

## UNEMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Eva KOIŠOVÁ, Jana MASÁROVÁ, Karol KRAJČO

---

### Abstract

*Being able to work and have a job is very important for everyone. This is especially important for people with disabilities. Some of these people are able to work at least part-time after removing certain obstacles. However, these people have great difficulty finding suitable employment in the labour market. This is related not only to their state of health, but also to their low level of education, frequent working capacity and various environmental barriers. The aim of the article is to evaluate the development of unemployment of people with disabilities in the Slovak Republic, its regions and districts. We use methods of time series analysis, synthesis and comparison. Our research has shown that the number of unemployed people with disabilities is fluctuating, with a decline in recent years. There are significant differences in the unemployment of people with disabilities in the regions and districts of the Slovak Republic*

### Key words

*Labour market. The people with disabilities. Unemployment. Job seeker with disabilities*

**JEL Classification:** E24, J64, R23.

---

### Introduction

An important source of self-realization and a source of livelihood for a person is to have a job and to be employed. The work also contributes to personal development and a sense of usefulness. Social contacts and relationships are formed in the work environment. These facts are more important for people with disabilities than for other participants in the labour market. People with disabilities have a more positive approach to work, try to be consistent and are usually characterized by low turnover. Although the current situation on the labor market in the Slovak Republic is relatively favorable, there are nevertheless groups of people who have difficulty participating in the work process, whether due to insufficient qualifications, lack of experience, age, gender or disability. People with disabilities have a special position within the group of disadvantaged people on the labour market. These people have considerable problems finding employment on the labour market, as due to their state of health, they may also have difficult access to education, resp. to lifelong learning, which is essential in today's society.

The aim of this article is to examine and evaluate the development of unemployment of people with disabilities in the Slovak Republic and its regions and districts in the years 2000-2018. In evaluating this development, we use the statistics of the Central Office of Labor, Social

Affairs and Family. We use the method of time series analysis, comparison and synthesis. We have assessed regional differences in the level of unemployment of people with disabilities using the range of variation and the coefficient of variation. We have used Pearson's correlation coefficient to evaluate the relationship between the number of job seekers and the number of job seekers with disabilities.

### Theoretical aspect of employment issues of people with disabilities in the labour market at home and abroad

Disability is defined differently in the professional literature. According to Masárová and Španková (2006), a disability is a disorder of an individual's mental, physical or intellectual function with permanent consequences associated with limited educational ability, work ability, increased demands on health and social care and significantly reduced quality of life. Disability can be understood as a severe, permanent disorder of an important function (e.g. mobility, orientation, communication, etc.), which can lead to significant social disadvantage in participation in social life, even to complete social exclusion (Orgonášová, 2014). Restrictions resulting from disability can be understood as discrimination against these persons and thus difficult access to education, employment and social employment. Nevertheless, there are a large proportion of

people with disabilities who, if certain obstacles and disadvantages are removed, can work either full-time or part-time. The issue of the position of people with disabilities on the Slovak labour market is not neglected in the works of other Slovak authors such as Čmelíková, Španková and Živčicová (2005), Sekulová and Gyarfášová (2010), Orgonášová and Záhorcová (2012), Pawera and Štefancová (2013), Orgonášová (2014), Bakošová et al. (2017). Masárová and Španková (2006), Repková (2012), Brichtová and Repková (2014) and others dealt with the topic of people with disabilities within the issues of social services and social work.

The status of a person with disability extremely intensively influences the position of this person on the labor market (Orgonášová, 2014). People with disabilities have particularly serious problems finding suitable employment in the labour market. According to Bakošová et al. (2017) disability of a person basically refers to minimizing certain opportunities for people with disabilities, whether in the private, cultural or professional field. This disadvantage results from the disorder and limitation of the person with a disability. As stated by Pawera and Štefancová (2013), the main obstacles that affect the employment of these people in the Slovak Republic include low qualification or education, frequent incapacity for work of these people as well as environmental barriers or lack of prosthetic devices.

In the context of the development of society, higher levels of health care, new treatment methods and medical procedures make it possible to save the lives of people, who would not have survived in the past due to certain diseases or injuries. Orgonášová and Záhorcová (2012) point out that the group of people with disabilities is still growing as a result of the increased incidence of congenital disorders, injuries, as well as diseases of civilization. They also recall that in the third millennium, it is possible to adjust the environment so that these people are not excluded from society, but so that they have access to education and creative activity.

