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# European Semester 2022-2023 country fiche on disability equality

With comparative data Annex provided by EDE

## Netherlands

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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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## Table of contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Executive summary and recommendations</b> .....	<b>6</b>
1.1	Key points and main challenges for Netherlands in 2022 .....	6
1.2	Recommendations for Netherlands .....	7
<b>2</b>	<b>Mainstreaming disability equality in the 2022 Semester documents</b> .....	<b>8</b>
2.1	Country Report (CR) and Country Specific Recommendation (CSR).....	8
2.2	National Reform Programme (NRP) and Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP).....	9
2.3	Semester links to CRPD and national disability action plans.....	10
<b>3</b>	<b>Disability and the labour market – analysis of the situation and the effectiveness of policies</b> .....	<b>11</b>
3.1	Summary of the labour market situation of persons with disabilities.....	12
3.2	Analysis of labour market policies relevant to the Semester.....	14
<b>4</b>	<b>Disability, social policies and healthcare – analysis of the situation and the effectiveness of policies</b> .....	<b>20</b>
4.1	Summary of the social situation of persons with disabilities .....	22
4.2	Analysis of social policies relevant to the Semester .....	24
<b>5</b>	<b>Disability, education and skills – analysis of the situation and the effectiveness of policies</b> .....	<b>26</b>
5.1	Summary of the educational situation of persons with disabilities .....	27
5.2	Analysis of education policies relevant to the Semester.....	28
<b>6</b>	<b>Investment priorities in relation to disability</b> .....	<b>30</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Annex: disability data relevant to the Semester</b> .....	<b>31</b>
7.1	Data relevant to disability and the labour market.....	32
7.2	EU data relevant to disability, social policies and healthcare (2020) ....	36
7.3	EU data relevant to disability and education.....	38

## **1 Executive summary and recommendations**

### **1.1 Key points and main challenges for Netherlands in 2022**

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

The Netherlands has a tight labour market. It is acknowledged that there is untapped labour potential of around 1.2 million people, two thirds of whom indicate they do not work due to a disability. The policy in place since 2015 to enhance labour participation for people with disabilities via the job agreement and quota system shows some positive results in participation rate for a relatively small group of workers who became disabled before their 18th birthday. This group requires wage subsidies and tax reliefs on a large scale and jobs offered are often on a temporary basis. The proportion of employers willing to hire workers with a disability does not significantly increase. The gap in labour participation between people without and people with disabilities in general has not changed during recent years.

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

Poverty among people with disabilities has increased. The policy has been and still is to improve social inclusion and to lift poverty by enhancing labour participation for people with disabilities. Labour participation has improved for young workers with a disability who are eligible for jobs based on the job agreement and quota scheme, but these jobs do not provide income security as, by law, the wages are mandated to be at minimum wage level as a condition for wage subsidies. The jobs are insecure because in half the cases they are offered on a temporary basis and often the wages have to be supplemented with benefits. Some measures have been taken to stimulate employers to offer more permanent contracts and to allow workers to retain a larger portion of supplementary benefits. Disabled persons organisations (DPOs) note that people with disabilities are burdened with high disability-related costs whether they work or not. Poverty among people with disabilities is not being monitored by the Government.

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

There is acknowledgement of the need to reskill and upskill workers. The National Reform Programme (NRP) announced a broad nationwide educational programme to upskill the workforce. Part of the programme is aimed at workers with low vocational education, among them workers with (cognitive) disabilities. The number of early school leavers from secondary and vocational education has been increasing since 2017.

At primary and secondary education level, schools are not able to provide reasonable accommodation to children with disabilities. The number of referrals to special schools increases year upon year, as does the number of children with severe disabilities being refused entry in the educational system. The Dutch educational system is becoming more segregated not only by disability, but also by migrant status, gender and parents' educational attainment. The gap between the average performance of pupils at schools with a low versus a high concentration of pupils with a migrant background is the second largest in the EU.

## **Investment priorities for inclusion and accessibility**

European structural funds continue to be used to support pupils leaving special secondary schools with internships, job coaching and extra training in order to find paid work.

### **1.2 Recommendations for Netherlands**

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

**Recommendation:** Continue efforts to reserve jobs via the job agreement and quota scheme, and make these jobs more secure by providing full wages.

**Rationale:** Workers often need additional benefits. This leads to continuous income insecurity and poverty. Work does not profit them enough.

**Recommendation:** Expand the quota scheme to reserve jobs for all workers who became disabled before their 18th birthday, offer wage subsidies, provide tax reliefs for job coaching and other instruments available for jobs at higher wage level, and subsidise jobs on the condition that permanent contracts are offered.

**Rationale:** The jobs offered to workers with disabilities using the wage subsidy are mostly short term and pay minimum wages. If contracts are required to be permanent, and if higher wages are stimulated by subsidising them, both employers and workers would be more incentivised to invest in training and in creating more high-skilled, adapted jobs with higher productivity and career opportunities.

**Recommendation:** Introduce a quota for workers with a disability at company level.

**Rationale:** Quotas are currently imposed at economic sector level. The majority of employers are indifferent and feel no need to adapt their work organisations. Even the tightness of the labour market does not induce them to create adaptations in their job vacancies or work organisation in order to welcome workers with a disability. Introducing quotas at company level might remedy this reluctance.

**Recommendation:** Monitor poverty, and causes of poverty, among households with a member with a disability.

**Rationale:** Poverty increases among people with a disability whether they have paid work or not. Low-wage, temporary jobs created for people with a disability do not provide income security or help social inclusion. There is no adequate policy formulated to address this problem. Providing data helps to analyse causes and remedies.

**Recommendation:** Address segregation within the educational system.

**Rationale:** Segregation in education reinforces segregation on the labour market and social exclusion. Segregation along the lines of migrant status, socioeconomic status and disability are interconnected. Efforts to diminish an influx to special education have failed so far and this leads to a decrease in resources for reasonable accommodation in regular schools.

## **2 Mainstreaming disability equality in the 2022 Semester documents**

### **2.1 Country Report (CR) and Country Specific Recommendation (CSR)**

The following key points highlight where a disability perspective was considered, or should be considered, in the CR/CSR. We address the most relevant of these in the next chapters.

The labour market is tight, yet there is untapped or underutilised labour, in particular in light of the lower employment rate for people with disabilities. Another challenge is the high proportion of flexible employment leading to labour market segmentation and low productivity growth. Many workers in these groups operate on the margins of the labour market, and have limited income security.

The Country Report states that the use of flexible employment is influenced by institutional factors and national policy choices such as differences in tax treatment for the self-employed, social security coverage and labour protection regulations.

The Country Report states that targeted support and continued investments in basic, technical and digital skills, education and training could improve access to the labour market while promoting equal opportunities and active inclusion.

Self-employed workers without employees lack social protection as they are underinsured against sickness, disability, unemployment and old age. The pandemic highlighted the risks of a highly segmented labour market. Young, low(er) skilled, people with a migrant background or disabilities, along with the self-employed without employees, were the groups hit hardest during the pandemic as they were faced with a loss of income.

The CR notes that ‘While the at-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion rate in the Netherlands is stable and below the EU average, challenges remain for specific groups, such as people with disabilities’. Of people with disabilities, 24.9 % were at-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion in 2020 (versus 12 % of those without disabilities). In-work-poverty risks are higher for people on flexible and / or temporary contracts as well as for the self-employed without employees. Significant challenges in terms of access to adequate social protection also remain for self-employed workers without employees.

The CSR mentions disability only in relation to social protection cover for self-employed people but several of the general recommendations are particularly relevant for people with disabilities, such as:

- targeted support to households most vulnerable to energy price hikes;
- investment for the green and digital transition, potentially for accessibility;
- implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP) and previous CSRs;
- addressing labour and skills shortages, and tapping underutilised labour potential;
- strengthening upskilling and reskilling opportunities, notably for those at the margins of the labour market and the inactive.



## 2.2 National Reform Programme (NRP) and Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP)

The following key points highlight where the situation of people with disabilities or disability policies are relevant to the NRP/RRP. We analyse the most relevant of these in the next chapters.

The Recovery and Resilience Plan<sup>2</sup> (submitted in July 2022 and endorsed by the European Commission in September 2022)<sup>3</sup> contains labour market reforms aimed at reducing the current stimulant to choose self-employment. An obligatory disability insurance for the self-employed will be introduced, while the fiscal premium to work as self-employed will be reduced. The RRP aims to continue with a nationwide broad educational programme aimed at upskilling and reskilling. The programme called 'Netherlands keeps on learning'<sup>4</sup> offers free-of-charge advice on training, a nationwide online learning programme offering courses ranging from a few weeks to a year, and an offer of budget for educational and transition plans for business sectors in which workers become superfluous and are asked to switch to other business sectors. The online learning programme does not differentiate between workers with or without disabilities, with or without work. The programme's recruitment campaign says that the programme is aimed at vulnerable groups and mentions the self-employed, long-term unemployed and people working on flexible contracts, but this is not noticeable other than in the comment that the self-employed can apply. People with disabilities are not mentioned in this programme.

New temporary regional mobility teams have been founded to offer more personal support to workers who have lost their job due to the COVID-19 epidemic and who need individualised support in finding work or training to maintain their job.<sup>5</sup> These 35 teams are part of the existing 35 regional labour market organisations in which employers, trade unions, municipalities and the *Uitvoeringsinstituut Werknemersverzekeringen* (UWV, administrative authority issuing disability benefits) cooperate in matching workers with jobs. These regional mobility teams are required to target all vulnerable workers; people with disabilities who are eligible for the job agreement and quota scheme are specifically mentioned as a target group as they were disproportionately affected by the impact of COVID-19 on the economy.

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<sup>2</sup> See: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/rapporten/2022/07/08/nederlands-herstel-en-veerkrachtplan>.

<sup>3</sup> See: [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/QANDA\\_22\\_5399](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/QANDA_22_5399).

<sup>4</sup> In Dutch *Nederland leert door*. Government webpage: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/leven-lang-ontwikkelen/leven-lang-ontwikkelen-financiele-regelingen/nederland-leert-door>.

<sup>5</sup> Webpage national government on regional mobility teams: <https://www.hoewerkt nederland.nl/onderwerpen/regionale-mobiliteitsteams>.

### 2.3 Semester links to CRPD and national disability action plans

The implementation plan, Unlimited Participation<sup>6</sup> (2018-2021), sees the job agreement and quota scheme as the main action plan to implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). An evaluation of the implementation plan by the national Government<sup>7</sup> acknowledges that people with disabilities have not experienced substantial change in their lives in relation to employment or education, as has been reported in three critical monitoring reports by the National Human Rights Institute and the alternative report by an alliance of DPOs on the implementation of the CRPD.<sup>8</sup> The minister planned to make further unspecified agreements in 2022 with employers organisations and the association of municipalities to improve the situation for people with disabilities.<sup>9</sup>

The 2022 NRP does not refer to the CRPD or the implementation plan. Neither the job agreement and quota scheme nor the evaluation and progress reports on this scheme refer to the UN CRPD or the implementation plan.

Relevant recommendations arising from participation in the UN CRPD are highlighted in the following chapters. The UN CRPD Committee recommendations to the Netherlands are not yet scheduled. The submission of the initial state report by the Netherlands was in 2018 and the most recent response from the Committee was the 2022 List of Issues.

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<sup>6</sup> In Dutch *Onbeperkt Meedoen*, <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/rechten-van-mensen-met-een-handicap/programma-onbeperkt-meedoen>.

<sup>7</sup> Letter to Parliament 19 April 2022 by the Minister of Health Welfare and Sport, on the coordinating of disability issues, <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2022/04/19/kamerbrief-over-vervolg-coördinerende-aanpak-implementatie-van-het-vn-verdrag-handicap>.

<sup>8</sup> These critical monitoring reports are: DPO report on the CRPD Netherlands, <https://iederin.nl/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Netherlands-DPO-report-on-the-CRPD-in-the-Netherlands.pdf>; Additional Report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on the adoption of the List of Issues for the initial report of the Netherlands | *Mensenrechten*, <https://publicaties.mensenrechten.nl/file/4a3345ce-7f76-06a4-9a8d-642ed0eb18e6.pdf>; Monitoring report *Inzicht in Inclusie III*, <https://publicaties.mensenrechten.nl/file/46701e6d-cb1d-44a1-9385-fb829ae0cd35.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> Letter to the Parliament on 19 April 2022 by the minister of Health, Welfare and Sport, on the coordinating of disability issues: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2022/04/19/kamerbrief-over-vervolg-coördinerende-aanpak-implementatie-van-het-vn-verdrag-handicap>.

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

The most recent CRPD developments are the 2022 List of Issues raised by the UN CRPD Committee,<sup>10</sup> and the input provided for this by an alliance of DPOs<sup>11</sup> and by the National Human Rights Institute Netherlands (NHRI) in 2022.<sup>12</sup> The state's submission of the initial report was in 2018.<sup>13</sup>

[Article 27 UN CRPD](#) addresses Work and Employment. The List of Issues asks the state party to:

'25. Please provide information on: (a) Employment rates among persons with disabilities, disaggregated by age, sex and impairment type, in both the open labour market and sheltered employment, as well as on unemployed persons with disabilities; (b) Measures taken to promote inclusive employment of persons with disabilities in the open labour market, including the quota system that was initiated in 2018, and on measures taken to ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided to persons with disabilities in the workplace and in the open labour market; (c) The definition of 'people with occupational disabilities' as mentioned in paragraph 291 of the State party report; (d) Measures taken to reduce the unemployment rate of persons with disabilities and to narrow the gender pay gap faced by women with disabilities.'

