

Disability in the United Kingdom 2014

Facts and figures



**Papworth
Trust**

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Foreword

If we want a world where disabled people are seen for what they can do, we need to work together.

Looking back over the 5 years Papworth Trust has been publishing this disability facts and figures report, I don't think the UK has moved any closer towards equality for disabled people.

Some of the most shocking facts in this report are about the living standards and incomes of disabled people in the UK. The pay gap between disabled and non-disabled people has widened by a third since 2010. Children in families including a disabled person are almost twice as likely to live in poverty.

To change this, we need economic equality. And for that we need employers, disabled people and organisations like ourselves to work together so that disabled people can find jobs that are right for them and are flexible to their needs. At the moment, only one third of people in the private sector think their workplace welcomes disabled people. When I write this foreword in 5 years time, I hope that all workplaces will welcome all people equally.

This year we have widened the scope of the report so we can compare the UK against countries in the European Union. For example, did you know that the UK employment gap between disabled and non-disabled people is more than a third, which is significantly worse than the EU average? Or that across the EU, less than half of disabled people are employed compared to almost three quarters of non-disabled people? You can read more on pages 34 – 35.

We want to keep talking about how we can create a world where disabled people are seen for what they can do. Please join the conversation, using the hashtags #worktogether or #disabilityfacts on social media, emailing policy@papworthtrust.org.uk or calling **01480 357 212**.



Vicky McDermott,
Chief Executive of Papworth Trust



Methodology

This report gives an overview of the key facts and figures about disability in the UK today.¹ It covers areas such as employment, health, housing, transport and education.

This report is the result of a comprehensive search of the latest key statistics on all aspects of disability. The figures have been taken from the most recent and up to date surveys and research reports.

It is important to note that the number of disabled people in the UK is widely under reported. In many cases, the actual number of disabled people will be higher than the figures in this report suggest.

Data is based on differing definitions of disability; different surveys produce different estimates of the number of disabled people. This report draws from a range of data sets and sources. It is important to note that the different sources are not necessarily compatible, and may be based on different definitions.

However, most of the information in this report has been provided using the Equality Act 2010 definition, which says:

A person has a disability if:

- They have a physical or mental impairment
- The impairment has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to perform normal day to day activities.²

This year's report includes a new section 'Disability in the European Union' which looks at comparative data on disabled people across the European Union (EU). The EU's Europe 2020 strategy aims to deliver high levels of employment and strengthen social cohesion for all EU citizens.

Full economic and social participation of disabled people is essential for Europe 2020 to succeed in creating a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. This section provides the disability prevalence rate, employment rate, risk of poverty and social exclusion for disabled people at the EU level.

¹ Not all the facts and figures presented are for the UK inclusively, but we have clearly signposted where they are not.

² Equality Act 2010



Key statistics

- There are over 12 million disabled people in the UK. Almost 1 in 5 people (19%) in the UK have a disability; this figure has remained relatively constant over time (12.2 million in 2012/13).¹
- The prevalence of disability rises with age: in 2012/13, 7% of children were disabled (0.9 million), compared to 16% of adults of working age (6.1 million), and 43% of adults over state pension age (5.1 million). There are more disabled women than men in the UK.²
- In 2012/13, the most common impairments that disabled people had were: mobility (57%), stamina/breathing/fatigue (38%), dexterity (28%) and mental health (16%).³
- The distribution of disabled people is fairly evenly spread across the UK. The North East, Wales, the North West and East Midlands have the highest rates of disability, while London, the South East and the East of England have the lowest.⁴
- People from white ethnic groups are almost twice as likely as those from non-white ethnic groups to have a limiting long-standing illness or disability (20% compared with 11%).⁵
- Disabled people are far less likely to be in employment. In March 2013, the UK employment rate among working age disabled people was 49% (4.1 million), compared to 81.8% of non-disabled people.⁶
- 44.3% of working age disabled people are economically inactive. This figure is nearly 4 times higher than for non-disabled people (11.5%).⁷
- The 2 most commonly stated enablers for employment among adults with impairments are modified hours or days or reduced work hours and tax credits.⁸
- The 2 most common barriers to work among adults with impairments are a lack of job opportunities (43%) and difficulty with transport (29%).⁹
- Disabled adults are nearly 3 times as likely as non-disabled adults to have no formal qualifications, 30% and 11% respectively.¹⁰
- The 2 main barriers to educational opportunities for disabled adults are finance (15%) and a health condition, illness or impairment (9%).¹¹
- 19% of households that include a disabled person live in relative income poverty (below 60% of median income), compared to 14% of households without a disabled person.¹²

- The gap of people in absolute low income between families where at least 1 member is disabled and those where no one is disabled has increased over the last few years.¹³
- The largest gap is among working-age adults in families with at least 1 disabled person (22% compared to 12%).¹⁴
- The high level of unemployment is the primary reason why so many disabled people are in low income households.¹⁵
- Disabled people pay on average £550 per month on extra costs related to their disability. As a result of these extra costs, disabled people are twice as likely to have unsecured debt totalling more than half of their household income.¹⁶
- Disabled men experience a pay gap of 11% compared with non-disabled men, while the gap between disabled women and non-disabled women is double this at 22%.¹⁷
- Disabled people experience much lower economic living standards than their peers.¹⁸
- Disabled people face a disproportionate likelihood of living in a deprived area, and are more likely than non-disabled people to live in poor housing.¹⁹
- There is a shortage of housing that is specifically designed to meet disabled people's needs.²⁰
- The majority of homes in England (84%) do not allow someone using a wheelchair to get to and through the front door without difficulty.²¹
- Transport is the largest concern for disabled people in their local area. Pavement/road maintenance, access, and frequency of public transport are the biggest issues.²²
- It is estimated there are 62,000 disability motivated hate crimes each year on average.²³
- The annual cost of bringing up a disabled child is 3 times greater than that of bringing up a non-disabled child.²⁴
- 40% of disabled children in the UK live in poverty. This accounts for around 320,000 disabled children and almost a third of those are classified as living in 'severe poverty'.²⁵
- Children in families containing 1 or more disabled persons are twice as likely to live in households with combined low income and material deprivation as those in families with no disabled persons (22% compared to 10%).²⁶



- 1 in 4 people will experience mental ill health in any given year. ²⁷
- Overall, 1 in 10 adults in Britain experience depression at any one time. Around 1 in 20 people at any one time experience major or 'clinical' depression. ²⁸
- Nearly 4 in 10 people thought of disabled people as less productive than non-disabled people, and three quarters of people thought of disabled people as needing to be cared for some or most of the time. This suggests that a degree of 'benevolent prejudice' exists towards disabled people. ²⁹
- It is estimated that the number of older disabled people is likely to increase by around 40% between 2002 and 2022, if age related disability rates remain constant. ³⁰
- The World Health Organisation has predicted that depression will be the leading cause of disability by 2020. Mental ill health and learning disabilities in particular are anticipated to grow. ³¹
- Disabled people are disadvantaged in the labour market in all European countries. At the European Union (EU) level, about 47% of disabled people are employed, compared to 72% of non-disabled people. The average employment gap is 25%. ³²
- Disabled people face a higher risk of poverty compared to non-disabled people across all EU member states. At the EU level, 19% of disabled people face the risk of living in poverty, compared to 15% of non-disabled people. ³³

