

184/2014 - 2 December 2014

Situation of people with disabilities in the EU

Fewer than 1 in 2 disabled adults were in employment in the EU28 in 2011

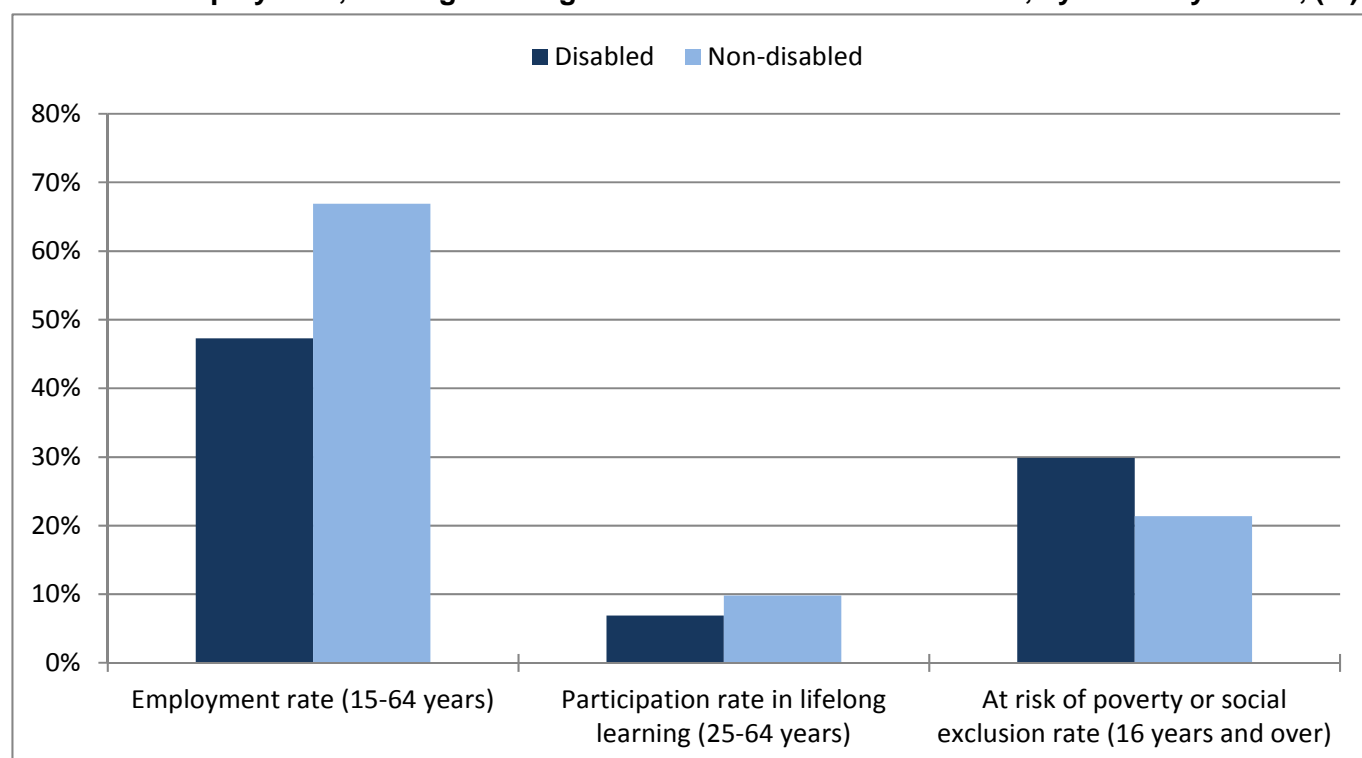
And almost a third at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2013

Around 44 million people aged 15 to 64 in the European Union (**EU28**) have reported a disability¹, often preventing them from taking part fully in society and the economy. Whether in the labour market, in the education system or for social inclusion indicators, the situation of disabled persons in the **EU28** is less favourable than that of non-disabled people.

Persons with disabilities had a more limited access to the labour market in the **EU28** in 2011: while the employment rate² of people aged 15 to 64 without disability was 66.9%, this rate was much lower (47.3%) for those with disabilities. The pattern was the same for access to education and lifelong learning in the **EU28**: the participation rate in education and training² of non-disabled people aged 25-64 was 9.8% in 2011, compared with 6.9% for those with disabilities. The gap existing between non-disabled and disabled persons was also noticeable for social inclusion: while the at-risk of poverty or social exclusion rate² was just over 20% for non-disabled people aged 16 and over (21.4%) in the **EU28** in 2013, this share stood at almost 30% for disabled persons (29.9%).

On the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities³, on 3 December, **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union**, issues data on the economic and social integration of persons with disabilities in the **EU28** Member States. This News Release is complemented with several Eurostat publications⁴, containing data on a larger range of indicators.

