



# **European Semester 2020-2021 country fiche on disability equality**

Portugal

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# **European Semester 2020-2021 country fiche on disability equality**

With comparative data annex provided by EDE

## **Portugal**

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

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

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## **1 Executive summary and recommendations**

### **1.1 Key points and main challenges for the European Semester in 2021**

Portugal lacks a national disability strategy or action plan, which goes against the UNCRPD recommendations. Therefore, disability policies continue to be piecemeal and lack a strategic orientation. In addition, the following points are highlighted:

#### **Disability and the labour market**

Overall, up until 2019, Portugal was in a good track in regard to the employment of persons with disabilities: the number of persons with disabilities who accessed jobs was increasing, although disabled people continued to fare lower than non-disabled persons in the labour market. However, these positive developments were quickly overturned during the first semester of 2020, due to the COVID-19 crisis and unemployment raised by 10 % just over the first semester of 2020, despite some measures that the government took.

#### **Disability, social policies and healthcare**

People with disabilities in Portugal face a significantly higher risk of poverty than non-disabled people and their households experience lower work intensity, lower income, and greater material deprivation than those of non-disabled people. Gaps and the poverty risk persist even after social transfers, which is another indicator of the low level of benefits that they receive and contributes to explain the overall risks of poverty among this population.

With the outset of the pandemic, persons with disabilities faced the temporary suspension of many social and healthcare services (and many are not yet back to normal operation) which has created a burden on their informal caregivers (mostly family members). The measures presented in the NRP are not enough and caregivers are facing burnout, putting at risk the safety and well-being of disabled persons too.

The independent living scheme has only been introduced in Portugal in 2017 and only covers a residual number of people across the country. It is very important to monitor the quality of the support provided from the perspective of the users - persons with disabilities – as well as to ensure the sustainability of this scheme (from the current phase of pilot projects to a permanent social policy measure).

#### **Disability, education and skills**

Despite the positive trend concerning the inclusion of students with disabilities in education in Portugal, the percentage of disabled students who leave school early remains above the EU average, especially in the 18-29 years old group. Moreover, the percentage of disabled students who reach post-secondary education remains extremely low with the number of those who graduate being even lower. Literacy in digital skills remains a further challenge.

## 1.2 Recommendations for Portugal

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

**Recommendation:** invest in the qualification of persons with disabilities, especially in terms of digital and technological skills.

Rationale: Digital and technological skills are more necessary than ever to address current labour market needs, particularly following the shifts in the labour market due to the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g. increase in teleworking). However, this is an area where persons with disabilities in Portugal particularly lag.

**Recommendation:** Monitor and enforce the implementation of the quota system for persons with disabilities in the public and private sectors while continuing to adopt measures to facilitate their access to the labour market (e.g. protecting their jobs, developing awareness-raising campaigns).

Rationale: It is important that the new quota for the private sector does not exist just in the paper, but it is actually enforced on the ground while at the same time incentives and supports are granted to employers to stimulate employment of persons with disabilities, reduce precarious contracts, and raise awareness about the work abilities of persons with disabilities.

**Recommendation:** Expand and ensure the sustainability of the independent living scheme in Portugal, so that instead of a pilot project it becomes a permanent social policy measure covering a wider number of beneficiaries.

Rationale: The existing IL scheme is quite recent and only covers a residual number of persons. Without the support of personal assistants disabled persons in Portugal are very dependent on family care which compounds their social exclusion.

**Recommendation:** Ensure that sufficient human and material resources are provided to support the inclusion of disabled students in compulsory and tertiary education, especially if distance learning continues.

Rationale: While Portugal already has a very progressive legal framework that promotes the inclusion of students with disabilities in compulsory education more needs to be done to support a quality education and to reduce the high number of early school leavers amongst this population.

**Recommendation:** Adopt a disability strategy or action plan

Rationale: Disability policies in Portugal are piecemeal, lacking a global coherence as well as specific goals and indicators to monitor change.

## 2 Opportunities to mainstream disability equality in the Semester documents

### 2.1 [Country Report](#) for Portugal (Staff Working Document)

In 2020, the Country Report for Portugal included the following direct references to disability issues:

- The CR points out a sudden **reduction of low-skilled positions** in the labour market, and an increase in hiring a more skilled workforce. This trend is likely to affect the employment of persons with disabilities negatively (only 743 graduated from Higher Education in 2019 – see Table 13). However, the CR does not make any mention on this particular vulnerability of the disabled people group.

In 2020, the Country Report for Portugal did not include any direct reference to disability issues. However, it would have been relevant to discuss the situation of persons with disabilities in relation to some of the issues raised, particularly in the labour market, education and social policies section of the Reform priorities listed in the report, notably: (1) the problem of unused labour market reserves in Portugal (CR, p. 38), since this unused reserve most likely include a disproportionate number of persons with disabilities who give up on looking for work due to barriers faced in the labour market; (2) the use of active labour market policies to boost permanent employment and job-specific training (CR, p. 39), a measure being implemented but which does not seem to be benefitting persons with disabilities at the same rate as the general population: indeed, in 2018,<sup>2</sup> 72.15 % of persons with disabilities who benefitted from general employment measures were covered by short-term measures (Employment-Insertion Contracts and Employment-Insertion Contracts+), which did not create permanent jobs. Moreover, while the report praises Portugal for 'improvements in several areas of the SDGs and the European Pillar of Social Rights' (CR, p. 41), it fails to mention specifically persons with disabilities as one of the vulnerable groups that risks being left behind. Data discussed on the sections of the current EDE report on education, labour market and social policy, show the gaps that persist in these areas for persons with disabilities, which the CR should also highlight.

### 2.2 [Country Specific Recommendation](#) for Portugal (CSR)

In 2020, the Country Specific Recommendation for Portugal included the following direct references to disability issues:

- '19. The outbreak of COVID-19 requires measures to mitigate social impacts and protect people in vulnerable situations, so that inequalities are not exacerbated. '

Although the CSRs for Portugal do not mention directly persons with disabilities several issues raised in the paper are particularly relevant for them, namely: (1) the recognition that '*following sustained positive labour market developments since 2014, Portugal will now face extraordinary employment challenges as a result of the pandemic*' (CSRs 18, p. 5) As we discuss in the labour section of the current report,

<sup>2</sup> No data is yet available for 2019, but the proportion is likely to be the same.



available data already clearly show rising unemployment rates amongst persons with disabilities (an increase of over 10 %, just in the first half of 2020).

It is also recommended that the government takes *'measures to mitigate social impacts and protect people in vulnerable situations, so that inequalities are not exacerbated'* (CSRs 19, p. 5). However, there is no specific mention of persons with disabilities and their families, a group that has higher risk of poverty than the general population, as examined on the section on social policy in this report.

Finally, the CSRs paper calls attention to the *'large digital skills deficit'* that persists in Portugal and the barriers faced by *'people suffering from digital exclusion to overcome the obstacles in accessing distance learning'*. While no direct reference to persons with disabilities is made, they likely compound a large proportion of the digital excluded. As we discuss on the education section of the present report, data from an ODDH survey<sup>3</sup> has showed that the lack of digital literacy and the lack of specialized support prevented many disabled children and youngsters to benefit from distance learning during the lockdown months, thus aggravating existing educational disparities.

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<sup>3</sup> Estudo ODDH - Pessoas com Deficiência e COVID-19: Resultados preliminares, available at [http://oddh.iscsp.utl.pt/index.php/pt/mediateca/eventos/item/455-covid\\_estudo](http://oddh.iscsp.utl.pt/index.php/pt/mediateca/eventos/item/455-covid_estudo).

### 3 Disability and the labour market - analysis of the situation and the effectiveness of policies

In 2016, the UN CRPD Committee made the following recommendations to Portugal:

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

‘52. The Committee recommends that the State party, in close consultation with organizations representing persons with disabilities, review its public- and private-sector labour legislation to bring it into line with the Convention and that it take measures to enforce the law and apply the stipulated penalties for non-compliance. The Committee also recommends that it do away with segregated working environments, that it review the legislation regulating the Occupational Activity Centres from a human rights perspective to bring them into line with the Convention and that it step up efforts to promote access to the regular labour market for persons with intellectual disabilities and autism. The State party should promote corporate social responsibility in connection with the employment of persons with disabilities. The Committee recommends that the State party consider the links between article 27 of the Convention and target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, with a view to achieving full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.’

#### 3.1 Summary of the labour market situation of persons with disabilities

Data from EU-SILC indicate an employment rate for persons with disabilities in Portugal of 58.4% in 2018, compared to 77.4% for other persons and approximately 7.6 points above the EU27 average - resulting in an estimated disability employment gap of approximately 19 percentage points (EU27 average gap 24.2, see Tables 2-4). The same data indicate unemployment rates of 18.6 % and 11.0 %, respectively in 2018 (see Tables 5-7) and the economic activity rate for persons with disabilities in Portugal was 71.8 %, compared to 86.9 % for other persons (see Tables 8-10). These indications are broken down by gender and age in the respective tables in annex.

The economic activity rate of disabled persons (aged 20-64) in Portugal exceeded the EU average for the same age group in 2018 (Table 8). Amongst persons with disabilities in Portugal, disabled persons in the age groups 25-34 and 35-44 had the highest economic activity rates (Table 9), an age range which may also include those disabled persons who are participating in vocational training measures.

Overall, in recent years, it could be said that Portugal was in a good track in regards to the employment of persons with disabilities: the number of persons with disabilities who accessed jobs as registered by the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training was increasing (+5 percentage points between 2017 and 2018) and persons with disabilities registered as unemployed were decreasing (since 2016) (Table 11), although in general disabled people continued to fare lower than non-disabled persons in the labour market (Table 4). Nevertheless, it should be pointed that the employment rate among persons with disability in Portugal continues to be above the EU average, especially among the more severely impaired (where the national average is nearly the double of the European average) (Table 2).

However, these positive developments appear to be overturned in the first semester of 2020, possibly due to the COVID-19 crisis (+10.34 % unemployed persons with disabilities during the first semester of 2020, compared with the unemployed registered by the end of 2019), following the trend already observed in the general population (+32.43 % for the same period) (Table 11). On the other hand, the number of persons with disabilities in search of a new job (which was already on the rise in 2019), reached record values of more than 11,000 people in the first half of 2020 alone (Table 13). Even so, these numbers do not represent the total percentage of unemployed persons with disabilities in Portugal, just of those who are registered at the IEFP Employment Centres.

As the CR points out, youth unemployment in Portugal remains relatively high, though measures have been taken to tackle the challenge. Amongst persons with disabilities this issue takes a slightly different turn. In fact, although unemployment is also high among young persons with disabilities in Portugal, it is even higher amongst adults with disabilities (25+). This situation is coupled with the persistent and high numbers of unemployed disabled people looking for a new (rather than a first job), thus suggesting the high precarity of the labour market insertion of persons with disabilities in this country (Table 6).

### **3.2 Analysis of labour market policies relevant to the Semester**

With regards to vocational training and support for persons with disabilities, there was a clear increase in the investment made by the Institute for Vocational Training and Employment (IEFP) in 2018 and 2019, compared to previous years. In fact, in 2018 the overall budget spent was of EUR 32.412.381,49 (an increase of 59 % in relation to December 2017 – EUR 20.407.559,39). This budget was increased again in 2019, when over EUR 40.000.000 were invested in vocational training, traineeships and employment support measures for persons with disabilities in Portugal. In parallel, the number of beneficiaries increased over the last few years up until 2018 (when it reached 32,452 persons) but decreased in 2019 (Table 12). Despite this overall decrease, the number of beneficiaries of ‘Sheltered Employment’ continued to increase, although this policy stands in strong contradiction with recommendation 52 of the UNCRPD Committee, which in 2016 called upon the Portuguese State to ‘*do away with segregated working environments*’. On a more positive side, the number of interns that were offered a permanent contract under employment measures also started to increase in 2018 (more 36 persons than in 2017), and continued the same trend in 2019 (more 67 persons than in 2018) (Table 12).

In addition to the ongoing programmes and policies in the area of vocational training and employment for persons with disabilities (presented in previous ANED reports), in the face of the COVID-9 pandemic several measures have been adopted recently to mitigate the negative impact of the crisis on the labour market which also cover persons with disabilities, namely:

- *Ordinance 206/2020 of 27 August*<sup>4</sup> regulating the measure *Estágios ATIVAR.PT* (Internships ACTIVATE.PT), aiming to support the insertion of young people in the labour market or the professional training of long-term unemployed people.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://data.dre.pt/eli/port/206/2020/08/27/p/dre>.

