



Disability in Hungary

The Importance of Disability

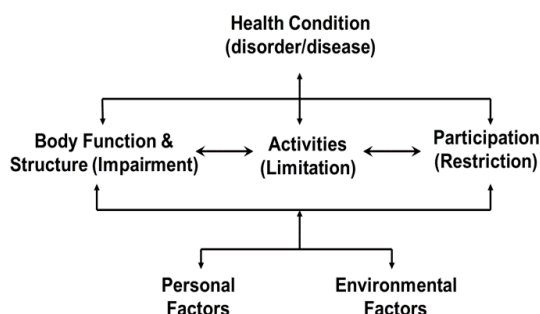
Disability is both a multidimensional concept and experience. Disability can affect anyone at any time – from birth through childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and old age.

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

Hungary Data on Disability and Methods

The census is a collection of data that involves the entire population of Hungary, and is usually organised every ten years. It is carried out simultaneously throughout the whole country, using the same questions and methodology, covering every dwelling and person. The census provides an accurate and detailed account of the size, demographic and employment characteristics, health status, qualifications, ethnic and religious composition and living and housing conditions of the entire population of Hungary. This report uses the data on the noninstitutionalized population of the 2022 census. The WG-SS questions have been first included in the 2022 census as non-compulsory questions. The census provides data on disability of 6 680 654 persons (74.4%) in the population aged 5 years and over and 5 771 151 persons (74.4%) in the population aged 18 years and over. For more information about Census 2022, visit: <https://nepszamlalas2022.ksh.hu/en/census-2022..>

In the framework of the EU statistics on income and living conditions (EU-SILC), the Hungarian Central Statistical Office collects data on household income, living conditions and other characteristics. The survey is carried out annually in all EU countries, as the data form the basis for the European Union's harmonised statistics on income and living conditions.

EU-SILC is a nationally-representative interview survey of the civilian, noninstitutionalized population. This report uses 2022 SILC data. In Hungary, the sample for 2022 included 14 363 adults aged 18 and over. The WG-SS questions have been first included in the EU-SILC health module in 2022. It is planned that the health module will be asked every six years in the future. For more information about EU-SILC, visit:

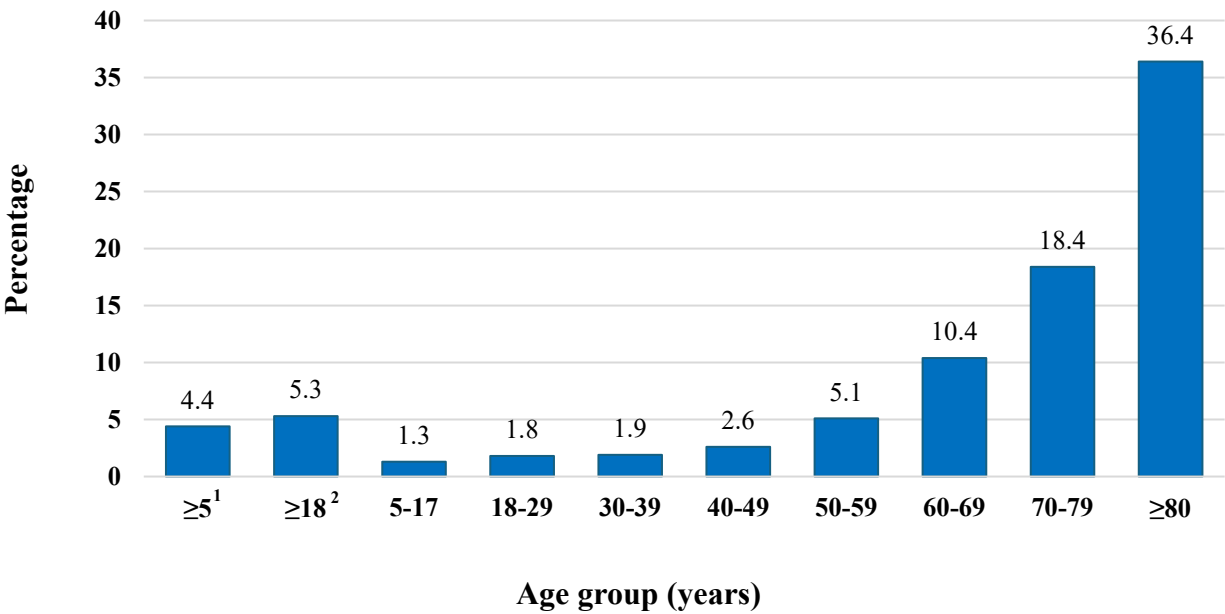
<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/microdata/european-union-statistics-on-income-and-living-conditions>
<https://www.ksh.hu/eletmod>.

