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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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¹ 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

In the field of employment, the situation has no significant changes. The employment rate for registered persons with disabilities was just 26.6 % in 2018 (28.8 % for those with severe activity limitation in EU-SILC). As the overall unemployment rate decreases, the proportion of unemployed persons with disabilities registered in the State Employment Agency (Public Employment Service) increased to 13.6 % in 2019, while the proportion of unemployed persons with disabilities decreased to 11.3 % as a result of Covid-19 pandemic, while the total amount of unemployed persons increased.

Employment services are provided to persons with disabilities within the framework of mainstreaming. Individual activities are directly targeted at persons with disabilities, but their impact is not significant. Subsidies alone do not increase employers' interests in employing persons with disabilities. In addition to disability, the long-term unemployed with disabilities also have other social problems, such as low levels of education, dependencies, low motivation and lack of official language skills.

In social and health policy, the welfare of persons with disabilities is not a priority. In the social field, following the judgments of the Constitutional Court, the Saeima and the Government are required to make changes by 1 January 2021 to determine the state monetary support corresponding to human dignity, including for persons with disabilities and persons who have become in need. Using the funding of the European Union's Structural Funds, there are being implemented several projects for the development of community-based services and implementation of the deinstitutionalisation process.

The development of social services is affected by the ongoing administrative-territorial reform. The views of national authorities and the public (NGOs) on the deinstitutionalisation process vary. There is no clarity on the further financing of the deinstitutionalisation process and the further development of the system of services. In the field of health care, increasing the pay of medical workers is a priority. Health services are not available (long waiting time, expensive services). The issue of optimising the number of hospitals is under consideration. Access to medical rehabilitation services remains a matter of concern.

There are few statistics available in the field of education about persons with disabilities at all levels of education. The inclusion of learners with special needs into the overall education system is slow. There are no changes to the definition of special education programmes. An assistant service for persons with disabilities for higher education has been introduced.

1.2 Recommendations for Latvia

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

- **Recommendation:** Create a support system for employers to provide flexible working arrangements for persons with disabilities. Develop the supply of personalised services to the Public Employment Service.

Rationale: The number of long-term unemployed with disabilities will be reduced, the attitudes of employers changed.

- **Recommendation:** Increase state social support for persons with disabilities to ensure a dignified life. Ensure access to healthcare and community-based social services as close as possible to person's place of residence.

Rationale: Improved health status of persons with disabilities, available social and health services (including medical rehabilitation) and ensured a dignified life.

- **Recommendation:** Provision of vocational education programmes adapted for children with disabilities in vocational education institutions. Provision and accessibility of lifelong learning programmes adapted for persons with disabilities.

Rationale: Sequential access to education for children with disabilities. Increased level of education for persons who have acquired disability during their working life to promote their future employment or return to the labour market.

2 Opportunities to mainstream disability equality in the Semester documents

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

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

- 'p. 3 Notably, the elderly and persons with disabilities experience high poverty rates.
- p. 4 Taking steps to address social exclusion by improving the guaranteed minimum income, minimum pensions and income support for persons with disabilities in 2020. The adequacy of benefits, however, remains low.
- p. 5 The risk of poverty or social exclusion has slightly increased as the situation continues to worsen for persons with disabilities, older persons and the unemployed.
- p. 15 In 2019, work started on reviewing system for assessing disabilities and on enhancing the integration of persons with disabilities in the labour market.
- p. 30 In 2018, around 1 % of the population (20 878 persons) were guaranteed minimum income recipients, out of which 20 % were children, 16 % persons with disabilities and 14 % older persons.
- p. 32 Measures are being taken to improve the weak social protection for persons with disabilities. The share of persons with disabilities at risk of poverty or social exclusion in Latvia is one of the highest in the EU.
- p. 32 Prejudices towards adults with mental disabilities remain a challenge though, and continuous communication efforts are needed.'

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

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

- '18. Despite some slight improvement, the adequacy of the guaranteed minimum income, of minimum pensions and of income support for persons with disabilities remains low.'

Ensuring an adequate level of income for persons with disabilities has formally been a policy priority, but practical measures have not been taken for a long time. Disability scarcity and poverty issues are addressed within the framework of an inclusive (mainstreaming) principle. The point of ensuring a guaranteed minimum income level in the government was viewed and repeatedly postponed since 2014.

Updated in July 2020, following the judgments of the Constitutional Court regarding the compliance of Cabinet Regulations (specific paragraphs) with the Constitution. The judgments, which take effect on 1 January 2021, prescribe that the paragraphs of Cabinet Regulations, which determine the amount of the guaranteed minimum income level (GMI) benefit and the amount of the state social security benefit, do not conform to the Constitution.

A case has also been brought before the Constitutional Court regarding the compliance of the minimum amount of disability pensions with the rights specified in the Constitution.

Consequently, the Ministry of Welfare has developed several recommendations to raise the level of the GMI benefit, the state social security benefit and the disability pension base. In autumn 2020, public discussions and discussions in the Saeima are taking place concerning 2021 budget.

Increasing benefits, pensions within the framework of the budget will not significantly improve the situation of persons with disabilities given that the cost of goods, services, and therefore the cost of living, is increasing.

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

In 2017, the UN CRPD Committee made the following recommendations to Latvia:

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

‘47. The Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Ensure support for the employment of all persons with disabilities in the open labour market in inclusive employment settings on an equal basis with others; (b) Pay attention to the links between Article 27 of the Convention and target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals.’

Under one of the action lines ‘Work and employment’ of the Guidelines for the Implementation of the UN CRPD in 2014-2020² it was planned to develop the measures to promote the integration of persons with disabilities into the labour market and to inform employers about the employment of persons with disabilities, breaking stereotypes of persons with disabilities as a useless workforce.

The performance indicators identified in the Implementation Plan for 2018-2020 of these Guidelines³ forecasted in 2020 an increase in:

- the number of employees in the subsidised workplaces (number of persons with severe disability employed);
- the number of persons with mental disability employed;
- the proportion of persons with disability employed (%);
- the number of services involving persons with disabilities.

The second important policy paper is the ‘Inclusive Employment Guidelines for 2015-2020’. Within the framework of the action line ‘inclusive labour market’, it was planned to extend the provision of services to the registered unemployed in line with the individual needs identified as a result of profiling, increase the use of career services, increase the participation of the unemployed at-risk group in the labour market, address major causes of unemployment, develop social entrepreneurship and increase regional mobility opportunities. Subsidised employment measures were planned for the employment of persons with disabilities.⁴

² Order of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 564 ‘On the Guidelines for the Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2014 – 2020’, 2013. Riga: Cabinet of Ministers. Available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/262238-par-apvienoto-naciju-organizacijas-konvencijas-par-personu-ar-invaliditati-tiesibam-istenosanas-pamatnostadnem-2014-2020-gadam>, http://www.lm.gov.lv/upload/2013junijs/lmpamn_040613_inv.pdf.

³ Order of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 67 ‘On the Implementation plan 2018-2020 of the Guidelines on the Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2014-2020’, 2018. Riga: Cabinet of Ministers. Available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/303670-par-apvienoto-naciju-organizacijas-konvencijas-par-personu-ar-invaliditati-tiesibam-istenosanas-pamatnostadnu-2014-2020>.

⁴ Inclusive Employment Guidelines 2015-2020, 2015. Riga: Cabinet of Ministers. Available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/273969-par-ieklausos-nodarbinatibas-pamatnostadnem-20152020gadam>.

3.1 Summary of the labour market situation of persons with disabilities

Latvia's national target for the headline employment rate (73 %), that was set according to the EU 2020 strategy, was reached already in 2016 but data from EU-SILC indicate an employment rate for persons with disabilities in Latvia of 61.1 % in 2018, compared to 80.0 % for other persons. It is approximately 10.3 points above the EU27 average but still results in an estimated disability employment gap of approximately 19 percentage points (EU27 average gap 24.2, see Tables 2-4 in annex).

The same data indicate unemployment rates of 13.6 % and 8.3 %, respectively in 2018 (see Tables 5-7) and the economic activity rate for persons with disabilities in Latvia was 70.6 %, compared to 87.3 % for other persons (see Tables 8-10). These indications are broken down by gender and age in the respective tables in annex.

According to data from the Central Statistical Bureau in 2019, the general activity rate in the age group 15-64 years was 77.3 %, employment rate 72.3 % but unemployment rate 6.5 %.⁵ Out of 421,100 inactive population, 61,700 indicated disease or disability as a reason for not seeking work. Between 2010 and 2019, the number of such individuals has increased from 53,900 to 61,700 or 14 %. Of the total inactive population, the proportion of such persons increased from 9.4 % to 14.6 % or by 5.2 percentage points (see Table 11).

Between 2010 and 2019 the number of unemployed persons with disabilities registered in Public Employment Service (PES) gradually decreased from 9,345 to 7,868 or by 15 % (see Table 12). The proportion of registered unemployed persons with disabilities increased from 5.8 % in 2010 to 13.6 % in 2019. Starting in 2020 the number of unemployed persons with disabilities is increasing to 8,856 unemployed at the end of June 2020. The employment situation in the context of the conditions due to Covid-19, the total number of registered unemployed persons is increasing (78,266 in June 2020), with the proportion of registered unemployed persons with disabilities decreasing, in June 2020 11.3 %, accordingly.

In 2018 the proportion of persons with disabilities accounted for by the State Social Insurance Agency as workers was 26.6 % of the total number of adults with disabilities (compared to 23 % in 2013).⁶

Between 2013 and 2018, the number of persons with disabilities in subsidised jobs increased by 52 % (from 289 in 2013 to 840 in 2018).⁷

The registered unemployment rate at the end of June 2020 was 8.6 % (6.4 % in January). Of 78,266 unemployed persons registered in the PES, 8,856 or 11.3 % were

⁵ Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia. NBG040. Activity rate, employment rate and unemployment rate by statistical region (%) Available at: http://data1.csb.gov.lv/pxweb/en/sociala/sociala_nodarb_aktivitate_ikgad/NBG040.px/table/tableViewLayout1/.

⁶ Social policy indicators. Ministry of Welfare. Available at: <http://lm.gov.lv/lv/nozares-politika/invaliditate>.

⁷ Social policy indicators. Ministry of Welfare. Available at: <http://lm.gov.lv/lv/nozares-politika/invaliditate>.

unemployed with disabilities. Of these, 63.7 % were unemployed with disabilities over 50 years of age, 42.9 % were long-term unemployed, while 1.7 % were young persons aged 15-24.⁸

3.2 Analysis of labour market policies relevant to the Semester

Support measures to promote the employment of persons with disabilities are being addressed in general order, which means that all services provided by the PES are available to persons with disabilities. In recent years the average number of unemployed with disabilities registered in PES is 8,000. There are only a few activities directly targeting persons with disabilities, such as subsidised jobs within the scope of available active employment support activities.

The number of persons with disabilities employed in subsidised workplaces varies between 2010 and 2019. The smallest number of employees has been recorded in 2013 and 2015, with 289 and 305 persons with disabilities, respectively. Starting 2015, the number of persons with disabilities working in subsidised jobs is increasing to 840 or by 175 %, so the performance indicator (600) set out in the national policy planning papers has been reached. However, the overall trend between 2010 and 2018 shows a slight decrease (see Table 13).

In 2017 the subsidised employment measures were complemented by a new type of services for the unemployed with mental disabilities – a support person at work.⁹ However, since the introduction of this service, it has not been requested for any person.¹⁰ Starting May 2018, the PES offers persons with disabilities to be involved in a job search motivation programme.¹¹ The number of participants involved in this programme amounted to 2,334 persons, of which 1,488 aged 50 years.¹²

The Social Enterprise Law,¹³ entered into force in April 2018 with a view to promote the employment of population groups at risk of social exclusion, including persons with disabilities. At the end of July 2020, 32 % of 112 active social enterprises were active

⁸ Overview of the unemployment situation in the country (June). 2020. Riga: Public Employment Service. Available at: https://www.nva.gov.lv/sites/nva/files/content/270720/parskats-par-bezdarba-situaciju_junijs_2020.pdf.

⁹ The support person participates in discussions with the employer, supports the acquisition and performance of the work tasks defined by the head of work, helps to develop communication with the employer, the head of work and work colleagues, and provides psychological and motivating support.

¹⁰ An informative Report on the interim evaluation of the implementation of the Inclusive Employment Guidelines for the period 2015-2020, 2019. Available at: http://lm.gov.lv/upload/LMZin_200819_IN_pamatn.pdf.

¹¹ The job search motivation programme shall include activities aimed at providing support, addressing individual social challenges, improving and developing personal and social skills, developing household skills, strengthening motivation and preparing for the work process, and the social mentor's service, which includes practical support, counselling and recruitment recommendations. Within the service, the availability of transport, catering, accommodation, training specialist assistant, sign language interpretation services shall be provided.

¹² Informative Report on interim evaluation of the implementation of the Inclusive Employment Guidelines for the period 2015-2020, 2019. p. 28. Available at: http://lm.gov.lv/upload/LMZin_200819_IN_pamatn.pdf.

¹³ Social Enterprise Law, 2017. Riga: Saeima. Available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/294484-social-enterprise-law>.

in the field of job integration. More than a half (55 %) worked in Riga (capital city) and Pierīga (15 %), the least in Latgale (4 %).¹⁴ The areas of business are diverse, from basic arts activities, social care for the elderly and persons with disabilities without accommodation to road freight or burial and related activities. Of the total 11 groups at risk of social exclusion¹⁵, only two are linked to disability: persons with disabilities and persons with mental disabilities. Of all registered companies, 19 social companies have identified persons with disabilities as a target group. Since 1 April 2018 to April 2020, 51 persons with disabilities or mental disabilities have started to work in social enterprises.¹⁶

Summary: Given that general employment support measures and social entrepreneurship support measures are generally applicable to all population groups at risk of social exclusion, specific support measures for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the open labour market (supported employment) are not available on general terms. Neither workers nor employers have been responsive to individually targeted measures, such as promoting the employment of persons with mental disorders.

Recommendations:

- PES has developments for individualised services, but it is necessary to address long-term support measures for employers, increasing the qualifications and specialisation of PES specialists for work directly with the long-term unemployed with disabilities, which are characterised by many social problems, starting with a lower level of education and ending with different kinds of addictions.
- It is necessary to introduce long-term support measures for employers employing persons with disabilities, such as wage subsidies, reliefs in sickness costs.
- In the field of social entrepreneurship, it is necessary to improve support measures for entrepreneurs in the area of labour integration for the promotion of employment of persons with disabilities and persons with mental disorders; to increase financial resources and develop targeted measures for persons with disabilities and to review the number of target groups.

¹⁴ Statistical data on social enterprises on 27.07.2020. Ministry of Welfare. Available at: http://lm.gov.lv/upload/lol/yyyy/Statistika_SU_200727.pdf.

