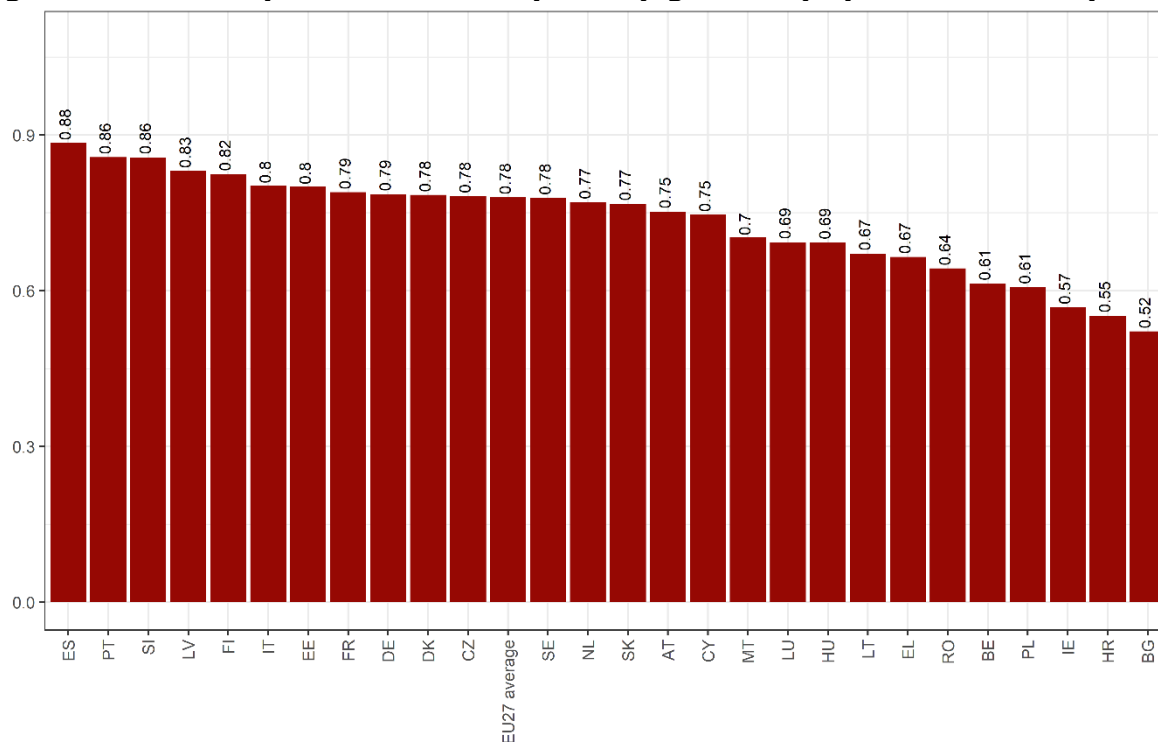
A comparative analysis of economic activity data helps to complete the picture of variation in labour market outcomes for persons with disabilities. We should expect the activity rate of persons with disabilities to vary in proportion to the economic activity rate of the general population but at a lower rate, reflecting a proportion of persons who may be unable to work, temporarily or permanently. As Figure 23 shows, there is a weak association ($r=0.503$; $p=0.008$; $R^2=0.253$). Little of the variation in disability activity rates between EU Member States can be explained by differences in general activity rates for those countries. This means that other factors must be involved (e.g. policy factors).

Romania had both a very low economic activity rate for persons with disabilities and a very low economic activity rate among the entire population, in contrast to Portugal with its high economic activity rate for the population and for persons with disabilities. On the other hand, Bulgaria, and to a lower degree also Croatia, had a high general activity rate paired with a low activity rate for persons with disabilities.

Figure 23: General population economic activity rate and economic activity rate of persons with some or severe activity limitation (age 20-64) (2023)



On average, in 2023, the ratio of the economic activity rate for persons with and without disabilities amounted to 0.78 (Figure 24). The highest ratio was recorded for Spain (0.88) and the lowest for Bulgaria (0.52), indicating that persons with disabilities have on average in Bulgaria slightly more than half the chance of being economically active compared to persons without disabilities.

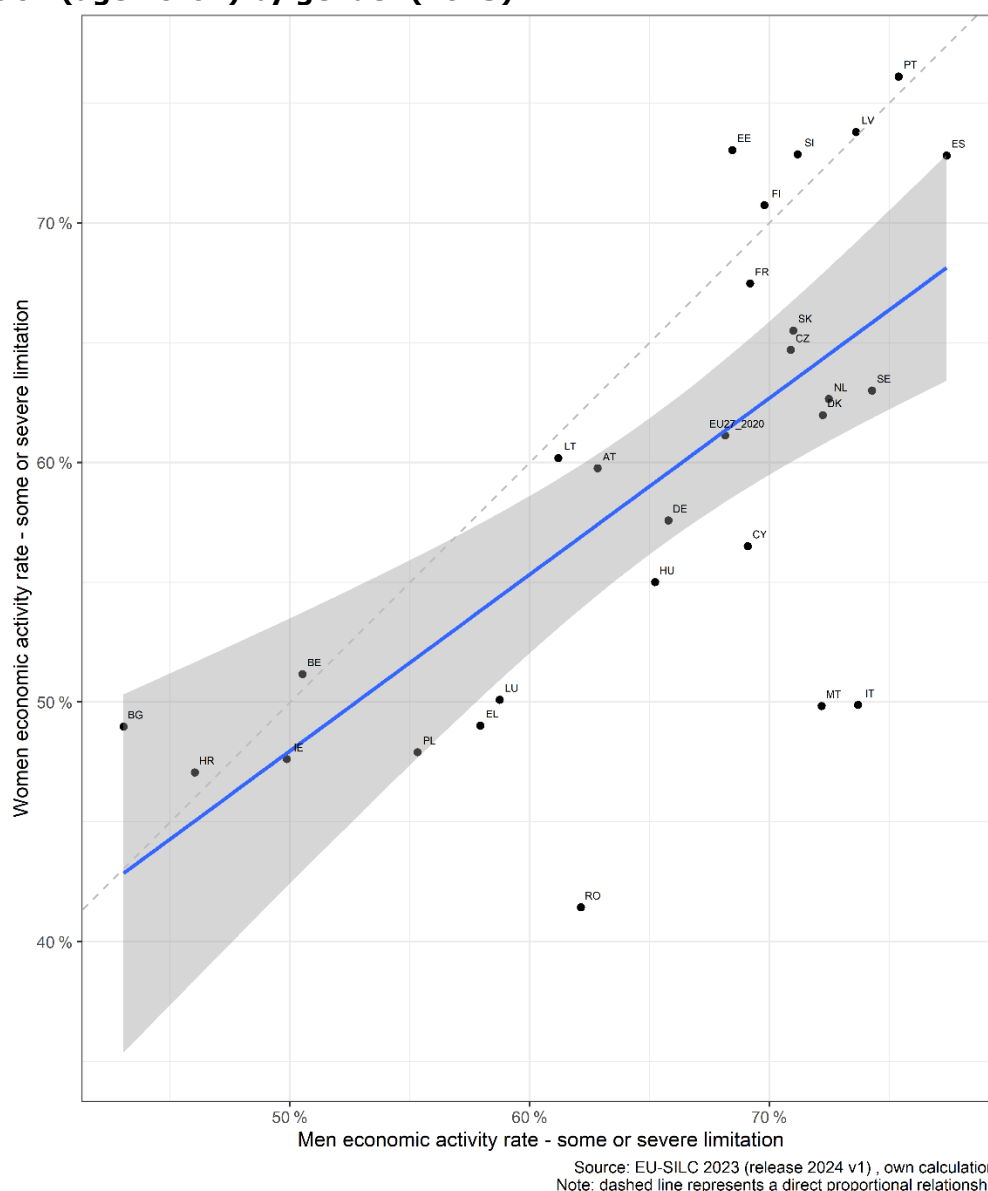
Figure 24: Disability economic activity ratio (age 20-64) by Member State (2023)

Source: EU-SILC 2023 (release 2024 v1) , own calculation

There is weak positive association between self-reported prevalence and the disability activity rate ($r=0.602$; $p=0.001$; $R^2=0.362$). In countries where more people self-report in the disability category the activity rate for this group also tends to be higher (according to the hypothesis outlined earlier, this might suggest that the survey captures more persons with low levels of activity limitation in these countries who are, on average, also closer to the labour market). However, only 36.2 % of the variance among EU Member States can be explained by this association.

Figure 25 shows the economic activity rates of persons with disabilities by gender. There is a positive association between the economic activity rates of men and women with disabilities ($r=0.690$; $p=4.816e^{-05}$; $R^2=0.476$). The economic activity rate for women with disabilities is in most EU Member States lower than that for men with disabilities. The exception is Bulgaria, which has a low economic activity rate among men with disabilities and a somewhat higher activity rate for women with disabilities. At the other end, Estonia has a generally high economic activity rate for men with disabilities and an even higher economic activity rate for women with disabilities.

The policy mixes that funnel those who are not in employment towards either unemployment or inactivity include both employment policies and social protection policies (e.g. the availability of disability pension schemes and the gateway eligibility conditions attached to them).

Figure 25: Economic activity rate of persons with some or severe activity limitation (age 20-64) by gender (2023)

Disability employment rates, gaps and ratios are necessary but not sufficient to explain the labour market participation of persons with disabilities. Unemployment is a relatively small but important category for those seeking employment, and often requiring targeted support, but economic activity is particularly important as a large and widely divergent factor among EU Member States.

5.2.6 Comparing indicators of employment, unemployment and activity

The previous analyses of headline indicators suggest a complex and often unpredictable interaction between key labour market indicators for persons with disabilities in EU Member States. A high general employment rate does not always predict a high disability employment rate at the country level, although there is an average trend to this effect across the EU. The same is true for unemployment rates and activity rates, but not in equal measure or even in the same direction – a low disability employment rate might be associated with a high unemployment rate or a high activity rate (depending, for example, in which direction non-working persons with disabilities are funnelled by national policy options or definitions).

By disaggregating these three factors and equivalising them, we can represent the relative extent of the disability equality challenges within and between countries. This compares the relative chances of being economically active, employed and not being unemployed in each country (the unemployment ratio is inverted to express all three as a positive chance). A value of 1.0 would mean that the chances of persons with disabilities were equal to those of other persons, on average.⁸³

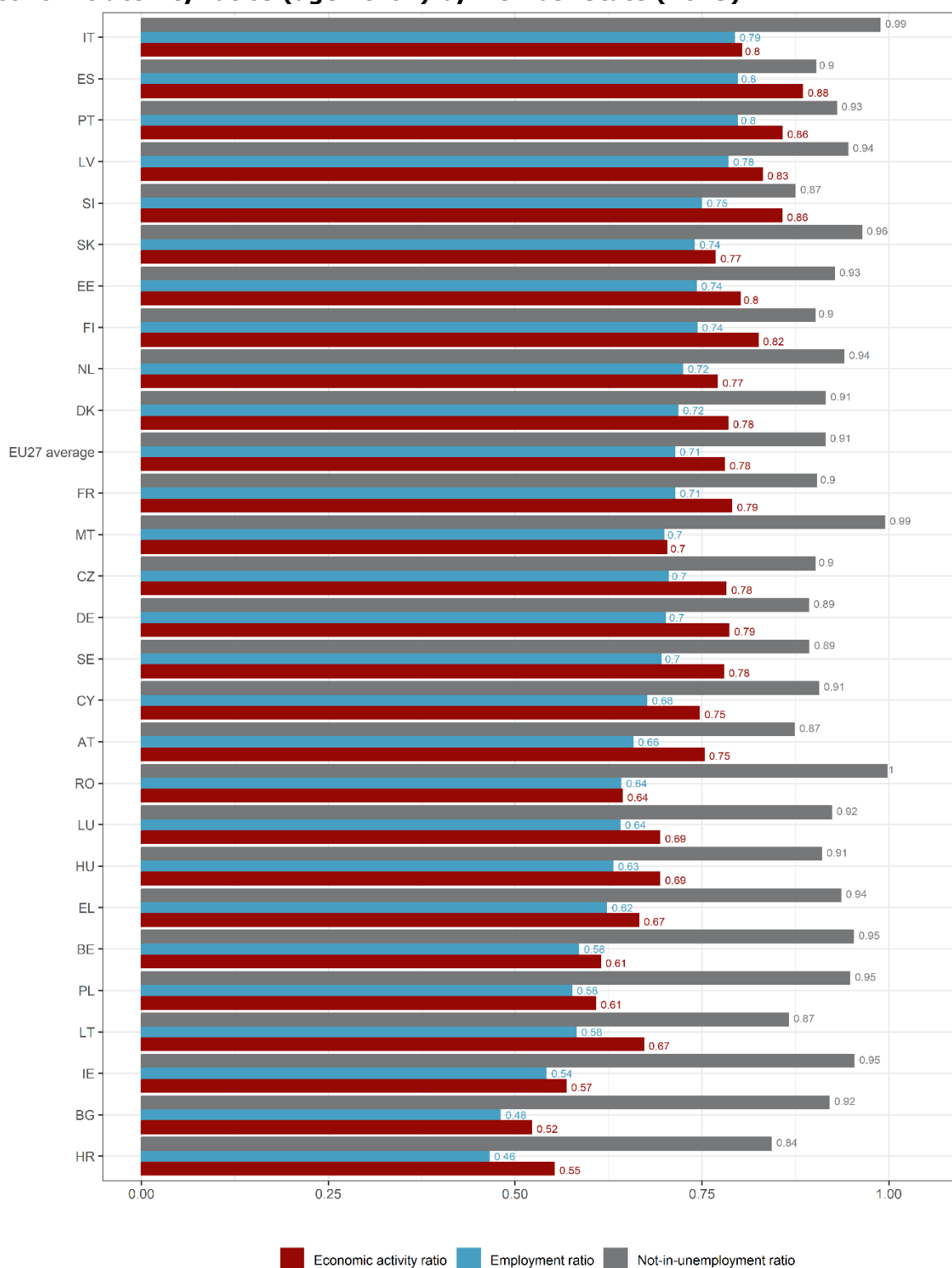
The following summary figure provides an overview of the three different indicators in 2023, expressed as relative chances for all countries (Figure 26). The ranking of the countries is based on the stacked results of three ratio indicators. The combined total suggests a broad synthetic indicator of labour market inclusion, although this would need to be contextualised with an examination of methodological artefacts (such as the prevalence factor).

On average, persons with disabilities in the EU have a relative chance of 0.78 of being economic active, 0.71 of being employed and 0.91 of being not unemployed compared to persons without disabilities. Italy had the highest combined ratio score in 2023, while Croatia had the lowest combined ratio score.

It is important to recall that a minority of persons with disabilities cannot be expected to enter the labour market (i.e. it would not be realistic to expect an activity or employment ratio of 1). However, with appropriate assessment of work potential and accessible jobs then the chances for persons with disabilities of being 'not unemployed' in the labour market should not be markedly worse (less than 1.0) compared to persons without disabilities.

⁸³ For the purpose of policy analysis, shorter component bars might suggest areas of policy concern for further analysis at country level. A score of 1.0 in each component approaches parity with persons without disabilities.

Figure 26: Comparison of disability employment, not-in-unemployment and economic activity ratios (age 20-64) by Member State (2023)



Source: EU-SILC 2023 (release 2024 v1), own calculation
 Note: countries are ranked by their sum of the three indicators

5.2.7 Selected labour market policy initiatives from the Member States

This section provides examples of labour market policy initiatives supporting the employment of persons with disabilities, based on the information provided by country experts in the national fiches. In general, experts highlight the policy and national strategic frameworks in place, while also identifying where further improvements could be made. The focus here is primarily on ongoing measures and recently adopted policy plans that demonstrate active engagement in promoting labour market inclusion. Therefore, the countries presented were selected to provide an indicative, but not exhaustive, overview of Member States implementing policy initiatives in this field. This indicative selection illustrates a range of approaches and policy measures currently implemented across the EU.

