



Disability in the Czech Republic

The Importance of Disability

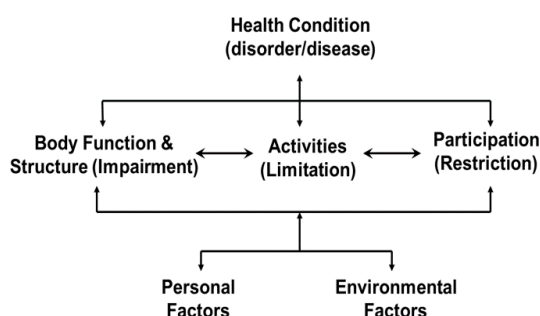
Disability is both a multidimensional concept and experience. Disability can affect anyone at any time – from birth through childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and old age.

Worldwide, many people with disabilities do not have equal access to education, employment, and health care. In addition, those with disability may experience barriers to participating in civic and social life activities.

Defining Disability

No single definition of disability exists. Definitions vary depending on the purpose for measurement. Moreover, the nature and severity of disabilities can vary greatly depending on cultural contexts¹. Yet, data on the size and characteristics of the population with disability, which also allow for cross-cultural comparisons, require standardization in both the conceptualization and the measurement of disability.

The ICF Model of Disability



The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF), developed by the World Health Organization², provides the necessary and consistent definition of disability. According to the ICF model, disability arises from the interaction between an individual and

that individual's contextual (personal and environmental) circumstances. Thus, the degree to which participation in life activities is restricted depends on the interaction between the individual's functioning (ability to perform basic functional activities) and the environment.

The Washington Group

The Washington Group on Disability Statistics (WG), a city group established under the United Nations Statistical Commission, was formed to address the need for population-based measures of disability by promoting and coordinating international co-operation in the area of health statistics, focusing on disability data collection tools suitable for censuses and national surveys.

The WG has developed, tested and adopted the Short Set on Functioning (WG-SS) to collect such data. The questions use the ICF as a conceptual framework. The WG-SS is comprised of 6 questions measuring difficulty functioning in basic actions, with response categories that capture the full spectrum of difficulty functioning, from mild to severe. Disability is defined as having “a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do at all” to at least one WG-SS question.

The WG Short Set on Functioning

1. Do you have difficulty seeing, even if wearing glasses?
2. Do you have difficulty hearing, even if using a hearing aid?
3. Do you have difficulty walking or climbing steps?
4. Do you have difficulty remembering or concentrating?
5. Do you have difficulty with self-care, such as washing all over or dressing?
6. Using your usual language, do you have difficulty communicating, for example understanding or being understood?

Response categories: No difficulty / Some difficulty / A lot of difficulty / Cannot do at all

Czech Republic Data on Disability and Methods

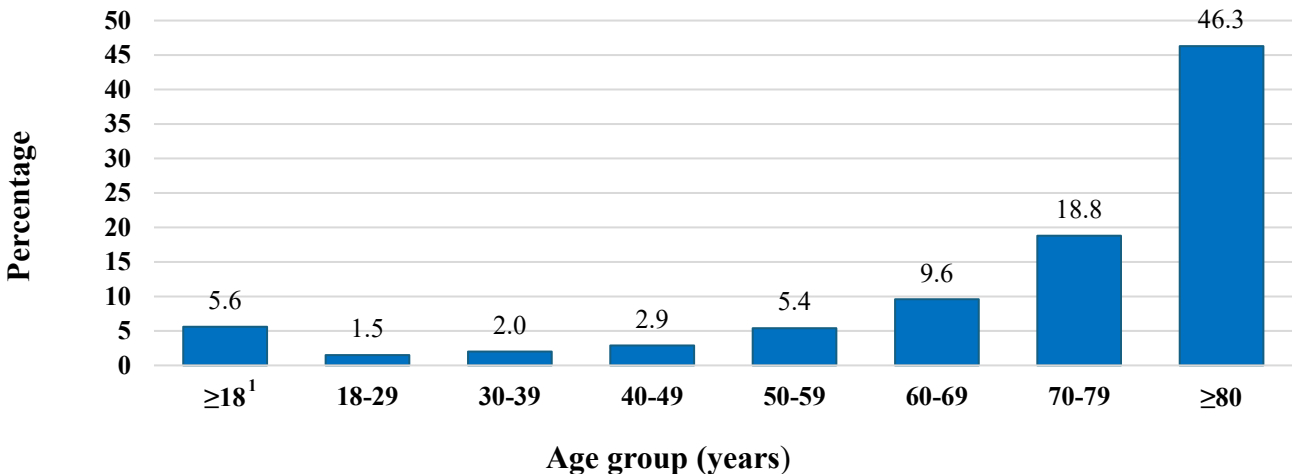
In the Czech Republic, a sample survey of people with disabilities³ is conducted every 5-6 years, which also includes some questions from the WG set of questions. However, data from the EU-SILC survey are used for this report, because this survey is conducted in all EU countries and contains the set of all six questions from the WG-SS (once every 3 years). The data for the Czech Republic from the SILC survey are therefore more comparable with data for other countries (at least European ones). This report uses 2022 SILC data. The final sample for 2022 included 8.6 thousand households and 15.1 thousand adults aged 18 and over. For more information about SILC, visit: <https://csu.gov.cz/living-conditions-eu-silc-methodology>