¹⁵ Other groups at risk of social exclusion defined in the Cabinet Regulation No. 173 (2018) 'Regulations Regarding the Population Groups at Risk of Social Exclusion Risk and Procedures for Granting, Registration and Supervision of the Status of a Social Enterprise' (<https://likumi.lv/ta/en/en/id/298035-regulations-regarding-the-population-groups-at-risk-of-social-exclusion-risk-and-procedures-for-granting-registration-and-supervision-of-the-status-of-a-social-enterprise>) are persons for whom the conformity with the status of the needy family (person) has been determined; unemployed persons who have dependent persons, unemployed persons older than 54 years of age and long-term unemployed persons; ethnic minority the Roma; prisoners or persons released from the place of imprisonment; persons with problems of addiction to alcohol, narcotic, psychotropic or toxic substances, gambling or computer games; persons whose place of residence is declared in a night shelter; victims of human trafficking; persons to whom the status of a refugee, alternative status or the status of a stateless person has been granted in the Republic of Latvia; orphans and children left without parental care at the age from 15 years, and also adult persons conforming to this group until reaching 24 years of age. Many of these persons can work in the open labour market with additional, targeted social services support.

¹⁶ Informative report on the activities and development of social enterprises. 2020, p. 13. Available at: <http://tap.mk.gov.lv/lv/mk/tap/?pid=40488145&mode=mk&date=2020-06-16>.

- Improve the system for the accurate collection of statistical data and the further use of data for analysing the employment of persons with disabilities and the development of support measures.

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

In 2017, the UN CRPD Committee made the following recommendations to Latvia:

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

‘47. The Committee recommends that the State party: (a) Ensure support for the employment of all persons with disabilities in the open labour market in inclusive employment settings on an equal basis with others; (b) Pay attention to the links between Article 27 of the Convention and target 8.5 of the Sustainable Development Goals.’

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

‘31. The Committee urges the State party to: (a) Expedite the complete deinstitutionalization of all persons with disabilities within a set time frame in order to close all remaining institutions, both those run by the State and the municipalities, ensuring that residents are not subject to trans-institutionalization ; (b) Reinforce the engagement of municipalities in implementing the deinstitutionalization strategy, including through raising awareness about independent community-based living for persons with disabilities and ensuring sustainable provision of services to promote independent living following termination of European structural funds; (c) Ensure the provision of quality personal assistance that takes into account the individual needs of persons with disabilities and ensures their social inclusion and participation.’

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

‘43. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure the availability, adequacy and accessibility of general health-care services and facilities for all persons with disabilities throughout the country.’

[Article 26 UN CRPD](#) addresses Habilitation and rehabilitation.

‘45. The Committee recommends that the State party improve the accessibility and timely delivery of rehabilitation services throughout the country for all persons with disabilities.’

Under one of the action lines ‘Social protection’ of the Guidelines for the Implementation of the UN CRPD in 2014-2020, it was planned to implement measures to promote more efficient services by maximizing the individual needs of each individual and thereby improving the quality of life of persons with disabilities.¹⁷

¹⁷ Order of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 564 ‘On the Guidelines for the Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2014 – 2020’, 2013. Riga: Cabinet of Ministers. Available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/262238-par-apvienoto-naciju-organizacijas-konvencijas-par-personu-ar-invaliditati-tiesibam-istenosanas-pamatnostadnem-2014-2020-gadam>, http://www.lm.gov.lv/upload/2013junijs/lmpamn_040613_inv.pdf.

The performance indicators set out in the implementation plan for the period 2018-2020 of these guidelines provided that:

- 1) as regards the development of services, the following increases in 2020 are planned:
 - the number of persons with Group I visual disability who receive the services/support of an assistant;
 - the number of persons with disabilities who receive assistant services for the acquisition of higher education;
 - the number of persons receiving a psychologist service for a person up to 18 years who lives in the family, as well as his or her legal representative;
 - the number of persons with disabilities who receive support for the adaptation of the dwelling;
 - the number of persons receiving services of a support person.
- 2) As regards the state aid to persons with disabilities, the percentage of persons with disabilities (%) with incomes below the at-risk-of-poverty threshold will be reduced in 2020.¹⁸

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 Latvia was 27.7 % in 2018, compared to 14.2 % for other persons of similar age - an estimated disability poverty gap of approximately 14 percentage points (see Table 14). For persons aged over 65, the disability poverty gap was 10.3 points (48.7 % for older persons with disabilities and 38.4 % 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.

In 2019 there were 196,159 registered persons with disabilities in Latvia, of which 8,330 children and 187,868 adults.¹⁹ Disability statistics from the Central Statistical Bureau often refer to this administrative population rather than the wider population represented in social surveys. In general, this population is smaller, with more severe levels of impairment and with poorer social outcomes than the general survey estimates from EU-SILC.

According to data from the Ministry of Welfare²⁰ the number of registered persons with disabilities for whom the status of a needy person has been determined has decreased from 13,873 to 9,197 persons between 2012 and 2018, or by 33 %. The number of adults with disability decreased by 27 % and the number of children (age group 0-17 years) by 65 % (more detailed in Table 19).

¹⁸ Order of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 67 'On the Implementation plan 2018-2020 of the Guidelines on the Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2014-2020'; 2018. Riga: Cabinet of Ministers. Available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/303670-par-apvienoto-naciju-organizacijas-konvencijas-par-personu-ar-invaliditati-tiesibam-istenosanas-pamatnostadnu-2014-2020>.

¹⁹ Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia. VAG132. The number of registered persons with disabilities. Available at: http://data1.csb.gov.lv/pxweb/en/sociala/sociala_veseliba_vesel/VAG132.px/table/tableViewLayout1/.

²⁰ Social policy indicators. Ministry of Welfare. Available at: <http://lm.gov.lv/lv/nozares-politika/invaliditate/>.

Both the Saeima and the government acknowledge that persons with disabilities are among the most at risk of poverty. Consequently, their social inclusion, among other things, by tackling poverty, material deprivation and income inequality, is identified as one of the actions under the National Development Plan 2021-2027 as part of the priority 'Strong Family, Healthy and Active Persons'.²¹

In 2019:

- an extension of the target group entitled to benefits for reimbursement of transport costs due to movement difficulties;
- an increase in the amount of disabled childcare benefit and care benefit for adults with disabilities from childhood onwards from EUR 213 to EUR 313;
- from 1st September persons with disabilities can receive assistant services in universities and colleges;
- introduction of psychosocial rehabilitation services for persons with the oncological disease and their families, as well as palliative care for children and their family's members;
- additional funding granted for the provision of technical aids.²²

From 1 January 2020, the amount of the state social security benefit for persons with disabilities was increased from EUR 64.03 to EUR 80 (for persons with disabilities from childhood – EUR 122.69) and consequently, the minimum amount of the disability pension was increased.²³

4.2 Analysis of social policies relevant to the Semester

Tackling poverty and social exclusion has been one of the priorities of Latvia's long-term and medium-term policy planning papers.²⁴ The targets for poverty reduction were set out in the National Development Plan for 2014-2020. As early as 2014 the Cabinet approved the concept paper on 'Determination of the minimum income level',²⁵ yet one year from a year the solutions included in it were postponed. After the Ombudsman brought an action before the Constitutional Court, in August 2019 the Cabinet approved a policy planning paper entitled 'Plan for the Improvement of the

²¹ Statement of Saeima 'On National Development Plan of Latvia for 2021 - 2027 (NAP2027)', 2020. Riga: Saeima. Available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/315879-par-latvijas-nacionalo-attistibas-planu-2021-2027-gadam-nap2027>.

²² Public Overview 2019. Riga: Ministry of Welfare. Available at: http://lm.gov.lv/upload/aktualais_jautajums/LM_Gada_Parskats_2020_05.pdf.

²³ Amendments to Cabinet Regulation No. 1605 of 22 December 2009 'Regulations Regarding the Amount of the State Social Security Benefit and Funeral Benefit, Procedures for the Review thereof and Procedures for the Granting and Disbursement of the Benefits', 2019. Regulation No. 603. Riga: Cabinet of Ministers. Available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/311344-grozijumi-ministru-kabineta-2009-gada-22-decembra-noteikumos-nr-1605-noteikumi-par-valsts-sociala-nodrosinajuma-pabalsta-un-apb...>

²⁴ Sustainable Development Strategy of Latvia until 2030, p.106. 2010. Riga: Saeima. Available at: <http://polsis.mk.gov.lv/documents/3323>.

²⁵ Cabinet Order No. 619 'On the Concept Paper 'On Determination of the Minimum Income Level' 2014. Riga: Cabinet of Ministers. Available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/269886-par-koncepciju-par-minimala-ienakuma-limena-noteiksanu>.

Minimum Income Support System for 2020-2021',²⁶ intending to increase the amount of the state social security benefit base to EUR 99 in the first half of 2020 (the amount of this benefit also determines the minimum amount of disability pension). However, the planned measures were not introduced since the amount of the state social security benefit base was increased only to EUR 80 from 1 January 2020.

The issue of adequate state support for persons with disabilities is at the centre of attention following the judgment of the Constitutional Court of 9 July 2020 in case 2019-27-03 On Cabinet Regulation No. 1605 of 22 December 2009 'Regulations Regarding the Amount of the State Social Security Benefit and Funeral Benefit, Procedures for the Review thereof and Procedures for the Granting and Disbursement of the Benefits' on the conformity of Paragraph 2 of these Regulations with Section 1, the second sentence of Section 91 and Section 109 of the Constitution of the Republic of Latvia, by which the contested paragraph 2 of the Cabinet Regulation No. 1605 insofar as it determines the amount of the state social security benefit for unemployed persons with disabilities and seniors does not comply with the Constitution and is invalid from 1 January 2021.²⁷

The Constitutional Court concluded that the Cabinet had permitted equal treatment to groups of persons in different circumstances - employed and unemployed persons with disabilities who receive the state social security benefit; for years the amount of such benefit has been determined depending on the possibilities of the state budget without assessing the economic situation in the country and without taking into account the average actual consumer price index determined by the Central Statistical Bureau. The Constitutional Court also concluded that Latvia did not have a comprehensive assessment on the compliance of state and local government support measures available to unemployed persons with disabilities to ensure equal opportunities and legal freedoms for these persons, including the extent to which these persons can satisfy their basic needs. In Latvia a comprehensive social security standard for persons with disabilities has not been developed, criteria have not been elaborated to allow for an objective determination of the amount of the benefit, which, in conjunction with other social security system measures, would ensure that the recipient's basic needs are met and allow a life that corresponds to human dignity.

For the implementation of the Constitutional Court judgment, the Minister for Welfare decided to move forward a proposal for viewing in the government, where higher amounts are set for the thresholds provided on behalf of the state, i.e. for age and disability pensions – EUR 163 or 30 % of the median income, for persons with disabilities since childhood – EUR 191 or 35 % of the median. In the light of the judgment of the Constitutional Court, different minimum income thresholds will be offered to employed persons with disabilities and non-working persons with disabilities

²⁶ Cabinet Order No. 408 'On Plan for Improvement of Minimum Income Support System for 2020-2021', 2019. Riga: Cabinet of Ministers. Available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/308914-par-planu-minimalo-ienakumu-atbalsta-sistemas-pilnveidosanai-2020-2021-gadam>.

²⁷ Constitutional Court of the Republic of Latvia. The judgment of 9 July 2020 in Case 2019-27-03. Available at: https://www.satv.tiesa.gov.lv/web/viewer.html?file=/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/2019-27-03_Spriedums-1.pdf#search=.

who receive the state social security benefit.²⁸ The solution depends on the political agreement in the Cabinet and the Saeima.

The number of recipients of social services is collected in the LabIS system, which is not publicly available. Data on long-term care recipients (collected in annual statistical reports) indicates that number of registered persons with disabilities in long-term social care and rehabilitation both in state and local government institutions is increasing (More detailed in Table 20). There are no improvements in social services (diversity of services, availability). The available funding remains at the level of previous years, except for assistant services and financing for the provision of technical aids (see Table 21). In 2019 an assistant service was introduced in higher education institutions, but it is funded not in the field of education and is compared to the services of assistants provided in the municipality.

There are no significant improvements in access to services for persons with disabilities in the health-care system. At the top of the policy priority is the issue of increases in the remuneration of medical practitioners. An agreement on the development of insurance systems and one basket of services was reached in 2019, withdrawing the introduction of 'two baskets' of health services initially planned. By 2021 health-care services are provided to all citizens on a uniform basis.²⁹ Health services are not available to many persons because of costs and queues. Persons choose to wait, thereby increasing the likelihood that the disease is not diagnosed and neglected (more detailed in Table 22), which leads to disability. Disability has been determined for the first time to persons with diseases (malignancies, circulatory system diseases, musculoskeletal, muscle and connective tissue diseases, psychological and behavioural disorders, more detailed in Table 23) which are treatable on condition that healthcare services are available on time as close as possible to the patient's place of residence. Medical rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities are available to a limited extent, as determined by the state-funding granted (e.g., for a person with a very severe disability the State pays ten physiotherapy lessons, in exceptional cases 20 sessions per year). Information on the number of persons receiving state-funded rehabilitation services, their number and the number of persons receiving services is not publicly available.

Summary: social security measures (social security, state social benefits, social services) and health services do not provide basic needs and human dignity for persons with disabilities. For long, the State has discriminated non-working persons with disability who receive the state social security benefit. Poverty risks for persons with disabilities remain high.

Recommendations:

²⁸ The Ministry of Welfare proposes to set the GMI at EUR 109 and at the same time significantly raise the threshold for minimum old-age and disability pensions, Ministry of Welfare. For press. Available at: <http://lm.gov.lv/lv/aktuali/presei/91903-labklajibas-ministrija-rosina-gmi-noteikt-109-eiro-apmera-un-vienlaikus-ieverojami-palieldinat-slieksni-minimalajam-vecuma-un-invaliditates-pensijam>.

²⁹ Accomplished tasks in the healthcare sector during the first year of Arturs Krišjānis Kariņš' government. Ministry of Health. Available at: https://www.vm.gov.lv/lv/nozare/paveiktais_valdibas_pirmaja_gada/.

- Increase social support (state social benefits, disability pensions) for the provision of basic needs and dignified life of persons with disabilities. Develop a social security standard.
- Ensure access to healthcare and community-based social services as close as possible to persons' place of residence.

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

In 2017, the UN CRPD Committee made the following recommendations to Latvia:

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

‘41. Recalling its general comment No. 4 (2016) on the right to inclusive education and Sustainable Development Goal 4, especially targets 4.5 and 4 (a) thereof, the Committee urges the State party to ensure that no child is refused admission to mainstream schools on the basis of disability, and that it further allocate the resources necessary to guarantee reasonable accommodation to facilitate the accessibility of all students with disabilities to quality, inclusive education, including in preschool, tertiary and lifelong learning institutions.’

