



## Lidia Zofia Jabłońska-Porzuczek

Poznań University of Life Sciences, Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences,  
Department of Economics, [jplidka@up.poznan.pl](mailto:jplidka@up.poznan.pl)

## Sławomir Marcin Kalinowski

Poznań University of Life Sciences, Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences,  
Department of Economics, [skalin@up.poznan.pl](mailto:skalin@up.poznan.pl)

# Analysis of the Labor Market Situation of People with Disabilities

**Abstract:** People with disabilities belong to a social group at risk of poverty. In their daily lives, they face prejudice and obstacles in the labor market. The purpose of this paper is to analyze and assess the labor market situation of people with disabilities which, according to data analysis, is much more difficult than that of persons without disabilities. In 2010–2016, the activity rate of disabled people was, on average, by 39 percentage points lower compared to the total population. The disadvantageous situation of disabled people is impacted by frequent amendments to legal regulations. Over recent years, the changes in the area of subsidized employment have contributed to an increase in employment of disabled people in the open labor market, accompanied by a decrease in employment figures in sheltered workshops.

**Keywords:** labor market, labor market participation, people with disabilities

**JEL:** J21

## 1. Introduction

In their daily lives, people with disabilities face multiple obstacles related to individual prejudice, difficulties in the education system and in the labor market, and discrimination. Often, these barriers prevent them from living an active life. Thus, the government should provide disabled people with access to various areas of social, economic and cultural life. All the more so since, pursuant to the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland, the objective pursued by the state is to “reduce poverty and social exclusion (especially in the labor market) of the excluded population and of people at risk of poverty. Measures aimed at preventing social disparities and social exclusion will be based on multiple processes, including the good practices brought on by the cooperation between social assistance institutions, labor market and healthcare institutions” (BBN, 2014: 40). In recent years, one of the main goals of the social policy, especially in regards to labor market policy, was the professional inclusion of unemployed people, facing a difficult situation in the labor market, and young and elderly people. Although disabled people are classed as a social group at risk of poverty, they are often discriminated against and isolated in the labor market (Baldwin, Choe, 2014: 101–124; Jones, 2016: 1, 5; O’Brien, 2013: 321–333). Today, professional and social inclusion of people with disabilities is a key challenge for the social policy.

The purpose of this paper is to analyze and assess the effects of recent amendments to legal regulations, including subsidies for employers of disabled people, on the labor market situation of disabled people.

## 2. The essence of disability

As disability is a complex phenomenon, it has no single applicable definition (cf. Jones, 2008: 407; Mabbett et al., 2002). The multifaceted nature of disability is related to various limitations, types and consequences. The World Health Organization defines disability as a “restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being” (WHO, 2011: 3–4; *Encyklopedia PWN*, 2016)<sup>1</sup>. The Act of August 27, 1997 on the professional and social rehabilitation of disabled peo-

---

<sup>1</sup> The World Health Organization (WHO) defines disability as follows, taking into consideration the health status of an individual: impairment: any loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological, or anatomical structure or function; disability: restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being; handicap: disadvantage for a given individual, resulting from an impairment or disability, that limits or prevents the fulfillment of a role that is normal (depending on age, sex and social and cultural factors) for that individual – <http://www.unic.un.org.pl> [accessed: 21.10.2016].

ple defines disability as a “permanent or temporary inability to fulfill one’s social roles due to a permanent or prolonged dysfunction of the organism, resulting (without limitation) in the inability to work” (Article 2, item 10) (cf. Bound, 1991: 106–138). According to the Charter of Rights for Persons with Disabilities (1997), disabled people are “people whose physical, psychological or mental condition hampers, restricts or prevents their ability to live their daily lives, learn, work and fulfill their social roles.” According to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities<sup>2</sup> (2006), “Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others” (Article 1). In turn, the Central Statistical Office defines disabled persons as those “who hold an appropriate certificate issued by a duly authorized body (a legally disabled person / holder of a legal certificate) or who, while not being a holder of the aforesaid certificate, feel to be restricted in their ability to perform basic activities adequate to their age (biologically disabled person)” (GUS, 2015a: 203).

In Poland disability is classed into three groups, depending on the degree of its severity: significant, moderate and light (Table 1).

Table 1. Disability degrees in Poland

Significant	Moderate	Light
A person who has physical impairment, who is incapable of work or capable of work under the conditions of protected labor, who is not able to live independently and requires permanent or long-term care and support from others in order to fulfill his/her social roles.	A person who has physical impairment, who is incapable of work or capable of work under the conditions of protected labor, or who requires temporary or partial care and assistance from others in order to fulfill his/her social roles.	A person who has physical impairment which decreases his/her capacity to work, in comparison with a person with similar vocational qualifications but without disabilities, or has limited ability to fulfill his/her social roles which may be compensated with orthopedic appliances, auxiliary means or technical equipment.