Starting with Austria, the 2025-2029 Government Programme continues efforts to reform sheltered employment. Country experts highlight pilots for inclusive jobs that provide full social insurance and formal recognition of work in day structures. While funding for disability inclusion is reduced in the 2025–2026 budget and no new major legal reforms are planned, these pilots aim to create pathways to more inclusive employment.

In Belgium, the 2025-2029 federal coalition agreement introduces measures to strengthen inclusion for persons with disabilities, including stricter enforcement of public-sector quotas and a progressive and simplified system that links work income with disability benefits. The country fiche notes that these initiatives seek to reduce participation gaps and encourage broader engagement in the labour market.

Experts from Cyprus highlight that the National Disability Strategy and Action Plan 2024-2028 includes a dedicated employment pillar. Key measures focus on expanding vocational training, supporting social enterprises and exploring the feasibility of extending employment quotas to the private sector.

Germany continues to rely on sheltered workshops (WfbM) for vocational training, but ongoing reforms aim to improve transitions to the open labour market. Supported employment, employer incentives and gradual strengthening of accessibility, particularly in public services and digital workplaces, are central elements of ongoing and future policy.

In Finland, country experts highlight that employment and integration services were decentralised to municipalities in 2025 to provide locally tailored support. The IPS job coaching programme supports individuals with mental health conditions in entering or remaining in the labour market. The National Action Plan on the UN CRPD 2023-2027 prioritises workplace support, strengthening authority competence and exploring disability quota models.

The country fiche notes that France combines employment support in mainstream and adapted companies with wage subsidies, training and awareness-raising initiatives. The Full Employment Act 2023 provides personalised support and career paths for jobseekers with disabilities.

In Portugal, experts highlight the PESSOAS 2030 Programme, funded by ESF+, which supports employment for persons with disabilities through financial incentives for employers, internships, supported employment, workplace adaptations and recognition awards for inclusive employers. While the share of persons with disabilities in the workforce remains low, private-sector employment has more than doubled since 2015.

Slovenia's Action Programme 2022-2030 offers job coaching, supported employment, inclusive centres, vocational rehabilitation and employer incentives. Country experts note that urban employment has increased, but challenges persist, including reliance on sheltered work, limited workplace adjustments and uneven quota enforcement, highlighting the need for stronger monitoring and clear participation targets.

Other Member States, including Greece, Italy, Poland, Romania and Spain, have implemented a mix of quota systems, wage subsidies, supported employment, vocational training and social enterprise initiatives. Experts note that while these policies have supported employment for persons with disabilities, structural barriers, uneven implementation and limited workplace accommodations continue to pose challenges in several countries.

5.3 Disability and poverty reduction

Several of the insights arising from analysis of the labour market situation are also relevant to indicators on poverty and social exclusion. These indicators are more reliably established as they follow the same EU-SILC methodology as the Semester and because the summary tables are already published in the disability and income distribution section of Eurostat's disability database.⁸⁴ This affords an opportunity to examine some breakdowns beyond the headline indicators and also to consider the additional dimension of access to healthcare, which was highlighted as a concern during the COVID-19 crisis, along with long-term social care.

5.3.1 Strategic context

Article 28 CRPD refers to 'adequate standard of living and social protection' and 'social protection programmes and poverty reduction programmes', as well as 'assistance from the State with disability-related expenses', 'retirement benefits and programmes', access to 'affordable services, devices and other assistance for disability-related needs' and 'public housing programmes'. Article 19 refers to 'independent living' and 'in-home, residential and other community support services, including personal assistance' schemes.⁸⁵

In its Concluding Observations to the EU, in September 2015, the UN Committee noted 'with deep concern the disproportionately adverse and retrogressive effect the austerity measures in the EU have on the adequate standard of living of persons with disabilities'. It recommended that the EU should:

'...take urgent measures, in cooperation with its Member States and representative organisations of persons with disabilities, to prevent further adverse and retrogressive effect of austerity measures on the adequate standard of living of persons with disabilities, including by the provision of a minimum social protection floor.'⁸⁶

In the second and third combined reports which the EU submitted to the UN CRPD Committee on the progress made to implement the CRPD, it outlines specific measures that were put in place to improve the standard of living of persons with disabilities, as per the competence of the EU.⁸⁷ In this regard, the Commission (1) promotes accessible social and affordable housing through the Affordable Housing Initiative (AHI)⁸⁸ launched in 2021 and EU funds regulations and (2) works with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to develop and maintain the Affordable Housing Database⁸⁹ and help countries monitor access to good-quality affordable housing. It also ensures that social

⁸⁴ Eurostat (2025), 'Disability database', <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/disability/database>.

⁸⁵ UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 28: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-persons-disabilities>.

⁸⁶ United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2015), 'Concluding observations on the initial report of the European Union', <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/811081?ln=en>.

⁸⁷ United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2024), 'Combined second and third periodic reports submitted by the European Union under article 35 of the Convention', <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4052486?v=pdf>.

⁸⁸ European Commission, 'Affordable Housing Initiative', https://single-market-economy.ec.europa.eu/sectors/proximity-and-social-economy/social-economy-eu/affordable-housing-initiative_en.

⁸⁹ OECD, 'Affordable Housing Database', <https://www.oecd.org/en/data/datasets/oecd-affordable-housing-database.html>.

and affordable housing facilities benefit from the Renovation Wave strategy for Europe⁹⁰ in synergy with the New European Bauhaus (NEB).⁹¹

Within the European Semester framework, the Commission monitors trends and provides recommendations related to poverty, social exclusion and access to quality housing for vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities. A key EU initiative of particular relevance to combating poverty and social exclusion across the EU is the European Child Guarantee (ECG) that explicitly identifies children with disabilities as a priority group, ensuring their access to essential services aimed at preventing and reducing poverty and social exclusion.⁹² It guides EU Member States to ensure free or affordable access to early childhood education and care, education (including school meals), healthcare and adequate housing and nutrition for children under 18 at risk of poverty. The initiative also aims to break the cycle of intergenerational disadvantage by supporting children in need and removing barriers to these essential services.

In its Concluding Observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of the EU, in April 2025 the UN CRPD Committee expressed concern about 'the high levels of poverty and social exclusion of persons with disabilities, in particular women with disabilities, autistic persons and persons with intensive support needs' and the higher housing costs faced by persons with disabilities.⁹³ In its recommendations, it calls for the allocation of more ESF resources to promote social inclusion, combat poverty and address structural and intersectional inequalities. It also reasserts the need for national laws and policies on social protection that are rights-based and gender-responsive and urges prioritising EU funding and concrete actions to ensure accessible, affordable housing for persons with disabilities.

Regarding affordable housing, the Commission is currently developing the first ever European Affordable Housing Plan, which is expected to be adopted in early 2026.⁹⁴

As with Article 28, in its Concluding Observations to the EU in September 2015, the UN Committee raised concerns regarding Article 19, 'living independently and being included in the community'. The Committee highlighted that many persons with disabilities, particularly those with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities, still reside in institutions across the EU rather than within their communities. Despite regulatory changes, European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) are still being used in some Member States to support residential institutions instead of community-based support services. The Committee recommends that the EU establish a clear framework to promote deinstitutionalisation and enhance monitoring of ESIF use to ensure funds are allocated solely for community support services, not for maintaining or expanding institutions. It further advises the EU to suspend, withdraw or recover payments when fundamental rights are violated.

In this regard, as part of the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the European Commission adopted Guidance⁹⁵ on independent living for persons with

⁹⁰ European Commission (2020), A Renovation Wave for Europe – greening our buildings, creating jobs, improving lives, COM/2020/662 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0662>

⁹¹ For information on the NEB initiative, see https://new-european-bauhaus.europa.eu/about/about-initiative_en.

⁹² Council Recommendation (EU) 2021/1004 of 14 June 2021 establishing a European Child Guarantee, ST/9106/2021/INIT, <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reco/2021/1004/oj>.

⁹³ UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2025), 'Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of the European Union' <https://docs.un.org/en/CRPD/C/EU/CO/2-3>.

⁹⁴ For information on the European Housing Affordability Plan, see https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/14670-European-affordable-housing-plan_en.

⁹⁵ The Guidance builds on and complements other initiatives, such as the Council Recommendation on access to affordable high-quality long-term care, the Council Recommendation establishing the European Child Guarantee, the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child and the related Commission Recommendation on integrated child protection systems, the Council Recommendation on early childhood education and care, and the Commission Communication on a comprehensive approach to mental health, European Accessibility Act, the Commission Communication 'A Renovation Wave for Europe', the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive 2024, the Commission Recommendation on building renovation and the New European Bauhaus

disabilities. This document offers guidance that is targeted at EU funds implementing bodies at all levels (e.g. managing authorities and intermediary bodies), as well as those implementing EU-funded projects related to independent living activities, including civil society, service providers and the academic community, as well as persons with disabilities themselves and their families. EU funds support investments by Member States in developing community-based services and access to mainstream services available to the general population by following an integrated approach combining service provision with infrastructure and equipment to support independent living. Moreover, the European Care Strategy,⁹⁶ launched in 2022, and the accompanying Council Recommendation on long-term care⁹⁷ specifically address the provision of high-quality, affordable and accessible care services supporting independent living and community-based care for persons with disabilities.

The Commission has recently published two toolkits: (1) providing an overview of all the opportunities for support offered by EU funds in the field of social housing and associated services⁹⁸ and (2) providing guidance for Managing Authorities in the Member States and other implementing bodies on how ESF+ should be used for staff training⁹⁹ to support independent living.¹⁰⁰ Circling back to housing initiatives, the InvestEU¹⁰¹ programme has supported investments in accessible and affordable social housing to improve accessibility and access to housing for persons with disabilities. Similarly, the UN Committee's General Comment No. 5¹⁰² on independent living and community inclusion, adopted in October 2017 highlights as an obligation for Member States to ensure the provision of accessible and affordable housing for persons with disabilities, as this is also crucial for the deinstitutionalisation process.

In its 2025 Concluding Observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of the EU, the CRPD Committee reiterated that no EU funds, including those from the RRF, should be used to build or maintain institutional settings, including small group homes, and called for the Multiannual Financial Framework to be aligned accordingly. In addition, it recommends revising the Commission guidance to clarify that small group homes do not comply with the Convention and adopting clear definitions of community-based services. The committee also noted that 'None of the matters related to the home and the family of persons with disabilities raised in the European Semester process were carried through to the country specific recommendations'.

Article 25 of the CRPD affirms the right to health, ensuring persons with disabilities access to 'the same range, quality and standard of free or affordable health care and programmes as provided to other persons', as well as disability-specific health services, as highlighted in the UN Committee's General Comment No. 5. In this regard, among other recommendations, the Committee highlights the lack of training for healthcare professionals and urges the State parties to provide tailored training to these professionals, adopting a human-rights-based approach. Recommendations regarding affordability and accessibility of healthcare services were noted in all Member States. In its latest Concluding Observations to the EU (April 2025), the Committee calls for establishing comprehensive

initiative, including New European Bauhaus Investment Guidelines, and transport, as highlighted in the Commission Communication on the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy.

⁹⁶ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on the European care strategy, COM/2022/440 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52022DC0440>.

⁹⁷ Council Recommendation of 8 December 2022 on access to affordable high-quality long-term care 2022/C 476/01, ST/13948/2022/INIT, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=oj:JOC_2022_476_R_0001.

⁹⁸ European Commission (2024), 'Social housing and beyond – Operational toolkit on the use of EU funds for investment in social housing and associated services', <https://op.europa.eu/s/AacQ>.

⁹⁹ For more on this toolkit, see Chapter 5.4.1.

¹⁰⁰ European Commission (2024), Toolkit: Using the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) for staff training in independent living support', <https://op.europa.eu/s/AacR>.

¹⁰¹ Examples of projects in the area of affordable and social housing supported by InvestEU can be found here: InvestEU operations - list - European Union (https://investeu.europa.eu/investeu-programme_en).

¹⁰² UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2017), General comment No. 5 on living independently and being included in the community, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/general-comments-and-recommendations/general-comment-no5-article-19-right-live>.

accessibility standards in healthcare and providing Easy Read materials, accessible procedures and communication training for healthcare staff to better support persons with intellectual disabilities.

In this regard, the Commission introduced a new comprehensive approach to mental health as part of the European Health Union in 2023.¹⁰³ Backed by 20 flagship initiatives and EUR 1.23 billion in EU funding from various instruments, this effort aims to support Member States to address mental health issues and improve access to treatment and care.¹⁰⁴ That same year, the Commission also launched a study to develop healthcare access guidelines for EU and EEA/EFTA countries, focusing on improving access to healthcare for persons with disabilities.¹⁰⁵ The study addresses areas such as health service coverage and out-of-pocket costs and includes specific information on cancer prevention and care for persons with disabilities.

Articles 19, 25 and 28 of the UN CRPD are particularly relevant to reducing poverty among persons with disabilities. Although social policies are, mostly, within the competence of the Member States, the EU Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities also clearly acknowledges that persons with disabilities and their families are at higher risk of financial poverty, due to weaknesses in the labour market and social protection (including disability benefit rules). The Strategy also underlines the need for equal access to healthcare without discrimination. This necessitates enhanced efforts at both EU and national levels to implement targeted policy measures and to continuously monitor the effectiveness of existing measures.

5.3.2 Disability, poverty and social exclusion

Data on the social situation of persons with disabilities is presented in the EDE statistical review accompanying this synthesis report (using the EU-SILC microdata from 2023) and following the Eurostat methodology. These EU-SILC data provide indicators of the key risks for persons with disabilities, including household risks of low work intensity, low income measured as at-risk-of-poverty after social transfers, and severe material and social deprivation. These three measures are combined in the overall estimate for risk of poverty or social exclusion (AROPE).¹⁰⁶ Relevant data from national sources are provided in each of the EDE country fiches, where available. These are divided by the main age groups (for all persons aged 16 and over, 16-64, and 65+). The EU-SILC 2023 survey does not distinguish 'activity limitation' for children under the age of 16 so it has not been possible to disaggregate disability estimates of child poverty from this survey.

Figure 27 summarises the EU27 average poverty or social exclusion risks by component for persons with and without disabilities, for the total population and for 2023 and 2024. The EDE country reports contain the same table with comparisons of national averages and the EU27 average. These confirm that, on average and across the EU, persons with disabilities experience relative disadvantage on all three main measures. This is the case in every Member State to varying degrees.

On average in 2024, 18.4 % of persons with disabilities in the EU were affected by low work intensity in their households compared to 5.5 % of persons without disabilities. The low work intensity rate for persons with disabilities increased from 2023 to 2024, while it decreased marginally for persons without disabilities. 21.8 % of persons with disabilities were considered to be at risk of poverty compared to 14.1 % of persons without disabilities.

¹⁰³ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on a comprehensive approach to mental health, COM/2023/298 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52023DC0298>.

