



European Semester 2022-2023 country fiche on disability equality

Sweden

January 2023

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
Directorate D — Social Rights and Inclusion
Unit D3 — Disability & Inclusion

European Commission
B-1049 Brussels

European Semester 2022-2023 country fiche on disability equality

With comparative data Annex provided by EDE

Sweden

Johanna Gustafsson

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.

This country report has been prepared as input for the European Semester in 2022¹ and has been developed under Contract VC/2020/0273 with the European Commission.

¹ For an introduction to the Semester process, see:
<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/european-semester/how-european-semester-works/>.

LEGAL NOTICE

Manuscript completed in January 2023

This document has been prepared for the European Commission however it reflects the views only of the authors, and the European Commission is not liable for any consequence stemming from the reuse of this publication. More information on the European Union is available on the Internet (<http://www.europa.eu>).

Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2023

© European Union, 2023



The reuse policy of European Commission documents is implemented based on Commission Decision 2011/833/EU of 12 December 2011 on the reuse of Commission documents (OJ L 330, 14.12.2011, p. 39). Except otherwise noted, the reuse of this document is authorised under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC-BY 4.0) licence (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>). This means that reuse is allowed provided appropriate credit is given and any changes are indicated.

Table of contents

1	Executive summary and recommendations	6
1.1	Key points and main challenges for Sweden in 2022	6
1.2	Recommendations for Sweden.....	7
2	Mainstreaming disability equality in the 2022 Semester documents	8
2.1	Country Report (CR) and Country Specific Recommendation (CSR).....	8
2.2	National Reform Programme (NRP) and Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP)	9
2.3	Semester links to CRPD and national disability action plans.....	9
3	Disability and the labour market – analysis of the situation and the effectiveness of policies	10
3.1	Summary of the labour market situation of persons with disabilities.....	10
3.2	Analysis of labour market policies relevant to the Semester.....	11
4	Disability, social policies and healthcare – analysis of the situation and the effectiveness of policies	15
4.1	Summary of the social situation of persons with disabilities	15
4.2	Analysis of social policies relevant to the Semester	17
5	Disability, education and skills – analysis of the situation and the effectiveness of policies	21
5.1	Summary of the educational situation of persons with disabilities	21
5.2	Analysis of education policies relevant to the Semester.....	22
6	Investment priorities in relation to disability	25
7	Annex: disability data relevant to the Semester	26
7.1	Data relevant to disability and the labour market.....	27
7.2	EU data relevant to disability, social policies and healthcare (2020)	33
7.3	EU data relevant to disability and education.....	35

1 Executive summary and recommendations

1.1 Key points and main challenges for Sweden in 2022

Disability and the labour market

Data from EU-SILC estimated a disability employment gap of approximately 20 percentage points in 2021. The national statistics show a disability gap of 8 percentage points in the employment rate between persons with disabilities and the population in total. It can be assumed that active labour market measures, and not only employment, contribute to the relatively narrow disability gap in the employment rate that the national statistics demonstrate. The disability gap is larger for persons with reduced work capacity, 21 percentage points, and has widened in recent years, from 15 percentage points in 2020. In the last year there has been a decrease in participants in wage subsidy programs. There are differences in labour market inclusion between types of disabilities as well as gender differences that need to be highlighted.

Disability, social policies and healthcare

Statistics and reports on the social situation of persons with disabilities show that people with disabilities are disadvantaged regarding their financial situation. The number of persons with disabilities on activity allowances (disability pension for age 18-29) and sickness allowances (age 30-65) has decreased in the last six years. Opportunities for independent living are foremost provided by personal assistance, but the number of people who are entitled to personal assistance allowances has decreased, as a result of changes in the case law, which clarified the right to the allowance. People with disabilities in general are in a worse health condition than the population as a whole and access to healthcare is not equal.

Disability, education and skills

The level of education of persons with disabilities has increased gradually over the years but the disability gap in education is still large. Although the trend is positive, there are still many challenges, such as lack of support and accommodation. It is difficult to pinpoint students with disabilities and their needs because schools are not allowed to keep records of disability or health, only of those who are given special support in teaching, regardless of the reason. Also, there are no statistics on target achievement for the group of students with disabilities.

Investment priorities for inclusion and accessibility

The Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) describes investments in education and housing. The investments in education may benefit people with disabilities as they address the challenges of having low education level and being unemployed, two challenges that are more common among people with disabilities than in the rest of the population. Investments in housing do not address the specific needs of people with disabilities, such as adapted housing.

1.2 Recommendations for Sweden

These recommendations are based on the evidence and analysis presented in the following chapters of our report.

Recommendation: Counteract the disability employment gap concerning people with reduced workability with measures aimed at jobs in the ordinary labour market.

Rationale: The disability gap concerning people with reduced workability has widened in the last year, from 15 percentage points in 2020 to 21 percentage points in 2021. The proposed investments in Samhall (sheltered work) do not align with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (UN CRPD), Article 27.

Recommendation: Review the support and transfer systems compensation level to avoid the large differences in the risk of poverty between people with disabilities and the rest of the working population.

Rationale: The at-risk-of-poverty-or-social-exclusion rate (AROPE) of people with disabilities is almost double that of those without disabilities, and the transfer systems compensation level is well below the relative risk of poverty levels. The recommendation is that the authorities perform a review and based on that, adjust the transfer systems compensation level.

Recommendation: Promote the health of people with disabilities through accessible care and adequate financial support.

Rationale: People with disabilities in general have a poorer health condition than the population as a whole and access to healthcare is not equal. The poorer health condition among people with disabilities may to some extent be explained by disability-related symptoms and co-morbidities, but a significant part can be attributed to well-known risk factors to poor health, such as living in poverty.

Recommendation: Give greater recognition to people with disabilities and their needs in public policy reports, recommendations, and statistics.

Rationale: Conflating people with disabilities in larger groupings (e.g. disadvantaged groups) is questionable as it may hide both the specific situation of people with disabilities (being one of the most vulnerable in the group), and their specific needs. It is also questionable whether people with disabilities should be treated as one group as the group is heterogenous and the situation and needs vary within the group.

2 Mainstreaming disability equality in the 2022 Semester documents

2.1 Country Report (CR) and Country Specific Recommendation (CSR)

The following key points highlight where a disability perspective was considered, or should be considered, in the CR/CSR. We address the most relevant of these in the next chapters.

In 2022, the Country Report for Sweden included the following direct references to disability issues:

Labour market integration and education gaps

‘A sizeable group of workers lacks the skills to grasp the opportunities the Swedish labour market offers. (...) In addition, a significant group of people, such as people with disabilities and women born outside of Sweden, find it difficult to become and remain employed.’

The European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) for Sweden

‘By the end of 2020, cohesion policy investments had supported 43 400 enterprises, 95 000 migrants or people from migrant backgrounds, 33 000 long-term unemployed and more than 40 000 people with disabilities.’

Employment, skills and social policy challenges in light of the European pillar of social rights

‘The pandemic disproportionately affected the employment participation of people with disabilities, as the disability employment gap increased by 4 pps from 2019 to reach 28.9 % in 2020.’

The disability employment gap is ‘To watch’.

‘Sweden has seen increasing income inequality in recent years. (...) The AROPE of people with disabilities is almost double compared to those without disabilities (29 % vs 15.7% in 2020), and slightly exceeds the EU average.’

The Country Specific Recommendations do not directly reference disability but a disability perspective is of relevance to several of the general recommendations, such as:

- targeted support to households most vulnerable to energy price hikes;
- support to people fleeing Ukraine;
- investment for the green and digital transition;
- implementation of Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP) and previous CSRs;
- improve the efficiency of the housing market;
- make the healthcare system more resilient;
- better integration of disadvantaged groups in the labour market; and
- providing equal access opportunities to schools.

2.2 National Reform Programme (NRP) and Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP)

The following key points highlight where the situation of people with disabilities or disability policies is relevant to the NRP/RRP. We analyse the most relevant of these in the next chapters.

The NRP has nine references to disability, concerning the areas of independent living, economic support from the transfer systems and inclusion in the labour market. The specific measures proposed in the NRP are:

- proposed amendments to the law for a strengthened right to personal assistance;
- increased guarantee level in sickness and activity compensation and increased housing supplement.

The NRP also describes some organisations and their projects targeting people with disabilities:

- *Funktionsrätt Sverige* – example projects aim to reduce the disability employment gap;
- ‘The way out!’ program – cooperatives run 14 companies to help rehabilitate people with disabilities.

In the RRP there are 11 references to disability, related to the areas of: labour market integration and skill mismatch, education (support to students with disabilities) and housing. These were reviewed in our 2021 Semester disability fiche.

2.3 Semester links to CRPD and national disability action plans

It is important that Semester plans align with national disability strategy. In Sweden, this refers to the National Goal and Focus on Disability Policy. A new national strategy for disability policy was adopted in 2021, taking the UN CRPD as a starting point and with sectoral actions for the period 2021-2031.² This national action plan is not mentioned in the 2022 NRP.

Relevant recommendations arising from participation in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) are highlighted in the following chapters. The last UN CRPD Committee recommendations to Sweden were in 2014, the most recent submission by Sweden was in 2019 and the most recent response from the Committee was the 2018 List of Issues.

² See: [Strategi för systematisk uppföljning av funktionshinderspolitiken under 2021-2031 \(regeringen.se\)](https://www.regeringen.se/strategi-for-systematisk-uppfoljning-av-funktionshinderspolitiken-under-2021-2031).

3 Disability and the labour market – analysis of the situation and the effectiveness of policies

In 2014, the UN CRPD Committee made the following recommendations to Sweden:

[Article 27 UN CRPD](#) addresses Work and Employment.

‘50. The Committee recommends that the State party take measures to improve opportunities for persons with disabilities to obtain work on the basis of the report presented by the FunkA Inquiry (FunkA-utredning). It further suggests that the State party increase measures of support, including, inter alia, personal assistance in employment, technical assistance in performing in the workplace, reduced social fees, financial support to employers, rehabilitation and vocational training, and that it put in place measures to narrow the employment and pay gender gap. The Committee recommends that the State party assess the impact of the use in the labour market of the term ‘people with reduced capacities or limitations’ to refer to persons with disabilities and revise it in accordance with the principle of non-discrimination.’

The most recent CRPD development was the 2018 List of Issues and the state’s response in 2019.

3.1 Summary of the labour market situation of persons with disabilities

According to the Social Scoreboard indicator, cited in the Semester package, the disability employment gap in Sweden is considered ‘To watch’.

Data from EU-SILC indicate an employment rate for persons with disabilities in Sweden of 53.9 % in 2020, compared to 82.1 % for other persons. This results in an estimated disability employment gap of approximately 29 percentage points (estimated EU27 average gap 24.5, see Tables 2-4) or an employment chances ratio of 0.7. Statistics published on the Eurostat database indicate a disability employment gap of 28.9 percentage points in 2020, using a slightly different methodology, but falling dramatically to 19.9 points in 2021 (against a pre-COVID crisis figure of 24.9 points).³ This large adjustment requires some caution in interpretation.