Many world authors also deal with the issue of the position of people with disabilities in society and on the labour market. Aytac et al. (2012) in their study evaluated the employment

of people with disabilities working from home for customs brokerage company in Turkey. Jetha et al. (2019) in their research focused mainly on the entry of young adults with chronic diseases into the labour market. Geiger et al. (2017) examined the successes and failures in reducing the employment gap for people with disabilities in Europe in 2002-2014. One of the reasons for the low employment of people with disabilities is the fear of companies to employ such people, the reluctance to adapt their work environment, the inability to communicate between healthy people with certain groups of people with disabilities, distrust in their abilities and others. In its study, the Institute for Research and Development on Inclusion and Society (2014) examined the employment of people with disabilities in Canada, and one of the findings is that most employers who have employed people with developmental disabilities have positive experiences with them. The study further shows that key benefits for employers in recruiting people with disabilities are their consistency, low turnover, positive attitude, pride in work and their positive impact on the diverse workplace culture and employer image in public. In his research, Turcotte (2014) focused on the participation of Canadians with physical or mental disabilities aged 25-64 on the labour market. He found that people with disabilities were less employed than people without disabilities, but in the case of university graduates, people with mild or moderate disabilities had almost the same employment rates as university graduates without disabilities.

Several authors examine the impact of the educational level of people with disabilities on the quality of life of these people, their employment, income and standard of living. Jones et al. (2011) examined the mismatch between disability and employment, income and job satisfaction in Australia in 2001-2008. Bliksvær (2018) examined the relationship between disability, level of education and employment. He notes that education can be a potentially effective means of reducing inequalities between people with disabilities and people with disabilities on the labour market. Sainsbury's and Coleman-Fountain (2013) emphasize that labour market participation through employment is considered to be one of the cornerstones of active citizenship for people

with disabilities. According to them, the level of education is one of the most important predictors of employment of people with disabilities, and therefore it is an effective way to improve the chances of people with disabilities on the labour market and reduce systematic differences in employment rates of people with disabilities and non-people with disabilities.

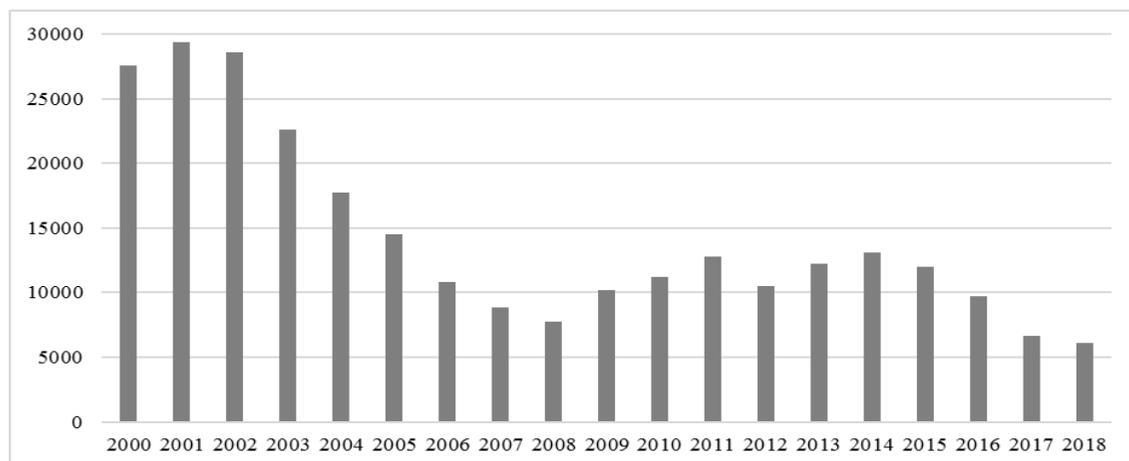
### Situation on the labour market in Slovak Republic

We have used data for the evaluation of unemployment of persons with disabilities in the regions of the Slovak Republic, which is collected and reported by the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic. We have examined the differences at

the level of regions and districts in the observed period 2000-2018.