The state report gives an overview of legislation, policies and measures that exist to support the employment of people with disabilities but does not provide statistical data or outcome results of these policies.

The NHRI states in its report<sup>14</sup> that discrimination and denial of reasonable accommodation still occur<sup>15</sup> and that employers are being cautious or lack knowledge about possibilities for support and the provision of reasonable accommodation.<sup>16</sup> It points out that policies and measures to promote the employment of persons with disabilities are complex and that both persons with disabilities and employers find it difficult to understand what the rules are and to obtain the support they need.

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<sup>10</sup> List of Issues Netherlands:

[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2fC%2fNLD%2fQ%2f1&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2fC%2fNLD%2fQ%2f1&Lang=en).

<sup>11</sup> Alliance of DPOs input for LOI, 1 February 2022:

[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCRPD%2fICO%2fNLD%2f47913&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCRPD%2fICO%2fNLD%2f47913&Lang=en).

<sup>12</sup> NHRI, Additional Report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on the adoption of the List of Issues for the initial report of the Netherlands, February 2022:

[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCRPD%2fICO%2fNLD%2f47910&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCRPD%2fICO%2fNLD%2f47910&Lang=en).

<sup>13</sup> Netherlands periodic report, *State Party Report 2018*,

[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2fC%2fNLD%2f1&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2fC%2fNLD%2f1&Lang=en).

<sup>14</sup> NHRI, Additional Report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on the adoption of the List of Issues for the initial report of the Netherlands, February 2022:

[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCRPD%2fICO%2fNLD%2f47910&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCRPD%2fICO%2fNLD%2f47910&Lang=en).

<sup>15</sup> The NHRI names an example of denial of reasonable accommodation in Opinion 2020-62, 27 July 2020; Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, Opinion 2020-26, 19 March 2020; Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, Opinion 2018-82, 26 July 2018.

<sup>16</sup> Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, Comprehensive opinion, pp. 18-21; Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, *It works differently*, pp. 10-20.

The alternative report by the alliance of DPOs states that the gap in employment rates between people with and people without disabilities remains persistent and unchanged since 2016, despite the job agreement and quota scheme and other policies to support people with disabilities in employment. The alternative report criticises the small percentage of employers who are willing to hire employees with a disability, the limited reduction in sheltered employment since 2015, and the fact that the transition from professional training to paid employment is harder for persons with a disability due to lack of workplace adaptation or support during internships. The alternative report also criticises the state's implementation plan, Unlimited Participation,<sup>17</sup> for its lack of quantifiable targets and adequate statistical monitoring.<sup>18</sup>

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

According to the Social Scoreboard indicator, cited in the Semester package, the disability employment gap in the Netherlands is considered 'On average'.

Data from EU-SILC indicate an employment rate for persons with disabilities in the Netherlands of 59.5 % in 2020, compared to 84.1 % for other persons. This results in an estimated disability employment gap of approximately 25 percentage points (estimated EU27 average gap 24.5, see Tables 2-4) or an employment chances ratio of 0.7. Statistics published on the Eurostat database indicate a disability employment gap of 25.4 percentage points in 2020, using a slightly different methodology, and 25.8 points in 2021 (against a pre-COVID-19 figure of 26.5 points).<sup>19</sup>

The same data indicate unemployment rates of 6.5 % and 3.1 %, respectively in 2020 (see Tables 5-7) and the economic activity rate for persons with disabilities in Netherlands was 63.6 %, compared to 86.8 % for other persons (see Tables 8-10). These indications are broken down by gender and age in the respective tables in the Annex.

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on employment in 2020-2021, some caution is needed when interpreting trend data.

The Netherlands has a tight labour market situation and the Government is starting to pay attention (by commissioning research) to tapping into unused labour potential, including among people with disabilities. The Dutch Government estimates the untapped labour potential at around 1.2 million people, of whom around 765 000 indicate they do not seek paid work due to illness or a disability.<sup>20</sup> Not all of these 765 000 are in receipt of a disability or unemployment benefit.

<sup>17</sup> *Onbeperkt Meedoen* (Unlimited Participation), report on implementation of the CRPD, 1 June 2018, <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/rechten-van-mensen-met-een-handicap/documenten/rapporten/2018/06/01/programma-vn-verdrag-onbeperkt-meedoen>.

<sup>18</sup> The Netherlands Disabled Persons' Organisations Report on the CRPD in the Netherlands, December 2019, <https://iederin.nl/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Netherlands-DPO-report-on-the-CRPD-in-the-Netherlands.pdf>.

<sup>19</sup> Eurostat, Disability employment gap by level of activity limitation and sex (source EU-SILC), 2022, [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/hlth\\_dlm200/default/table](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/hlth_dlm200/default/table).

<sup>20</sup> Letter to Parliament on the labour market shortage. March 2022. *Beslisnota's Kamerbrief Aanpak Arbeidsmarktcrisise*, <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/ministeries/ministerie-van-sociale-zaken-en-werkgelegenheid/documenten/beleidsnotas/2022/07/11/beslisnotas-kamerbrief-aanpak-arbeidsmarktcrisise-1-van-2>.

The third monitoring report by the Netherlands Human Rights Institute (with input from Netherlands Statistics (CBS) and research agency Nivel using panel data) on the CRPD also notes there is much unused labour potential among people with disabilities as 'most people with a disability that are not employed would like to work'.<sup>21</sup>

The proportion of workers in the Dutch labour market on temporary contracts, on call contracts or on contracts as self-employed workers has further increased in 2022 to 41 %, <sup>22</sup> compared to the 36 % mentioned in the Commission's Country Report. People with disabilities report an even higher proportion of flexible temporary contracts (50 %). The Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP) reports that people with such contracts, including people with disabilities and paid work, were among the first to lose their work and income security as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>23</sup>

The NHRI monitoring report on the CRPD notes that, overall, fewer persons with a disability are employed than persons without a disability.<sup>24</sup> The percentage of persons with a disability that do not have paid work is highest among persons with intellectual, severe physical and mental disabilities.<sup>25</sup> Research agency Nivel also notes that people with (physical) disabilities do not profit from the tightening of the labour market. The participation rate of a panel of people with physical disabilities is 31 % compared to 76 % within the general population.<sup>26</sup> According to the same research report, people with disabilities who do have paid work are more likely to be offered temporary contracts and less working hours per contract than they prefer. They state they have less chance of being offered promotion and opportunities for self-improvement.<sup>27</sup>

Tighter eligibility criteria for disability benefits reduced the number of disability benefit claimants but enlarged the group of people receiving unemployment benefits by

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<sup>21</sup> Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, *Insight in Inclusion III*, February 2022. The data on persons not employed but willing to work is derived from persons with a physical and mental disability and persons with a chronic illness,

<https://publicaties.mensenrechten.nl/publicatie/48a73d44-f079-450c-9487-e100984d0b3a>.

<sup>22</sup> *Flexbarometer*, by Netherlands Statistics (CBS), Trade Unions Federation (FNV), Union of Temporary Employment Agencies (ABU), and research agency TNO,

<http://www.flexbarometer.nl/verhouding-vast-flex-zelfstandig>.

<sup>23</sup> SCP, *Welbevinden ten tijde van corona. Eerste bevindingen op basis van een bevolkingsenquête uit juli 2020* SCP, September 2020. (Wellbeing in times of corona. First data based on interviews in general population), <https://www.scp.nl/publicaties/publicaties/2020/09/10/welbevinden-ten-tijde-van-corona.-eerste-bevindingen-op-basis-van-een-bevolkingsenquête-uit-juli-2020>.

<sup>24</sup> NHRI, Monitoring report *Inzicht in Inclusie III*, <https://publicaties.mensenrechten.nl/file/46701e6d-cb1d-44a1-9385-fb829ae0cd35.pdf>.

<sup>25</sup> Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, *Insight in Inclusion III*, February 2022. This data is derived from physical, mental and intellectual disability and persons with a chronic illness.

<sup>26</sup> Knapen, Haarmann, Grosscurt & Boeijs, 2020, *Verdiepingsstudie Participatiemonitor. Werken met een beperking. Arbeidsomstandigheden van mensen met een lichamelijke beperking* (In-depth study Participation Monitor) and Nivel *kerncijfers participatie* (Core data participation) <https://nivel.nl/sites/default/files/bestanden/1003802.pdf> and <https://www.nivel.nl/nl/publicatie/meedoen-de-samenleving-2008-2018-update-kerncijfers-participatiemonitor>.

<sup>27</sup> Knapen, Haarmann, Grosscurt & Boeijs, 2020, *Verdiepingsstudie Participatiemonitor. Werken met een beperking. Arbeidsomstandigheden van mensen met een lichamelijke beperking* (In-depth study Participation Monitor) and Nivel *kerncijfers participatie* (Core data participation) <https://nivel.nl/sites/default/files/bestanden/1003802.pdf> and <https://www.nivel.nl/nl/publicatie/meedoen-de-samenleving-2008-2018-update-kerncijfers-participatiemonitor>.



municipalities (based on the Participation Act). Around 60 % of people receiving such a benefit based on the Participation Act describe themselves as unable to seek work due to a disability or chronic illness. Although municipalities have the means to offer wage subsidies and other reintegration support, the chances of finding and keeping paid work did not increase for this group, according to an evaluation by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP).<sup>28</sup>

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) noted in a report that the Netherlands has a large group of more than 1.7 million people over the age of 16 that are low skilled, of whom two-thirds are of prime working age. Although these ‘vulnerable’ groups still perform better than their counterparts in most other OECD countries, their comparatively poor performance relative to their Dutch peers means that they will struggle to find work and integrate successfully into society.<sup>29</sup>

The majority of people who are self-employed and have low incomes (15 % of all households with a minimum wage level income are self-employed)<sup>30</sup> have no insurance when they become ill or disabled. They have no funds to invest in personal education or training.

Since 2015 there has been no significant increase or decrease in the willingness of employers to hire people with disabilities. Of all employers, 61 % state they are willing to hire someone with a disability but only 19 % make concrete plans to do so. Less than a quarter of the 19 % of employers who make plans succeed in hiring an employee with a disability.<sup>31</sup> This minority group of private employers succeeds in hiring enough workers with a disability to fulfil the quota for their sector.

One third of people with disabilities experience discrimination and unequal treatment by employers or work colleagues compared to 25 % of people without disabilities. One in eight jobseekers with a disability stopped their attempts to find paid work due to experiencing discrimination.<sup>32</sup>

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

#### ***Job Agreement and Quota Scheme***

The main programme to enhance labour participation among people with disabilities is the job agreement and quota scheme, introduced in 2015. This programme requires private and government employers to offer 125 000 jobs before 2025 to a specific group of people who became disabled before their 18th birthday and who are

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<sup>28</sup> SCP, *Eindevaluatie Participatiewet* (End report evaluation of the Participation Act) SCP publication 2019-17, <https://www.scp.nl/publicaties/publicaties/2019/11/19/eindevaluatie-van-de-participatiewet>.

<sup>29</sup> OECD, Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report Netherlands 2017, <https://www.oecd.org/publications/oecd-skills-strategy-diagnostic-report-the-netherlands-2017-9789264287655-en.htm>.

<sup>30</sup> Stimulanz, *Bestrijding van Armoede onder zelfstandigen*, (Fighting poverty among the self-employed), May 2010.

<sup>31</sup> SCP, *Eindevaluatie Participatiewet* (End report evaluation of the Participation Act), SCP publication 2019-17, <https://www.scp.nl/publicaties/publicaties/2019/11/19/eindevaluatie-van-de-participatiewet>.

<sup>32</sup> *Ervaren discriminatie in Nederland II SCP April 2020* (Experienced discrimination in Netherlands), <https://www.scp.nl/publicaties/publicaties/2020/04/02/ervaren-discriminatie-in-nederland-ii>.

assessed as having at least partial ability to do paid work. The total target for 2021 has not been met. Private employers have offered 67 000 jobs, which is 7 000 over the target of 60 000. Government employers lag behind with offering only 11 842 jobs where 20 000 jobs should have been realised. The government sector has not met the yearly target since the scheme began.<sup>33</sup>

The job agreement and quota scheme was accompanied by closing down all inflow to sheltered workshops as of 2015. Instead of sheltered workshops, a commitment to offer sheltered employment jobs in regular companies was introduced with wage subsidies for employers. Since this policy shift, the chance of being offered a job in sheltered employment decreased from 55 % in 2013 to 39 % in 2019; a decrease of 16 percentage points.<sup>34</sup> In 48 % of cases, sheltered employment jobs are offered on a temporary basis.<sup>35</sup>

The job agreement and quota scheme targets the group of people who became disabled before their 18th birthday and who are assessed as having potential to do some paid work but not being able to earn at least minimum wage.<sup>36</sup> Among this group the employment rate increased from 29 % before 2015 to 38 % in 2019 for this specific group.<sup>37</sup>

The job agreement and quota scheme has no notable influence on the general labour participation rate of all people with disabilities. The group of people who have been in employment and who are entitled to a disability benefit is, at 600 000, almost three times as large as the group of workers (around 200 000) with a disability who are entitled to participate in the job agreement and quota scheme.<sup>38</sup> The labour participation rate decreased for this larger group of 600 000 in the period 2018-2021 (see table A in Annex 7.1.3).<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Letter to Parliament on the results of the job agreement and quota system (*Brief Betreft Resultaten banenafspraken 2021 en gesprekken toekomst banenafspraken*), July 2022, <https://open.overheid.nl/repository/ronl-93b9c14b22847eaa64ab2b5f5f5dfb6da25725b8/1/pdf/kamerbrief-resultaten-banenafspraken-2021-en-gesprekken-toekomst-banenafspraken.pdf>.