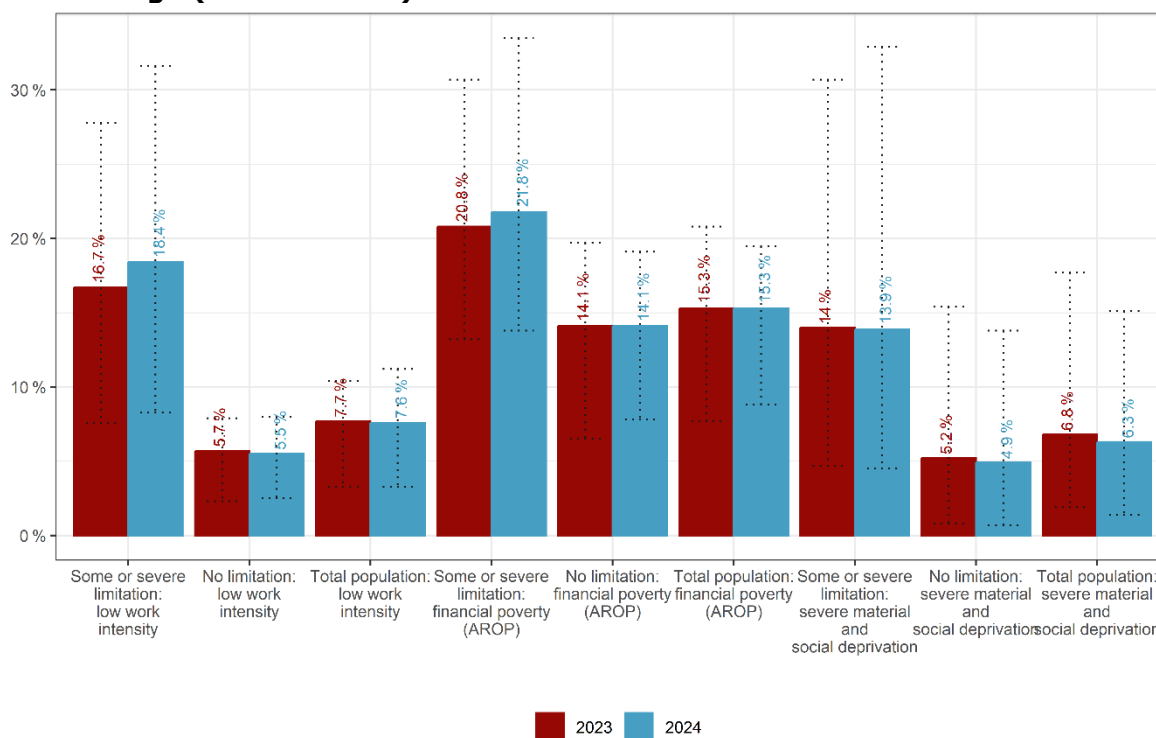
¹⁰⁴ For information on the initiative and progress so far, see https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-life/european-health-union/comprehensive-approach-mental-health_en.

¹⁰⁵ For information on the study, see https://hadea.ec.europa.eu/news/survey-access-cancer-care-people-disabilities-2024-11-08_en.

¹⁰⁶ The risks for older people do not include work intensity (Eurostat refers to the under 65 age group for this measure).

Again, the at-risk-of-poverty rate for persons with disabilities increased from 2023 to 2024, while it remained stable for persons without disabilities. 13.9 % of persons with disabilities experienced severe material and social deprivation in 2024, compared to 4.9 % of persons without disabilities. For material and social deprivation rates, we can observe the strongest heterogeneity among Member States.

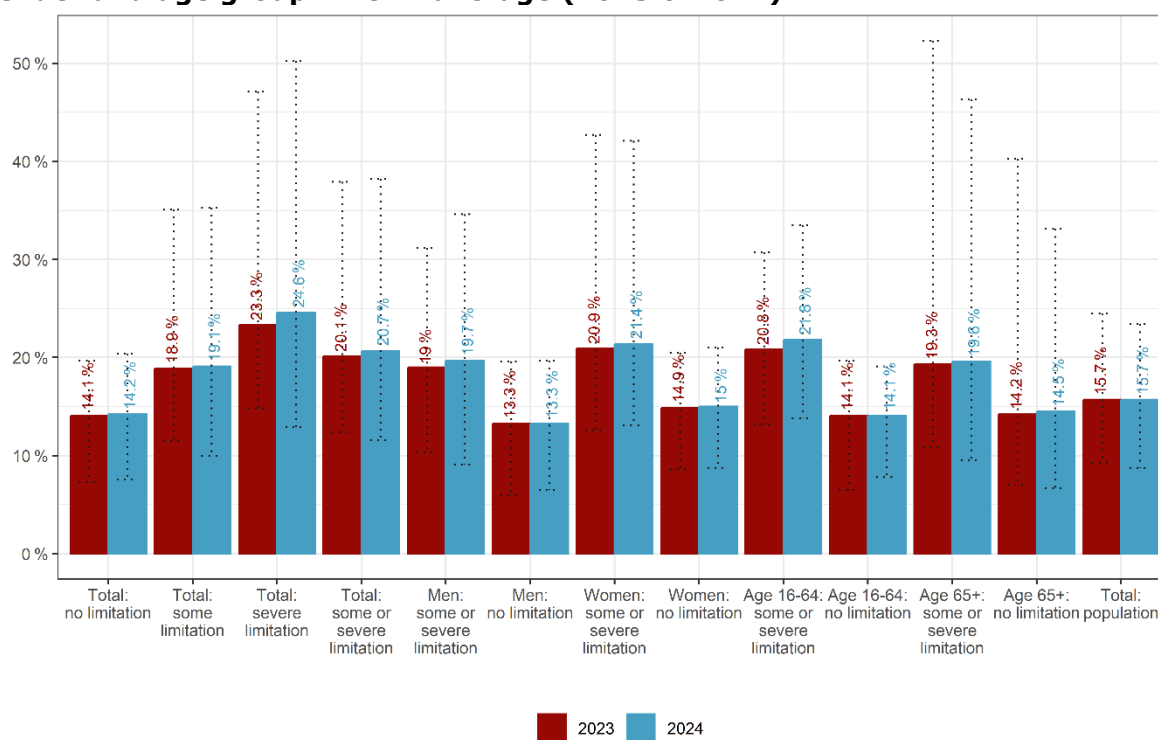
Figure 27: Main types of poverty risks (age 16-64) by activity limitation status – EU27 average (2023 & 2024)



Source: Eurostat [hlth_dpe040], [hlth_dpe020] and [hlth_dm010], extracted on 2025-05-26
 Note: vertical dotted lines indicate range (minimum and maximum)

There is a clear association of the at-risk-of-poverty rates with the severity of reported activity limitation and with gender equality (shown in Figure 28). Persons reporting more severe levels of activity limitation face higher risks of poverty, as do women when compared to men. Importantly, there are differences in the average risks for adults of working age and for older adults (aged 65+). The elevated risks for adults of working age are mainly linked to the importance of employment income. EU Member States had the most considerable variation in at-risk-of-poverty (AROP) rates for the group of persons with disabilities aged 65 years and over, as well as for persons with severe activity limitation. Employment and the adequacy of working age disability benefits remain key factors when predicting poverty risk for persons with disabilities in the EU (as reported in the past by ANED).¹⁰⁷ For persons with disabilities, a general increase in the at-risk-of-poverty rates from 2023 to 2024 could be observed, while it fell slightly from 2022 to 2023.

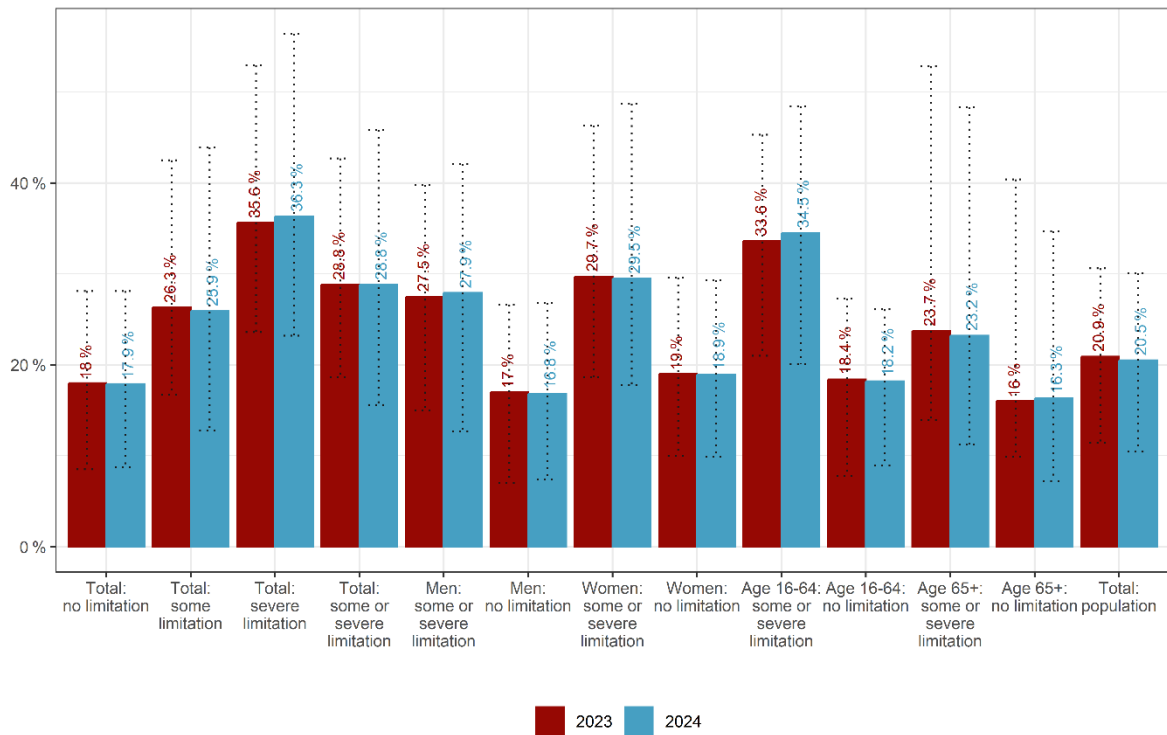
¹⁰⁷ See: <http://www.disability-europe.net/theme/social-protection>; <http://www.disability-europe.net/theme/statistical-indicators>.

Figure 28: At risk of poverty (AROP) rate (age 16+) by activity limitation level, gender and age group – EU27 average (2023 & 2024)

Source: Eurostat [h1th_dpe020], extracted on 2025-05-26
 Note: vertical dotted lines indicate range (minimum and maximum)

Taking the other components of the at-risk-of-poverty and social exclusion indicator into account increases the prevalence rates (Figure 29). On average, 28.8 % of persons with disabilities were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2023 and 2024, compared to around 18 % of persons without disabilities. The AROPE rate increases severely by level of activity limitation and remains higher for women than men. Persons with disabilities in the working age group (16-64 years) are on average more affected than persons with disabilities in the 65+ age group. The disability gap is also wider for the working age group. While we observed a small reduction in the AROPE rate for persons with disabilities in the 65+ years age group, for those aged 16-64 years the AROPE rate increased from 2023 to 2024. The strong variation in AROPE rates among EU Member States for persons with disabilities aged at least 65 years remains.

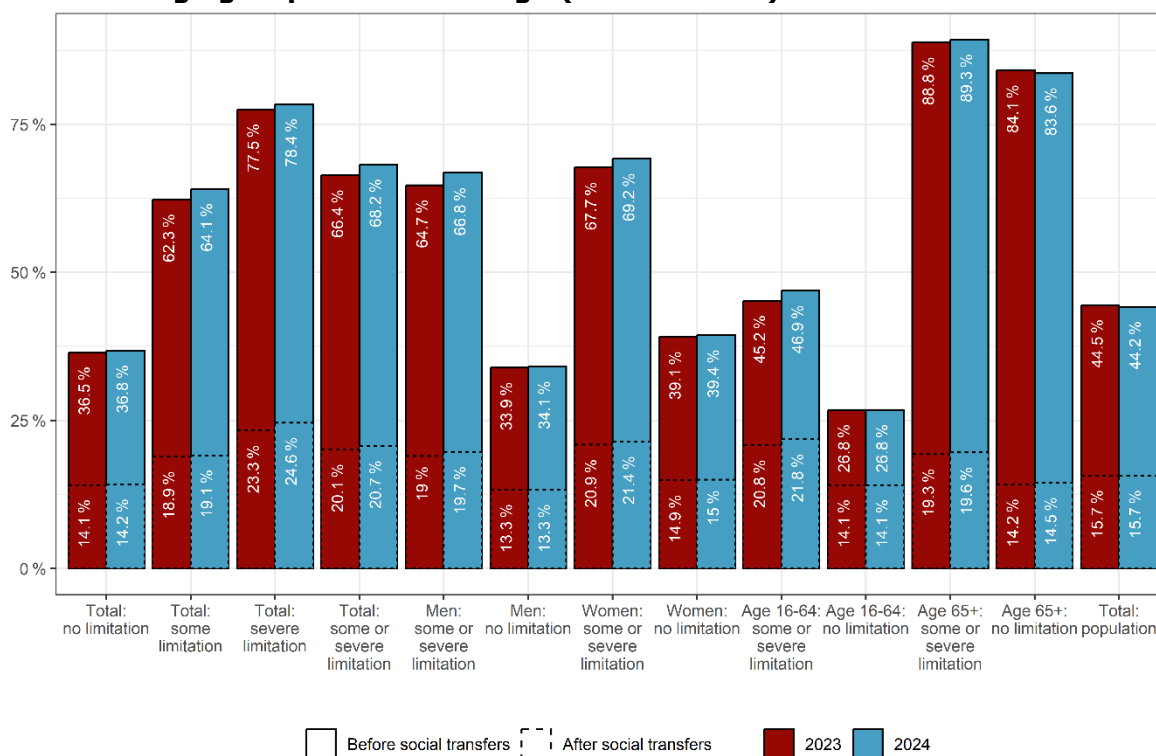
Figure 29: At risk of poverty or social exclusion (AROPE) rate (age 16+) by activity limitation level, gender and age group – EU27 average (2023 & 2024)



Source: Eurostat [hlth_dpe010], extracted on 2025-05-26
 Note: vertical dotted lines indicate range (minimum and maximum)

Figure 30 illustrates the important role of social transfers for reducing financial poverty (AROP). Especially persons with severe activity limitations and persons aged 65+, independent of activity limitation, benefit strongly from social transfers. Without social transfers, 89.3 % of persons with disabilities aged 65+ years would be considered to be at risk of poverty in 2024. Pensions are counted as social transfers which explains the strong poverty reduction effect in this age group independent of the activity limitation.

