



DISABILITY INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY

» Who

8 million persons in Canada aged 15 and older had a disability in 2022 (**27% of the population**) – an increase of 1.7 million people over 2017, when the disability rate was 22%. Some of the most common types of disabilities experienced by people are related to pain, flexibility, mobility, and mental health.

Disability can vary in type and severity

4.7 million persons have milder disabilities

3.3 million persons have more severe disabilities

71% had two or more co-occurring disability types

The population of persons with disabilities is diverse

Rates of Disability in Canada, age 15 and over	
All Canadians	27%
Men	24%
Women	30%
Racialized individuals	14%*
Immigrants	21%*
Indigenous Peoples	32%**

Sources: Canadian Survey on Disability, 2022, *Canadian Survey on Disability, 2017 and Indigenous Peoples Survey, 2022**.

» Government Programs

Provinces/Territories and the Government of Canada each play a significant role in providing direct supports for persons with disabilities. Provinces/Territories deliver most services related to disability in Canada.

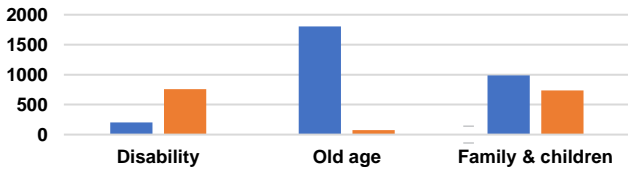
Provinces/Territories provide:

- Income supports (social assistance)
- Disability supports (aids and devices)
- Education
- Housing
- Health care
- Accessibility and employment legislation
- Training and employment supports, which reach the largest number of Canadians

The Government of Canada provides:

- Leadership in the implementation of the *Accessible Canada Act* and in setting national accessibility standards
- Partial income replacement through disability benefits for those who work (e.g., Canada Pension Plan – Disability, EI Sickness Benefits)
- Leadership in establishing the Canada Disability Benefit to help support financial security
- Funding for labour market programs and post-secondary education
- Investments in communities and organizations (e.g., Enabling Accessibility Fund, Social Development Partnerships Program–Disability)

Per Capita Spending (\$) by Order of Government, 2022

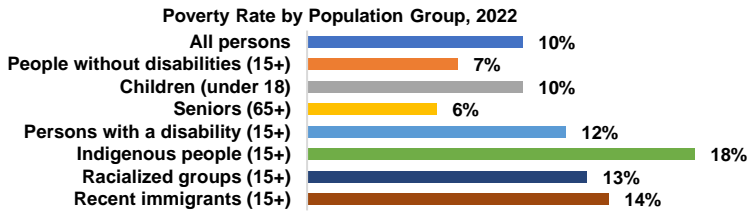


Source: Statistics Canada 2022
Note: Spending excludes: Canada Pension Plan Disability (CPPD), Quebec Pension Plan Disability Pension (QPPD), Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Québec Pension Plan (QPP).

» Experience with Exclusion and Inequality

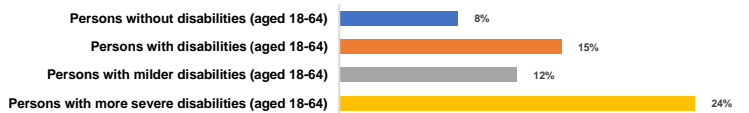
Income Inequality

Persons with disabilities continue to face high rates of poverty



Source: Canadian Income Survey on Disability, 2022.

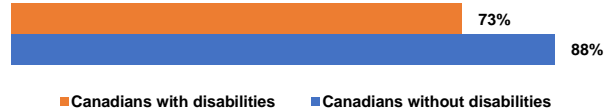
Poverty rates, persons with disabilities by severity of disability (aged 18–64)



Source: Canadian Income Survey, 2022.

Employment

Employment rates, core working-age (aged 25 to 54), 2023



Source: Labour Force Survey, 2023

- Businesses with inclusive cultures are significantly more likely to meet or exceed financial targets, be high-performing, be innovative and agile and achieve better business outcomes.
- Persons with disabilities, however, are more likely to be unemployed or underemployed, and face significant barriers to employment.
- Employment gaps are not explained by differences in education.
- Some 740,000 persons with disabilities in Canada aged 25–64 who were not employed had the potential to work.