<sup>34</sup> SCP, *Eindevaluatie Participatiewet*, SCP-publication 2019-17 (End report evaluation of the Participation Act), <https://www.scp.nl/publicaties/publicaties/2019/11/19/eindevaluatie-van-de-participatiewet>.

<sup>35</sup> Letter to Parliament, December 2020. *Resultaten onderzoeken banenafspraken en cijfers beschut werk*, <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/kamerstukken/2020/12/18/resultaten-onderzoeken-banenafspraken-en-cijfers-beschut-werk>.

<sup>36</sup> Criteria described by the UWV, the administrative organisation that determines eligibility, <https://www.uwv.nl/particulieren/overige-onderwerpen/doelgroepregister/detail/wanneer-word-ik-opgenomen-in-het-doelgroepregister>.

<sup>37</sup> SCP, *Eindevaluatie Participatiewet* (End report evaluation of the Participation Act), SCP-publicatie 2019-17, <https://www.scp.nl/publicaties/publicaties/2019/11/19/eindevaluatie-van-de-participatiewet>.

<sup>38</sup> Data on types of disability benefits in 2021 by the UWV: *Monitor arbeidsparticipatie arbeidsbeperkten 2021* (Labour participation monitor for workers with a disability), p.4, <https://www.uwv.nl/overuuv/kennis-cijfers-en-onderzoek/kennis-onderzoeken/uwv-monitor-arbeidsparticipatie-arbeidsbeperkten-2021.aspx>.

<sup>39</sup> Data on types of disability benefits in 2021 by the UWV: *Monitor arbeidsparticipatie arbeidsbeperkten 2021* (Labour participation monitor for workers with a disability), p.4 <https://www.uwv.nl/overuuv/kennis-cijfers-en-onderzoek/kennis-onderzoeken/uwv-monitor-arbeidsparticipatie-arbeidsbeperkten-2021.aspx>.

The implementation plan, Unlimited Participation, refers to the job agreement and quota scheme as the main policy to reduce unemployment among people with disabilities. Yearly evaluations by the Government report on the number of jobs that are being offered. There is no reflection on the restricted scope of this scheme (it is aimed only at the group of workers who were disabled at young age). There is no reflection on the actual outcome results in terms of the stagnant participation rate of all people with disabilities.

The Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP) laid bare several shortcomings of the job agreement and quota scheme combined with the Participation Act and sheltered employment scheme.<sup>40</sup> The main shortcomings are: wage subsidies are effective as they offer 55 % more chance of a job for people with disabilities, but municipalities offer these subsidies sparsely due to lack of budget; municipalities offer less or no reintegration support to persons with a disability if they are not entitled to an individual benefit; municipalities offer less support in finding work to people with more severe disabilities as their reintegration support is deemed more expensive. Furthermore, the majority of employers are unaware of the range of reintegration support and wage subsidies that are available and if they are aware, they find them so complicated and such a burden on the productivity of their employees without a disability that they refrain from using them. Employers offer existing job vacancies to people with disabilities and do not want to deploy adaptation instruments for specific jobs. Furthermore, employers are not in the habit of using instruments such as job carving to create new jobs that might be suitable for people with severe disabilities.<sup>41</sup> The report by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research cites additional research that shows that people with physical disabilities are not offered enough opportunities to work on their employability by learning or studying.<sup>42</sup>

The Netherlands Institute for Social Research also notes that jobs offered within the job agreement and quota scheme and sheltered employment jobs are for a large and increasing part (48 %) on a temporary contract, have low pay and not all workers with a disability are entitled to an additional disability benefit. The majority of this group does not succeed in finding enough paid work and runs a high risk of missing out on an adequate minimum income level.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> SCP, *Eindevaluatie Participatiewet* (End report evaluation of the Participation Act), November 2019, <https://www.scp.nl/actueel/nieuws/2019/11/15/doelstellingen-participatiewet-nauwelijks-behaald>.

<sup>41</sup> Research cited in *Evaluatie Participatiewet SCP: De Beer et al., 2019; Ieder(in), 2019, Fermin, de Looze en Hazelzet, 2019*. SCP, *Eindevaluatie Participatiewet* (End report evaluation of the Participation Act), SCP publication 2019-17.

<sup>42</sup> Knapen, Haarmann, Grosscurt & Boeije, 2020, *Verdiepingsstudie Participatiemonitor. Werken met een beperking. Arbeidsomstandigheden van mensen met een lichamelijke beperking* (In-depth study participation monitor. Working with a disability. Work environment for people with a physical disability) and *Nivel kerncijfers participatie* (Core data participation), <https://nivel.nl/sites/default/files/bestanden/1003802.pdf> and <https://www.nivel.nl/nl/publicatie/meedoen-de-samenleving-2008-2018-update-kerncijfers-participatiemonitor>.

<sup>43</sup> SCP, *Eindevaluatie Participatiewet* (End report evaluation of the Participation Act), November 2019, <https://www.scp.nl/actueel/nieuws/2019/11/15/doelstellingen-participatiewet-nauwelijks-behaald>.



The Government is addressing the shortcomings with several measures. The aim is to simplify reintegration support for employers and to provide a larger budget for wage subsidies, job coaching and other personal support instruments. Wage subsidies for people with disabilities that until 2020 were given for a maximum of three years will, as of 2024, be granted permanently to stimulate employers to change temporary job contracts into permanent contracts.<sup>44</sup> This measure addresses the Country Report remarks on the high proportion of flexible working arrangements.

### **Wage subsidies and incentives**

Employers that are willing to hire workers with a disability show a high take up of the financial instruments available to lower the costs of employing workers with a disability. Employers are, under certain conditions, allowed to pay no wage during trial periods of up to six months; are allowed to pay less than minimum wage for specific workers with a disability;<sup>45</sup> can opt for wage subsidies (of up to 70 % of minimum wage) and can opt for adaptations in the workplace and free-of-charge assistance by job coaches. Furthermore, a tax relief<sup>46</sup> is available to public and private employers who hire employees with a disability eligible to be hired in the job agreement scheme. The tax relief is granted on the condition that the employee works more than 1 248 hours a year for an hourly wage of between EUR 10.48 and EUR 13.12 per hour.<sup>47</sup>

The UWV reports that for 55 % of workers who had a disability before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, a wage subsidy was given to their employers.<sup>48</sup> The number of granted tax reliefs for workers with a disability is estimated to be around 43 000.<sup>49</sup> Trial placement was granted by the UWV for 2 700 workers with a disability in the year 2020. Employers who hire a person with a disability are also granted a ‘no-risk’ insurance for these employees. This means that they are not obliged to pay sickness leave wages during the first two years of an illness as they are obliged to do for all other employees.

Wage subsidies are furthermore restricted to low pay levels, thus limiting the opportunities for employees with a disability to seek training, promotion, higher productivity and a higher salary level. This means that employers who invest in the training and education of their workers with a disability run the risk of losing wage subsidies if training ensures promotion and higher wages. The workers themselves

<sup>44</sup> Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, *Programma Breed offensief* (Programme Broad charge) budget plan 2021, <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/begrotingen/2020/09/15/xv-sociale-zaken-en-werkgelegenheid-rijksbegroting-2021>.

<sup>45</sup> Those workers that are receiving a Young Disabled Persons Act (*Wajong*) benefit.

<sup>46</sup> The tax relief is based on the *Wet tegemoetkomingen loondomein* (Relief Wages Act), <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0037522/2022-01-01>.

<sup>47</sup> Webpage by the administrative authority UWV with description of all conditions of the tax relief. The webpage is aimed at employees to inform them about their rights and to help their employers in gaining the tax relief: <https://www.uwv.nl/particulieren/overige-onderwerpen/loonkostenvoordeel/detail/voorwaarden-per-doelgroep>. Another webpage with description of conditions aiming at employers on the tax relief is by a private consultancy firm OAZ: <https://oaz.nl/nieuws/de-voorlopige-berekening-wtl-2021/>.

<sup>48</sup> UWV, *Monitor arbeidsparticipatie arbeidsbeperkten 2021* (Labour participation monitor for workers with a disability), <https://www.uwv.nl/overuwv/kennis-cijfers-en-onderzoek/kennis-onderzoeken/uwv-monitor-arbeidsparticipatie-arbeidsbeperkten-2021.aspx>.

<sup>49</sup> Estimation based on data from Netherlands Statistics as quoted in the *UWV Monitor arbeidsparticipatie arbeidsbeperkten 2021* (Labour participation monitor for workers with a disability), p. 68, <https://www.uwv.nl/overuwv/kennis-cijfers-en-onderzoek/kennis-onderzoeken/uwv-monitor-arbeidsparticipatie-arbeidsbeperkten-2021.aspx>.

have no financial means to invest in further education and training due to low wages and also because they are often offered temporary contracts.<sup>50</sup>

### **Other measures**

To reduce the number of people working on self-employed contracts, the Government will impose an obligatory disability insurance for all self-employed workers and will reduce the tax credit for the self-employed while compensating them with a general tax credit for all workers. This measure will induce self-employed workers to increase their tariffs or consider opting to become employees.

In order to tap into unused labour potential, the Government seeks to stimulate part-time workers to work more hours. A specific measure aims at workers with a disability. Additional funding (EUR 40 million) has been made available in order to make work pay more for people with a supplementary disability benefit. For every extra euro earned, a disability benefit receiver is allowed to keep at least 30 cents.

To address the complaints about the complexity of the support systems for employers who hire workers with a disability, municipalities and the administrative authority UWV (who both support different groups of jobseekers with a disability) are stimulated to work more intensively together in regional reintegration programmes and are supposed to lessen bureaucratic rules for granting wage subsidies to employers. The aim is also to make 'easier' use of European Social Funds as of 2020, to enhance regional cooperation between municipalities, the UWV and employers.<sup>51</sup> It is not clear what making easier use of European Social Funds means. All available funds via the ESF 2010-2020 might be complicated to use, but they were completely depleted before 2018.

There is no specific strategy to seek higher productivity jobs for people with disabilities, or aimed at stimulating or facilitating people who acquired a disability during working age and receive an employee-related benefit, to seek employment. The financial incentives and instruments to stimulate employers to hire workers with a disability are specifically aimed at the target group of young people with a disability acquired before their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. National statistics show no improvement in employment chances for other workers with a disability nor in dependency on benefits (from either the UWV or municipalities based on the Participation Act).<sup>52</sup>

The National Reform Programme announces a broad educational programme aimed at upskilling and reskilling. The programme, called 'Netherlands keeps on learning',<sup>53</sup> offers free-of-charge advice on training for individuals. There is a nationwide learning programme offering short term online courses ranging from a few weeks to a year. The third part of the learning strategy is an offer of budget for educational and transition

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<sup>50</sup> SCP, *Eindevaluatie Participatiewet* (End report evaluation of the Participation Act), November 2019, <https://www.scp.nl/publicaties/publicaties/2019/11/19/eindevaluatie-van-de-participatiewet>.

<sup>51</sup> Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, *Programma Breed offensief* (Programme Broad charge) budget plan 2021, <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/begrotingen/2020/09/15/xv-sociale-zaken-en-werkgelegenheid-rijksbegroting-2021>.

<sup>52</sup> European Semester 2020-2021 country fiche on disability equality. Netherlands, <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=23942&langId=en>.

<sup>53</sup> *Nederland leert door*. Government webpage: <https://business.gov.nl/subsidy/temporary-support-scheme-nl-leert-door-nl-keeps-learning/>.

plans for business sectors in which workers become superfluous and are asked to switch to other business sectors. The online learning programme does not differentiate between workers with or without disabilities, with or without work, or educational level. The programme's recruitment campaign says that the programme is aimed at vulnerable groups and mentions the self-employed, long-term unemployed and people working on flexible contracts, but this is not noticeable other than in the comment that the self-employed can apply. People with disabilities are not mentioned in this programme. The Government published further details in the yearly budget and announced that it will restrict parts of the learning programme to people who have a low vocational level.<sup>54</sup> Part of the programme offers courses to improve literacy and digital literacy. In so doing the Government addresses the importance of reaching out to the large group of people (1.7 million) who are low skilled and / or have cognitive disabilities.<sup>55</sup>

The programme for upskilling and reskilling relies mainly on individual workers and employers to take the initiative to enrol. The Government is calling on the regional organisations in which employer organisations, trade unions, municipalities and the UWV cooperate together to offer tailor-made learning opportunities to vulnerable workers who need facilitation.

There is no policy to reduce perceived discrimination based on disability on the labour market.

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<sup>54</sup> Letter to Parliament, 23 September 2022, *Beleidslijnen Leven Lang Ontwikkelen* (Lifelong development policy), [https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/brieven\\_regering/detail?id=2022Z17569&did=2022D37174](https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/brieven_regering/detail?id=2022Z17569&did=2022D37174).