Figure 30: At risk of poverty (AROP) rate of persons with some or severe activity limitation (age 16+) before and after social transfers by activity limitation level, gender and age group – EU27 average (2023 & 2024)

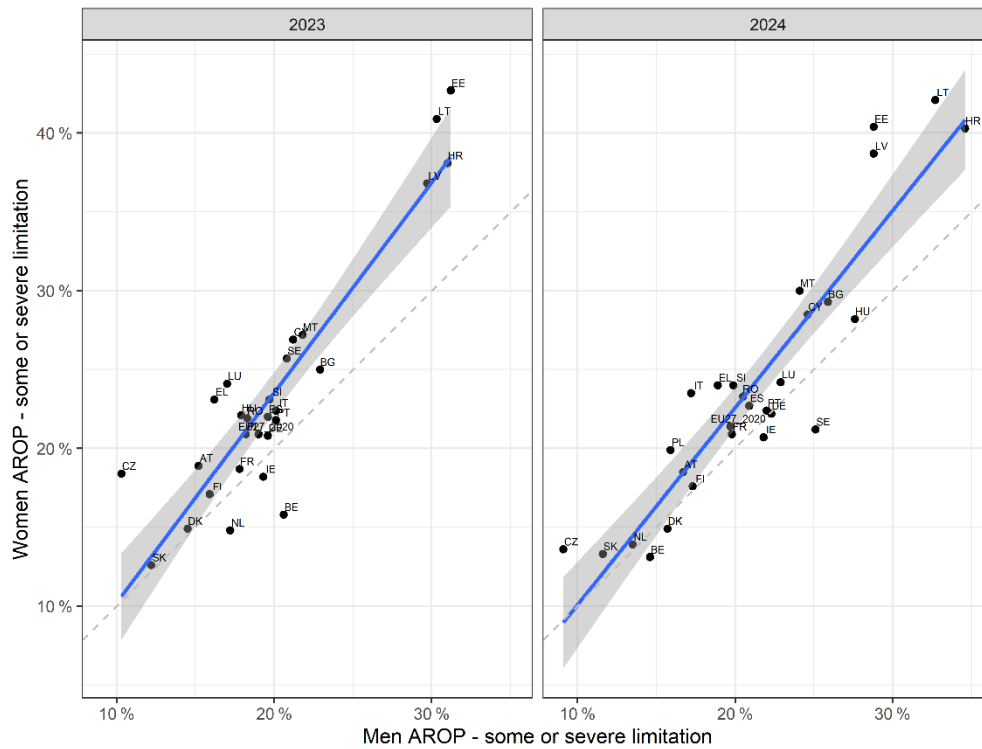


Source: Eurostat [h1th_dpe030], extracted on 2025-05-26

5.3.3 Gender differences in poverty risks

In most EU Member States, women with disabilities face higher at-risk-of-poverty rates than men with disabilities. The strong positive association between AROP rates of men and women with disabilities is statistically significant and explains more than 80 % of the variance (2023: $r=0.905$; $p=8.703e-11$; $R^2=0.82$; 2024: $r=0.919$; $p=1.279e-11$; $R^2=0.845$). Countries with low AROP rates for women with disabilities often have comparable AROP rates for men with disabilities and vice versa. The association increases towards higher AROP rates for women with rising but lower AROP rates for men. Comparing the two years, an increase in average at-risk-of-poverty rates can be observed. Most countries clustered closer to the EU average in 2023. In 2024, the countries are more spread out towards higher AROP rates, including an increase in the standard deviation of the women's and men's AROP rate from 2023 to 2024. However, a cluster of countries (Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Croatia) with high AROP rates for men with disabilities and even higher rates for women with disabilities remained in both years. The Netherlands, Ireland and Belgium were the only countries with lower women's AROP rates compared to the men's AROP rates in 2023. In 2024, this group of countries consisted of Belgium, Denmark, Ireland and Sweden.

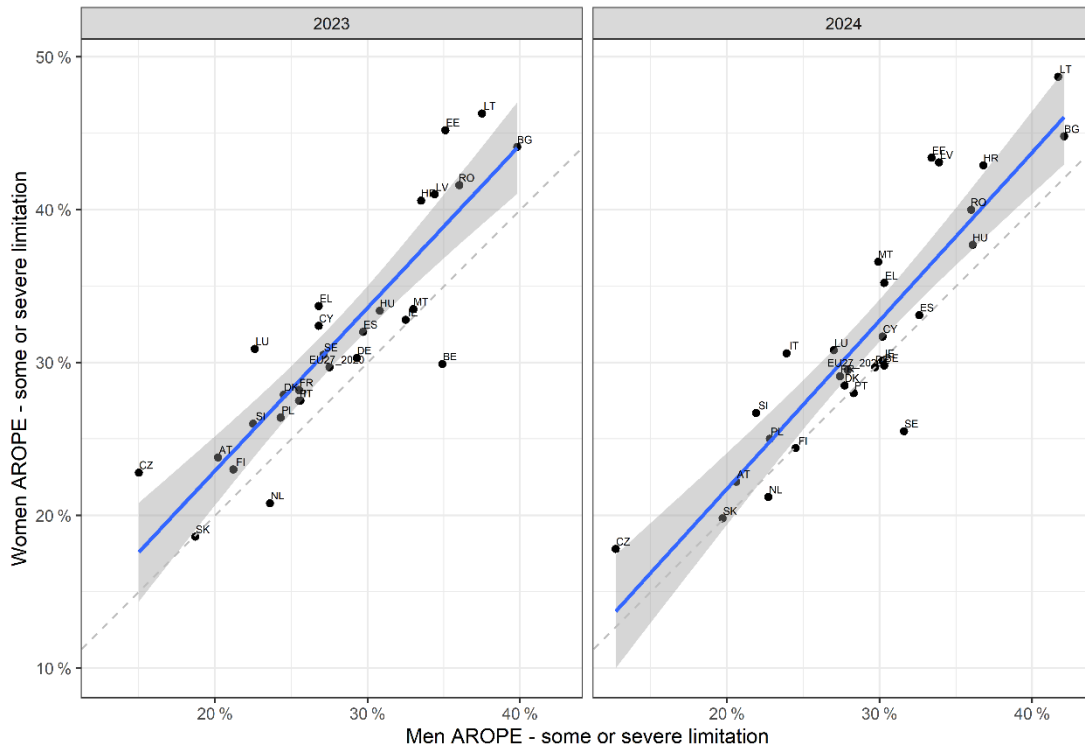
Figure 31: AROP rate of persons with some or severe activity limitation (age 16+) by gender (2023 & 2024)



Source: Eurostat [hlth_dpe020], extracted on 2025-05-26
 Note: dashed line represents a direct proportional relationship

Figure 32 repeats the analysis of the association between gender and poverty risk for the AROPE indicator. The positive association between the AROPE rate for men and women with disabilities remains strong, statistically significant and explains more than three quarters of the variance (2023: $r=0.886$; $p=8.391e^{-10}$; $R^2=0.784$; 2024: $r=0.903$; $p=1.219e^{-10}$; $R^2=0.815$). The general tendency remains that men’s AROPE rates are associated with higher women’s AROPE rates. The Netherlands and Belgium were the only countries in 2023 with lower women’s AROPE rates compared to the men’s AROPE rates. In 2024, the same was observed for the Netherlands and for Sweden.

Figure 32: AROPE rate of persons with some or severe activity limitation (age 16+) by gender (2023 & 2024)



Source: Eurostat [hth_dpe010], extracted on 2025-05-26
 Note: dashed line represents a direct proportional relationship

5.3.4 Age differences in poverty risks

As mentioned earlier, age plays a significant part in explaining average risks of poverty among persons with disabilities in European countries. The prevalence of activity limitation increases rapidly with age, from mid-adulthood onwards. Persons with disabilities in old age are at higher risk of poverty than older persons without disabilities. They include two groups that cannot be easily disaggregated from the EU-SILC data. Some experienced disability during their younger years and have grown old with disabilities, but many older people acquire disabilities later in life. In terms of poverty risk, the latter group might benefit from the protective influence of occupational or public pension rights accumulated previously as adults without disabilities (with less risk of exclusion from employment).

To understand the differences in poverty risk for older and younger adults with disabilities, it is helpful to examine the comparison with people without activity limitations in the same age group in more detail. Figure 33 plots the general risk of poverty among 16-64-year-olds in each Member State with the risk for persons with disabilities in that age group (using a similar method to the graphs above summarising the labour market situation). Figure 34 shows a similar comparison for those aged 65 and over. This suggests that the average risk of poverty after social transfers among older people in general very strongly predicts poverty risk among older persons with disabilities.¹⁰⁸ This positive association predicts around 98 % of the variance in disability poverty risk rates for this age group but only around half of the risk among the working age group.^{109,110}

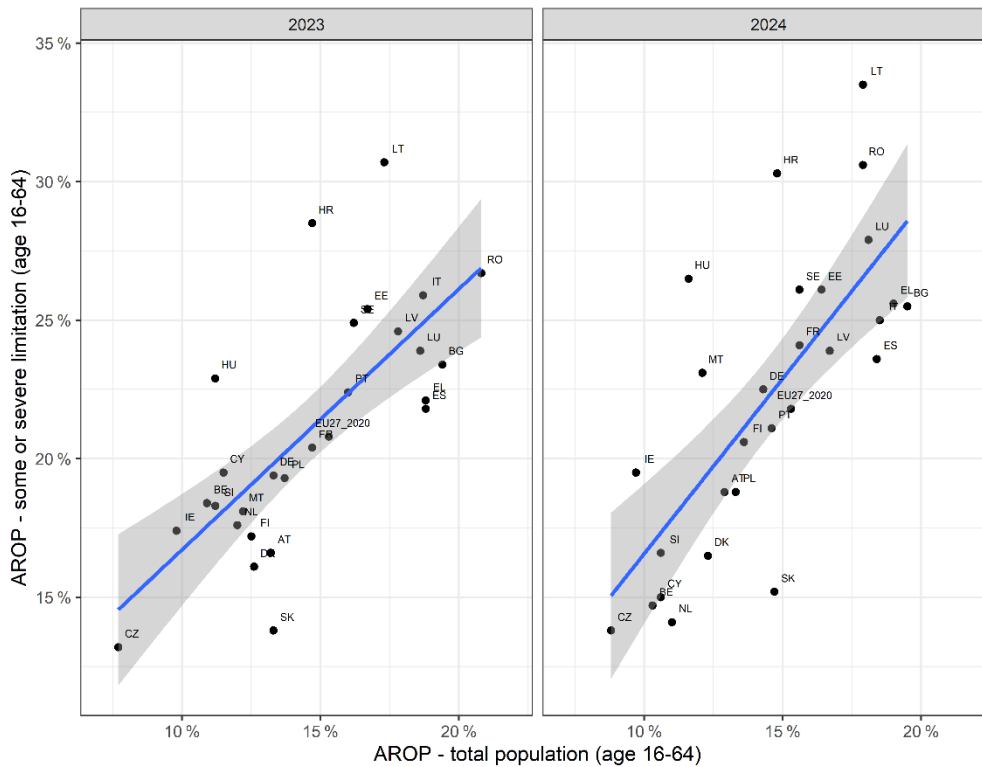
This is relevant from a policy perspective because it suggests that general poverty alleviation measures targeting older people, including old age pensions, might benefit a significant proportion of persons with disabilities. It is also relevant that many in this age group will have accumulated occupational pension protection during their working lives prior to developing disabilities. However, the use of an average indicator can mask the hidden costs of living with disability in old age and the accumulated disadvantage faced by the minority who have long-standing or more severe activity-limiting conditions. Targeted disability policies are still needed to close the disability poverty gap in old age.

¹⁰⁸ 2023: $r=0.99$; $p<2.2e^{-16}$; $R^2=0.979$; 2024: $r=0.987$; $p<2.2e^{-16}$; $R^2=0.975$.

¹⁰⁹ 2023: $r=0.73$; $p=1.55e^{-05}$; $R^2=0.533$; 2024: $r=0.739$; $p=1.079e^{-05}$; $R^2=0.546$.

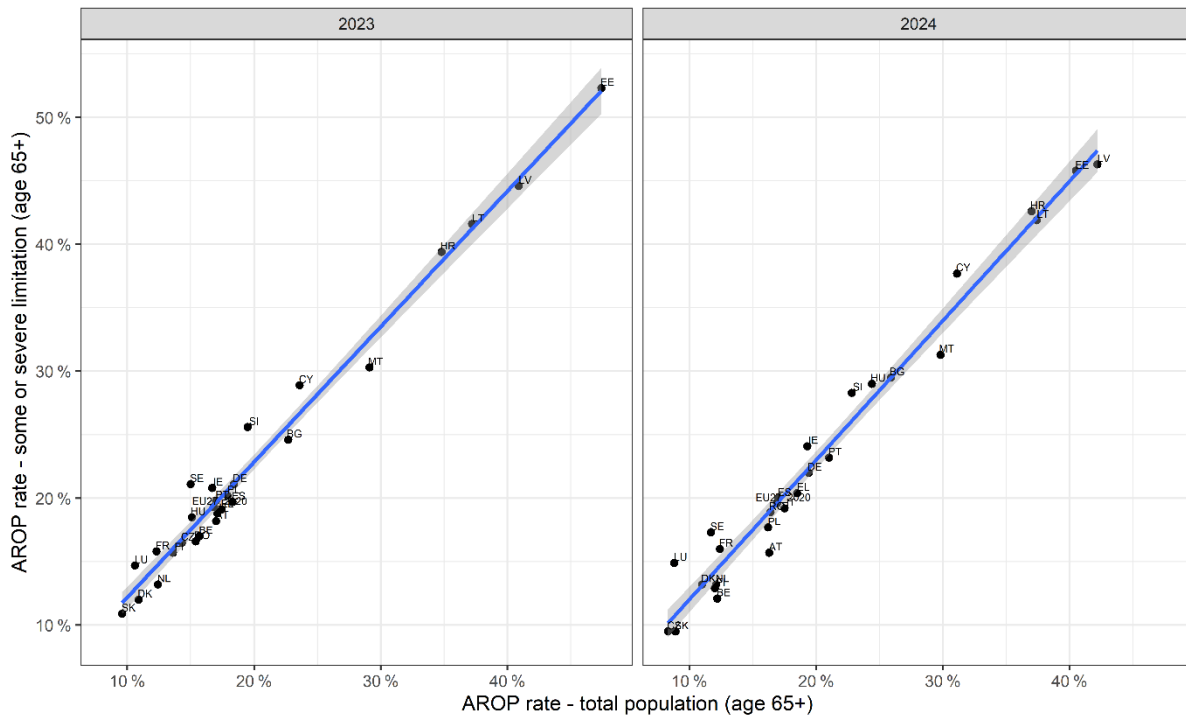
¹¹⁰ This is partly accounted for by the fact that an increased proportion of the general population contains the comparator group of persons with disabilities, but the general comparison helps to dilute the prevalence effect discussed earlier.