Under action line ‘Education’ of the Guidelines for the Implementation of the UN CRPD in 2014 – 2020 the following target was determined: ‘Promoting the inclusion of children with disabilities in all levels and forms of education according to the abilities of a person with a disability’. Performance indicators planned: the number of persons with disabilities in general education institutions is increasing from 22 % in 2011 to 50 % in 2017 and increasing in 2020, while the number of special education institutions from 61 in 2011 will decrease to 50 in 2017 and will decrease in 2020.³⁰

The measures set out in the implementation plan of these guidelines for the period 2018-2020 (ensuring effective inclusion of children with disabilities in general education schools, assessing the effectiveness of the network of special education institutions performing an educational function and ensuring the right of children with special needs to quality education, ensuring the availability of support staff in educational establishments)³¹ are in line with the measures included under action line 1.4. ‘Implementation of inclusive education principle and reduction of social exclusion risk’ of Education Development Guidelines for the period 2014-2020.³²

Education Development Guidelines for 2021-2027 is currently under development which set out four objectives: educators and academic staff is high-skilled, skilled and excellence-oriented; education supply is modern, high-quality and oriented towards the development of skills highly appreciated in the labour market; support for the growth of everyone and management of education systems and resources is

³⁰ Cabinet Order No. 564 ‘On the Guidelines for the Implementation of the UN CRPD in 2014 – 2020’, 2013. Riga: Cabinet of Ministers. Available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/262238-par-apvienoto-naciju-organizācijas-konvencijas-par-personu-ar-invaliditāti-tiesībām-istenošanas-pamatnostādņu-2014-2020-gadam>.
http://www.lm.gov.lv/upload/2013junijs/lmpamn_040613_inv.pdf.

³¹ Cabinet Order No. 672 ‘On the Implementation Plan for the period 2018-2020 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Implementation Guidelines for 2014-2020’, 2018. Riga: Cabinet of Ministers. Available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/303670-par-apvienoto-naciju-organizācijas-konvencijas-par-personu-ar-invaliditāti-tiesībām-istenošanas-pamatnostādņu-2014-2020>.

³² On the Approval of the Education Development Guidelines for the period 2014-2020, 2014. Riga: Saeima. Available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/266406-par-izglītības-attīstības-pamatnostādņu-20142020gadam-apstiprināšanu>.

sustainable and efficient. In the framework of Objective 3 'Support for the growth of everyone' it is planned to provide high-quality special education and to ensure inclusive education access at all levels of education.³³ Education issues for persons with disabilities are not viewed separately; the mainstreaming principle is applied in the paper.

5.1 Summary of the educational situation of persons with disabilities

Caution is needed when interpreting estimates of early school leaving and tertiary educational attainment derived from small samples in EU-SILC, although these tend to indicate average rates around the EU average (Table 24-25), and consistently over time.

In Latvia general and statistical data on persons with disabilities are not publicly available in the field of education. There are data available for learners with special educational needs, which also includes data on children with no determining disability (e.g., children with emotional or behavioural difficulties).³⁴

In the 2018/2019 academic year, there were a total of 54 special educational institutions in Latvia, in which 5,708 students were trained (627 students undertook special basic education and 81 students undertook special secondary education). Forty-seven general education institutions have open special classes in which 1,475 learners acquired basic education.

The number of students with special needs who were integrated into general education institutions (in total 369 institutions) and acquired special education programmes was 4,989. There were 748 students with special needs trained in vocational education institutions in the 2018/2009 academic year.³⁵

5.2 Analysis of education policies relevant to the Semester

Overall, the results planned under action line 'Education' of the Guidelines for the Implementation of the UN CRPD in 2014-2020 have not been achieved.

There were 54 special education institutions in the 2018/2019 academic year. The number of integrated learners in special classes in general education institutions has increased by 46 learners in the 2015/2016 academic year, while the number of students in special schools has decreased by 122. On average there are 5.7 thousand students in special schools and 1.4 thousand in special classes of general schools. The proportion of students with special needs integrated into general education schools against the total number of students with special needs in the 2017/2018

³³ Education Development Guidelines 2021-2027. Draft version 16.07.2020. Ministry of Education and Science. Available at:

https://www.izm.gov.lv/images/IAP2027_projekta_versija_apspriesana_16072020.pdf.

³⁴ See also, the European Agency's Statistics on Inclusive Education (EASIE), concerning the population of enrolled students identified with special educational needs <https://www.european-agency.org/data/data-tables-background-information>.

³⁵ Education Development Guidelines 2021-2027. Draft version 16.07.2020. Ministry of Education and Science. Available at: https://www.izm.gov.lv/images/IAP2027_projekta_versija_apspriesana_16072020.pdf.

academic year was 42.14 % (increased by 3.42 % from the 2015./2016.academic year). However, this indicator, including the number of students in general education institutions in special classes, is 54.09 % (an increase, respectively, is 3.3 %) (in more detail see Tables 26-28).

Data on early leaving for students with disabilities are not publicly available. According to data from the Central Statistical Bureau, in 2019 training following the completion of basic schools was not continued by 6.6 % of learners, which was 2.1 points higher compared to 2015. Non-continuation after completion of secondary school training was 31 %, which compared to 2015 was 1.8 points less (see Table 29). According to the Ministry of Education and Science, the proportion of early school leavers is significantly different in cities and rural areas. In 2018, the share of school leavers in cities was 6.2 %, while in rural areas 13.4 %. This trend is stable and also negatively impacts on the future participation of citizens in lifelong learning activities. However, as indicated above, there are no data on persons with disabilities.

An increase of remuneration for teachers is one of the main priorities in the field of education. By 1 September 2022, it is planned to reach EUR 900 for the lowest wage rate. In 2018 the reforms to improve an educational content and teacher pay, as well as to increase the attractiveness of the teaching profession and the development of inclusive education were ongoing, the guidelines for new pre-primary education and the new basic education standard have been developed and approved by the government,³⁶ Cabinet Regulations regarding the support of the European Social Fund (ESF) for the development of digital learning resources for the introduction of a new learning content have been adopted.³⁷ In 2020 by reallocating funding under the European Union's Structural Funds Programme additional funding of more than EUR 7.4 million was assigned to create a single online learning environment and introduce digital learning and methodological tools and to introduce the capacity-based content for general education.³⁸

From 1 September 2020, it is planned to launch four special education programmes in general education institutions.

In 2020 Saeima approved an administratively territorial reform which aims to reduce the number of municipalities from 119 to 42 by July 2021. This reform may affect the number of educational institutions, including 49 municipal special schools which provide boarding-school services. Given that the Law on Administrative Territories and

³⁶ *Annual Report 2018* of the Ministry of Education and Science, 2019. Riga: Ministry of Education and Science. Available at:

https://izm.gov.lv/images/parskati/2018_PARSKATS_SEPTEMBRIS.pdf.

³⁷ Cabinet Regulations No. 677 'On implementing rules for the first round of project applications of 'Operational programme 'Growth and employment' 8.3.1. specific objective 'Developing competence-based universal education content' 8.3.1.2. measure 'Development of digital learning and methodological tools', 2018. Riga: Cabinet of Ministers. Available at:

<https://likumi.lv/ta/id/302856-darbibas-programmas-izaugsmes-un-nodarbinatiba-8-3-1-specifiska-atbalsta-merka-attistit-kompetencu-pieejas-balstisu-visparejas>.

³⁸ EU funding substantially increased for the development and implementation of digital learning content. Actualities. 18 August 2020. Ministry of Education and Science. Available at:

<https://izm.gov.lv/lv/aktualitates/4233-butiski-palieldina-es-fondu-finansejumu-digitala-macibusatura-izstradei-un-ieviesanai>.

Populated Areas³⁹ entered into force on 23 June 2020, it needs time to make an impact assessment.

The unavailability of vocational education for children and young persons with disabilities⁴⁰ is reduced by the possibility of receiving vocational rehabilitation services from the Social Integration State Agency (under the Ministry of Welfare) Jurmala Vocational Secondary School and College. Before the acquisition of vocational education (basic, initial, secondary, in-service training and further education programs) or a first-level higher vocational education programme persons with disability shall be determined for vocational suitability. Between 2016 and 2018, the number of children with disabilities (up to 18 years of age), who have tested for vocational suitability, has increased from 13 to 30 or by 131 %, the number of young persons with disabilities aged 19 to 24 years has increased from 42 to 62 or by 48 %, while in the age group 25-29 years the number has increased from 33 to 44 persons or 33 % (see Table 30). Also, young persons can obtain vocational training by registering with PES as an unemployed person or a job seeker.

To promote the possibility to acquire higher education for persons with disabilities, within the framework of Implementation Plan for 2018-2020 of the Guidelines for the Implementation of the UN CRPD in 2014-2020, there has been introduced an assistant service from 1 September 2019. (see Chapter 4.2.).

Summary: Few data are available in Latvia on the number of persons with disabilities in educational institutions. The number of special schools is relatively high, the inclusion of children with disabilities (which is part of children with special needs) in general education institutions is slow. The provision of vocational education must be within the competence of the Ministry of Education and Science. On the impact of inclusive four special education programs, as well as of the administratively territorial reform, it is too early to judge.

Recommendations:

- Create a database on persons with disabilities at every stage of education (starting with pre-school and ending with lifelong learning).
- Ensure a more active transition to inclusive education by reducing the number of special education institutions (especially special schools providing boarding-school services), provide adequate personalised and technical resources.
- Ensure the acquisition of vocational training in general vocational schools for children and young persons with disabilities. Provision and accessibility of lifelong learning programmes adapted for persons with disabilities.

³⁹ Law on Administrative Territories and Populated Areas. 2020. Riga: Saeima. Available at: <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/315654-administrativo-teritoriju-un-apdzivoto-vietu-likums>.

⁴⁰ As mentioned in the chapter 5.1, there were 748 students with special needs trained in vocational education institutions in the 2018/2009 academic year.

6 Investment priorities in relation to disability

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

Structural funds of the European Union are implemented in all areas identified in this report. Concerning persons with disabilities, the most important are the following:

- in the field of employment - subsidised jobs for disadvantaged unemployed persons, integration of persons with disabilities or mental disorders in employment and society; and social entrepreneurship;
- in the field of disability, social policies and health-care - social work development in local governments, assistive technologies (two projects), complex health promotion and disease prevention measures, improving the accessibility of quality health-care services, in particular for persons at risk of social, territorial exclusion and poverty, developing health care infrastructure and projects for deinstitutionalisation process;
- in the field of education - support for the development of individual competencies of students.

Publicly available data on progress in project implementation indicate that the invested funding is between 14 %⁴¹ and 69 %, ⁴² while performance rates have been reached between 2 %⁴³ and 121 %.⁴⁴ In some projects, support for the target group has not yet been launched or the performance is planned at the end of the project (more detailed information in Table 31).

In the context of deinstitutionalisation (DI), the Ministry of Welfare implements several projects both by developing community-based services and by developing infrastructure for the provision of services, by developing and improving the qualifications and skills of social workers, as well as by financing community-based services. The main target groups are children with functional disorders, persons with mental disorders and persons in state specialized social care centres who can return to their municipalities. The funding spent and the performance indicators achieved for the various projects vary, but progress is made, and projects are expected to be implemented by the end of 2023. The development of a community-based service infrastructure could be affected to some extent by the ongoing administratively territorial reform, which is intended to reduce the number of municipalities. Consequently, local governments are not aware of the availability of the necessary funding in the future.

Project implementers (Ministry of Welfare) understand the goal of the DI process (closure of three state social and rehabilitation centres/branches, reduction of customers, etc.). On the other hand, parents of children with disabilities and parents/relatives of persons with mental disorders believe that the main objective of

⁴¹ Measure 9.2.2.1. Deinstitutionalisation.

⁴² Measure 9.1.4.1. Integration of persons with disabilities or mental disorders into employment and society.

⁴³ Measure 9.3.1.1. Development of service infrastructure for the implementation of deinstitutionalisation plans.

⁴⁴ Measure 9.2.2.1. Deinstitutionalisation.

the DI process is to provide services to two target groups (children with disabilities and persons with mental disorders). Given that the activities planned in the projects are more focused on setting up a community-based service system than on providing services and on limited funding for projects, the DI process is being assessed negatively. There is no clarity on the budget needed to provide services after the end of the financing of the European Structural Funds. Another issue is the process of deinstitutionalisation for seniors, as statistics from recent years indicate an increasing number of seniors and persons with disabilities in municipal social care centres (see Table 20).

6.2 Priorities for future investment (after 2020)

The priorities proposed by the European Commission for investment from the Just Transition plan 2021-2027⁴⁵ in Latvia for persons with disabilities will only be affected under the mainstreaming principle, such as investments in the creation of new firms, including through business incubators and consulting services, as well as upskilling and reskilling of workers where persons with disabilities may be involved on a general basis. Consequently, it will not be possible to assess the impact of this fund on persons with disabilities.

The most important priorities for future investment during the next programming period for improving the situation of disabled persons are relevant to CSR 1 and 2:

- availability of investment for the future development of the infrastructure of the community-based services system;
- development of community-based services, including the development of services alternative to institutional care for persons with disabilities in all age groups and the availability of adapted housing;
- access to vocational training for persons with disability;
- access to healthcare services, in particular medical rehabilitation.

These priorities correspond to two investment priorities identified by Regional Development and Cohesion Policy beyond 2020:⁴⁶ a more Social Europe, delivering on the European Pillar of Social Rights and supporting quality employment, education, skills, social inclusion and equal access to healthcare and a Europe closer to citizens, by supporting locally-led development strategies and sustainable urban development across the EU.

It would be relevant also to emphasise that the accessibility needs of persons with disabilities must be taken into account when investing in transport and broadband access (relevant to CSR3).

⁴⁵ Annex D Investment Guidance on Just Transition Fund 2021-2027 for Latvia. *Country Report Latvia 2020*. Commission Staff Working Document. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2020-european-semester-country-reports_en.

⁴⁶ Regional Development and Cohesion Policy beyond 2020: *The New Framework at a glance*. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/2021_2027/.

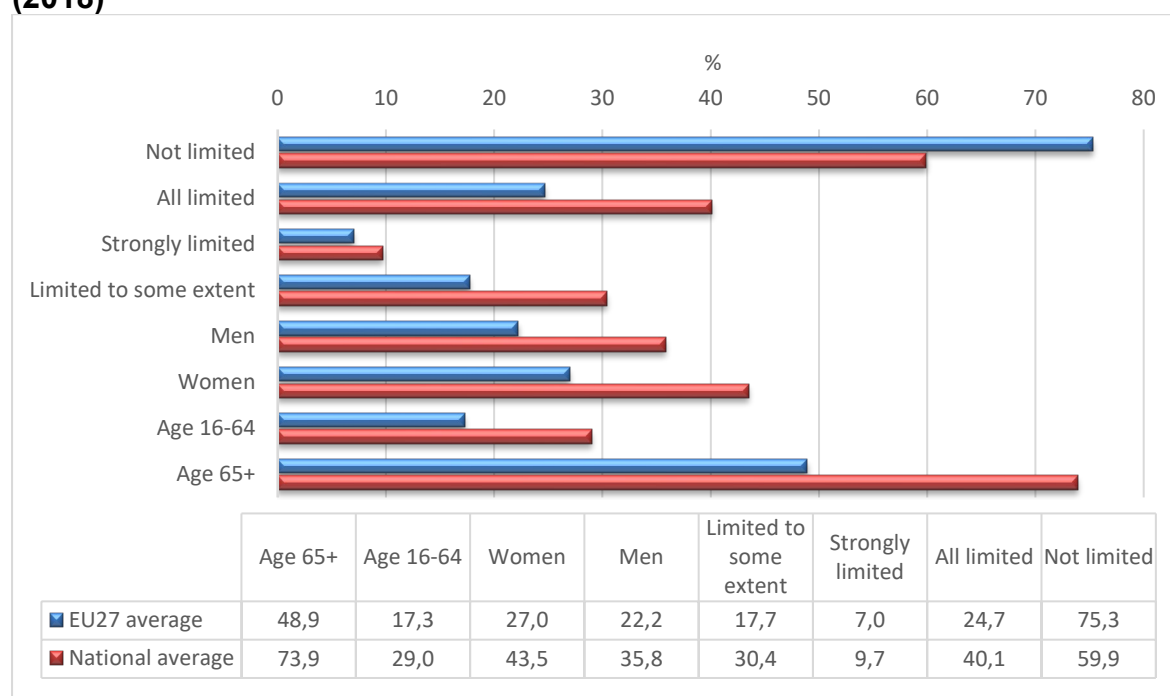
7 Annex: disability data relevant to the Semester

See also disability data published in the Eurostat database⁴⁷ and statistical reports.⁴⁸

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

The proxy used to identify persons with disabilities (impairments) is whether 'for at least the past six months' the respondent reports that they have been 'limited because of a health problem in activities persons usually do'.⁴⁹

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



Source: EU-SILC 2018 Release 2020 version 1

In subsequent tables, unless otherwise stated, 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

⁴⁷ Eurostat health Database, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/health/data/database>.