<sup>55</sup> OECD, Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report Netherlands 2017, <https://www.oecd.org/publications/oecd-skills-strategy-diagnostic-report-the-netherlands-2017-9789264287655-en.htm>.

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

The most recent CRPD developments are the 2022 List of Issues raised by the UN Committee,<sup>56</sup> and the input provided for this by an alliance of DPOs<sup>57</sup> and by the National Human Rights Institute Netherlands (NHRI) in 2022.<sup>58</sup> The state's submission of the initial report was in 2018.<sup>59</sup>

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

The state report mentions that the policies to enhance labour participation for people with disabilities are intended to have a positive impact in terms of ensuring a satisfactory standard of living and social protection and that social security benefits guarantee a general safety net. People with disabilities who might incur extra costs due to their disability can claim an extra benefit at their municipality should these extra costs push their disposable income below minimum benefit level.

The alternative report by the alliance of DPOs gives Eurostat statistics as evidence of a trend of increasing poverty and social exclusion for persons with a disability. The alternative report criticises the policy of the Government to relieve poverty by enhancing labour participation because the majority of people with disabilities are not working, while those that have work often need benefits to supplement their low wages.

The List of Issues asks the state party to:

'26. Please provide information on measures taken to: (a) Include disability in the collection and publication of data concerning poverty and social protection, disaggregated by sex, age, level of education, ethnicity and national origin, type of impairment and type of residence; (b) Tackle the income inequality faced by persons with disabilities; (c) Address homelessness among persons with psychosocial disabilities.'

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

The state report interprets Article 19 as the right to have affordable accessible housing and describes what legislation is in place to oblige municipalities to seek yearly agreements with housing corporations to reserve newly built houses for specific groups among which there are people with disabilities. No data are provided on

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<sup>56</sup> List of Issues Netherlands:

[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2fC%2fNLD%2fQ%2f1&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2fC%2fNLD%2fQ%2f1&Lang=en).

<sup>57</sup> Alliance of DPOs input for LOI, 1 February 2022:

[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCRPD%2fICO%2fNLD%2f47913&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCRPD%2fICO%2fNLD%2f47913&Lang=en).

<sup>58</sup> NHRI, Additional Report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on the adoption of the List of Issues for the initial report of the Netherlands, February 2022:

[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCRPD%2fICO%2fNLD%2f47910&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCRPD%2fICO%2fNLD%2f47910&Lang=en).

<sup>59</sup> Netherlands periodic report, *State Party Report 2018*,

[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2fC%2fNLD%2f1&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2fC%2fNLD%2f1&Lang=en).

outcome results of such local agreements. The report also notes that people with disabilities may be offered sheltered and clustered housing.

The alternative report by the alliance of DPOs criticises the lack of deinstitutionalisation policies and the lack of monitoring for affordable, accessible housing, adequately-funded personal budgets, support for building a social network, decreasing stigmatisation of people with psychosocial disabilities and effectively supporting family members who provide care.

The List of Issues asks the state party to:

'17. Please provide information on: (a) Steps taken to develop a deinstitutionalization policy, including details on the time frame within which the full deinstitutionalization of all persons with disabilities, in particular children with disabilities, persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with psychosocial disabilities, will be achieved, and measures to facilitate their full inclusion and participation in the community; (b) The availability of housing and the extent to which it ensures the right of persons with disabilities to freely choose their living arrangements in the community and their right to choose where and with whom to live, including for persons placed under substitute decision-making regimes; (c) Measures taken to ensure that personal assistance programmes provide persons with disabilities, including persons who are still under substitute decision-making regimes, with sufficient financial assistance to allow them to live independently in the community, and to ensure that the differences in criteria applied by municipal authorities are reduced to a minimum; (d) The number of persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, who are still living in residential institutions.'

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

The state party report states that access to health insurance is guaranteed for low-income households via an allowance to compensate for the health insurance premium and to compensate for obligatory co-payments, and the possibility to deduct excessive health expenses (including disability-related expenses) from taxes.

The alternative report by the alliance of DPOs notes that people with disabilities, especially if they are dependent on long-term care, face high co-payments leading to fewer instances of care use.

The List of Issues asks the state party to:

'23. Please inform the Committee about the rationale of prenatal screening for pregnant women for detecting impairment of a foetus, as indicated in the paragraphs 268 and 269 of the State party report, as well as whether the State party is aware that disability prevention is a measure of the medical model of disability and not a provision of the Convention.  
24. Please provide information on measures taken to: (a) Ensure access for all persons with disabilities to healthcare, including gynaecological, dental and other healthcare services, facilities, amenities and equipment, including through the provision of specific accessible amenities and equipment for women and girls with disabilities; (b) Reduce the waiting time necessary to access healthcare services, in particular for persons with psychosocial disabilities; (c) Facilitate training and the promulgation of an ethical standard for health-care professionals, with a view to providing health-care services for persons with disabilities that are of the same quality as those provided to others, including through raising awareness of the human rights, dignity, autonomy and requirements of all persons with disabilities.'

## 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 Netherlands was 21.3 % in 2020, compared to 10.5 % for other persons of similar age – an estimated disability poverty gap of approximately 11 percentage points (see Table 14). For people aged over 65, the disability poverty gap was 2.2 points (12.6 % for older persons with disabilities and 10.4 % for other persons of similar age). The tables in the Annex also indicate the respective rates of risk of poverty or social exclusion and break these down by gender as well as age. Recently updated data from Eurostat indicates that this relative risk rose slightly for the working-age disabled population (23.9 %) and significantly for the older age group (17.5 %) in 2021.<sup>60</sup>

For persons with disabilities of working age (18-64) in the Netherlands, the risk of poverty before social transfers was 42.3 % and 21.3 % after transfers. The in-work poverty rate for persons with disabilities in this age range was 7.1 %, rising to 7.4 % in 2021.<sup>61</sup>

Between 2010 and 2018, the risk of poverty increased in the Netherlands for all people. It increased more for people with disabilities younger than 65 years of age than for other persons in that age group.<sup>62</sup> Poverty decreased between 2018-2020 according to the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP) but this decrease in poverty did not lead to a higher level of quality of life. According to SCP, objective quality of life is at a significantly lower level for households on low incomes, people with lower educational levels, people with a migrant status and people who experience health problems and / or have a disability. This lower quality of life is attributed, among other reasons, to uncertainty due to the large proportion of temporary contracts, on-call contracts and self-employment contracts. People with a disability have also suffered austerity measures affecting their ability to access support and care.<sup>63</sup>

Until 2020 net disposable income increased more for households with paid work (2.2 %) than for households with a member in receipt of an unemployment or disability benefit (increase in 2020 1.3 %). This trend has been reversed in the budget for 2023. Households with paid work will see their net income increase by 3.4 % and households with an unemployment or disability benefit will see an increase of 8.5 %. This high increase is due to energy costs allowances to households with low incomes and an increase of more than 10 % in the minimum wage and benefits that are related to the minimum wage. Despite the energy costs allowance paid in 2022, the number of

<sup>60</sup> Eurostat, People at risk of poverty by level of activity limitation, sex and age, [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/HLTH\\_DPE020\\_custom\\_3348056/default/table](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/HLTH_DPE020_custom_3348056/default/table).

<sup>61</sup> Eurostat, In-work at-risk-of-poverty rate by level of activity limitation, sex and age, [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/hlth\\_dpe050/default/table](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/hlth_dpe050/default/table).

<sup>62</sup> See Chapter 7, Table 14.

<sup>63</sup> SCP, *De Sociale Staat van Nederland*, (Social state of affairs Netherlands), September 2020, <https://www.scp.nl/publicaties/publicaties/2020/09/10/kwaliteit-van-leven-in-onzekere-tijden.-de-sociale-staat-van-nederland-op-hoofdlijnen>.



people living in poverty increased in 2022 but the number is expected to decrease in 2023 as a result of the raising of the minimum wage.<sup>64</sup>

Social inclusion of people with physical and intellectual disabilities has not changed significantly since 2008 according to the participation monitor by research agency Nivel. According to this monitor (based on interviews with a panel of people with disabilities) participation in recreation activities, living in the community using public transport, doing paid or voluntary work and contributing to clubs and associations, hardly changed.<sup>65</sup>

Access to healthcare and social support, affordable housing and forming families is hindered by obligatory contributions for care,<sup>66</sup> inadequate support in navigating complicated eligibility procedures, and competence fights between different agencies that finance and provide long-term care. The National Ombudsman warned that people with more severe disabilities and families with young children with disabilities are severely affected by the lack of access to long-term care.<sup>67</sup> The National Ombudsman reported in 2022 that young adults with disabilities face serious and long-term financial difficulties caused by insecure income, low benefits or wages, lack of support by municipalities and the experience that financial and social support systems in place are so complicated that they cannot get the support they need. The report states that the Government has set too high expectations for people with disabilities to be self-reliant and that instead of being supportive, the support system is limiting young people with disabilities.<sup>68</sup>

Of interest to health policy are the data on self-reported unmet needs for medical examination (too expensive, too far to travel or waiting list). Disability equality gaps are evident here too and, on this basis, the rate for persons with disabilities in Netherlands was 0.5 %, compared to 0.1 % for other persons.

When the Government publishes its new annual budget, it also publishes the increase or decrease of net disposable income of different types of households. Households with a member with a disability are never represented in these annual budget data. Netherlands Statistics has stopped reporting on the net disposable income of households with a disability.

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<sup>64</sup> Centraal Planbureau (CPB) (Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis), *Macro Economische Verkenning*, September 2022, <https://www.cpb.nl/sites/default/files/omnidownload/CPB-Raming-Macro-Economische-Verkenning-MEV-2023.pdf>.

<sup>65</sup> Nivel, *Update Kerncijfers Participatie monitor 2008-2018*, July 2020, <https://nivel.nl/sites/default/files/bestanden/1003827.pdf> and <https://www.nivel.nl/nl/publicatie/meedoen-de-samenleving-2008-2018-update-kerncijfers-participatiemonitor> and CPB, Co-payments in long term home care: do they affect the use of care?, discussion paper 363: <https://www.cpb.nl/sites/default/files/omnidownload/CPB-Discussion-Paper-363-Co-payments-in-long-term-home-care.pdf>.

<sup>67</sup> Ombudsman, *Rapport Zorgen voor burgers* (Report worries on care for civilians), May 2018: <https://www.nationaleombudsman.nl/nieuws/onderzoeken/2018030-zorgen-voor-burgers-onderzoek-naar-knelpunten-bij-de-toegang-tot-zorg> and press release September 2020: <https://www.nationaleombudsman.nl/nieuws/2020/nationale-ombudsman-geen-woorden-maar-daden-nodig-bij-toegang-tot-zorg>.

<sup>68</sup> Ombudsman, *Meedoen zonder beperkingen* (Participate without limitations), 13 September 2022, [https://www.nationaleombudsman.nl/system/files/bijlage/Rapport%20Meedoen%20zonder%20beperkingen\\_0.pdf](https://www.nationaleombudsman.nl/system/files/bijlage/Rapport%20Meedoen%20zonder%20beperkingen_0.pdf).

The national umbrella organisation of DPOs, Ieder(in), annually draws attention to the high disability-related costs for people with disabilities shortly before the parliamentary debate on the budget. In September 2022, the organisation drew attention to the fact that, as of 2022, disability-related costs can be much higher as people with disabilities make extra use of electricity (for instance to power up their wheelchair).<sup>69</sup> The general compensation, which the Government presented for excessive energy costs, compensates average extra costs of electricity and does not take these extra disability-related costs into account.

The alternative report by NGOs on the implementation of the CRPD made use of interviews in which young people with a disability state they cannot access affordable adapted rental houses. They also stated that obligatory contributions for social care and support – which are means-tested within households – prevents them from initiating marriage or starting long-lasting relationships with partners with a paid job. Forming a household which a partner with a paid job would result in higher obligatory contributions for care of hundreds of euros per month.<sup>70</sup> When the Government was addressed by Members of Parliament on this particular issue, the answer was that people living in a relationship are supposed to be financially responsible for each other and to contribute in solidarity to the costs of long-term care of a partner.

## 4.2 Analysis of social policies relevant to the Semester

The policy to reduce poverty relies on providing minimum level of benefits on the basis of unemployment or disability. Until 2022 the trend was to provide people working in paid jobs with tax credits as an incentive to accept paid work over a benefit. This policy, combined with the efforts to provide extra jobs based on the job agreement and quota scheme, was intended to improve the social inclusion of people with disabilities.

The policy does not lead to a general improvement of labour participation of people with disabilities. The group of workers who are offered a job based on the job agreement generally do not earn enough steady income to be lifted out of poverty, mostly because they remain dependent on supplementary benefits, for which the tax credit for workers does not bring enough added value. Their net disposable income remains at net minimum level.<sup>71</sup>

The Government decided to increase the minimum wage in 2023, which helps all households with a minimum wage or with benefits, but the tax credit for workers has also been raised, thus widening the gap between people dependent on benefits and those with paid jobs. The Government did introduce new measures which allow workers with a disability to retain more of their wages if supplementary benefits are needed but this does not help those who cannot find a paid job.