Some of the estimates reported in this report are age-adjusted using the 2020 world population to facilitate cross-country comparisons³. Differences between estimates, when tested, were evaluated using two-sided significance tests at the 0.05 level.

Prevalence of Disability

- The age-adjusted percentage of persons aged 5 and over with disabilities is 4.4%.
- The age-adjusted percentage of persons aged 18 and over with disabilities is 5.3%.
- The prevalence of disability increases with age, from 1.3% among those 5-17 years to 36.4% among those aged 80 and over.

Figure 1. Prevalence of disability: age-adjusted and age-specific percentage of the population 5 years and over and by age group, Hungary, 2022



¹Total for 5 years and over is age-adjusted using the 2020 world population (available at: [World Population Prospects - Population Division - United Nations](#)) using the following age groups: 5-17, 18-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70-79, and ≥80 years.

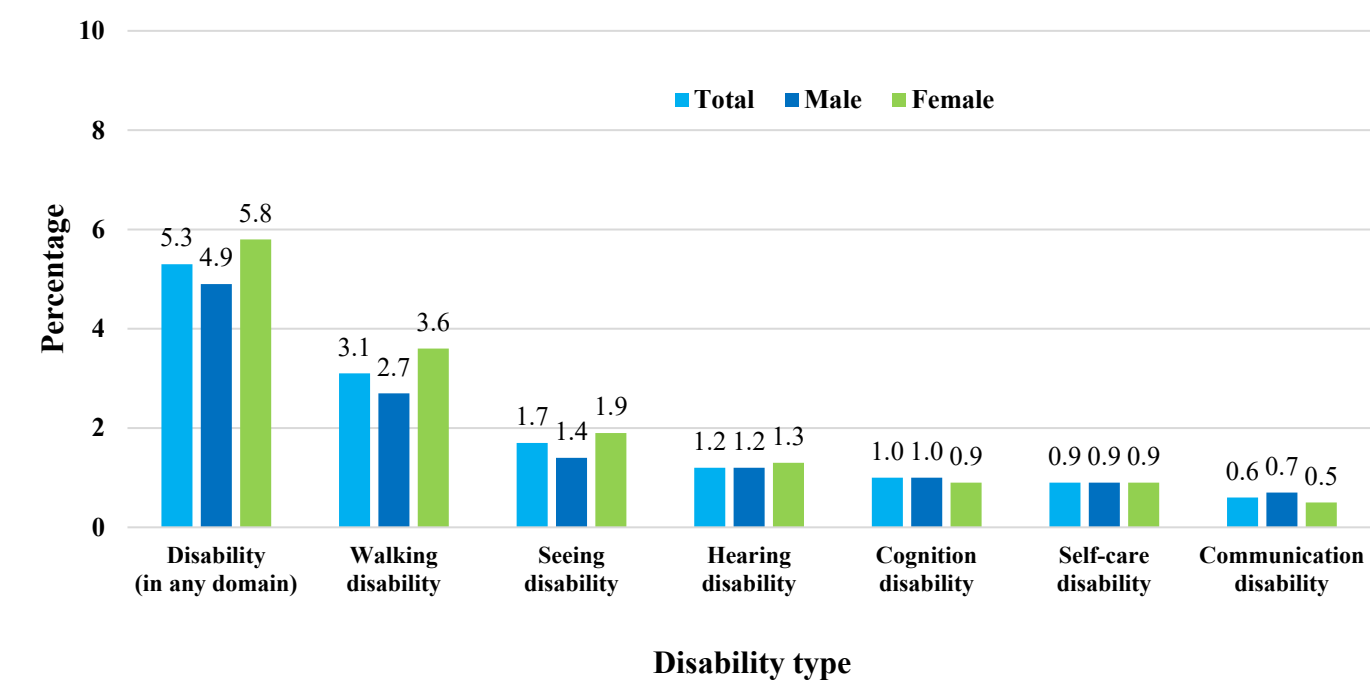
²Total for 18 years and over is age-adjusted using the 2020 world population (available at: [World Population Prospects - Population Division - United Nations](#)) using the following age groups: 18-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, 70-79, and ≥80 years.