Figure 33: General population AROP rate and AROP rate of persons with some or severe activity limitation (age 16-64) (2023 & 2024)



Source: Eurostat [hlth_dpe020], extracted on 2025-05-26

Figure 34: General population AROP rate and AROP rate of persons with some or severe activity limitation (age 65+) (2023 & 2024)



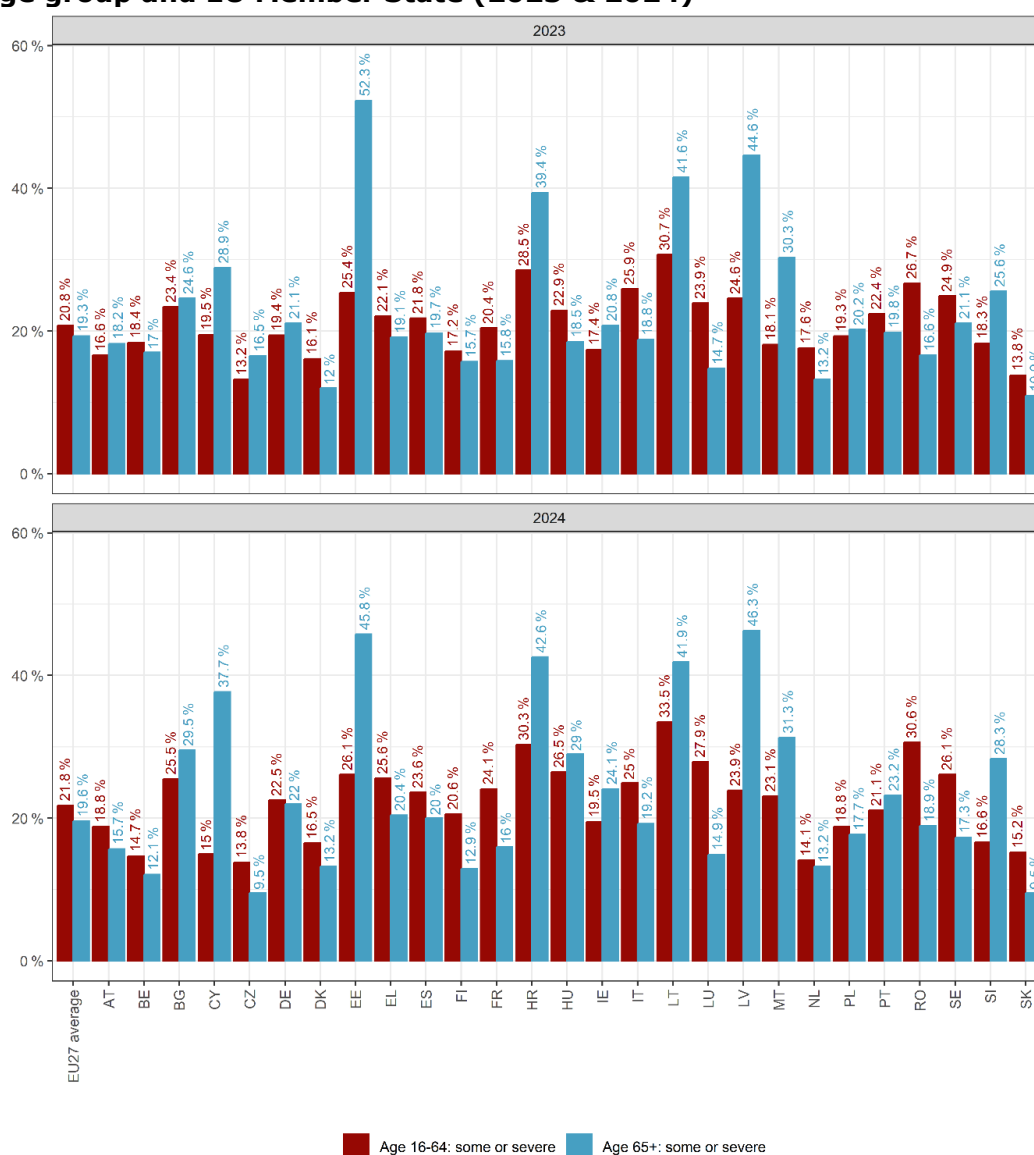
Source: Eurostat [hlth_dpe020], extracted on 2025-05-26

By comparison, general levels of poverty risk in working age adults do not predict the variation of risk for working age adults with disabilities (16-64 years) as clearly (Figure 33). Countries with lower general poverty risks in this age group do tend to have lower

risks for persons with disabilities but the explanatory power of this positive association is weaker. The heterogeneity among EU Member States is influenced by the differences in employment chances (discussed earlier) and the adequacy of social protection benefits (including disability benefits).¹¹¹

Examining the differences between the main age groups reveals several anomalies of policy interest. While the average risk of poverty after social transfers in the EU is on average higher for working age persons with disabilities than for older persons with disabilities, the reverse is observed in several Member States. A higher AROP rate by at least 10 pps for older persons with disabilities was seen in Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Malta in 2023 as well as in Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia and Slovenia in 2024. This is shown in Figure 35 and might be explained by a combination of differences in labour market opportunities and social protection policies, including pensions, or sampling/response factors in national surveys. It is important to underline that these are measures of financial poverty relative to a national relative threshold (60 % of median disposable income).

Figure 35: AROP rate of persons with some or severe activity limitation by main age group and EU Member State (2023 & 2024)

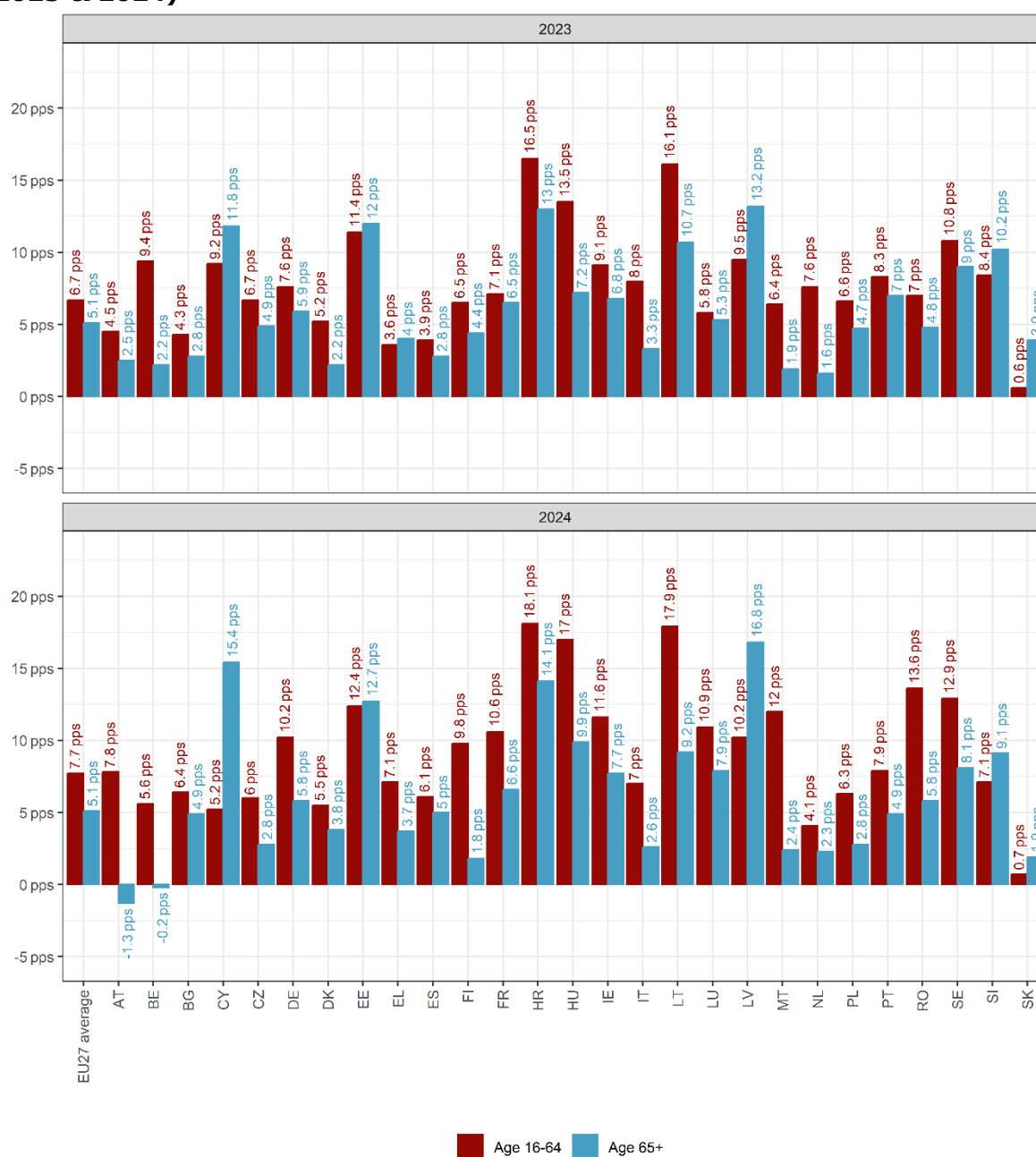


Source: Eurostat [hith_dpe020], extracted on 2025-05-26

¹¹¹ It may also be affected to some extent by variations in the reported rate of disability prevalence, as discussed earlier (but this is not the determinant factor).

These anomalies are further evident when we look at disability equality gaps in the risk of poverty (Figure 36). On average, the gaps are larger for persons with disabilities aged 16 to 64 years than aged 65 years or older. The average gap for working age persons with disabilities in the EU was 6.7 pps in 2023 and 7.7 pps in 2024, while the gap for older persons with disabilities was 5.1 pps in 2023 and 5.1 pps in 2024. In most countries these gaps are larger among working age adults, but in some countries the pattern is reversed, notably in Cyprus, Latvia, Slovakia and Slovenia. On the other hand, Austria and Bulgaria had negative disability poverty gaps for older persons in 2024, thus persons with disabilities in this age group had lower AROP rates than their peers without disabilities. Some of these risk gaps are substantial, for example, in the working age group it exceeded ten percentage points in five Member States in 2023 (above 15 pps in Croatia and Lithuania) and 12 Member States in 2024 (above 15 pps additionally in Hungary). For the older group, in 2023 it was above ten points in six Member States (around 13 pps in Latvia and Croatia) and in 2024 in four Member States (above 15 pps in Cyprus and Latvia).

Figure 36: Disability poverty gap (AROP) by main age group and EU Member State (2023 & 2024)



Source: Eurostat [h1th_dpe020] own calculation, extracted on 2025-05-28

5.3.5 A summary indicator of poverty risk

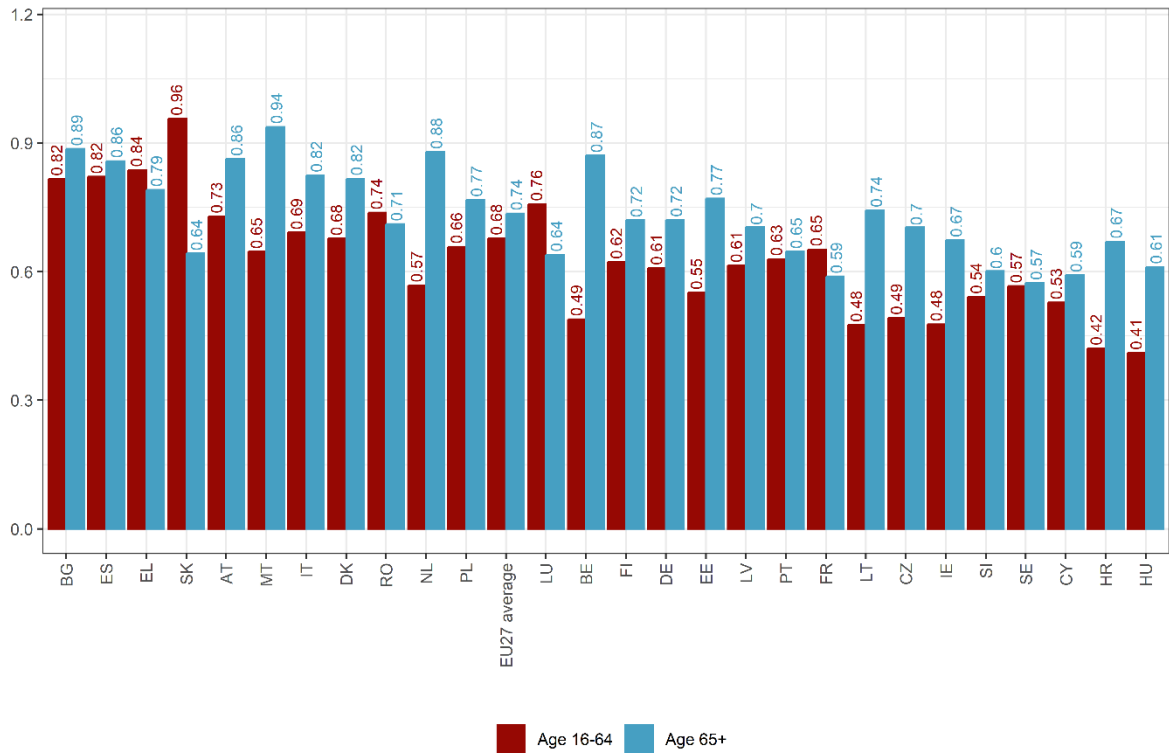
Based on this review, it is useful to distinguish indicators of poverty risk for the two main age groups in policy discussions (and to ensure that child poverty can be added in the future). It is also useful to compare relative disability risks within countries (using inverted relative chances may be helpful here, as shown in Figure 37 and Figure 38). For example, where the risk of living in poverty is two times greater for persons with disabilities than other persons, the inverted ratio (0.5) represents the corresponding chances of not living in poverty. Using these ratios has the effect of standardising the poverty rate indicators to represent the relative chances of persons with disabilities in each age group, compared to other persons in the same groups.¹¹² In practice, these risks arise from the interaction of labour market inclusion and social protection policies over a lifetime. Relative poverty risk provides a good, and well tested, method to compare within and between countries, but it is interesting to look also at the relative chances of being in poverty across countries.

The countries in Figure 37 and Figure 38 are arranged according to their ranking of the combined values of inverted poverty risks for both age groups. In 2023, Bulgaria had the highest combined score with an inverted risk ratio of 0.82 for the 16-64 age group and 0.89 for the 65 or older age group, which indicates that the difference in at-risk-of-poverty rates for persons with and without disabilities differs less than in other countries. Hungary had the lowest combined score in 2023 with 0.41 for 16-to-64-year-olds and 0.61 for those aged 65 and over and thus a significantly greater difference in AROP rates between persons with and without disabilities. In 2024, Austria and Belgium had an inverted poverty risk ratio above 1 for persons aged 65 years and more, which indicates that persons with disabilities have a lower AROP rate than persons without disabilities. Austria and Belgium together with Slovakia are the top three countries when aggregating the ratios of both age groups. Hungary has the lowest combined ratio score.

On average, persons with disabilities in the EU of working age had an inverted poverty risk of 0.68 in 2023 and of 0.65 in 2024 and thus around a one-and-a-half times higher chance of being at risk of poverty than persons without disabilities in the same age group. For persons with disabilities aged 65 years or older, the inverted poverty risk was 0.74 in 2023 and 2024 and thus a lower relative risk.

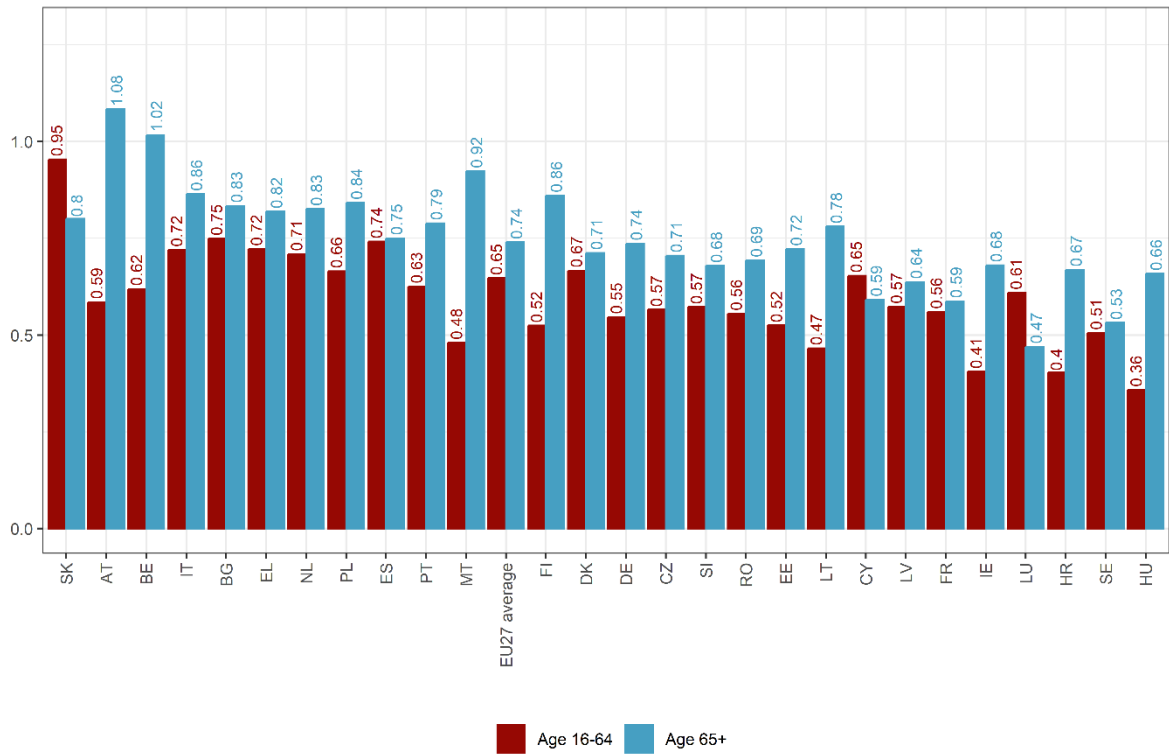
¹¹² This means the risk estimation is reversed as a ratio of the poverty risk for persons without disabilities to persons with disabilities (so that 1 rather than 0 equates to parity between groups).