Most of the estimates reported here are age-adjusted using the 2020 world population⁴ to facilitate cross-country comparisons.

Prevalence of Disability

- The age-adjusted percentage of persons aged 18 and over with disabilities is 5.6%.
- The prevalence of disability increases with age, from 1.5% among those 18-29 years to 46.3% among those aged 80 and over.

Figure 1. Prevalence of disability: age-adjusted and age-specific percentage of the population 18 years and over and by age group, Czech Republic, 2022



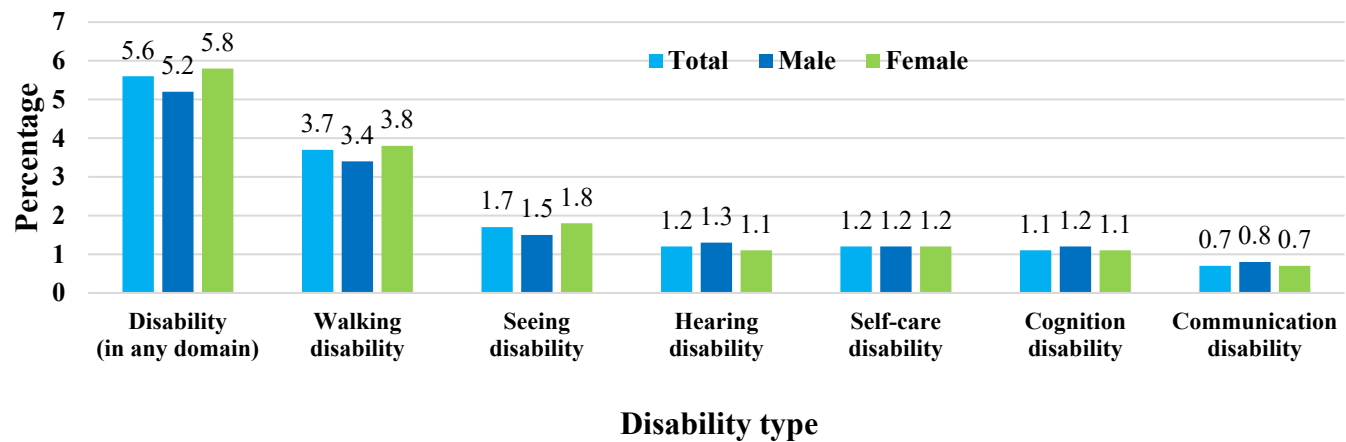
¹Total for ≥18 is age-adjusted using the 2020 world population (available at: [World Population Prospects - Population Division - United Nations](#)) using the following age groups: 18–29, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59, 60–69, 70–79, and ≥80 years.

Disability is defined using the WG Short Set on Functioning, which asks about difficulty in seeing, hearing, walking or climbing steps, communicating, remembering or concentrating, and self-care, such as washing all over or dressing. Respondents who indicated “a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do at all” to at least one of the six functioning domains were classified as with disabilities.