Source: own study based on Article 4 of the Act of August 27, 1997 on the professional and social rehabilitation of disabled people, Journal of Laws [Dz.U.] of 1997, No. 123, item 776, as amended

Note that the Polish social security system does not include any unified framework for medical certification of disability. Such certificates are governed by various legal acts under the competence of several institutions. There are certificates issued for social pension purposes and for purposes other than social pension (Kłos, 2015: 10–11). Also, there are equivalent certificates held by people classed into an infirmity

<sup>2</sup> The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 13, 2006 was ratified by the President of the Republic of Poland on September 6, 2012 (Journal of Laws [Dz.U.] of 2012, item 1169).

group prior to January 1, 1998. Holders of such certificates are considered to be disabled persons under the Act. Infirmity degrees correspond to specific disability degrees as follows: the 1<sup>st</sup> infirmity group refers to significant level of disability; the 2<sup>nd</sup> infirmity group refers to moderate level of disability; the 3<sup>rd</sup> infirmity group refers to light level of disability. In turn, persons suffering from permanent or long-term incapacity for farm work are considered to be disabled people. However, they are considered to suffer from significant disability or light disability depending on whether or not they are beneficiaries of nursing allowance (Article 62 of the Act of August 27, 1997 on the professional and social rehabilitation of disabled people). In addition, there are certificates issued by medical examiners of the Social Insurance Institution pursuant to the Act of December 17, 1998 on pensions from the Social Insurance Fund. In this case, the following equivalence rules apply (Article 62 of the Act of August 27, 1997 on the professional and social rehabilitation of disabled people):

- 1) the certificate of total incapacity for work is considered to be equivalent to the certificate of significant disability,
- 2) the certificate of incapacity to lead an independent life is considered to be equivalent to the certificate of significant disability,
- 3) the certificate of total incapacity for work is considered to be equivalent to the certificate of moderate disability,
- 4) the certificate of partial incapacity for work is considered to be equivalent to the certificate of light disability.

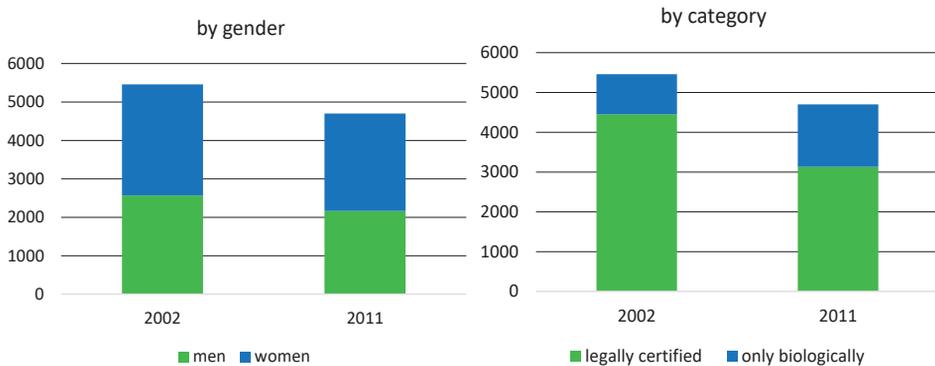


Figure 1. Number of people with disabilities in 2002 and 2011 (thousands)

Source: own study based on Central Statistical Office data

According to the results of the labor force survey, the number of disabled people has decreased from nearly 4.3 million in 2002 to 3.2 million in 2016 (<http://www.niepelnosprawni.gov.pl/p,81,bael>). In turn, according to the National Population and Housing Census, in 2011, the Polish disabled population was 4.7 million, representing 12.2% of the total population. Compared to 2002, the number of people with disabilities decreased by 13.9% and their share in the total population

dropped by 2.1 percentage points. Note however that replies to disability questions were voluntarily. Nearly 1.5 million people refused to answer (GUS, 2012: 63).

Most of the disabled people were women, with a share of 52.9% and 53.9% in 2002 and 2011, respectively (Figure 1). There were 4.5 million and 3.1 million holders of legal disability certificates in 2002 and 2011, respectively. The decrease in the number of people found legally disabled results from strengthening of the regulations on certifying the disability and incapacity for work. However, in the period under consideration, the number of people biologically disabled increased by 55.5%. As forecasted by Szukalski (2004: 109), the number of disabled people will grow by 32.7% from 2002 to 2030 (while the shares of people with disabilities in specific age groups will remain unchanged).

According to the results of the European Health Interview Survey (EHIS), in 2014, there were 3.8 million holders of a legal certificate of disability in Poland. “Over 5 years, the population of people with disabilities legally decreased by over 350,000” (GUS, 2015b: 8). “Depending on the adopted biological disability criterion (or, more strictly, on the level of restrictions), the Polish disabled population may be even 4.9 million. This estimation includes all legally disabled people and those with a severely restricted ability to perform actions” (GUS, 2015b: 8).

### 3. Disabled people in the labor market

One of the objectives pursued by the labor market policy is the professional inclusion of unemployed people. The labor market policy instruments should be focused on problematic groups of labor market actors (Wiśniewski, 2005: 16, 18). Pursuant to the Act of April 20, 2004 on employment promotion and labor market institutions, people in a special situation in the labor market include unemployed persons with disabilities (Article 49). In the case of disabled persons, work plays a significant role. The participation of disabled people in the labor market provides them not only with a source of income but, above all, with an opportunity for integration and rehabilitation. It contributes to personal fulfillment at work and to preventing the exclusion of disabled people (Kryńska, 2013: 26). Maintaining the employment is crucial, too (Baldwin, Johnson, 2001: 39–62).