Source: Canadian Survey on Disability, 2022.

Employment Barriers

Workplace barriers remain a key obstacle to work:

- Attitudes and discrimination
- Inaccessible workspaces and work tools
- Lack of workplace accommodations
- Three out of five employees with disabilities required workplace adaptations, most of which are low or no cost
- Employers do not feel equipped to adequately support persons with disabilities
- COVID-19 triggered a substantial change in work arrangements. As of May 2023, 20% of Canadians worked most of the time from home (up from 7% in 2016 but down from 24% in 2021). This may present both new opportunities and barriers to employment for persons with disabilities.

Source: Labour Force Survey, 2024.

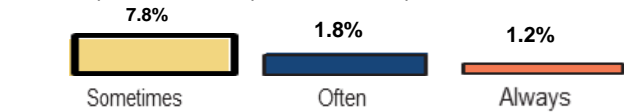
» Barriers to Accessibility

In the past two years, 72% of Canadians with disabilities aged 15 years or older encountered at least 1 of 27 types of barriers to accessibility in communication, public spaces, the internet or behaviours, misconceptions or assumptions by others.

Source: Government of Canada, 2022 Canadian Survey on Disability.

Attitudinal Barriers

37% of Canadians with disabilities experienced at least one barrier-related behaviour, misconception, or assumption made about them. When interacting with staff of government services or programs, persons with disabilities felt that behaviours, misconceptions, or assumptions from staff presented a barrier:



Source: Government of Canada, 2022 Canadian Survey on Disability.

Barriers to the Built Environments

56% of Canadians with disabilities experienced at least one type of barrier in public spaces sometimes.

Canadians with disabilities experience **barriers either sometimes, often or always with sidewalks** in general (**24.4%**) and when sidewalks were **covered in ice or snow** (**36.3%**).

The following **most common** barriers experienced in public spaces by persons with disabilities were:

- 31.1% with wait lines.
- 19.4% entering or exiting buildings.
- 19% with lighting and sound levels inside buildings.

Source: Government of Canada, 2022 Canadian Survey on Disability (CSD).

Transportation Barriers

Almost two-thirds (**63%**) of Canadians with disabilities, difficulties, or long-term conditions encountered one or more barriers when using transportation such as airplanes, passenger trains, ferry services, and buses. The top three barriers experienced were:

- 35% Wait lines
- 30% Accessing information on a website
- 30% Lighting or sound levels

Source: Government of Canada, 2021 Survey on Accessibility in Federal Sector Organizations
*Government of Canada, 2022 Canadian Survey on Disability (CSD).

Communication Barriers*

48% of persons with disabilities experienced a barrier related to communication at least sometimes. When interacting with the general public, customer service and government representatives, Communication barriers were experienced:

- 25.5% Over the phone
- 26.4% In-person

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

17% of persons with disabilities experienced a barrier related to Internet use. Nearly 1 in 10 (9.3%) persons with disabilities reported that they experienced a barrier when attempting to access government information, services, or supports online:

39.5% of these respondents indicated that they had a very severe disability

29% of these respondents indicated that they had a severe disability

14% of these respondents indicated that they had a moderate disability

18% of these respondents indicated that they had a mild disability

Source: Government of Canada, 2022 Canadian Survey on Disability (CSD).

» Intersectionality

- The intersectionality of disability and other identity characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, age, wealth, and religion amplify the degree of marginalization.
- This can significantly impact how someone with a disability experiences and accesses current government income programs and benefits.
- The Canada Disability Survey has some data on intersecting identities but overall it is lacking in Canada at the moment.
- The 2021 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan Survey found that 27% of respondents identified as persons living with a disability.
- Indigenous Peoples in Canada continue to experience disability at a rate much higher than that of the general population, with an estimated 32% of First Nations persons living off reserve, 30% of Métis and 19% of Inuit having one or more disabilities (Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2017). Measures in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan highlight the need to seek concrete data solutions to better understand the socio-economic situation of Indigenous persons with disabilities.