Estimates are based on household interviews of the noninstitutionalized population in Czechia.
Data source: SILC, Czech Statistical Office, 2022.

- Females (5.8%) are more likely than males (5.2%) to have disability (in any domain).
- Males are more likely to have hearing and cognition disabilities, while females are more likely to have walking and seeing disabilities.
- The most common type of disability reported is walking.

Figure 2. Prevalence of disability in any domain and disability in each domain: age-adjusted percentage of the population 18 years and over, by sex, Czech Republic, 2022



Age-adjusted percentages are based on the 2020 world population (available at: [World Population Prospects - Population Division - United Nations](https://population.un.org/wpp/)) using the following age groups: 18–29, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59, 60–69, 70–79, and ≥80 years.

Disability is defined using the WG Short Set on Functioning, which asks about difficulty in seeing, hearing, walking or climbing steps, communicating, remembering or concentrating, and self-care, such as washing all over or dressing. Respondents who indicated “a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do at all” to at least one of the six functioning domains were classified as having disability (in any domain). Disability in each domain is defined by a response of “a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do at all” in that domain.

Estimates are based on household interviews of the noninstitutionalized population in Czechia.
Data source: SILC, Czech Statistical Office, 2022.

Outcomes Disaggregated by Disability

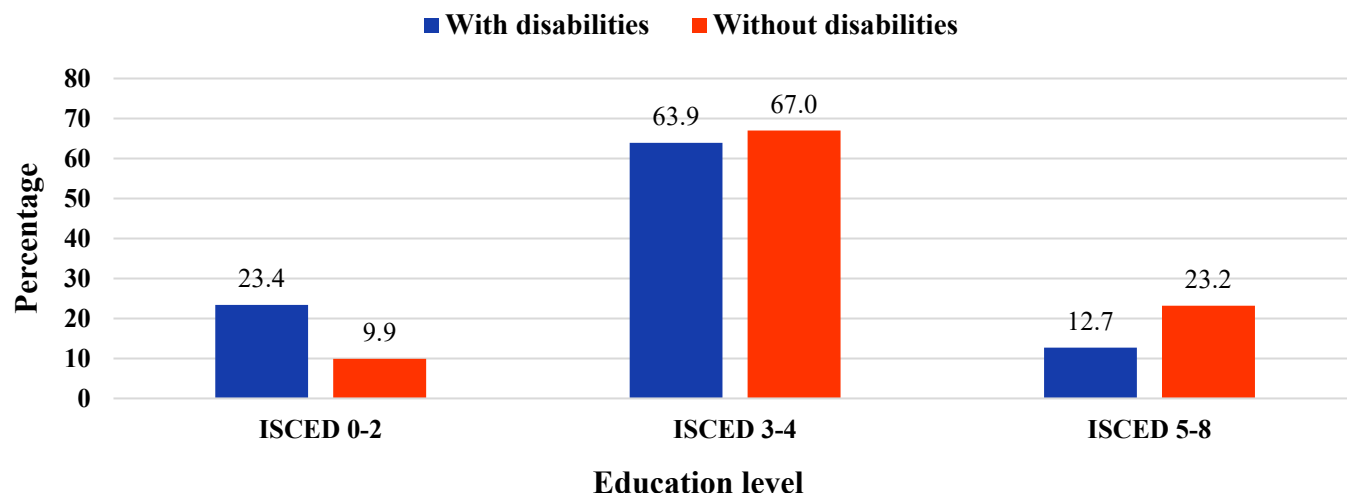
Disaggregating data by disability status allows for the comparison of outcomes for people with and without disabilities and is a necessary first step towards addressing disparities. Outcome indicators, such as educational attainment and employment, any of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals⁵, or specific programmatic objectives, can be monitored over time to determine if gaps exist between those with and without disabilities and whether those gaps are increasing or decreasing across time. In this section, data on educational attainment, family income, and employment status are disaggregated by disability status.

Educational Attainment

- Adults aged 18 and over with disabilities (23.4%) were more likely to have no more than primary education (ISCED 0-1) compared with those without disabilities (9.9%).
- Adults with disabilities (12.7%) were less likely to have completed a college degree or higher compared with those without disabilities (23.2%).

