

# Exploring Gender and Disability: Sociodemographic Trends in Puerto Rico 2016-2020

Ariana Muñoz Maurás, MS

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# Introduction

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Objective: Analyze the sociodemographic characteristics of the population with a disability by gender in Puerto Rico (PR) for 2016-2020.

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16 % of people worldwide were living with a disability (WHO, 2022).

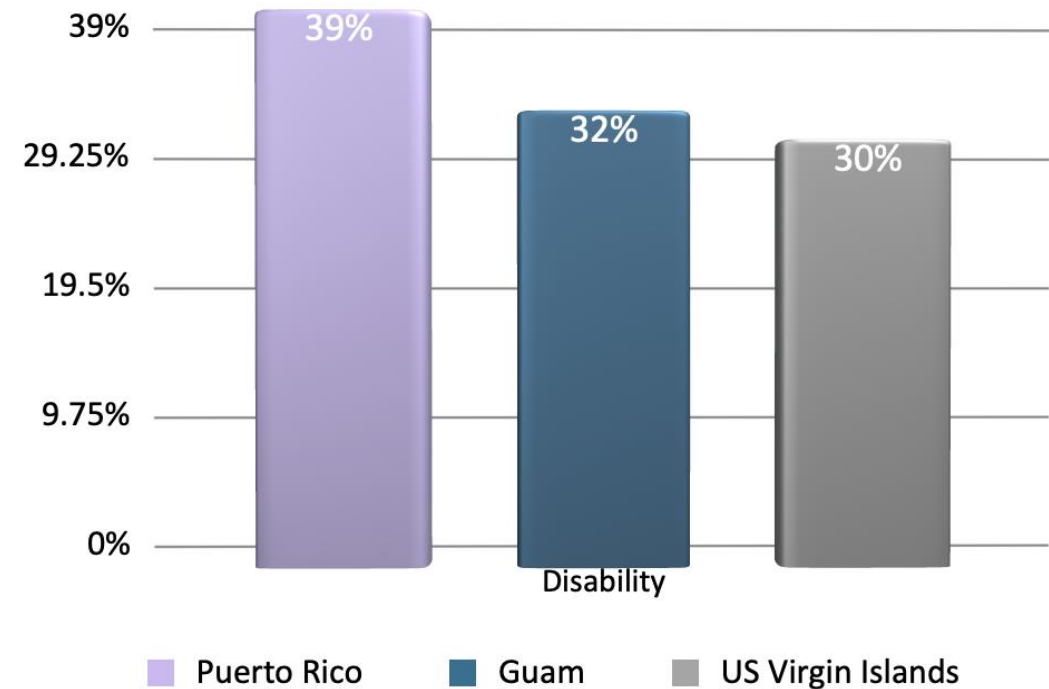
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12% of the population of Latin America and the Caribbean lived with at least one disability (PAHO, 2012).

# Background

- PR ranks among U.S. territories with the highest disability prevalence.
- The Defender of People with Disabilities in PR has lost 75% of the federal funds it receives (Rivera Sánchez, 2021a).
- Unsafe and inaccessible services and places.
- Unequal Treatment of Puerto Rico Residents with Disabilities in Federal Programs and Benefits (NCD, 2022)

Adults (18+ years) with disabilities in U.S. Territories, 2021



(BRFSS, 2021)

# Considerations

PR is experiencing a population decline, with deaths outnumbering births.

- Births: 19, 140 (2020)
- Deaths: 32,236 (2020)

The demographic composition reveals a higher proportion of women compared to men.

- Women: 1,720,714 (2022)
- Men: 1,551,668 (2022)

The population is predominantly elderly.

- Population 65 years and over: 22.3 % (2022)

Puerto Ricans generally have a long lifespan, with women typically outliving men.

- Women: 84.6 years (2019)
- Men: 77.8 years (2019)

Each year, the island loses thousands of residents due to migration to the US, mostly young people.

- No. of emigrants to the US 2020-2021: 55,000 and 43,000 approx.

# What is “disability”?

Various definitions exist for the term "disability."