The same data indicate unemployment rates of 22.4 % and 6.4 %, respectively in 2020 (see Tables 5-7) and the economic activity rate for persons with disabilities in Sweden was 69.5 %, compared to 87.8 % for other persons (see Tables 8-10). These indications are broken down by gender and age in the respective tables in the Annex.

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on employment in 2020-2021, some caution is needed when interpreting trend data.

³ Eurostat, Disability employment gap by level of activity limitation and sex (source EU-SILC), 2022, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/hlth_dlm200/default/table.

Employment data is also available from an annual survey on the labour market situation of persons with disabilities in Sweden (see Table A in Annex 7.1.3).⁴ This data indicates an activity rate (employed + unemployed jobseekers)⁵ among persons with disabilities of 71 % and 58 % for people with reduced work capacity in 2021, compared with 79 % of the population, a difference of 8 and 21 percentage points respectively. The disability gap concerning people with reduced workability has widened in the last year, from 15 percentage points in 2020.⁶ The difference between the proportion of people with disabilities and the rest of the population has fluctuated over time. From 2013, the employment rate in the general population increased from 77 % to 79 %. During the same period, the employment rate for people with disabilities increased from 62 % to 71 %. However, there is a smaller proportion of people with disabilities who work full time compared to the population as a whole.

In 2021, approximately 168 300 people with disabilities and reduced work capacity were registered at the Public Employment Services, of whom 25.4 % got a job or started studies during the year.⁷ Approximately 42 % of those registered were unemployed while the rest were enrolled in some kind of wage subsidy program.⁸ It can therefore be assumed that active labour market measures, and not just employment, contribute to Sweden's relatively narrow disability gap in the employment rate.

In 2021, the unemployment rate for people with disabilities was 10.8 % compared to 8.8 % in the total population. Among people with disabilities with reduced work capacity, unemployment is 17 %. Between 2013 and 2019, unemployment in the population decreased. Among people with disabilities, unemployment has varied without a clear trend during these years. Between 2019 and 2020, unemployment for the total population increased, from 6 % to 9 %.

3.2 Analysis of labour market policies relevant to the Semester

For reference, see the 2022 National Reform Programme, the Recovery and Resilience Plan for Sweden and the Strategy for systematic follow-up of disability policy in 2021-2031.

The Country Report for Sweden included a few direct references to disability issues in the labour market, such as people with disabilities facing difficulties to become and remain employed and noted that the disability employment gap is 'to watch'. In such reports, people with disabilities are often referred to as part of a larger population, such as 'disadvantaged groups' in the labour market. The intersection of disability with other social statuses (e.g. gender, immigrant background, education level) is of relevance for disadvantages in the labour market as these statuses may reinforce or counteract each other and thus influence opportunities for labour market integration. However,

⁴ Statistics Sweden, The labour market situation for persons with disabilities 2021, [Situationen på arbetsmarknaden för personer med funktionsnedsättning \(scb.se\)](https://www.scb.se/arbetsmarknaden-for-personer-med-funktionsnedsattning).

⁵ Employed = employed + unemployed jobseekers enrolled in certain programs at the Public Employment Services. In Swedish: *sysse/satt*.

⁶ See: [Situationen på arbetsmarknaden för personer med funktionsnedsättning \(scb.se\)](https://www.scb.se/arbetsmarknaden-for-personer-med-funktionsnedsattning).

⁷ See: [Förekomst av funktionsnedsättning som medför nedsatt arbetsförmåga - Arbetsförmedlingen \(arbetsformedlingen.se\)](https://arbetsformedlingen.se/forekomst-av-funktionsnedsattning-som-medfor-nedsatt-arbetsformaga).

⁸ See: [Återrapportering regleringsbrevet 2021 - Arbetsförmedlingen \(arbetsformedlingen.se\)](https://arbetsformedlingen.se/aterrapportering-regleringsbrevet-2021).

conflating people with disabilities as part of a larger population is questionable as it may hide both their specific situation (being one of the most vulnerable in the group), and their specific needs. It is also questionable whether people with disabilities should be treated as one group as the group is heterogenous and both situation and needs vary within the group.

A recent report⁹ from the Public Employment Services (PES) shows that among the unemployed with a disability registered at the PES, the three largest disability categories are people with mobility disabilities (29 %), mental disabilities (25 %) and specific cognitive disability (i.e. neuro-psychiatric disabilities) (20 %). Of the registered unemployed with a disability, 33 % were born abroad. The PES statistics¹⁰ demonstrate that in relation to people with specific cognitive impairments, people with mobility disabilities had 5 % lower probability of having a subsidised or non-subsidised job or being in education, while people with mental disabilities had a 24 % lower probability and other disabilities had a 10 % lower probability. There are thus differences between types of disabilities that need to be highlighted concerning the situation in the labour market. The same report also shows other differences among jobseekers with disabilities; for example, women with disabilities have a 16 % lower probability than men with disabilities of having a subsidised or unsubsidised job or of being in education.

Regarding education level, it was noted that there was a 19 % higher probability of having a subsidised or unsubsidised job or being in education among people with disabilities with post-secondary education in relation to people with pre-secondary education as their highest education, while there is a 17 % higher probability for people with secondary education. Thus, tertiary education does not seem to be advantageous for jobseekers with disabilities, registered at the PES. This may be affected by wage subsidy levels, where the PES reimburses the employer up to approximately EUR 1 847 (SEK 20 000), which can be seen as a low-range salary in Sweden. The wage subsidy level may therefore counteract the effect of higher education which is otherwise evident in the population (4.9 % unemployment among those with post-secondary education vs 7.8 % among those with secondary and 31.4 % among those with pre-secondary education in 2022).¹¹ Concerning education level, the statistics from the PES show a 59 % higher probability that jobseekers with disabilities with post-secondary education can get an unsubsidised job compared to those with pre-secondary education, thus making it clear that the wage subsidy level counteracts the advantage of education level, if wage subsidies are used.

The report also shows that jobseekers with disabilities who were born abroad have a 13 % lower probability of being in work or education in relation to those who are Swedish born. There are thus differences within the disability group that need to be taken into consideration when watching the disability employment gap and the situation for jobseekers with disabilities.

⁹ See: [Översyn av prioriterade grupper och dess målnivå - Arbetsförmedlingen \(arbetsformedlingen.se\)](#).

¹⁰ The PES made a regression analysis of the probability of having a job (which lasted for at least 90 days) among people who were newly registered at the PES and who had an identified disability during the period 2013-2020, (each person could only be included once).

¹¹ See: [Arbetslöshet efter utbildningsnivå - Ekonomifakta](#).

There are no explicit references to labour market policies in the CSR, other than to developing the skills of disadvantaged groups to support their integration into the labour market. Skills may be developed both in the regular education system and in different measures or programs aiming at skills-enhancement for people with disabilities. The PES offers some programs aimed at skills enhancement, by education or internship, or by validation of competence.¹² Due to the relatively low number of participants with disabilities in the programs (a total of 14 408), compared to the total number registered at the PES (168 300 in 2021), these skills-enhancing programs are not likely to have any large effect on the integration of people with disabilities into the labour market (see Table B in Annex 7.1.3).

The NRP and the RRP make a few references to disability and inclusion in the labour market, mainly to active labour market programs for jobseekers with disabilities and by describing different local projects which aim to reduce the disability employment gap. The NRP and RRP point to the PES's general range of services and special services for people with reduced working capacity, e.g. wage subsidy and sheltered employment at Samhall. As Table C shows, the total number of persons with disabilities who participated in the programs during 2020 was approximately 114 000.¹³ It is a 10 % decrease in comparison to 2019, when approximately 126 000 persons with disabilities participated in the same programs.

The PES explains this decrease as follows:

'(...) even before the outbreak of the Corona pandemic, the transitions to subsidised employment had begun to decline due to the slowdown in labour market. With the outbreak of the Corona pandemic, the labour market situation worsened sharply and employers found it more difficult to take on new employees, especially those with needs for adaptations. In addition, competition for jobs increased when there were many unemployed people with current work experience and skills.' (p. 68)¹⁴

As shown by the proportion of those employed 90 and 180 days after the program ended, the programs have different effects on the employment status of the participants. In the 'best cases', one out of two were still in employment three to six months after the program ended, while in some other programs one out of three were still in employment. The statistics do not show the activity rate of those who did not get employed by the programs, but a reasonable guess is that most are still enrolled at the PES, as jobseekers or in other labour market programs.

The RRP furthermore notes that 'Samhall has been given increased funds from 2021 to facilitate the integration of people with disabilities'. Samhall is a state-owned company, which exclusively employs people with disabilities, in sheltered employment, subsidised by wage subsidies administered by the PES. The PES has carried out a review of the different disability categories that get access to Samhall, in

¹² See: [Arbetsmarknadspolitiska program Pdf, 2 MB. \(3\).pdf](#).

¹³ See: [Arbetsmarknadspolitiska program - Arbetsförmedlingen \(arbetsformedlingen.se\)](#).

¹⁴ See: [Arbetsmarknadspolitiska program - Arbetsförmedlingen \(arbetsformedlingen.se\)](#).

the wage subsidies for development in employment program.¹⁵ General learning disability (i.e. intellectual disabilities) and mental disability account for 40 %. Specific cognitive disability (i.e. neuro-psychiatric disability) accounts for 44 %. The PES explains this distribution by the fact that young people are prioritised for this effort and this category of disabilities are common among younger people. Between the years 2005 and 2015, the proportion of first-time enrollers with a specific cognitive impairment among young people, aged 18-24, doubled, from 26 % to 54 %. People between the ages of 18 and 24 accounted for 67 % of those who work with wage subsidies for development at Samhall. The relative youth of these workers is twofold. A paid job is of importance for a young person as much of the economic transfer system in Sweden is based on income. On the other side there may be a risk of a lock-in effect, as relatively few employees (6 % in 2021) leave the sheltered employment of Samhall for employment in the open labour market.¹⁶ The proposed investments in Samhall (sheltered work) do not align with CRPD, Article 27 (j): 'Promote the acquisition by persons with disabilities of work experience in the open labour market'.¹⁷

Gender differences

A report from the Swedish Agency for Participation¹⁸ shows gender differences between women and men with disabilities in terms of the scope of work, with significantly fewer women working full time. Women with disabilities are part-time unemployed or have hourly jobs to a greater extent than men with disabilities and other women and men. The report also demonstrates differences between women with disabilities and comparison groups regarding labour force participation, especially regarding women with reduced work ability. For these women, long-term unemployment is more common and a lower percentage transition to work. The opportunities to take part in support measures on the labour market programs differ between women and men with disabilities who are registered with the Public Employment Service. For example, the percentage of women who participate in programs with wage subsidies is significantly lower than the percentage of men.

¹⁵ See: [Översyn av prioriterade grupper och dess målnivå - Arbetsförmedlingen \(arbetsformedlingen.se\)](https://arbetsformedlingen.se/oversyn-av-prioriterade-grupper-och-dess-malnivaa).

¹⁶ See: [Samhall AHR 2021.pdf](#).

¹⁷ See: [Article 27 – Work and employment | United Nations Enable](#).

¹⁸ See: [Ekonomisk jämställdhet för kvinnor med funktionsnedsättning \(mfd.se\)](#).