⁴⁸ Eurostat (2019) *Disability Statistics* https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Disability_statistics.

⁴⁹ 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)).

persons who report and do not report 'activity limitations'.⁵⁰ National estimates for Latvia are compared with EU27 mean averages for the most recent year.⁵¹

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

Table 2: Employment rates, by disability and gender (aged 20-64)

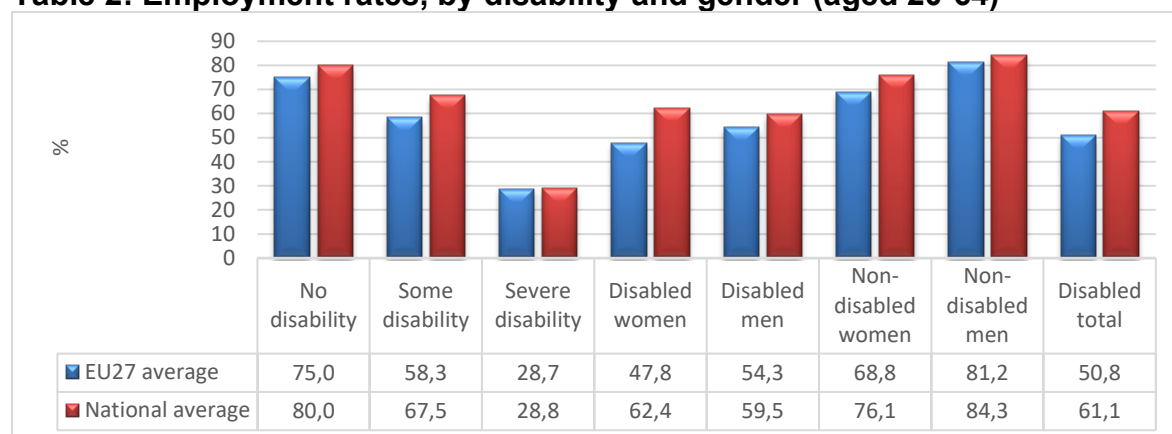
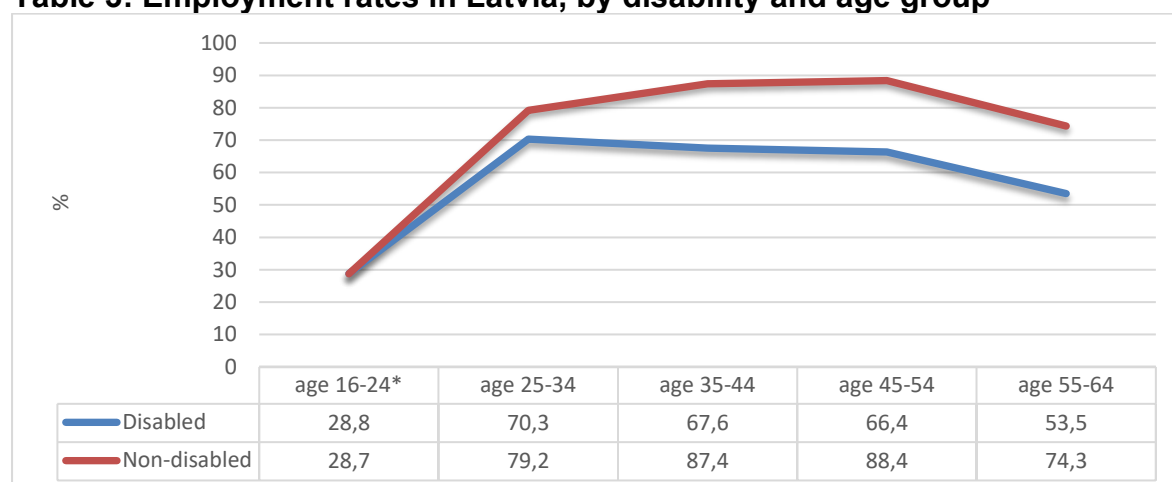
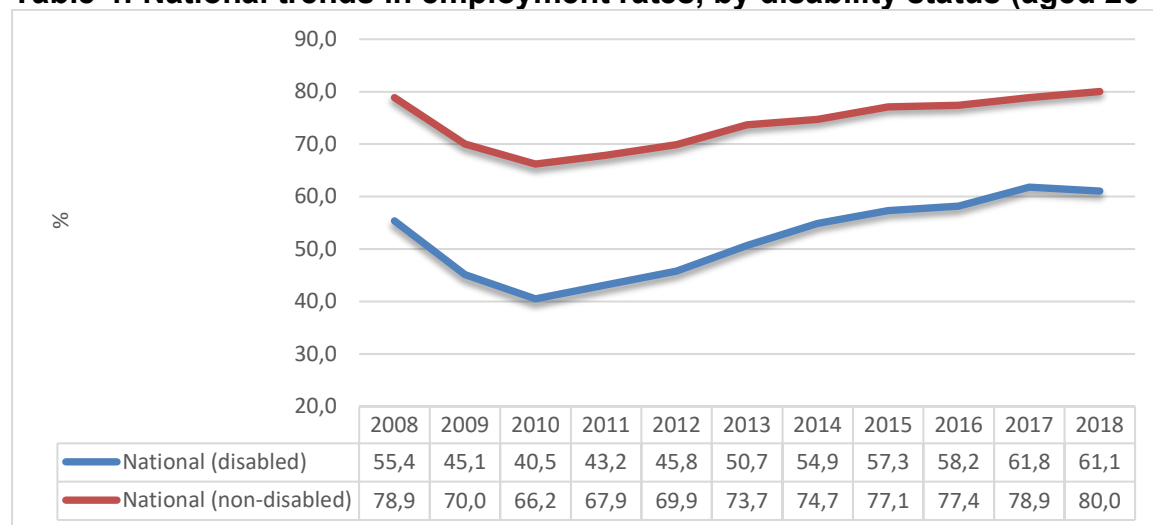


Table 3: Employment rates in Latvia, by disability and age group



⁵⁰ This methodology was developed in the annual statistical reports of ANED, available at <http://www.disability-europe.net/theme/statistical-indicators>.

⁵¹ 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.

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

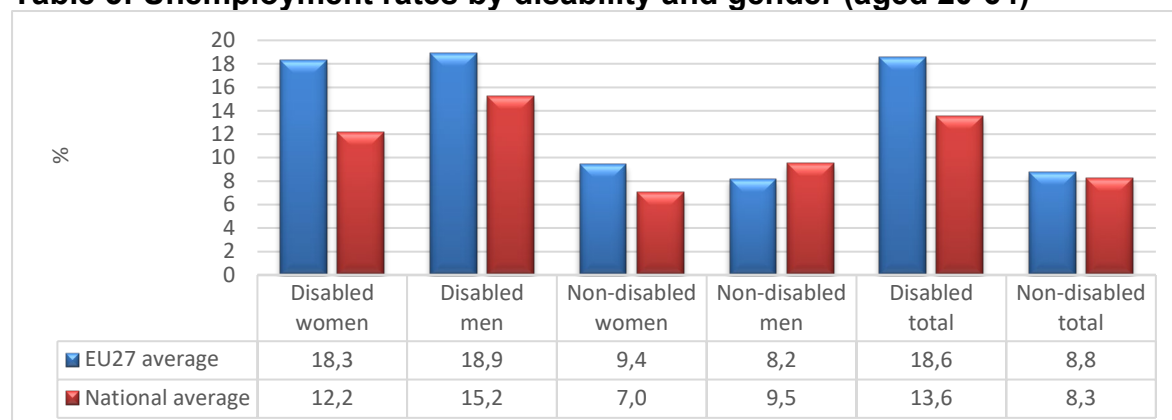
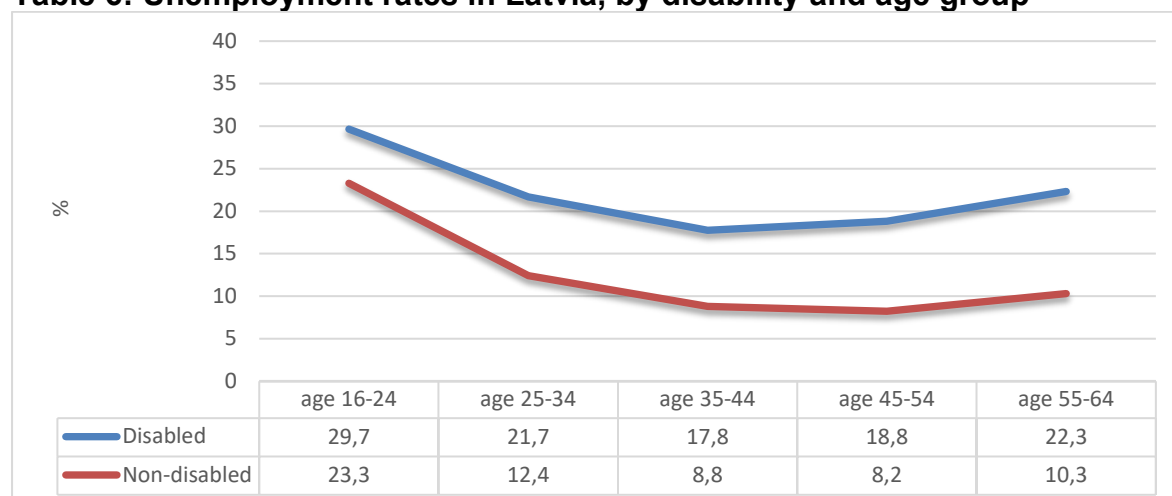
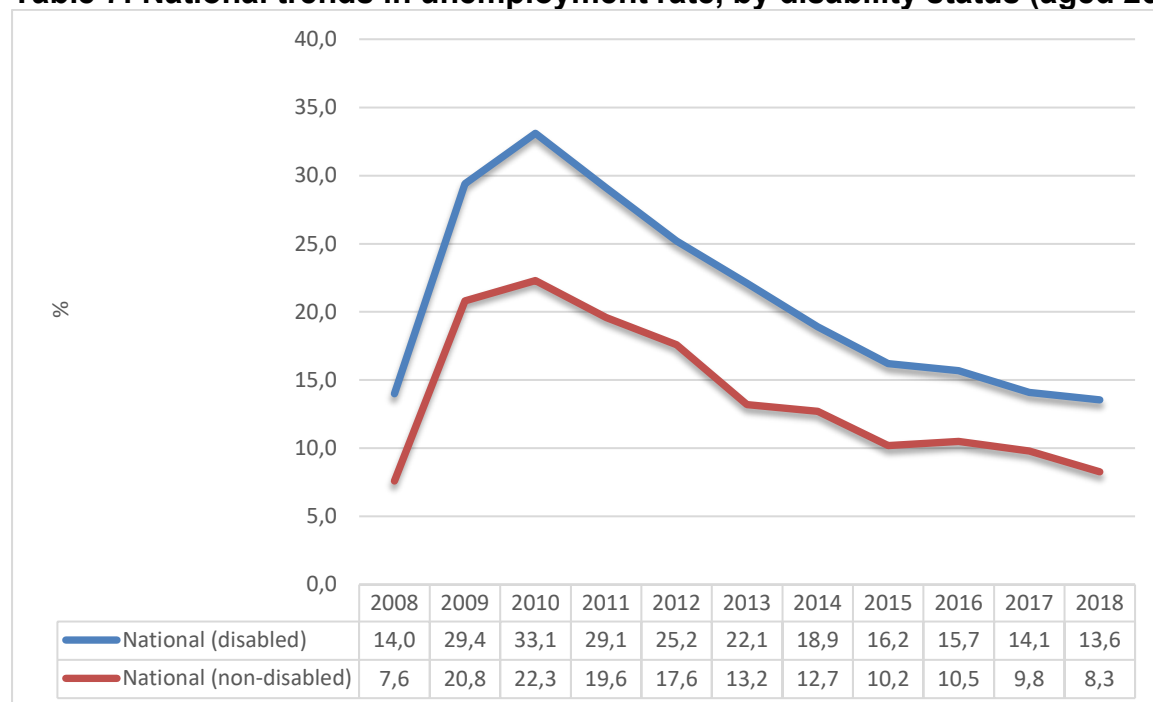
Table 5: Unemployment rates by disability and gender (aged 20-64)**Table 6: Unemployment rates in Latvia, by disability and age group**