## **Abellán García & Puga González, 2005**

- “A consequence of functional, cognitive, and emotional limitations resulting from disease or other bodily deficiencies, accidents or other health problems” (Abellán García & Puga González, 2005)
- “The difficulty to perform socially accepted roles and activities that are common for people of similar age and socio-cultural background” (Abellán García & Puga González, 2005)

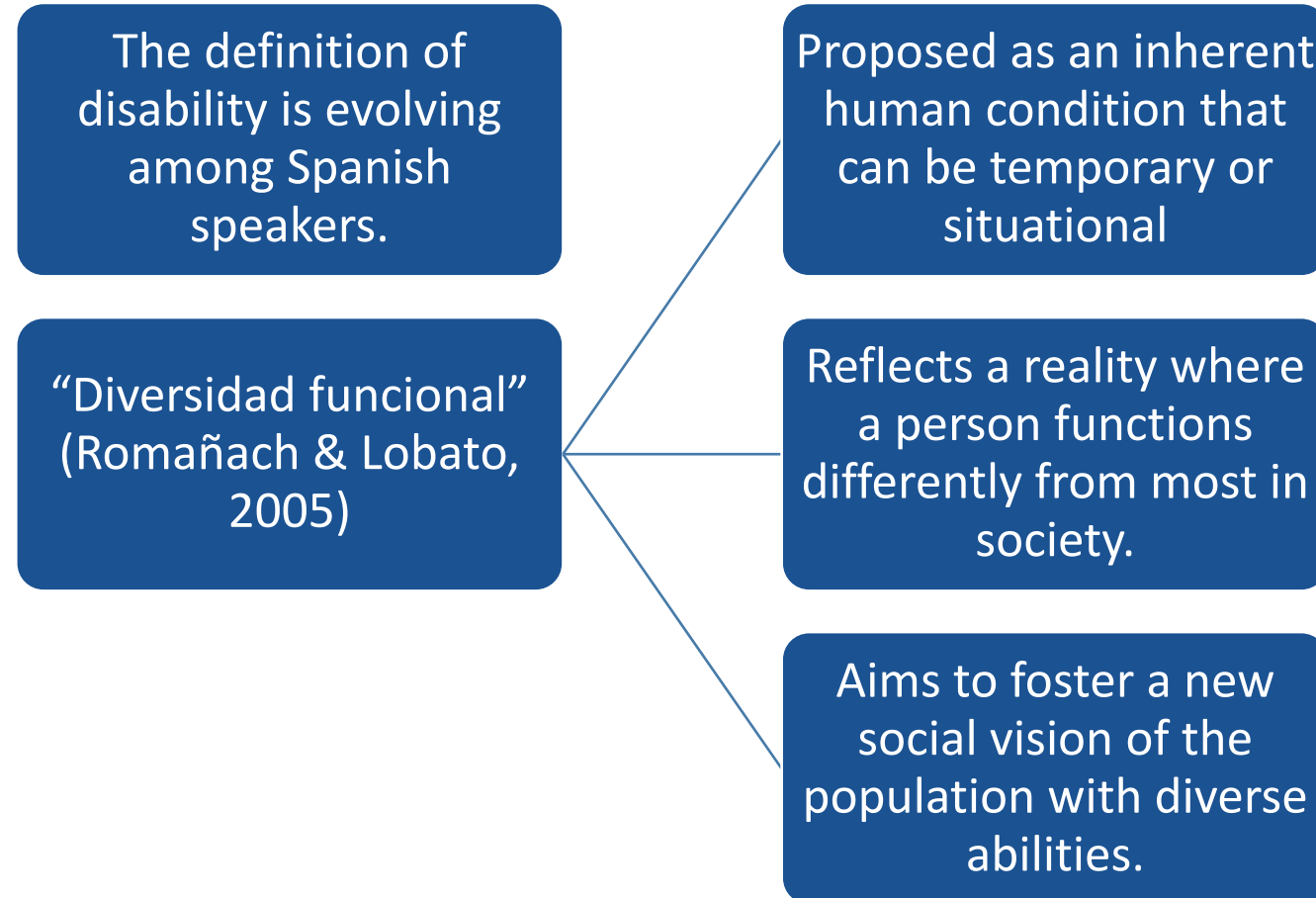
## **US Census Bureau, 2019**

- “The product of interactions between individuals' bodies; their physical, emotional, and mental health; and the physical and social environment in which they live, work, or play” (US Census Bureau, 2019)
- “Disability exists when this interaction results in limitations of activities and restrictions to full participation in school, work, home, or community”(US Census Bureau, 2019)

# Types of disability

Difficulty	Definition	Other considerations
Hearing	A person who is deaf or had serious difficulty hearing.	Used to determine the disability status of children under 5 years of age and children between 5 and 14 years of age.
Vision	A person who is blind or had serious difficulty seeing, even with glasses.	
Self-Care	Difficulty dressing or bathing.	Used to determine the disability status of children between 5 and 14 years old.
Ambulatory	Severe difficulty walking or climbing stairs.	
Cognitive	A person who, because of physical, mental or emotional condition, had serious difficulty concentrating, remembering or making decisions	
Independent Living	A person who, because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition, had difficulty running errands alone, such as going to a doctor's office or shopping.	