The labor market situation of disabled people may be diagnosed based on various indicators, including the labor force participation rate, the employment rate and the unemployment rate (Kryńska, 2013: 25).

In the 2010–2014 period, the total active population grew by 1.8%. A decrease by barely 1% was experienced in the two subsequent years (Table 2). On average, the employed people represented 91% of the active population. Their number grew by almost 5%. While the total number of unemployed people decreased by 35.6%, the number of professionally inactive persons ranged from 2.79 million to 2.68 million.

Table 2. Economic activity of people with disabilities in 2010–2016 (thousands)

Specification		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	
Disabled people	Total	3359	3341	3361	3320	3272	3252	3207	
	Active	Total	566	569	585	575	568	536	524
		Employed	485	486	495	478	483	470	467
		Unemployed	81	83	91	97	84	66	57
Inactive	2793	2773	2776	2746	2704	2716	2683		
Non-disabled people	Total	30956	31003	31038	31037	30985	30962	30703	
	Active	Total	17123	17221	17340	17361	17428	17388	17260
		Employed	15474	15562	15591	15568	15862	16084	16197
		Unemployed	1650	1659	1749	1793	1567	1304	1063
Inactive	13832	13782	13698	13676	13556	13574	13443		

Source: own study based on the labor force survey, Office of Government Plenipotentiary for Disabled People; annual average data

Disabled people demonstrated different patterns of economic activity. Generally, the number of active persons decreased by 7.5%. However, that sub-population grew slightly (by 3%) in the first two years of the researched period. A consistent decrease was recorded afterwards. Changes in the active population were related to changing numbers of employed and unemployed people. The number of employed persons fluctuated slightly, as it increased from 485,000 to 495,000 by 2012; in 2013, it modestly declined to reach 478,000; in 2014, it increased to 483,000; it has been on a decrease since 2015, reaching the lowest level (467,000) in 2016. In 2010–2016, the number of unemployed people with disabilities decreased by 30%. An increase was reported in the first four years of that period, followed by a gradual decline.

The data analysis suggests that the labor market situation of disabled people is much worse than that of the non-disabled population. In 2010–2016, the average activity rate of disabled people was 17%, compared to 55.9% for non-disabled people (Table 3). Also, the non-disabled population demonstrated a growth of their activity rate, whereas in the case of the disabled people, following an initial climb, it has been on a decline, reaching the lowest level (16.3%) in 2016. Similar conclusions may be drawn from the analysis of the employment rate. The average difference in the employment rate between the total population and the disabled sub-population is 35 percentage points. A similar situation exists in other countries. According to Eurostat data, in 2011, the employment rate of disabled people (experiencing difficulties in performing basic activities, with e.g. vision or hearing problems) in the EU (28) was 47.3%, i.e. nearly 20 percentage points lower compared to non-disabled people. The lowest (23.7%) and the highest (66.2%) employment rate of disabled people were recorded, respectively, in Hungary and Sweden. In Poland, it was 33.9% (Eurostat, 2014: 1).

Table 3. Activity rate, employment rate and unemployment rate in 2010–2016 (in %)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Activity rate							
Disabled people	16.8	17.0	17.4	17.3	17.4	16.5	16.3
Non-disabled people	55.3	55.5	55.9	55.9	56.2	56.2	56.2
Employment rate							
Disabled people	14.4	14.5	14.7	14.4	14.8	14.5	14.6
Non-disabled people	50.0	50.2	50.2	50.2	51.2	51.9	52.8
Unemployment rate							
Disabled people	14.4	14.6	15.5	16.9	14.8	12.3	10.9
Non-disabled people	9.6	9.6	10.1	10.3	9.0	7.5	6.2

Source: own study based on the labor force survey, Office of Government Plenipotentiary for Disabled People; annual average data

In the case of disabled people, lower employment rates result from different socio-economic conditions. “During the economic downturn, people with disabilities tend to be excluded from the labor market quicker than the non-disabled population. Therefore, during a crisis, the category under consideration faces a growing risk of losing their jobs. This could discourage them from taking active part in the job seeking process and therefore already placing them in the first stage of professional exclusion” (Kryńska, 2013: 60).

In the period considered, the unemployment rate fluctuated in regards to both disabled and non-disabled people. In the first group, it grew until 2013, where it reached the highest level of 16.9%. Afterwards, it decreased to 10.9% in 2016. However, the unemployment rate for disabled people was higher than for the entire population. In the case of non-disabled people, it ranged from 10.3% to 6.2%.