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.

Data source: Hungarian Census 2022.

- Among the population aged 18 and over, a higher proportion of females (5.8%) report disability in any domain than males (4.9%).
- Males have slightly higher rates of cognition and communication disabilities than females, while females have higher rates of walking, hearing and seeing difficulties. There is no difference in self-care disability between males and females.
- For both sexes, the most common type of disability reported is walking.

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



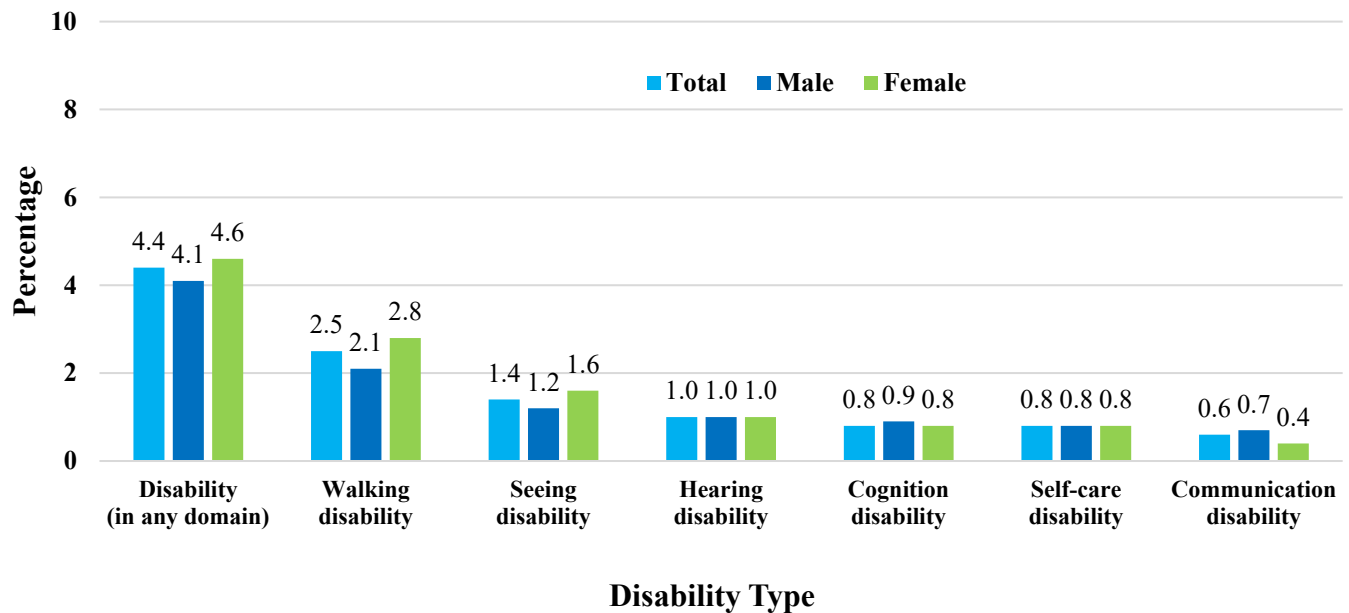
Age-adjusted percentages are based on the 2020 world population (available at: [World Population Prospects - Population Division - United Nations](#)) using the following age groups: 18–29, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59, 60–69, 70–79, and ≥80 years.