- Both adults with and without disabilities most commonly had the highest level of education completed at ISCED level 3-4 (63.9%, and 67.0%, respectively).

Figure 3. Education level by disability status: age-adjusted percentage of the population 18 years and over, Czech Republic, 2022



Age-adjusted percentages are based on the 2020 world population (available at: [World Population Prospects - Population Division - United Nations](#)) using the following age groups: 18–29, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59, 60–69, 70–79, and ≥80 years.

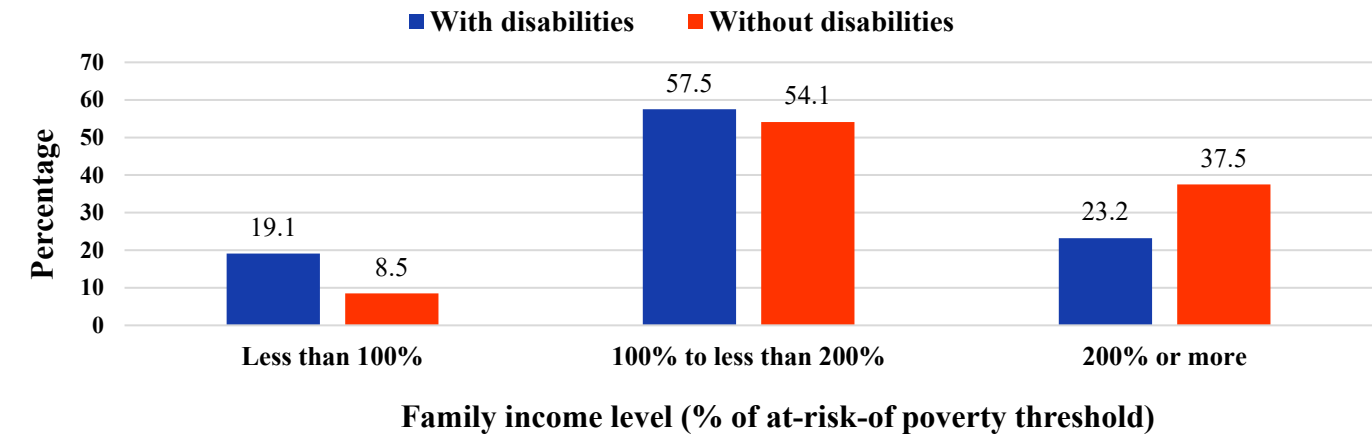
Disability is defined using the WG Short Set on Functioning, which asks about difficulty in seeing, hearing, walking or climbing steps, communicating, remembering or concentrating, and self-care, such as washing all over or dressing. Respondents who indicated “a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do at all” to at least one of the six functioning domains were classified as with disabilities. Education is defined by highest education level attained according to the ISCED classification (available at: [International Standard Classification of Education \(ISCED\) - Statistics Explained](#)).

Estimates are based on household interviews of the noninstitutionalized population in Czechia.
Data source: SILC, Czech Statistical Office, 2022.

Family Income

- In 2022, 19.1% of adults aged 18 and over with disabilities had family incomes less than 100% of the at-risk-of-poverty threshold compared with 8.5% of those without disabilities.
- 23.2% of adults with disabilities had family incomes of 200% or more of the at-risk-of-poverty threshold compared to 37.5% of those without disabilities.
- Adults with disabilities were more likely to have family incomes less than the at-risk-of-poverty threshold.

Figure 4. Family income level by disability status: age-adjusted percentage of the population 18 years and over, Czech Republic, 2022



Age-adjusted percentages are based on the 2020 world population (available at: [World Population Prospects - Population Division - United Nations](#)) using the following age groups: 18–29, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59, 60–69, 70–79, and ≥80 years.