There is also a great variation in the employment rate of disabled people between specific provinces. The highest employment rates were recorded in 2010 in Świętokrzyskie (22%) and Lubusz (20.4%) provinces, whereas the lowest ones were reported in 2016 in Lesser Poland (8.6%) and Western Pomeranian (8.7%) provinces (Figure 2). As emphasized by Kryńska, low employment rates are recorded both in labor markets which have been experiencing problems for many years (e.g. the Western Pomeranian province) and in labor markets considered to be well-developed (e.g. the Lower Silesian province) (Kryńska, 2013: 60).

In 2010 and 2016, the growth dynamics of the employment rate varied from one province to another. The employment rate decreased in eight provinces, with the highest decline recorded in the Lublin province (40.7%) and Western Pomeranian province (24.3%). The highest increase of the employment rate was reported in Lesser Poland (82%) and Warmian-Masurian (37.1%) provinces. In 2016, only in the Lubusz province the employment rate reached half of the level supposed to be attained by 2030. “According to the Europe 2030 strategy, the employment rate should reach 40%” (Kryńska, 2013: 25). The employment rate in specific provinces is affected by multi-

ple factors, including the number of sheltered workshops and their employees. In 2016, the highest number of sheltered workshops (164) was recorded in the Greater Poland province while the Mazovian province reported the highest number of sheltered workshop employees (23,500). In turn, the highest average number of employees per sheltered workshop (254) was reported in Lower Silesia (Figure 3).

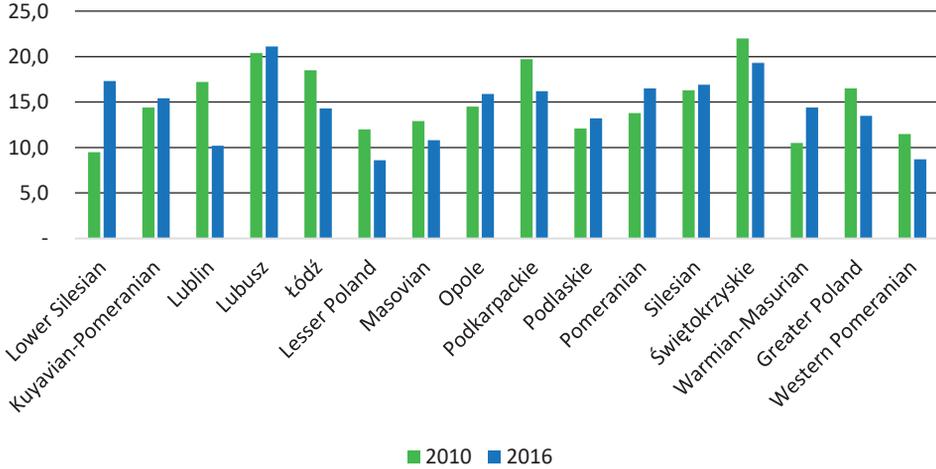


Figure 2. Employment rate by province in 4Q 2010 and 2016 (in %)

Source: own study based on the labor force survey, Office of Government Plenipotentiary for Disabled People; quarterly data

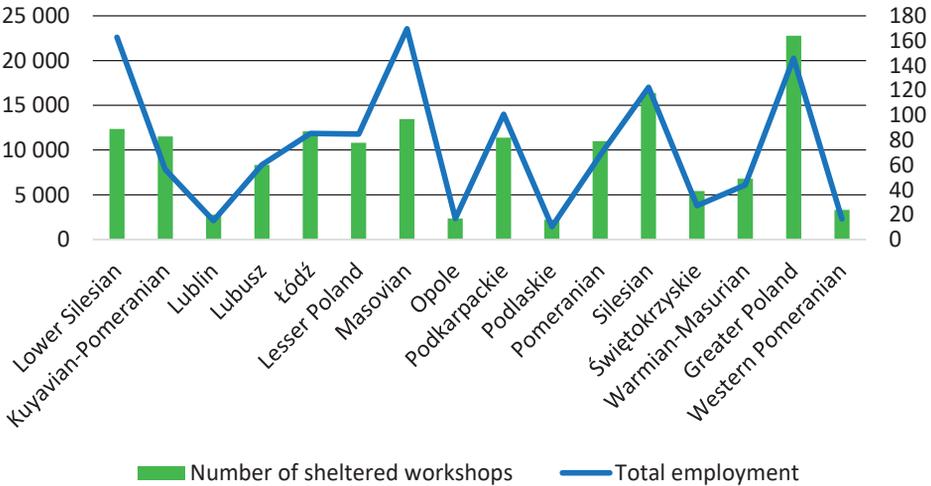


Figure 3. Number of sheltered workshops and total employment in December 2016 by province (in %)

Source: own study based on data from Office of Government Plenipotentiary for Disabled People

Note also that the number of both sheltered workshops and their employees (primarily including disabled people) decreased over the 2010–2016 period, respectively by 43.5%, 42.5% and 36.2% (Table 4).

Table 4. Number of sheltered workshops and their employees in 2010 and 2016\*

Years	Number of sheltered workshops	Number of employees	Number of FTEs	Number of disabled employees	Number of disabled FTEs
2010	1952	286,867	271,714	204,451	193,570
2016	1102	164,826	155,380	130,512	124,005

\* As at December.