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<sup>69</sup> Ieder(in), *Mensen met een beperking zitten al jaren in de knel*, press release, 20 September 2022, <https://iederin.nl/kabinet-moet-nu-noodmaatregelen-treffen-om-mensen-met-een-beperking-te-helpen/>.

<sup>70</sup> Alliantie VN-Verdrag Handicap, *Schaduwrapportage Verdrag inzake de rechten van personen met een handicap in Nederland* (Alternative report on implementing the CRPD Netherlands), 3 December 2019, [https://iederin.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Schaduwrapport-VN-verdrag-Handicap.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0K76ogu6\\_UWWSSuhGR7A5Bja0345uqhxwvUH1MGfc6V-p-HLuF8Yr\\_fg](https://iederin.nl/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Schaduwrapport-VN-verdrag-Handicap.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0K76ogu6_UWWSSuhGR7A5Bja0345uqhxwvUH1MGfc6V-p-HLuF8Yr_fg).

<sup>71</sup> SCP, *Kansrijk armoedebeleid* (Successful poverty policy), June 2020.



The system of wage subsidies and tax relief for employers is such that employers are incentivised to not raise wages and to refrain from promoting their workers with a disability to better paid jobs. Wage subsidies and tax reliefs are only granted for jobs with low hourly pay. This hinders workers with a disability to invest in training and making career steps that would provide them with a higher and more secure income.

Extraordinary health expenses, including disability-related costs, can be partially tax deductible. An evaluation of this tax deduction regulation showed that in 2019, of all people with disabilities who have disability-related extra costs, only 16 % could make use of this tax deduction.<sup>72</sup> This proportion is relatively low because people with a minimum income pay low to no taxes and thus cannot profit from tax deduction. Another cause of the low uptake is that not all disability-related expenses are accepted in the tax deduction regulation.

Because there is no specific monitoring of the net income position among households with a member with a disability and the obligatory contributions that people with disabilities pay for support, the need for additional measures is not addressed. Poverty diminishes opportunities for people with a disability to participate in training and education.

There is a need to address the growing inequality among especially low skilled workers, not only in terms of net disposable income, but also in terms of having job security and access to social insurance. People with a disability are overrepresented among groups with lower education, lower skills and insecure job contracts and access to employee-related disability benefits. The new nationwide education programme aims to upskill low-skilled workers. Part of the programme is aimed at workers with a low vocational level and who have low literacy abilities. Given the complexity of regulations around the job agreement and quota scheme and the general view by employers that the reintegration support system is too complicated to use, whether the educational programme can effectively reach out to workers with a disability who might profit from it remains a question.

Existing problems for people with disabilities in accessing long-term care and social support, as reported by the National Ombudsman, are addressed by the Government by initiating projects and pilots to enhance access to long-term care and social support. The aim is to provide everyone in need of social support or long-term care with an independent client support worker who will help navigate the bureaucracy and complicated eligibility procedures. Although this measure helps citizens in need of support, it does not address adequately the competing financial interests and competences of financiers of social support and care according to the National Ombudsman.<sup>73</sup> Moreover, the recent report by the Ombudsman on the precarious financial position of young adults with disabilities has not been addressed with any measures yet.

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<sup>72</sup> Significant Public, *Evaluatie aftrek specifieke zorgkosten* (Evaluation of deductions for specific healthcare costs), August 2022, <https://www.tweedekamer.nl/downloads/document?id=2022D36047>.

<sup>73</sup> Ombudsman, press release, September 2020: <https://www.nationaleombudsman.nl/nieuws/2020/nationale-ombudsman-geen-woorden-maar-daden-nodig-bij-toegang-tot-zorg>.

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

The most recent CRPD developments are the 2022 List of Issues raised by the UN Committee,<sup>74</sup> and the input provided for this by an alliance of DPOs<sup>75</sup> and by the National Human Rights Institute Netherlands (NHRI) in 2022.<sup>76</sup> The state's submission of the initial report was in 2018.<sup>77</sup>

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

The state party report states that the Netherlands traditionally maintains a dual system of regular and special schools and that such a dual system is not contradictory to the UN CRPD. The report gives a description of individual support that is available to students (such as adaptations in transport, of study books, and a supplement to their study loans).

The alternative report by the alliance of DPOs provides statistical data on the increase in the number of children that are being referred to special schools and the continuous increase in the number of children with disabilities being refused entry into schools and being referred to care centres. The alternative report cites research which found that pupils who finish secondary special education (with or without a diploma) are significantly less likely to find employment than their peers in regular education.

The NHRI has jurisdiction to issue opinions on the provision of reasonable accommodation by schools. In its 2020 report on the right to education, the NHRI pointed out that these opinions in the cases concerned indicate that schools do not always fulfil their obligation to investigate whether the reasonable accommodation applied for is necessary.<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, the evaluation of the education system has shown that not all schools are able to provide the support needed by pupils with a disability.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> List of Issues Netherlands:  
[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2fC%2fNLD%2fQ%2f1&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2fC%2fNLD%2fQ%2f1&Lang=en).

<sup>75</sup> Alliance of DPOs input for LOI:  
[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCRPD%2fICO%2fNLD%2f47913&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCRPD%2fICO%2fNLD%2f47913&Lang=en).

<sup>76</sup> NHRI, Additional Report to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on the adoption of the List of Issues for the initial report of the Netherlands, February 2022:  
[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCRPD%2fICO%2fNLD%2f47910&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=INT%2fCRPD%2fICO%2fNLD%2f47910&Lang=en).

<sup>77</sup> Netherlands periodic report, *State Party Report 2018*,  
[https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2fC%2fNLD%2f1&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2fC%2fNLD%2f1&Lang=en).

<sup>78</sup> Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, *The right to education in the CRPD*, p. 27; See also: Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, Opinion 2019-36, 19 April 2019; Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, Opinion 2020-9, 11 February 2020; Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, Opinion 2021-33, 1 April 2021.

<sup>79</sup> Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, *The right to education in the CRPD*, p. 27.

The List of Issues asks the state party to:

'22. Please provide information on: (a) Plans to discontinue the dual education system and implement the inclusive education system, and plans to build a strategy with clear targets and an allocated budget for inclusive education for all children with disabilities; (b) Plans to recognize the denial of access to education in general schools for a child with disabilities as a form of discrimination; (c) Measures taken to ensure access for all children with disabilities to general schools in their communities, and to ensure the necessary support, in particular the provision of reasonable accommodation, for children with disabilities in the general education system; (d) Measures taken to ensure access to inclusive tertiary education, including vocational and higher education, for children and adults with disabilities; (e) Training provided to general education teachers on the rights of children with disabilities to inclusive education, and on inclusive education methods and augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, education techniques and materials; (f) Data, disaggregated by age, sex and type of impairment, on children with disabilities in special education settings, including in special education schools and special education classes within the general education system, as well as on children with disabilities in the general education system.

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

The EU-SILC 2020 estimates concerning educational attainment should be treated with caution due to relatively wide confidence intervals but they consistently indicate disability equality gaps (an average of 2-3 years provides a more stable indication). Table 16 indicates early school leaving rates disaggregated by disability status in Netherlands. Youths 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 17 shows completion rate of tertiary education disaggregated by disability and age group. Persons with disabilities (aged 30-34) are less likely to complete tertiary education than their peers (and this is reinforced in the wider age range 30-39).

The number of early school leavers from secondary and vocational education has been increasing since 2017. In the school year 2020/21, the number of early school leavers was 24 385, well above the target of 20 000.<sup>80</sup>

The national education inspectorate has expressed concern over the high percentage (80 %) of school leavers from special secondary schools that do not continue to study or work after leaving school.<sup>81</sup>

Segregation of pupils with disabilities has increased. The number of children in special schools increased in 2022 above the level of 2015.<sup>82</sup> The number of children with

<sup>80</sup> Letter to Parliament, 14 March 2022, *Cijfers voortijdig schoolverlaten schooljaar 2020-2021*: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/vsv/documenten/kamerstukken/2022/03/14/cijfers-voortijdig-schoolverlaten-vsv-2020-2021>.

<sup>81</sup> National Education Inspectorate, *De Staat van het Onderwijs, Onderwijsverslag over 2016/2017* (The State of Education, Education Report over 2016/2017), 11 April 2018, p. 21, <https://www.onderwijs-inspectie.nl/documenten/rapporten/2018/04/11/rapport-de-staat-van-het-onderwijs>.

<sup>82</sup> Netherlands Statistics, Data May 2022 on pupils referred to special education (*Speciaal basisonderwijs en speciale scholen; leerlingen, schoolregio*), <https://opendata.cbs.nl/statline/#/CBS/nl/dataset/71478ned/table?dl=422CC>.

disabilities and complex support needs that are not accepted in any school, but are being referred to day care centres, increased from 4 444 children in 2015 to almost 7 000 children in 2021.<sup>83</sup> On top of that, around 4 000 children with special educational support needs are formal pupils in schools but have effectively dropped out of schools.<sup>84</sup>

The Dutch educational system is becoming more segregated not only by disability, but also by migrant status, gender and parents' educational attainment. Migrant children, especially boys, are overrepresented in special schools.<sup>85</sup> Differences between schools in the Netherlands have the largest impact on pupils' performance of all OECD countries and are closely linked to the different tracks offered. The gap between the average performance of pupils at schools with a low versus high concentration of pupils with a migrant background is the second largest in the EU. This implies that the achievement of individual pupils is closely linked to their school choice. The parental choice system contributes to creating more segregated schools and strengthens the effects of residential separation.<sup>86</sup>

## 5.2 Analysis of education policies relevant to the Semester

The policies to reduce early school leaving consist of agreements between national Government, municipalities and secondary and vocational schools to cooperate on a regional basis. Schools and municipalities are required to make regional plans to finance and offer coaching for potential early school leavers, to set up special classes, provide mentoring, reduce sickness among pupils, provide on-the-job learning opportunities and to provide support to families of pupils who are at risk of dropping out of school. The policy has not resulted in better outcome results. This is attributed to the effect of COVID-19, the temporary lockdowns of schools and increase in mental health problems as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic among young people.<sup>87</sup>

The Government made an additional budget of EUR 214 million available in 2021<sup>88</sup> and again of EUR 8 million in 2023 to help pupils from secondary special education to follow additional vocational training.<sup>89</sup> These policies aim to reduce drop-out numbers and help young pupils with a disability to enter vocational education and transition to the labour market. Success in this field has been good. According to the OECD, vocational upper secondary education (MBO colleges) is of good quality with strong

<sup>83</sup> Ingrado, 2020, *Benchmark VSV Kompas*, [https://www.vsvkompas.nl/resultatenoverzicht/kijk-en-vergelijk/?qlistcat\\_id=44012#!/](https://www.vsvkompas.nl/resultatenoverzicht/kijk-en-vergelijk/?qlistcat_id=44012#!/).

<sup>84</sup> See: <http://www.autipassendonderwijsutrecht.nl/themas/thuiszitters>.

<sup>85</sup> Netherlands Statistics, *Leerlingen op speciale scholen; migratieachtergrond, woonregio*, <https://opendata.cbs.nl/statline/#/CBS/nl/dataset/83295NED/table?ts=1623851947556>

<sup>86</sup> OECD, Education at a glance 2020.

<sup>87</sup> Letter to Parliament, 14 March 2022, *Cijfers voortijdig schoolverlaten schooljaar 2020-2021*, <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/onderwerpen/vsv/documenten/kamerstukken/2022/03/14/cijfers-voortijdig-schoolverlaten-vsv-2020-2021>.

<sup>88</sup> Vereniging Gehandicaptenzorg Nederland (VGN), National Association of Care Providers, Budget Day Memorandum 2020: <https://www.vgn.nl/documenten/notitie-prinsjesdag-2020-vgnpdf>.

<sup>89</sup> Letter to Parliament, 23 September 2022, *Beleidslijnen Leven Lang Ontwikkelen* (Lifelong development policy), [https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/brieven\\_regering/detail?id=2022Z17569&did=2022D37174](https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/brieven_regering/detail?id=2022Z17569&did=2022D37174).

links to the labour market.<sup>90</sup> Pupils with disabilities in special schools are supported and succeed in entering basic vocational education. Vocational colleges cooperate with special schools and provide their courses within these special schools. Projects to provide more coaching while doing internships for pupils with disabilities are funded with ESF funds. These measures continue to help young people with disabilities to find employment.

The National Reform Programme makes funding available for a nationwide learning programme offering short-term online courses and tailor-made training opportunities for workers with low vocational levels and low literacy skills.<sup>91</sup> In doing so the Government addresses the importance of reaching out to the large group of people (1.7 million) that are low skilled and / or have cognitive disabilities.<sup>92</sup>

The Government is hesitant in designing national policies to diminish segregation in primary and secondary education, both for migrant children and children with disabilities. The NHRI reports that schools do not always provide reasonable accommodation.<sup>93</sup> The evaluation of the education system has also shown that not all schools are able to provide the support needed by pupils with a disability.<sup>94</sup> As a result, children with a disability are more often referred to special schools. This has the effect of even less available resource to support children with disabilities in regular schools because the increasing costs of special schools are automatically deducted from the budgets of neighbouring regular schools.

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<sup>90</sup> OECD Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report Netherlands, 2017, <https://www.oecd.org/publications/oecd-skills-strategy-diagnostic-report-the-netherlands-2017-9789264287655-en.htm>.