# Language Evolution: Embracing Positive Terms in Disability Discourse



# Issues affecting women with disabilities

Physical, sexual and psychological violence, which can be institutional or interpersonal.

Limitation of sexual and reproductive rights, including the right to access information and communication, challenges related to motherhood and childcare responsibilities.

Discrimination that is both varied and intersectional

(Comité Español de Representantes de Personas con Discapacidad, 2017)



# Methodology

## Source

- Puerto Rico Community Survey, (PRCS) 2016-2020
- PUMS (Public Use Microdata Sample, 5 %)

## Type of study

- Descriptive cross-sectional

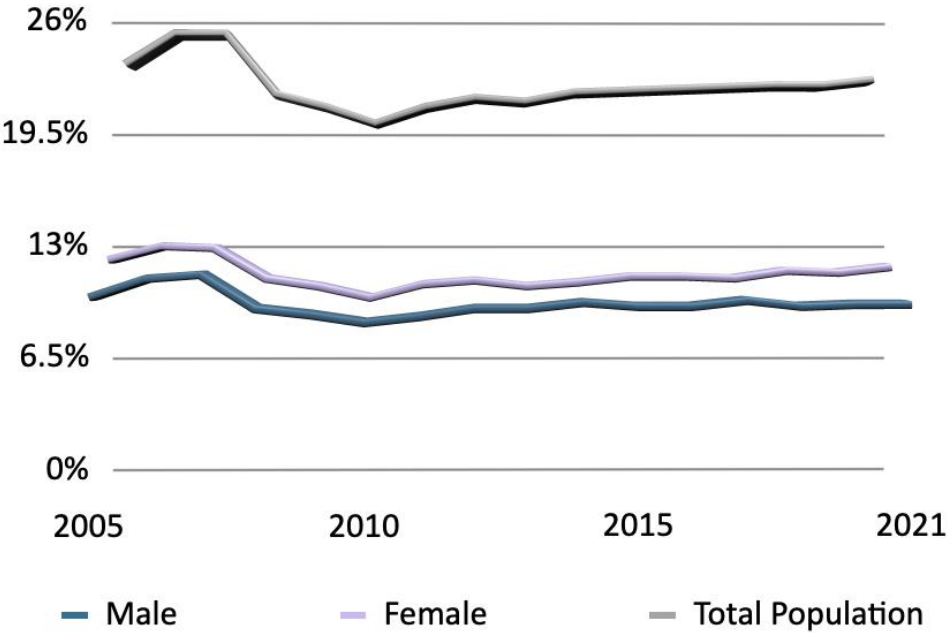
## Variables

- Sociodemographic indicators related to the population with disabilities
- Age, sex, education level, type of disability, and poverty level