These internships target all age groups including young people (until 30 years of age), long-term unemployed (above 31 years) and people over 45 years of age. Persons with disabilities are explicitly identified as beneficiaries of this measure (Article 3). The duration of the internship is of 9 months for the general population and of 12 months for specific groups, including persons with disabilities (Article 8). Interns are entitled to a monthly individual grant (that also covers insurance and food subsidy) and a transportation subsidy (in the case of persons with disabilities) (Articles 11 and 12). If employers provide the intern a permanent employment contract within a maximum period of 20 working days from the end date of the internship, they are entitled to an award (*Prémio ao Emprego*), whose amount varies and can reach up to 5xIAS<sup>5</sup> (EUR 2,194.05) (or, until 30 June 2021, up to 7xIAS = EUR 3,071.67).

- *Ordinance 207/2020 of 27 August*<sup>6</sup> regulating the measure *Incentivo ATIVAR.PT* (Incentive ACTIVATE.PT), which consists in granting financial support to employers that celebrate contracts with people who are registered as unemployed in the national employment institute (IEFP), according to specific criteria: being unemployed for at least 6 consecutive months (and, by 30 June 2021, 3 consecutive months); being unemployed for at least 2 consecutive months, if the person is up until 29 years old or over 45 years old. However, regardless of the duration of unemployment, persons with disabilities are explicitly identified as beneficiaries of this measure (Article 6). The measure covers employment contracts without a term or, in specific cases such as persons with disabilities, short-term contracts, provided they have an initial duration of 12 months or more (Article 7). If an open-ended contract is celebrated, the financial support given to the employer is 12xIAS (EUR 5.265,72). If it is the case of a short-term contract, the financial support is 4xIAS (EUR 1.755,24). If hiring a person with a disability, the amount of the support is increased by 10 % (Article 11). In the event of conversion from a short-term contract into a permanent contract, the employer is granted a conversion award, whose amount varies and can reach up to 5xIAS<sup>7</sup> (EUR 2.194,05) (or, until 30 June 2021, up to 7xIAS = EUR 3.071,67) (Article 12).

Previously to the COVID-19 pandemic, and with a view to tackle precariousness and address labour market segmentation, the Government already adopted Law 93/2019,<sup>8</sup> of 4 September, introducing some changes to the Labour Code. The most relevant changes from a disability perspective are:

- Article 112, which:
  - increased the duration of the probatory period in a permanent contract from 90 to 180 days, if the employee is a long-term unemployed or a person in search for a first job;

<sup>5</sup> Value of Social Support Index (IAS) in 2020 (EUR 438,81):

<https://data.dre.pt/eli/port/27/2020/01/31/p/dre>.

<sup>6</sup> <https://data.dre.pt/eli/port/207/2020/08/27/p/dre>.

<sup>7</sup> Value of Social Support Index (IAS) in 2020 (EUR 438,81):

<https://data.dre.pt/eli/port/27/2020/01/31/p/dre>.

<sup>8</sup> <https://data.dre.pt/eli/lei/93/2019/09/04/p/dre>.

- determined the elimination/reduction of the probatory period after the completion of a professional internship if the employee maintains the same activity for the same employer.
- Article 148, which reduced the duration of short-term contracts for a maximum period of 2 years and, of uncertain term contracts, for a maximum period of 4 years, between the worker and the same employer.
- Article 149 which determined that short-term contracts can only be renewed up to three times.
- Article 159 which stated that as long as the initial justifying reason remains, the temporary short-term employment contracts can be renewed up to 6 times, (for a maximum period of 4 years) except in case of replacement of an absent worker due to illness, accident, parental leave, or other similar situations.

Given that persons with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to precarious forms of employment (short-term contracts, internships and so on) some of these measures are likely to benefit them as well.

Moreover, following the Decree/Law 29/2001,<sup>9</sup> establishing the mandatory application of a quota for persons with disabilities with a incapacity level equal or greater than 60 % to all hiring processes in the public sector (thus encompassing all services and bodies of central and local administration, as well as all public institutes), and Law 38/2004<sup>10</sup> that already foresaw the possibility of introducing quotas in the private sector, on 10 January 2019 Law 4/2019<sup>11</sup> entered into force establishing the system of employment quotas for persons with disabilities with an incapacity level equal or greater than 60 %, for medium and large companies in the private sector. Medium-sized companies with 75 employees or more must have at least 1 % of disabled workers, while large companies must have at least 2 %. For companies with 75 to 100 employees, the law sets up a transition period of five years for the full implementation of the quota, and for those with more than 100 workers, a transition period of four years. Currently, there is still no data to help us understand the impact of this law on the rates of employment of persons with disabilities in the private sector (we only have national data on employment of persons with disabilities up until 2018 – see Table 15). However, data from 2018 show a clear difference between the public sector (Table 16), that has enforced employment quotas for persons with disabilities for almost 20 years now and that employed in 2018 + 38,44 % persons with disabilities than the private sector.

In short, some positive changes and policy measures were adopted in Portugal to promote the employment of persons with disabilities. Among these are the implementation of quotas for the private sector; the revision of legislation to prevent precarious employment contracts and abusive contractual relations; the implementation of incentives to employers and the establishment of new internship programmes to promote employability of vulnerable groups. However, several

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<sup>9</sup> <https://data.dre.pt/eli/dec-lei/29/2001/02/03/p/dre/pt/html>.

<sup>10</sup> <https://data.dre.pt/eli/lei/38/2004/08/18/p/dre/pt/html>.

<sup>11</sup> <https://data.dre.pt/eli/lei/4/2019/01/10/p/dre/pt/html>.

obstacles persist and the gaps in the employment rates of people with and without disabilities are still wide. Moreover, as reported in previous years, the country still lacks a national disability strategy or action plan, which goes against the UNCRPD recommendations. Similarly, the 2020 National Reform Programme (that performs a 2019 review and that mentions the country's response and future recovery plan to the COVID-19 pandemic) does not make any specific reference related to employment policies or support to persons with disabilities, only general measures targeted to the so-called vulnerable groups.

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

In 2016, the UN CRPD Committee made the following recommendations to Portugal:

[Article 28 UN CRPD](#) addresses Adequate standard of living and social protection.

‘53. The Committee notes the efforts made by the State party to mitigate the impact of austerity measures on persons with disabilities. However, it is concerned that there are no support services of any kind for persons with disabilities who, as a result of the implementation of austerity measures, are forced, in the absence of family support or assistance networks, to live in poverty or extreme poverty.

54. The Committee recommends that the State party, in cooperation with organizations representing persons with disabilities, take the following measures:

(a) urgently review austerity measures.

(b) Provide support services for living independently and residential homes respectful of the rights of persons with disabilities, their wishes and preferences, in addition to providing cash subsidies to make it possible for unemployed persons with disabilities and without family support to have a decent standard of living.

(c) Step up efforts, in line with the human rights approach of the Convention, to strengthen the right to a decent standard of living and the social protection of persons with disabilities who are living in poverty and extreme poverty, allocating funds sufficient for that purpose.

(d) Consider the links between Article 28 of the Convention and target 10.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals in order to empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of their disability.’

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

‘38. The Committee is concerned that the State party has no national policy on living independently, that it has not regulated personal assistance and that the allowance for such assistance is currently very low, thus forcing some people to live in institutions for persons with disabilities or for older persons, in which the State party invests more in than in support for living independently. It is also concerned that the National Programme for Mental Health 2007-2016, which aims to expand the National Network for Integrated Continuous Care, has not yet established support services in the community.

39. The Committee recommends that the State party, in close consultation with organizations representing persons with disabilities, adopt a national strategy for living independently, including increased investment to facilitate living independently in the community rather than in institutions, that it regulate personal assistance and that it increase the availability of sign language interpreters and fingerspelling systems in public services. It also urges the State party to establish



support services in the community for persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities. ‘

[Article 25 UN CRPD](#) addresses Health.

‘49. The Committee notes that the State party has paid little attention to the rights of persons with disabilities in its legislation and policies in the field of health care, sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases, and that health services, especially obstetric and gynaecological services, are not always accessible. The Committee is further concerned that the primary prevention of disability is understood as a measure taken in implementation of the Convention.

50. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to ensure that persons with disabilities have unrestricted access to health care, including sexual and reproductive health care, by explicitly prohibiting discrimination on grounds of disability in its legislation, ensuring the universal accessibility of its programmes and services in both urban and rural areas and providing health professionals with adequate training. The primary prevention of disability should also be excluded from health programmes.’

#### 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 Portugal was 24.1% in 2018, compared to 14.6% for other persons of similar age - an estimated disability poverty gap of approximately 10 percentage points (see Table 17). For people aged over 65, the disability poverty gap was 6.7 points (20.2 % for older persons with disabilities and 13.5 % for other persons of similar age). The tables in annex also indicate the respective rates of AROPE and break these down by gender as well age.

According to this data,<sup>12</sup> people with disabilities in Portugal are significantly in higher risk of poverty than non-disabled people (Table 17): in 2018, the analysis of poverty risks showed that the low work intensity in households containing people with disabilities was 10 percentual points higher (15.8 %) than in those with non-disabled people (5,5 %) in Portugal. However, both measures are still considerably lower than the EU average (22.6 % in households with people with disabilities and 7.1 % for non-disabled people). Risks related to low income were also higher in households of people with disabilities in Portugal (24.1 %) than in those of non-disabled people (14.6 %), yet in rates very similar to those found in average at the EU level (23.7 % and 15,3 % respectively). In the same manner, households of people with disabilities are more materially deprived (10.5 % in Portugal and 11 % in Europe) than of people without disabilities (4.7 in Portugal and 5.1 % in Europe). Even so, the analysis of the poverty risks in Portugal shows an improvement since at least 2016,<sup>13</sup> when the risk for low work intensity in households of people with disabilities was 19.8 % (+4pps than in 2018, when the percentage was 15.8), the risk of low income was 26.3 % (-2.2pps in 2018) and 14.3 % (-3.8pps in 2018) of those households were materially deprived.

<sup>12</sup> Release 2020 version 1.

<sup>13</sup> Comparison of data presented in the PT-ANED-2018 Final report. *Source: EU-SILC UDB 2016 – version of March 2018 (and previous UDB).*



The economic crisis due to COVID-19 is likely to reverse this trend and increase the gap between persons with and without disabilities, especially those with more severe disabilities. In fact, available data from the EUSILC (Table 18) over the last few years has shown that people with disabilities are more exposed to the risk of poverty or social exclusion than non-disabled people, being those with severe disability the most affected: 60.1 % of people with moderate and severe disability are exposed to this risk, compared to only 18.1 % of people without disability, placing Portugal very close to the European level (60.8 % and 19.1 % respectively). From a gender perspective, data shows that women are at higher risk of poverty, and women with disability are the most affected group. In Portugal, 29.1 % of women with disabilities face this risk, while men with disabilities are one percentual point below (28.1 %). Furthermore, in regard to the risk of poverty, women with disabilities in Portugal show a rate (29.4 %) similar to the European average, but Portuguese men with disabilities are 1,4 percentual points (28.1 %) above the European level (27.5 %).

In terms of age, the overall risk of household poverty or exclusion (AROPE) for people with disabilities between 16 to 64 years old is higher (32.6 %) than for people without disabilities in the same age range (18.5 %), although almost 2 percentual points below the European average in both groups (34.6% and 19.9% respectively). However, among the households of those over 65 years old, the risk of poverty is higher in Portugal than in the EU, particularly when the household includes a person with disability (Table 19): 24.5 % of the households of people with disabilities older than 65 face this risk in Portugal, while the average in Europe is just 21.7 %.

Trends in the poverty risk after social transfers (Table 20) illustrate well the financial situation from 2010 to 2018 in Portugal. In general, people with disabilities have faced a higher risk of poverty after social transfers than the population without disabilities throughout this period (and especially from 2015 on), which is another indicator of the low level of benefits that they receive and contributes to explain the overall risks of poverty among this population (since many households of persons with disabilities are highly dependent on social benefits as their only source of income). Households of people with disability aged 16 to 64 are the ones who face the highest risk (except in 2010 and 2011, when people with disabilities older than 64 were 0.5 and 0.6 percentual points above). Nevertheless, from 2016 on the risk of poverty after social transfers is decreasing for households of persons with disabilities aged 16-64, coinciding with the introduction in 2017 of the new disability scheme - the Social Inclusion Benefit. This benefit excludes persons who acquire their disabilities after 55 years old.