4 Disability, social policies and healthcare – analysis of the situation and the effectiveness of policies

In 2014, the UN CRPD Committee made the following recommendations to Sweden:

No observation was made on [Article 28 UN CRPD](#) on Adequate standard of living and social protection.

[Article 19 UN CRPD](#) addresses Living independently in the community.

‘44. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that personal assistance programmes provide sufficient and fair financial assistance to ensure that a person can live independently in the community.’

No observation was made on [Article 25 UN CRPD](#) that addresses Health.

The most recent CRPD development was the 2018 List of Issues and the state’s response in 2019.

4.1 Summary of the social situation of persons with disabilities

Data from EU-SILC indicate the poverty risk rate for working-age persons with disabilities in Sweden was 26.7 % in 2020, compared to 14.3 % for other persons of similar age – an estimated disability poverty gap of approximately 12 percentage points (see Table 14). For people aged over 65, the disability poverty gap was 6.6 points (20.9 % for older persons with disabilities and 14.3 % for other persons of similar age). The tables in the Annex also indicate the respective rates of risk of poverty or social exclusion and break these down by gender as well age. Recently updated data from Eurostat indicates that this relative risk fell for the working-age disabled population (24.8 %) and for the older age group (18.5 %) in 2021.¹⁹

For persons with disabilities of working age in Sweden (aged 18-64) the risk of poverty before social transfers was 53.3 % and 26.7 % after transfers. The in-work-poverty rate for persons with disabilities in this age range was 11.3 % in 2020, and 9.3 % in 2021.

Of interest to health policy are the data on self-reported unmet needs for medical examination (too expensive, too far to travel or waiting list). Disability equality gaps are evident here too and, on this basis, the rate for persons with disabilities in Sweden was 5.1 %, compared to 1.0 % for other persons.

Based on national data, for people with disabilities, from age 16 and up, the proportion living at an economic standard with a risk of poverty is approximately 26 %.²⁰ For the rest of the population, the proportion is 13 %. Financial assistance from social services is still more common among people with support under the Law of support and

¹⁹ Eurostat, People at risk of poverty by level of activity limitation, sex and age, https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/HLTH_DPE020_custom_3348056.

²⁰ SCB, *Undersökningarna av levnadsförhållandena ULF/SILC 2021, Statistik om personer med funktionsnedsättning, Statistik om personer med funktionsnedsättning, tabeller 2021 (scb.se)*.

services for people with certain disabilities (LSS) or the Social Services Act (SoL), compared to the rest of the population (5 % and 19 % of the recipients respectively).²¹ Financial assistance has decreased by a few percentage points since 2018, but the proportion of people receiving long-term financial assistance has increased. In 2020, approximately 2.5 % of people supported under the LSS received long-term assistance, and the corresponding proportion with support under the SoL was just over 10 %. One factor that affects the financial conditions for people with disabilities are the fees for various supports related to disability, such as fees for aids. These vary across the country and these variations create in themselves unequal conditions.

Statistics from the Swedish Social Insurance Agency²² show that the number of young people with activity allowances has decreased over the past six years, and in 2021 nearly 29 000 people received activity allowances. More men than women receive activity allowance (54 % vs 46 %). Compared to 2020, the number of recipients has decreased by 2 % among women and has been unchanged among men. The number of recipients of sickness allowances has also steadily decreased and at the end of 2021, 222 000 people received sickness allowance. More women than men receive sickness allowance (58 % vs 42 %). Compared to 2020, the number of recipients decreased by 6 % among women and 4 % among men.

After a few years with a reduced number of new grants of activity allowance (i.e. 'disability benefit' for persons aged 16-29 years), the number increased between 2018 and 2020, to then be reduced again. During the year 2021, 6 700 people were newly granted activity allowance, which was 2 % less than in 2020.²³ Diagnoses of mental illnesses are the most common among those with newly granted activity allowance, and the share of those with mental illnesses have increased over the years. In 2021, people with mental illnesses corresponded to 87 and 90 % of all newly granted activities for women and men respectively. Concerning the number of new grants of sickness allowance (i.e. 'disability benefit' for persons aged 30-65 years) the trend has been more constant. Since 2014, the number has decreased from approximately 7 500 people to just over 5 300 people in 2021. Since 2006, mental illnesses have been the largest diagnostic group. In 2021, mental illnesses accounted for 50 % of the newly granted sickness allowances for women and 49 % for men.

In 2021, around 6 200 women and girls and 7 500 men and boys received assistance allowance (economic support for personal assistance) from the Social Insurance Agency.²⁴ From 2016, the number of people with assistance allowance has decreased, depending on changes in the case law, which clarified the right to the allowance. As shown in the numbers, there are differences between the sexes: more men or boys (55 %) than women or girls receive assistance allowance. Between 2020 and 2021, the number of people with personal assistance decreased by roughly 300 people.²⁵ In the age group 0-12, the reduction was just over 100 people or 13 %.

²¹ See: [Insatser och stöd till personer med funktionsnedsättning – Lägesrapport 2022 \(socialstyrelsen.se\)](https://socialstyrelsen.se).

²² See: [Socialförsäkringen i siffror 2022 \(forsakringskassan.se\)](https://forsakringskassan.se).

²³ See: [Socialförsäkringen i siffror 2022 \(forsakringskassan.se\)](https://forsakringskassan.se).

²⁴ See: [Socialförsäkringen i siffror 2022 \(forsakringskassan.se\)](https://forsakringskassan.se).

²⁵ See: [Statistik om insatser enligt lagen om stöd och service till vissa funktionshindrade 2021 \(socialstyrelsen.se\)](https://socialstyrelsen.se).

Health

A larger proportion of people with disabilities rate their health as poor compared to the rest of the population.²⁶ There are also differences between the sexes, where a lower proportion of women with disabilities rate their health as good compared to men with disabilities. Dental health is also rated worse among people with disabilities. People with disabilities report tiredness, have trouble sleeping, feel stressed and experience anxiety to a higher extent compared to the general population. It is also significantly more common to report pain among people with disabilities.

4.2 Analysis of social policies relevant to the Semester

For reference, see the 2022 National Reform Programme, the Recovery and Resilience Plan for Sweden and the Strategy for systematic follow-up of disability policy in 2021-2031.

Income inequality

The Country Report for Sweden included a direct reference to disability, social policies and healthcare: ‘Sweden has seen increasing income inequality in recent years (...), the AROPE of people with disabilities is almost double compared to those without disabilities (29 % vs 15.7 % in 2020), and slightly exceeds the EU average.’ As demonstrated by the national statistics in Section 4.1, every fourth person with disabilities is living at an economic standard with a risk of poverty.²⁷ This is twice as common for people with disabilities. The risk of poverty for people with disabilities has also increased by 7 % since 2017.²⁸ The increased guarantee level for sickness and activity allowances, and increased housing supplement as proposed in the NRP, is a step in the right direction as receiving activity or sickness allowances risks creating long-term financial challenges.

In 2021, the maximum guarantee level for activity allowance was EUR 907 (SEK 9 837) per month and for sickness allowances EUR 926 (SEK 10 036), before tax. This is well below 60 % of the national median income, which was EUR 3 063 (SEK 33 200) in 2021.²⁹

Many recipients of activity allowances have not had the opportunity to build up additional insurance cover through employment and being on long-term allowances thus risk the poor financial conditions following them through their life. In December 2021, 88 % of women and 93 % of the men who received activity allowance had the lowest kind of allowance (guarantee level).³⁰ The mean sum of activity allowance per month in 2021 was approximately EUR 830 (SEK 9 004) for women and EUR 836 (SEK 9 064) for men.

²⁶ See: [Hälsan hos personer med funktionsnedsättning — Folkhälsomyndigheten \(folkhalsomyndigheten.se\)](https://www.folkhalsomyndigheten.se/omsorg-och-vardnad/halsa-och-trygghet/halsa-och-trygghet/halsa-och-trygghet).

²⁷ See: [Statistik om personer med funktionsnedsättning, tabeller 2021 \(scb.se\)](https://www.scb.se/statistik/om-personer-med-funktionsnedsattning-tabeller-2021).

²⁸ See: [Statistik om personer med funktionsnedsättning, tabeller 2016–2017 \(scb.se\)](https://www.scb.se/statistik/om-personer-med-funktionsnedsattning-tabeller-2016-2017).

²⁹ See: [Medianlöner i Sverige \(scb.se\)](https://www.scb.se/statistik/medianloner-i-sverige).

³⁰ See: [Socialförsäkringen i siffror 2022 \(forsakringskassan.se\)](https://www.forsakringskassan.se/socialforsakringen-i-siffror-2022).

The majority of those who receive sickness allowance have had the opportunity to build up additional insurance cover and receive a higher income-related allowance. In December 2021, 77 % of women and 63 % of the men received an income-related sickness allowance.³¹ However, there is quite a large proportion of recipients that have not had the opportunity to build up additional insurance cover, as they have not had employment. This might be especially the case for people with congenital or early acquired disabilities and reduced work capacity. The mean sum of sickness allowance per month in 2021 was EUR 892 (SEK 9 680) for women and EUR 982 (SEK 10 650) for men. The proposal in the NRP means that people with full sickness or activity allowance, at the guarantee level, will receive just over EUR 92 (SEK 1 000) more in guarantee allowance per month. The proposed increase of the guarantee level is a necessity to prevent poverty among recipients of the allowances but it is not enough to lessen the risk of poverty. However, the income-related levels also need to be raised as the mean sum of income from both sickness and activity allowances is well below 60 % of the national median income.

As people with disabilities in general are at a higher risk of poverty their situation must be recognised in the ‘targeted support to households most vulnerable to energy price hikes’ as the Country Specific Recommendations addresses. The new Government has decided on retroactive energy price hike support to households situated in the regions of Sweden with the highest energy prices during last year. It has not been discussed whether individual circumstances, such as the household’s risk of poverty, will be taken into account in the transfer model of support.

Personal assistance

The NRP proposes amendments to the law for a strengthened right to personal assistance. The proposals are estimated to lead to 1 800 new recipients of assistance allowance and that more people will be entitled to municipal personal assistance. Since 2016, the number of people with assistance allowance has decreased, as a result of changes in the case law, which clarified the right to the allowance.³² The social insurance agency believes that there are several obstacles to making good investigations regarding the assistance allowance, and that ‘the legislation is an obstacle to fully come to terms with the problems that individuals experience with too close investigations of their integrity-related needs’ (p. 7).³³ They have been tasked by the Government with producing a knowledge support that can provide support and guidance in needs assessment, and to make assessments and decisions more understandable for the individual, within the current legislation. Based on problems with individuals experiencing too close investigations regarding privacy-related needs, the support must also contribute to a procedure where the breach of privacy for individuals is as small as possible without the quality of investigations and decisions deteriorating. This knowledge support will be gradually implemented in 2022. However, even if this is a step in the right direction, it will take time to implement it and, in the documentation, it is not convincing how the implementation will lead to a strengthened right to personal assistance, as it will be done within the current legislation and case law, which clarified the right to the allowance, will not change.