Based on the data provided by the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, it is possible to monitor the development of the number of job seekers with disabilities in Slovak Republic, in individual regions and districts. The development of the total number of job seekers with disabilities in the Slovak Republic is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Number of applicants with disabilities in Slovak Republic

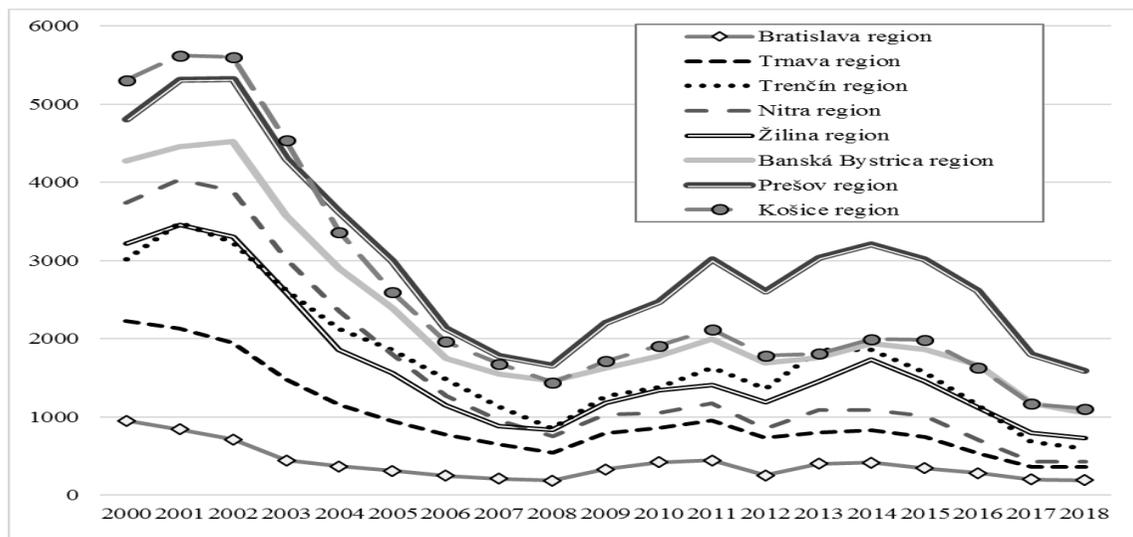


Source: Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family(2019)

The number of jobseekers with disabilities fluctuated in the period under review, with a declining trend. The highest number of unemployed with disability was in 2001 (29,352 persons), on the contrary in the pre-crisis years (2006-2008) and in the last monitored years their number was significantly lower, in 2018 it was only 6060 persons.

Within Slovakia, there are significant differences in the number of people with disabilities in individual regions, which results from the size of the region and the number of inhabitants, the number of economically active population, the health status of the population and other factors. The development of the number of job seekers with disabilities in the regions of the Slovak Republic is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Number of job seekers with disabilities in the regions of Slovak Republic