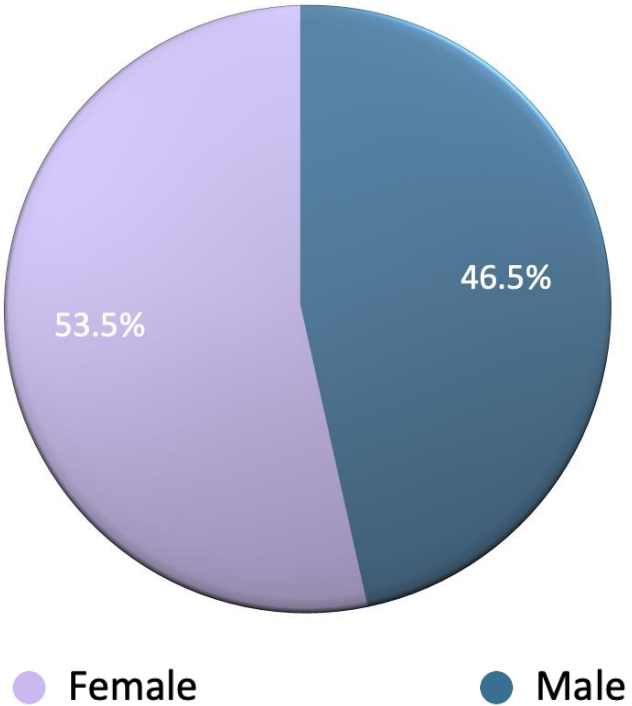
# Data Insights and Findings

# Disability Prevalence by Gender in Puerto Rico

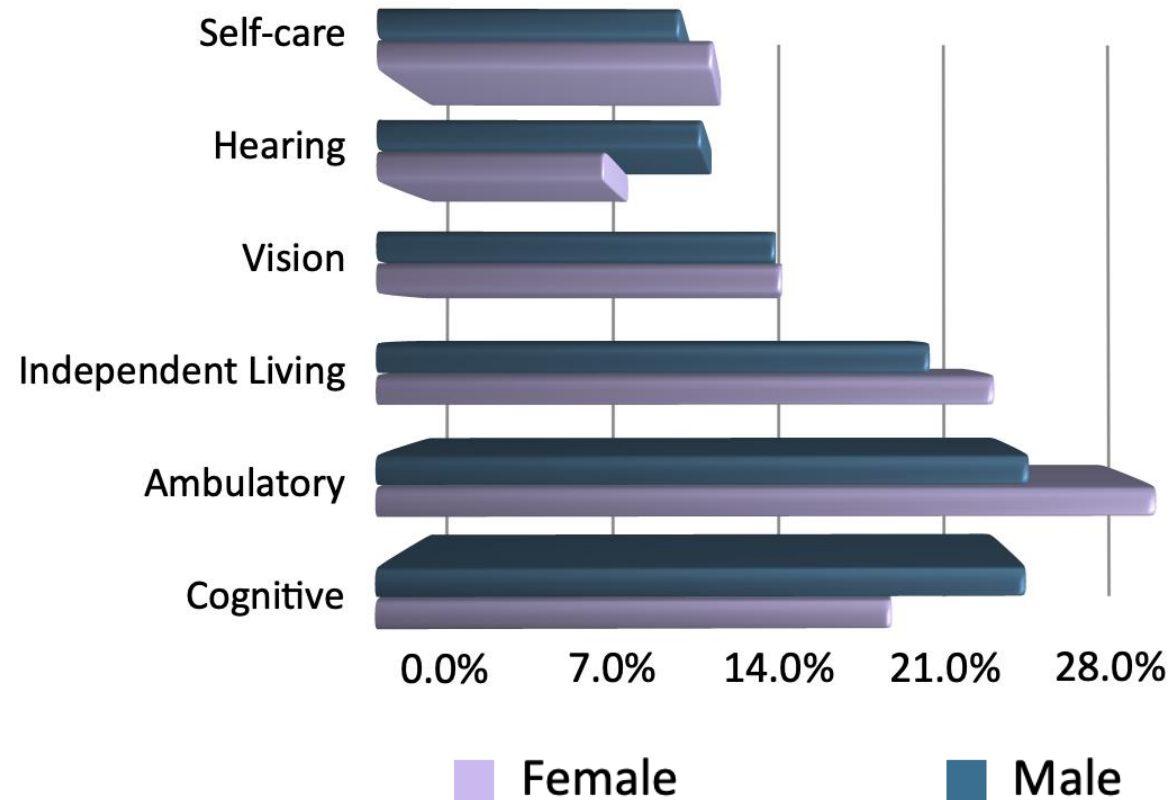
### Disability Prevalence Trends by Gender in Puerto Rico, 2005-2021