Access to employment, lifelong learning and social inclusion in the EU28, by disability status, (%)



Highest employment rate for disabled people in Sweden, lowest in Hungary

In all EU28 Member States, the employment rate of persons aged 15-64 was higher in 2011 for non-disabled people than for disabled. The employment rate of disabled people was less than a third in **Hungary** (23.7%), **Ireland** (29.8%), **Bulgaria** (30.7%), **Romania** (31.8%), **Slovakia** (31.9%) and **Croatia** (33.0%). On the contrary, employment rates above 60% were recorded in **Sweden** (66.2%), **Luxembourg** (62.5%), **Finland** (60.8%) and **Austria** (60.3%). At **EU28** level, the employment rate of disabled people aged 15-64 was 47.3% in 2011.

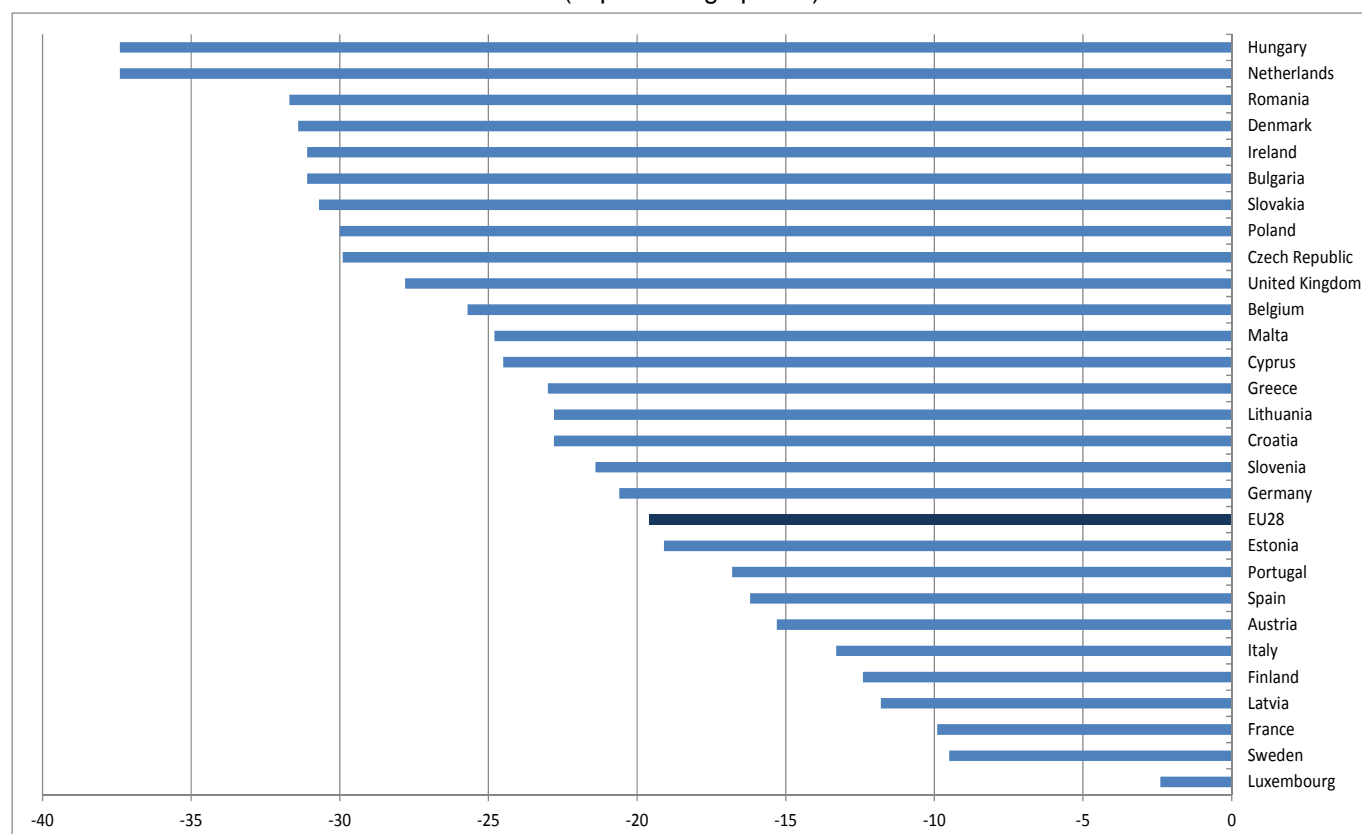
Employment rate in the EU28 Member States, by disability status, 2011 (people aged 15-64)