In the healthcare sector, and according to data from the Eurostat Health Database (Table 21), due to cost, distance, or waiting lists<sup>14</sup> around 4 % of people with some disability and 5.3 % of persons with severe disability older than 16, reported unmet needs for medical examination in contrast with 1.2 % of persons without disability in Portugal (on a three-year average). This is similar to what is observed at the EU level except among people with severe disabilities who report more unmet health needs in the EU than in Portugal (one percentual point higher in the EU than PT). It is important

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<sup>14</sup> Eurostat. *Unmet health care needs statistics*. [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Unmet\\_health\\_care\\_needs\\_statistics#Unmet\\_needs\\_for\\_health\\_care](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Unmet_health_care_needs_statistics#Unmet_needs_for_health_care).

to state that Portugal has a universal public health care system that exempts persons with disabilities from user-fees.

Nevertheless, in the context of the COVID-19 crisis, persons with disabilities and their families have been seriously affected, not only in terms of healthcare, due to the restricted availability of services, but also because of isolation. A survey conducted by the Disability and Human Rights Observatory<sup>15</sup> in April-May 2020 found that 40.1 % of the respondents with disabilities (n=286) had fundamental supports, such as therapies and other occupational activities, temporarily suspended. The suspension of these supports and services (including personal assistance services) compromised not only the well-being of persons with disabilities, but also that of their family members who, in absence of any kind of support, were required to provide 24/7 needed care to their children (including adult children), creating situations of burnout. In many cases, as found by the same survey, carers accumulated the provision of care to persons with disabilities with teleworking duties.

By the same token, the UN policy brief: the impact of the COVID in older persons<sup>16</sup> points that older people with disabilities are at higher risk of poverty and marginalisation, mentioning impacts on their economic well-being, mental health and fatality rates. Data from the EU-SILC UDB 2017 – version of March 2019 for Portugal, shows that 65 % of those who reported an activity limitation are older than 65, placing Portugal far above the European average (47.6 %).<sup>17</sup> This suggests that they are very likely to face the negative impacts of the pandemic identified above.

Finally, lack of accessibility in the built environment, transportation and communication and information systems remains a widespread problem throughout the country. With the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the topic of access to information gained an increased priority. Over 1/5 of the respondents of the Survey conducted by the ODDH on the Impact of the COVID on the lives of people with disabilities in Portugal reported finding little or no accessible at all the information provided by the General Directorate of Health concerning the pandemic, and many asked for information provided in alternative formats such as Plain Language and captioning.

## 4.2 Analysis of social policies relevant to the Semester

One of the most important social policies for people with disabilities in Portugal is the **Social Inclusion Benefit** (PSI - *Prestação Social para a Inclusão*). First introduced in 2017, the number of beneficiaries of the disability social benefit has been increasing: in July 2020 there were 109.619 beneficiaries, +10,4 % compared to July 2019 (Table 22). In September 2019, the benefit was extended to children and youth, starting from birth. As mentioned in the NRP, it is important to maintain this path of strengthening social protection for persons with disabilities, who may be more exposed to the socioeconomic consequences of the COVID-19 crisis than any other groups.

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<sup>15</sup> Disability and Human Rights Observatory, 2020. Disability and COVID-19: preliminary results at [http://oddh.iscsp.utl.pt/index.php/pt/mediateca/eventos/item/455-covid\\_estudo](http://oddh.iscsp.utl.pt/index.php/pt/mediateca/eventos/item/455-covid_estudo).

<sup>16</sup> United Nations, 2020. UN policy brief: the impact of the COVID on older persons, available at <https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/Policy-Brief-The-Impact-of-COVID-19-on-Older-Persons.pdf>.

<sup>17</sup> Data from the National Demographic statistics 2011 mentioned that around 18 % of the population have a difficulty for developing activities, and that 55 % of them are older than 65.

Another important policy measure introduced recently was the Statute of the Informal Caregiver, approved in 2019 (Law 100/2019) which came into force in 2020 (Order 64/2020), establishing a monthly cash benefit to informal caregivers (pilot projects in 30 municipalities during 12 months). However, the press has reported that requirements for accessing this benefit are difficult to fulfil. According to the vice president of the Association of Informal Caregivers cited in the newspaper, just 1,300 caregivers have applied for the benefit, but there are no official data available to confirm this. Given that a very large number of persons with disabilities in the country depend on family care to survive (due to insufficient coverage of the personal assistance scheme), notwithstanding that this measure is being implemented, more needs to be done. With the outset of the pandemic many support services were suspended (and are not yet back to normal operation) which has aggravated the situation of caregivers who are facing burnout and despair, as the above mentioned study of the ODDH has found. The measures presented in the NRP are not enough (e.g. exceptional regime of justified absences from work; and exceptional support to the family for workers, arising from the suspension of teaching activities in schools or social support equipment's for early childhood or disability).

The NRP further mentions that, due to the epidemiological situation of COVID-19, extraordinary support measures were created for the social sector, including for non-governmental organisations for people with disabilities. As part of the strategy, the third generation of the programme for expanding the network of facilities for social care (*Programa de alargamento da rede de equipamentos sociais PARES*) was launched. The programme will fund the construction or adaptation of facilities to develop social care services for people with disabilities, older people, and children and youth, aiming to protect them and their families from poverty and vulnerability. Unfortunately, when it comes to persons with disabilities, the facilities that the programme will fund are occupational centres and residential care facilities. Both these types of services are contrary to a rights-based approach to disability, and thus oppose recommendation 39 of the CRPD Committee which called for an 'increased investment [of the Portuguese State] to facilitate living independently in the community rather than in institution'. The government also launched the programme MAREES (Emergency Strengthening for Social and Health Care Facilities Measure) which aims to strengthen the human resources of public and non-profit service providers of the social and health care sectors during the pandemic. These temporary measures include an extraordinary regime for grant increases in the already existing programmes of Employment-Insertion Contract (CEI) and Employment Insertion Contract+ (CEI+) of which many persons with disabilities are beneficiaries. However, these are only measures that are temporary and do not create sustainable jobs, as no permanent contract can be offered by the same employer once a CEI or CEI+ finishes.

Finally, it is important to mention that only in 2017 Portugal implemented **a scheme to support independent living** MAVI - *Modelo de Apoio à Vida Independente* (Decree-Law 129/2017). The measure follows the UN CRPD Committee Recommendation and was adopted under the mounting pressure of the disability movement and their allies. It is now being implemented through pilot projects funded by the ESF. In 2019, the scheme was amended by Decree-Law 27/2109 which introduced changes in the eligibility criteria, by enabling people who live in residential facilities to apply to this support for their transition to life in community, for a period up to six months while still living in residential care. Data from the National Institute for Rehabilitation (INR, I.P.)

(Table 23) shows that as of July 2020 830 persons with disabilities were receiving support through this scheme (426 women, and 404 men). This is still a very residual number of persons with disabilities across the country, and so much more investment needs to be put into this policy. It is also very important to monitor the quality of the support provided from the perspective of the users - persons with disabilities – as well as to ensure the sustainability of the scheme (from the current phase of pilot projects to a permanent social policy measure).

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

In 2016, the UN CRPD Committee made the following recommendations to Portugal:

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

‘45. The Committee recommends that the State party, in close consultation with organizations representing persons with disabilities, review its legislation on education to bring it into line with the Convention and take measures to provide additional resources and materials to facilitate access to and enjoyment of inclusive education of high quality for all students with disabilities, providing public schools with the resources they need to ensure the inclusion of all students with disabilities in ordinary classrooms.

46. The Committee recommends that the State party consider the relationship between article 24 of the Convention and targets 4.5 and 4.a of the Sustainable Development Goals to ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training, as well as to build and upgrade education facilities to make them disability-sensitive and safe.

48. The Committee recommends that the State party introduce in its legislation regulations on the access of students with disabilities to higher education and vocational training on an equal basis with other students, while providing reasonable accommodation and the required support services. ‘

### 5.1 Summary of the educational situation of persons with disabilities

The EU-SILC estimates concerning educational attainment should be treated with some caution due to variable confidence levels, but they consistently indicate disability quality gaps. Table 24 indicates early school leaving rates disaggregated by disability status. Youth 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 25 shows 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 sample for age 30-39).

Portugal has been promoting inclusive education since at least 2008. The Statistics of the Directory General of Education and Science (DGEEC) reports that, in the school year 2017/18, 99 % of all students with special education needs identified in the country attended mainstream schools, representing an increase of 7 % compared to 2016/17 (table 26). Unfortunately, this was the last school year for which the DGEEC published statistics on students with disabilities. A new law has been introduced in the school year 2018/19, furthering the path towards inclusive education (for a more detailed description of the new law see 5.2 below) but since then no statistics have been made available on this group of pupils.

Despite the positive trend concerning the inclusion of students with disabilities in education in Portugal, data from the EU-SILC 2018 Release 2020 version 1 (and

preceding UDBs) (in annex 7) show that the percentage of disabled students who leave school early remains above the EU average, especially in the 18-29 years old group. It should be noted that among non-disabled students, the rate of early school leavers in the country is also above EU average.

The number of students with disabilities in tertiary education has also been increasing (Table 28): according to the DGEEC, in comparison to the precedent school year, in 2018/19 there was an increase of about 16 % (from 1,978 to 2,311) in the number of disabled students registered in post-secondary institutions. Nevertheless, the percentage of disabled students who complete post-secondary education remains extremely low (though not significantly different from the EU average, as per Table 25) with the number of those who graduate being even lower. Indeed, in 2018/19 only 405 students with disabilities graduated from tertiary education, which amounts to a decrease of 20 % in relation to the previous year. This low number is certainly due to lack of accommodation and supports in High Education Institutions (HEIs) for these students. In fact, according to the same DGEEC report (Table 29), only about 62.5 % of the HEIs have special regulations for disabled students, and just about 55 % provide support services. Lack of physical accessibility to the educational facilities, lack of accessible transportation systems, and lack of accessible student housing are additional barriers that students with disabilities face in accessing higher education, as reported by DGEEC. These barriers were also acknowledged by the CRPD Committee in its evaluation of Portugal which led the Committee to recommend that ‘the State party consider the relationship between article 24 of the Convention and targets 4.5 and 4.a of the Sustainable Development Goals to ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training, as well as to build and upgrade education facilities to make them disability-sensitive and safe; and that ‘the State party introduce in its legislation regulations on the access of students with disabilities to higher education and vocational training on an equal basis with other students, while providing reasonable accommodation and the required support services.

## **5.2 Analysis of education policies relevant to the Semester**

For reference, see also the 2020 [National Reform Programme](#) for Portugal.

According to the last report of the Observatory on Disability and Human Rights,<sup>18</sup> over the last decade Portugal has done great progress in including students with disabilities in mainstream education: from 2010/11 to 2017/18, the number of students with special education needs attending mainstream schools in the country increased by 67 %. However, over the same period, the number of specialized staff in mainstream schools (e.g. special education teachers and other support staff) only increased by 8 % (Table 27). This has translated into an increased workload for teachers and other specialised staff as well as less hours of support for the students. Indeed, lack of resources (both human and material) to support mainstream education has been reported in various studies.<sup>19</sup> It is also against the CRPD Committee recommendation which called upon the Portuguese State to ‘*take measures to provide additional*

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<sup>18</sup> <http://oddh.iscsp.ulisboa.pt/index.php/pt/2013-04-24-18-50-23/publicacoes-dos-investigadores-oddh/item/442-relatorio-oddh-2019>.

<sup>19</sup> See for example <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/social-policy-and-society/article/from-rights-to-reality-of-crisis-coalitions-and-the-challenge-of-implementing-disability-rights-in-portugal/99851CAB57B130D348391C8E499EFF94>.



*resources and materials to facilitate access to and enjoyment of inclusive education of high quality for all students with disabilities, providing public schools with the resources they need to ensure the inclusion of all students with disabilities in ordinary classrooms’.*

On 24 May 2018, the Government approved new legislation on Inclusive Education – Decree-Law 54/2018 – which came into force on 6 July 2018. The goal of this new legislation is to ensure differentiated learning processes responding to pupils’ diverse skills and needs, namely in regard to teaching methods, curricular activities, and assessment without labelling students as ‘special education needs’. A more student-centred approach is sought to be developed in cooperation with the child’s parents or guardians, or special teachers or technical support specialists.

This new Decree-law applies to pre-schools, basic and secondary schools of public and private ownership, as well as to vocational schools, that are obliged to provide learning opportunities to all students. A set of different measures will be combined to achieve these goals (Article 7): 1) universal measure — applying to all students (e.g. pedagogical differentiation measures, and interventions in small groups with an academic and/or behavioural focus); 2) selective measures — aiming to fill potential gaps in the implementation of universal measures (e.g. slightly different curriculum, the provision of psycho-pedagogical support and tutorial support); 3) additional measures — developed to solve proven persistent problems not overcome by universal and selective measures (e.g. significant curricular adaptations; individual transition plans; development of social and personal autonomy skills).