Source: own study based on data from Office of Government Plenipotentiary for Disabled People

The decrease in the number of sheltered workshops and their employees results from amendments to legal regulations, including the subsidies towards payment of remuneration for disabled persons and the conditions for granting the sheltered workshop status. The sheltered workshop status may be applied for by each employer who has been running business activities for no less than 12 months and employs no less than 25 employees on an FTE basis. Additionally, the facilities and premises used by the sheltered workshop must comply with occupational health and safety regulations and principles, must address the needs of disabled persons in terms of adjusting the workstations, hygiene and sanitary premises and passageways, and must comply with accessibility requirements. Also, emergency and specialized healthcare, medical counseling and rehabilitation services must be ensured. Until December 31, 2011, the operator of the sheltered workshop was required to maintain the total employment rate of disabled people for no less than 6 months at a level of no less than 40%, (including persons classed as suffering from significant or moderate disability representing no less than 10% of the total workforce) or no less than 30%, if the operator employs visually impaired or mentally ill people or mentally disabled people classed as suffering from significant or moderate disability. Meanwhile, since January 1, 2012, the employment rate of disabled people must be no less than 50% for no less than 6 months, including persons classed as suffering from significant or moderate disability representing no less than 20% of the total workforce; and no less than 30% of visually impaired or mentally ill people or mentally disabled people classed as suffering from significant or moderate disability (Article 28 of the Act of August 27, 1997 on the professional and social rehabilitation and employment of disabled people).

According to data from the Financing and Reimbursement System of the State Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons, in the period under consideration, there was a slight decrease in subsidized employment (from 267,000 to 258,000). The number of sheltered workshops and their employees decreased over the 2010–

2016 period by 44% and 37%, respectively. Meanwhile, there was an increase in the number of establishments employing disabled people (by 117%) and in the number of disabled people employed in the open labor market (by 95%) (Table 5).

The years under consideration saw a decline in subsidized employment in sheltered workshops, accompanied by a consistent increase in subsidized employment in the open labor market. Note however that “in the European employment policy, companies and institutions from the open labor market are regarded as a main segment of labor market driving the creation of jobs for disabled people” (Giermanowska, 2015: 182). Nevertheless, in Poland, persons with disabilities are often underestimated in the labor market. When employing disabled people, “the employers are mainly guided by cost-efficiency” (Giermanowska, 2015: 186). Often, the employers are affected by negative stereotyping. According to a research by the Center for Public Opinion Research, more and more Poles support the active participation of disabled people in the labor market (79% in 2007 and 72% in 2000). The share of people who believe that disabled persons whose health condition make them fit for work should not work decreased from 22% in 2000 to 16% in 2007 (CBOS, 2007: 5). The lack of contact with disabled people is often the reason behind the attitudes towards them. According to a study by the Center for Public Opinion Research, 21% of the interviewees do not know any disabled people while 66% know disabled people vaguely or by sight (CBOS, 2007: 2).

Table 5. Number of disabled employees and employers registered in the Financing and Reimbursement System of the State Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons in 2010–2016\*

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total disabled employees (in thousand)							
In sheltered workshops	198.2	173.8	163.1	166.9	139.4	124.5	124.0
In the open labor market	69.0	71.7	80.5	85.1	104.0	121.6	134.7
Total	267.2	245.5	243.6	252.0	243.4	246.1	258.7
Total of employers							
Sheltered workshop operators	2,087	2,001	1,806	1,437	1,392	1,263	1,163
Open labor market	11,507	14,090	15,676	17,305	19,318	22,745	25,036
Total	16,091	17,482	18,742	20,710	24,008	26,199	28,399

\* As per December of each year.

Source: own study based on data from the Financing and Reimbursement System of the State Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons, Office of Government Plenipotentiary for Disabled People

The decline in subsidized employment is also related to changes in the principles of financing the remuneration of disabled employees. Pursuant to applicable regulations, the monthly financing depends on the working time of the disabled employee, on his/her disability degree and specific illnesses, and on the type of the disabled person’s employer (Table 6).

Table 6. Monthly subsidies towards payment of remuneration for disabled employees from January 2010 to March 2014