Age and gender

- Almost 1 in 5 people (19%) in the UK have a disability; this figure has remained relatively constant over time (12.2 million in 2012/13).³⁴
- There are more disabled women than men in the UK. In 2012/13, there were 6.6 million disabled women (21%) and 5.5 million disabled men (18%). This has remained broadly stable over time.³⁵
- The prevalence of disability rises with age: in 2012/13, 7% of children were disabled (0.9 million), compared to 16% of adults of working age (6.1 million), and 43% of adults over state pension age (5.1 million).³⁶
- Health is strongly associated with age. In 2012, 67% of those aged 75 and over had a longstanding illness or disability, compared with 14% of those aged 16–24.³⁷
- Only 17% of disabled people were born with their disabilities. The majority of disabled people acquire their disability later in life.³⁸
- In 2012/13, the most common impairments that disabled people had were: mobility (57%), stamina/breathing/fatigue (38%), dexterity (28%) and mental health (16%).³⁹
- Disabled people of state pension age are more likely than those of working age to report multiple impairments, including mobility (71%) and hearing (23%).⁴⁰
- Disabled people of working age are more likely than those of state pension age to report problems with mental health (24%), learning (13%) and social or behavioural impairments (7%).⁴¹
- For disabled children, the most common impairments are social and behavioural (33%), learning disability (31%), and stamina, breathing and fatigue (31%).⁴²
- Among disabled children, boys have a higher rate of disability than girls, and are more likely to experience social and behavioural, learning and memory difficulties.⁴³

Disability and geography

- Disabled people tend to be concentrated in poorer areas as a result of lower incomes and social housing allocation policy. ⁴⁴
- Rates of disability are highest within deprived and poorer areas, as well as a general north-south divide with health in the North East historically poor. This is largely due to a legacy of heavy industries, such as coal mining and shipbuilding, lifestyle choices and a complex web of factors. ⁴⁵
- The distribution of disabled people across the UK is fairly evenly spread. The North East, Wales, the North West and East Midlands have the highest rates of disability in the UK (25%, 24%, 22% and 22% respectively). ⁴⁶
- London, the South East and the East of England have the lowest rates of disability in the UK (14%, 16% and 19% respectively). ⁴⁷
- People living in Wales (26%) are most likely to have a limiting long-standing illness or disability when compared with other regions of Great Britain. ⁴⁸
- The Local Authorities with the highest proportions of people who have a limiting long term health problem or disability are East Lindsey (26%), Blackpool (25.6%), and Tendring (25.5%). The lowest levels are in Wandsworth (11.2%), Richmond upon Thames (11.5%), and the City of London (11.5%). ⁴⁹
- Adults with impairments living in the North and the South West report the highest number of life areas (for example, education or leisure) in which participation is restricted. ⁵⁰
- Adults with impairments living in the West Midlands and South East report the lowest number of life areas (for example, education or leisure) in which participation is restricted. ⁵¹

Disability and ethnicity

- The prevalence and profile of disability varies by ethnicity. People from white ethnic groups are almost twice as likely as those from non-white ethnic groups to have a limiting long-standing illness or disability (20% compared with 11%).⁵²
- In Great Britain, white adults (29%) report a higher percentage of impairments than other ethnic groups, while Chinese and other ethnic groups show the lowest percentage (19%).⁵³
- In the 2011 Census, white Irish reported the highest percentage of long-term health issues or disability (26%), while other white reported the lowest (9%), followed by mixed/multiple ethnic group (10%), and black/African/Caribbean/black British (11%).⁵⁴
- One study shows there is evidence that Indian Asian people are significantly more likely to experience higher rates of disability than Europeans.⁵⁵
- Adults with an impairment from black or black British ethnic backgrounds report the highest number of life areas (for example, education or leisure) in which participation is restricted, while adults from white ethnic backgrounds report the lowest.⁵⁶

Employment

- Over 50% of working age people who are out of work are disabled (either unemployed or economically inactive). ⁵⁷
- In March 2013, 20.8% of the working age population in the UK (8.3 million people) had a disability. Working age is defined as 16-64 years old for both males and females. ⁵⁸
- The employment rate gap between disabled and non-disabled people has narrowed from 37.2% in 2006 to 32.8% in 2013. ⁵⁹
- In March 2013, the economically inactive rate for working age disabled people was 44.3%. This figure is nearly 4 times higher than for non-disabled people (11.5%). ⁶⁰
- Disabled people are more likely to be unemployed than non-disabled people. In March 2013, the unemployment rate for disabled people stood at 12%, compared to 7.6% of non-disabled people. ⁶¹
- 53% of working-age adults with impairments experienced barriers to work compared with 30% of adults without impairments. ⁶²
- The 2 most commonly stated enablers for employment among adults with impairments are modified hours or days or reduced working hours and tax credits. ⁶³
- The 2 most common barriers to work among adults with impairments are a lack of job opportunities (43%) and difficulty with transport (29%). ⁶⁴
- One third (33%) of employed people with impairments are limited in the type or amount of paid work that they can do, compared to 18% of adults without impairments. ⁶⁵
- A graduate with a work limiting disability is more likely to be lacking, but wanting work than an unqualified person with no disability. ⁶⁶
- Disabled people are nearly 4 times as likely to be unemployed or involuntarily out of work as non-disabled people. ⁶⁷

- The highest employment rates (6 in 10) exist for people with diabetes, skin conditions or chest/breathing problems. ⁶⁸
- A key reason for the low employment rate of disabled people is the fact that 1 in 6 of those who become disabled while in work lose their job during the first year after becoming disabled. ⁶⁹
- Disabled people are more likely to be long term unemployed and economically inactive. Over half of disabled people claiming incapacity benefits have been out of work for more than 5 years. ⁷⁰
- Long term inactivity or unemployment can increase the difficulty of returning to work. ⁷¹
- The average annual rate of disabled people making a transition from economic inactivity into employment is 4%, while the equivalent figure for non-disabled people is 6 times higher. ⁷²
- Disabled people are approximately 3 times more likely to stop working. ⁷³
- According to a recent survey, only one third (34%) of people who work in the private sector think their workplace welcomes disabled people, compared to over half (55%) of those in the public sector. ⁷⁴
- The top 3 types of discrimination identified by employed adults who experienced workplace discrimination due to a health condition, illness, impairment or disability are: being given fewer responsibilities (17%), not being promoted (11%), and being refused a job (8%). ⁷⁵
- Unemployed people (those out of work but looking for work) are almost twice as likely as those in employment to have a limited long-standing illness or disability (17% compared with 9%). They are also more likely to have a long-term illness (31% compared with 22%). ⁷⁶