³¹ See: [Socialförsäkringen i siffror 2022 \(forsakringskassan.se\)](https://forsakringskassan.se/om-socialforsakringen-i-siffror-2022).

³² See: [Socialförsäkringen i siffror 2022 \(forsakringskassan.se\)](https://forsakringskassan.se/om-socialforsakringen-i-siffror-2022).

³³ See: [uppdrag-om-kunskapsstod-gallande-assistansersattningen-s2021-07149-svar-pa-regeringsuppdrag-dnr-fk-2021-017172.pdf \(forsakringskassan.se\)](https://forsakringskassan.se/om-socialforsakringen-i-siffror-2022).

Housing

The RRP includes references to the housing market, and argues that ‘more housing is needed to meet the needs of adapted housing for people of old age and people with disabilities’. This is also highlighted by the Swedish Authority for participation, whose mission is to follow-up on the national disability strategy.³⁴ Access to housing for people with disabilities has been a challenge for many years and waiting times continue to be long. In 2019, the median time for enforcement of decisions on housing with special service was 122 days, an increase of 46 days in five years.³⁵ A yearly survey from the Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning shows that 162 municipalities state a lack of some form of housing with special services for people with disabilities.³⁶

Most common is a lack of group housing, where 139 municipalities (out of 293) state a lack. The number of municipalities reporting a lack of housing for people with disabilities has increased for several years, but in recent years there has been a slight decrease. The municipalities state several reasons why it can be difficult for the municipalities to anticipate the need for housing for people with disabilities, including that too little has been built historically, and that several older housing units would need to be replaced or rebuilt. Some municipalities believe that the needs are very individual, and that they cannot always meet the needs of people with disabilities, even though the municipality builds group housing and has a balance. Therefore, it can sometimes be difficult to fill the places, while it can also be difficult to offer suitable housing for certain people.

Health

The Country Specific Recommendations do not include a direct reference to disability. However, the disability perspective is of relevance to the recommendations concerning social policies and healthcare.

As demonstrated in Section 4.1, a larger proportion of people with disabilities rate their health as poor compared to the rest of the population.³⁷ The poorer health among people with disabilities may to some extent be explained by disability-related symptoms and co-morbidities, but a significant part can be attributed to well-known risk factors for poor health, such as living in poverty. People with disabilities work to a lesser extent, which is especially true for women, which can cause financial anxiety based on the lack of financial margin due to low income. The Swedish Public Health Agency’s national survey shows that it is more common among people with a disability to lack money for an unexpected expense.³⁸ There are gender differences where more women with disabilities report such conditions, and the difference is greater between women and men with disabilities than between women and men in the rest of the population.

³⁴ See: [Boverket inkluderar målgruppen från start - MFD](#).

³⁵ See: [Insatser och stöd till personer med funktionsnedsättning \(socialstyrelsen.se\)](#).

³⁶ See: [Insatser och stöd till personer med funktionsnedsättning \(socialstyrelsen.se\)](#).

³⁷ See: [Hälsan hos personer med funktionsnedsättning — Folkhälsomyndigheten \(folkhalsomyndigheten.se\)](#).

³⁸ See: [Hälsan hos personer med funktionsnedsättning — Folkhälsomyndigheten \(folkhalsomyndigheten.se\)](#).

The NRP notes that close to EUR 277 million (SEK 3 billion) is to be paid out to the regions annually to strengthen accessibility in healthcare, with a focus on shortening care queues and waiting times. Access to care for people with disabilities is not always equal to others in the population.³⁹ For example, women with interventions under the LSS have almost double the risk of dying from breast cancer compared with other breast cancer patients and those with interventions under the LSS who develop cancer have double the risk of dying from cancer compared with other cancer patients. A growing share of the health and care sector uses various digital solutions (e-health), and surveys show large digital exclusion for people with disabilities.⁴⁰ Moreover, the accessibility described – i.e. focus on shortening care queues and waiting times – is only one accessibility problem for people with disabilities, and much more needs to be done to secure fully accessible healthcare for people with disabilities.⁴¹

³⁹ See: <https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/globalassets/sharepoint-dokument/artikelkatalog/ovrigt/2019-3-7.pdf>.

⁴⁰ See: [2019 Rapporten och resultat | Begripsam](#).

⁴¹ See: [Hur skapar vi bättre hälsa för personer med funktionsnedsättning? | SKR](#).

5 Disability, education and skills – analysis of the situation and the effectiveness of policies

In 2014, the UN CRPD Committee made the following recommendations to Sweden:

[Article 24 UN CRPD](#) addresses Education.

‘48. The Committee urges the State party to guarantee the inclusion of all children with disabilities in the mainstream education system and ensure that they have the required support.’

The most recent CRPD development was the 2018 List of Issues and the state’s response in 2019.

5.1 Summary of the educational situation of persons with disabilities

The EU-SILC 2020 estimates concerning educational attainment should be treated with caution due to relatively wide confidence intervals but they consistently indicate disability equality gaps (an average of 2-3 years provides a more stable indication). Table 16 indicates early school leaving rates disaggregated by disability status in Sweden. Youths with disabilities (aged 18-24) tend to leave school significantly more than non-disabled peers of the same age groups (and this is reinforced by widening the sample size to age 18-29). Table 17 shows the completion rate of tertiary education disaggregated by disability and age group. Persons with disabilities (age 30-34) are less likely to complete tertiary education than their peers (and this is reinforced in the wider age range 30-39).

Reports from Statistics Sweden show that the level of education of people with disabilities is lower than in the population as a whole.⁴² In the population aged 16-64, 14 % have compulsory school as the highest completed education, compared with 17 % among people with disabilities. Among people with disabilities, 43 % have upper secondary education as their highest completed education, compared with 35 % among the population as a whole. Overall, 51 % of the population has tertiary education, compared with 40 % among people with disabilities.

People with reduced work capacity show a similar distribution as people with disabilities in general. A larger proportion of women than men with disabilities have tertiary education: 48 % compared with 33 %. This also applies to those with reduced work capacity. Of those, the proportion of women with tertiary education is 41 %, compared with 28 % of men.

There are no statistics available on the proportion of students with disabilities in the mainstream educational system, as schools are not allowed to collect statistics on health status or disability, only on students in need of special support. Also, there are no statistics on target achievement for the group of students with disabilities.⁴³

⁴² See: [Situasjonen på arbetsmarknaden för personer med funktionsnedsättning \(scb.se\)](#).

⁴³ MFD, ‘Training’; [Utbildning - MFD](#).

During the academic year 2020/21, 5.8 % of students in compulsory schooling participated in an ‘action programme for special support’.⁴⁴ The proportion has risen slightly in the last academic year. Action programs are more common among boys than among girls, 7.4 % and 4.1 %, respectively.⁴⁵ Both action programs and other types of support are more common among boys than girls. A survey aimed at guardians with children with neuropsychiatric disabilities shows that schools do not meet the students’ needs.⁴⁶ Of the respondents, just over 90 % believe that their children need special support to achieve educational goals, but that it is often not given in the right way or is not present at all.

Students with intellectual disabilities can read a special curriculum in a specialised unit within the mainstream schools, designed for students with intellectual disabilities. The number of students in these units in compulsory schools in 2021/22 was just over 14 400.⁴⁷ This is an increase of 7 % compared to the previous academic year. The increase of students follows the population trend overall. The proportion of students in this form of schooling has been about 1 % in the last 10 school years. In the academic year 2021/22, the percentage is 1.3 %, which is a marginal increase compared to previous years. There are sex differences: 64 % are boys and 36 % are girls. The proportion of boys has increased slightly in recent school years. Just over 5 500 of the students attend the ‘training school’ (i.e. a school for students with more severe disabilities), which corresponds to 38 % of all students who read a special curriculum in a specialised unit. It is on a par with the previous academic year. The percentage of students who read a special curriculum integrated in mainstream classes has been around 20 % since the beginning of the 1990s. In the academic year 2021/22, it is just under 18 %.

During the academic year 2021/22, 6 750 students read the special curriculum in a specialised unit within a mainstream upper secondary school (57 % on a national program and 43 % on an individually designed program).⁴⁸ The number of students in such units increased by 3 % since the previous academic year. There is a predominance of men, (60 %), a distribution that has been relatively stable over the past 10 years.

5.2 Analysis of education policies relevant to the Semester

For reference, see the 2022 National Reform Programme, the Recovery and Resilience Plan for Sweden and the Strategy for systematic follow-up of disability policy in 2021-2031.

⁴⁴ See: [Särskilt stöd i grundskolan läsåret 2020/21 - Skolverket](#).

⁴⁵ See: [Särskilt stöd i grundskolan läsåret 2020/21 - Skolverket](#).

⁴⁶ See: [PDF-Undersökning-Rapport-Attentions Skolenkät 2014-02-06-1.pdf](#).

⁴⁷ See: [Elever i grundsärskolan - läsåret 2021/22 \(skolverket.se\)](#).

⁴⁸ See: [Elever i gymnasiesärskolan - Läsåret 2021/22 \(skolverket.se\)](#).

The CSR highlights a better integration of disadvantaged groups in the labour market by providing equal access opportunities to schools. Statistics Sweden shows that disabilities risk becoming an obstacle to completing an upper secondary school program: about one in ten people without a final grade from upper secondary school has stated that a disability prevented them from either starting or finishing upper secondary education.⁴⁹

The Education Act⁵⁰ states that support should be given to students with difficulties in learning, based on individual needs, and no diagnosis or disability recognition is required to receive support in preschool or school. The support should be given promptly and to the extent that the student needs, but reports show that many schools do not live up to this commitment. Statistics from the Swedish National Agency for Education demonstrate that the percentage of students who receive special support is highest in grade nine (the last grade in compulsory schools).⁵¹ This means that the support is first introduced at the end of compulsory education, when it stands clear that the student faces difficulties in achieving the grades. Lack of adaptation of the learning environment and differences in the allocation of funds to schools for students with special needs are some of the challenges that Funktionsrätt Sweden (a disability organisation) points out, when it comes to children and young people with disabilities.⁵² The transition between schools and grades could also be of importance, when it comes to equal access. Recent research has looked at the equivalence of children's transitions between school forms (i.e. preschool and primary school). The research points to a number of shortcomings, such as a lack of structure and systematics in the transmission of information and varying access to educational resources.⁵³ These shortcomings mean that school transitions do not always contribute to children 'quickly' getting extra adaptations within regular education, as prescribed by the Education Act. The research also points out that in connection with the preschool class becoming mandatory in 2018, a gap arose in the legislation, which means that there is no preschool option for children who will be enrolled in a special school. The school principals interviewed highlight the problem that the elementary special school lacks both competence and facilities for a preschool class in this form of school.

Follow-ups on the education for people with disabilities by the Swedish Agency for Participation show that support is introduced too late and that students with disabilities feel unsafe in the school environment, which affects the education level among people with disabilities.⁵⁴ A report from the Swedish National Agency for Education shows

⁴⁹ SCB 2017 *Unga utanför? Så har det gått på arbetsmarknaden för 90-talister utan fullföljd gymnasieutbildning?*,

https://www.scb.se/contentassets/8470acff99c54f21bd4aba8ca058cb5b/uf0549_2015a01_br_a40_br1704.pdf.

