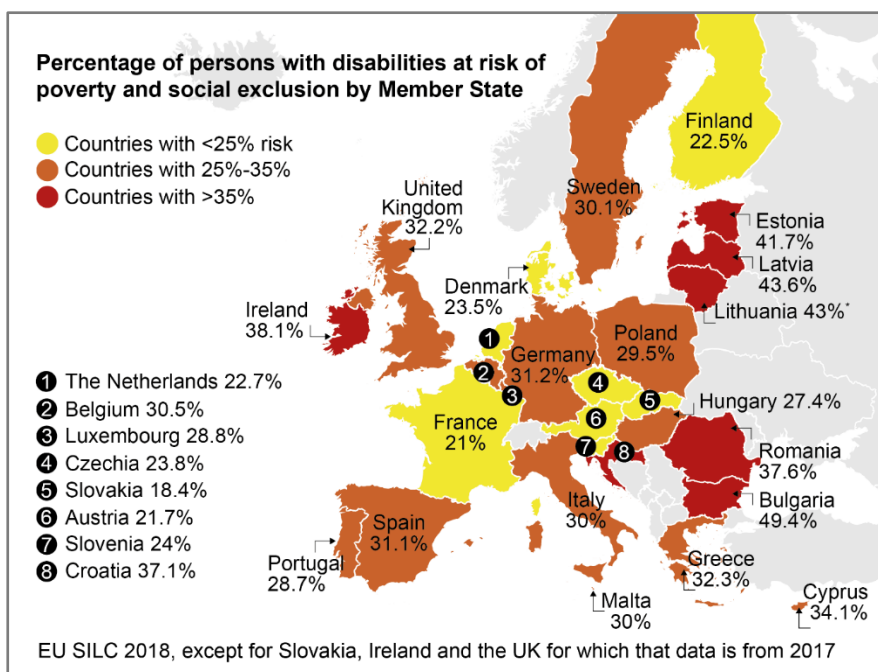


**Joint Social Protection Committee &
Employment committee meeting,
January 2020:
Key messages from several Social Platform members**

European Disability Forum

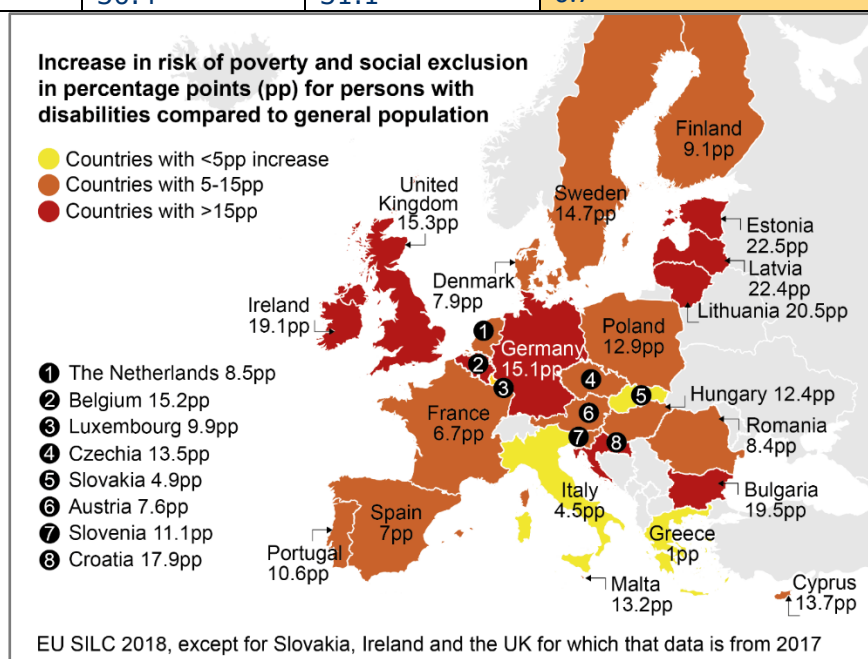
Some things the Autumn Package overlooks

1. 28.7% of persons with disabilities in the EU are at risk of poverty and social exclusion compared to 19.2% among the general populationⁱ. Some countries such as Ireland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Bulgaria have extremely high risks of poverty for persons with disabilities, exceeding percentages of 35%. Ireland, UK, Belgium, Germany, Croatia, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania have the biggest gaps in poverty between persons with and without disabilities. 29.5% of women with disabilities in the EU are at risk of poverty and social exclusion compared to 27.5% of men with disabilitiesⁱⁱ.