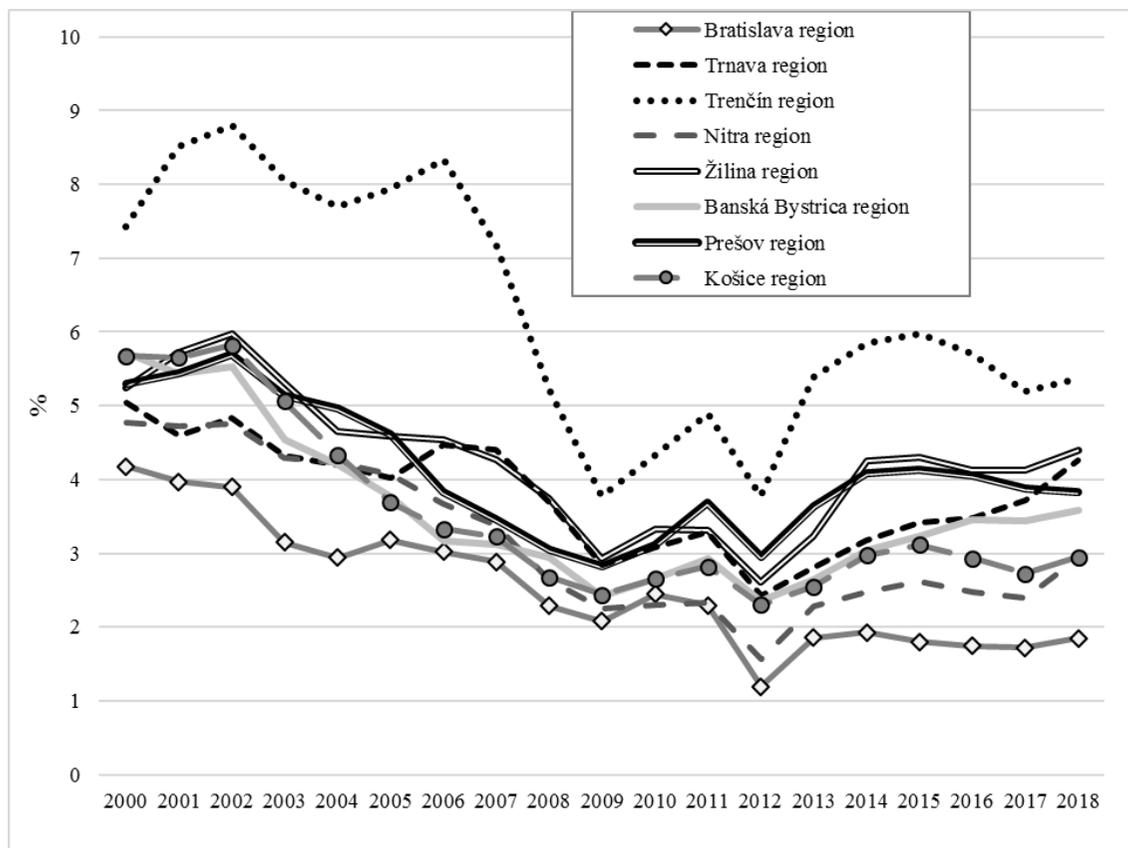
Source: Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family(2019)

As Figure 2 shows, the largest number of job seekers with disabilities in the years 2000-2003 was in the Košice region, in the following years it was the Prešov region. In the Prešov Region, 5622 job seekers with disabilities were registered in 2001, but in the Bratislava Region there were only 846 of them in the same year. In 2018, the number of job seekers with disabilities also decreased significantly in the Prešov Region and

reached the level of 1,591 persons, in the Bratislava Region it was 191 persons.

Due to a more realistic comparison of the situation of people with disabilities on the labour market in individual regions of the Slovak Republic, we have recalculated the share of the number of applicants with people with disabilities in the total number of job seekers. The results are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Share of job seekers with disabilities in the regions of Slovak Republic (%)



Source: Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family(2019)

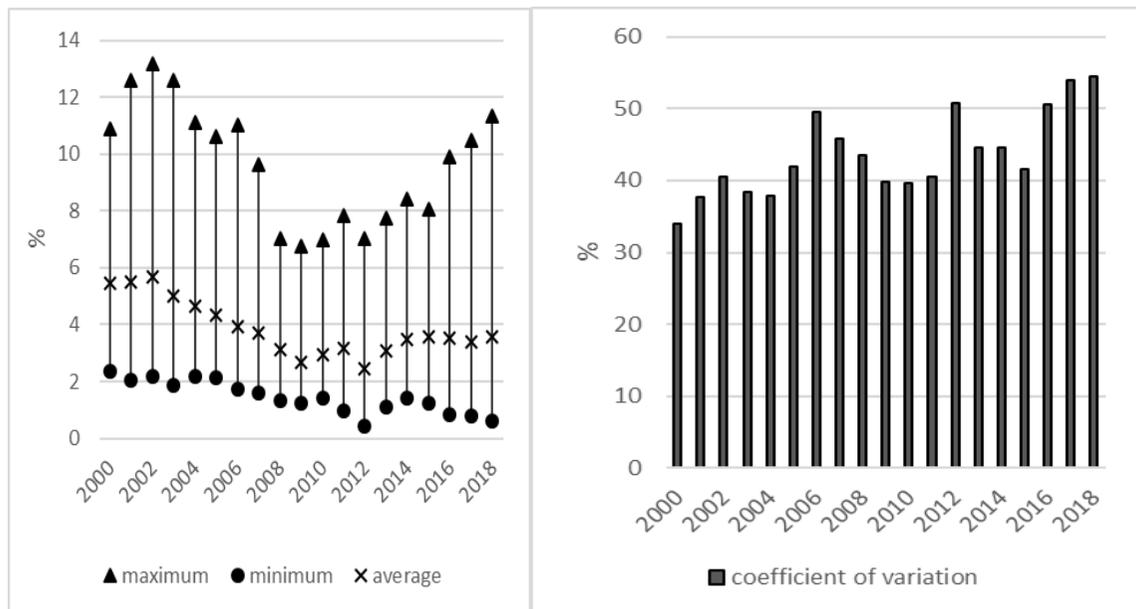
Figure 3 shows an interesting finding that although the situation on the labor market in the Trenčín region is not the worst in the Slovak Republic and there is not the highest number of unemployed with disabilities, the share of job seekers with disabilities is the highest among the regions in Slovakia. The distance of the Trenčín Region from other regions is considerable in most years. The Bratislava Region has the lowest number of job seekers with disabilities and also their share in the total number of job seekers is the lowest - in 2012 only 1.19%, in recent years around 1.8%.