The new measures are supposed to contribute to a more inclusive and flexible education system that addresses every child’s needs. The National Education Council (*Conselho Nacional de Educação*) has considered this a positive step yet recommends strengthening the human resources in schools and the reduction of class size. However, since the publication of the new law the government has not published any indicators or statistics on inclusive education and/or students with disabilities, which precludes monitoring the implementation of the new legislation.

In the context of the COVID19 pandemic, the government took special measures which are described in the 2020 National Reform Programme. In the education field, those measures included the closure of all education institutions on 12 March and the launching of online learning. For the 12 years of compulsory education this system was complemented with broadcast classes from 14 April on and until the end of the school year (except for students of grades 10-12th who returned to school to prepare for final exams on 18 May). Students with disabilities faced huge inequalities in accessing both online learning and broadcast teaching for lack of accessible materials and supports, as reported by a recent survey conducted by the Disability and Human Rights Observatory: 77.9 % (n=169) of the respondents evaluated the distance learning modalities used in compulsory education as not adequate and 69.3 % (n=52) were not satisfied with higher education distance-learning modalities provided by the universities to students with disabilities. Yet there is no mention of this group in the education section of the NRP. It is therefore urgent that the government addresses the specific needs of students with disabilities in planning for alternative learning modalities and that the development of digital competences includes students with disabilities so that they can be adequately prepared for the new challenges that arise

with distance and online learning and to mitigate inequalities in access to the labour market.



## **6 Investment priorities in relation to disability**

### **6.1 Updates on use of existing EU funds (to 2020)**

According to the partnership agreement between Portugal and the European Commission 2014-2020, the so-called Portugal 2020 programme, funds for social innovation and inclusion are channelled through the Operational Programme of Social Inclusion and Employment (POISE), which defined four main priorities: 1) Promoting sustainability and job quality; 2) Youth employment initiative; 3) Promoting social inclusion and fighting poverty and discrimination; 4) Technical support.

In the programme, persons with disabilities are identified as a vulnerable group at risk of poverty due to insufficient incomes, unstable jobs, difficulties to access the labour market, facilities, and services. The agreement then mentions the goal of supporting projects and policies aimed to improving the situation of persons with disabilities in the labour market, fighting discrimination against them in the education system and in the market, guaranteeing equal access to education and training as well as fair wages. Expanding the capacity of the health system and creating new social and health responses according to their needs, such as the National Scheme for Independent Living, actions addressed to protect caregivers and personal assistance, among others, are also goals stated in the Agreement.

The *Portugal 2020 Annual Report for 2019*, presented by the Agency for Development and Cohesion IP, points that persons with disabilities make up just 7 % (or around 15,000 people) of the beneficiaries of active inclusion measures, included within the third priority axis 'Promoting social inclusion and job quality'. The report mentions specifically the lack of action towards disability in the priority axis regarding 'Social Capital' and recommends the implementation of measures that ensure equal access to education for persons to disability across the country.

In a similar way, the external evaluation of the Local Contracts for Social Development programme, conducted in 2019, points that this strategy to operationalise the transfers from the Portugal 2020 funds to local networks have been insufficient for people with disabilities. Although the report evaluated the first three generation of the strategy (2007, 2012 and 2015), it shows that in the first year only 2 % of the contracts targeted projects related to people with disabilities, just 11 % in 2012 and 6 % in 2015. It recommends projects to include explicitly within their design a plan to guarantee the participation of people with disabilities in all their activities, as well as an indicator that enables to monitor the project in terms of beneficiaries with disabilities.

In addition to benefitting from just a small proportion of the projects, there has been in Portugal at least one case of failure to use of the funds to promote deinstitutionalisation of persons with disabilities. The case concerns the construction of a residential facility for people with disabilities, supported by the government of the Autonomous Region of Azores, through the Operational Plan of Azores 2020, funded by the Portugal 2020 Programme. The cost of the project amounted to EUR 913,279.58, of which EUR 776,287.65 came from the European Regional Development Fund-ERDF. The case was the subject of a complaint submitted by national and European independent living associations to national and European authorities, as it goes against a rights-

based approach and is contrary to the UNCRPD Committee recommendations to support de-institutionalisation and community living.

## **6.2 Priorities for future investment (after 2020)**

The Commission's 2020 Country Report for Portugal, Annex D<sup>20</sup> address a number of themes and challenges, amongst which the growing need to update the skills and specialise the workforce, to provide job-search assistance and actively include job candidates. These challenges are particularly relevant to persons with disabilities given their educational gaps and vulnerabilities in accessing the labour market.

CSR1 refers to ensuring 'equal access to quality health and long-term care', where the unmet medical needs of disabled people and priority for independent living supports need to be prioritised. CRS2 addresses the need for social policies that have a significant disability equality dimension, including employment support, effective social protection and the use of digital technologies to ensure equal access to quality education. These specific needs should be acknowledged in investment plans for these areas.

For the next funding period 2021-2027, the new Cohesion Policy reflects the EU framework for investment priorities, linked closely to the Semester.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, the previous objectives were reviewed and simplified into five new Policy Objectives:

While there are no disability-specific objectives or projects mentioned in the New Cohesion Policy for Portugal, the fourth objective of the Cohesion Policy *A more social Europe* is relevant for persons with disabilities as it meets the needs of this population. Investments related to 'a more social Europe' aim to promote equality in access to employment and an active inclusion. In addition, the encompass improving education systems, investing in the development and qualification of the labour market, with a special focus on digital skills, all of which are also likely to affect positively persons with disabilities, addressing their current needs. Lastly, this objective is also concerned with reducing poverty and social exclusion, which again directly address the needs of persons with disabilities and their families, as it was demonstrated above in this report.<sup>22</sup>

In addition, in the context of the COVID-19 crisis, at the end of May 2020, the European Commission presented a wide range of emergency measures that encompass a recovery plan for the Union that amounts to a total of EUR 1,85 trillion. The goal of building 'a fair and inclusive recovery' is part of the plan, which speaks directly to the needs of persons with disabilities and their families. As the crisis caused many to lose their jobs, as a short-term solution the Commission highlights the EU obligation to pay special attention to the most vulnerable groups now more than ever regarding access

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<sup>20</sup> 2020 Country Report (CR) Portugal: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2020-european-semester-country-reports\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2020-european-semester-country-reports_en).

<sup>21</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/2021\\_2027/portugal/](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/2021_2027/portugal/).

<sup>22</sup> Cohesion Policy investments in 2021-2027 (European Semester, Country report, Annex D): <https://ec.europa.eu/portugal/sites/portugal/files/politica-coesao-investimentos-2021-2027-atualizado.pdf>.

to work, as they face an even more aggravating position<sup>23</sup> and proposes, amongst other measures, the implementation of a new 'Support to mitigate Unemployment Risks in an Emergency' (SURE) mechanism in order to protect employment and to compensate the affected employees. It is very important that Portugal uses this mechanism to support and protect the employment of persons with disabilities. In addition, the Commission calls on Member States to '*ensur[e] that all workers in the EU earn a decent living*', which again is particularly relevant to workers with disabilities given the very low wages that they often secure in Portugal.

Moreover, with the aim of developing '*a fairer and easier business environment*', the Commission proposes to adopt the new Digital Services Act to improve the legal framework for digital services, with clear rules for online platforms. It is very important that the new act considers the needs of persons with disabilities in terms of accessibility. Digital accessibility remains an area poorly developed in Portugal, and thus it is a barrier that many persons with disabilities face that further compounds their marginalisation and social exclusion.

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<sup>23</sup> Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Europe Council, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions (27 May 2020): <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52020DC0456&from=EN>.

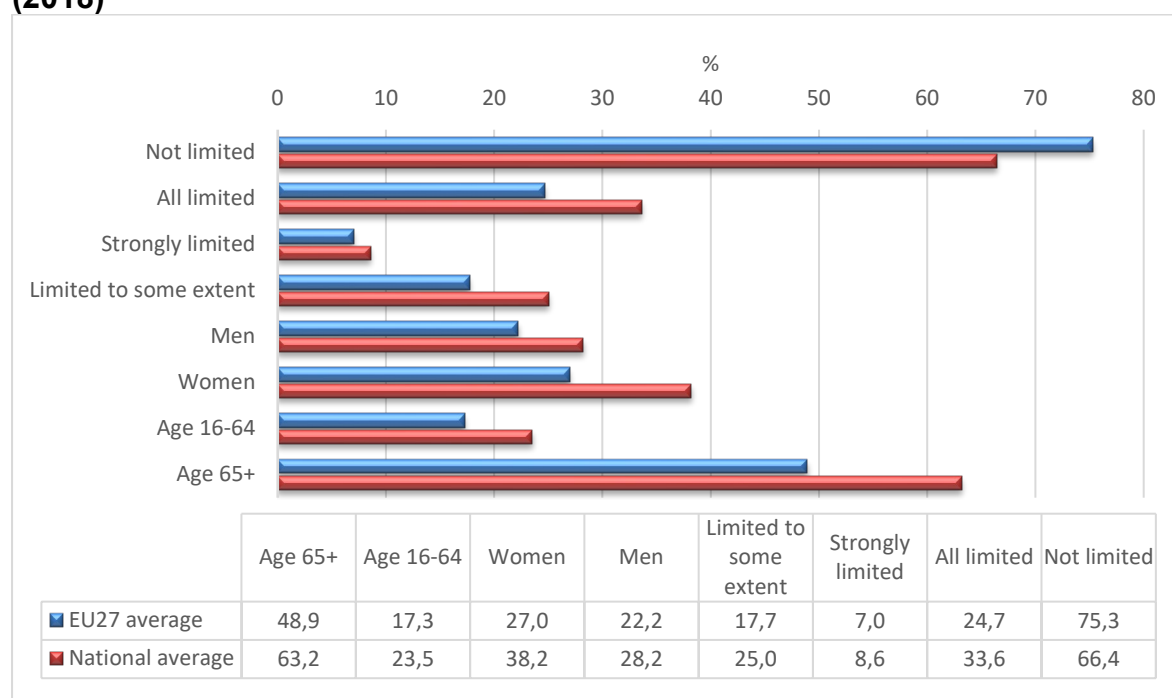
## 7 Annex: disability data relevant to the Semester

See also disability data published in the Eurostat database<sup>24</sup> and statistical reports.<sup>25</sup>

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’.<sup>26</sup>

**Table 1: Self-reported ‘activity limitations’ as a proxy for impairment/disability (2018)**



Source: EU-SILC 2018 Release 2020 version 1

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’.<sup>27</sup> National estimates for Portugal are compared with EU27 mean averages for the most recent year.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Eurostat health Database, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/health/data/database>.

<sup>25</sup> Eurostat (2019) *Disability Statistics* [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Disability\\_statistics](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Disability_statistics).

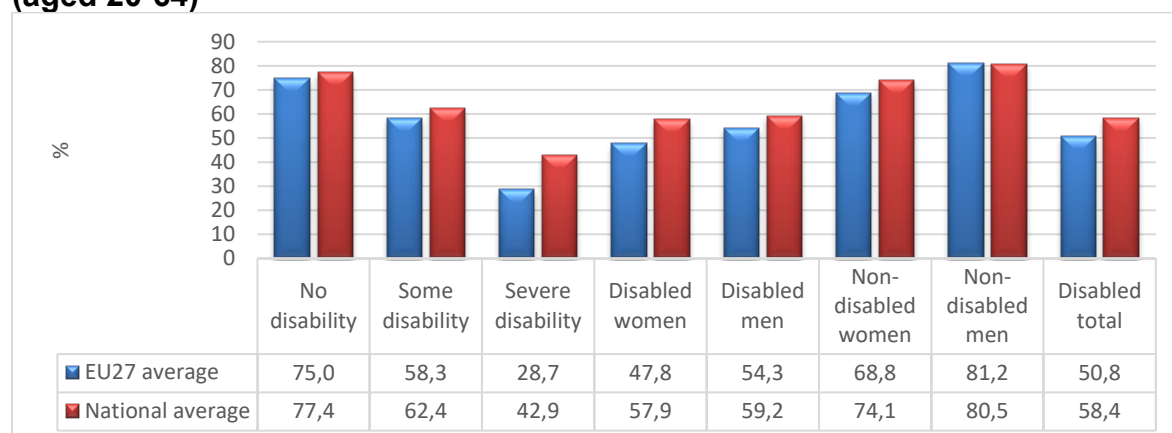
<sup>26</sup> The SILC survey questions are contained in the Minimum European Health Module (MEHM) [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Special:WhatLinksHere/Glossary:Minimum\\_European\\_Health\\_Module\\_\(MEHM\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Special:WhatLinksHere/Glossary:Minimum_European_Health_Module_(MEHM)).