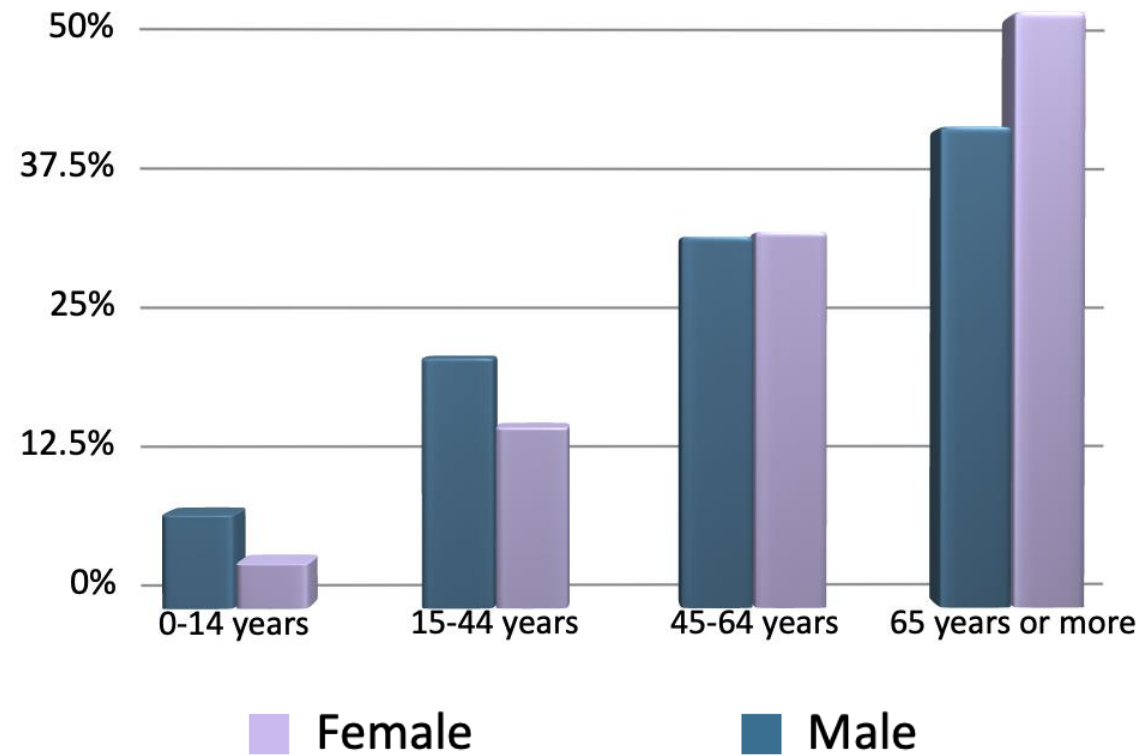
### Prevalence of Disability in Puerto Rico: 2016-2020