Sheltered workshop	Open labor market
2010–2011	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 160% of the minimum wage in the case of disabled people classed as suffering from significant disability,</li> <li>– 140% of the minimum wage in the case of disabled people classed as suffering from moderate disability,</li> <li>– 60% of the minimum wage in the case of disabled people classed as suffering from light disability.</li> </ul> <p>The financing is increased by 40% of the minimum wage in the case of disabled people diagnosed with mental illness, mental disability or epilepsy, or people with partial or severe visual impairment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 70% of amounts allocated to sheltered workshops,</li> <li>– 90% of amounts allocated to sheltered workshops in the case of disabled people diagnosed with mental illness, mental disability or epilepsy, or employees with partial or severe visual impairment.</li> </ul> <p>As of March 2011, the remunerations of employees classed as suffering from moderate or light disability and entitled to a retirement pension are not eligible for financing.</p>
01.2012 – 06.2012	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 170% of the minimum wage in the case of disabled people classed as suffering from significant disability,</li> <li>– 125% of the minimum wage in the case of disabled people classed as suffering from moderate disability,</li> <li>– 50% of the minimum wage in the case of disabled people classed as suffering from light disability.</li> </ul> <p>The financing is increased by 40% of the minimum wage in the case of disabled people diagnosed with mental illness, mental disability, general developmental disorders or epilepsy, or people with partial or severe visual impairment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 70% of amounts allocated to sheltered workshops,</li> <li>– 90% of amounts allocated to sheltered workshops in the case of disabled people diagnosed with mental illness, mental disability, general developmental disorders or epilepsy, or employees with partial or severe visual impairment.</li> </ul>
07.2012 – 08.2012	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 180% of the minimum wage in the case of disabled people classed as suffering from significant disability,</li> <li>– 115% of the minimum wage in the case of disabled people classed as suffering from moderate disability,</li> <li>– 45% of the minimum wage in the case of disabled people classed as suffering from light disability.</li> </ul> <p>The financing is increased by 40% of the minimum wage in the case of disabled people diagnosed with mental illness, mental disability, general developmental disorders or epilepsy, or people with partial or severe visual impairment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 70% of amounts allocated to sheltered workshops,</li> <li>– 90% of amounts allocated to sheltered workshops in the case of disabled people diagnosed with mental illness, mental disability, general developmental disorders or epilepsy, or employees with partial or severe visual impairment.</li> </ul>

Sheltered workshop	Open labor market
09.2012 – 12.2012	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 180% of the minimum wage in the case of disabled people classed as suffering from significant disability,</li> <li>– 115% of the minimum wage in the case of disabled people classed as suffering from moderate disability,</li> <li>– 45% of the minimum wage in the case of disabled people classed as suffering from light disability.</li> </ul> <p>The financing is increased by 40% of the minimum wage in the case of disabled people diagnosed with mental illness, mental disability, general developmental disorders or epilepsy, or people with partial or severe visual impairment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 70% of amounts allocated to sheltered workshops,</li> <li>– 90% of amounts allocated to sheltered workshops in the case of disabled people diagnosed with mental illness, mental disability, general developmental disorders or epilepsy, or employees with partial or severe visual impairment.</li> </ul>
01.2013 – 03.2014	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 180% of the minimum wage in the case of disabled people classed as suffering from significant disability,</li> <li>– 100% of the minimum wage in the case of disabled people classed as suffering from moderate disability,</li> <li>– 40% of the minimum wage in the case of disabled people classed as suffering from light disability.</li> </ul> <p>The financing is increased by 40% of the minimum wage in the case of disabled people diagnosed with mental illness, mental disability, general developmental disorders or epilepsy, or people with partial or severe visual impairment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 70% of amounts allocated to sheltered workshops,</li> <li>– 90% of amounts allocated to sheltered workshops in the case of disabled people diagnosed with mental illness, mental disability, general developmental disorders or epilepsy, or employees with partial or severe visual impairment.</li> </ul>

Source: own study based on State Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons data

From January 2010 to March 2014, the subsidies for sheltered workshops were higher than those allocated to employees in the open labor market (Table 7). In the case of sheltered workshops, the monthly subsidies towards payment of remuneration increased by 32% for employees suffering from significant disability, and decreased by 16% or 21% for employees suffering from moderate disability or light disability, respectively. With regards to people suffering from special disease, there was a 29.3% increase in the case of significant disability, an 8.6% decrease in the case of moderate disability and a 6% decrease in the case of light disability. In turn, in establishments active in the open labor market, the monthly subsidies towards payment of remuneration increased by 32% for employees suffering from significant disability, and decreased by 16% or 21% for employees suffering from moderate disability or light disability, respectively. In the case of special disease, there

was a 29% increase of amounts allocated to employees suffering from significant disability, and an 8.6% and 6% decrease of amounts allocated to employees suffering from moderate and light disability, respectively.

Table 7. Monthly subsidies towards payment of remuneration for disabled employees from January 2010 to March 2014 (in PLN)

Disability degree	Open labor market			Sheltered workshop		
	advanced	intermediate	light	advanced	intermediate	light
2010–2011						
special disease	2296.80	2067.12	1148.40	2552.00	2296.80	1276.00
no special disease	1429.12	1250.48	535.92	2041.60	1786.40	765.60
01.2012 – 06.2012						
special disease	2411.64	1894.86	1033.56	2679.60	2105.40	1148.40
no special disease	1518.44	1116.50	446.60	2169.20	1595.00	638.00
07.2012 – 08.2012						
special disease	2526.48	1780.02	976.14	2807.20	1977.80	1084.60
no special disease	1607.76	1027.18	401.94	2296.80	1467.40	574.20
09.2012 – 12.2012						
special disease	2744.28	1933.47	1060.29	3049.20	2148.30	1178.10
no special disease	1746.36	1115.73	436.59	2494.80	1593.90	623.70
01.2013 – 03.2014						
special disease	2970.00	1890.00	1080.00	3300.00	2100.00	1200.00
no special disease	1890.00	1050.00	420.00	2700.00	1500.00	600.00

Source: own study based on State Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons data

On April 1, 2014, new principles for subsidies towards payment of remuneration were adopted. Accordingly, the subsidy primarily depends on the employee's disability degree, irrespective of the employer's status. Monthly subsidies towards payment of remuneration for disabled employees are as follows:

- 1) PLN 1800, in the case of disabled people suffering from significant disability,
- 2) PLN 1125, in the case of disabled people suffering from moderate disability,
- 3) PLN 450, in the case of disabled people suffering from light disability.