<sup>27</sup> This methodology was developed in the annual statistical reports of ANED, available at <http://www.disability-europe.net/theme/statistical-indicators>.

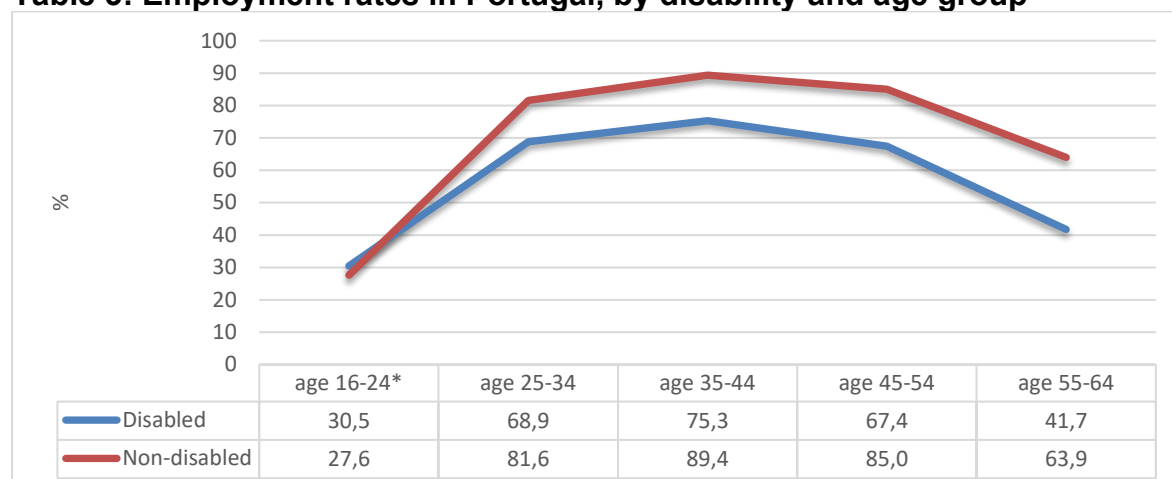
<sup>28</sup> The exit of the United Kingdom from the EU changes the EU average. Averages were also affected in 2015 by a discontinuity in the German disability data due to a definitional change.

## 7.1 EU data relevant to disability and the labour market (2018)

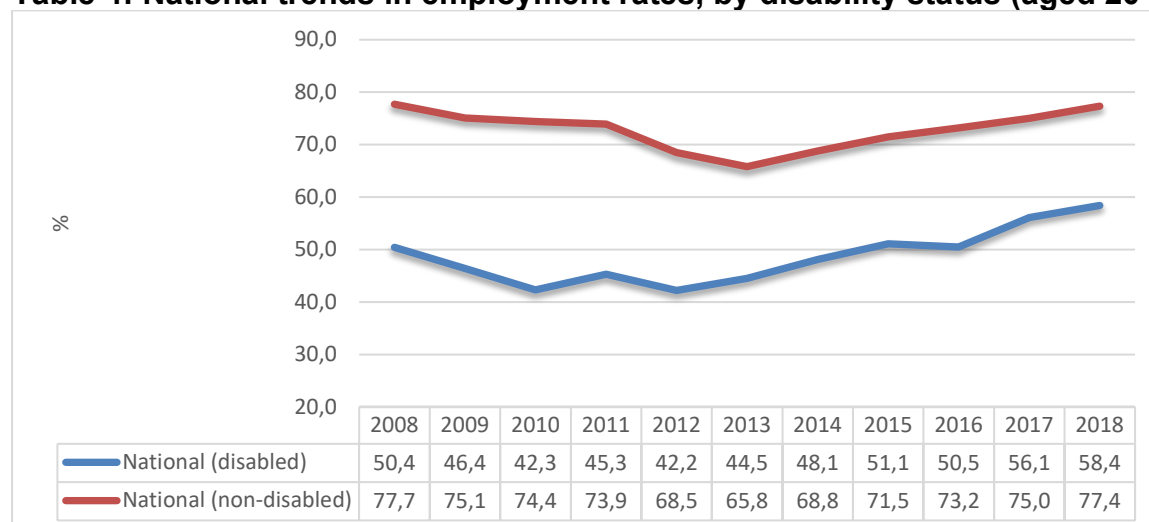
**Table 2: EU and Portugal employment rates, by disability and gender (aged 20-64)**



**Table 3: Employment rates in Portugal, by disability and age group**



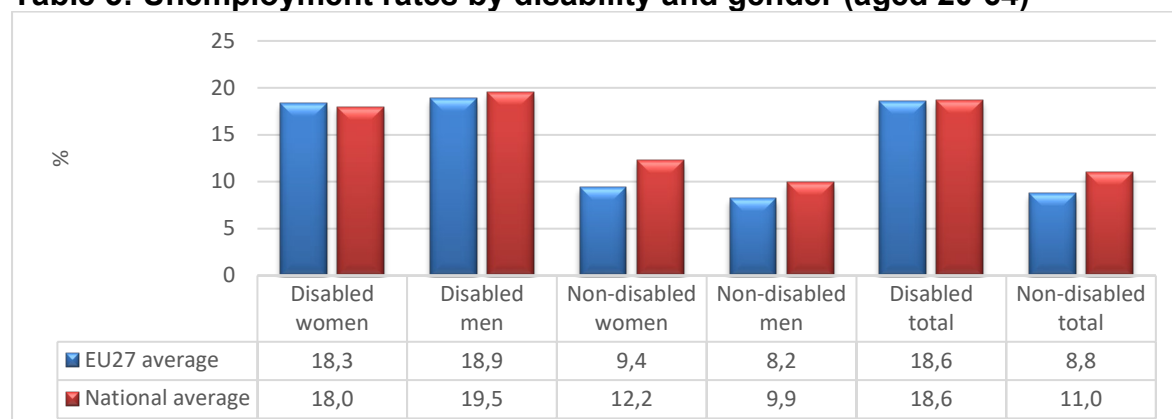
**Table 4: National trends in employment rates, by disability status (aged 20-64)**



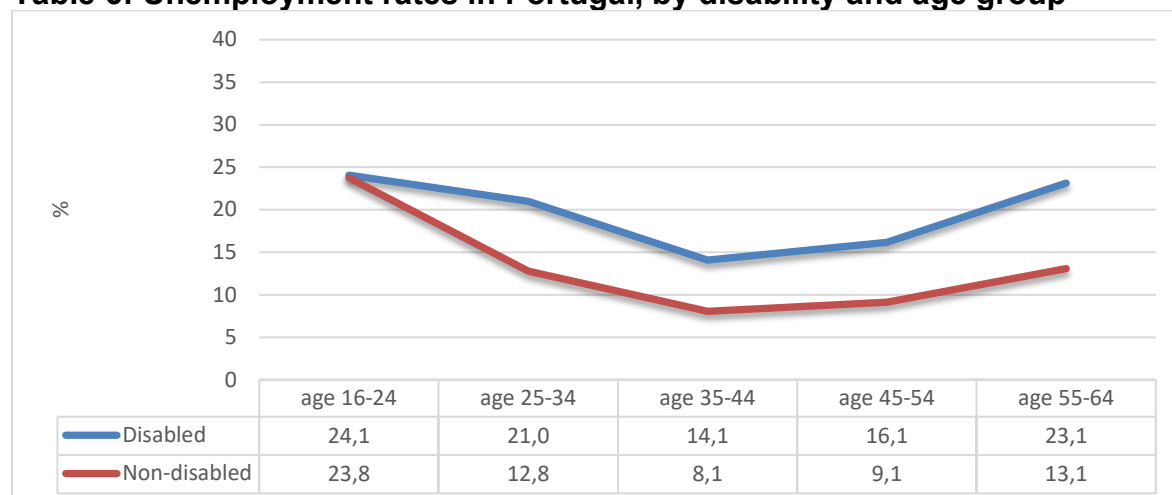
Source: EU-SILC 2018 Release 2020 version 1 (and preceding UDBs)

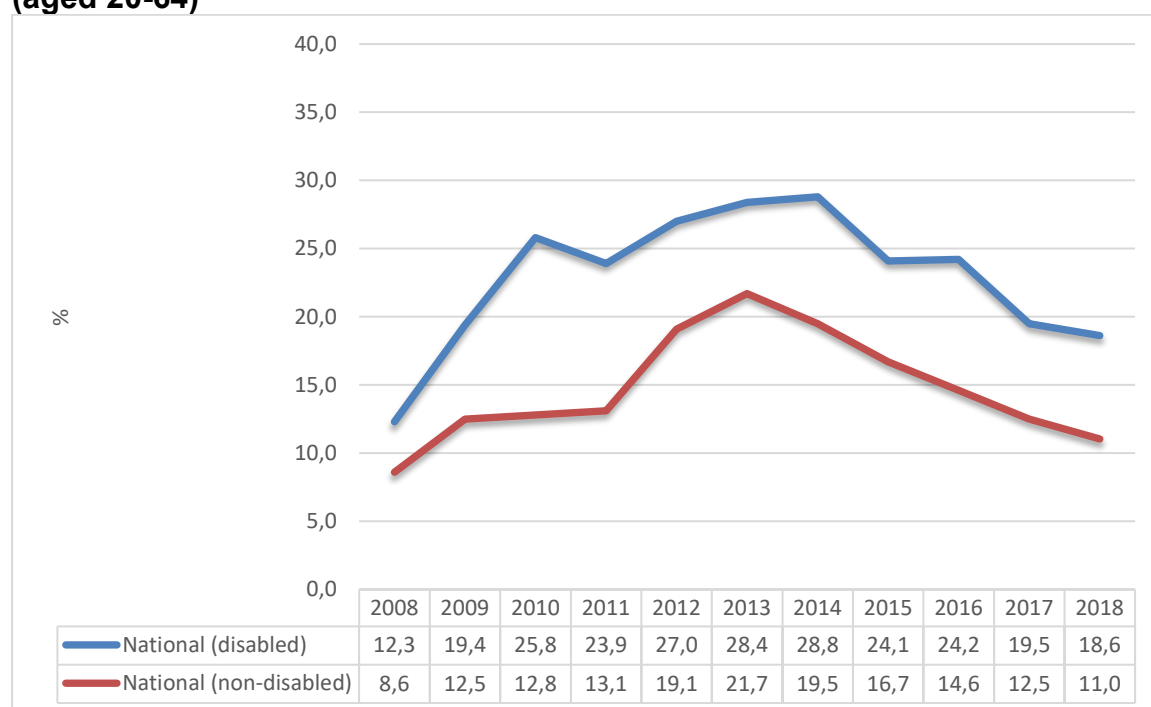
### 7.1.1 Unemployment

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



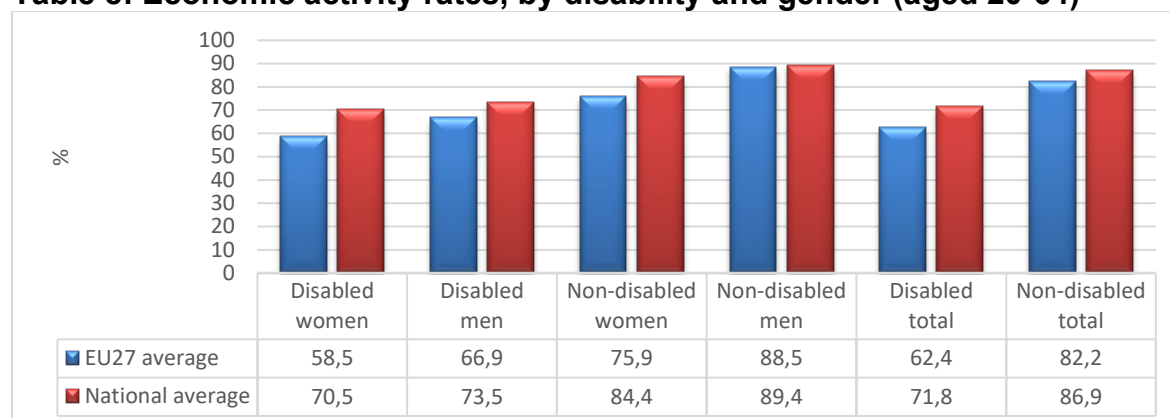
**Table 6: Unemployment rates in Portugal, by disability and age group**