Figure 37: Disability AROP risk ratios (1 / risk, chances of not being in poverty) (2023)



Source: Eurostat [hlth_dpe020] own calculation, extracted on 2025-05-26

Figure 38: Disability AROP risk ratios (1 / risk, chances of not being in poverty) (2024)



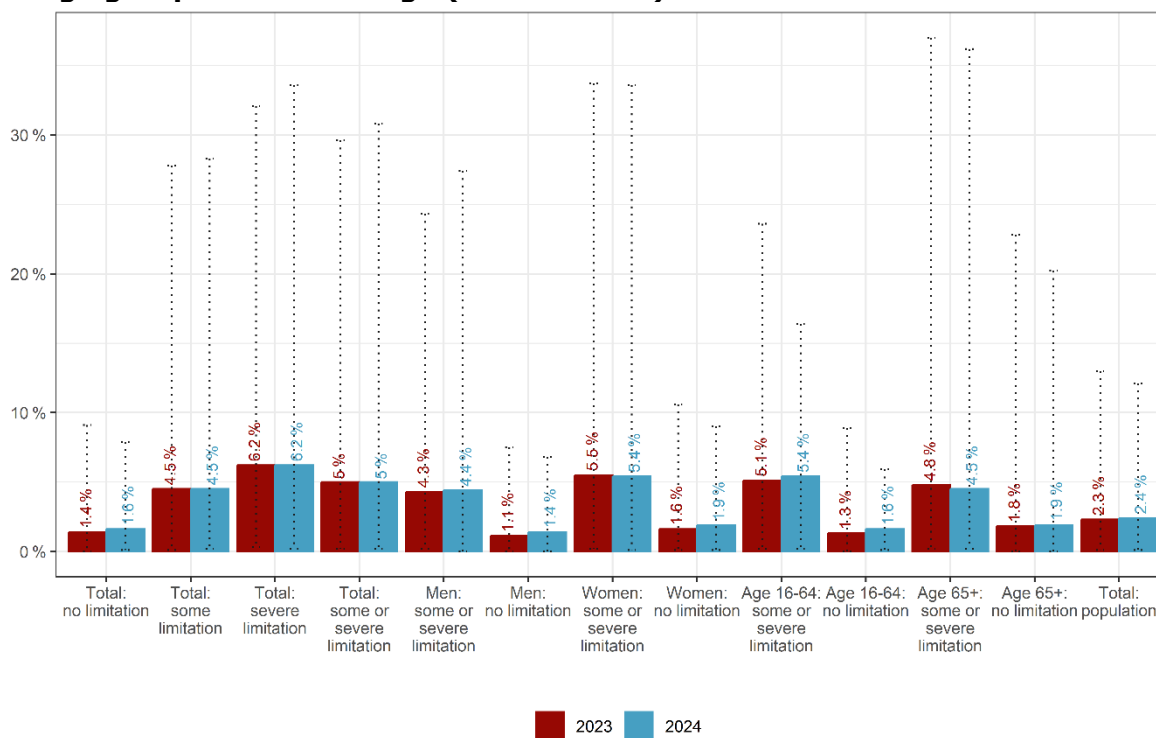
Source: Eurostat [hlth_dpe020] own calculation, extracted on 2025-05-26

5.3.6 Healthcare – unmet healthcare needs

The 27 EDE country fiches contain separate tables for the share of unmet healthcare needs of persons with and without disabilities in the country compared to the EU27 average. They are based on the EU-SILC variable of unmet needs for healthcare services due to financial reasons (too expensive), distance/transport (too far to travel) or timeliness (waiting lists).¹¹³ Figure 39 illustrates the EU averages for unmet healthcare needs in 2023 and 2024 by level of activity limitation, gender and main age group. The results need to be interpreted with caution due to the wide variation in Member States' estimates, especially for persons with disabilities.

On average, 5 % of persons with disabilities reported unmet healthcare needs in 2023 and 2024, compared to 1.4 % and 1.6 % of persons without disabilities. Independent of gender and age group, persons with disabilities are more affected by unmet healthcare needs than persons without disabilities. The national averages for persons with disabilities range from 0.2 % (2023 & 2024) in Cyprus to 29.6 % (2023) and 30.8 % (2024) in Greece. The rate of unmet healthcare needs generally increases with the level of activity limitation and is higher among women with disabilities than among men with disabilities. The average rate for persons with disabilities of working age with unmet healthcare needs was 5.1 % in 2023 and 5.4 % in 2024. Among older persons with disabilities, the rate was 4.8 % in 2023 and 4.5 % in 2024. A greater disability equality gap than the gender or age gap can be observed regarding unmet healthcare needs.

Figure 39: Unmet healthcare needs (age 16+) by activity limitation level, gender and age group – EU27 average (2023 & 2024)



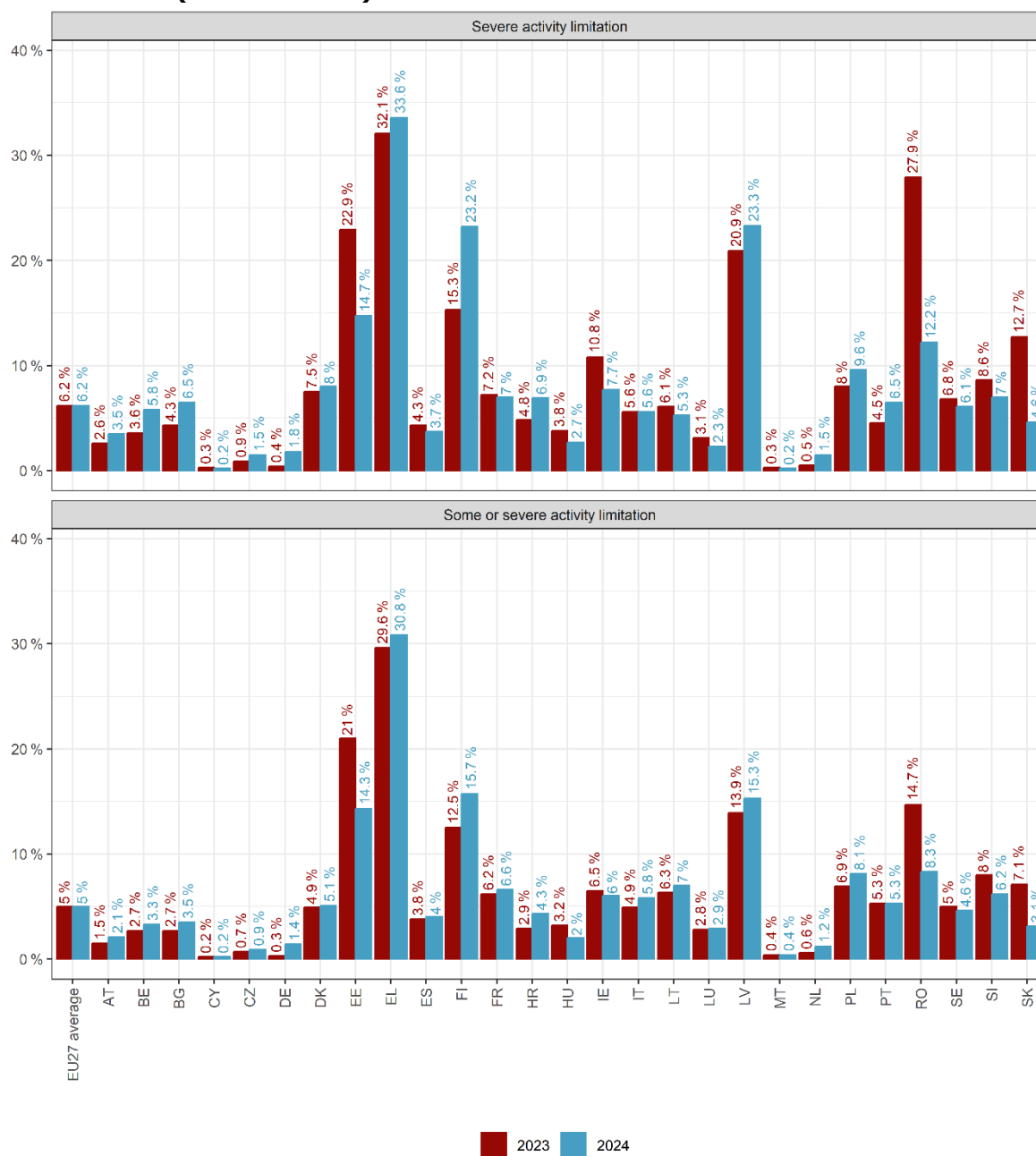
Source: Eurostat [hlth_dh030], extracted on 2025-05-26
Note: vertical dotted lines indicate range (minimum and maximum)

Estonia, Greece, Finland, Latvia and Romania reported unmet healthcare needs above the 10 % threshold for persons with disabilities in 2023, and in 2024 the same group of countries excluding Romania (Figure 40). The same five countries, and additionally Ireland and Slovakia in 2023, also have unmet healthcare needs above 10 % for persons with severe activity limitation. The rate decreased by at least 4 pps from 2023 to 2024 in

¹¹³ For further explanation of the indicator, see https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Unmet_health_care_needs_statistics.

Estonia, Romania and Slovakia for persons with disabilities, while it increased by 3.2 pps in Finland. Countries with high rates of persons with disabilities with unmet healthcare needs do not always report high prevalences among persons without disabilities. This indicates that unmet healthcare needs are predominantly associated with activity limitation and are thus a concern for better disability equality in Europe.

Figure 40: Unmet healthcare needs (age 16+) by activity limitation and EU Member State (2023 & 2024)



Source: Eurostat [hlth_dh030], extracted on 2025-05-26

5.3.7 Selected social policy initiatives from the Member States

This section provides illustrative examples of recently enacted and implemented social policy measures based on information provided in the country fiches.

Examples of recent and ongoing reforms aimed to strengthen income security and reduce poverty, including among persons with disabilities include the creation of a comprehensive social security benefit in Finland that would consolidate existing supports into a single,

more coherent framework. The new benefit is intended to include a basic living allowance, a housing cost allowance and a discretionary allowance acting as a last-resort safety net. The law establishing this new benefit is expected to enter into force by early 2026. The Government's proposal includes an impact assessment covering various population groups, including persons with disabilities. In Luxembourg, a major increase in the energy allowance was announced in July 2024, trebling it in size with effect from 1 January 2025. From this date, recipients of the REVIS benefit will automatically receive both the cost-of-living and energy allowances.

In Malta, several significant measures have been adopted to support carers and persons with disabilities. The Carers' Grant for parents of children with severe disabilities over the age of 16 and the Carer at Home Scheme have been strengthened. The Government also supports full-time carers who live with relatives requiring high or medium levels of medical care through two schemes – the Increased Carers' Allowance and the Carers' Allowance. In 2024, both of these allowances were fully updated in line with the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA), while the Increased Severe Disability Allowance was raised to match the net national minimum wage.

In Slovakia, amendments to the Pension and Disability Insurance Act were adopted in 2023 allowing for part-time disability pensions to be recalculated as full-time equivalents. The objective is to reduce poverty and social exclusion among persons with disabilities, particularly those who are only able to work part-time.

In addition, a number of countries have recently implemented measures aimed at enhancing access to social services and promoting independent living for persons with disabilities.

In Bulgaria, the Government adopted the National Map for Social Services in August 2024, financed from the state budget. This instrument defines the maximum number of users for each type of service.

In Finland, a new Disability Services Act (675/2023) entered into force in January 2025, merging two previous disability laws into a single, comprehensive framework. It represents a major step toward compliance with the UN CRPD as most services under this Act are defined as subjective rights, which means that individuals have an enforceable entitlement to them. The Act also introduces new types of services, including supported decision-making and special participation support, a service similar to personal assistance but specifically designed for persons with intellectual disabilities who had previously been largely excluded from personal assistance schemes because of capacity-based eligibility restrictions.

In Belgium, the Flemish Government adopted a draft memorandum in May 2025 that sets the direction for a reform of personalised budgets for persons with disabilities by 2028. This reform responds to the growing waiting lists and increasing complexity of care needs. The Flemish Government plans to guide people with lesser care needs, currently classified in priority groups 2 and 3, towards directly accessible services such as home support, day care and group support, in order to optimise the use of resources and ensure more targeted assistance.

In Slovakia, the parliament approved a concept for reforming the financing of social services in 2025, which is expected to take effect in 2026. This reform will introduce a personal budget system and a framework for supported decision-making to enhance the independence of persons with disabilities. Within this new system, the existing home-care allowance will be replaced by a care allowance for dependent persons. This allowance will be granted to all individuals recognised as dependent, who will then have the flexibility to use it for formal or informal care according to their own preferences.

In Austria, the Government Programme for 2025-2029 sets out the goal of developing personal assistance into a nationwide system. It envisages several measures, including

providing legal protection for personal assistants, clarifying their qualifications and job descriptions, introducing a unified definition of personal assistance and ensuring consistent regulation of assistance for both work and leisure. It also foresees establishing a single contact point for all personal assistance services.

In Czechia, the recent amendment to the Social Services Act introduces a new type of service known as social-health inpatient care. This service is designed for individuals whose health condition is too serious to be accommodated within standard residential social services, such as nursing homes, yet not severe enough to require hospitalisation. The amendment also enables the provision and financing of health services within non-residential settings, such as relief or respite social services.

With regard to access to healthcare services, in Denmark a major healthcare structural reform was agreed in November 2024. The reform aims to move healthcare services and treatments closer to citizens, ideally providing them in their own homes where possible. It involves a large-scale investment in modern hospitals, medical equipment, digital services and local healthcare facilities. The reform places a strong emphasis on innovation and digitalisation in healthcare delivery.

Recent measures to enhance physical accessibility and promote inclusive living environments, which are of particular relevance for persons with disabilities, include a new public financial support package for accessibility improvements in France (introduced between 2023 and 2024) that targets both local authorities and small private facilities. In addition, since 1 January 2024, the Ma Prime Adapt scheme has provided funding for home adaptation work to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities and older adults with care needs. The scheme is also open to landlords, encouraging broader adaptation of housing stock.

Finally, there are two countries which have recently undertaken comprehensive reforms of their disability assessment systems to ensure greater consistency, transparency and alignment with the UN CRPD.

In Italy, Legislative Decree No. 62, which came into force in early 2024, introduces a new definition of disability consistent with the UN CRPD, focusing on the interaction between long-term impairments and environmental barriers. The reform unifies all assessments, covering disability, deafness, blindness and work-related disability, into a single, coherent process that can be initiated and completed in one session. The new system is currently being piloted in selected provinces before being rolled out nationally.

In Slovakia, the parliament approved a reform of the disability assessment process in November 2024, due to take effect in September 2025. The reform aims to unify and streamline assessment activities by removing duplication and introducing digitalisation through the use of digitised health records. It also redefines and unifies the criteria for determining degrees of dependency, with the goal of making assessments more transparent. However, the list of diagnoses will remain unchanged to ensure that no person loses entitlement to compensation or aids as a result of the reform. The new methodology will integrate health and social dimensions of disability for the purposes of both compensation and access to social services.

