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Around 1,9 million people experience health-related limitations in their everyday activities

Unmet support needs, increased deprivation and poverty rates

Vienna, 2024-05-03 – 25,5% of women and 24,6% of men in Austria state that they experience health-related limitations in everyday activities and therefore live with disabilities. Many of them do not receive the necessary level of support when it comes to basic needs and household chores. They are on average more affected by material and social deprivation and rate their quality of life lower than people without disabilities. This is shown by analyses carried out by Statistics Austria on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection on the basis of various household and personal surveys.

“Currently, around 1,9 million people in Austria between the ages of 15 and 89 state that they are limited in their everyday activities due to health reasons. This is shown by a pilot project aimed at establishing regular disability and participation statistics, presenting results from personal surveys on various topics and areas of life. Thus, politicians and businesses are provided with possible starting points to further strengthening the inclusion of people with disabilities,” says Tobias Thomas, Director General of Statistics Austria.

8% of the population perceive themselves as severely limited, 17% as somewhat limited

Of the projected 1,9 million people with health-related limitations in everyday activities, 571 300 persons (corresponding to 7,6% of the population) report severe limitations, while 1 315 900 persons (17,5% of the population) classify themselves as “somewhat limited” (see table). The proportion of persons with activity limitations increases with age, from 7,4% among 15 to 24-year-olds to 59,5% among persons aged 75 and above.

Unmet need regarding support with basic needs and household chores

24,2% of the people who need support from others to carry out basic needs, so-called “basic activities”, would need more support or any support at all. When it comes to carrying out household chores, referred to as “instrumental activities”, the gap between the support needed and the support received is almost as wide: Here, 20,5% of people with support needs do not receive the level of help they would require.

Higher deprivation and poverty rates and a lower quality of life

Even though many people with health-related activity limitations are part of the active workforce, 9,9% are affected by material and social deprivation and 5,5% by significant material and social deprivation. Furthermore, 22,7% of this population are at risk of poverty and social exclusion. People with health-related activity limitations rate their overall quality of life lower than people without activity limitations, with an average score of 64,2 out of 100 points compared to 82,9 points. They also report a lower quality of life in the areas of physical health, mental health, environment and social relationships.

Population in 2022 by health-related restrictions in everyday activities and age (in %)

Age in years	General population in 1 000	Not limited	Severely & somewhat limited combined	Severely limited	Somewhat limited
15–24 years	921,1	92,6	7,4	(1,5)	5,9
25–34 years	1 204,7	89,1	10,9	1,8	9,1
35–44 years	1 204,6	86,8	13,2	3,0	10,2
45–54 years	1 264,9	77,3	22,7	5,6	17,1
55–64 years	1 314,9	65,5	34,5	10,5	24,1
65–74 years	892,5	60,8	39,2	12,6	26,7
75–89 years	734,0	40,5	59,5	24,4	35,1
Overall	7 536,6	75,0	25,0	7,6	17,5

S: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Microcensus 2022. – Population in private households aged 15 to 89. – () Values with less than 14 000 persons extrapolated for Austria are very much subject to chance.

The first report of a pilot project on disability and participation statistics, titled “People with disabilities in Austria I” as well as detailed tables can be found on our [website](#).

Information on methodology, definitions: By ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2008, Austria committed to providing people with disabilities equal access to all areas of social life.

For the report “People with disabilities in Austria I: Cross-survey data analyses of current surveys using the GALI indicator on health-related limitations in everyday activities as a proxy variable for disability” commissioned by the Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection (BMSGPK), data from the following surveys were used: Microcensus 2022, EU-SILC 2022, Health Survey 2019 and “This is how we are today” 2021/2022 (waves 1 to 5). In these surveys, Eurostat collects the characteristic “disability” using the so-called GALI question (GALI: Global Activity Limitation Indicator). Respondents indicate whether and to what extent they have been limited in typical everyday activities for at least six months due to health reasons. Accordingly, the report “People with disabilities in Austria I” uses the term „people with health-related limitations in everyday activities” in parallel to the term „people with disabilities”.

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