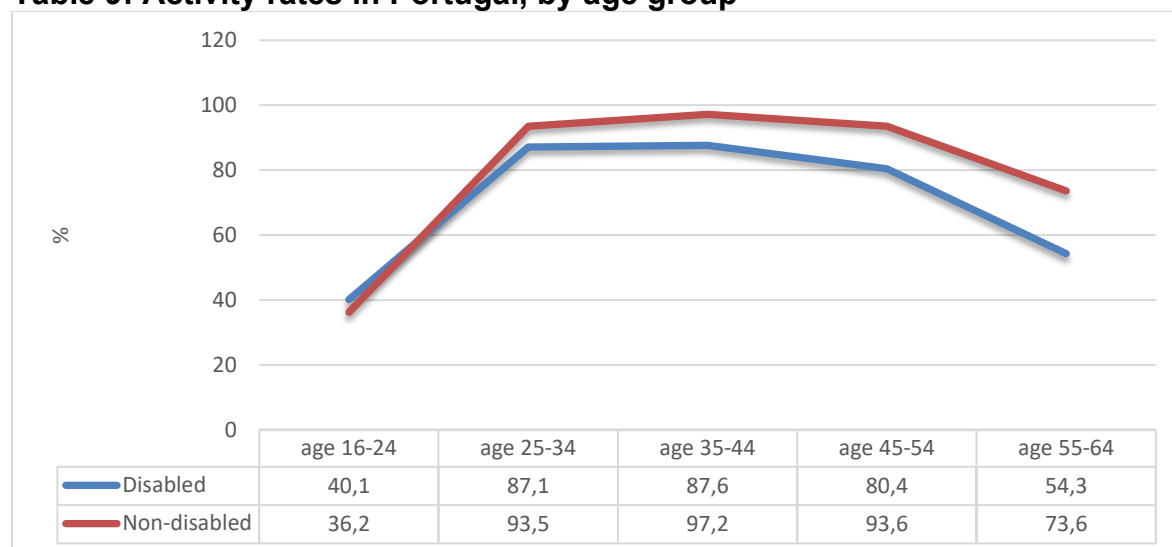
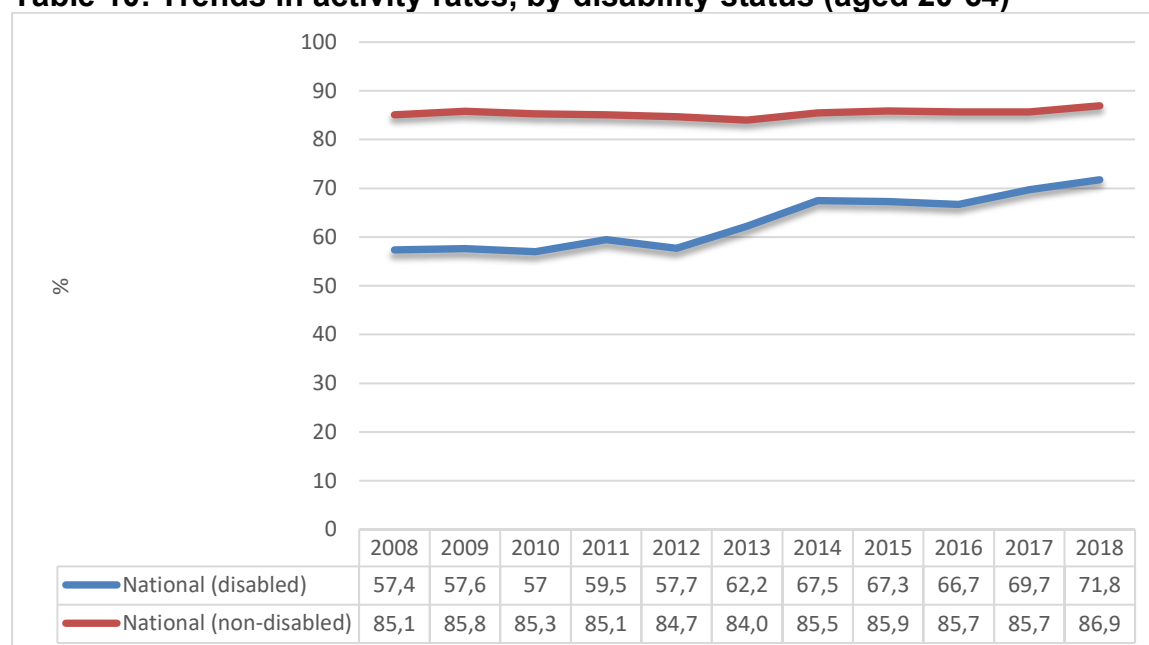


**Table 7: National trends in unemployment rate, by disability status (aged 20-64)**

Source: EU-SILC 2018 Release 2020 version 1 (and preceding UDBs)

### 7.1.2 Economic activity

**Table 8: Economic activity rates, by disability and gender (aged 20-64)**

**Table 9: Activity rates in Portugal, by age group****Table 10: Trends in activity rates, by disability status (aged 20-64)**

Source: EU-SILC 2018 Release 2020 version 1 (and preceding UDBs)



### 7.1.3 Alternative sources of labour market data in Portugal

**Table 11: Unemployed persons with disabilities (PWDs) registered at IEFP Employment Centres at the end of the year: in thousands, Continent.**

Years	Registered unemployed (total)	Registered unemployed PWDs (total)	Job placement of PWDs through the IEFP (total)
<b>2015</b>	521.611	12.667	1.261
<b>2016</b>	468.282	13.183	1.363
<b>2017</b>	377.791	12.911	1.484
<b>2018</b>	315.093	12.135	1.564
<b>2019</b>	288.176	12.027	1.577
<b>(Jan-Jun) 2020</b>	381.629	13.270	492

Source: IEFP, I.P.

**Table 12: Total number of beneficiaries of the IEFP professional rehabilitation measures for persons with disabilities that were allocated in the end: December 2015 – December 2019**

Number of allocations in the end of professional rehabilitation measures	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<i>Interns that were offered a permanent employment contract</i>	303	351	266	302	<b>369</b>
<i>Placed by own means</i>	35	25	64	86	<b>117</b>
<i>Placed through Employment Centre</i>	6	9	7	54	<b>68</b>
<i>Placed in alternative modalities</i>	11	30	67	237	<b>261</b>

Source: IEFP Relatórios de Execução Física e Financeira (2015-2019)<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> IEFP (Estatísticas; Publicações Estatísticas; Publicações Mensais; Relatório de Execução Física e Financeira): <https://www.iefp.pt/estatisticas>.

**Table 13: Unemployed persons with disabilities registered at IEFP Employment Centres: Annual data, in thousands, Continent.**

Total of registered unemployed persons with disabilities/Years	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Jan-Jun (2020)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,667</b>	<b>13,183</b>	<b>12,911</b>	<b>12,135</b>	<b>12,027</b>	<b>13,270</b>
<b>Male</b>	7,446	7,645	7,261	6,570	6,395	7,048
<b>Female</b>	5,221	5,538	5,650	5,565	5,632	6,222
<b>Youth (&lt; 25)</b>	1,602	1,657	1,701	1,371	1,430	1,504
<b>Adults (25 +)</b>	11,065	11,526	11,210	7,250	10,597	11,766
<b>&lt; 12 Months</b>	5,209	5,123	5,115	5,008	5,563	5,981
<b>≥ 12 Months</b>	7,458	8,060	7,796	3,614	6,464	7,289
<b>Unemployed (<i>In search for 1<sup>st</sup> job</i>)</b>	2,074	2,243	2,381	1,291	2,050	1,942
<b>Unemployed (<i>In search for new job</i>)</b>	10,593	10,940	10,530	7,331	9,977	11,328
<b>&lt; 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle Primary Education</b>	1,253	1,304	1,238	1,228	1,162	1,181
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Cycle Primary Education</b>	2,526	2,477	2,306	2,090	1,981	2,087
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle Primary Education</b>	2,520	2,555	2,430	2,190	2,137	2,339
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle Primary Education</b>	3,366	3,537	3,454	3,196	3,123	3,645
<b>Secondary Education</b>	2,316	2,557	2,701	2,731	2,881	3,196
<b>Higher Education</b>	686	753	782	700	743	822

Source: IEFP, I.P.

Note: Primary education – 1<sup>st</sup> cycle (Years 1, 2, 3 and 4); 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle (Years 5 and 6); 3<sup>rd</sup> cycle (Years 7, 8 and 9); Secondary (Years 10, 11 and 12). In search for 1<sup>st</sup> job – those who have never worked before. In search for new job – those who have already been employed before.

**Table 14: Total number of beneficiaries of the IEFP professional rehabilitation measures for persons with disabilities and allocated budget: December 2015 – December 2019**

<b>IEFP professional rehabilitation measures for persons with disabilities (thousands)</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
ASSESSMENT, ORIENTATION AND TRAINING	4,783	6,892	8,793	12,284	10,883
ASSISTANCE TO JOB PLACEMENT	8,272	8,014	7,566	8,991	10,224
SHELTERED EMPLOYMENT	541	548	989	1,443	1,957
OTHER ACTIVITIES	282	289	288	288	215
PROFESSIONAL REHABILITATION	3,309	7,941	9,117	9,446	6,637
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES</b>	<b>17,187</b>	<b>23,684</b>	<b>27,209</b>	<b>32,452</b>	<b>29,916</b>
<b>BUDGET SPENT (€)</b>	<b>11.479.487,96</b>	<b>24.119.697,65</b>	<b>20.407.559,39</b>	<b>32.412.381,49</b>	<b>40.548.401,60</b>

Source: IEFP Relatórios de Execução Física e Financeira (2015-2019)<sup>30</sup>

Note: Assessment, Orientation and Training (*Diagnóstico, Orientação e Formação*); Assistance to Job Placement (*Apoio à Inserção e Colocação*); Sheltered Employment (*Emprego Protegido*); Other Activities (*Outros Apoios*); Professional Rehabilitation (*Organismo Intermédio - Reabilitação*).

<sup>30</sup> IEFP (Estatísticas; Publicações Estatísticas; Publicações Mensais; Relatório de Execução Física e Financeira): <https://www.iefp.pt/estatisticas>.

**Table 15: Employees with disabilities in the private sector (2015-2018)**

Total of employed persons with disabilities in the private sector/Years	2015	2016	2017	2018
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10,210</b>	<b>10,789</b>	<b>11,657</b>	<b>12,720</b>
<b>Male</b>	5,056	5,306	5,633	5,978
<b>Female</b>	5,154	5,483	6,024	6,742
<b>Age (18-34)</b>	1,109	1,210	1,248	1,313
<b>Age (35-65)</b>	8,810	9,283	10,043	11,013
<b>Age (65 +)</b>	291	204	366	394
<b>Employees with incapacity level below 60%</b>	1,668	1,733	1,813	1,930
<b>Employees with incapacity level from 60 to 80%</b>	7,041	7,617	8,332	9,202
<b>Employees with incapacity level equal or above 80%</b>	1,501	1,439	1,512	1,588

Source: GEP/MTSSS - Balanço Social – COLECÇÃO ESTATÍSTICAS (2015-2018)<sup>31</sup>

**Table 16: Employees with disabilities in the public sector (2015-2019)**

Total of employed persons with disabilities in the public sector/Years	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14,324</b>	<b>15,296</b>	<b>16,170</b>	<b>17,610</b>	<b>18,617</b>
<b>Male</b>	5,264	5,348	5,552	5,913	6,166
<b>Female</b>	9,060	9,948	10,618	11,697	12,451

Source: DGAEP - Boletim Estatístico do Emprego Público (2015-2019)<sup>32</sup>

Disability data is not included in the core European Labour Force Survey but labour market indicators for Portugal were disaggregated from ad modules conducted in 2001 and 2011. These can be found in the Eurostat disability database.<sup>33</sup>

The National Statistics Institute (INE) carries out every three months the Labour Force Survey (LFS). Persons with disabilities have not been identified in the survey. Nevertheless, in 2002 the data about disabled people were included in a special module. This happened again in the module that accompanied the application of the LFS in the second trimester of 2011. The module Employment of Persons with Disabilities 2011 (EPD 2011)<sup>34</sup> targeted persons with disabilities aged 15-64, living in

<sup>31</sup> GEP/MTSSS (Estatística; Balanço Social; Estatísticas Anteriores; Publicações): <http://www.gep.mtsss.gov.pt/web/gep/estatisticas-antiores?categoryId=11334>.