	Persons with disabilities (in %)	Persons with no disability (in %)	Gap (in percentage points)
EU28	47.3	66.9	-19.6
Belgium	40.7	66.4	-25.7
Bulgaria	30.7	61.8	-31.1
Czech Republic	38.6	68.5	-29.9
Denmark	46.7	78.1	-31.4
Germany	51.5	72.1	-20.6
Estonia	49.5	68.6	-19.1
Ireland	29.8	60.9	-31.1
Greece	35.5	58.5	-23.0
Spain	44.3	60.5	-16.2
France	56.2	66.1	-9.9
Croatia	33.0	55.8	-22.8
Italy	45.6	58.9	-13.3
Cyprus	46.4	70.9	-24.5
Latvia	50.8	62.6	-11.8
Lithuania	40.4	63.2	-22.8
Luxembourg	62.5	64.9	-2.4
Hungary	23.7	61.1	-37.4
Malta	34.4	59.2	-24.8
Netherlands	42.7	80.1	-37.4
Austria	60.3	75.6	-15.3
Poland	33.9	63.9	-30.0
Portugal	51.0	67.8	-16.8
Romania	31.8	63.5	-31.7
Slovenia	47.0	68.4	-21.4
Slovakia	31.9	62.6	-30.7
Finland	60.8	73.2	-12.4
Sweden	66.2	75.7	-9.5
United Kingdom	47.6	75.4	-27.8
Iceland	66.9	84.0	-17.1
Switzerland	69.0	81.6	-12.6
Turkey	41.1	51.0	-9.9

Widest gaps in the employment rates of disabled and non-disabled people in Hungary and the Netherlands

In 2011 across Member States, the largest differences between the proportion of disabled people and that of non-disabled people aged 15-64 being in employment were recorded in **Hungary** and the **Netherlands** (both -37.4 percentage points). At the opposite end of the scale, gaps of less than 10 percentage points were registered in **Luxembourg** (-2.4 pp), **Sweden** (-9.5 pp) and **France** (-9.9 pp). At **EU28** level, the difference between the employment rate of disabled people (47.3%) and of non-disabled people (66.9%) was -19.6 pp in 2011.

Differences in employment rate for disabled and non-disabled people aged 15-64, 2011
(in percentage points)



Equal access to lifelong learning for disabled and non-disabled people in Sweden and France

Trends similar to those observed in the labour market can be seen for access to education. In each of the **EU28** Member States for which data are available, the participation rate in lifelong learning was lower in 2011 for disabled people than for non-disabled people aged 25 to 64. However, significant differences can be noted across Member States.

In 2011, participation rates in lifelong learning were almost the same for disabled and non-disabled people in **Sweden** (26.2% for disabled people compared with 27.3% for non-disabled, or -1.1 percentage points), **France** (-1.3 pp), **Italy** (-1.7 pp), **Ireland** and **Greece** (both -1.8 pp), while **Slovenia** (9.6% for disabled people compared with 19.3% for non-disabled, or -9.7 percentage points), **Denmark** (-8.7 pp), the **Czech Republic** (-7.8 pp), **Finland** (-7.4 pp) and the **Netherlands** (-7.2 pp) had the widest gaps.

Participation rate in education and training in the EU28 Member States, by disability status, 2011
(people aged 25-64)

	Persons with disabilities (in %)	Persons with no disability (in %)	Gap (in percentage points)
EU28	6.9	9.8	-2.8
Belgium	5.5	8.7	-3.2
Bulgaria	:	1.5	:
Czech Republic	5.3	13.0	-7.8
Denmark	24.5	33.2	-8.7
Germany	5.5	8.1	-2.5
Estonia	9.8	14.0	-4.2
Ireland	5.3	7.1	-1.8
Greece	1.0	2.8	-1.8
Spain	8.4	12.6	-4.3
France	5.2	6.5	-1.3
Croatia	:	3.4	:
Italy	4.6	6.2	-1.7
Cyprus	5.1	9.1	-4.0
Latvia	2.7	4.9	-2.2
Lithuania	2.2	6.3	-4.2
Luxembourg	10.7	14.9	-4.2
Hungary	0.8	3.8	-3.0
Malta	:	7.6	:
Netherlands	11.5	18.7	-7.2
Austria	10.1	14.5	-4.4
Poland	1.7	5.1	-3.4
Portugal	7.8	13.0	-5.1
Romania	0.5	2.4	-1.9
Slovenia	9.6	19.3	-9.7
Slovakia	1.5	5.2	-3.7
Finland	19.0	26.3	-7.4
Sweden	26.2	27.3	-1.1
United Kingdom	11.7	16.2	-4.5
Iceland	20.7	25.8	-5.2
Switzerland	21.9	30.7	-8.8
Turkey	1.7	4.1	-2.4

: not available

At risk of poverty or social exclusion rates differ most according to disability status in Bulgaria and Belgium, least in Greece and Spain

The share of disabled people aged 16 and over being at risk of poverty or social exclusion is higher than for non-disabled people in all EU28 Member States.