The above amounts are increased by PLN 600 in the case of disabled people diagnosed with mental illness, mental disability, general developmental disorders or epilepsy, or people with partial or severe visual impairment. The following are eligible for subsidies towards payment of remuneration for disabled employees:

- 1) sheltered workshop operators;
- 2) operators who employ no less than 25 employees on an FTE basis with an employment rate of disabled people of no less than 6%;
- 3) operators who employ less than 25 employees on an FTE basis.

Operators who employ no less than 25 employees on an FTE basis and demonstrate an employment rate of disabled people of less than 6% are not eligible for financing. Operators who employ no less than 25 employees on an FTE basis and are exempt from compulsory Fund contributions shall not be eligible for subsidies towards payment of remuneration for disabled employees, unless they demonstrate an employment rate of disabled people of 6% (Article 26 of the Act of August 27, 1997 on the professional and social rehabilitation and employment of disabled people).

## 4. Conclusions

The data analysis suggests that the labor market situation of disabled people is much more difficult than that of the general public. Disabled people are largely affected by professional exclusion. In the disabled population, there is a worrying proportion of inactive persons to active persons. The disadvantageous situation of disabled people results from applicable legal regulations which have undergone multiple amendments in the recent years. Changes in the area of subsidized employment have contributed to an increase in employment of disabled people in the open labor market, accompanied by a decrease in employment figures in sheltered workshops over the period concerned. Professional inclusion of people with disabilities is vital from the perspective of an individual and of the society as a whole. For a disabled person, professional activity means not only a source of income but, most of all, social integration.

## References

- Act of April 20, 2004 on employment promotion and labor market institutions, people in a special situation in the labor market include unemployed persons with disabilities (Journal of Laws of 2004 No. 99, item 1001 with amendments) [Ustawa z dnia 20 kwietnia 2004 r. o promocji zatrudnienia i instytucjach rynku pracy (Dz.U. z 2004 r. Nr 99, poz. 1001 z późn. zm.)].
- Act of August 27, 1997 on the professional and social rehabilitation of disabled people (Journal of Laws of 1997, No. 123, item 776 with amendments) [Ustawa z dnia 27 sierpnia 1997 r. o rehabilitacji zawodowej i społecznej osób niepełnosprawnych (Dz.U. z 1997 r. Nr 123, poz. 776 z późn. zm.)].
- Baldwin M., Choe C. (2014), *Wage discrimination against workers with sensory disabilities*, “Industrial Relations: A Journal of Economy and Society”, no. 53, issue 1, pp. 101–124.
- Baldwin M., Johnson W.G. (2001), *Dispelling the myths about work disability*, [in:] T. Thomason, J.F. Burton, D. Hyatt (eds.), *Prepared for the 1998 IRRA Research Volume, New Approaches to Disability in the Workplace*, IRRA, Madison.
- BBN (2014), *Strategia bezpieczeństwa narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, Warszawa, <https://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/SBN%20RP.pdf> [accessed: 10.07.2017].
- Biuro Pełnomocnika Rządu ds. Osób Niepełnosprawnych, [www.niepelnosprawni.gov.pl](http://www.niepelnosprawni.gov.pl) [accessed: 15.05.2017].
- Bound J. (1991), *Self-reported versus objective measures of health in retirement models*, “Journal of Human Resources”, vol. 26, no. 1, pp. 106–138.