Education and skills

- Disabled adults are nearly 3 times as likely to have no formal qualifications as non-disabled adults, 30% and 11% respectively. ⁷⁷
- At 19 years of age, 28% of disabled young people do not have a qualification higher than Level 2, compared to only 17% of non-disabled young people. ⁷⁸
- At 19 years of age, 53% of disabled people do not have a qualification higher than Level 3, compared to only 42% of non-disabled people. ⁷⁹
- Adults aged 16–64 with impairments are twice as likely as their peers to experience barriers to education and training opportunities, 33% and 16% respectively. ⁸⁰
- The 2 main barriers to educational opportunities for disabled adults are finance (15%) and a health condition, illness or impairment (9%). ⁸¹
- At 19 years of age, disabled young people are twice as likely as their non-disabled peers to not be in any form of education, employment or training (NEET), 28% compared to 13%. ⁸²
- Between the ages of 16 and 19, disabled people are more likely to be in the NEET group at least once (33% compared to 24%). ⁸³
- Disabled people are twice as likely as non-disabled people to remain in the long-term NEET group (greater than 12 months), 15% compared to 8%. ⁸⁴
- In 2012/13, of the 743,380 people who entered higher education, 9.8% were disabled learners (73,135). This is a slight increase compared to 9% in 2011/12. ⁸⁵
- Disabled young people are more likely than non-disabled young people to participate in higher education at the age of 19, 64% compared to 58%. ⁸⁶
- It is predicted that by 2020, 42% of jobs will require a degree level qualification or above. ⁸⁷
- The Learning and Skills Council says that basic computer literacy is increasingly important for finding work. But in 2007, 37% of those who received Disability Living Allowance had never used a computer. ⁸⁸
- At all levels of qualification, the proportion of disabled people who don't have, but want, paid work is much greater than for their non-disabled peers. ⁸⁹
- In January 2014, 2.8% (232,190) of pupils in England had statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN). 92.5% of these attended state funded schools, 5.1% attended independent schools, and 1.7% attended non-maintained special schools. ⁹⁰
- In January 2014, 15.1% (1.26 million) of pupils in England had SEN without statements. ⁹¹

Income and pay

- Disabled people are more likely to live in low income households than their peers. This is primarily because of their high level of unemployment. 49% of working-age disabled adults are in paid employment, compared to 81.8% of their non-disabled counterparts.⁹²
- The rate of material deprivation among children living with at least 1 disabled adult is twice as high as those living without disabled adults (45.1% and 22.4%).⁹³
- Disabled people are more likely to be at the lower end of the earnings distribution. In 2012, the average hourly wage for disabled people was £12.15, compared to £13.25 for non-disabled people.⁹⁴
- The pay gap between disabled people and non-disabled people has increased by 35% since 2010.⁹⁵
- Disabled men experience a pay gap of 11% compared to non-disabled men, while the gap between disabled women and non-disabled women is double this at 22%.⁹⁶
- The likelihood of disability or limiting longstanding illness increases as income decreases. In 2012, only 6% of people with an income of £50,000 or more had a limiting longstanding illness or disability, compared with 30% of those earning £10,000 or less.⁹⁷
- For all types of family (for example single/couple, with/without children), a disabled adult's risk of having a lower income is much greater than that of a non-disabled adult.⁹⁸
- Adults in the poorest fifth of the income distribution are much more likely to be at risk of developing mental ill health than those on average incomes.⁹⁹
- Disabled adults aged from 25 to retirement age are twice as likely as their non-disabled counterparts to live in low income households (31% compared with 16%).¹⁰⁰
- More than half (55%) of disabled people reported having no savings, compared to around 12% of the general population.¹⁰¹
- Disabled people's day to day living costs – for basics like mobility aids, care and transport – are 25% higher than those of non-disabled people.¹⁰²
- Between disabled and non-disabled people in the 55-64 age group, the gap in the mean level of private pension wealth is £125,000.¹⁰³
- The average income of families with disabled children is £15,270, which is 23.5% below the UK mean income of £19,968. 21.8% have incomes that are less than half the UK mean.¹⁰⁴
- There are marked socio-economic differences for prevalence of disability. In the UK, people in the lowest socio-economic group experienced an increase in disability, while socially advantaged groups experienced a decline.¹⁰⁵

Living standards

- A substantially higher proportion of people who live in families with disabled members live in poverty, compared to people who live in families where no one is disabled.¹⁰⁶
- This is particularly the case for people living in families containing 1 or more disabled members and not receiving disability benefits. 12% of those in receipt of disability benefits live in low income households, compared to 24% of those who do not receive disability benefits.¹⁰⁷
- 19% of households that include a disabled person live in relative income poverty (below 60% of median income), compared to 14% of those without a disabled person.¹⁰⁸
- 3.7 million people living in families where at least 1 member is disabled are in relative income poverty.¹⁰⁹
- The gap of people in absolute low income between families where at least 1 member is disabled and those where no one is disabled has increased over the last few years.¹¹⁰
- The largest gap is among working-age adults in families with at least 1 disabled person (22% compared to 12%).¹¹¹
- With the exception of pensioners, those living in families with a disabled member are more likely to have a low income than those in families without a disabled member.¹¹²
- Disabled people are more likely to be in receipt of state benefits. 84% of families with at least 1 disabled adult are in receipt of benefits, compared to 48% of families with non-disabled adults.¹¹³
- Disabled people pay on average £550 per month on extra costs related to their disability. As a result of extra costs, disabled people are twice as likely to have unsecured debt totalling more than half of their household income.¹¹⁴
- Disabled people are 3 times more likely to use doorstep loans, and have on average £108,000 fewer savings and assets than non-disabled people.¹¹⁵
- Disabled people experience much lower economic living standards than their peers. 38% of households with a disabled person could not afford to pay an unexpected but necessary expense of £500, compared with 26% of households without a disabled person.¹¹⁶
- According to a study by Ipsos MORI, half of disabled people have used a credit card or loan to pay for everyday items in the previous 12 months, such as clothing or food.¹¹⁷
- 33% of households with a disabled person could not afford to pay for a week's annual holiday away from home, compared with 20% of households without a disabled person.¹¹⁸

Health and social care

- Disabled people make up around one third of NHS users in Britain. ¹¹⁹
- There is a strong association between low socio-economic status and poorer health. Those who have never worked or are long term unemployed have the highest rates of self-reported poor health. ¹²⁰
- People in routine occupations are more than twice as likely to say their health is poor, compared to people in higher managerial and professional occupations. ¹²¹
- People with learning disabilities or long term mental ill health on average die 5 to 10 years younger, often from preventable illnesses. ¹²²
- The majority of impairments are not visible; there are only around 1.2 million wheelchair users in the UK, roughly 2% of UK population. ¹²³
- Only 28% of wheelchair users are under the age of 60. ¹²⁴
- In 2013, there were approximately 17,300 organisations providing or organising adult social care in England – an increase of 1% from 2012. ¹²⁵
- There were approximately 1.52 million adult social care jobs in England in 2013. There were around 1.45 million people doing these jobs. ¹²⁶
- The number of adult social care jobs was estimated to have increased by around 2% between 2012 and 2013, and by 15% since 2009. ¹²⁷
- Of the total social care workforce, it is estimated that the independent sector employs around 75%, councils employ 16%, and direct payment recipients employ 8%. It is estimated that over 2 million people work in the social care sector in the UK, constituting around 7% of the labour market. ¹²⁸
- The social care workforce is predominantly female (83%), rising to 85-90% of those undertaking direct care-giving jobs. ¹²⁹