<sup>32</sup> DGAEP (Estatísticas do Emprego Público; Boletim Estatístico do Emprego Público): <https://www.dgaep.gov.pt/index.cfm?OBJID=C0F56E62-5381-4271-B010-37ECE5B31017>

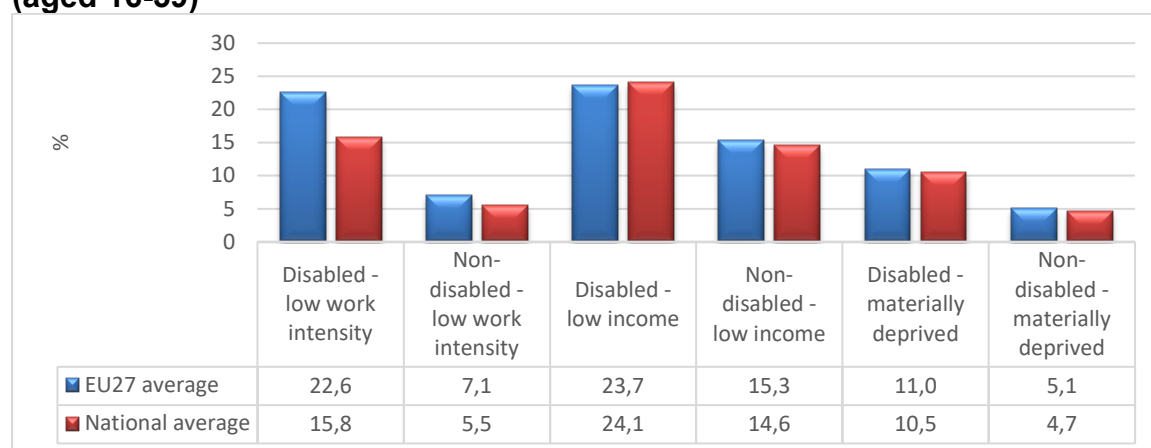
<sup>33</sup> Eurostat Health Database: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/health/data/database>.

<sup>34</sup> Ad hoc module of the Labour Force Survey on Persons with Disabilities: <http://smi.ine.pt/SuporteRecolha/Detalhes/?id=10015&lang=EN>.

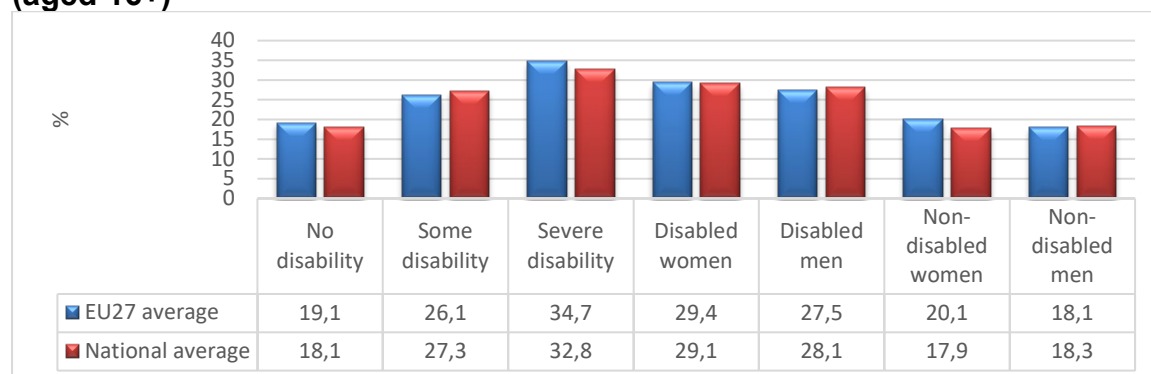
Portugal. The aim of the module was to provide information about the situation of persons with disabilities in the labour market, compared with that of persons without disabilities. Persons living in collective accommodation such as hotels, pensions and institutions, and individuals living in mobile homes were excluded from this survey. The EPD 2011 module included 11 indicators to describe the main long-term health problems, the main activity limitations and the limitations and special needs that result from them: 4 indicators to identify the 2 major health problems and the 2 major difficulties in daily life activities (19 questions); 3 indicators to evaluate the association between health problems and difficulties in daily life activities and limitations in the work schedule, the work tasks and transportation to and from work (12 questions); 3 indicators to determine needs for assistance with health problems or with daily life activities (3 questions); and 1 indicator to identify the main causes of limitations in work abilities (10 questions). A summary of the results obtained with the ad hoc module of the LFS on persons with disabilities, held on the second quarter of 2011, as well as the results of the 2011 Census, was provided in a brochure entitled 'Health and Incapacities in Portugal in 2011', published by the National Statistics Institute (INE) in December 2012.

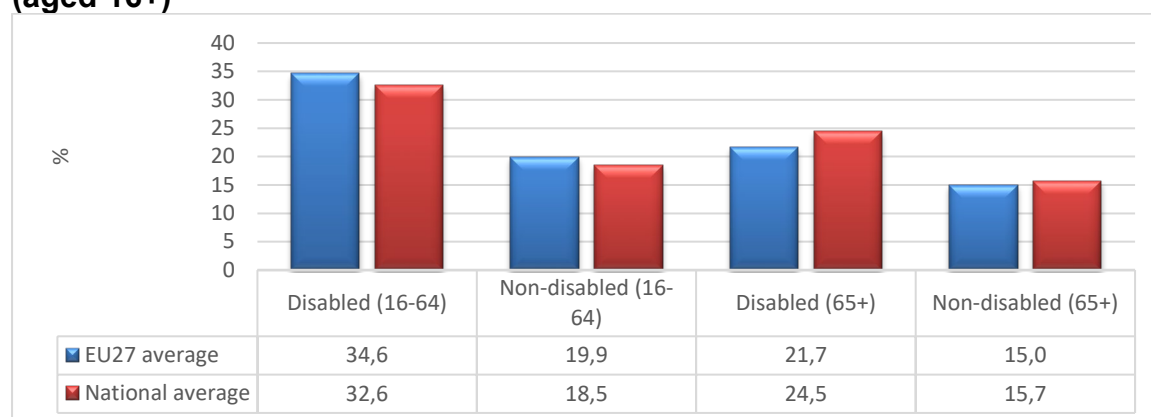
## 7.2 EU data relevant to disability, social policies and healthcare (2018)

**Table 17: People at risk of poverty or social exclusion, by disability and risk (aged 16-59)**

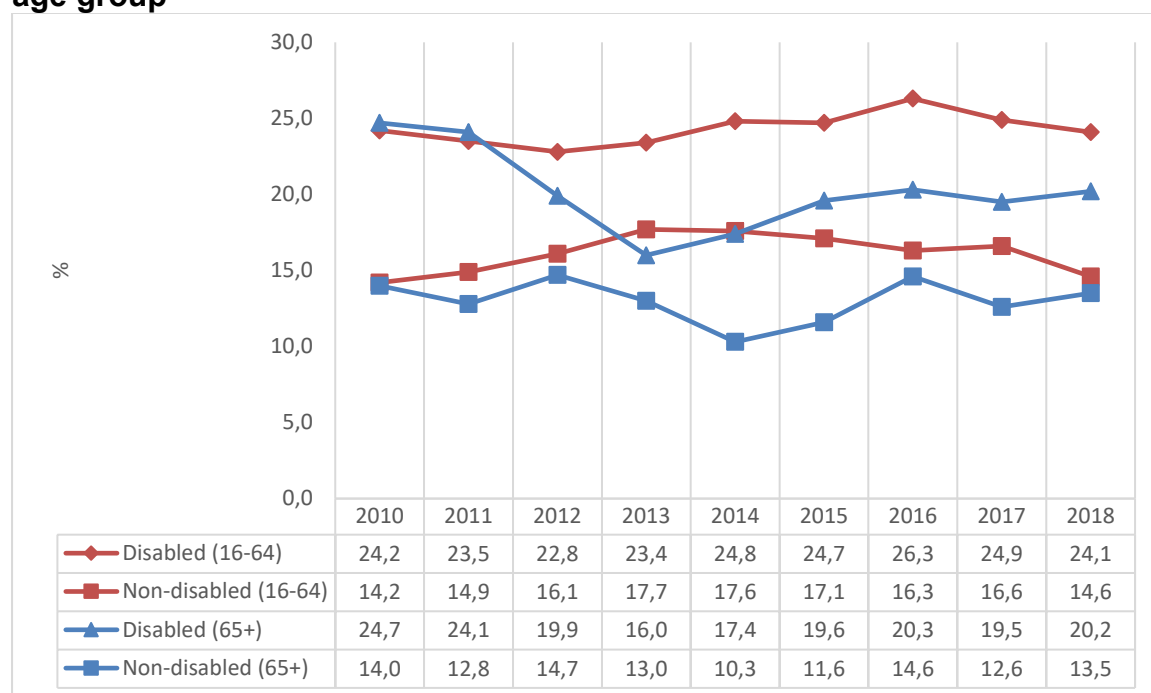


**Table 18: People at risk of poverty or social exclusion, by disability and gender (aged 16+)**



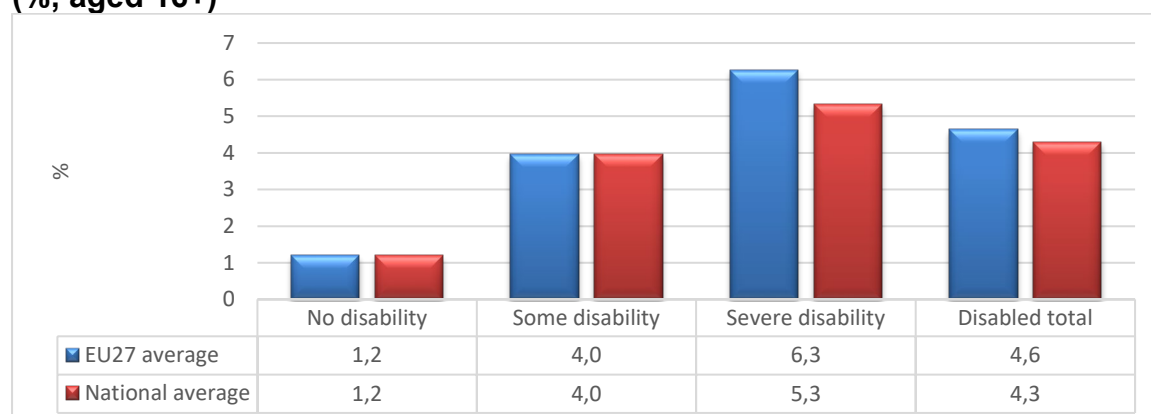
**Table 19: Overall risk of household poverty or exclusion by disability and age (aged 16+)**

Source: EU-SILC 2018 Release 2020 version 1 (and previous UDB)

**Table 20: 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 21: 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 2018 are consistent with the 3-year mean values.

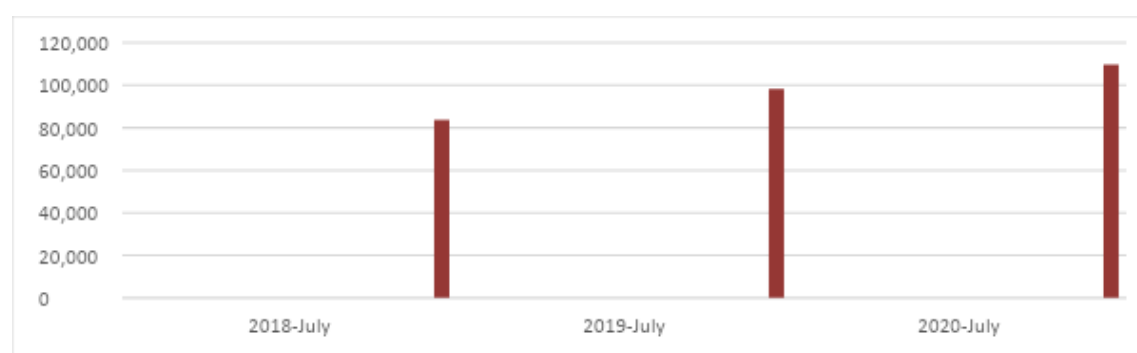
### 7.2.1 Alternative sources of poverty or health care data in Portugal

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.<sup>35</sup>

National surveys or studies may offer additional information.