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

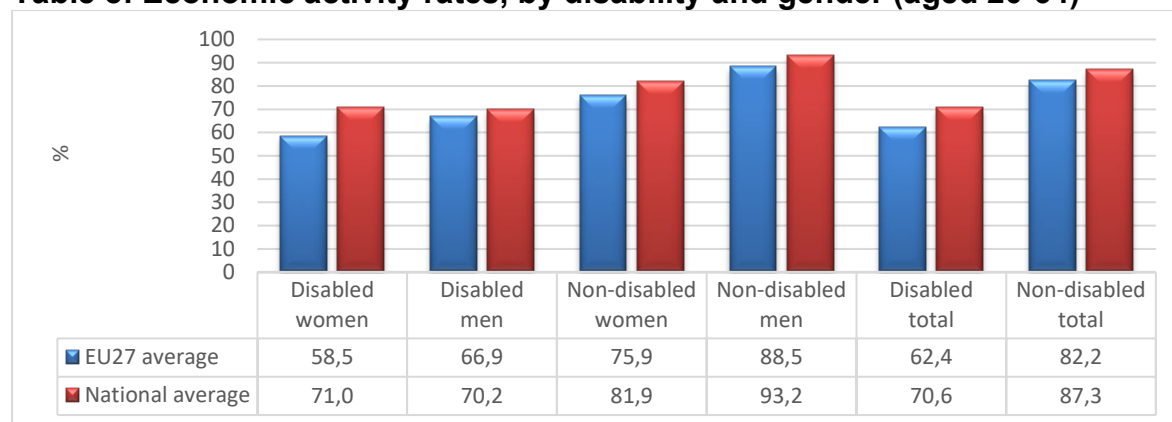
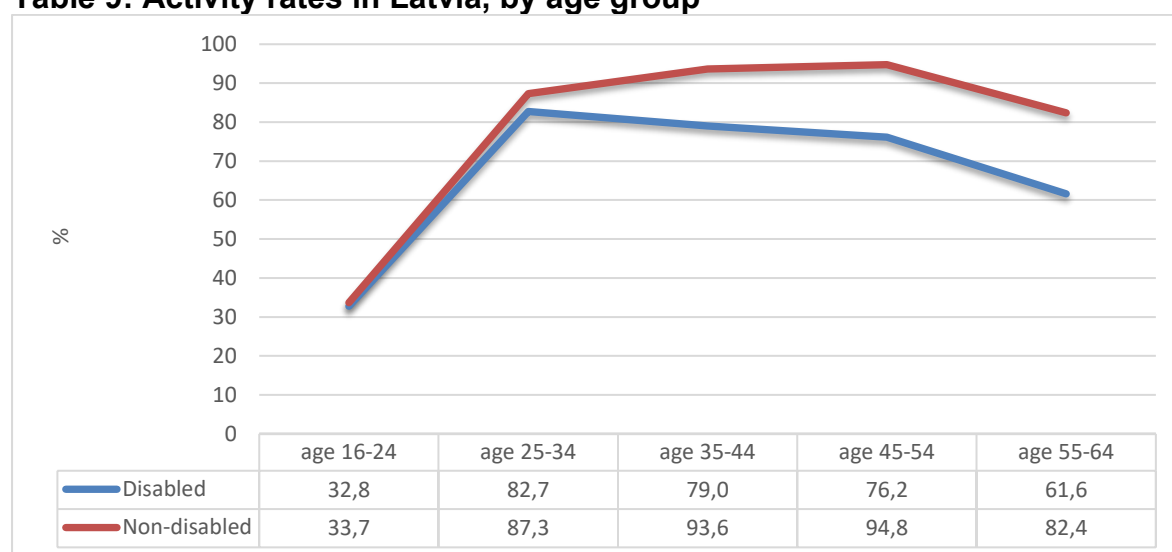
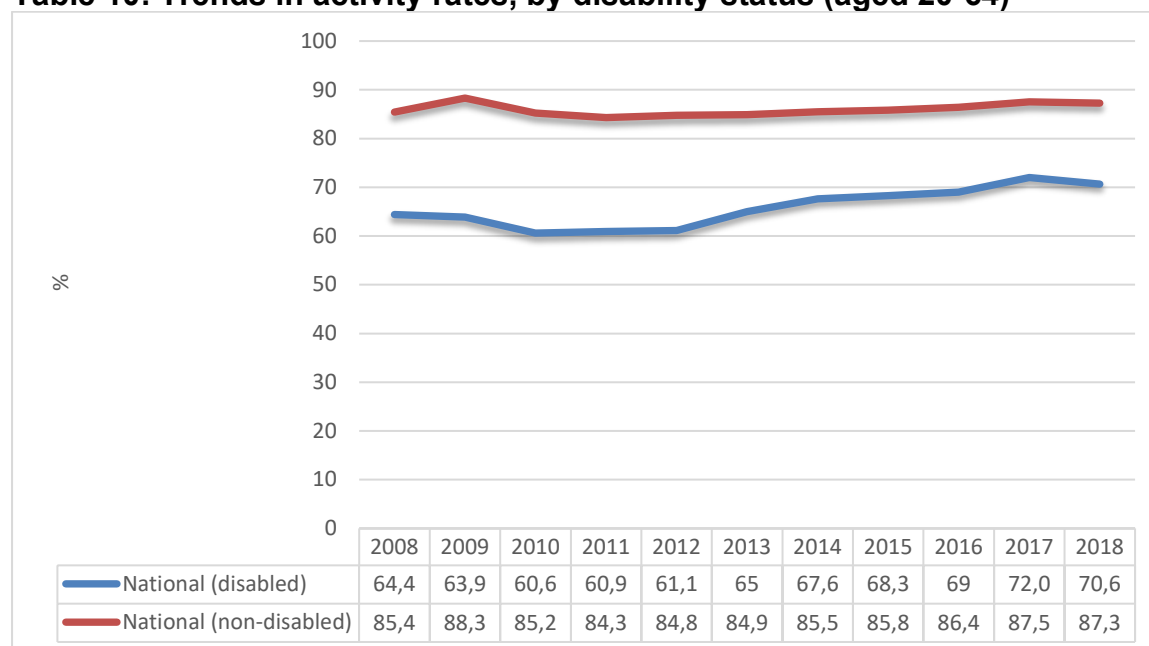
Table 8: Economic activity rates, by disability and gender (aged 20-64)

Table 9: Activity rates in Latvia, 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 Latvia

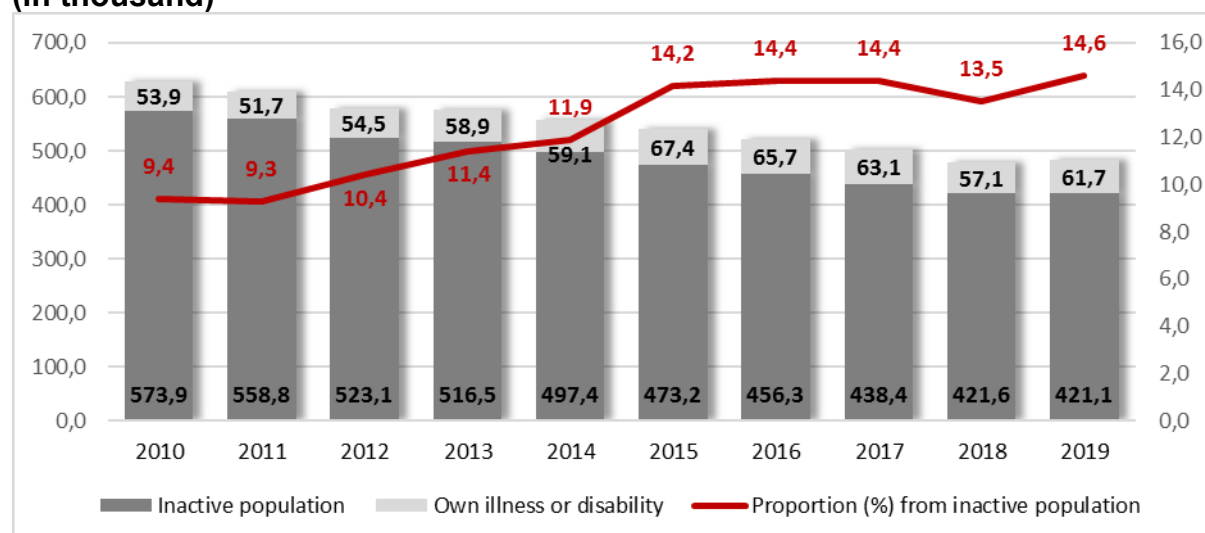
Disability data is not included in the core European Labour Force Survey but labour market indicators for Latvia were disaggregated from an ad module conducted in 2011. These can be found in the Eurostat disability database.⁵² Latvia did not participate in the European Labour Force Survey module 2002.

The Central Statistical Bureau is responsible for organising the statistical work and for the reliability of the data it produces by summarizing the information obtained from the respondents. In the National Labour Force Survey, persons have a possibility, when doing self-evaluation, to make a reference that he/she has long-term incapacity for

⁵² Eurostat Health Database, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/health/data/database>.

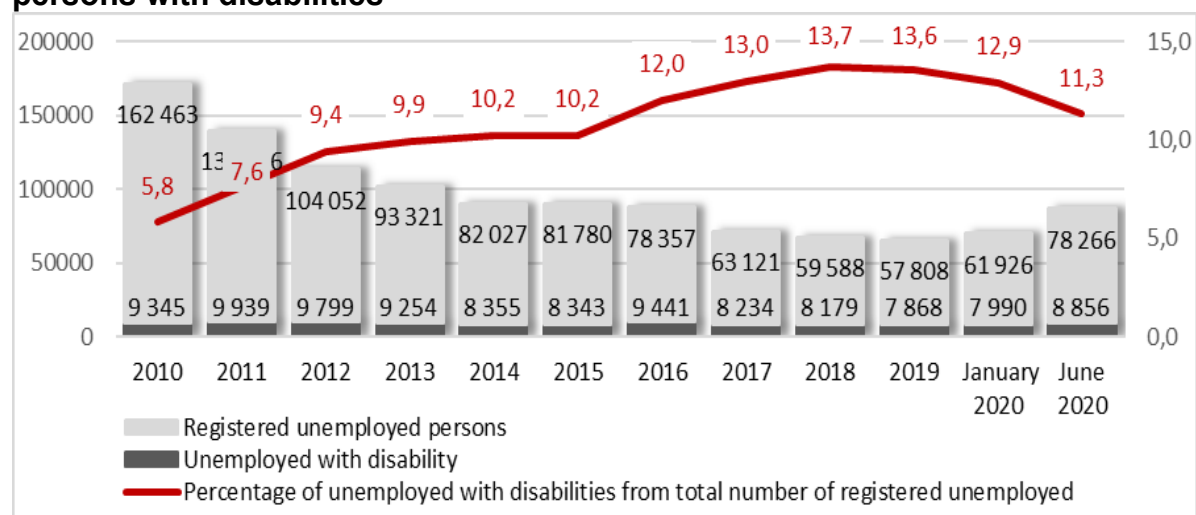
work or disability. Specific questions on disability are not included. From 2002 the survey is taken every week throughout the whole year. Data on employment and unemployment are published and are available in section E-publications. Specific questions on disability are not included.

Table 11: Inactive population by reason for not seeking employment 2010-2019 (in thousand)

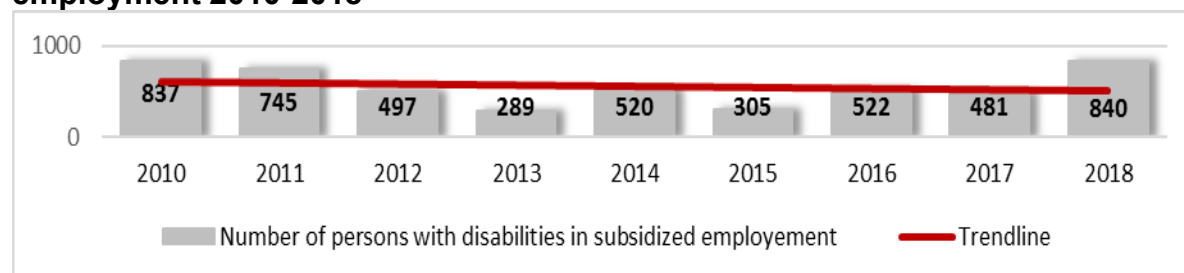


Source: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia. NBG340. Inactive population by reason for not seeking employment. Available at: http://data1.csb.gov.lv/pxweb/en/sociala/sociala_nodarb_aktivitate_ikgad/NBG340.px/table/tableViewLayout1/

Table 12: General unemployment data and data on the unemployed registered persons with disabilities



Source: Public Employment Service. The unemployment situation in the country (June). 2020. Riga: Public Employment Service. Available at: https://www.nva.gov.lv/sites/nva/files/content/270720/parskats-par-bezdarba-situaciju_junijs_2020.pdf

Table 13: Number of registered persons with disabilities in subsidized employment 2010-2018

Source: Ministry of Welfare. Social policy indicators. Available at: <http://lm.gov.lv/lv/nozares-politika/invaliditate>