- The overall vacancy rate for staff is 3% with an overall turnover rate of 19%. The direct care roles turnover rate is higher at 22%. ¹³⁰
- 2% of the adult social care workforce has a disability. The incidence is higher among workers in adult day and community care (5% each) and statutory employers. ¹³¹
- Up to 220,000 care workers earn less than the minimum wage, and around one third of the workforce are on zero-hours contracts. ¹³²
- In 2013/14, Local authorities in England spent £17.2 billion on adult social services. This is almost unchanged in cash terms from 2012/13. ¹³³
- Around 1.27 million service users received adult social services from councils in England in 2013/14, down 5% from 2012/13, or down 29% from 2008/9. ¹³⁴
- Around 1.05 million service users received community based services (non-residential) in 2013/14, a fall of 5% from 2012/13. Of those, 64% were aged 65 and over. ¹³⁵
- Around 214,000 adults, older people and carers received direct payments from councils' social services departments as of 2013 – approximately 70,000 of these recipients were directly employing their own staff. ¹³⁶
- The total number of direct payment recipients continued to increase (by 11%) between 2012 and 2013. The total number of direct payment recipients directly employing their own staff was also estimated to have increased by 5% since 2012. ¹³⁷
- Around 6.5 million people are informal, unpaid carers. 1 in 5 people aged 50-64 are carers, almost 1.3 million people aged 65 or older are carers, and 178,000 under 18s have caring responsibilities, according to the 2011 Census. ¹³⁸
- Most carers (40%) care for their parents or parents-in-law. Over a quarter (26%) care for their spouse or partner. People caring for disabled children under 18 account for 8% of carers, and 5% of carers are looking after adult children. A further 4% care for their grandparents, and 7% care for another relative. While the majority care for relatives, 1 in 10 carers (9%) care for a friend or neighbour. ¹³⁹

- Almost 4 million carers spend up to 19 hours each week caring for others. 1.4 million carers provide over 50 hours of unpaid care per week. ¹⁴⁰
- The economic value of the contribution made by carers in the UK is £119 billion per year. ¹⁴¹
- For adults with impairments, a family member or relative normally provides assistance (81%), followed by a friend or neighbour (25%). ¹⁴²
- 37% of adults think it is unlikely that they will have care needs after pensionable age. ¹⁴³
- More than 7 out of 10 people are not saving anything towards their future care needs. ¹⁴⁴
- Two thirds of people with dementia live at home and most are supported by unpaid carers. ¹⁴⁵
- 7 out of 10 families caring for someone with profound and multiple learning disabilities have reached or come close to 'breaking point' because of a lack of short break services. ¹⁴⁶
- More than 15.4 million people in England are living with a long-term health condition, accounting for around 70% of the annual NHS expenditure – a figure that is set to increase dramatically over the next 10 years. ¹⁴⁷



Housing

- Disabled people face a disproportionate likelihood of living in a deprived area, and are more likely than non-disabled people to live in poor housing. ¹⁴⁸
- Disabled people are twice as likely as non-disabled people to be social housing tenants. ¹⁴⁹
- There is a shortage of housing that is specifically designed to meet disabled people's needs. ¹⁵⁰
- According to a report by Leonard Cheshire Disability, 54% of those with mobility impairments who have looked for accessible homes said they were difficult to find, only 4% said they were easy to find. ¹⁵¹
- The majority of people with a learning disability (76%) either live with family and friends, or in a registered care home or supported accommodation. ¹⁵²
- Most people with a learning disability who live with family and friends want greater independence, with around 70% wanting to change their current housing arrangements to achieve this. ¹⁵³
- The majority of homes in England (84%) do not allow someone using a wheelchair to get to and through the front door without difficulty. ¹⁵⁴
- In 2011/12, there were 6.5 million households that included 1 or more people with a long term limiting illness or disability: ¹⁵⁵
 - o Some 726,000 households contained at least 1 person who used a wheelchair at least some of the time
 - o Three quarters (75%) of these people live in older households, where the oldest person was aged 60 or over
 - o Around 15% of these households contained 1 or more disabled person who felt that their current home was not suitable for their needs and needed adaptations.
- Some 1.9 million households contained at least 1 person who felt that their condition meant that they required some adaptations to their home. ¹⁵⁶
- The most common adaptations needed were: ¹⁵⁷
 - o Grab rails inside the dwelling
 - o A bath/shower seat or other aids to use a bath/shower
 - o A shower to replace the bath
 - o A special toilet seat.

- Households renting from housing associations were more likely to have all of the adaptations needed, compared to tenants renting from local authorities (57% compared with 42%).¹⁵⁸
- A little over half of wheelchair user households (55%) are owner occupiers, with 39% in social rented housing and about 6% in private rented accommodation.¹⁵⁹
- The 4 features considered to be the most important for a home to be 'visitable' by people with mobility impairments are:
 - Level access
 - Flush threshold
 - Sufficiently wide door and circulation space to move around
 - Use of a toilet on the ground floor or at entrance level.¹⁶⁰
- According to the 2012-13 English Housing Survey, only 1.2 million dwellings (5%) possessed all 4 'visitable' features for full visitability. Almost 6 million (5.8) dwellings (25%) had none of these 4 features.¹⁶¹
- Of the 21.5 million homes (95%) that were not already fully visitable, around 2.5 million (12%) could comply by carrying out minor work; and a further 9.6 million (45%) could comply with moderate work. Visitability could only be achieved in 3.4 million (16%) homes through major works and a further 6.0 million (28%) homes were considered simply not feasible to make visitable.¹⁶²
- Just 17% of homes had level access or a wheelchair accessible toilet at entrance level.¹⁶³
- Although the gap in 'non-decent' accommodation has narrowed over recent years, 1 in 3 households with a disabled person still live in non-decent accommodation.¹⁶⁴
- Children and older people tend to be more at risk from poor housing conditions in terms of their health and safety.¹⁶⁵
- Households with a person who had a long term illness or disability are more likely to be unable to heat their homes adequately, compared to other households (36% and 29% respectively).¹⁶⁶

Travel and transport

- Disabled people travel a third less often than the general public. ¹⁶⁷
- Disabled people drive cars a lot less and are less likely to have a car in their household. 60% of disabled people have no car available to their households, compared to 27% of the overall population. ¹⁶⁸
- Despite this, cars are key to disabled people's mobility in England and Wales, with the most common mode of transport being a car driven by someone else. ¹⁶⁹
- Disabled people use buses, taxis and minicabs more often than the general public. ¹⁷⁰
- 75% of adults with an impairment experience barriers to using transport, compared to 60% of adults without an impairment. ¹⁷¹
- Working age adults with an impairment are more likely to experience barriers to accessing transport. The 4 transport types included in the study are: motor vehicles (44%), local buses (52%), long distance trains (51%), and taxis/minicabs (43%). Cost is the most common barrier to transport in all transport types. ¹⁷²
- The 3 modes of transport adults with an impairment report they use less than they would like are motor vehicles (25%), local buses (18%), and long distance trains (18%). ¹⁷³
- Transport is the biggest concern for disabled people in their local area. Pavement/road maintenance, access, and frequency of public transport are the biggest issues. ¹⁷⁴
- In the 10 years to 2012, the number of journeys made using the Disabled Persons Railcard has increased by 165% to nearly 4 million. In 2012 these journeys were made by 140,000 Disabled Railcard holders, averaging approximately 29 journeys each. ¹⁷⁵
- 70% of disabled people are unaware of any type of specific scheme to help disabled people use trains. Only 10% of disabled people had seen, heard or read information from train operators about disabled passengers' rights to assistance, and only 9% of had heard of the Passenger Assist service. ¹⁷⁶
- On the whole, fewer than half of passengers receive the exact service they have booked for through Passenger Assist. ¹⁷⁷
- In 2013, 11% of adults reported having a mobility impairment which means they have difficulties travelling on foot, by bus or both. ¹⁷⁸

