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Employment Outcomes among People with Disabilities: Macro-Level Determinants

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Authors	Russinova, Zlatka;de Wet, Anneliese;Bloch, Philippe;Shulman, Alex
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Employment Outcomes among People with Disabilities: Macro-Level Determinants

Selected Findings from NIDILRR-funded Disability Employment Research in the 21st Century

A systematic scoping review of research published between 2000 and 2020 on employment of people with disabilities, that was funded by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR), was conducted by CeKTER researchers. All papers comparing people with disabilities to those without were excluded from the systematic scoping review. Among over 100 publications reviewed there was a wide and very disparate array of findings with numerous variables used and varying research questions. This result belies summative findings. There are numerous ways of organizing the disparate findings. This brief is part of a series of findings from CeKTER's systematic scoping review. In this brief we report on findings about a range of macro-level determinants impacting the employment of people with disabilities, including community-related and system-level determinants. Please note that all comparisons are always about corresponding peers with disabilities.

Community-Related Determinants

- Lack of transportation is a barrier to the employment of people with disabilities.^{1,2,3}
- Youth with disabilities were more likely to have higher employment rates if they lived in suburban or rural areas when compared to their peers who lived in urban areas.⁴
- Successful vocational rehabilitation (VR) case closure due to self-employment increased as geography became more rural.⁵
- People with disabilities were more likely to have higher employment rates if they lived in communities with⁶:
 - higher proportions of Hispanic individuals, and
 - greater number of college students
- People with disabilities were more likely to have lower employment rates if they lived in communities with⁶:
 - higher rates of violent crime,
 - higher population density, and
 - higher concentration of physicians



- People with disabilities were more likely to have lower earnings if they lived in communities with⁶:
 - higher concentrations of physicians, and
 - higher concentration of high school graduates

- People with disabilities were more likely to work fewer number of hours per week if they lived in communities with⁶:
 - higher concentrations of physicians, and
 - higher concentration of high school graduates

System-Level Determinants

- People with disabilities living in a state with a Supplemental Security Income (SSI) supplement of \$100 higher than the average of \$44 were less likely to be employed compared to their peers living in states with smaller amounts of an SSI supplement, including states with no supplement.⁶
- Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries residing in the Northern states of the United States were more likely to have higher employment rates compared to those residing in Southern states.⁷
- People with visual impairments residing in the Midwest or South regions of the United States were more likely to be employed compared to their peers residing in the West and Northeast.⁸
- People with disabilities residing in states with lower unemployment rates were more likely to have successful VR case closures.⁹
- SSDI beneficiaries residing in states with low unemployment rates at the time of the SSDI award were more likely to¹⁰:
 - enroll in employment services,
 - start and complete a trial work period, and
 - achieve nonpayment status due to successful work
- Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) beneficiaries with visual impairments residing in states with lower unemployment rates were more likely to have greater earnings.¹¹

- People with psychiatric disabilities receiving Individual Placement and Support (IPS) services were more likely to be employed if they resided in areas with lower unemployment rates.¹²
- People with disabilities residing in areas with limited job opportunities were more likely to have unsuccessful VR case closure.^{2, 13, 14}
- Limited availability of jobs was a barrier to the employment of individuals who have experienced vision loss.³ People with disabilities residing in a state with higher amounts of county-level federal aid per capita were more likely to work more hours per week and to have greater earnings.⁶
- People with disabilities residing in states with a Medicaid Buy-In (MBI) program were more likely to have higher earnings.⁶



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