- CBOS (2007), *Postawy wobec niepełnosprawnych. Komunikat z badań*, Warszawa, [http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2007/K\\_169\\_07.PDF](http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2007/K_169_07.PDF) [accessed: 4.05.2017].
- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on December 13, 2006 was ratified by the President of the Republic of Poland on September 6, 2012 (Journal of Laws of 2012, item 1169) [Konwencja o prawach osób niepełnosprawnych, sporządzona w Nowym Jorku dnia 13 grudnia 2006 r., ratyfikowana przez Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w dniu 6 września 2012 r. (Dz.U. z 2012 r. poz. 1169)].
- Eurostat (2014), *Disability statistic – labour market access*, [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Disability\\_statistics\\_-\\_labour\\_market\\_access](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Disability_statistics_-_labour_market_access) [accessed: 7.02.2017].
- Encyklopedia PWN* (2016), <http://encyklopedia.pwn.pl/> [accessed: 21.10.2016].
- Giermanowska E. (2015), *Niepełnosprawni obywatele i pracownicy. Niedoceniony potencjał zawodowy z perspektywy pracodawców i polityki społecznej*, [in:] G. Ciura (eds.), *Niepełnosprawni i polityka przeciwdziałania ich wykluczeniu*, Studia BAS nr 2(42), Biuro Analiz Sejmowych Kancelarii Sejmu, Warszawa.
- GUS (2012), *Raport z wyników Narodowy Spis Powszechny Ludności i Mieszkań 2011*, Warszawa, [http://stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbr/gus/lud\\_raport\\_z\\_wynikow\\_NSP2011.pdf](http://stat.gov.pl/cps/rde/xbr/gus/lud_raport_z_wynikow_NSP2011.pdf) [accessed: 3.05.2017].
- GUS (2015a), *Rocznik statystyczny Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej 2015*, Warszawa.
- GUS (2015b), *Zdrowie i zachowanie zdrowotne mieszkańców Polski w świetle Europejskiego Ankietowego Badania Zdrowia (EHIS) 2014 r.*, <https://stat.gov.pl/obszary-tematyczne/zdrowie/zdrowie/zdrowie-i-zachowania-zdrowotne-mieszkancow-polski-w-swietle-badania-ehis-2014,10,1.html> [accessed: 3.05.2017].
- Jones M.K. (2008), *Disability and the labour market: a review of the empirical evidence*, “Journal of Economic Studies”, vol. 35, issue 5, pp. 405–424.
- Jones M.K. (2016), *Disability and labor market outcomes. Disability is associated with labor market disadvantage; recent evidence points to a causal relationship*, IZA World of Labor, Evidence-based policy making, <https://wol.iza.org/articles/disability-and-labor-market-outcomes/long> [accessed: 4.07.2017].
- Kłos B. (2015), *System orzecznictwa o niezdolności do pracy i orzecznictwo o niepełnosprawności w Polsce*, [in:] G. Ciura (eds.), *Niepełnosprawni i polityka przeciwdziałania ich wykluczeniu*, Studia BAS nr 2(42), Biuro Analiz Sejmowych Kancelarii Sejmu, Warszawa.
- Kryńska E. (ed.) (2013), *Analiza sytuacji osób niepełnosprawnych w Polsce i Unii Europejskiej. Raport przygotowany w ramach projektu „Zatrudnienie osób niepełnosprawnych-perspektywy wzrostu”*, IPiSS, Warszawa.
- Mabbett D. et al. (2002), *Definitions of Disability in Europe. A Comparative Analysis*, Final Report 13 December, Brunel University, UK (European Commission).
- O’Brien R.L. (2013), *Economy and Disability: Labor Market Conditions and the Disability of Working-Age Individuals*, “Social Problems”, vol. 60, no. 3, pp. 321–333.
- PFRON (2015), *Dofinansowanie do wynagrodzeń pracowników niepełnosprawnych*, <https://www.pfron.org.pl/pl/obsługa-dofinansowan-i/dofinansowanie-do-wyna/2288,Wielkosc-dofinansowania-w-okresie-od-stycznia-2009-r-do-marca-2014-r.html> [accessed: 24.06.2017].
- Szukalski P. (2004), *Projekcja liczby niepełnosprawnych seniorów do roku 2030*, [in:] J.T. Kowalewski, P. Szukalski (eds.), *Nasze starzejące się społeczeństwo. Nadzieje i zagrożenia*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, Łódź.
- WHO (2011), *World report on disability*, World Bank, <http://www.unic.un.org.pl> [accessed: 21.10.2016].
- Wiśniewski Z. (2010), *Ewolucja polskiej polityki rynku pracy*, [in:] Z. Wiśniewski, K. Zawadzki (eds.), *Aktywna polityka rynku pracy w Polsce w kontekście europejskim*, Wojewódzki Urząd Pracy Uniwersytet Mikołaja Kopernika, Toruń.

## Analiza sytuacji osób niepełnosprawnych na rynku pracy

**Streszczenie:** Osoby niepełnosprawne należą do grupy społecznej zagrożonej ubóstwem. W życiu codziennym spotykają się z uprzedzeniami, utrudnieniami na rynku pracy. Celem publikacji jest analiza i ocena sytuacji osób niepełnosprawnych na rynku pracy. Z analizy danych wynika, że osoby niepełnosprawne mają znacznie trudniejszą sytuację na rynku pracy niż osoby sprawne. W latach 2010–2016 wskaźnik aktywności zawodowej osób niepełnosprawnych był średnio o 39 p.p. niższy niż dla ludności ogółem. Niekorzystna sytuacja osób niepełnosprawnych związana jest z częstą modyfikacją regulacji prawnych. W ostatnich latach zmiany dotyczące zatrudnienia dotowanego przyczyniły się do zwiększenia zatrudniania osób niepełnosprawnych na otwartym rynku pracy, a spadku w zakładach pracy chronionej.

**Słowa kluczowe:** rynek pracy, aktywność zawodowa, osoby niepełnosprawne

**JEL:** J21

	<p>© by the author, licensee Łódź University – Łódź University Press, Łódź, Poland.          This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license CC-BY          (<a href="http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/">http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/</a>)</p>
	<p>Received: 2017-08-20; verified: 2018-02-14. Accepted: 2018-04-12</p>