See endnote for Lithuaniaⁱⁱⁱ regarding the map above^{iv}.

	Poverty rate for PWD 2010 in %	Poverty rate for PWD 2018 in %	Increase in percentage points
EE	28.5	41.7	13.2
LU	21.2	28.8	7.6
DE	24.7	31.2	6.5
SE	24.0	30.1	6.1
IE	34.9	38.1	3.2
CZ	20.6	23.8	3.2
LT	40.7	43	2.3
IT	27.8	30.0	2.2
NL	21	22.7	1.7
MT	29	30	1
ES	30.4	31.1	0.7



See endnote for Lithuania^v regarding the map above^{vi}.

2. 11 Member States have seen poverty rates go up for persons with disabilities since 2010. These countries are Estonia, Luxembourg, Germany, Sweden, Ireland, Czechia, Lithuania, Italy, Netherlands, Malta and Spain.

3. Extra disability-related costs, even after social payments, are significant. They are estimated at 23,012 euros/year in Sweden or 14,550 euros/year in Belgium, for example^{vii}. More support needs to be given to persons with disabilities to prevent extreme poverty and homelessness. Research shows persons with disabilities to be highly overrepresented among homeless people. A study carried out in the Netherlands in 2014, for example, found that 29.5% of homeless people had an intellectual disability^{viii}, whereas the prevalence of intellectual disabilities among the population as a whole is around 0.7%^{ix}.

Eurocarers

1. **Access to long-term care**

We welcome the mention in the ASGS that “*Population ageing makes investing in healthcare and long-term care increasingly important*”. It is essential that, when investing in healthcare and long-term care services, the perspective of informal carers is taken into account. They are not only key partners in care delivery, but also a vulnerable group in need of support in order to maintain their own health and well-being. This is crucial to implement care systems organised around people’s needs and preferences.

2. **Gender equality**

We welcome the reference in the ASGS to the need to “*promote effective work-balance policies*” (ASGS p 9) and we believe that, after the welcome adoption of the WLB directive, much remains to be done to ensure that people with care responsibilities– mostly women- , are protected against poverty and social exclusion. The swift transposal of the Directive must be accompanied by measures protecting carers from disadvantage and discrimination, not only in the workplace but in the society in general, and countering gender stereotypes concerning care activities, as part of ambitious strategies towards carer-friendly societies at EU and national levels .

3. **Digitalisation in care**

When it comes to *investment in health and long term care*, (AGS page 10 as point 1 and p 6= (“*digital technologies change how we communicate, work and live*”) it is now clear that digital technologies are transforming health and long-term care delivery, and have the potential to support effectively informal carers in their caring role and as a vulnerable group. However, ICT-based solutions will be accessible to all only if a deliberate effort is undertaken to allow all informal carers to overcome barriers such as the lack of digital literacy, and the cost and accessibility of new technologies. There is a need for coordinated investment by relevant stakeholders in this respect, to ensure equal access to innovation likely to mitigate the impact of demographic change on people.

ERGO Network

1. **Better integration of the EU Framework for Roma Integration into the European Semester**

Roma inclusion requires a comprehensive, integrated approach, including better links between the Framework and the European Semester, Europe 2020, the European Pillar of Social Rights, and the Sustainable Development Goals. This is currently missing, and they urge for better connections in the new decennial cycle, with measurable objectives at European level for Roma social rights and inclusion.

2. Roma inclusion is not just about the economy, but also about human rights

ERGO Network warmly welcomes the explicit mention of European Roma in the Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy, however they are disappointed that the wording indicates that the focus exclusively on the Roma contribution to the economy, rather than a rights-based approach, aimed at promoting wellbeing, social inclusion, and human dignity.