In 2013 across Member States, the largest differences between the share of disabled people and non-disabled people aged 16 and over being at risk of poverty or social exclusion were observed in **Bulgaria** (63.7% for disabled people compared with 44.1% for non-disabled people, or +19.6 percentage points), followed by **Belgium** (+17.7 pp), **Lithuania** (+16.3 pp), **Estonia** (+15.9 pp) and the **United Kingdom** (+15.0 pp). On the contrary, the smallest differences were recorded in **Greece** (36.8% for disabled people compared with 34.5% for non-disabled people, or +2.3 percentage points), **Spain** (+3.7 pp), **Luxembourg** (+4.3 pp) and **Italy** (+4.4 pp). At **EU28** level, the difference between the at-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion rate for disabled people (29.9%) and for non-disabled people (21.4%) was +8.5 pp in 2013.

At risk of poverty or social exclusion rate in the EU28 Member States, by disability status, 2013
(people aged 16 and over)

	Persons with disabilities (in %)	Persons with no disability (in %)	Gap (in percentage points)
EU28	29.9	21.4	+8.5
Belgium	34.3	16.6	+17.7
Bulgaria	63.7	44.1	+19.6
Czech Republic	23.1	12.0	+11.1
Denmark	27.4	16.5	+10.9
Germany	27.6	14.9	+12.7
Estonia	34.4	18.5	+15.9
Ireland	:	:	:
Greece	36.8	34.5	+2.3
Spain	29.4	25.7	+3.7
France	21.8	16.0	+5.8
Croatia	37.7	27.1	+10.6
Italy	30.8	26.4	+4.4
Cyprus	36.7	25.7	+11.0
Latvia	43.3	29.4	+13.9
Lithuania	42.2	25.9	+16.3
Luxembourg	20.7	16.4	+4.3
Hungary	38.8	29.2	+9.6
Malta	32.7	21.1	+11.6
Netherlands	21.4	11.3	+10.1
Austria	24.0	15.2	+8.8
Poland	30.9	23.1	+7.8
Portugal	31.6	25.2	+6.4
Romania	43.8	37.1	+6.7
Slovenia	28.7	17.5	+11.2
Slovakia	22.7	17.0	+5.7
Finland	22.2	12.7	+9.5
Sweden	25.6	14.3	+11.3
United Kingdom	34.8	19.8	+15.0
Iceland	21.6	9.9	+11.7
Norway	24.9	12.0	+12.9
Switzerland	22.9	13.8	+9.1
Serbia	55.1	40.5	+14.6

: not available

1. **Disability** is a complex, evolving and multi-dimensional concept for which various definitions, interpretations and approaches are possible in a particular survey. Disability is here defined as a self-reported limitation in the activities of everyday life. More precisely, the following data sources and operational definitions are used:
For the data on employment and education, the source is the EU Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS) ad-hoc module on employment of disabled people conducted in 2011 in the EU Member States, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Turkey and covering people aged 15-64 living in private households. In this survey, disabled people are those persons reporting at least one basic activity difficulty (such as difficulty in seeing, hearing, walking, remembering, etc.).
For the data on poverty and social exclusion, the source is the EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC), collected annually in the EU Member States, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Serbia and covering people aged 16 and over living in private households. In this survey, disabled people are those people reporting being limited in activities people usually do because of health problems for at least the past six months.
2. The **employment rate** is calculated by dividing the number of persons aged 15 to 64 in employment by the total population of the same age group.
Lifelong learning is defined as encompassing all learning activities after the end of initial education, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences, within a personal, civic, social and or employment related perspective.
People **at risk of poverty or social exclusion** are in at least one of the following three conditions: at-risk-of-poverty after social transfers (income poverty), severely materially deprived or living in a household with very low work intensity.

3. For more information, see: <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=111>.
4. Eurostat, Statistics explained articles "**Disability statistics - Labour market access**", "**Disability statistics - Access to education and training**" and "**Disability statistics - Poverty and income inequalities**". Available on the Eurostat website. Data on 'at risk of poverty or social exclusion' presented in this News Release may differ from those published in the Statistics explained article, due to updates made after the data extractions used for the publication.

Issued by: **Eurostat Press Office**

Vincent BOURGEAIS
Tel: +352-4301-33 444
eurostat-pressoffice@ec.europa.eu

For further information about the data:

Lucian AGAFITEI
Tel: +352-4301-36 461
lucian.agafitei@ec.europa.eu

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