Significant differences between individual districts can be observed within individual regions. The largest share of job seekers is in the

districts: Banská Štiavnica (2002: up to 13.16%), Medzilaborce, Stropkov, Myjava, Levoča, Prievidza and Žarnovica. The smallest share of job seekers with disabilities is in the districts of the Bratislava region (especially in the city districts of Bratislava), then in the districts: Lučenec, Kežmarok, Komárno, Levice, Malacky and Žilina.

In the monitored period of 2000-2008, we have evaluated the differences between the share of job seekers with disabilities in individual districts of Slovak Republic. The absolute differences in the share of jobseekers determined by the minimum value, the maximum value and the average, as well as the relative differences measured by the coefficient of variation are shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Variability in the share of job seekers with disabilities within the districts of Slovak Republic



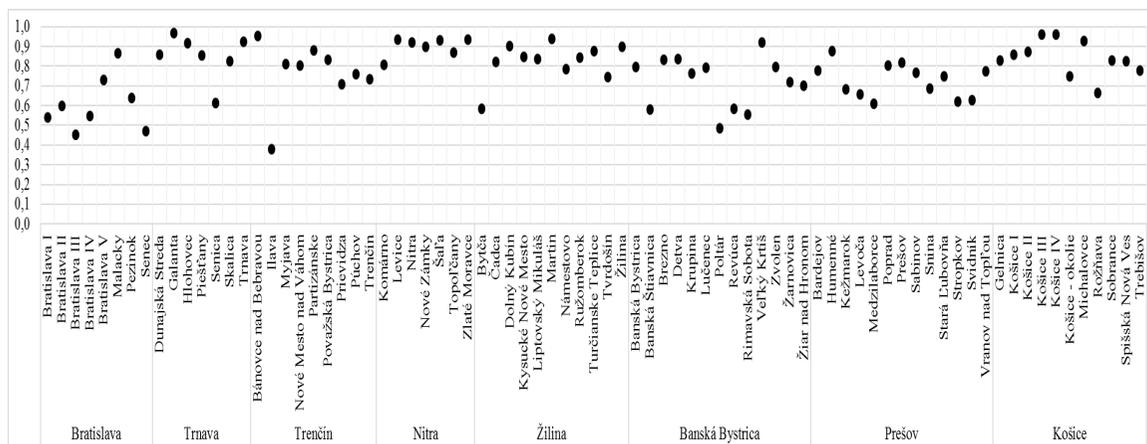
Source: own calculation, Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family(2019)

The large absolute differences in the share of jobseekers with disabilities in the total number of jobseekers result mainly from the large distance of the worst regions from the average value. In 2008-2010, these absolute differences between districts were the lowest, but gradually increased and the difference between the best and worst districts was 10.69 percentage points in 2018 (similar to 2003). Relative differences between the districts of the Slovak Republic in the share of persons with disabilities in the total number of registered unemployed also increased in the observed period, reaching 54.50% in 2018. Thus,

we can state that although the general situation on the labour market is improving, regional differences are increasing, because in some districts of Slovakia there is a relatively high share of people with disabilities in the total number who cannot find job on the labour market.