- Mobility impairments tend to affect older people more than younger people. 31% of those aged 70 or over have problems walking or using a bus, compared with 3% of those aged 16 to 49. ¹⁷⁹
- This increase with age is more marked among women than men, although the proportion of women aged 70 or over with mobility impairments may be increased by the higher number of women living to very old age. ¹⁸⁰
- Those reporting mobility impairments make fewer trips on average, across all age groups. This is largely due to fewer trips as a car/van driver or by walking. ¹⁸¹
- People with mobility impairments also make fewer commuting, education or leisure trips on average, partly reflecting the age profile. ¹⁸²
- The proportion of disabled people experiencing difficulties using public transport has fallen in recent years. ¹⁸³
- At the end of March 2013, there were 78,000 licensed taxis in England and Wales, with 58% wheelchair accessible (around 45,000 in total). This figure is broadly unchanged since 2009. ¹⁸⁴
- As of March 2014, 84% of the 35,800 buses in England had the accessibility certificate required for all buses on local services by 2017. Among this, 98% of London buses and 79% of buses outside London have met the accessibility standard. This figure has increased steadily in recent years. ¹⁸⁵
- Nearly 40% of all stops and stations across London's rail based public transport network are currently step free, up from around 30% in 2008. ¹⁸⁶
- There are currently 66 step free stations on the London Tube (or 24% of the 270 Tube stations). ¹⁸⁷
- In London, all buses are wheelchair accessible, all black cabs are wheelchair accessible, and access to all trams is step free. ¹⁸⁸
- In March 2013, the estimated number of valid Blue Badges holders was 2.58 million. This represents 4.8% of the English population. The number of badges held has declined by 2.1% since 2011. This was driven by a decrease in the number of badges held subject to further assessment. ¹⁸⁹
- In 2012/13, the estimated number of Blue Badges issued in England was 897,000, a decrease of 0.9% from the previous year and 2.1% from 2011. This was driven by a fall in badges issued subject to further assessment. ¹⁹⁰
- There are an estimated 1.9 million licensed disabled drivers in the UK, and around 400,000 adapted vehicles in the UK. Drivers with DVLA listed medical conditions form approximately 6% of the 34 million licensed drivers. ¹⁹¹

Safety and security

- Disabled people are significantly more likely to be victims of crime than non-disabled people. This gap is largest among 16-34 year-olds, where 39% of disabled people reported being victims of crime, compared to 28% of non-disabled people.¹⁹²
- It is estimated there are 62,000 disability motivated hate crimes each year on average.¹⁹³
- In 2013-14, there were 1,985 disability hate crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales, an 8% increase from 2012/13.¹⁹⁴
- 40% of disability hate crimes involved violence against the person; of these, 31% involved injury.¹⁹⁵
- 27% of disability hate crimes involved public order offences, 13% involved criminal damage and arson, the remaining 20% involved crimes such as theft, burglary and sexual offences.¹⁹⁶
- More than 80% of 16 year olds with a statement of Special Educational Needs or disability have reported being bullied, compared to less than two thirds of non-disabled young people.¹⁹⁷
- 56% of disabled people said they had experienced hostility, aggression or violence from a stranger because of their condition or impairment.¹⁹⁸
- Disabled people are less likely than non-disabled people to think the criminal justice system is fair, 57% as opposed to 63%.¹⁹⁹
- A similar pattern is observed in attitudes of disabled and non-disabled people to whether the criminal justice system is effective, 38% compared to 44%.²⁰⁰
- More than 20% of disabled people have experienced harassment in public because of their impairment.²⁰¹
- Harassment is the most common crime experienced by disabled people. Verbal abuse outside homes and repeat burglaries are common experiences.²⁰²
- 9 out of 10 people with a learning disability have been a victim of hate crime and bullying.²⁰³
- People with mental ill health are more likely to be the victims of crime than the perpetrators, and the costs to the criminal justice system are significant.²⁰⁴
- Disabled people are significantly more likely to experience unfair treatment at work than non-disabled people (19% compared with 13%).²⁰⁵

Children, disability and poverty

- In 2012/13, 7% (or 0.9 million) of children under the age of 16 in the UK were disabled. Disabled children aged 0–16 are the fastest growing group among the population of disabled people.²⁰⁶
- The annual cost of bringing up a disabled child is 3 times greater than that of bringing up a non-disabled child.²⁰⁷
- 40% of disabled children in the UK live in poverty. This accounts for around 320,000 disabled children, and almost a third of those are classified as living in 'severe poverty'.²⁰⁸
- Households affected by disability are more likely to not be working, or working fewer hours. The level of worklessness is much higher for households with disabled children, with 38% of disabled children living in workless households, compared to 16% of all children.²⁰⁹
- Children in families with at least 1 disabled person are more likely to live in absolute low income households than those in families with none (28% compared to 18%).²¹⁰
- Children in families containing 1 or more disabled person/s are twice as likely to live in households in combined low income and material deprivation as those in families with no disabled person (22% compared to 10%).²¹¹
- Children in families where someone is disabled and in receipt of disability benefits have much lower rates of relative low income than those where someone is disabled but not in receipt of disability benefits (15% and 23% respectively before housing costs).²¹²
- There is a 2 way relationship between disability and poverty in childhood. Disabled children are among the most likely to experience poverty, and children from poorer backgrounds are more likely to become disabled than those who are better off.²¹³
- 84% of mothers of disabled children do not work, compared with 39% of mothers of non-disabled children. Only 3% of mothers of disabled children work full time and 13% work part time.²¹⁴
- 99.1% of disabled children live at home and are supported by their families, and only 1 in 13 disabled children receive a regular support service of any sort from their Local Authority.²¹⁵

- According to a Contact a Family survey in 2012, 1 in 6 families (17%) with disabled children go without food, 1 in 5 (21%) go without heating, 1 in 4 (26%) go without specialist equipment or adaptations, and 86% go without leisure activities.²¹⁶
- Research by Contact a Family shows that 65% of families caring for disabled children reported feeling isolated frequently or all of the time – over half (56%) felt that the cause of their isolation was due to a lack of support from statutory services, such as social care and education services.²¹⁷
- In 2014, a Scope report revealed that 69% of parents with disabled children have difficulty accessing local services for their children, and 90% were worried about cuts to the local services that they need.²¹⁸
- It is estimated that around 748,000 children and young people aged 5 to 16 in Great Britain have a cognitive impairment or mental ill health. Around 78,000 of these have autistic spectrum disorders, around 132,000 have a learning disability, and 51,000 have mental ill health.²¹⁹
- About 60% of children and young people with learning disabilities and mental ill health live in poverty.²²⁰
- Children with a learning disability are often socially excluded and 8 out of 10 children with a learning disability are bullied.²²¹