⁵⁰ See: https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/skollag-2010800_sfs-2010-800.

⁵¹ See: [Särskilt stöd i grundskolan läsåret 2020/21 - Skolverket](#).

⁵² Funktionsrätt 2019 *Respekt för rättigheter: Rapport om hur Sverige lever upp till konventionen om rättigheter för personer med funktionsnedsättning 2019*, <https://funktionsratt.se/funktionsratt-ratten-att-fungera-i-samhallen-pa-lika-villkor/manskliga-rattigheter/funktionsrattskonventionen/civilsamhallets-granskning/>.

⁵³ Welén, T. (2022). *Lärares roll och utmaningar i arbetet med barns tidiga skolövergångar* (The role of the teacher and challenges in early school transitions of children), Doktorsavhandling, Mälardalens Universitet, DiVA.

⁵⁴ See: [Utbildning - MFD](#).

that many schools feel that they do not have sufficient conditions for the learning environment to be pedagogically, socially and physically accessible for students with disabilities.⁵⁵ Primary school teachers state that they often notice that some of their students need extra adaptations and special support, but that they themselves subsequently lack the opportunity and competence to support and adjust as appropriate. There is a lack of special education teachers and competition between principals in recruiting and retaining special education teachers and other occupational categories within student health has also emerged. The problems with sufficient conditions for the learning environment not being in place are reinforced by a lack of disability perspective in the schools 'quality work'. The Swedish National Agency for Education concludes that unless the school situation for students with disabilities is followed up and analysed from different perspectives, it will be difficult to know whether the students receive the pedagogically, socially and physically accessible learning environment that they have the right to, from a legal perspective.

⁵⁵ See: [Ladda ned publikation - Skolverket](#).

6 Investment priorities in relation to disability

The RRF describes three investments in education:

- more places in regional vocational adult education (*Yrkesvux*);
- more places in the higher vocational education (*Yrkeshögskolan*); and
- resources to meet the demand for education at universities.

These investments, of which the first two are mainly aimed at those with a low educational background, may well benefit people with disabilities as their education level on average is lower than that of others in the population. However, if it is to benefit people with disabilities, education must be accessible to people with disabilities and their individual needs.

The RRF states that higher vocational education providers can apply for extra government grants for costs for special educational support for students with disabilities, which should be an incentive to provide this kind of support and thus stimulate inclusion of students with disabilities. Within the universities, there is a support system for students with disabilities where each institution allocates 0.3 % of its educational grants to educational support. If those funds are not sufficient, the higher education institutions can apply for funds for educational support from Stockholm University. The educational support includes e.g. interpretation (sign language interpretation and written interpretation), note-taking support, mentor, tutoring, targeted language support, etc. Educational institutions can also apply for special educational support from the National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools, to accommodate and provide support to students with severe mobility disabilities or mental or neuropsychiatric disabilities. This support system for students with disabilities may provide an accessible learning environment if it is used.

The RRF points out that ‘the housing situation continues to be strained for groups with low incomes, such as young people, newly arrived immigrants and individuals who, for various reasons, have a weak position on the housing market’ (p. 130). More housing is needed (...) to meet the needs of adapted housing for people of old age and people with disabilities (p. 131). In the RRF, a state investment subsidy is introduced aimed at housing for students or for housing that is organised with the aim of facilitating entry into the regular housing market for people with a socially vulnerable situation (i.e. housing decided with the support of Chapter 4, Section 1 or 2 of the Social Services Act). This investment subsidy has the potential to meet the needs of individuals with a weak position in the labour market, but it will not meet the need for adapted housing. Thus, more needs to be done to combat the lack of access to housing for people with disabilities, as demonstrated in the annual surveys by the Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ See: [Insatser och stöd till personer med funktionsnedsättning \(socialstyrelsen.se\)](https://socialstyrelsen.se/insatser-och-stod-till-personer-med-funktionsnedsattning).

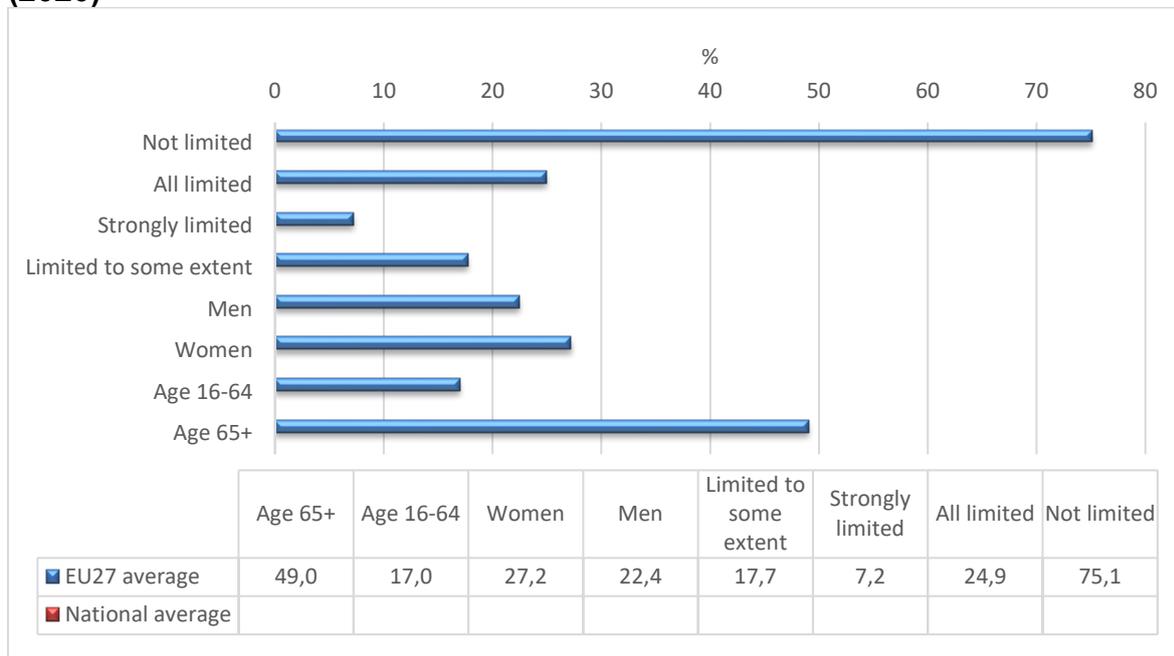
7 Annex: disability data relevant to the Semester

See also disability data published in the Eurostat database⁵⁷ and statistical reports.⁵⁸

Unless specified, the summary statistics are drawn from the most recent EU-SILC data available to researchers from Eurostat. The EU-SILC sample includes people living in private households and does not include people living in institutions (congregative households). The sampling methods vary somewhat in each country.

The proxy used to identify people with disabilities (impairments) is whether ‘for at least the past 6 months’ the respondent reports that they have been ‘limited because of a health problem in activities people usually do’.⁵⁹

Table 1: Self-reported ‘activity limitations’ as a proxy for impairment / disability (2020)



Source: EU-SILC 2020 Release April 2022

In subsequent tables, these data are used to indicate ‘disability’ equality gaps and trends relevant to the analytical chapters – for the labour market, social policies and healthcare, and education – by comparing outcomes for persons who report and do not report ‘activity limitations’. National estimates for Sweden are compared with EU27 mean averages for the most recent year.

⁵⁷ Eurostat Health Database: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/health/data/database>.

⁵⁸ Eurostat (2019) Disability Statistics: https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Disability_statistics.

⁵⁹ The EU-SILC survey questions are contained in the Minimum European Health Module (MEHM), [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Special:WhatLinksHere/Glossary:Minimum_European_Health_Module_\(MEHM\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Special:WhatLinksHere/Glossary:Minimum_European_Health_Module_(MEHM)).

7.1 Data relevant to disability and the labour market

Table 2: EU and Sweden employment rates, by disability and gender (aged 20-64) (2020)

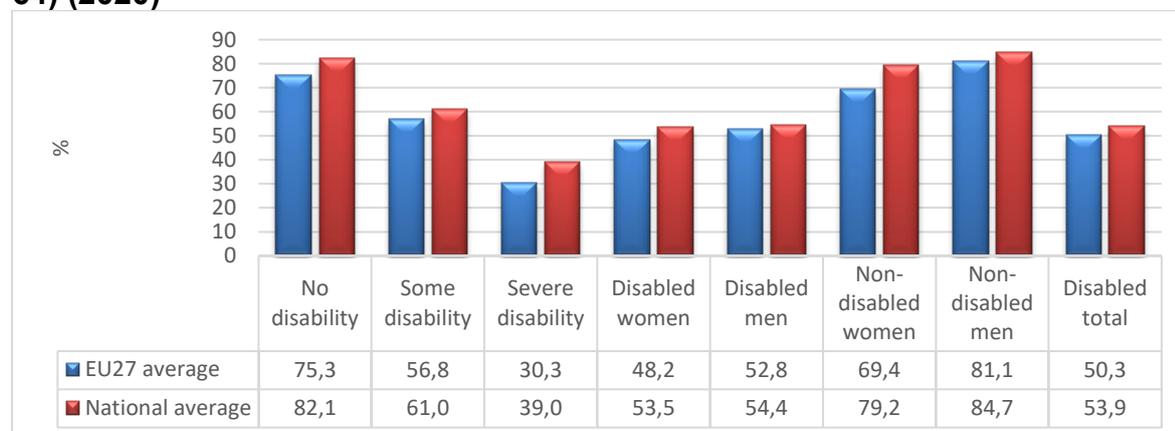


Table 3: Employment rates in Sweden, by disability and age group (2020)