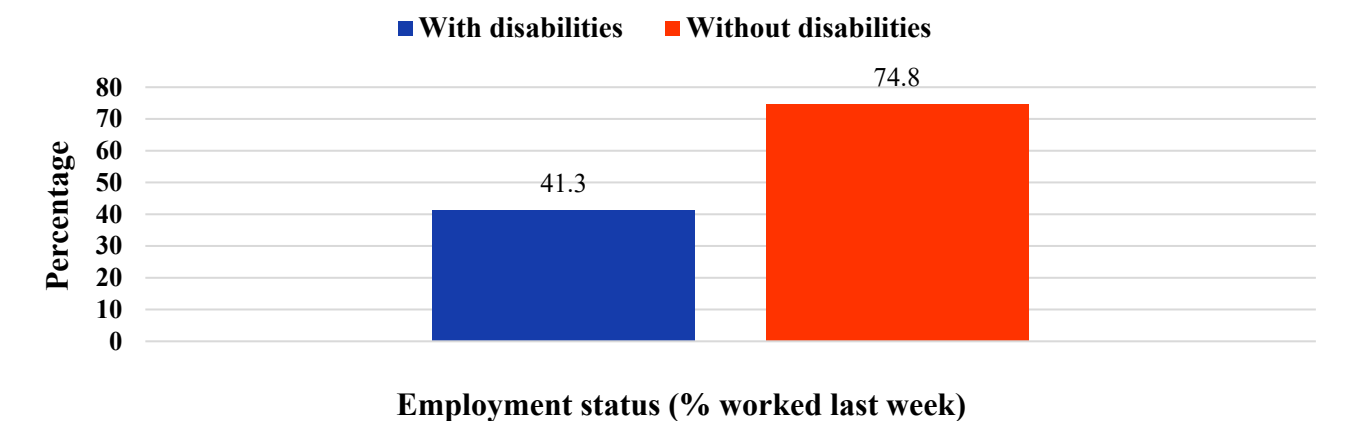
Disability is defined using the WG Short Set on Functioning, which asks about difficulty in seeing, hearing, walking or climbing steps, communicating, remembering or concentrating, and self-care, such as washing all over or dressing. Respondents who indicated “a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do at all” to at least one of the six functioning domains were classified as with disabilities. The at-risk-of-poverty threshold is set at 60% of the national median equivalised disposable income ([Glossary:At-risk-of-poverty rate - Statistics Explained](#)).

Estimates are based on household interviews of the noninstitutionalized population in Czechia.
Data source: SILC, Czech Statistical Office, 2022.

Employment Status

- In 2022, 41.3% of adults aged 18-64 with disabilities were employed in the last week compared with 74.8% of adults without disabilities.

Figure 5. Employment status by disability status: age-adjusted percentage of the population 18-64 years, Czech Republic, 2022



Age-adjusted percentages are based on the 2020 world population (available at: [World Population Prospects - Population Division - United Nations](#)) using the following age groups: 18–29, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59, 60–64 years.

Disability is defined using the WG Short Set on Functioning, which asks about difficulty in seeing, hearing, walking or climbing steps, communicating, remembering or concentrating, and self-care, such as washing all over or dressing. Respondents who indicated “a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do at all” to at least one of the six functioning domains were classified as with disabilities. Employment is defined as having worked for pay in the last week.

Estimates are based on household interviews of the noninstitutionalized population in Czechia.
Data source: SILC, Czech Statistical Office, 2022.

References

1. Altman, B. (2001). "Definitions of Disability and their Operationalization, and Measurement in Survey Data: An Update." In Barnartt, S. and Altman, B. (Eds.) *Exploring Theories and Expanding Methodologies: Where We Are and Where We Need To Go* (Research in Social Science and Disability, Vol. 2, pp. 77-100). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.
2. World Health Organization. (2001). *The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF)*. WHO.
3. Czech Statistical Office. (2025). *Sample Survey on Persons with Disabilities*.
<https://csu.gov.cz/vykazy/sample-survey-on-persons-with-disabilities>
4. United Nations. Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division. World Population Prospects 2022, Online Edition. Available at: <https://population.un.org/wpp/>
5. United Nations General Assembly. (2015). *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 21 October 2015, A/RES/70/1. Available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/57b6e3e44.html>.

This report was authored by:

Markéta Pištorová

Czech Statistical Office

Czech Republic

marketa.pistorova@csu.gov.cz