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

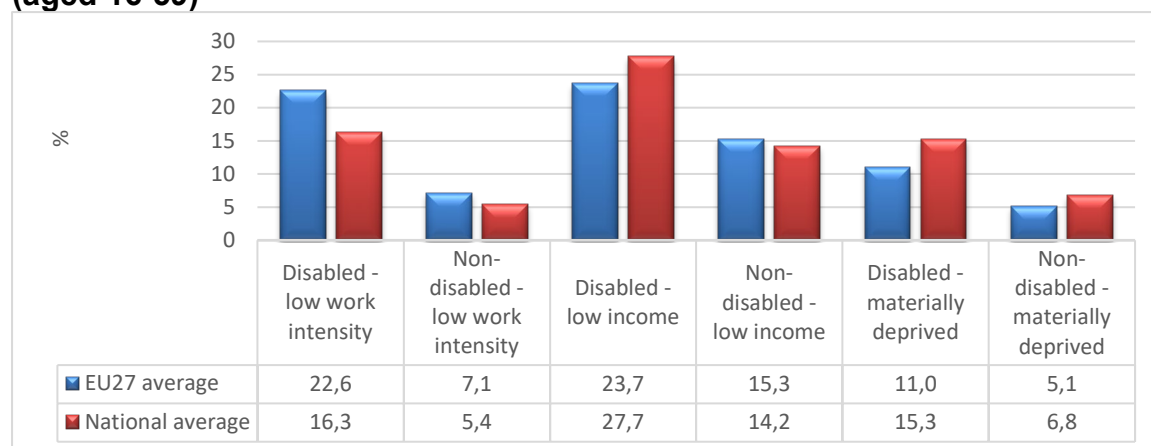
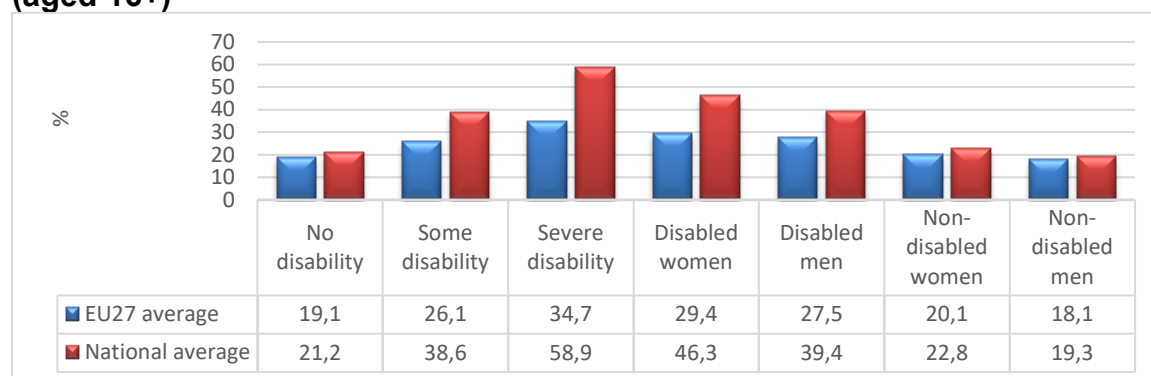
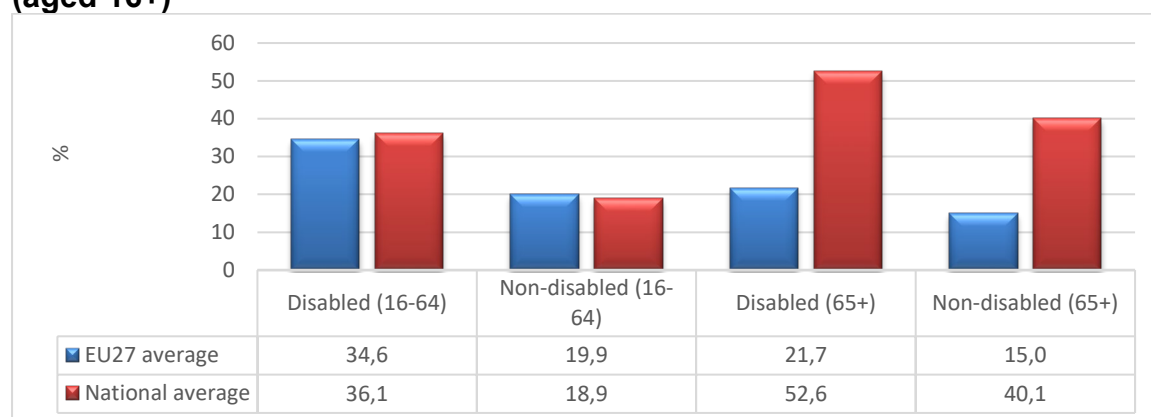
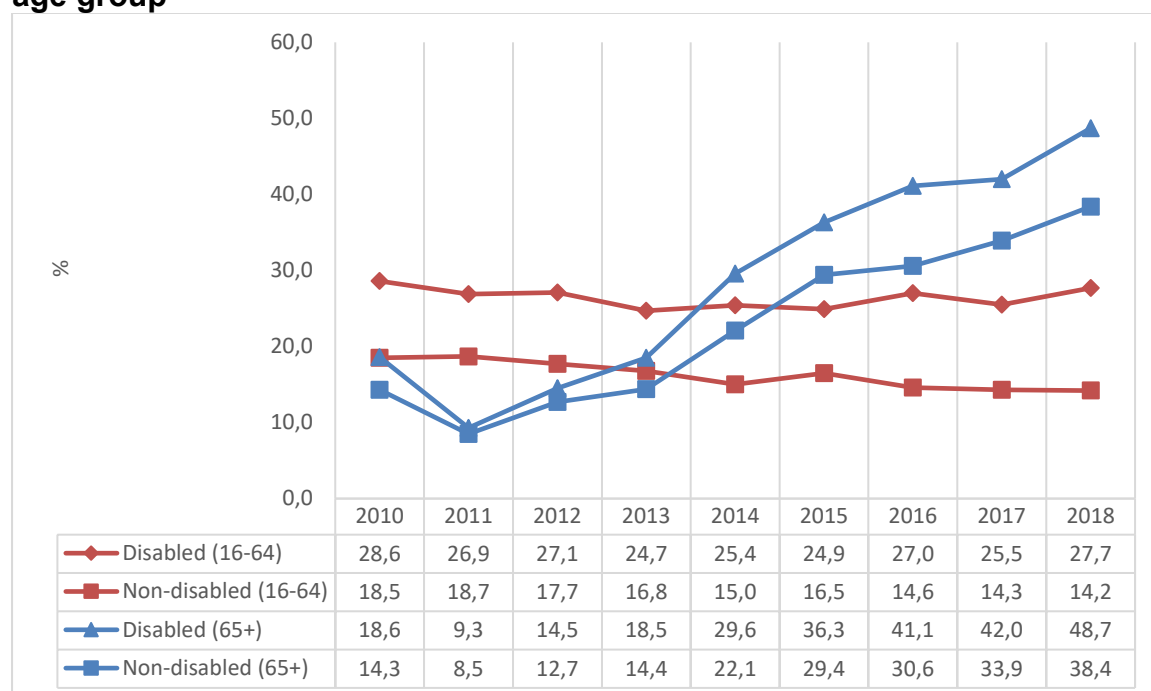
Table 14: Persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion, by disability and risk (aged 16-59)**Table 15: Persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion, by disability and gender (aged 16+)**

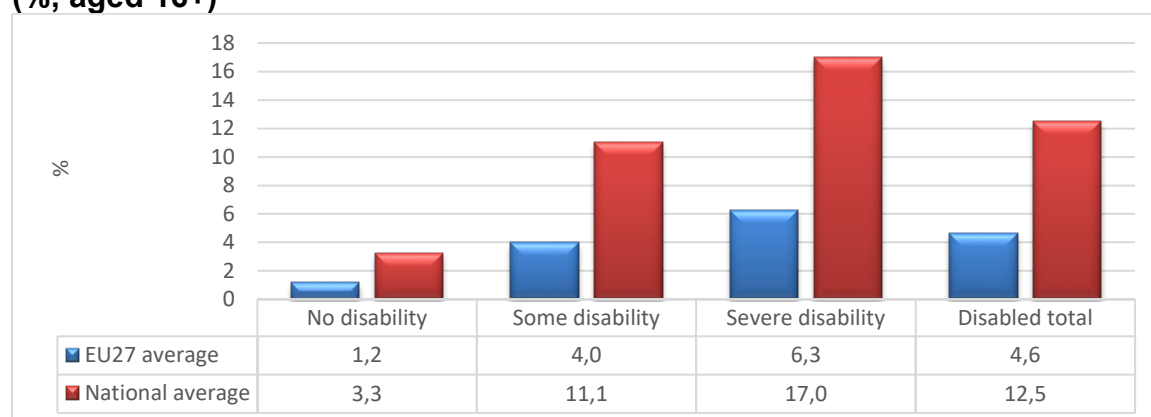
Table 16: Overall risk of household poverty or exclusion by disability and age (aged 16+)

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

Table 17: Trends in the risk of poverty after social transfers, by disability and age group

Source: Eurostat Health Database [[hlth_dpe020](#)] - Persons 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.

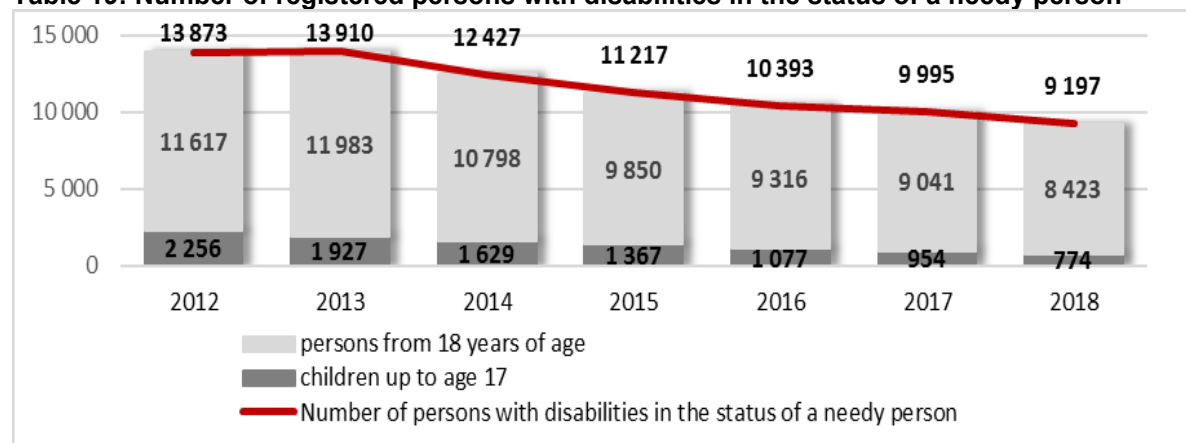
Table 18: Self-reported unmet needs for medical examination, 3-year average (% , aged 16+)

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.

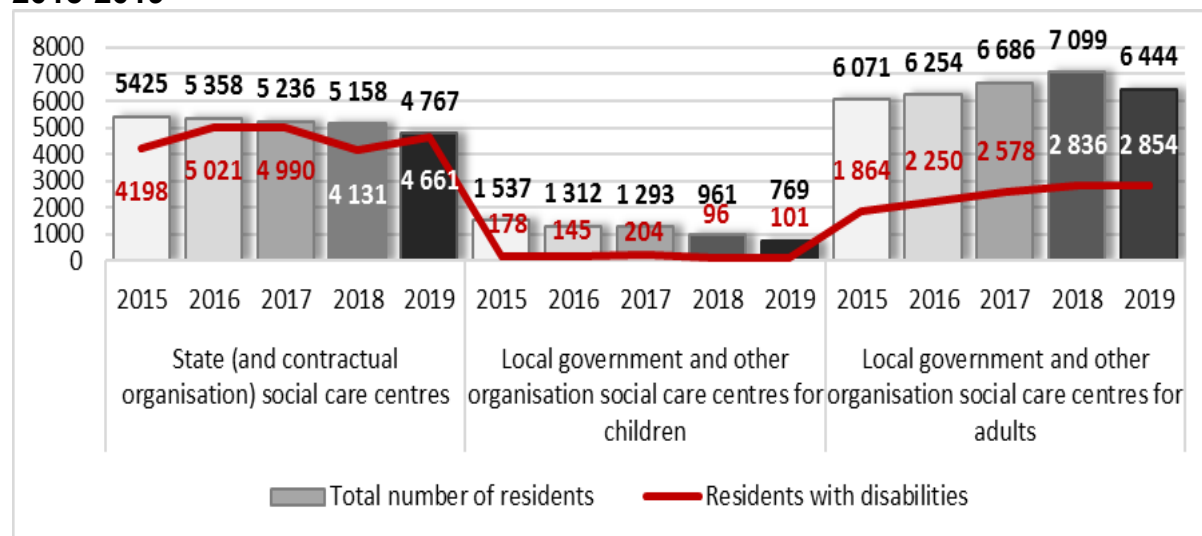
7.2.1 Alternative sources of poverty or health care data in Latvia

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.⁵³

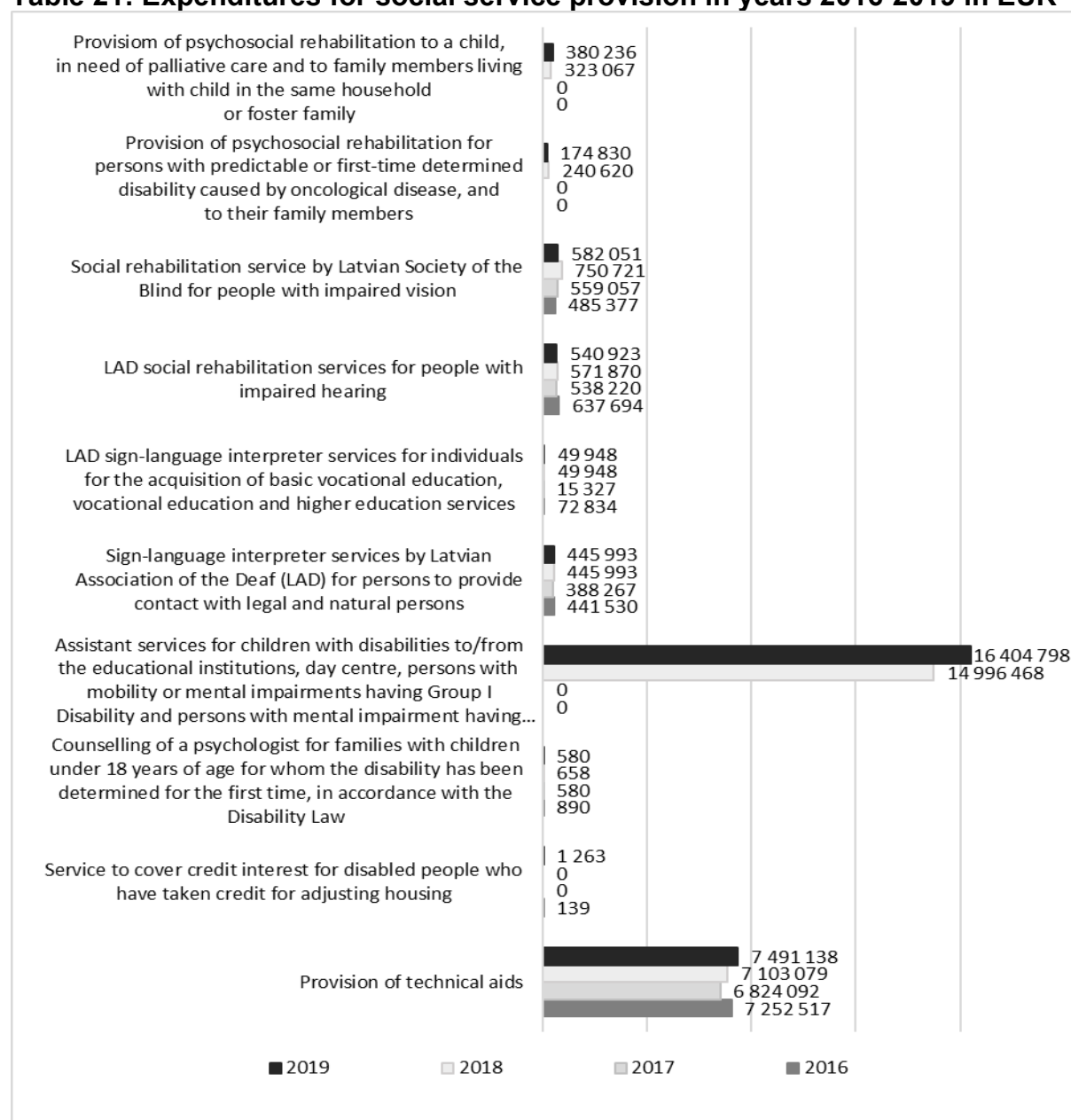
Table 19: Number of registered persons with disabilities in the status of a needy person

Source: Ministry of Welfare. Social policy indicators. Available at: <http://lm.gov.lv/lv/nozares-politika/invaliditate>

⁵³ Eurostat Health Database, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/health/data/database>.