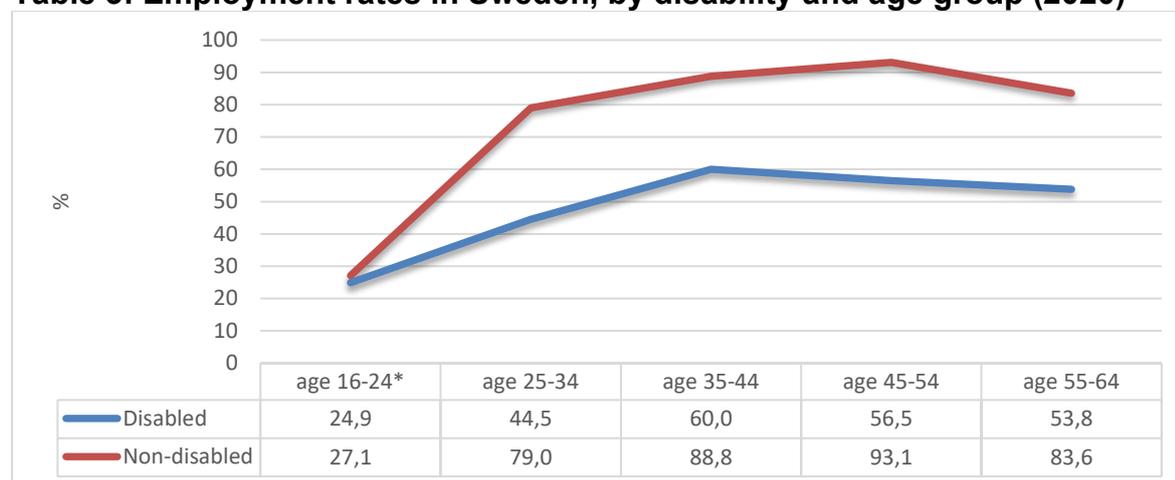
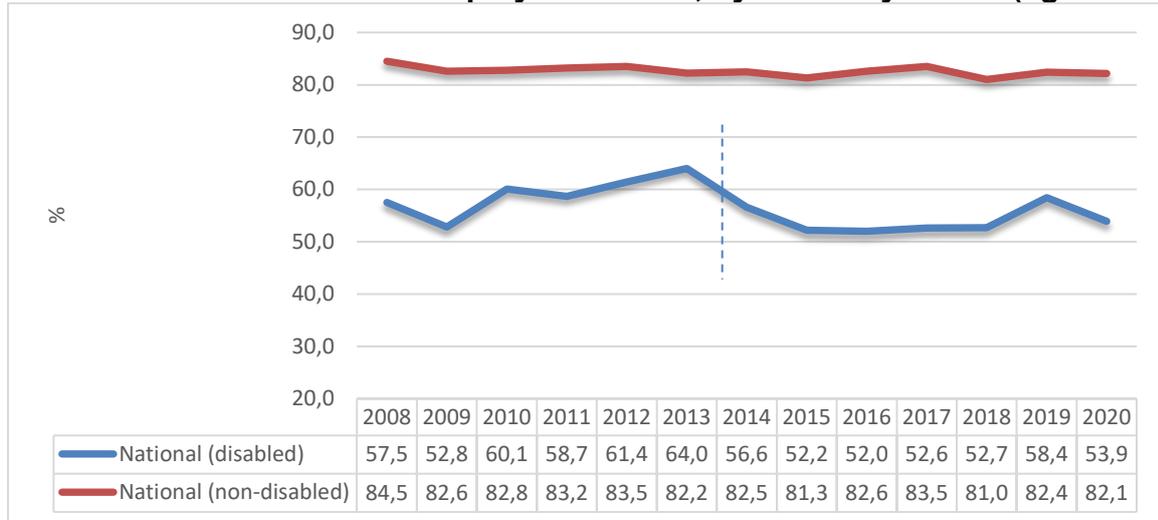


Table 4: National trends in employment rates, by disability status (aged 20-64)



Source: EU-SILC 2020 Release April 2022 (and preceding UDBs)

Note: There were fewer than 50 observations in the youngest disability age group for Sweden, which should be treated with caution. Microdata concerning employment status was not available for Germany and Italy in this data release, which affects the EU27 average (which is therefore estimated).

7.1.1 Unemployment

Table 5: Unemployment rates by disability and gender (aged 20-64) (2020)

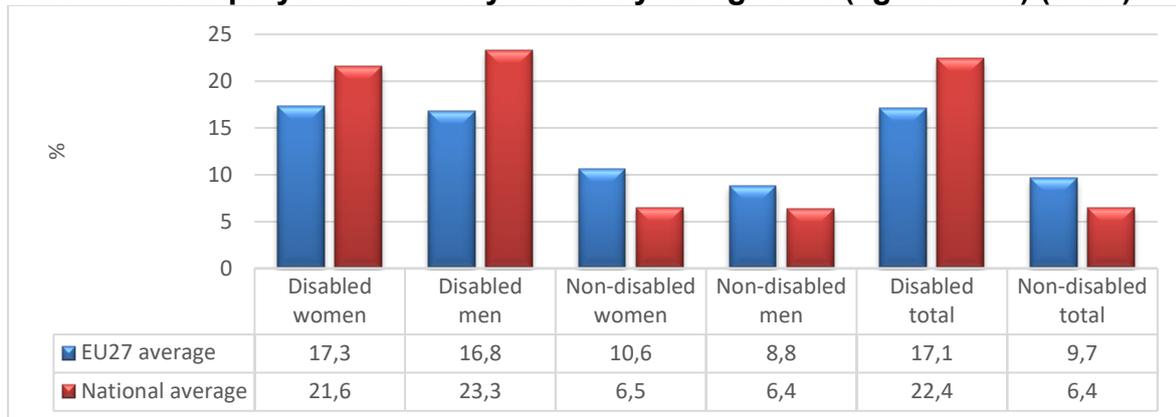


Table 6: Unemployment rates in Sweden, by disability and age group (2020)

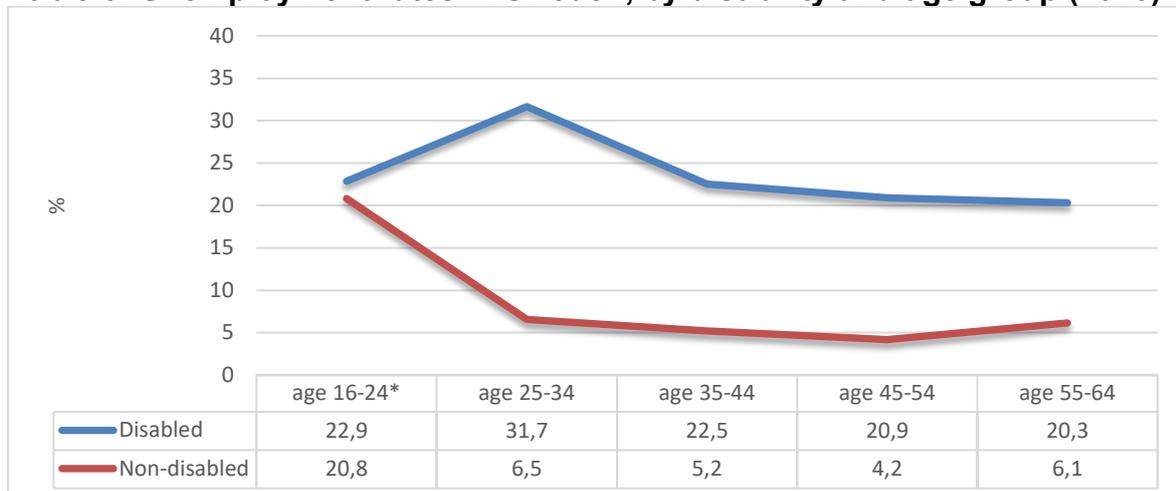
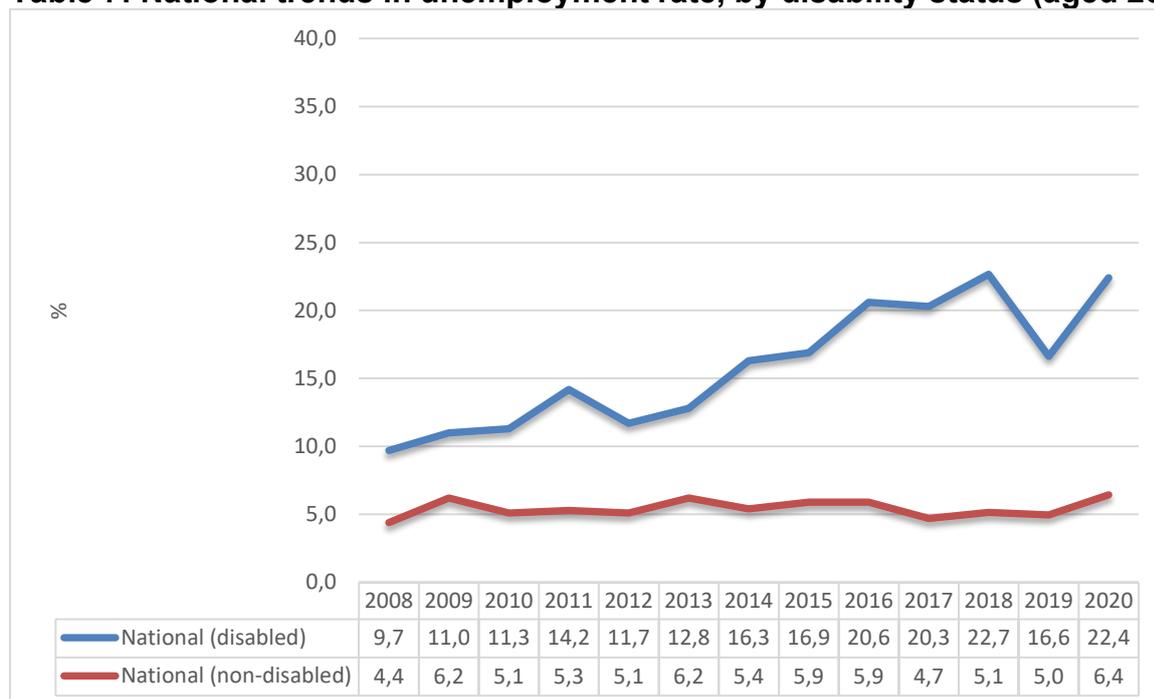


Table 7: National trends in unemployment rate, by disability status (aged 20-64)

Source: EU-SILC 2020 Release April 2022 (and preceding UDBs)

7.1.2 Economic activity

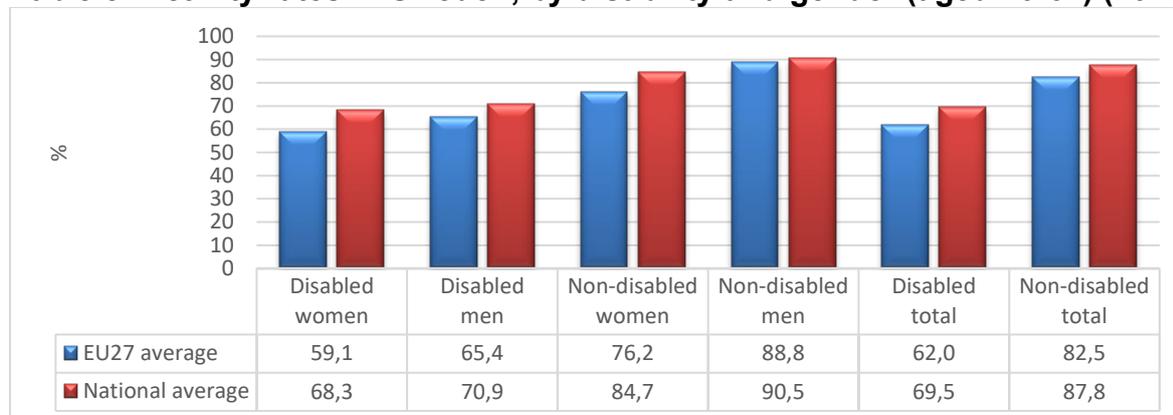
Table 8: Activity rates in Sweden, by disability and gender (aged 20-64) (2020)

Table 9: Activity rates in Sweden, by age group (2020)