5.4 Disability, education and skills development

5.4.1 Strategic context

Article 24 CRPD refers to education. As reiterated in the UN CRPD Concluding Observations to Member States, the Committee consistently recommends that States Parties review their national education strategies and emphasise awareness-raising initiatives, including mandatory training on inclusive education for teachers, support staff and non-teaching education personnel.

General Comment No. 4 on Article 24,¹¹⁴ issued in 2016, addresses the right to inclusive education. While notable progress has been made, the Committee remains deeply concerned about ongoing challenges. Millions of persons with disabilities continue to be denied access to education and many more only have access to segregated educational settings where the quality of education is substandard. The barriers to inclusive education for persons with disabilities stem from various factors, such as a lack of understanding and implementation of the human rights model of disability, persistent discrimination, inadequate and poorly designed funding mechanisms that fail to support reasonable accommodations and insufficient knowledge about inclusive and quality education and diversity. Emphasising inclusive education and training/upskilling, the Committee highlights:

'42. States parties must adopt and implement a national educational strategy that includes the provision of education at all levels for all learners, on a basis of inclusion and equality of opportunity.'

'12(d)... all teachers and other staff receive the education and training they need to give them the core values and competencies to accommodate inclusive learning environments, which include teachers with disabilities.'

'36. ...Having an adequate number of qualified and committed school staff is key to the introduction and sustainability of inclusive education. Lack of understanding and capacity remain significant barriers to inclusion. States parties must ensure that all teachers are trained in inclusive education and that that training is based on the human rights model of disability.'

In its 2023 and 2024 reviews, the UN CRPD Committee reiterated its concerns regarding the full implementation of inclusive education across several Member States. For instance, in its review of Austria, the Committee noted that progress towards inclusive education appears to have stagnated, with a decline in the integration of students with disabilities into mainstream education. Similarly, the Committee's observations on Belgium highlighted the lack of concrete timelines and resources for achieving full inclusion in education. In Germany, the Committee noted the prevalence of special schools and classes, emphasising the need for systemic reforms. Recent reviews of Denmark and the Netherlands also flagged high dropout rates, barriers to transitioning from special to inclusive education and the need for structured teacher training and accessible learning environments. In its 2025 Concluding Observations on the EU,¹¹⁵ the UN CRPD Committee urged the EU to ensure systematic and disability-specific training for professionals across sectors, including education and employment, as a precondition for delivering on the right to inclusive education and equal participation.

The EU supports Member States' efforts to foster inclusivity and accessibility in education for persons with disabilities through several targeted initiatives. Under the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030, the Council Recommendation on Vocational Education and Training (VET)¹¹⁶ encourages Member States to design inclusive and accessible vocational programmes for vulnerable groups, including individuals with disabilities. The renewed European Alliance for Apprenticeships¹¹⁷ supports knowledge-sharing on the role of apprenticeships in social inclusion and promotes quality apprenticeships tailored to learners with disabilities, while the reinforced Youth

¹¹⁴ United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2016), General comment No. 4 (2016) on Article 24: Right to inclusive education, CRPD/C/GC/4, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/general-comments-and-recommendations/general-comment-no-4-article-24-right-inclusive>.

¹¹⁵ United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2025), 'Concluding observations on the combined second and third periodic reports of the European Union', CRPD/C/EU/CO/2-3, adopted at the Committee's 780th meeting on 18 March 2025, <https://docs.un.org/en/CRPD/C/EU/CO/2-3>.

¹¹⁶ Council Recommendation of 24 November 2020 on vocational education and training (VET) for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience, 2020/C 417/01, OJ C 417, 2 December 2020, pp. 1-16, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=oj:JOC_2020_417_R_0001

¹¹⁷ European Commission (2021), 'European Alliance for Apprenticeships', <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1147>.

Guarantee¹¹⁸ facilitates outreach and activation¹¹⁸ of young persons with disabilities. The Child Guarantee,¹¹⁹ ongoing through 2030, complements the EU Disability Strategy by ensuring that children with disabilities, who are identified as a key vulnerable group, have access to inclusive education, early learning and targeted support, thereby contributing directly to the strategic objectives of skills development and social inclusion.

In addition, the European Skills Agenda¹²⁰ highlights the importance of public employment services and guidance counsellors in bridging skills gaps and improving market inclusion, particularly by enhancing digital skills and collaborating with social enterprises. The Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027¹²¹ further commits to providing accessible digital learning environments, content and assistive technologies for equitable participation in education.

More recent developments include the Council Recommendation of 13 May 2024 'Europe on the Move' — learning mobility opportunities for all,¹²² which highlights the importance of lifelong learning for everyone, including persons with disabilities, reinforcing the strategic framework for inclusive education and skills development. The Union of Skills Strategy (March 2025)¹²³ promotes inclusive lifelong learning and targeted upskilling and reskilling to address skills gaps linked to the green and digital transitions, including for persons with disabilities. In parallel, the EU Accessibility Act, which entered into force in June 2025, establishes binding standards for accessible services and products across the Union, creating more equitable conditions including for education, training and skills development.

Reskilling, upskilling and training of educational professionals is a priority for the Disability Strategy, as it is included in the UN Committee Recommendations to the Member States and the EU and in General Comment No. 5.¹²⁴ To address specific professional needs, the Commission's Training Strategy for justice professionals includes upskilling on EU disability legislation and the protection of individuals' rights in digital spaces, aligned with the UN CRPD.¹²⁵ The new Union of Skills Strategy (2025) reinforces this approach by promoting inclusive lifelong learning and targeted training opportunities to close skills gaps, thereby supporting teachers, trainers and professionals working with learners with disabilities.

Internally, the Commission fosters a respectful workplace by mandating training for managers and HR professionals to combat bias and discrimination against persons with disabilities.¹²⁶ Efforts to enhance accessibility extend to the Commission's infrastructure, digital platforms and communications, incorporating innovative projects, accessible publications and training in International Sign language to improve inclusivity across all areas of operation.

¹¹⁸ European Commission (2023), 'The reinforced Youth Guarantee', <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1079>.

¹¹⁹ European Commission (2021), 'European Child Guarantee', <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1428>.

¹²⁰ European Commission (2020), 'European Skills Agenda', <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1223>.

¹²¹ European Commission (2020), 'Digital Education', <https://education.ec.europa.eu/focus-topics/digital-education>.

¹²² Council of the European Union (2024), Council Recommendation of 13 May 2024 'Europe on the Move' – learning mobility opportunities for everyone, *OJ C / 2024/3364*, <https://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2024/3364/oj>.

¹²³ European Commission (2025), 'Union of skills', https://commission.europa.eu/topics/eu-competitiveness/union-skills_en.

¹²⁴ United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2017), General Comment No. 5 (2017) on Article 19: Right to live independently and be included in the community, CRPD/C/GC/5, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/general-comments-and-recommendations/general-comment-no5-article-19-right-live>.

¹²⁵ European Commission (2020), Ensuring justice in the EU – A European judicial training strategy for 2021–2024, COM(2020) 713 final, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52020DC0713>.

¹²⁶ European Commission (2022), *A new Human Resources Strategy for the Commission*, https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/3d1dc4df-7995-44b8-bf08-396930fb8c9d_en?filename=C-2022-2229-EN.pdf.

In a recent publication, the Commission presented a toolkit¹²⁷ on the use of ESF+ funds focusing on staff training to support independent living. Measures eligible for funding under the ESF+ include continuous and lifelong training, reskilling and adaptation for personal assistants and support staff to the changing contexts in which they operate. These efforts aim to enhance their effectiveness and ensure they are well-prepared to meet the evolving needs of those they support. In addition, ESF+ funding can be directed toward strengthening the role of personal assistants within communities, promoting their career development and ensuring their integration into the broader care and support sector. Furthermore, ESF+ also supports targeted interventions, including social innovation measures and initiatives aimed at improving the livelihoods of precarious workers.

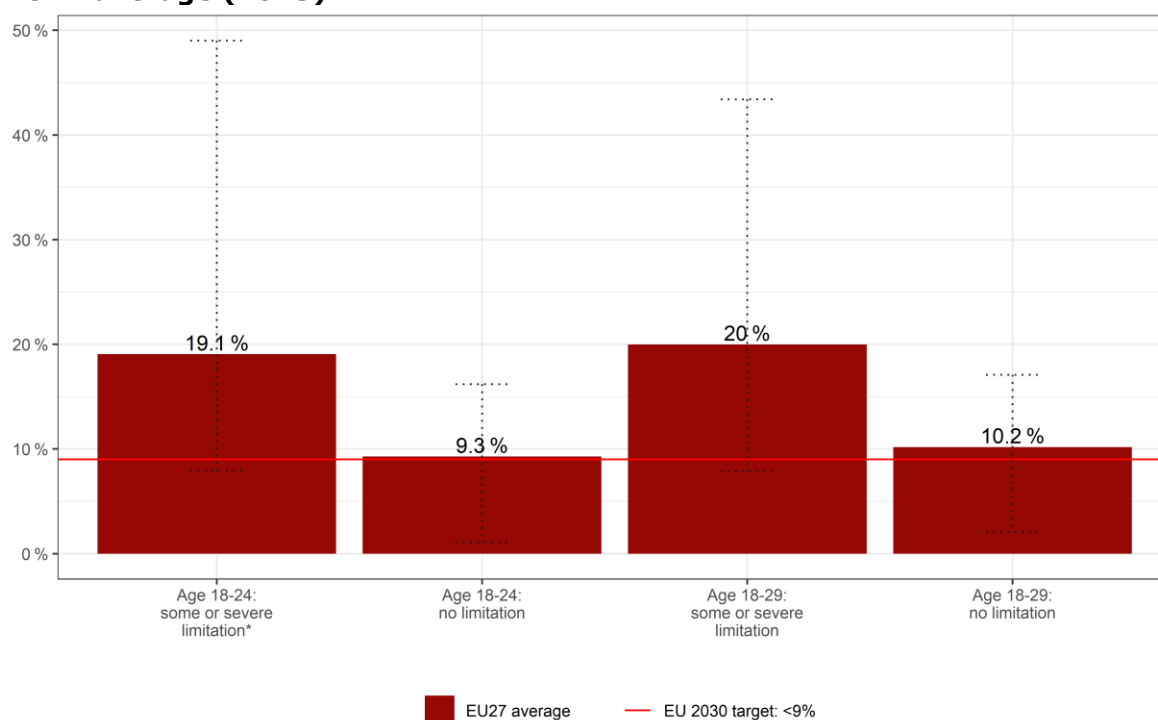
While education policies remain the responsibility of Member States, they have become increasingly important indicators for the EU, particularly when addressing the rights and inclusion of persons with disabilities. The EU has placed greater emphasis on education as a cornerstone for addressing systemic barriers faced by persons with disabilities, aiming to enhance their access to quality education, vocational training and employment opportunities.

5.4.2 Early school leavers and tertiary education

Data on education and skills development for persons with disabilities at the EU level are limited. The 27 EDE country fiches report more detailed national data on the situation of students and young adults with disabilities in 2023. The following figures use EU-SILC data on the rate of early school leavers and on completed tertiary education for different age groups.

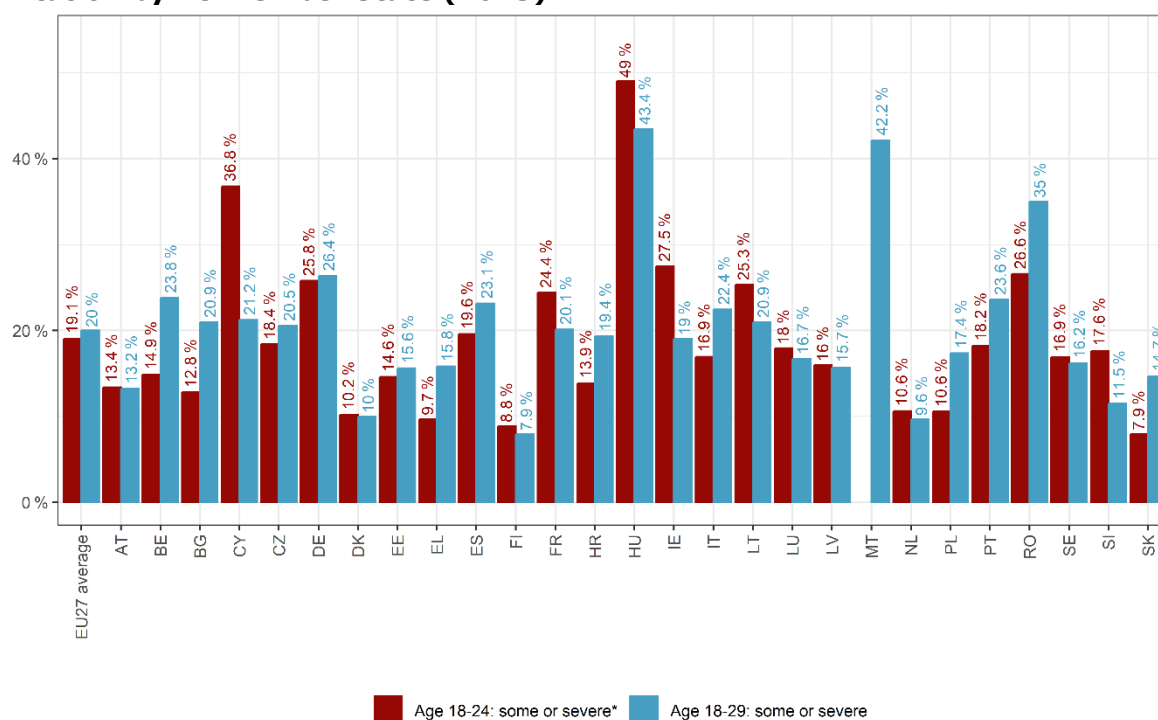
In 2023, the average rate of early school leavers among persons with disabilities was 19.1 % for the 18-24 age group and 20 % for the 18-29 age group (Figure 41). Independent of age group, the rate among persons with disabilities is significantly higher than among persons without disabilities. The EU 2030 target of less than 9 % of early school leaving has not been reached on average for persons with disabilities. The EU-SILC data estimate a rate of early school leaving slightly above 9 % among persons without disabilities (aged 18-24). The national rates for early school leaving among persons with disabilities vary substantially among EU Member States, but there is less variation for persons without disabilities.

¹²⁷ European Commission (2024), 'Toolkit: Using the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) for Staff Training in Independent Living Support', https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/toolkit-using-european-social-fund-plus-esf-staff-training-independent-living-support_en.