Based on the above, we examined the correlation dependence between the number of job seekers and the number of job seekers with disabilities in the districts of the Slovak Republic (Pearson's correlation coefficient) in the period 2000-2018. The results are shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Dependence of the number of registered job seekers and job seekers with disabilities



Source: own calculation, Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family(2019)

Figure 5 shows that there are districts in the Slovak Republic where there is a high dependence of the number of job seekers with disabilities and the total number of job seekers in the observed period, e.g. Galanta, Košice III, Košice IV, Martin and others. On the contrary, high dependence was not proven in the districts of Ilava, in the Bratislava city districts, in the district of Poltár and Rimavská Sobota.

### Summary and conclusions

The labour market is extremely dynamic and undergoes fundamental structural changes as a result of current economic developments. These cause the demand for certain types of work to decrease. As a result, people who have such work get into trouble and cannot find employment on the labour market. Individuals with disability are among the particularly vulnerable groups in the labour market. The above research shows that people with disabilities can be included on the labour market, important factor of their success is their education, as well as support from state authorities and institutions, various civic associations and foundations. Based on our knowledge, the most unemployed with disability were in 2001 (29,352 persons) and the least in the pre-crisis period (2006-2008) and in the last year 2018 only 6060 persons in the Slovak Republic. From the point of view of the regions,

the situation is quite different. We recorded the most job seekers with disabilities in the Košice region. The best situation in the whole monitored period was in the Bratislava region, although in the Prešov region there was a significant decrease. However, when examining the share of the number of applicants with disabilities in the total number of job seekers, we can observe an interesting development in the Trenčín region. It shows the worst results in the whole monitored period, although this region belongs to the regions with a low unemployment rate in terms of the number of unemployed. The situation is significantly different in the districts of individual regions of the Slovak Republic. Although the general situation improves on the labour market, regional differences are increasing, because a relatively high proportion of persons with disabilities in the total number of people in some districts of Slovakia. These are people who cannot find a job on the labour market. The coefficient of variation has not fallen below 50% in the last three years, on the contrary, it is still rising. The Slovak Republic has not been able to reduce large regional differences for a long time, which is also confirmed by our study focused on the position of people with disabilities. Reducing regional disparities in Slovakia is the Achilles heel of regional policy in the Slovak Republic.