Visual impairments

- According to the RNIB Sight Loss UK 2013 report, there are 1.87 million people in the UK living with sight loss that has a significant impact on their daily lives. This is expected to continue as an upwards trend. ²²²
- There are around 25,000 blind or partially sighted children between the ages of 0–16. Around half have additional disabilities and/or special educational needs. ²²³
- The older people get, the greater their risk of sight loss. 1 in 9 people in the UK aged 60 and over are living with sight loss. ²²⁴
- In March 2014, 143,400 people were registered as blind, a decrease of 4,400 (3%) from March 2011. 147,700 people were registered as partially sighted, a decrease of 3,300 (2%) from March 2011. ²²⁵
- 61% of blind and 64% of partially sighted people are aged 75 or over. ²²⁶
- 49,925 (35%) of those registered blind and 51,225 (35%) of those registered partially sighted also recorded that they had an additional disability. The majority of these are aged 65 or over. ²²⁷
- Of those people registered as blind with an additional disability, 60% recorded a physical disability, 26% have a hearing impairment, 9% have a learning disability, and 5% have mental ill health. ²²⁸
- Of those people registered as partially sighted with an additional disability, 65% recorded a physical disability, 23% have a hearing impairment, 6% have a learning disability, and 6% have mental ill health. ²²⁹
- 4 out 10 people with sight loss say they have some or great difficulty in making ends meet. 49% of (or 1 in 2) people with sight loss say they live in a household with a total income of less than £300 a week. ²³⁰
- 34% of people with sight loss say they feel unhappy or depressed. 1 quarter (25%) of people with sight loss say that they are dissatisfied with their life overall. ²³¹
- The direct expenditure on healthcare linked to eye health in the UK is £2.64 billion; the indirect cost of sight loss to the UK economy in 2013 is estimated to be around £5.3 billion. ²³²

Hearing impairments

- It is estimated that there are more than 10 million people in the UK with some form of hearing loss, or 1 in 6 of the population. ²³³
- From the total figure, 3.7 million are of working age, 6.3 million are of retirement age (65 or over). ²³⁴
- Hearing loss increases with ageing, 71.1% of over 70s and 41.7% of over 50s have some form of hearing loss. ²³⁵
- More than 800,000 people in the UK are severely or profoundly deaf. ²³⁶
- About 2 million people in the UK have hearing aids, but only 1.4 million use them regularly. At least 4 million people who do not have hearing aids would benefit from using them. ²³⁷
- There are more than 45,000 deaf children in the UK, plus many more who experience temporary hearing loss. Around half of all deaf children are born deaf, and the remaining half acquires deafness during childhood. ²³⁸
- There are approximately 250,000 deafblind people in the UK. The majority of those people (222,000) are aged over 70. ²³⁹
- Over half (53%) of people on the deaf register in 2010 were aged 18-64. Over 2 thirds (69%) of people on the hard of hearing register were aged 75 or over. ²⁴⁰
- On 31 March 2010, 56,400 people were registered as deaf, 156,500 people were registered as hard of hearing. ²⁴¹
- Every year, around 840 babies are born with a significant hearing impairment. About 1 in 1,000 children are deaf at 3 years of age. ²⁴²
- It is estimated that 20,000 children between 0-15 years of age are moderately to severely deaf, and approximately 12,000 were born deaf. ²⁴³
- Only 32.9% of deaf children in England achieved 5 or more GCSEs at grades A*-C, compared to the national average of 57.1%. ²⁴⁴
- On average it takes 10 years for people to address their hearing loss. ²⁴⁵

Learning disabilities

- Approximately 1.5 million people in the UK have a learning disability. Over 1 million adults aged over 20, and over 410,000 children aged up to 19 years old have a learning disability. ²⁴⁶
- Less than 1 in 5 people with a learning disability work, but at least 65% of people with a learning disability want to work. Of those people with a learning disability that do work, most work part time and are low paid. ²⁴⁷
- 1 in 3 people with a learning disability take part in some form of education or training. ²⁴⁸
- At least half of all adults with a learning disability live in the family home - meaning that many don't get the same chances as other people to gain independence, learn key skills and make choices about their own lives. ²⁴⁹
- Less than a third of people with a learning disability have some choice of who they live with, and less than half have some choice over where they live. ²⁵⁰
- 29,000 adults with a learning disability live with parents aged 70 or over, many of whom are too old or frail to continue in their caring role. In only 1 in 4 of these cases have a Local Authority planned alternative housing. ²⁵¹
- People with a learning disability are 58 times more likely to die aged under 50 than other people. And 4 times as many people with a learning disability die of preventable causes compared to people in the general population. ²⁵²
- People with a learning disability are more likely to be obese (28.3% compared to 20.4% of the remaining population). ²⁵³
- People with a learning disability are 10 times more likely to have serious sight problems and 6 out of 10 people with a learning disability need to wear glasses. ²⁵⁴

Mental health

- 1 in 4 people will experience a diagnosable mental health condition in any given year. ²⁵⁵
- Mental ill health is the single largest source of disease burden, greater than cancer and cardiovascular disease, and the costs extend well beyond health and social care. ²⁵⁶
- Depression is experienced by 2.6% of people, and depression with anxiety is experienced by 9.7% people in England. Women have a higher prevalence of mixed anxiety and depressive disorder than men. ²⁵⁷
- Overall, 1 in 10 adults in Britain experience depression at any one time. Around 1 in 20 people at any one time experience major or 'clinical' depression. ²⁵⁸
- Around 1.3% of the population has obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) at any one time. ²⁵⁹
- A number of studies indicate that 10-15% of new mothers will experience postnatal depression. Research by the charity 4Children indicates this figure may even be as large as 30%, suggesting that it frequently goes unreported. ²⁶⁰
- Around 1.9% of British adults experience some type of phobias; one study suggests that women are twice as likely as men to be affected by phobias. ²⁶¹
- The Office for National Statistics (ONS) reports that the prevalence rate for personality disorder in the UK is around 5.4% for men and 3.4% for women. ²⁶²
- Most studies give a lifetime prevalence of 1-2% for bipolar disorder. ²⁶³
- Recent evidence suggests up to 5% of us are on the bipolar spectrum. ²⁶⁴
- About 1 in 100 people will experience schizophrenia in their lifetime, men and women are equally affected. ²⁶⁵
- There are currently more than 815,000 people living in the UK with dementia, representing 1.3% of the British population. People with learning disabilities may have a higher risk of dementia due to premature ageing and genetic factors. ²⁶⁶
- Physical health problems significantly increase the risk of poor mental health, and vice versa. Around 30% of all people with a long-term health condition also have mental ill health, most commonly depression/anxiety. ²⁶⁷
- Prolonged economic instability can be expected to increase demand for mental health services, as there is a close link between unemployment, debt and mental ill health – particularly depression and anxiety. ²⁶⁸
- Up to 1.5 million people in the UK care for someone with mental ill health. ²⁶⁹