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 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.

Data source: Hungarian Census 2022.

- Among the population aged 5 and over, a higher proportion of females (4.6%) report disability in any domain than males (4.1%)
- Males have slightly higher rates of cognition and communication disabilities than females, while females have higher rates of disabilities in walking and seeing.
- For both sexes, the most common type of disability reported is walking.

Figure 2b. Prevalence of disability in any domain and disability in each domain: age-adjusted percentage of the population 5 years and over, by sex, Hungary, 2022



Age-adjusted percentages are based on the 2020 world population (available at: [World Population Prospects - Population Division - United Nations](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/)) using the following age groups: 5-17, 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.

Data source: Hungarian Census 2022.

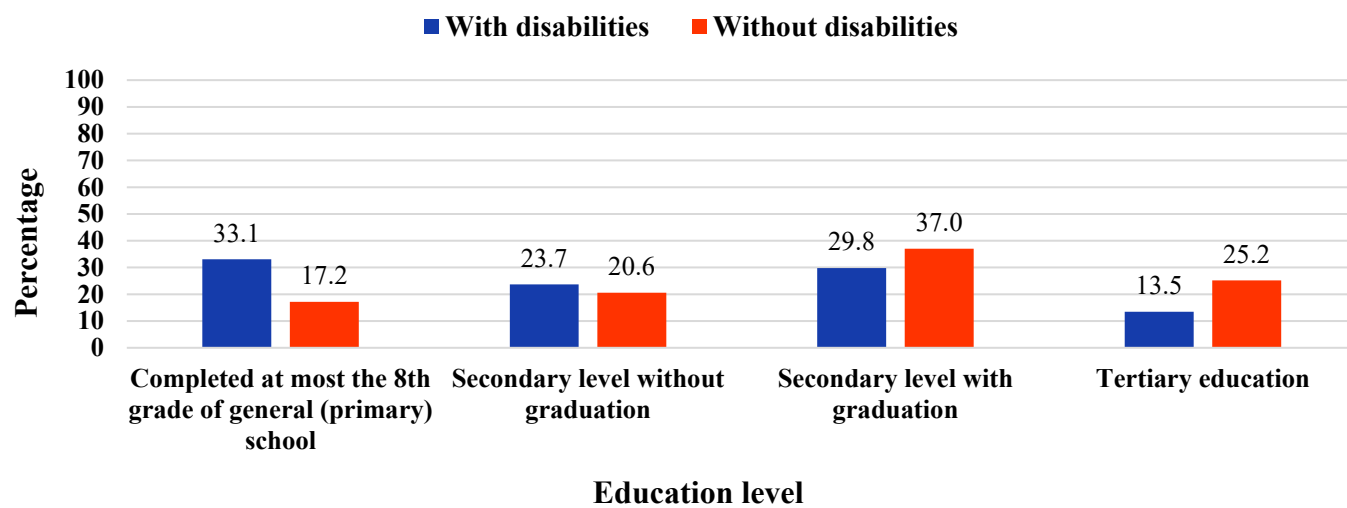
Outcomes Disaggregated by Disability

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 Goals⁴, 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, income, employment status and self-perceived state of health are disaggregated by disability status.

Educational Attainment

- Adults aged 18 and over with disabilities were more likely to have only primary (33.1%) or secondary school education without graduation (23.7%) compared with those without disabilities (17.2% with only primary school education and 20.6% with only secondary school education without graduation).
- Adults with disabilities were less likely to have secondary school education with graduation (29.8%) or tertiary education (college degree or higher, 13.5%) compared with those without disabilities (37.0% with secondary school education with graduation and 25.2% with tertiary education).