3. Roma inclusion is more than desegregated education

While ERGO Network appreciates the section in the Joint Employment Report dedicated to Roma, we lament that this is done solely from the education perspective, while ignoring the other key dimensions of the EU Framework for Roma Integration – employment, housing, health. Equally, measures proposed for education only concern schools, overlooking the need for wrap-around support for families in poverty, as well as the devastating impact of discrimination and antigypsyism.

ENSIE

1. According to the EU, another key area for improving productivity and innovation is education and skills development. ENSIE is happy to see that the Commission addresses this important issue (education and upskilling) and underlines that there is still a need to recognise non formal education as well as it is one of the main tool that disadvantaged people possess and that can help them to access better jobs and lives.
2. ENSIE supports the initiative of the European Commission to follow more closely the achievements of the Member States in the area of SDGs through the European Semester. As ENSIE supports the SDGs implementation, the network is glad to see that the Commission is willing to better monitor the implementation of its policies at national levels as it is crucial for the impact on EU objectives and in what concerns ENSIE, impact on the integration of disadvantaged people into the society and labour market and following impact on poverty reduction.
3. ENSIE welcomes the Commission's statement on the importance of the transition to a sustainable economic system based on digital technologies and a solid and innovative industrial base to provide a fair transition for disadvantaged people. ENSIE would like to raise your attention to some potential negative consequences that digitalisation could also create. Technological developments require a better education and develop new forms of work. All these consequences could increase the risks of exclusion of the low-skilled people from the labour market. An existing and recognised tool to these challenges created by digitalisation are Work Integration Social Enterprises (WISEs) that have already proven through their effective individualised and pedagogical approach the positive social impact they create. These WISEs still need support for their development in order to be able to continue to provide solutions to current social and environmental challenges.

Make Mothers Matter

1. Gender pay-gap.

Motherhood pay gap: We see that the main efforts within the Semester Recommendations have been concentrated at increasing women's participation in the labour market, but we see little to no mention of recommendations to address gender pay gap, even though many European studies prove that employed mothers are the women that account for most of the gender pay (and pension) gaps. This is even worse if the mothers are confronted with other types of discriminations (single mothers, mothers of a child with a handicap, or with a

handicap themselves, mothers living in precarious situations). We do not see recommendations either on gender budgeting that could serve as tools to alleviate some of these social situations.

2. Recognition of unpaid care work

Again, we see that the accent is on women's participation in the labour market forgetting the need to support parents' challenge of balancing their caring and educative responsibilities with a career – with, for example, non-discriminatory flexible working arrangements and quality part-time work. This means recommendations that are more social and take into account the wellbeing of mothers and families in general. We do not see recommendations that address the protection from all kinds of discriminations linked to motherhood – e.g., at hiring, in promotion, in pay, in quality jobs and that promote a more equitable distribution of unpaid family care work and responsibilities – first between men and women, but also between families and society. There are no recommendations on strengthening the social protection schemes that could prevent many mothers and families to fall into poverty and that help them achieve their whole development as human beings.

ⁱ EU SILC 2018 except for Slovakia, Ireland and the UK for which that data is from 2017.

ⁱⁱ Ibid

ⁱⁱⁱ According to the data from official Statistics of Lithuania in the year 2018 this figure is 35,9%

^{iv} EU SILC 2018, except for Slovakia, Ireland and the UK for which that data is from 2017.

^v According to the data from official Statistics of Lithuania in the year 2018 the difference is 18 percentage points

^{vi} EU SILC 2018, except for Slovakia, Ireland and the UK for which that data is from 2017.

^{vii} Antón, J.I., Braña, F.J. and Muñoz de Bustillo, R. (2014). *An analysis of the cost of disability across Europe using the standard of living approach*. Available at: <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2Fs13209-016-0146-5.pdf>

^{viii} Out of a pool of 387 participants observed.

^{ix} Van Straaten, B., Schrijvers, C. T. M., Van der Laan, J., Boersma, S.N., Rodenburg, G., Wolf, J.R. and Van de Mheen, D. (2014). *Intellectual Disability among Dutch Homeless People: Prevalence and Related Psychosocial Problems*. Erasmus medical centre, Rotterdam, Netherlands.