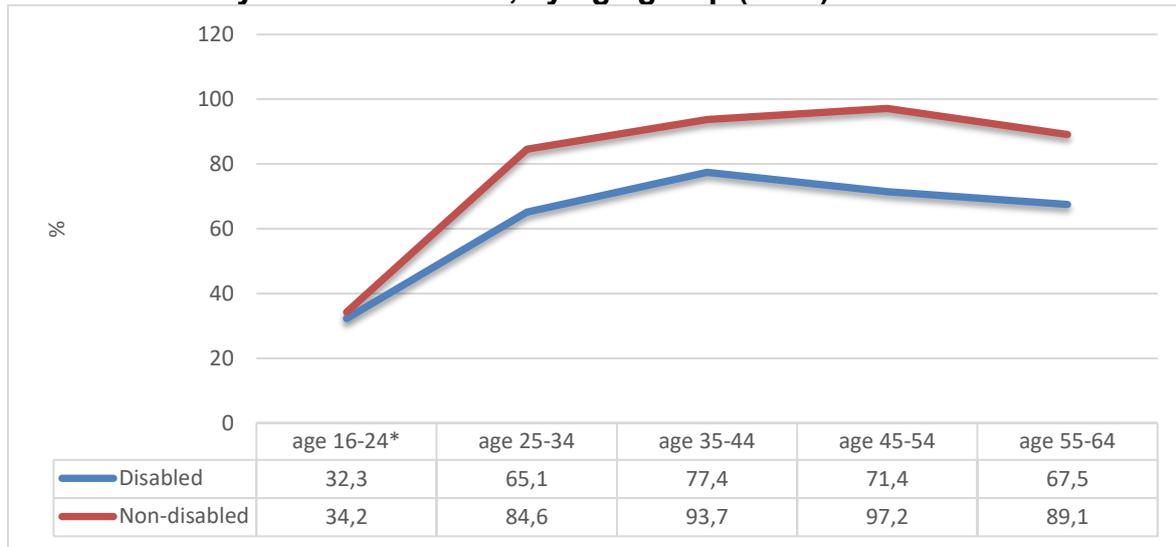
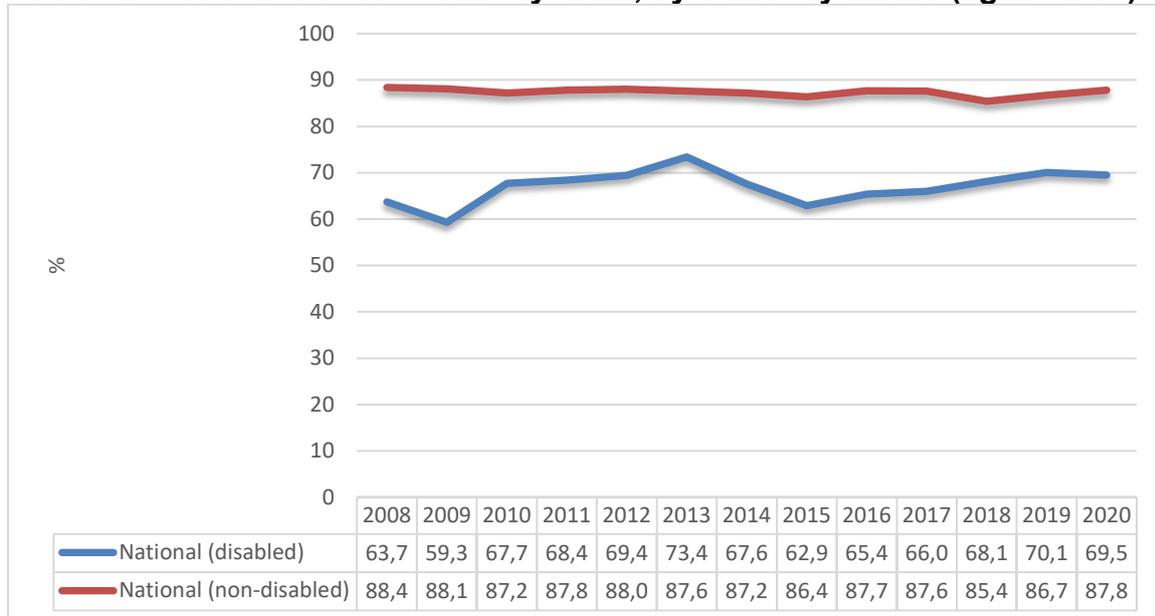


Table 10: National trends in activity rates, by disability status (aged 20-64)



Source: EU-SILC 2020 Release April 2022 (and preceding UDBs)

7.1.3 Alternative sources of labour market data in Sweden

Disability data is not yet available from the core European Labour Force Survey but labour market indicators for Sweden were disaggregated from ad hoc modules conducted in 2001 and 2011. These can be found in the Eurostat disability database.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Eurostat Health Database: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/health/data/database>.

Table A: Disability and employment (national data, 2021)

	With disabilities (%) 2021	% men / women with disabilities	With reduced work capacity (%)	% of men / women with reduced work capacity	Population in total (% of men / women)
Total population (16-64 years)	1,144,000 (18.0) (In 2013 987000 (16.4))	In the total population 18.0/17.9	479,000 (42 % of citizens with disabilities 16-64 years)	37.5/46.6	4,921,000 82.0/82.1
Employed (+ unemployed job seekers in Active labour market programs) 16-64 years	808,000 (16.4)	53.1/46.9	(58 % of citizens with disabilities 16-64 years)	47,3/52.7	79 % of pop, approx. 5 million) (52.5/47.5)
- Age 16-29 %	20.9		21.4		19.5
- Age 30-49 %	43.6		41.9		49.6
- Age 50-64 %	35.5		36.7		31.0
- Upper secondary education (highest education)	43.8		50.1		37.2
- Tertiary education	47.4		41.4		55.9
- Swedish born	85		88		75.7

Source: Statistics Sweden, *The labour market situation for persons with disabilities 2021*

Table B: participation in labour market programs

Program	Number of participants with disabilities 2020
'Arbetsmarknadsutbildning' – shorter (6m) vocational education	2,164
'Arbetspraktik' – internships	8,509
'Valideringsprogrammet' – validation of competence	17
'Förberedande och orienterande kurs' + «Folkhögskola i studiemotiverande syfte» – preparatory courses	3,718
	Total 14,408

Source: Public employment service

Table C: Participation in disability employment measures

Program	Number of participants with disabilities 2020	Number of participants with disabilities 2019	Proportion of employed 90/180 days after the program ended
'Introduktionsjobb' – 80 % wage subsidy + supervision allowance	702	1317	43/44.8
'Extratjänster' – 100 % wage subsidy + supervision allowance	1386	3256	28.7/31.8
Wage subsidy for development – individual level of subsidy +supervision allowance	15540	19757	51.2/53.7
Wage subsidy for development at Samhall ⁶¹ – individual level of subsidy +supervision allowance	4387	3315	N/A
Wage subsidy – individual level of subsidy +allowance for development measures at the workplace	31725	33397	45.8/52.5
Wage subsidy for 'secure employment' – individual level of subsidy +allowance for development measures at the workplace	36592	38763	45.4/52.3
Public sheltered work – individual level of subsidy	2476	2714	33.9/36.2
'Nystartsjobb' – tax reductions	4091	5297	30.5/32.9
'Special Introduction and follow-up support' – Supported employment support for up to three years	16613	18236	N/A

⁶¹ Samhall is a company that offers sheltered employment to people with disabilities, [Välkommen till Samhall - Sveriges viktigaste företag.](#)

Total number⁶²	113 512	126 052	
----------------------------------	----------------	----------------	--

Source: Public Employment Service

7.2 EU data relevant to disability, social policies and healthcare (2020)

Table 11: People at risk of poverty or social exclusion, by disability and risk (aged 16-64)⁶³

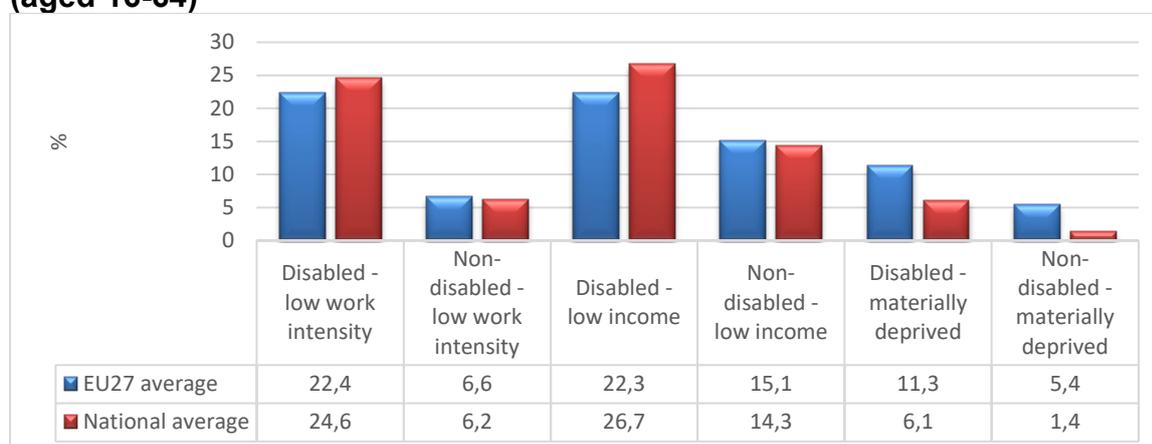


Table 12: People at risk of poverty or social exclusion, by disability and gender (aged 16+)

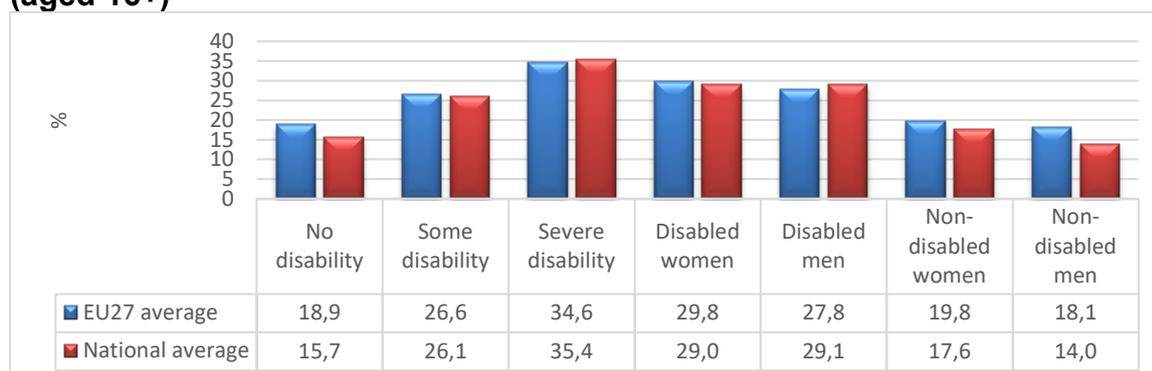
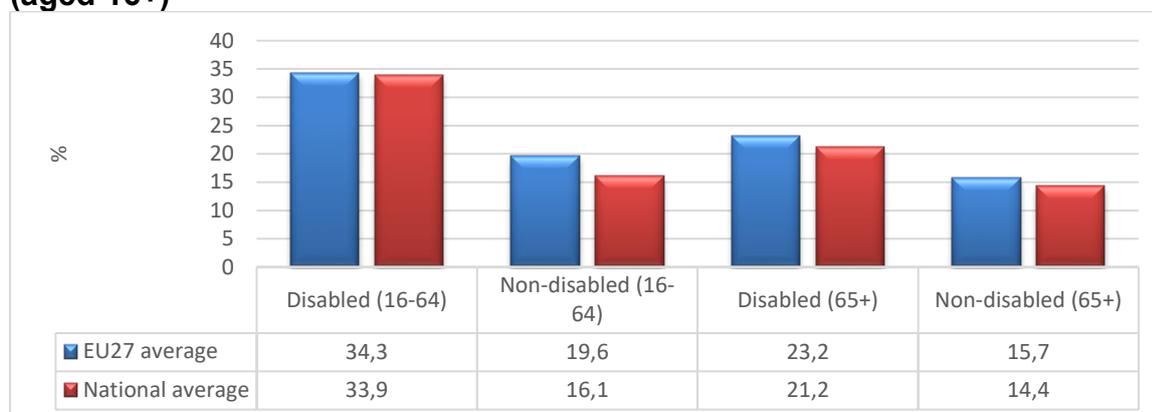