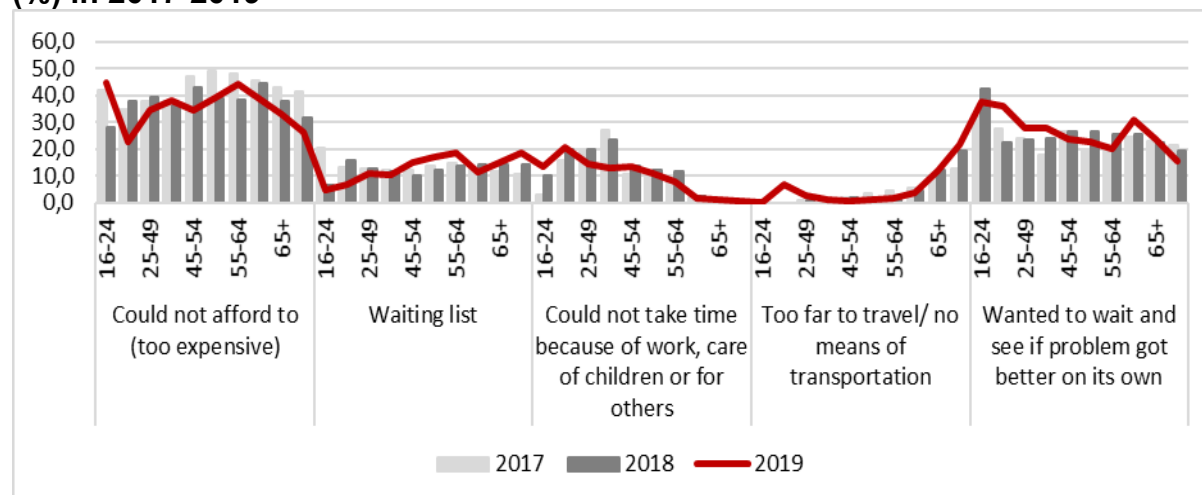
Table 20: Total number of residents and number of residents – registered persons with disabilities in long-term social care and rehabilitation institution 2015-2019

Source: Ministry of Welfare. Annual Statistical Reports on the provision of long-term social care and social rehabilitation services. Available at: <http://lm.gov.lv/lv/publikacijas-petijumi-un-statistika/statistika/valsts-statistika-socialo-pakalpojumu-un-socialas-palidzibas-joma/gada-dati>

Table 21: Expenditures for social service provision in years 2016-2019 in EUR

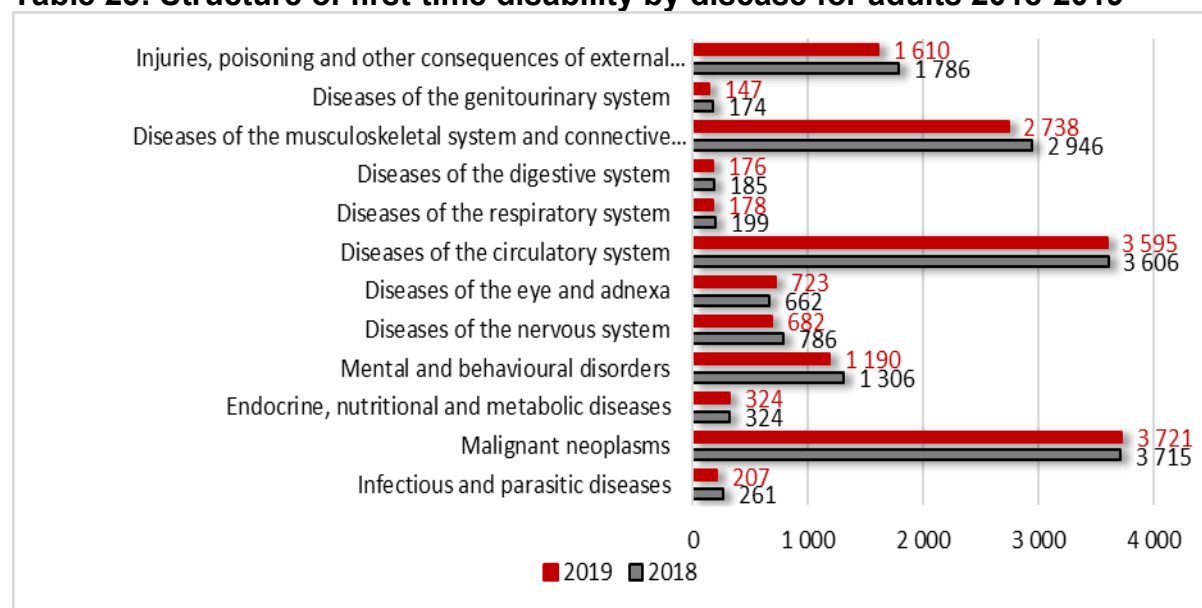
Source: Ministry of Welfare. Annual Public reports. Available at: <http://lm.gov.lv/lv/par-mums/publiskais-parskats>

Table 22: Medical examination (except dental) or treatment at health care provider and reasons for unmet need for medical care by gender and age group (%) in 2017-2019



Source: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia. VPG082. Medical examination (except dental) or treatment at health care provider and reasons for unmet need for medical care by gender and age group (%). Available at: http://data1.csb.gov.lv/pxweb/en/sociala/sociala_veseliba_vesel_pasnovert/VPG082.px/table/tableViewLayout1/

Table 23: Structure of first-time disability by disease for adults 2018-2019*



* The table includes data on disease groups with more than 100 newly diagnosed disability cases
Source: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia. VAG131. Structure of first-time disability by disease for adults. Available at: https://data.csb.gov.lv/pxweb/en/sociala/sociala_veseliba_vesel/VAG131.px

7.3 EU data relevant to disability and education

Table 24: Early school leaving rates, by disability status (aged 18-24 and 18-29)⁵⁴

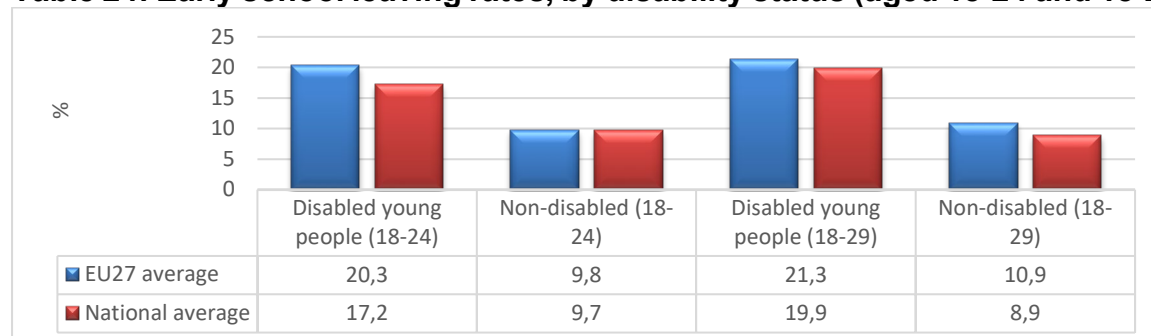
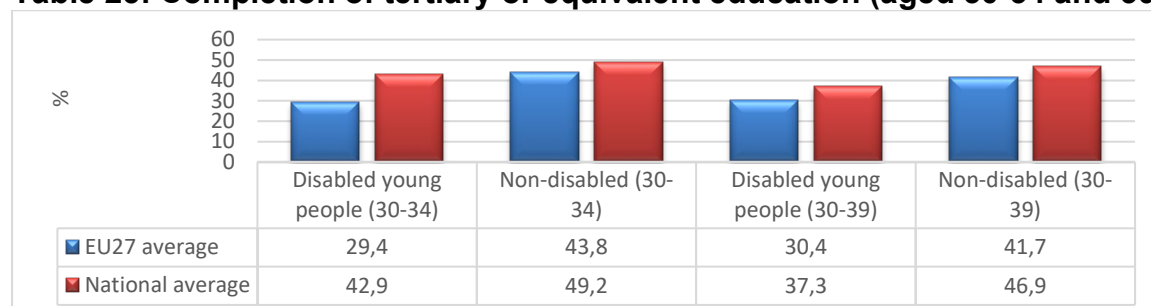


Table 25: Completion of tertiary or equivalent education (aged 30-34 and 30-39)



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.

7.3.1 Alternative sources of education data in Latvia

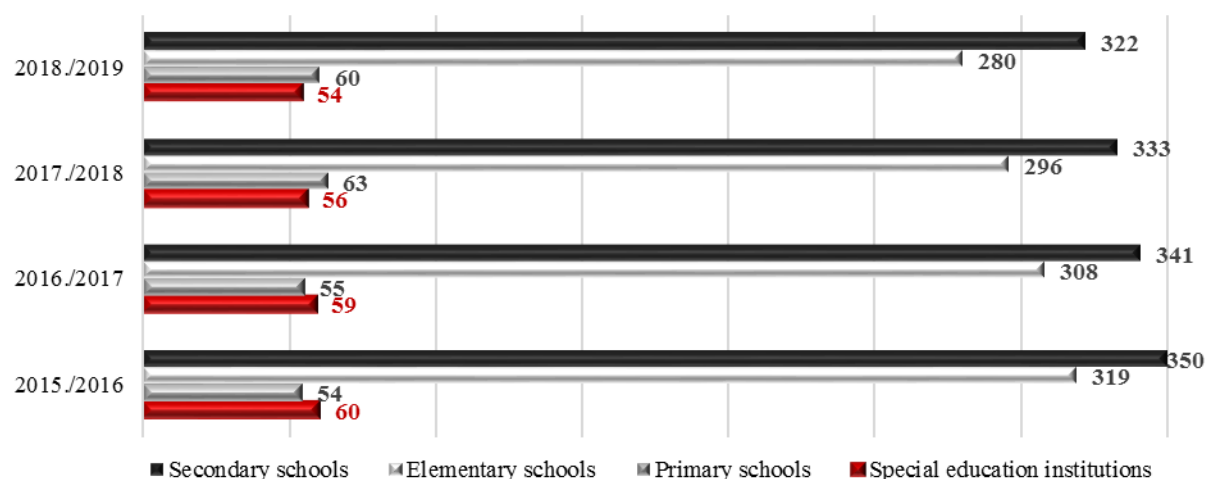
Disability data is not included in the core European Labour Force Survey but education and training indicators were disaggregated from ad hoc modules conducted in 2001 and 2011. These can be found in the Eurostat disability database.⁵⁵ Similar caution is needed with this data.

Some administrative data is also provided in the European Agency's Statistics on Inclusive Education (EASIE), concerning the population of enrolled students identified with special educational needs in Latvia.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ 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.

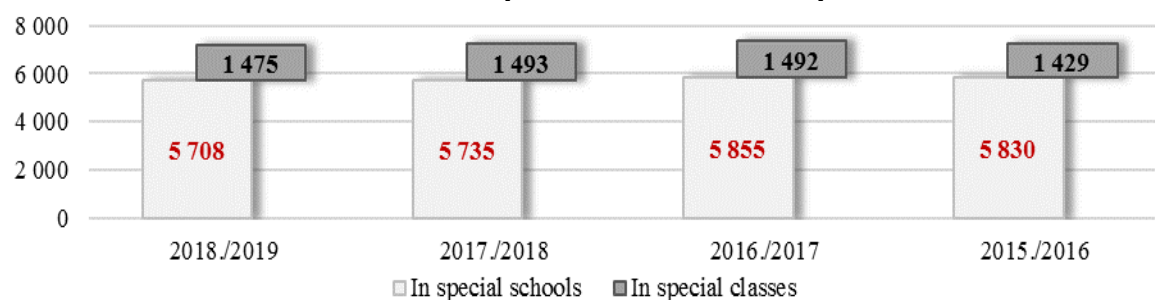
⁵⁵ Eurostat Health Database, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/health/data/database>.

⁵⁶ European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, *Statistics on Inclusive Education*, <https://www.european-agency.org/data/data-tables-background-information>.

Table 26: Number of education institutions in Latvia

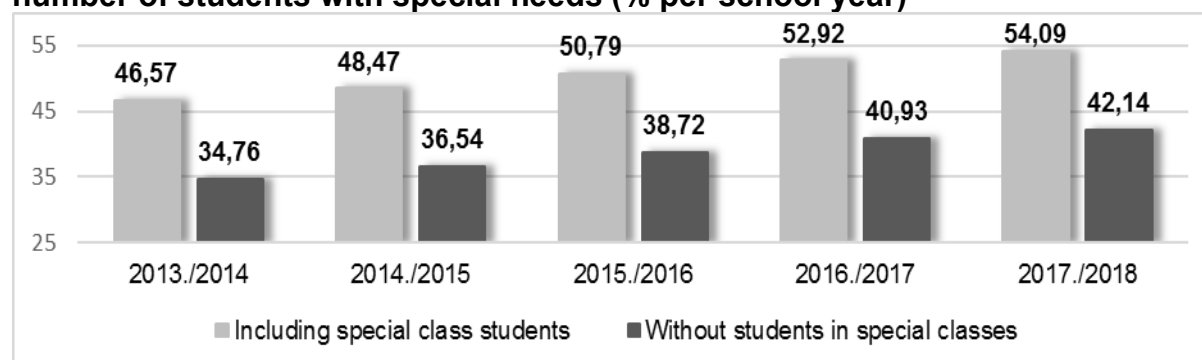
Source: Ministry of Education and Science. Official Statistics. Available at:

<https://izm.gov.lv/lv/publikacijas-un-statistika/statistika-par-izglitibu/statistika-par-visparejo-izglitibu>

Table 27: Number of students in special schools and special classes

Source: Official statistics on general education. Ministry of Education and Science. Available at:

<https://izm.gov.lv/lv/publikacijas-un-statistika/statistika-par-izglitibu/statistika-par-visparejo-izglitibu>

Table 28: Proportion of integrated students with special needs out of the total number of students with special needs (% per school year)

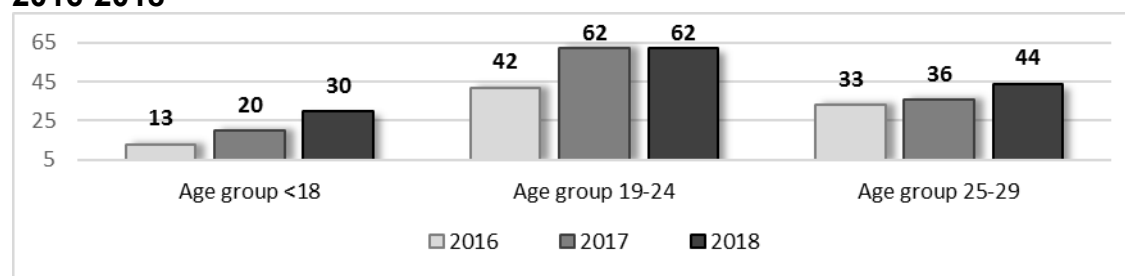
Source: Ministry of Welfare. Social policy indicators. Available at: <http://lm.gov.lv/lv/nozares-politika/invaliditate>

Table 29: Basic and secondary school graduates: continuing or discontinuing studies (%)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Basic schools graduates, total	100	100	100	100	100
..continue studies in secondary schools	63,2	61,2	61,1	60,1	58,9
..continue studies in vocational schools	32,3	34,6	35,7	34,5	34,5
..discontinue studying	4,5	4,2	3,2	5,4	6,6
Secondary schools graduates, total	100	100	100	100	100
..continue studies in higher education institutions and colleges	59,6	60,3	58,7	62,6	63,8
..continue studies in vocational schools	7,6	8,3	6,3	5,7	5,2
..discontinue studying	32,8	31,4	35,0	31,7	31,0

Source: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia. IZG180. Basic and secondary school graduates: continuing or discontinuing studies (%). Available at:

https://data.csb.gov.lv/pxweb/en/sociala/sociala_izgl_vispskolas/IZG180.px

Table 30: Number of registered persons with disabilities received service of determination of vocational suitability in the State Social Integration Agency in 2016-2018

7.4 Use of existing EU funds relevant to disability

Table 31: Important projects in the field of disability and progress in the implementation Employment

Subsidised jobs for disadvantaged unemployed (measure 9.1.1.1.) ⁵⁷			Implemented by the State Employment Agency
<i>Aim</i>	<i>Budget (EUR)</i>	<i>Implementation period</i>	<i>Progress from the beginning of the project</i>
To promote the inclusion and placement of 7371 disadvantaged unemployed persons, including the long-term unemployed.	European Social Fund - 42.4 million, state budget - 5.7 million; eligible private funding - 18.7 million	02.02.2015 – 31.12.2022	4512 subsidised jobs were created (employing 2200 men and 2312 women). After participating in the measure, 1968 persons were employed or self-employed, including 919 men and 1049 women. On 31 July 2020, the invested funding amounts to EUR 36.7 million (38 %). ⁵⁸ Directly for persons with disabilities, 1303 jobs have been created where 1537 unemployed persons with disabilities started to participate. Until 30 June 2020, 476 unemployed persons with disabilities settled into work (6 months after completion of the measure). For the creation and co-financing of jobs for unemployed persons with disabilities from the beginning of the project until 30 June 2020, the private funding invested amounts to EUR 11 208 297, incl. ESF funding EUR 9 874 510 and state budget funding EUR 1 333 787. ⁵⁹

Social entrepreneurship (measure 9.1.1.3.)			Implemented by the State Employment Agency
<i>Aim</i>	<i>Budget (EUR)</i>	<i>Implementation period</i>	<i>Progress from the beginning of the project</i>
To inform social entrepreneurs and residents of Latvia about the opportunities offered by new initiatives and social	European Social Fund - 12.6 million,	November 2015.- 31.12.2022.	Support was planned for 112 enterprises and 81 unemployed. On 31 July 2020, the invested funding amounts to EUR 4.13 million (37 %) by

⁵⁷ State Employment Agency. Projects. Subsidised jobs for the unemployed. Available at: <https://www.nva.gov.lv/lv/projekts/subsidetas-darbavietas-bezdarbniekiem>.