Accessibility outside the home

- 29% of adults (over 16 years old) with impairments have found some buildings outside of the home inaccessible. That's compared to 6% of adults without impairments. ²⁷⁰
- The 6 most common buildings where access is difficult for disabled adults are: shops (53%), hospitals (35%), bars or restaurants (23%), other people's homes (21%), GP surgeries (19%), and theatre or cinemas (17%). ²⁷¹
- Though adults with an impairment and without an impairment report similar difficulty in accessing shops, hospitals and GP surgeries are a lot more difficult for adults with impairments (34% and 25% respectively for hospitals, 19% and 11% respectively for GP surgeries). ²⁷²
- 29% of adults with an impairment experienced at least 1 barrier to accessing buildings, compared to 6% of adults without an impairment. However, adults with an impairment record having less difficulty with finding buildings, using bathroom facilities, parking or acquiring help than people without impairments - but they have more difficulty moving around inside buildings. ²⁷³
- The most common barriers to accessing buildings for adults with impairments are: ²⁷⁴
 - o Moving around the building – stairs, doors or narrow corridors (44%)
 - o A health condition, illness or impairment (39%)
 - o A disability (32%)
 - o Inadequate lifts or escalators (23%)
 - o Difficulty with approach areas due to lack of ramps/handrails (22%)
 - o Parking problems (21%)
 - o Bathroom facilities (location, layout, size) (17%)
 - o Footpath design and surfaces (15%)
 - o Difficulty with transport getting to the building (14%)
 - o Lack of help or assistance (13%).

Accessing public services

- More than a third (36%) of adults with an impairment reported experiencing difficulty accessing public services, compared with about a quarter (24%) of adults without an impairment. ²⁷⁵
- The 5 most common public services where disabled people have tried to access, and consequently experienced difficulty, are: benefits and pension services (31%), social services (28%), health services (28%), tax services (26%), and justice services (23%). ²⁷⁶
- The most commonly reported barriers to accessing health services for adults with an impairment are: difficulties getting appointments (64%), difficulty making contact by phone (38%), unhelpful or inexperienced staff (25%) and difficulty with transport (13%). ²⁷⁷
- The most commonly reported barriers to accessing justice services for adults with an impairment are: difficulty making contact by phone (45%), unhelpful or inexperienced staff (40%), lack of help with communication (23%), and lack of accessible information (18%). ²⁷⁸
- 75% of GPs have received no training to help them treat people with a learning disability. ²⁷⁹
- 93% of GPs would recommend specific training on learning disability to all health professionals. ²⁸⁰
- People with a disability or a long term limiting illness are generally less likely than those without one to say that they can influence local decisions. ²⁸¹
- A majority of polling stations at the 2010 election included at least 1 significant access barrier. ²⁸²
- Disabled people are likely to be under-represented in public life. In 2013/14, 1 in 5 people were disabled, but only about 7.3% of public appointments and reappointments were filled by disabled people, a 2.3% increase compared with 2012/13. ²⁸³
- The UK disabled consumer market comprises over 10 million disabled people with a combined annual spending on goods and services estimated in excess of £80 billion. For an average business, disabled people may account for up to 20% of all customers. Many businesses fail to recognise the business opportunity that improved access presents. ²⁸⁴
- Disabled customers spend a lot longer choosing where to buy than the average consumer, and tend to make more 'informed choices'. The main decision factors underpinning customer choice are past experience of good service and reputation for good service. ²⁸⁵
- The main reasons for disabled customers switching to a more accessible competitor include:
 - o Inaccessible premises
 - o Inaccessible websites
 - o Poor customer service: lack of awareness, poor communication, lack of flexibility
 - o Inaccessible telephone systems
 - o Inaccessible printed information. ²⁸⁶

Social life and attitudes

- Over 1 in 4 disabled people say that they frequently do not have choice and control over their daily lives. ²⁸⁷
- The ONS Opinions and Lifestyle Survey shows that people with a long-standing illness or disability give lower ratings for 'life satisfaction', 'worthwhile' and 'happy yesterday', and higher ratings for 'anxious yesterday' compared to those who reported not having any long-standing illness or disability. ²⁸⁸
- Almost 8 out of 10 respondents to the British Social Attitudes Survey 2009 felt that there was either a lot or a little prejudice towards disabled people. This has not changed markedly since 1998. ²⁸⁹
- Support for extra spending on benefits for disabled people who cannot work fell by nearly 20% from 1998 (from 72% in 1998 to 54% in 2013), though this represented a 1% increase in support from 2011. ²⁹⁰
- The Contact a Family survey in 2012 found that parents of disabled children are facing escalating hostility regarding the claiming of benefits, which has left them feeling ashamed about getting the help they are entitled to for their child. ²⁹¹
- Nearly 4 in 10 people thought of disabled people as less productive than non-disabled people, and 3 quarters of people thought of disabled people as in need of care, suggesting a degree of 'benevolent prejudice' exists towards disabled people. ²⁹²
- In 2013/14, disabled people had a lower engagement rate (72.4%) than non-disabled people (79.1%) in the arts, visiting heritage sites, museums, galleries and libraries, and digital participation in cultural sectors. There was a slightly higher engagement rate for visiting an archive (4% compared with 3%). ²⁹³
- The lower engagement rate in the arts and cultural sectors could be due to barriers, for example a lack of suitable transport to art facilities or a lack of hearing loops at the venue helping disabled people to engage. ²⁹⁴
- 72% of adults with an impairment have at least 1 barrier to playing sport, compared with 54% of adults without an impairment. ²⁹⁵
- Disabled people are less likely to participate in sport, compared to those without a longstanding illness or disability (29.3% versus 51.4%). ²⁹⁶

- Adult participation in 30 minutes of moderate intensity sport by those with a limiting disability increased from 15.1% in 2005/2006 to 17.8% in 2013/2014. This compared to an increase from 37.8% to 39.2% by those without a limiting disability in the same period. ²⁹⁷
- 1 in 5 British adults (21%) surveyed think disabled people need to accept unequal opportunity in their lives. Men are more likely than women to hold this view (28% compared with 15%). ²⁹⁸
- More than 1 in 4 Britons (26%) think nightclubs and bars are not suitable for wheelchair users. Men (31%) and 18-24 year olds (32%) are the most common holders of this view, compared to women (21%) and 45-54 year olds (22%). ²⁹⁹
- 1 in 4 Britons (24%) believe disabled people often overstate the level of their physical limitations. Men are more likely to hold this view than women (28% compared with 20%). ³⁰⁰
- In a survey, the general public believed the following actions would affect public attitudes towards disabled people:
 - o Greater presence of disabled people in day-to-day life (76%)
 - o Greater presence of disabled people in the workplace (81%)
 - o Greater public discussion of issues facing disabled people (86%)
 - o Disabled and non-disabled children mixing more both inside and outside school (88%)
 - o More disabled politicians (79%)
 - o More disabled people in the media (87%). ³⁰¹
- The same survey shows that the following would have negative effects on public attitudes towards disabled people:
 - o Comedians making jokes about disabled people (68%)
 - o Negative media coverage around people receiving disability benefits (83%)
 - o People claiming benefits when they are not disabled (87%)
 - o People using offensive language about disabled people (85%). ³⁰²
- As of October 2014, only a small proportion of civil servants were disabled. 8.8% had a declared disability, an increase of 0.2% from March 2013. ³⁰³
- However, the proportion of civil servants with a declared disability was greater in lower responsibility levels compared with high responsibility levels. 9.9% of civil servants declared a disability at the administrative responsibility level, compared with 5% at senior civil service level. ³⁰⁴