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

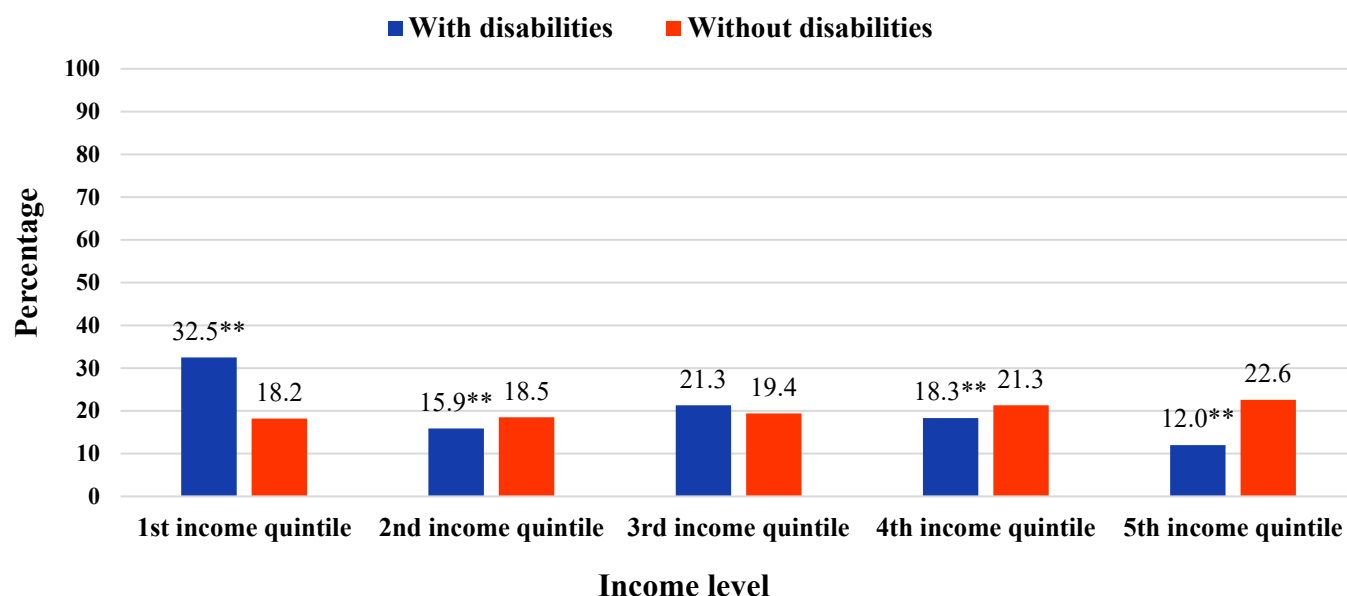
Disability is defined using the WG Short Set on Functioning, which asks about difficulty in seeing, hearing, walking or climbing steps, communicating, remembering or concentrating, and self-care, such as washing all over or dressing. Respondents who indicated “a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do at all”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

Data source: Hungarian Census 2022.

Income

- In 2022, adults aged 18 and over with a disability were more likely to be in the lowest household income category and less likely to be in the highest household income category than those without a disability (see Figure 4a):
 - 32.5% of adults aged 18 and over with disabilities were in the lowest household income quintile compared with 18.2% of those without disabilities.
 - 12.0% of adults with disabilities were in the highest household income quintile compared to 22.6% of those without disabilities.
- The percentage of people at risk of income poverty is more than twice as high among adults aged 18 and over with a disability (24.1%) than among those without a disability (10.6%, see Figure 4b).