<sup>91</sup> Letter to Parliament, 23 September 2022, *Beleidslijnen Leven Lang Ontwikkelen* (lifelong development policy), [https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/brieven\\_regering/detail?id=2022Z17569&did=2022D37174](https://www.tweedekamer.nl/kamerstukken/brieven_regering/detail?id=2022Z17569&did=2022D37174).

<sup>92</sup> OECD Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report Netherlands 2017, <https://www.oecd.org/publications/oecd-skills-strategy-diagnostic-report-the-netherlands-2017-9789264287655-en.htm>.

<sup>93</sup> Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, *The right to education in the CRPD*, p. 27; See also: Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, Opinion 2019-36, 19 April 2019; Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, Opinion 2020-9, 11 February 2020; Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, Opinion 2021-33, 1 April 2021.

<sup>94</sup> Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, *The right to education in the CRPD*, p. 27.

## 6 Investment priorities in relation to disability

Of the total European Structural and Investment Funds budgets for the Netherlands for the period 2021-2027, EUR 413 million comes out of the European Social Fund (ESF). Of this ESF budget, a large yet unknown part is spent on projects for young people with disabilities graduating from special schools and special vocational schools.<sup>95</sup> Projects aim to support school leavers with internships, job coaching and additional training on the job in order to help them gain paid jobs. Of the young people participating in ESF-projects after leaving special schools in the period 2014-2020, 27 % found paid work immediately afterwards.<sup>96</sup>

The Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP) for the Netherlands was endorsed by the Commission only in September 2022. It includes 28 investments and 21 reforms, some of which are of possible relevance to persons with disabilities although not directly targeted towards them (nearly half of the plan addresses climate objectives and a quarter is directed to digitalisation, but there are also objectives to create jobs, for example). For instance, investments in green energy security and housing energy efficiency might impact households including a member with a disability in the future, who are at higher risk of fuel poverty. Investments in digitalisation, including digital government, will need to ensure accessibility in design and implementation. Support for reforms in social protection, healthcare and re-skilling, as addressed in the previous chapters, need to be inclusive for persons with disabilities. The issue of disability insurance for self-employed persons, highlighted in previous CSRs, is addressed directly, and there is some attention to the job agreement.

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<sup>95</sup> Government webpage on ESF project period 2021-2027:

<https://www.uitvoeringvanbeleidszw.nl/subsidies-en-regelingen/esf>.

<sup>96</sup> Factsheet ESF projects: <https://www.cbs.nl/nl-nl/achtergrond/2016/24/factsheet-esf-in-nederland>.



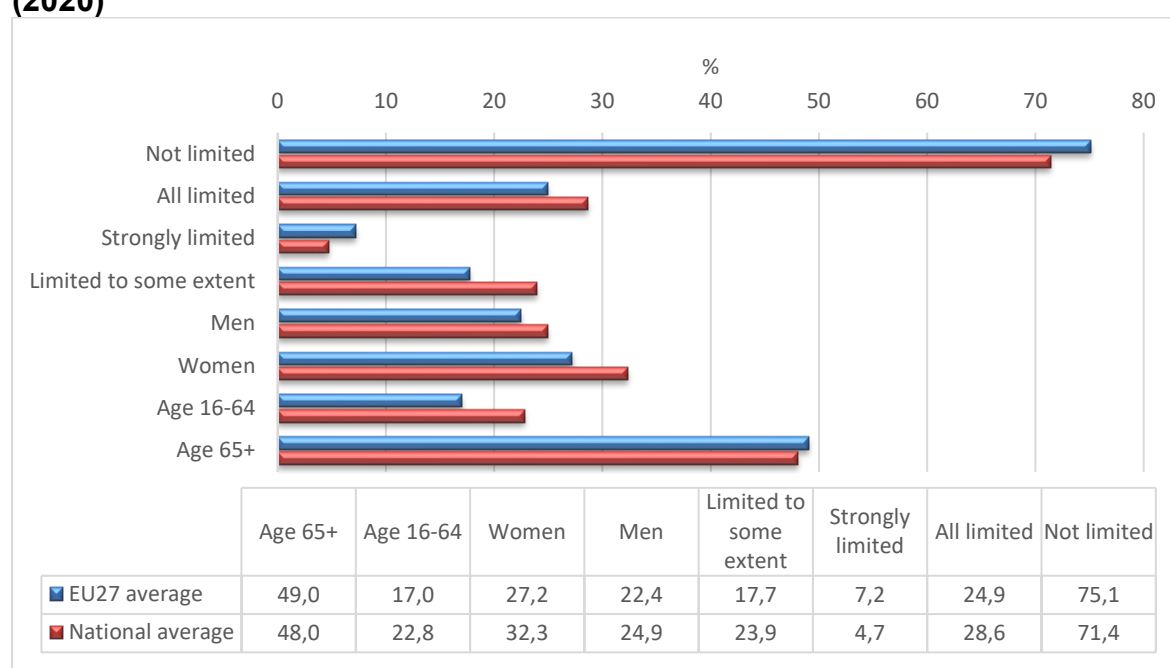
## 7 Annex: disability data relevant to the Semester

See also disability data published on the Eurostat database<sup>97</sup> and statistical reports.<sup>98</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>99</sup>

**Table 1: Self-reported ‘activity limitations’ as a proxy for impairment / disability (2020)**



Source: EU-SILC 2020 Release April 2022

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>100</sup> National estimates for the Netherlands are compared with EU27 mean averages for the most recent year.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>97</sup> Eurostat Health Database: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/health/data/database>.

<sup>98</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).

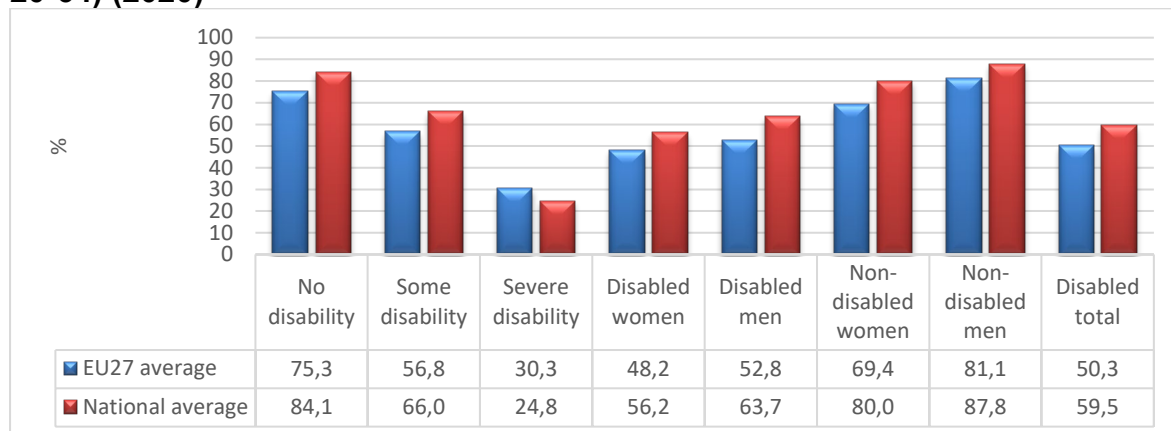
<sup>99</sup> The EU-SILC survey questions are contained in the Minimum European Health Module (MEHM), [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Special:WhatLinksHere/Glossary:Minimum\\_European\\_Health\\_Module\\_\(MEHM\)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Special:WhatLinksHere/Glossary:Minimum_European_Health_Module_(MEHM)).

<sup>100</sup> This methodology was developed in the annual statistical reports of ANED, available at: <http://www.disability-europe.net/theme/statistical-indicators>.

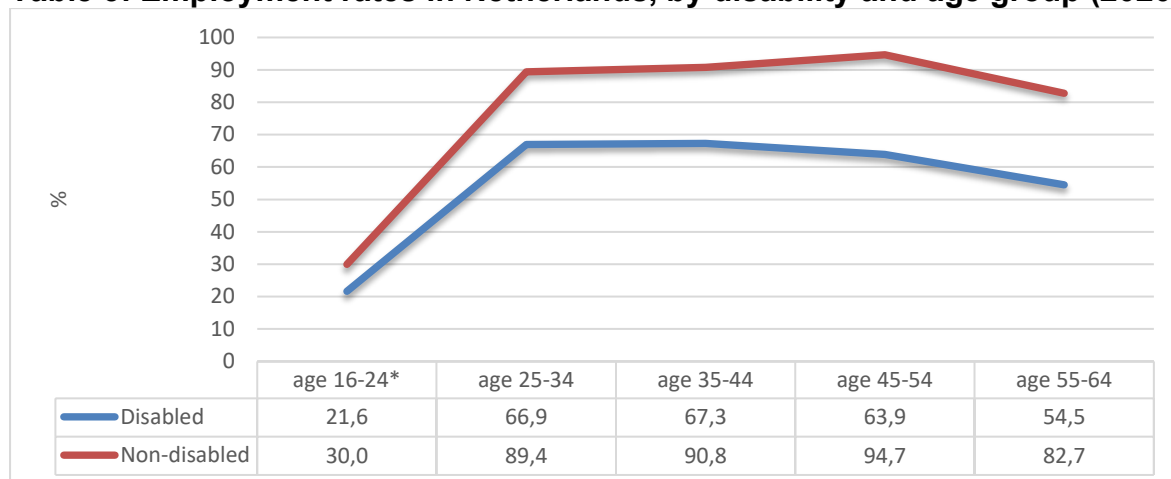
<sup>101</sup> The exit of the United Kingdom from the EU changed the EU average. EU27 averages have also been affected by time series breaks in other large countries, such as Germany.

## 7.1 Data relevant to disability and the labour market

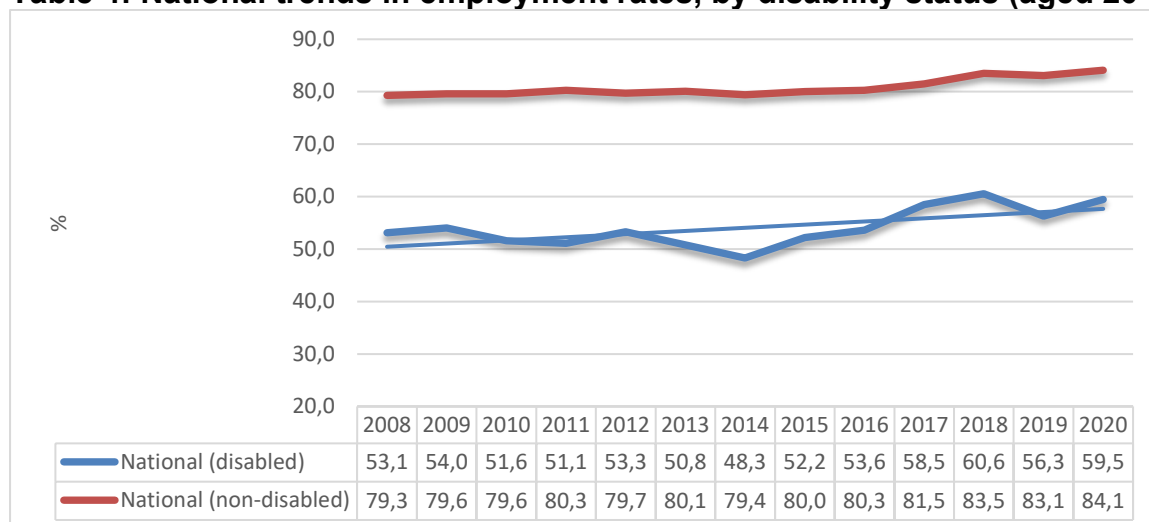
**Table 2: EU and Netherlands employment rates, by disability and gender (aged 20-64) (2020)**



**Table 3: Employment rates in Netherlands, by disability and age group (2020)**



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



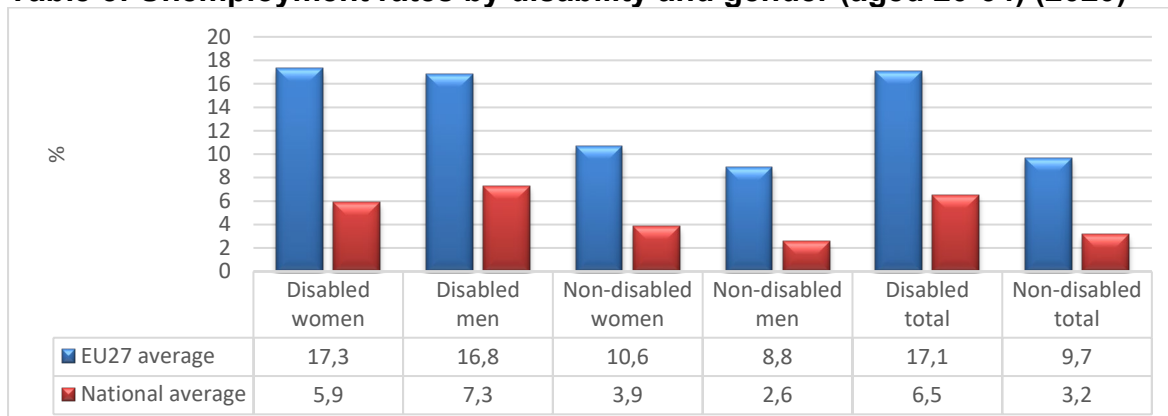
Source: EU-SILC 2020 Release April 2022 (and preceding UDBs)

Note: Microdata concerning employment status was not available for Germany and Italy in this data release, which affects the EU27 average (which is therefore estimated).

