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The Socio-Demographic Determinants of Disability – Findings from Poland

Short abstract

Nowadays, in the context of population ageing the health status and its determinants are broadly discussed issue because health is the main factor of so-called quality of life. Many studies have shown that health status does not only depend on biological factors (age, sex), but also on social and demographic factors (place of residence, living arrangements, marital status or level of education). The main purpose of the paper is to analyse the socio-demographic determinants of disability in Poland. The data used come from the panel survey “Social Diagnosis – living conditions and quality of life of Poles”, carried out in Poland since 2000. The random effects probit model with the dependent binary variable describing disability has been estimated. Our findings are similar to the results obtained for other European countries. We found that women have lower probability of being disabled than men. As it could be expected, the likelihood of having a disability increases with age. Married people have lower odds of becoming disabled than those never married, while for divorced this probability was higher. Moreover, the educational level has a strong impact on probability of being disabled: persons with higher level of education have lower risk of having a disability than those with lower level of education.