Figure 4a. Income level (income quintiles) by disability status: age-adjusted percentage of the population 18 years and over, Hungary, 2022

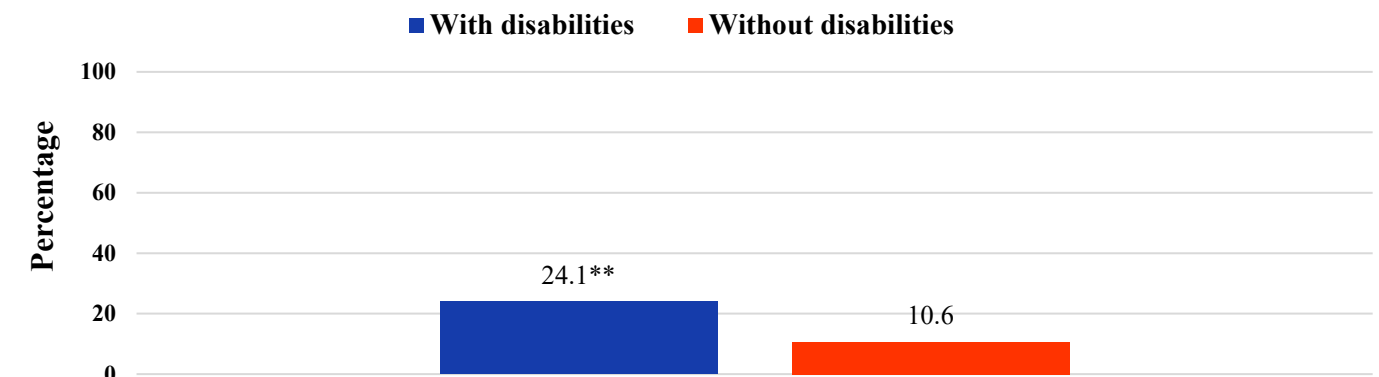


Age-adjusted percentages are based on the 2020 world population (available at: [World Population Prospects - Population Division - United Nations](#)) using the following age groups: 18–29, 30–39, 40–49, 50–59, 60–69, 70–79, and ≥80 years. ** Significantly different from adults without disability ($p < 0.05$).

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. Income quintiles are based on equivalised disposable income (total disposable household income divided by equivalent household size). For the equivalent household size the weights are the following: 1.0 to the first adult, 0.5 to the second and each subsequent person aged 14 and over, 0.3 to each child aged under 14.

Data source: Hungarian data of EU-SILC, 2022.

Figure 4b. People at risk of poverty by disability status: age-adjusted percentage of the population 18 years and over, Hungary, 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. ** Significantly different from adults without disability (p<0.05).

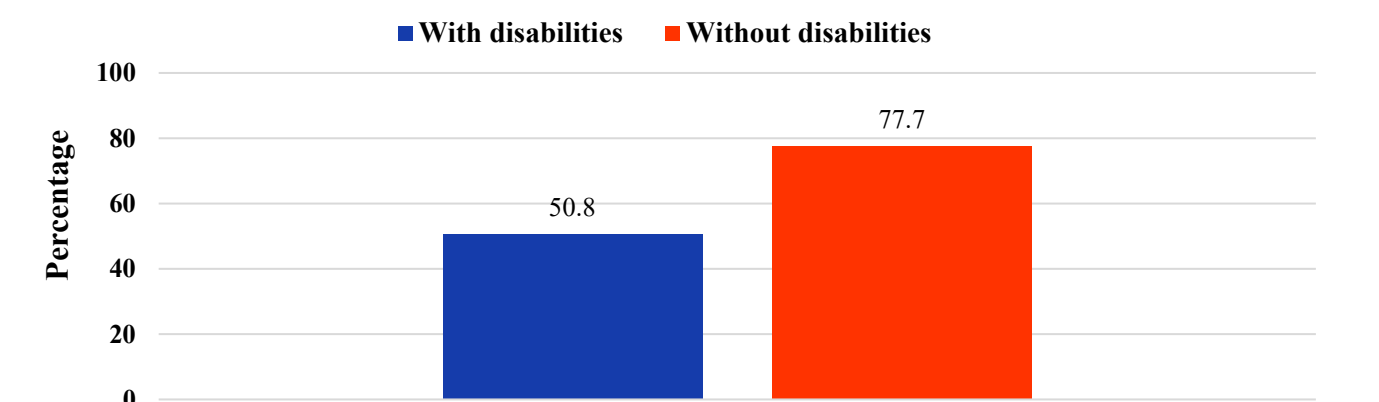
Disability is defined using the WG Short Set on Functioning, which asks about difficulty in seeing, hearing, walking or climbing steps, communicating, remembering or concentrating, and self-care, such as washing all over or dressing. Respondents who indicated “a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do at all”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