Figure 41: Early school leavers (age 18-24 & 18-29) by activity limitation status – EU27 average (2023)

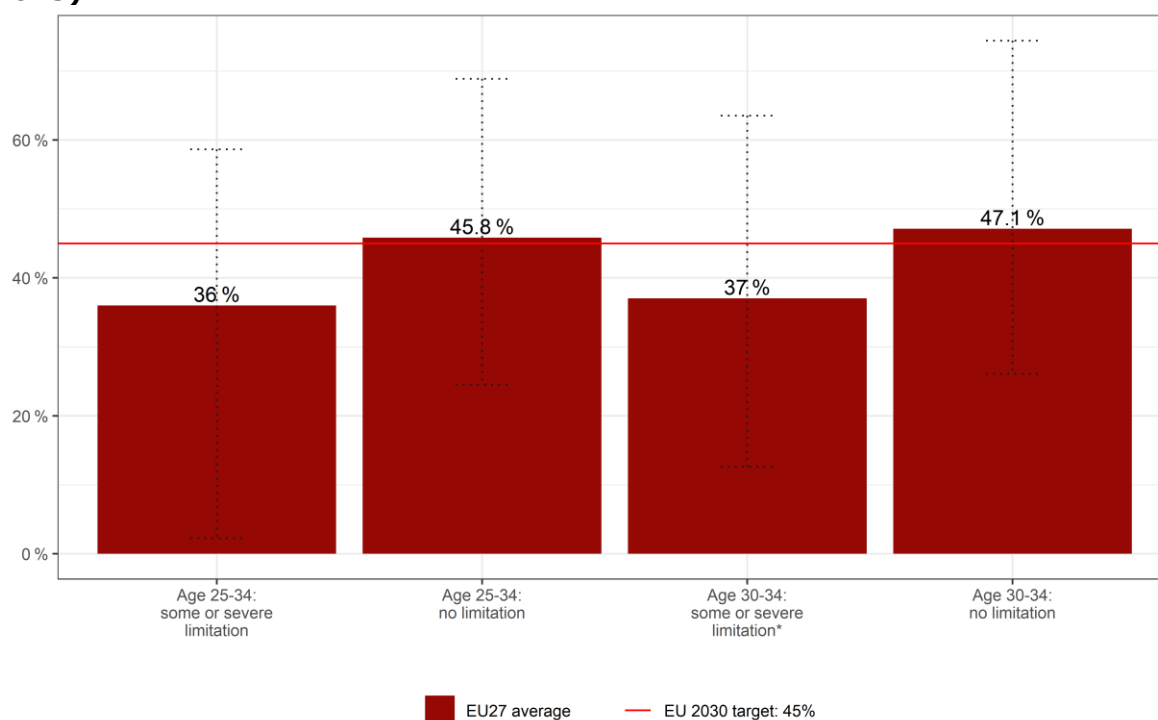
Note: * indicative data
 Source: EU-SILC 2023 (release 2024 v1), own calculation
 Note: vertical dotted lines indicate range (minimum and maximum)

The highest rates of 49 % of early school leaving among persons with disabilities (18-24 years) and 43.4 % (18-29 years) were recorded in Hungary (Figure 42). Slovakia, on the other hand, had the lowest early school leaving rates among persons with disabilities in the 18-24 age group (7.9 %), with Finland holding this position in the 18-29 age group (7.9 %).

Figure 42: Early school leavers (age 18-24 & 18-29) with some or severe activity limitation by EU Member State (2023)

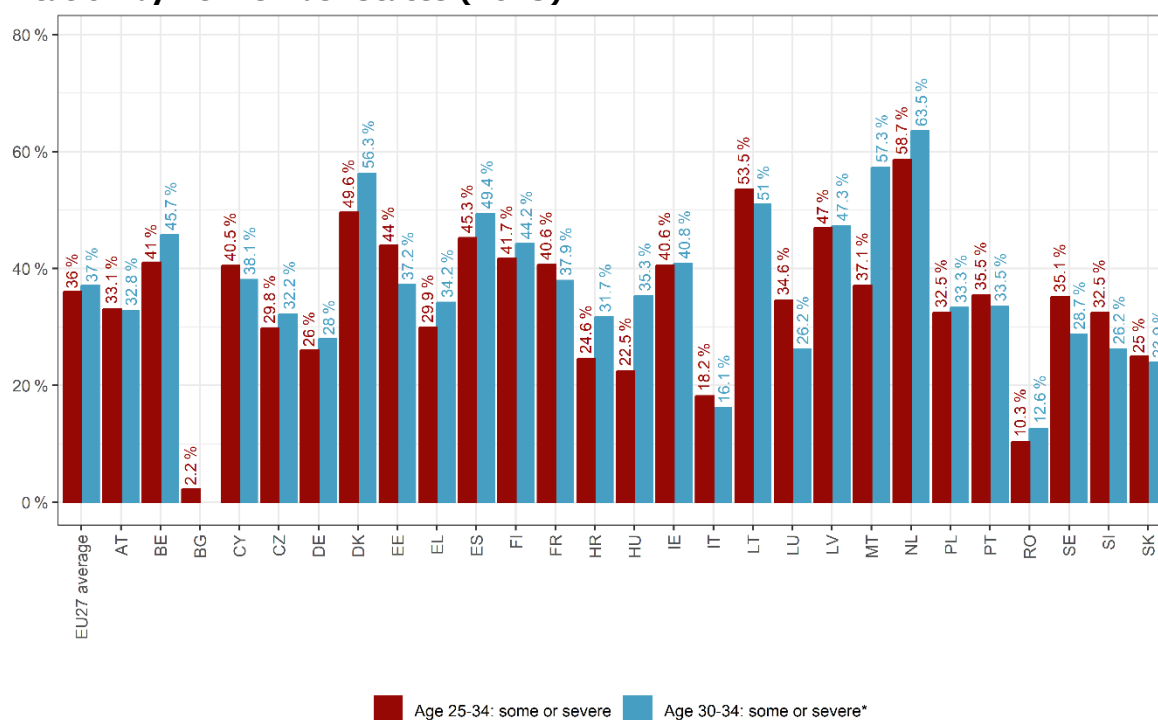
Note: * indicative data
 Source: EU-SILC 2023 (release 2024 v1), own calculation
 missing estimate for Malta due to low number of observations

Persons with disabilities in the EU also have on average lower rates of completed tertiary education (Figure 43). Of persons with disabilities aged 25-34 years, 36 % have on average completed tertiary education, with 37 % in the narrower age group of 30-34 years. The tertiary education completion rate of persons without disabilities is on average higher (45.8 % and 47.1 % for the two age groups). The tertiary education rate for persons with disabilities is therefore below the EU 2030 target of a 45 % completion rate, while the average for persons without disabilities is estimated to be above this target level.

Figure 43: Tertiary education (age 30-34 & 25-34) by activity limitation status (2023)

Note: * indicative data
 Source: EU-SILC 2023 (release 2024 v1), own calculation
 Note: vertical dotted lines indicate range (minimum and maximum)

The estimates for completed tertiary education vary significantly among EU Member States. In the 25-34 age group, the tertiary education rate for persons with disabilities ranges from 2.2 % in Bulgaria, which needs to be interpreted with caution due to the low number of observations, and from 10.3 % in Romania to 58.7 % in the Netherlands. In the narrower age group of 30-34 years, the rate ranges from 12.6 % in Romania to 63.5 % in the Netherlands. When compared to EU-SILC data for 2022, there is no significant association between countries' rates of early school leavers with disabilities and tertiary education rates of persons with disabilities.

Figure 44: Tertiary education (age 30-34 & 25-34) with some or severe activity limitation by EU Member States (2023)

Note: * indicative data
 Source: EU-SILC 2023 (release 2024 v1), own calculation
 missing estimate for Bulgaria due to low number of observations

5.4.3 Selected education policy initiatives from the Member States

In this section, we provide some examples of education and skills policy initiatives supporting learners with disabilities, based on information from national fiches. The countries presented were selected to provide an indicative overview of Member States with active or relatively advanced initiatives in this field. As in the previous sections (on labour market and social protection policies), this selection is not exhaustive but illustrates a range of approaches and policy measures planned or currently implemented across the EU.

For instance, Austria's National Action Plan for the European Child Guarantee and the 2025-2029 Government Programme include various measures to expand inclusive education for children and young people with disabilities. Initiatives focus on integrating special needs pupils into general schools, teacher training in inclusion, and increased federal funding for additional teaching support. New curricula for children with special educational needs will be implemented in 2025/2026.

In Belgium, ongoing initiatives strengthen support for pupils with disabilities across the Flemish, French and German-speaking Communities. In Flanders, the 2023 Decree on Learning Support and the 2025 'Roadmap towards more inclusive education' aim to gradually integrate special and mainstream education, starting with 20 pioneer schools in 2026. The French Community maintains territorial centres to assist mainstream schools, while the German-speaking Community consolidates special schools into shared campuses to enhance inclusion.

In Czechia, ongoing policies include the implementation of revised framework education programmes across all levels and the formal establishment of school counselling positions, such as psychologists and special educators, within mainstream schools. These measures aim to enhance early identification and tailored support, backed by guaranteed state funding. However, experts note persistent challenges in staff shortages and uneven access to qualified professionals, which limit the full realisation of inclusive education in practice.

Germany provides inclusive early childhood education through daycare centres, integrating children with and without disabilities. School-level inclusion remains more limited and relies heavily on assistance. Vocational training offers mainstream and disability-specific training options. Professional development and wage subsidy measures support persons with severe disabilities, although uptake remains modest.

Greece has launched disability-targeted education initiatives and reforms in general and vocational education which include training for teachers and special education staff. Other measures include fully accessible Higher Vocational Educational Units, integrated VET campuses and RRP-funded school improvements.

In Finland, amendments to the Primary and Lower Secondary Education Act (2024/2025) introduce individualised instruction, tailored support and parental involvement in needs assessments. Other policies focus on transport subsidies and specialised assistance. Country experts note that the inclusive education strategy aligns explicitly with the UN CRPD.

France promotes inclusive education via early identification, strengthened professionalisation of school assistants, reference teachers and local support centres. Digital tools monitor students' needs and higher education initiatives include disability guidance schemes, amongst other measures.

Lithuania's National Education Policy (2021-2030) includes targets for 90 % of pupils with disabilities to be in mainstream schools and 20 % of schools to be fully accessible by 2030. Measures indicatively include increasing classroom support assistants, boosting educational aid funding, establishing the Lithuanian Centre for Inclusion in Education and modernising school infrastructure.

Slovakia is implementing pre-primary education reforms, gradually making education compulsory from age four years (2027) and three years (2028), with a focus on accessibility and quality support. A new system of support measures for pupils with special educational needs includes tailored teaching adjustments, communication support, career guidance and barrier-free school facilities.

Spain implements comprehensive policies to support inclusive education at all levels. Non-university initiatives promote inclusion, digital skills and emotional support for students with disabilities, including through capacity-building for teachers to manage diversity in mainstream settings. In higher education, measures include dedicated admission quotas for students with disabilities, flexible doctoral and postdoctoral research contracts and tailored digital and vocational training programmes to enhance accessibility and skills development.

Other EU Member States have also implemented a mix of measures to support inclusive education for persons with disabilities, including targeted support in mainstream schools, special education reforms, vocational training and teacher upskilling. However, country experts note that implementation varies widely and there are challenges, such as insufficient funding, limited staff training, uneven regional coverage and gaps in accessibility and data collection. This overview highlights promising approaches while acknowledging that policies and practices remain uneven across Member States.

6 Summary and conclusions

This synthesis report provides an overview of the 2025 European Semester cycle from a disability perspective and is the first prepared under the renewed EU economic governance framework. The overhaul of the framework, including the introduction of the new Medium-Term Fiscal-Structural Plans (MTFPs/MTPS), has reshaped the way Member States design and report on their fiscal and structural policies. Following these changes, the report examines how disability has been mainstreamed across the Semester documentation (the Autumn and Spring Packages), within the new governance cycle, and in the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Plans (RRPs). It also draws on the most recent dialogues with the UN CRPD Committee, national and EU-level disability strategies and action plans, and the latest available EU data.

The shift introduced by the new framework de facto places greater emphasis on resilience and strategic autonomy, linking fiscal and social sustainability with long-term competitiveness. At the same time, the integration of social objectives into economic coordination offers new opportunities to strengthen the mainstreaming of equality and inclusion, including disability, within the Semester process. Given the structural changes introduced, direct comparisons with previous cycles are not always straightforward; however, evidence from the Joint Employment Report (JER), the Country Reports (CRs) and the Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs) indicates that disability visibility has been maintained and, in some areas, further consolidated within the reformed governance architecture.

The JER continues to play a central role in ensuring visibility of disability issues within the Semester. Through its monitoring of key employment and social indicators, the JER contributes to tracking progress on the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights and the EU Disability Strategy 2021-2030. The inclusion of the disability employment gap indicator in the Social Scoreboard remains a key achievement, ensuring consistent attention to the labour-market situation of persons with disabilities across all Member States. The 2025 report highlights that persons with disabilities continue to face substantial barriers to labour-market participation and remain overrepresented among the economically inactive population. It also reflects gradual progress in disability equality mainstreaming, with references to persons with disabilities now present in the first-stage analysis of 19 out of 27 Member States under the newly introduced Social Convergence Framework.

Complementary visibility is provided through the CRs and CSRs, which increasingly acknowledge the need to close the disability employment gap and to strengthen social protection, skills development and access to quality services. The 2025 CRs highlight that disability is now systematically reflected in the analysis of labour-market challenges, skills needs and risks of social exclusion, with a growing focus on upskilling and reskilling measures that include persons with disabilities as part of activation strategies for underrepresented groups.

Disability is explicitly referenced in ten CSR fiches, most often in relation to employment and social inclusion, but also in connection with education, early childhood education and care, long-term care and housing. This signals a broader understanding of disability as a cross-cutting policy concern within the Semester. Although the new MTFPs, which replace the National Reform Programmes, primarily focus on fiscal sustainability and expenditure paths, some Member States refer to disability policy developments and national disability strategies or action plans in their submissions.

EU funding instruments, particularly the Cohesion Policy Funds and the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), continue to play a crucial role in supporting the inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities across the Union. Evidence from the 2024-2025 country fiches points to a wide variety of measures financed under these instruments, from investments in community-based care and inclusive education to initiatives supporting employment, social services and accessibility in both the physical and digital environment.

These programmes demonstrate the potential of EU financial instruments to advance the implementation of the UN CRPD and the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030, provided that they are designed and implemented in line with rights-based and inclusive principles.

At the same time, the information gathered through the country fiches highlights persistent implementation challenges and, in some cases, tensions between investment choices and the strategic objectives of disability inclusion. In many instances, measures were not specifically targeted at persons with disabilities, or disability was treated only implicitly, which risks limiting the overall effectiveness of the interventions. This underlines the need for better disability targeting and for the consistent application of accessibility and inclusion requirements across all funding streams. Instances where EU or national funds have supported segregating or institutional care settings further illustrate the ongoing need for stronger safeguards and monitoring mechanisms to ensure that all investments contribute to accessibility, deinstitutionalisation and community-based living.

Recent strategic developments at both EU and national levels provide renewed momentum for advancing the rights of persons with disabilities in the coming years. At EU level, the substantial implementation of the European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 marks tangible progress, while the planned review of the Strategy and the consultation on a new Action Plan to accelerate implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights will set the direction for the next phase of disability policy. The UN CRPD Committee's 2025 Concluding Observations offer clear guidance on areas where further effort is required: strengthening disability mainstreaming, improving monitoring and participation and ensuring that EU funding fully complies with the Convention. At the national level, new and updated disability strategies and action plans reflect a shared commitment to align domestic policy with EU and international frameworks.

The statistical analysis underpinning this synthesis report confirms that, despite incremental progress in recent years, significant disparities persist between persons with and without disabilities across most socio-economic indicators. The disability employment gap remains substantial in all Member States, reflecting enduring barriers to labour-market participation, while persons with disabilities continue to face a higher risk of poverty or social exclusion (AROP) and lower levels of education and skills attainment. The participation gap in employment and training remains particularly pronounced among women, young people and older persons with disabilities, pointing to the need for more intersectional policy responses. The country fiches accompanying this synthesis report illustrate, in greater detail, the variety of national policy efforts to address these challenges, offering indicative examples of measures aimed at improving employment, education and social inclusion outcomes for persons with disabilities.

This report not only summarises the developments and findings of the 2025 Semester cycle but also sets the groundwork for the next phase of analysis and policy reflection within the 2026 European Semester. The coming cycles will test the extent to which the reformed governance framework can successfully combine fiscal and structural coordination with a reinforced social dimension and translate this balance into tangible improvements in the lives of persons with disabilities, ensuring that inclusion and equality remain at the core of Europe's social and economic agenda.

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