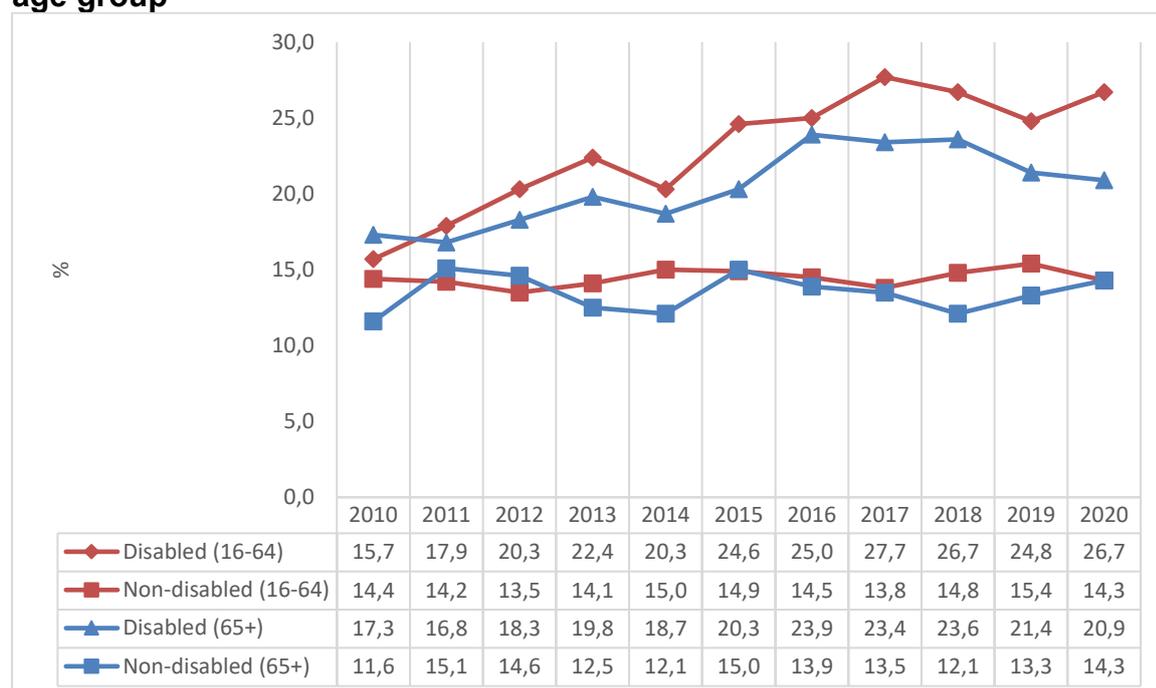
Table 13: Overall risk of household poverty or exclusion by disability and age (aged 16+)



Source: EU-SILC 2020 Release April 2022 (and previous UDB)

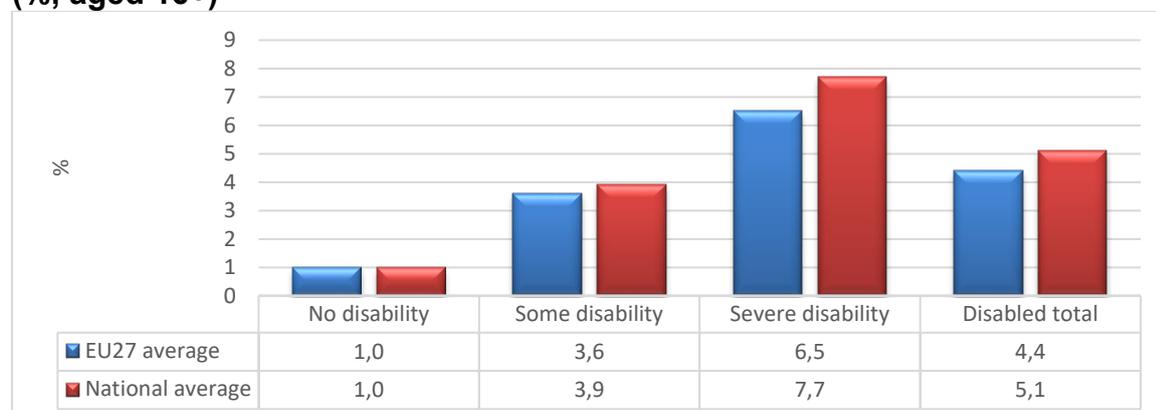
⁶² A person can participate in one or more programs during the year.

⁶³ Aged 16-59 for low work intensity.

Table 14: Trends in the risk of poverty after social transfers, by disability and age group

Source: Eurostat Health Database [[hlth_dpe020](#)] – People at risk of poverty

Note: This table shows national trends in financial poverty risk, rather than the general AROPE indicator (which is not as comparable between age groups due to the effect of paid employment); the survey does not distinguish 'activity limitation' for children under 16.

Table 15: Self-reported unmet needs for medical examination, 3-year average (% , aged 16+)

Source: Eurostat Health Database [[hlth_dh030](#)] – 'Too expensive or too far to travel or waiting list'

Note: Due to large variations an average of three years is indicated. EU mean averages are also skewed by high values in a minority of countries within disability groups but median averages for the total disability and no disability groups in 2020 are consistent with the 3-year mean values.

7.2.1 Alternative sources of poverty or healthcare data in Sweden

The EU-SILC data provides a comprehensive and reliable source concerning poverty or social exclusion rates. In addition to the summary tables presented so far, the

Eurostat disability database also contains breakdowns concerning disability and poverty before and after social transfers, as well as in-work poverty.⁶⁴

National surveys or studies are referred to in the text of Section 4.

7.3 EU data relevant to disability and education

Table 24: Early school leaving rates, by disability status (aged 18-24 and 18-29)⁶⁵

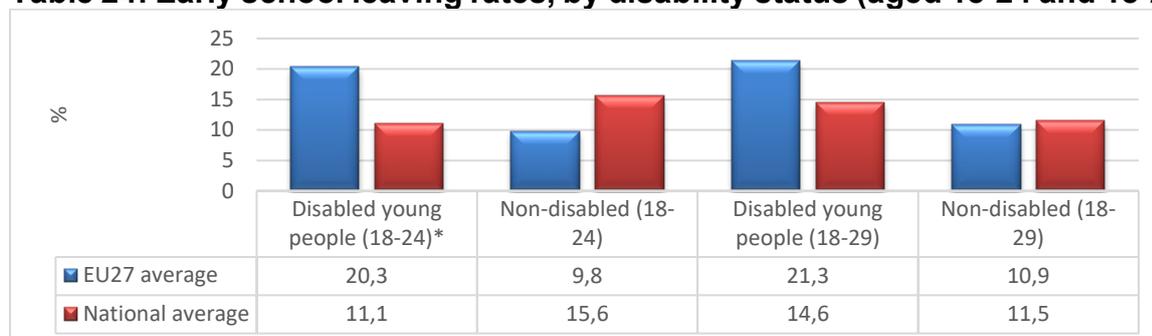
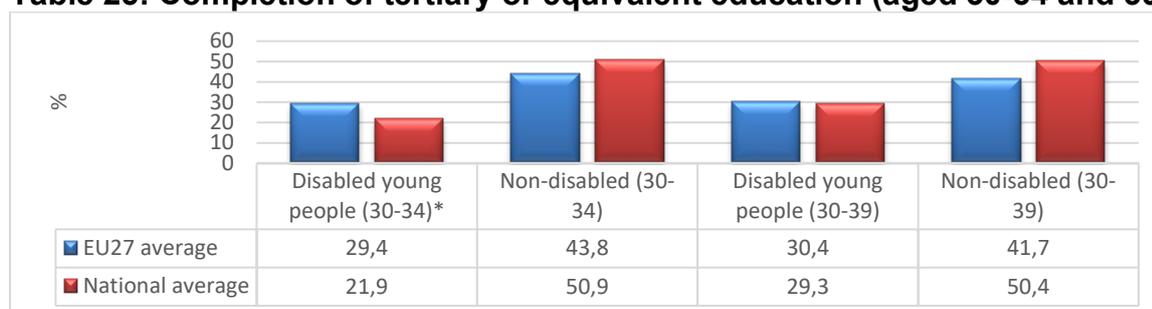


Table 25: Completion of tertiary or equivalent education (aged 30-34 and 30-39)



Source: EU-SILC 2020 Release April 2022 (and preceding UDBs)

Note: Confidence intervals for the disability group are large and reliability low (due to the small sample size in the target age group). An average of several years may be needed to establish trends or to compare breakdowns by gender. There were fewer than 50 observations in the narrow age bands for the disability group in Sweden, which should be treated with caution.

7.3.1 Alternative sources of education data in Sweden

National data sources are reviewed in the text of Section 5.

⁶⁴ Eurostat Health Database: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/health/data/database>.

⁶⁵ There was a change from International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) 1997 to ISCED 2011 qualification definitions in 2014 although some Member States continued to use the older definition after this time.

GETTING IN TOUCH WITH THE EU

In person

All over the European Union there are hundreds of Europe Direct information centres. You can find the address of the centre nearest you at: https://europa.eu/european-union/contact_en.

On the phone or by email

Europe Direct is a service that answers your questions about the European Union. You can contact this service:

- by freephone: 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 (certain operators may charge for these calls),
- at the following standard number: +32 22999696, or
- by email via: https://europa.eu/european-union/contact_en.

FINDING INFORMATION ABOUT THE EU

Online

Information about the European Union in all the official languages of the [EU is available on the Europa website at: https://europa.eu/european-union/index_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/index_en).

EU publications

You can download or order free and priced EU publications from: <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publications>.

Multiple copies of free publications may be obtained by contacting Europe Direct or your local information centre (see https://europa.eu/european-union/contact_en).

EU law and related documents

For access to legal information from the EU, including all EU law since [1951 in all the official language versions, go to EUR-Lex at: http://eur-lex.europa.eu](http://eur-lex.europa.eu).

Open data from the EU

The EU Open Data Portal (<http://data.europa.eu/euodp/en>) provides access to datasets from the EU.

Data can be downloaded and reused for free, for both commercial and non-commercial purposes.