Data source: Hungarian data of EU-SILC, 2022

Employment Status

- 50.8% of adults aged 18-64 with disabilities were employed in the last 7 days of September 2022 compared with 77.7% of adults without disabilities.

Figure 5. Currently employed by disability status: age-adjusted percentage of the population 18-64 years, Hungary, 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.

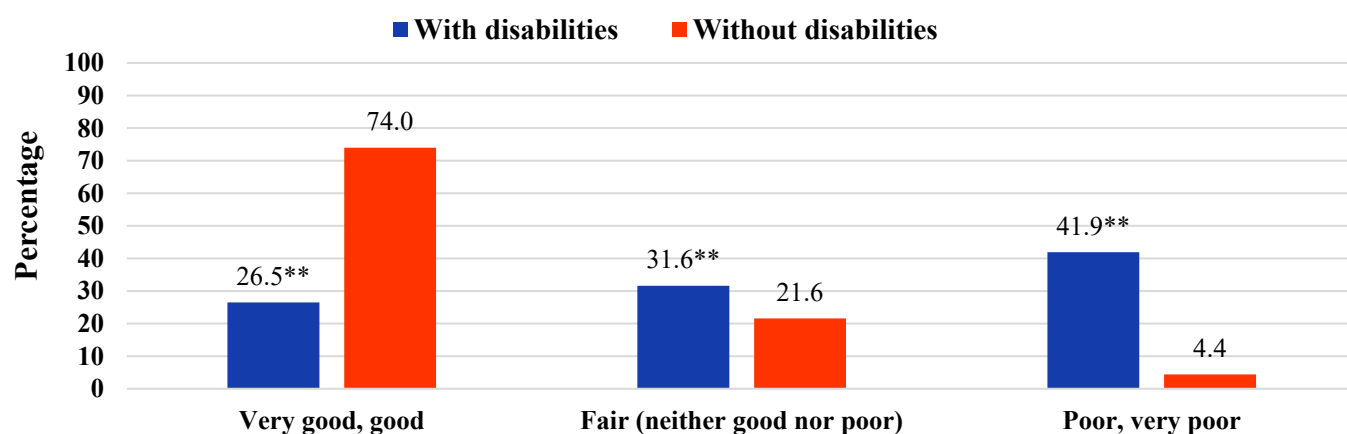
Disability is defined using the WG Short Set on Functioning, which asks about difficulty in seeing, hearing, walking or climbing steps, communicating, remembering or concentrating, and self-care, such as washing all over or dressing. Respondents who indicated “a lot of difficulty” or “cannot do at all”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

Data source: Hungarian Census 2022.

Self-Perceived General Health

- In 2022, 41.9% of people aged 18 and over with a disability considered their health to be poor or very poor, while only 4.4% of people without a disability considered their health to be poor or very poor.
- Adults with disabilities were much less likely to report being in good or very good health (26.5%) compared with those without disabilities (74.0%).
- While the vast majority of people without disabilities (95.6%) considered their health to be at least fair, only 58.1% of people with disabilities considered their general health as fair or better.

Figure 6. Self-perceived health by disability status: age-adjusted percentage of the population 18 years and over, Hungary, 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. ** Significantly different from adults without disability ($p < 0.05$).

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. Self-perceived health is inherently subjective. The reference is to health in general, not to current health status, as the question is not intended to measure temporary health problems.

Data source: Hungarian data of EU-SILC, 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.
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