⁵⁸ European Union structural funds in the welfare sector. Ministry of Welfare. Available at: http://sf.lm.gov.lv/f/files/2014_2020/LM_SAM_2014-2020_to_progress_un_izaicinajumi_31072020.pdf.

⁵⁹ Data from the State Employment Agency on demand.

enterprises, their role and their potential contribution to boosting economic growth. ⁶⁰	state budget - 2.2 million		providing support to 79 (71 %) enterprises and involving 39 (48 %) unemployed. ⁶¹
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Integration of persons with disabilities or mental disorders into employment and society (measure 9.1.4.1.)			Implemented by the Social Integration State Agency
<i>Aim</i>	<i>Budget (EUR)</i>	<i>Implementation period</i>	<i>Progress from the beginning of the project</i>
To improve the vocational rehabilitation system. ⁶²	European Social Fund - 1.7 million, state budget - 0.26 million	11.04.2015 – 30.06.2021	Support was planned for 150 disadvantaged persons, 90 of whom have started seeking employment/entering education after receiving the support. On 31 July 2020, the invested funding amounted to EUR 1.2 million (69 %), providing support to 100 (67 %) disadvantaged persons of whom 57 (63 %) started seeking employment/entering education. ⁶³

Disability, social policies and healthcare

Disability determination system for children (measure 9.1.4.3.)			Implemented by the State Medical Commission for the Assessment of Health Condition and Working Ability
<i>Aim</i>	<i>Budget (EUR)</i>	<i>Implementation period</i>	<i>Progress from the beginning of the project</i>
To develop the disability determination methodology for children under 18 years of age. ⁶⁴	European Social Fund - 270.3 thousand, state budget - 47.7 thousand	IV quarter of 2016 – IV quarter of 2019	On 31 July 2020, the implementation of the project has been completed. Invested funding amounted to EUR 305 056 (100 %) providing support to 50 (100 %) disadvantaged children. ⁶⁵

⁶⁰ Ministry of Welfare. Current projects. Available at: <http://www.lm.gov.lv/lv/es-finansejums/lm-istenotie-projekti/aktualie-projekti/esf-projekts-atbalsts-socialajai-uznemejdarbibai/1-par-projektu>.

⁶¹ European Union structural funds in the welfare sector. Ministry of Welfare. Available at: http://sf.lm.gov.lv/f/files/2014_2020/LM_SAM_2014-2020_to_progress_un_izaicinajumi_31072020.pdf.

⁶² Social Integration State Agency. Projects. Available at: <http://www.siva.gov.lv/esf-2014-2020-esfGRT.html>.

⁶³ European Union structural funds in the welfare sector. Ministry of Welfare. Available at: http://sf.lm.gov.lv/f/files/2014_2020/LM_SAM_2014-2020_to_progress_un_izaicinajumi_31072020.pdf.

⁶⁴ State Medical Commission for the Assessment of Health Condition and Working Ability. EU Funds support. Available at: <http://www.vdeavk.gov.lv/es-fondu-atbalsts/eiropas-savienibas-fonda-projekts-bernu-invaliditates-noteiksanas-sistemas-pilnveide/>.

⁶⁵ European Union structural funds in the welfare sector. Ministry of Welfare. Available at: http://sf.lm.gov.lv/f/files/2014_2020/LM_SAM_2014-2020_to_progress_un_izaicinajumi_31072020.pdf.

Social work development in local governments (measure 9.2.1.1)			Implemented by the Ministry of Welfare
<i>Aim</i>	<i>Budget (EUR)</i>	<i>Implementation period</i>	<i>Progress from the beginning of the project</i>
To increase the efficiency of the work of local government social service offices and the professionalism of social work specialists employed in local governments. ⁶⁶	Total funding -9.4 million, including the funding of the European Social Fund - 8.03 million	April 2015 – December 2023	It was planned to provide support to 2000 social work specialists (supervisions and training). On 31 July 2020 invested funding amounted to EUR 2.9 million (30 %) by improving the professional competence for 1900 (95 %) social work specialists. ⁶⁷

Assistive technologies (measure 9.1.4.2.) ⁶⁸		Implemented by the state Ltd. 'National Rehabilitation Centre 'Vaivari'	
<i>Aim</i>	<i>Budget (EUR)</i>	<i>Implementation period</i>	<i>Progress from the beginning of the project</i>
To establish and implement a functioning assessment system.	European Social Fund - 947.7 thousand and state budget - 172.0 thousand	19 July 2016, duration 77 months ⁶⁹	Support planned to 3000 disadvantaged persons. On 31 July 2020 invested funding amounted to EUR 61.99 thousand (54 %). Provision of support to the target group has not yet been started. ⁷⁰

⁶⁶ Ministry of Welfare. Development of professional social work in municipalities. Available at: http://lm.gov.lv/lv/?option=com_content&view=article&id=82150.

⁶⁷ European Union structural funds in the welfare sector. Ministry of Welfare. Available at: http://sf.lm.gov.lv/f/files/2014_2020/LM_SAM_2014-2020_to_progress_un_izaicinajumi_31072020.pdf.

⁶⁸ Full title: 'State Ltd. NRC "Vaivari" Establishment and implementation of a functioning assessment system and a study on the availability and use of assistive technologies (technical aids) in Latvian educational institutions'.

⁶⁹ National Rehabilitation Centre 'Vaivari'. Current projects. Available at: <https://www.nrcvaivari.lv/lv/vsia-nrc-vaivari-funkcijasanas-novertesanas-un-asistivo-tehnologiju-apmainas-sistemas-izveide-un-0>.

⁷⁰ European Union structural funds in the welfare sector. Ministry of Welfare. Available at: http://sf.lm.gov.lv/f/files/2014_2020/LM_SAM_2014-2020_to_progress_un_izaicinajumi_31072020.pdf.

Development of infrastructure for the development of a functioning assessment system for state Ltd. NRC „Vaivari” (measure 9.3.1.2.)			Implemented by the state Ltd. ‘National Rehabilitation Centre ‘Vaivari’
<i>Aim</i>	<i>Budget (EUR)</i>	<i>Implementation period</i>	<i>Progress from the beginning of the project</i>
To establish a single functioning assessment system infrastructure.	European Regional Development Fund - 2.11 million, state budget - 0.37 million ⁷¹	19 July 2016 until 31 December 2022	On 31 July 2020, invested funding amounted to EUR 0.42 million (17 %). The indicator is planned to be completed at the end of the project. ⁷²

Improve access to medical treatment and treatment support persons who provide services in priority health areas for residents living outside Riga (measure 9.2.5.)			Implemented by the Ministry of Health
<i>Aim</i>	<i>Budget (EUR)</i>	<i>Implementation period</i>	<i>Progress from the beginning of the project</i>
To improve the availability of medical practitioners in regions providing public-paid services in priority areas: cardiovascular, oncology, childcare and mental health. ⁷³	European Social Fund - 8.46 million (85 %) and state budget - 1.49 million (15 %)	01.12 2017 - 01.12.2023	Information on progress is not publicly available.

Improve the availability of quality health services, in particular for persons at risk of social, territorial exclusion and poverty, by developing healthcare infrastructure (measure 9.3.2.).			Implemented by medical institutions
<i>Aim</i>	<i>Budget (EUR)</i>	<i>Implementation period</i>	<i>Progress from the beginning of the project</i>
To improve the availability of quality health services, in particular for persons at risk of	Total eligible funding is - 194.36 million, including 152.13 million from the European Regional Development Fund, 42.22 million from national funding (including 31.58 million	December 2016 to December 2023 (including)	The project is implemented in several rounds. Information on progress is not publicly available.

⁷¹ National Rehabilitation Centre ‘Vaivari’. Current projects. Available at: <https://www.nrcvaivari.lv/lv/vsia-nrc-vaivari-infrastruktur-as-attistiba-funkcijasanas-novertesanas-sistemas-izveidei-0>.

⁷² European Union structural funds in the welfare sector. Ministry of Welfare. Available at: http://sf.lm.gov.lv/f/files/2014_2020/LM_SAM_2014-2020_to_progress_un_izaicinajumi_31072020.pdf.

⁷³ Ministry of Health. Sector. Recruitment of human resources for regions - financial support for medical practitioners outside Riga. Available at: https://www.vm.gov.lv/lv/nozare/cilvekesursu_piesaiste_rejoniem/.

social, territorial exclusion and poverty ⁷⁴	from the state budget and 10.64 million from private funding)		
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Deinstitutionalization

Deinstitutionalization (measure 9.2.2.1.)		Implemented by the Ministry of Welfare in cooperation with Latvia's planning regions and 115 local governments	
<i>Aim</i>	<i>Budget (EUR)</i>	<i>Implementation period</i>	<i>Progress from the beginning of the project</i>
To replace large institutional centres with community-based social services and services close to the family environment. ⁷⁵	49.67 million (European Social Fund and national budget)	From 2016 to 31.12.2023	The support was planned to 2100 individuals with mental disorders and 2270 children with functional disorders - reduce the number of children under institutional care to 720 and 700 persons with mental disabilities start to live independently outside the state social care centres. On 31 July 2020, the invested funding amounts to EUR 7.05 million (14 %) by providing support to 498 (24 %) persons with mental disorders and 1108 (49 %) children with functional disorders. The number of children in institutional care has been reduced to 597 (121 %), 336 (48 %) individuals with mental disorders have started to live independently. ⁷⁶

Development of service infrastructure for implementation of the deinstitutionalisation plans (measure 9.3.1.1.)			Implemented by eight big cities and 64 municipalities
<i>Aim</i>	<i>Budget (EUR)</i>	<i>Implementation period</i>	<i>Progress from the beginning of the project</i>
To develop service infrastructure for implementation of the	54.82 million (European Regional Development	2019 to 2023	It was planned to provide 2473 sites for the provision of community-based services to persons with mental disorders and children with disabilities and 250 sites for childcare in a family environment ⁷⁷ . By 31 July 2020, 72 contracts have been concluded for the implementation of projects, the organisation of procurement for the development of community-based

⁷⁴ Ministry of Health. European Union Structural Funds in the Health Sector. Available at: http://esfondi.vm.gov.lv/lat/2014_2020gads/eraf_sam_932/.

⁷⁵ Ministry of Welfare. Useful information. Community-based social services and deinstitutionalization. Available at: <http://www.lm.gov.lv/lv/nozares-politika/socialie-pakalpojumi/9-noderiga-informacija/sabiedriba-balstiti-socialie-pakalpojumi-un-deinstitucionalizacija>.

⁷⁶ European Union structural funds in the welfare sector. Ministry of Welfare. Available at: http://sf.lm.gov.lv/f/files/2014_2020/LM_SAM_2014-2020_to_progress_un_izaicinajumi_31072020.pdf.

⁷⁷ Ministry of Welfare. Useful information. Community-based social services and deinstitutionalization. Available at: <http://www.lm.gov.lv/lv/nozares-politika/socialie-pakalpojumi/9-noderiga-informacija/sabiedriba-balstiti-socialie-pakalpojumi-un-deinstitucionalizacija>.

deinstitutionalisation plans.	ent Fund and national public funding)		social services infrastructure is continuing and the establishment of infrastructure has been launched. Funding invested is EUR 9.25 million (17 %) by improving or establishing 54 (2 %) places for the provision of community-based services to persons with mental disorders and children with functional disabilities and 7 (3 %) places for childcare in a family environment. ⁷⁸
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Development of the social services support system (measure 9.2.2.2.)		Implemented by the Ministry of Welfare	
<i>Aim</i>	<i>Budget (EUR)</i>	<i>Implementation period</i>	<i>Progress from the beginning of the project</i>
To develop two mechanisms for financing public-based services and one mechanism for implementing the support person service. ⁷⁹	4.72 million (European Social Fund and national budget)	01.07.2016 - 28.02.2022	EUR 2.94 (62 %) has been invested by 31 July 2020. The indicator is planned to be completed at the end of the project. ⁸⁰

⁷⁸ European Union structural funds in the welfare sector. Ministry of Welfare. Available at: http://sf.lm.gov.lv/f/files/2014_2020/LM_SAM_2014-2020_to_progress_un_izaicinajumi_31072020.pdf.

⁷⁹ Ministry of Welfare. Actual projects. Available at: <http://lm.gov.lv/lv/es-finansejums/lm-istenotie-projekti/aktualie-projekti/socialo-pakalpojumu-atbalsta-sistemas-pilnveide-projekts-nr-9-2-2-16-i-001/2-par-projektu>.

⁸⁰ European Union structural funds in the welfare sector. Ministry of Welfare. Available at: http://sf.lm.gov.lv/f/files/2014_2020/LM_SAM_2014-2020_to_progress_un_izaicinajumi_31072020.pdf.

Support for the development of individual competencies of students (measure 8.3.2.2) ⁸¹			Implemented by the National Centre for Education
<i>Aim</i>	<i>Budget (EUR)</i>	<i>Implementation period</i>	<i>Progress from the beginning of the project</i>
To ensure the diversity of Latvian educational services based on the development and implementation of the individual learning approach in general education institutions.	Total funding 34.14 million, including funding from the European Social Fund	01.01.2017 - 31.12.2022	The planned results - at least 253 general education institutions will have developed and implemented individual approaches that are appropriate to the needs of learners to promote learning achievements. By 31 August 2020, the invested funding amounts to EUR 16.49 million by providing support to 4582 students with special needs and 7669 students with learning difficulties. The total number of general education institutions involved in the project is 358. ⁸²

⁸¹ National Centre for Education. Projects. Available at: https://visc.gov.lv/visc/projekti/esf_8322.shtml.

⁸² Ministry of Education and Science. Information on the request.

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