# Prevalence by Type of Disability in Puerto Rico, 2016-2020

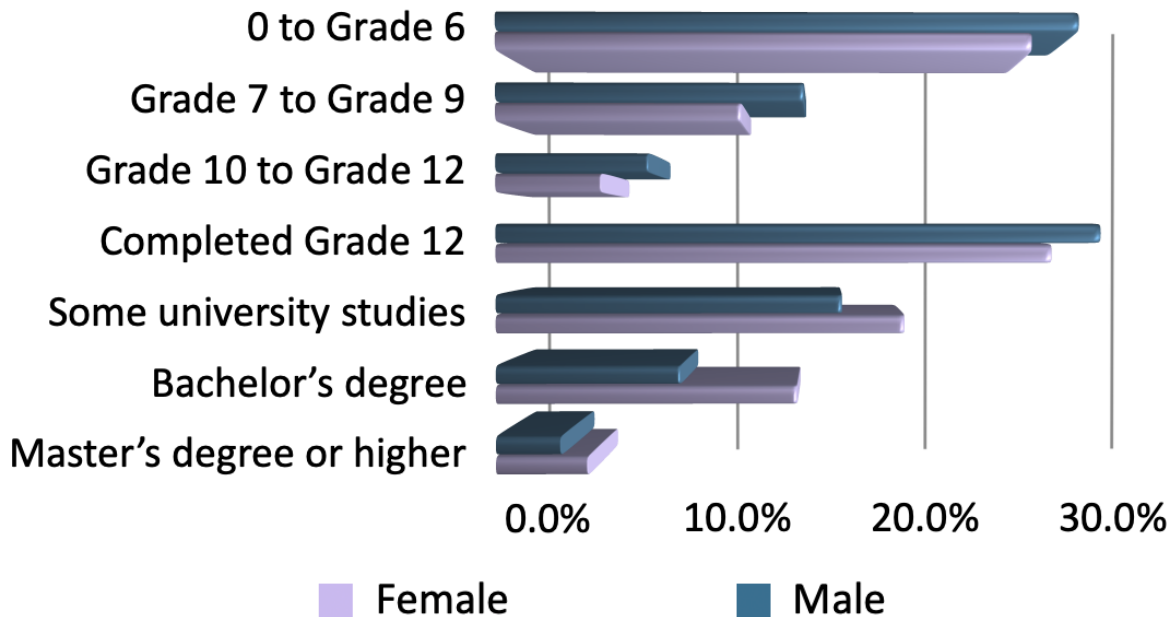


# Population with Disabilities by Age Groups in Puerto Rico, 2016-2020

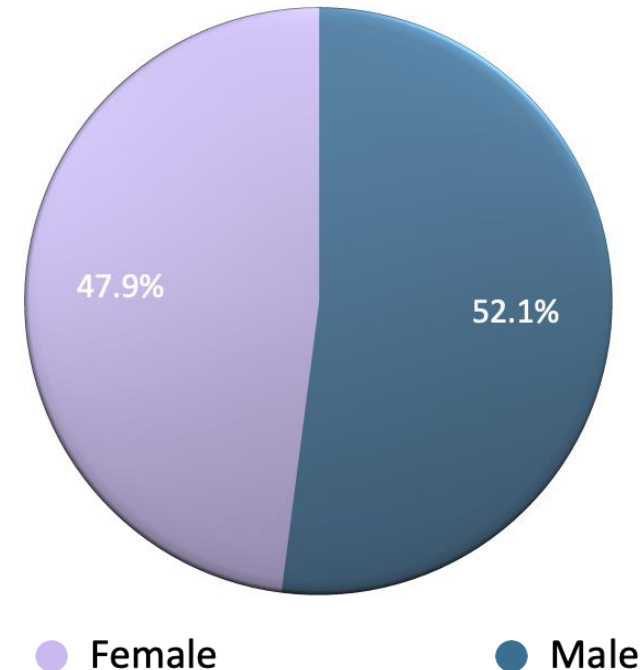


# Disability in Puerto Rico: Education and Workforce Insights (2016-2020)

## Educational Attainment of the Population with Disabilities in Puerto Rico, 2016-2020

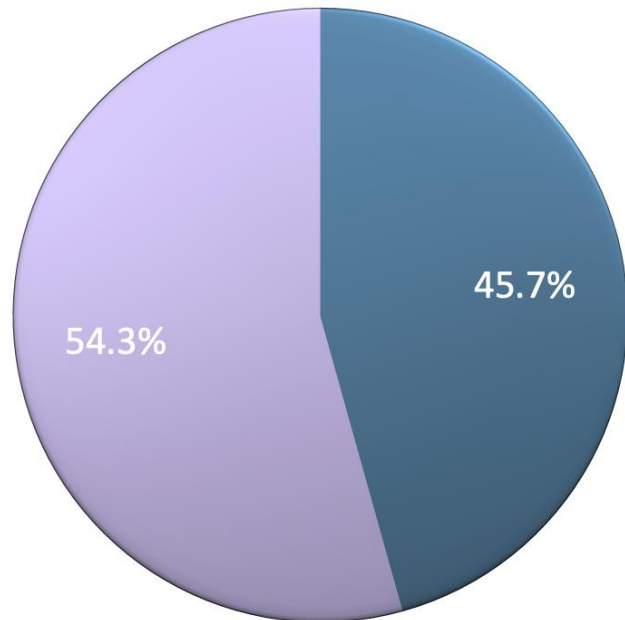


## Workforce participation of the Population with Disabilities in Puerto Rico, 2016-2020



# Income and Poverty Among People with Disabilities in Puerto Rico (2016-2020)

**Population with Disabilities Below the Poverty Level in Puerto Rico, 2016-2020**



● Female      ● Male

**Average Income of the Population with Disabilities in Puerto Rico, 2016-2020**

Gender	Total
Male	\$13,499.09
Female	\$10,064.33
Total	\$11,623.38

# Conclusions

- Noted vulnerabilities faced by people with disabilities in PR, with significant disparities between genders.
- Poor health outcomes linked to primary and secondary conditions and comorbidities among this population.
- Issues include social marginalization, poverty, inadequate healthcare access, and discrimination.
- Emphasizes the need for a public health approach that directly addresses social and health determinants.
- Advocates for an inclusive analysis recognizing challenges as collective societal issues, not merely individual.



# Recommendations & Future Steps

Encourage qualitative research to better understand the needs of women with disabilities.



Encourage qualitative research to explore terminology used for disability.



Include diverse female perspectives.



Monitor the changing needs of Puerto Rico's aging population over time.

# Exploring Gender and Disability: Sociodemographic Trends in Puerto Rico 2016-2020

Thank you!

[ariana.munoz.mauras@census.gov](mailto:ariana.munoz.mauras@census.gov)



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contact information.

# References

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