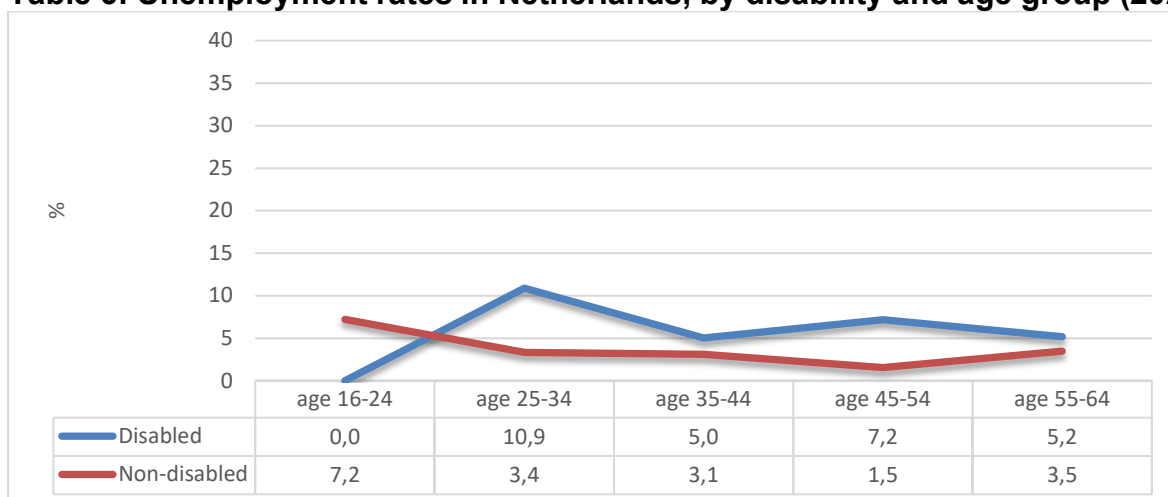


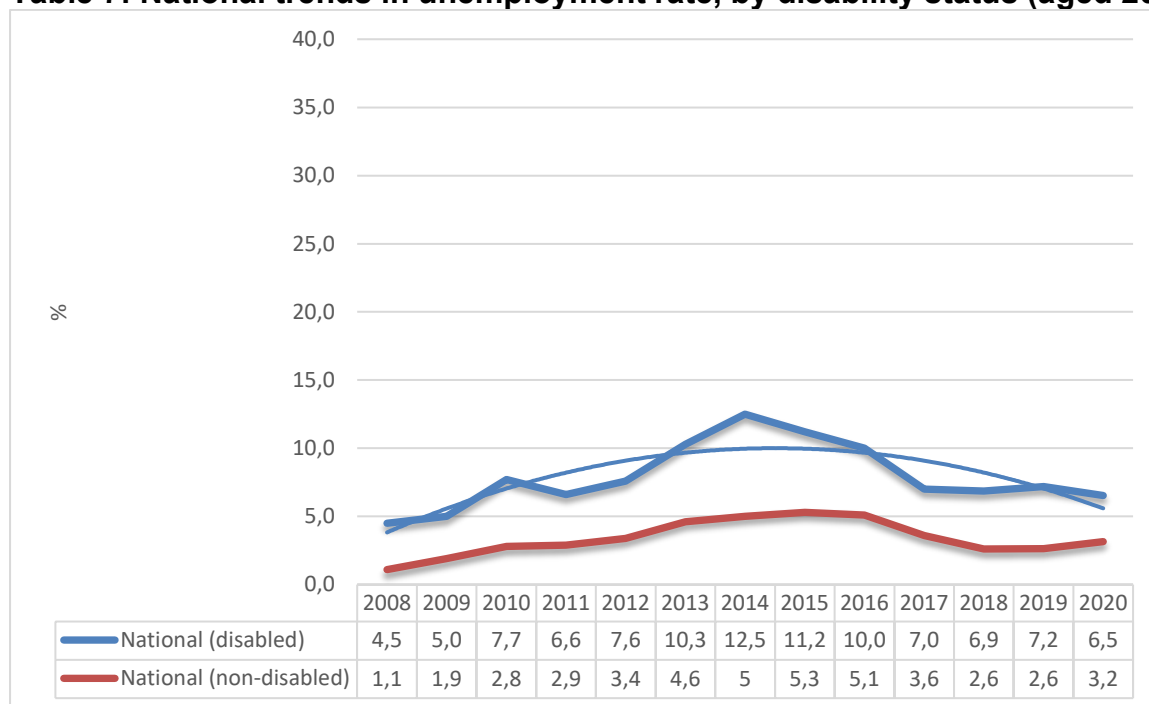
### 7.1.1 Unemployment

**Table 5: Unemployment rates by disability and gender (aged 20-64) (2020)**



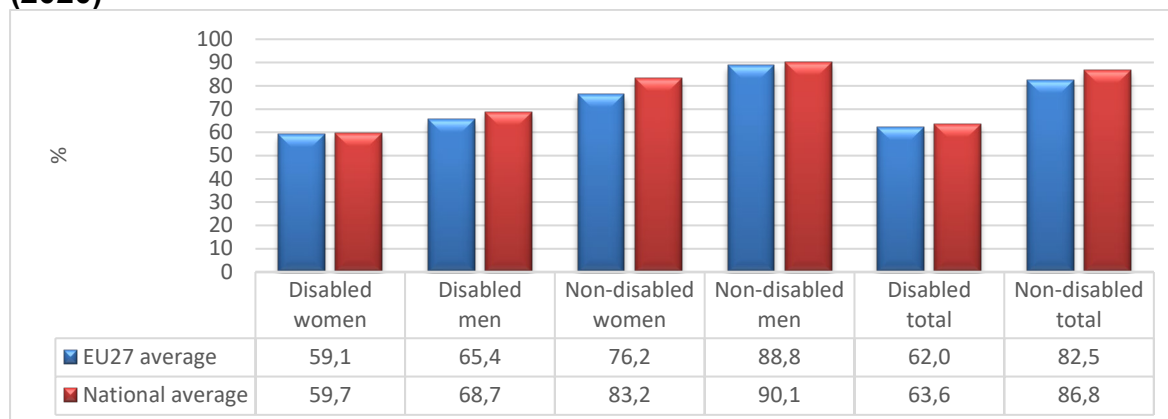
**Table 6: Unemployment rates in Netherlands, by disability and age group (2020)**

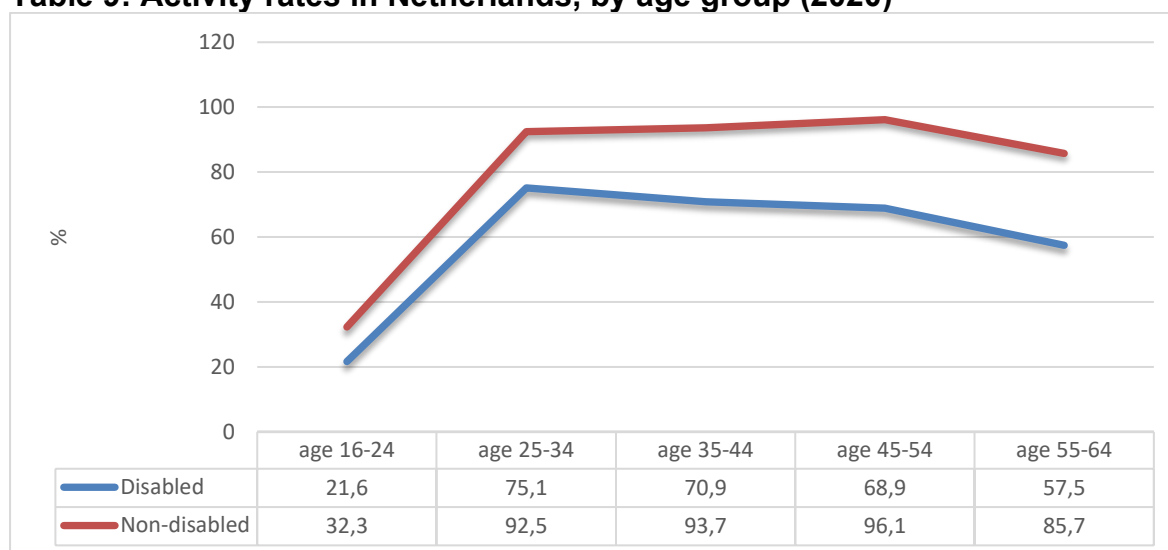
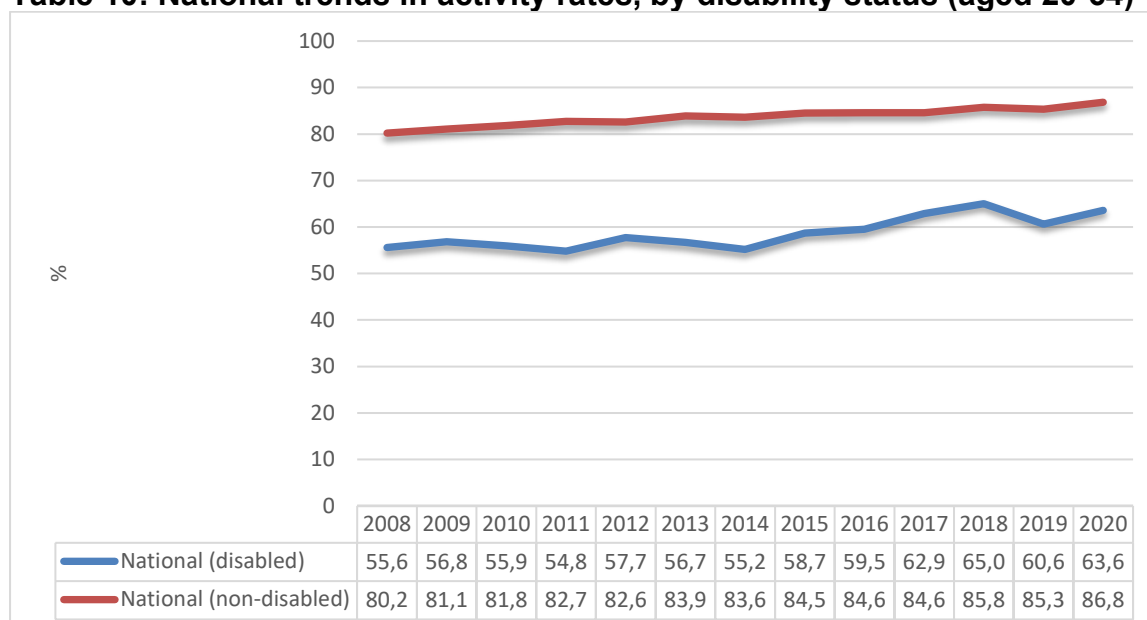


**Table 7: National trends in unemployment rate, by disability status (aged 20-64)**


Source: EU-SILC 2020 Release April 2022 (and preceding UDBs)

### 7.1.2 Economic activity

**Table 8: Activity rates in Netherlands, by disability and gender (aged 20-64) (2020)**


**Table 9: Activity rates in Netherlands, by age group (2020)****Table 10: National trends in activity rates, by disability status (aged 20-64)**

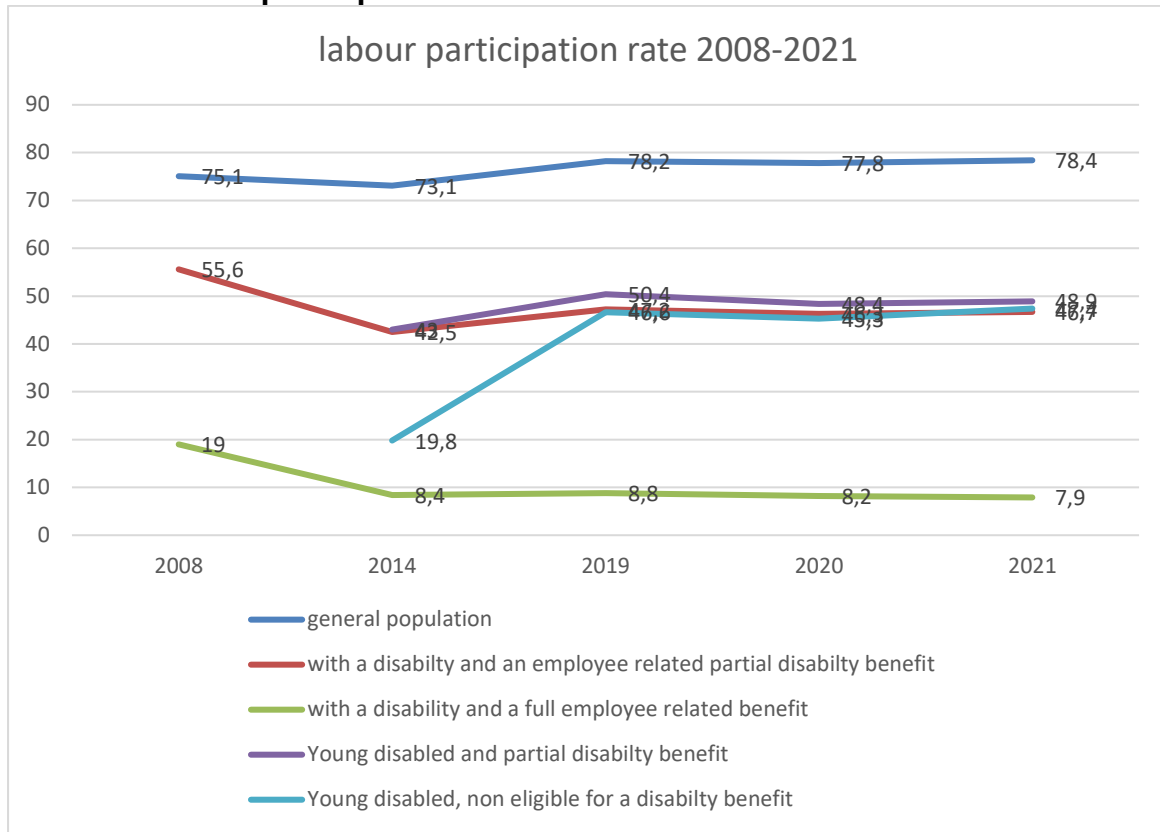
Source: EU-SILC 2020 Release April 2022 (and preceding UDBs)

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

Disability data is not yet available from the core European Labour Force Survey but labour market indicators for Netherlands were disaggregated from ad hoc modules conducted in 2001 and 2011. These can be found in the Eurostat disability database.<sup>102</sup>

<sup>102</sup> Eurostat Health Database: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/health/data/database>.