References

- Aytac, S., Bayram, N., Özenalp, A., Özgökçeler, S., Berkun, S., Ceylan, A., Erturk, H. (2012). Flexible Working and Employment of People with Disabilities at Customs Brokerage Firms in Turkey: A Social Responsibility Project. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 65 (2012), pp. 39-45. Retrieved from: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042812050732>
- Bakošová, A., Bulla, R., Kozárová, E., Bugár, Š. (2017). „Nezamestnateľní“ nezamestnaní. Vydané v rámci projektu Centrum sociálneho dialógu II. 404 p. ISBN 978-80-89837-30-4.
- Bliksvær, T. (2018). Disability, Labour Market Participation and the Effect of Educational Level: Compared to What? *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research*, 20(1), pp. 6–17. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.16993/sjdr.3>
- Brichtová, L. - Repková, K. (2014). *Sociálne služby: zacielené na kvalitu (v kontexte zmien zákona o sociálnych službách od roku 2014)*. Bratislava: Inštitút pre výskum práce a rodiny, 2014. ISBN 978-80-7138-138-9.
- Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. (2019). *Nezamestnanosť – mesačné štatistiky*. Retrieved from: [https://www.upsvr.gov.sk/statistiky/nezamestnanost-mesacne-statistiky.html?page\\_id=1254](https://www.upsvr.gov.sk/statistiky/nezamestnanost-mesacne-statistiky.html?page_id=1254)
- Čmelíková, T., Španková, J., Živčicová, E. (2005). Zdravotne postihnutí a ich postavenie na trhu práce. *Realnyj sektor ekonomiki: teorija i praktika upravlenija: Periodičeskij naučno-praktičeskij žurnal*. Iževsk: Ministerstvo obrazovanija i nauky rosijskoj federaciji, no. 1-2., pp. 37-41. ISSN 1813-7954.
- Geiger B.B., van der Wel K.A., Tøge A.G. (2017). Success and failure in narrowing the disability employment gap: comparing levels and trends across Europe 2002-2014. *BMC Public Health*. 17(1):928. DOI: 10.1186/s12889-017-4938-8.
- Institute for Research and Development on Inclusion and Society (2014). *Employment of People with Developmental Disabilities in Canada: Six Key Elements for an Inclusive Labour Market*. Toronto: Institute for Research and Development on Inclusion and Society (IRIS).
- Jetha, A., Shaw, R., Sinden, A.R., Mahood, Q., Gignac, M.A.M., McColl, M.A., Ginis, K.A.M. (2019). Work-focused interventions that support the labour market transition of young adults with chronic disabling health conditions: A systematic review. *Occupational & Environmental Medicine*. 76(3), 189-198. DOI: 10.1136/oemed-2018-105454
- Jones, M., Mavromaras, K., Sloane, P., Wei, Z. (2011). Disability and Job Mismatches in the Australian Labour Market. *IZA Discussion Paper*, No. 6152. Retrieved from: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=1968103>
- Masárová, T., Španková, J. (2006). Zdravotné postihnutie z pohľadu sociálnej práce. *Trendy hospodárskeho a sociálneho rozvoja v krajinách EÚ*. Trenčín: TnUAD, 2006. ISBN 80-8075-187-0.
- Orgonášová, M. (2014). Bio-psycho-sociálny pohľad na osobu so zdravotným postihnutím, predpoklad jej úspešnej inklúzie. Matulník, J. (ed.): *Vzdelávanie a zamestnanie osôb so zdravotným postihnutím*. Bratislava: Slovenská sociologická spoločnosť pri SAV. pp. 4-13. ISBN 978-80-85447-23-1. Retrieved from: <http://www.sociologia.eu.sk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/ZBORNIK-17-12.pdf>
- Orgonášová, M., Záhorcová, V. (2012). *Hodnotenie zdravotného stavu a pracovného potenciálu osôb so zdravotným postihnutím v niektorých krajinách EÚ a zvlášť v SR*. Správa z analýzy. Slovenská únia podporovaného zamestnávania.
- Pawera, R., Štefancová, V. (2013). Zdravotné postihnutie ako znevýhodnenie na trhu práce Slovenskej republiky. *Dimenzie vývoja súčasnej spoločnosti*. Trenčín: Trenčianska univerzita Alexandra Dubčeka v Trenčíne, pp. 72-84. ISBN 978-80-8075-630-7.
- Repková, K. (2012). *Politika sociálnych služieb: (v kocke)*. Prešov: Prešovská univerzita v Prešove, 80 p. ISBN 978-80-555-0621-0. Retrieved from: <http://www.pulib.sk/web/kniznica/elpub/dokument/Repkova1>
- Sainsbury, R., Coleman-Fountain, E. (2013). *Making Persons with Disabilities Full Citizens – New Knowledge for an Inclusive and Sustainable European Social Model*. DISCIT Deliverable 5.1: Diversity and Change of the Employment Prospects of Persons with Disabilities: The Impact of Redistributive and Regulatory Provisions in a Multilevel Framework.
- Sekulová, M., Gyarfášová, O. (2010). *Diskriminácia a viacnásobná diskriminácia. Pohľady verejnosti na diskrimináciu, rovnosť a rovné zaobchádzanie*.

Bratislava: Inštitút pre verejné otázky. ISBN 978-80-89345-24-3

Turcotte, M. (2014). *Persons with disabilities and employment* (Statistics Canada Cat. No. 75-006-X). Ottawa: Statistics Canada. Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/75-006-x/2014001/article/14115-eng.pdf?st=ZZO5Ipvt>

#### Contact

Ing. Eva Koišová, PhD., MBA,  
Ing. Jana Masárová, PhD.,  
Ing. Karol Krajčo  
Department of Economics and Economics,  
Faculty of Social and Economic Relations,  
Alexander Dubček University in Trenčín  
Študentská 3, 911 50 Trenčín  
e-mail: [eva.koisova@tnuni.sk](mailto:eva.koisova@tnuni.sk),  
e-mail: [jana.masarova@tnuni.sk](mailto:jana.masarova@tnuni.sk)  
e-mail: [karol.krajco@tnuni.sk](mailto:karol.krajco@tnuni.sk)