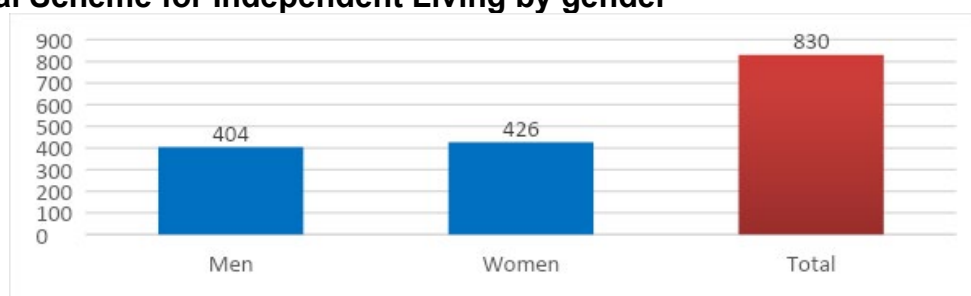
**Table 22: Number of the beneficiaries of Social Inclusion Benefit**

Number of beneficiaries PSI 83.678 98.181 109.619



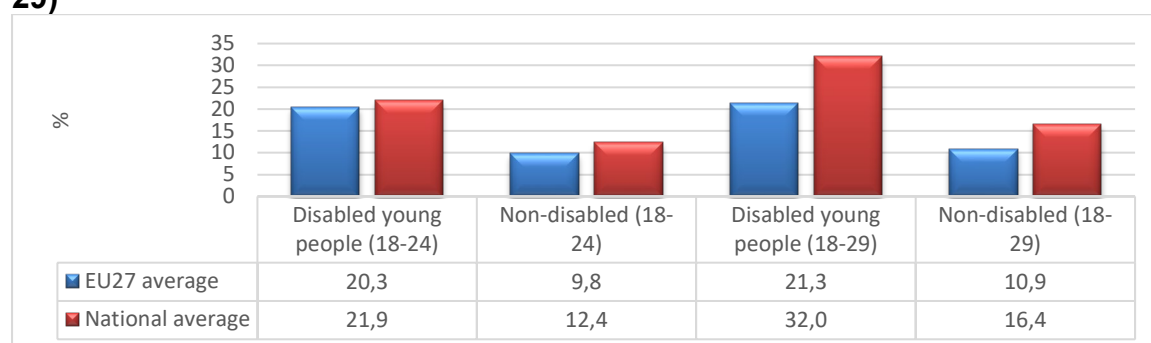
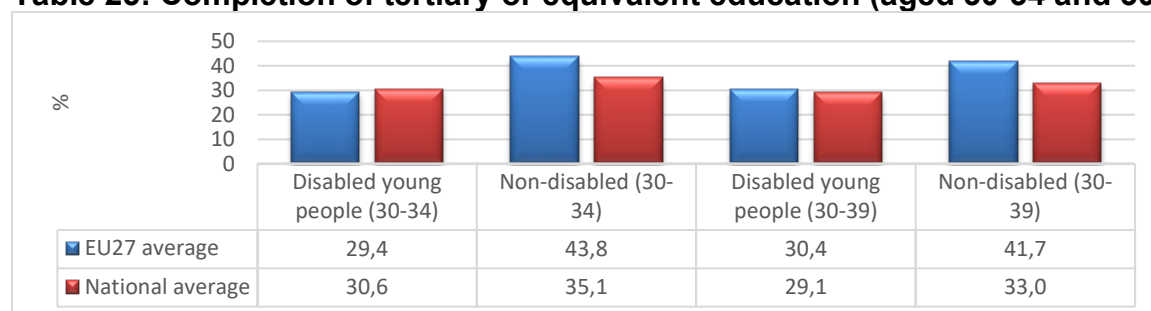
Source: Segurança Social, Statistics of programmes, Beneficiários Prestação Social para a Inclusão.

<sup>35</sup> Eurostat Health Database, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/health/data/database>.

**Table 23: Active individualised plans (PIAP) included in the strategies of the National Scheme for Independent Living by gender**

Source: Instituto Nacional para a reabilitação, Relatório mensal MAVI.

### 7.3 EU data relevant to disability and education

**Table 24: Early school leaving rates, by disability status (aged 18-24 and 18-29)<sup>36</sup>****Table 25: Completion of tertiary or equivalent education (aged 30-34 and 30-39)**

Source: EU-SILC 2018 Release 2020 version 1 (and preceding UDBs)

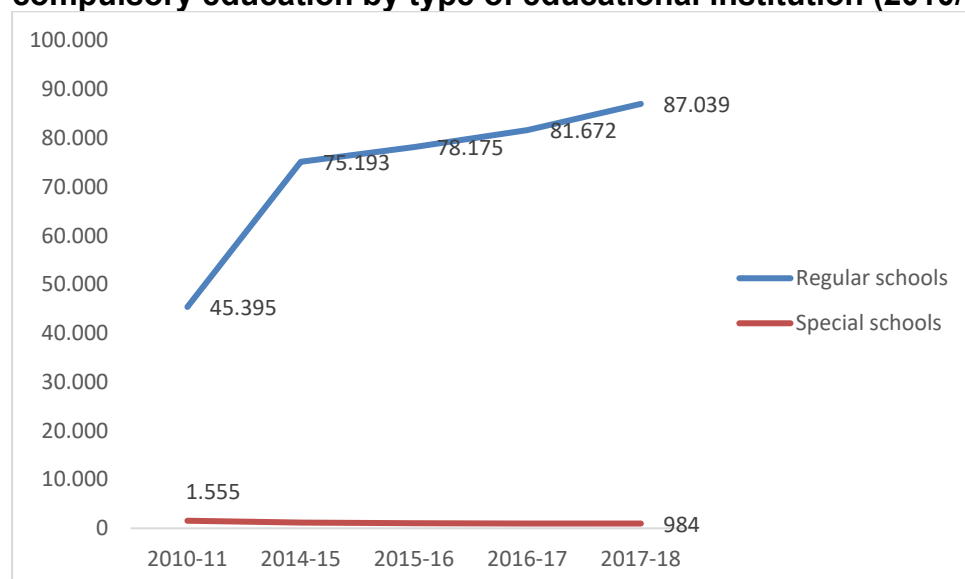
Note: Confidence intervals for the disability group are large and reliability low (due to the small sample size in the target age group). An average of several years may be needed to establish trends or to compare breakdowns by gender.

<sup>36</sup> There was a change from ISCED 1997 to ISCED 2011 qualification definitions in 2014 although some Member States continued to use the older definition after this time.



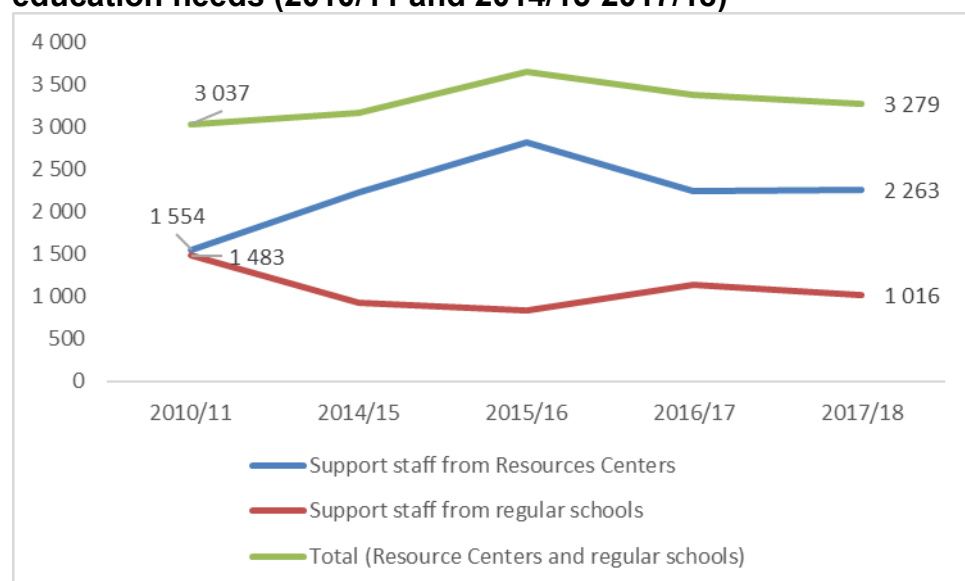
### 7.3.1 Alternative sources of education data in Portugal

**Table 26: Number of students with special education needs attending compulsory education by type of educational institution (2010/11-2017/18)**

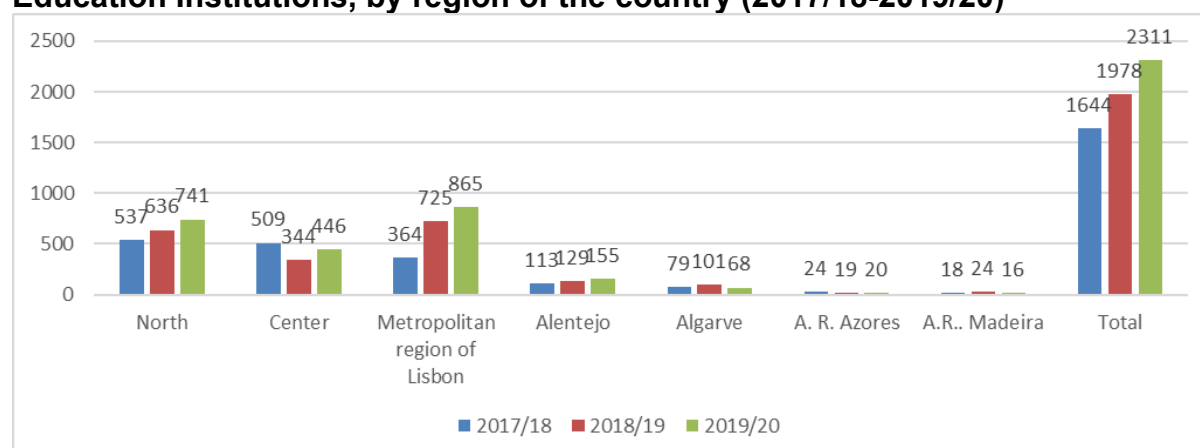


Source: DGEEC (2019). *Necessidades especiais de educação. [Estatísticas anuais 2010/11-2017/18.* Available at <https://www.dgeec.mec.pt/np4/224/>

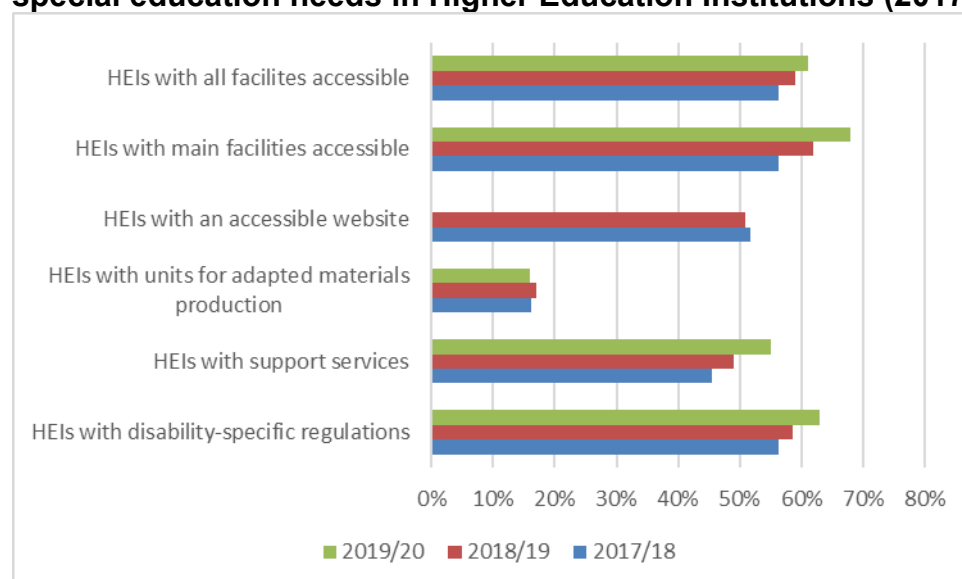
**Table 27: Number of specialised staff supporting students with special education needs (2010/11 and 2014/15-2017/18)**



Source: DGEEC (2019). *Necessidades especiais de educação. [Estatísticas anuais 2010/11-2017/18.* Available at <https://www.dgeec.mec.pt/np4/224/>

**Table 28: Number students with special education needs enrolled in Higher Education Institutions, by region of the country (2017/18-2019/20)**

Source: DGEEC (2020). *Inquérito às Necessidades Especiais de Educação nos Estabelecimentos de Ensino Superior [2017/18-2019/20]*. Available at <https://www.dgeec.mec.pt/np4/428/>

**Table 29: Provision of accessibility and supports available for students with special education needs in Higher Education Institutions (2017/18-2019/20)**

Source: DGEEC (2020). *Inquérito às Necessidades Especiais de Educação nos Estabelecimentos de Ensino Superior [2017/18-2019/20]*. Available at <https://www.dgeec.mec.pt/np4/428/>

Note: Data for provision of accessible website non-available for 2019/20

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