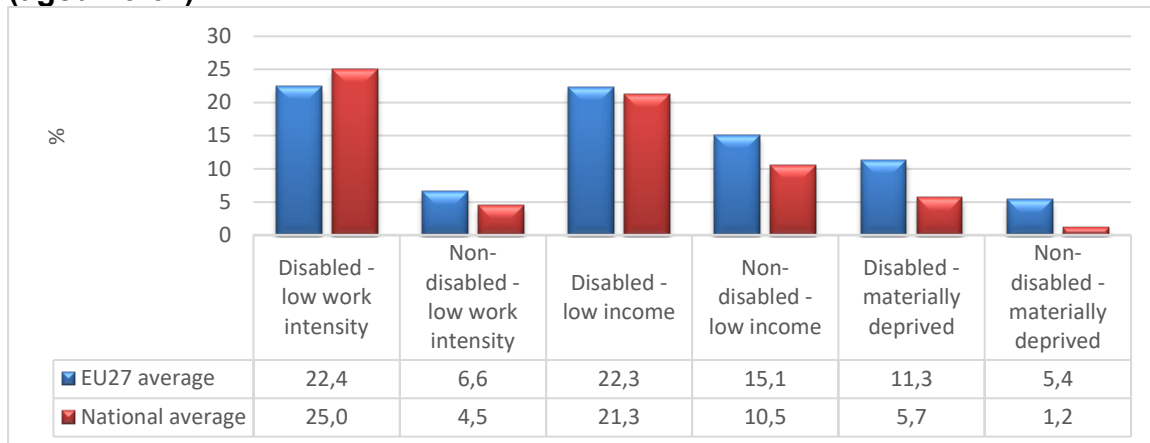
**Table A: Labour participation rate 2008-2021**



Source: Data on types of disability benefits in 2021 UWV. Monitor arbeidsparticipatie arbeidsbeperkten 2021 (Labour participation monitor of workers with a disability)<sup>103</sup>

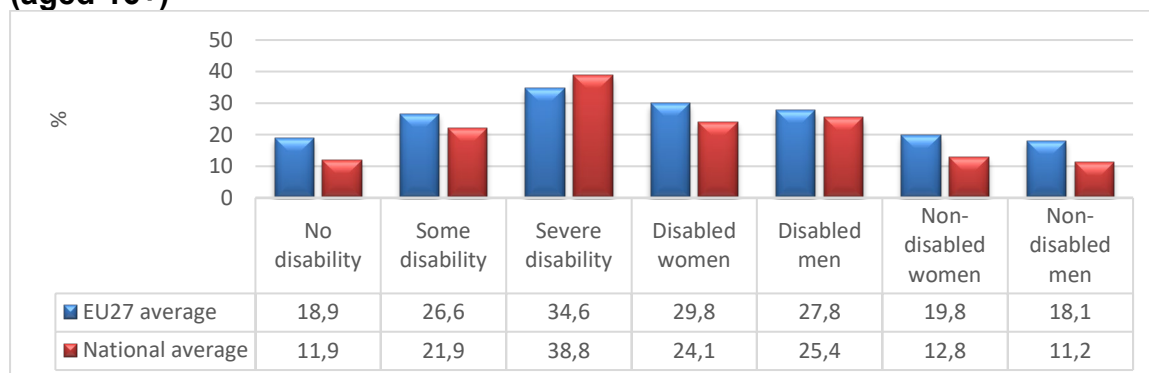
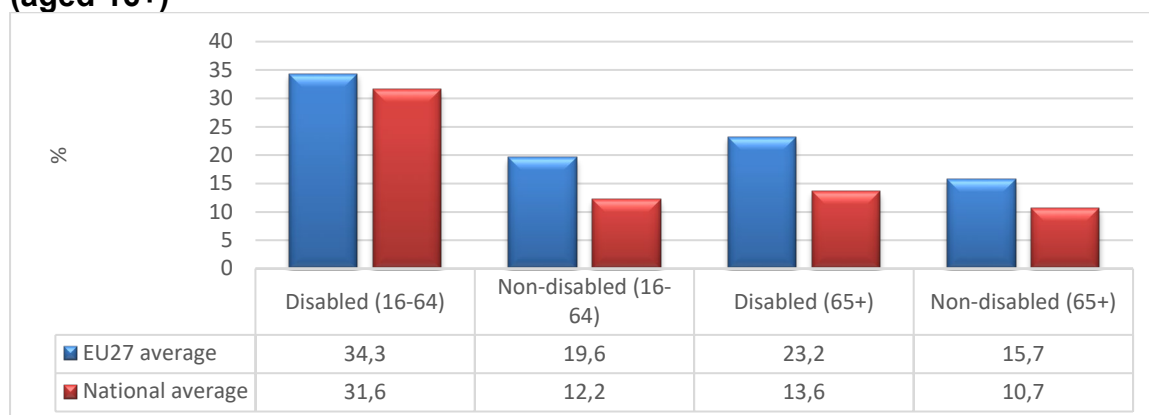
## 7.2 EU data relevant to disability, social policies and healthcare (2020)

**Table 11: People at risk of poverty or social exclusion, by disability and risk (aged 16-64)<sup>104</sup>**

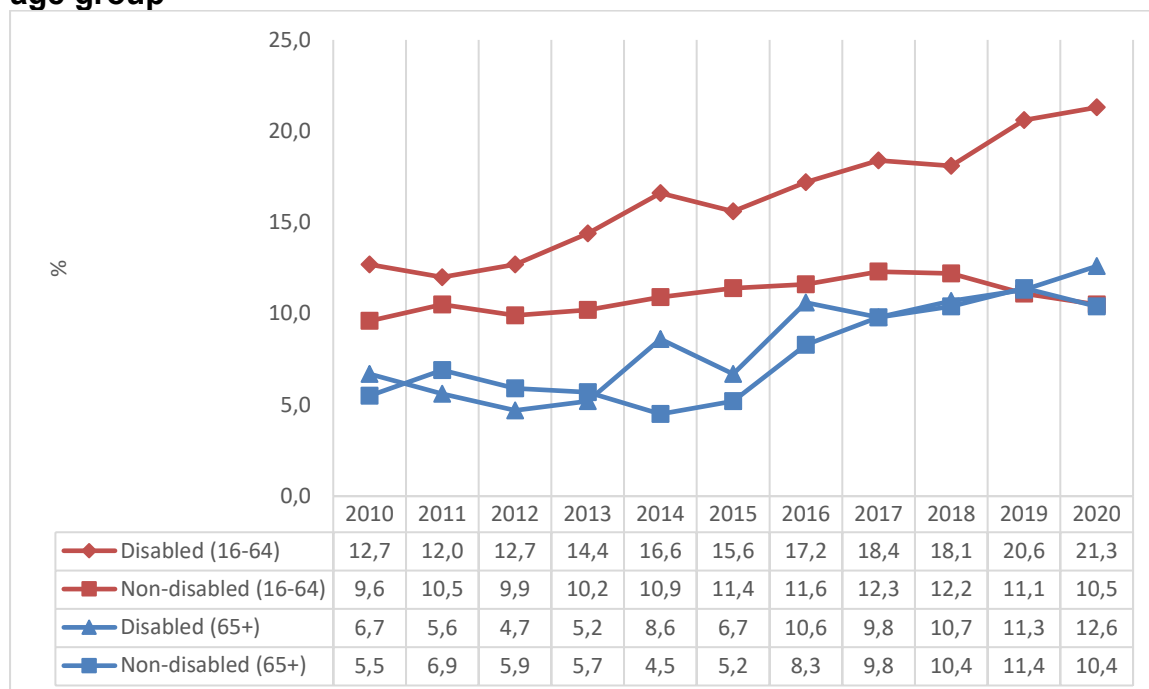


<sup>103</sup> UWV Monitor arbeidsparticipatie arbeidsbeperkten 2021 (Labour participation monitor of workers with a disability), <https://www.uwv.nl/overuwv/kennis-cijfers-en-onderzoek/kennis-onderzoeken/uwv-monitor-arbeidsparticipatie-arbeidsbeperkten-2021.aspx>.

<sup>104</sup> Aged 16-59 for low work intensity.

**Table 12: People at risk of poverty or social exclusion, by disability and gender (aged 16+)**

**Table 13: Overall risk of household poverty or exclusion by disability and age (aged 16+)**


Source: EU-SILC 2020 Release April 2022 (and previous UDB)

**Table 14: 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 15: Self-reported unmet needs for medical examination (% , aged 16+) 2020**



Source: Eurostat Health Database [[hlth\\_dh030](#)] – 'Too expensive or too far to travel or waiting list'

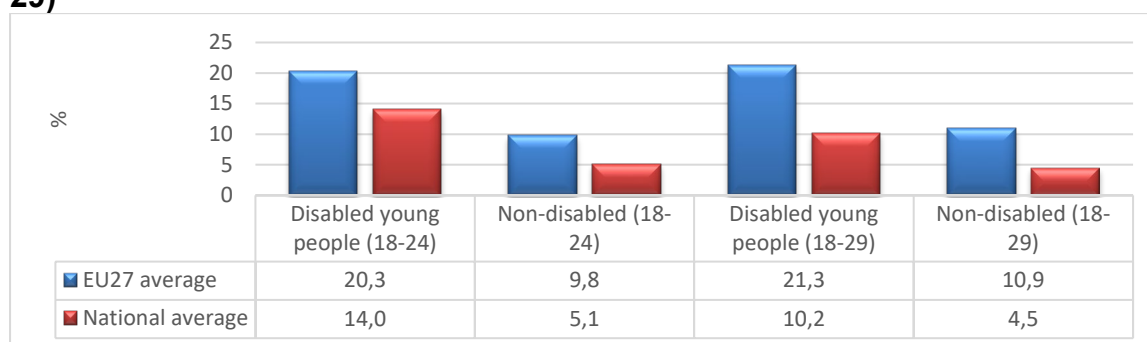
Note: EU mean averages are also skewed by high values in a minority of countries within disability groups but median averages for the total disability and no disability groups in 2020 are consistent with the 3-year mean values.

### 7.2.1 Alternative sources of poverty or healthcare data in Netherlands

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>105</sup> National sources of data are referred to in Section 4.

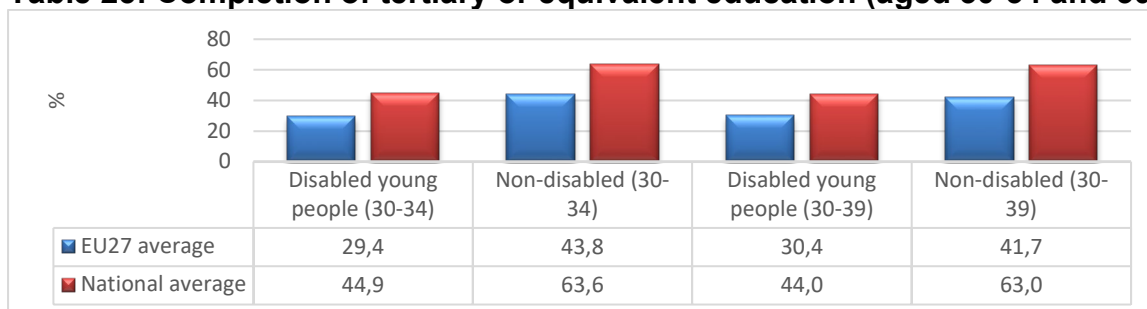
### 7.3 EU data relevant to disability and education

**Table 24: Early school leaving rates, by disability status (aged 18-24 and 18-29)<sup>106</sup>**



<sup>105</sup> Eurostat Health Database: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/health/data/database>.

<sup>106</sup> There was a change from International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED)1997 to ISCED 2011 qualification definitions in 2014 although some Member States continued to use the older definition after this time.

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

Source: EU-SILC 2020 Release April 2022 (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 Netherlands

National sources of data are referred to in Section 5.

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