Disability in the European Union

European comparative data on disabled people

- Across the European Union (EU) Member States, around 26% of the population aged 16 and over are disabled. The disability prevalence rate is lowest in Malta (12%), Sweden (16%) and Ireland (17%), and highest in Croatia (33%), Slovakia (34%) and Slovenia (36%). In the UK, the rate is 21.5%. ³⁰⁵
- About 28% of women aged 16 and over declare an activity limitation, compared to 23% of men of the same age group. The prevalence of disability is higher among women, mainly due to them living longer. ³⁰⁶
- About 8% of people aged 16 and over declare a severe disability (strongly limited), and about 18% declare a moderate disability. ³⁰⁷
- Disabled people are disadvantaged in the labour market in all European countries. Across the EU, about 47% of disabled people are employed compared to 72% of non-disabled people. The average employment gap is 25%. The Europe 2020 strategy aims for 75% of people aged 20–64 to be employed. ³⁰⁸
- In the UK 41.9% of disabled people were employed, compared to 79.5% of non-disabled people. The gap is about 37.6%, significantly higher than the EU average. ³⁰⁹
- The employment rate for disabled people is very low in Croatia (20%) Greece (30%) and Malta (32%), but high in Cyprus (55%), Germany (57%) and Sweden (59%). ³¹⁰
- The employment rate for disabled women is lower than disabled men in all EU Member States (44% and 51% respectively). This represents a 7% gender gap. ³¹¹
- The more disabled a person is, the less likely they are to be in work. At the EU level, the employment rate for severely disabled people is 28%, but for people with a moderate disability it is 55%. ³¹²
- At the EU level, the unemployment rate for disabled people is 17%, compared to 10% of non-disabled people. ³¹³
- The 6 countries with the lowest activity gap (Germany, Luxembourg, Austria, Slovenia, Italy and France) have well developed quota schemes in favour of disabled people. ³¹⁴
- Disabled young people (aged 18-24) are more likely to leave school early than their non-disabled peers. At the EU level, 19% of young disabled people are early school leavers, compared to 11% of non-disabled young people. ³¹⁵

- Disabled people are more likely to live in low work intensity households. Across the EU, 24% of disabled people live in households with a low work intensity, compared to 8% of non-disabled people.³¹⁶
- Disabled people face a higher risk of poverty, compared to non-disabled people across all EU member states.³¹⁷
- At the EU level, 19% of disabled people live in poverty, compared to 15% of non-disabled people.³¹⁸
- About 12% of disabled people are living in households which are severely materially deprived, compared to 7% of non-disabled people.³¹⁹
- Despite the above figures, poverty rates amongst those with disabilities may be underestimated due to the additional spending needs associated with disability. Depending on the nature of the disability these can include: equipment, mobility and communication, living costs, medical, care and assistance costs.³²⁰
- Disabled people face a higher risk of poverty or social exclusion, compared to non-disabled people across EU member states.³²¹
- Across the EU, 31% of disabled people aged 16 and over live in households which are at risk of poverty or social exclusion, compared to 21% of people without a disability of the same age group.³²²
- In the UK, the risk of poverty or social exclusion for disabled people was 32.3%, compared to 18.8% for non-disabled people.³²³
- The UK is behind the EU average in terms of the average employment gap between disabled and non-disabled people, percentage of disabled people living in poverty, and the risk of poverty or social exclusion for disabled people.³²⁴

3 Severely materially deprived expresses the person's inability to afford certain goods or services which are considered common use.

Future trends

- It is widely anticipated that the proportion of children and young people who are disabled will increase. It is estimated that there will be over 1.25 million children reporting a disability by 2029. The reasons include improved diagnosis, reduced stigma in reporting disability, and better survival rates for pre-term infants. ³²⁵
- It is estimated that there will be 450,000 children and young people (aged 0–19) with learning disabilities in the UK by 2031, a 10% increase from 410,000 in 2011. ³²⁶
- Up to 2020, it is predicted that the proportion of people in their 20s self-reporting long term health problems or disability will decrease moderately, while for those in their 30s and 40s it will increase moderately. For those in their 50s, it will increase significantly, from 43% in 2004 to 58% in 2020. ³²⁷
- The Personal Social Services Research Unit (PSSRU) has forecast that the number of older disabled people is likely to increase by around 40% between 2002 and 2022, if age specific disability rates remain constant. ³²⁸
- The World Health Organisation has predicted that depression will be the leading cause of disability by 2020. Mental ill health and learning disabilities in particular are anticipated to grow. ³²⁹
- The Department for Work and Pensions has an objective of 'improving the rights and opportunities for disabled people in a fair and inclusive society', but predicts that the proportion of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to be spent on achieving this aim will decrease from 2.5% in 2004/05 to 2.2% in 2019/20. ³³⁰
- The PSSRU estimates that public spending on long-term care may need to increase by 110% in real terms over the next 20 years to meet demographic pressures and likely rises in real care costs. ³³¹
- Through personalisation and the uptake of direct payments and personal budgets, the number of adult social care jobs is projected to grow to around 3.1 million by 2025. ³³²
- The IPPR Disability 2020 report estimates that by 2020 only 12% of properties are likely to meet the current 'visitability' standards for disabled people. ³³³
- The number of people with 3 or more long term conditions is predicted to rise from 1.9 million in 2008 to 2.9 million in 2018. ³³⁴

- The ageing population and increased prevalence of long term conditions has a significant impact on health and social care, and may require £5 billion of additional expenditure by 2018. ³³⁵
- Carers UK estimates that there will be a 40% rise in the number of unpaid carers by 2037 – meaning the carer population in the UK will reach 9 million. ³³⁶
- Over the next 30 years, the number of unpaid carers is projected to rise by 3.4 million (around 60%). ³³⁷
- By 2030, the number of older people with care needs is predicted to rise from 2.5 million (2010) to 4.1 million, an increase of 61%. ³³⁸
- As the population ages, the prevalence of hearing loss will grow. By 2031 there are predicted to be 14.5 million people with hearing loss. ³³⁹
- It is estimated the number of people living with sight loss could double from 2 million at present to nearly 4 million by 2050. This is being driven both by an ageing population and a growing incidence in some of the underlying causes of sight loss, such as obesity and diabetes. ³⁴⁰
- By 2030, the number of deafblind people in the UK is set to increase by 60% to 569,000, with the largest increase among older age groups. ³⁴¹
- The number of people living with dementia is expected to double to 1.4 million over the next 30 years. ³⁴²
- By 2030 it is estimated that the number of younger adults with learning disabilities may rise by 32.2%, as mortality among people with learning disabilities and children with severe and complex needs has reduced in recent years. ³⁴³
- The disabled consumer market is set for growth; as the population ages the prevalence of disability increases. 23% of the population will be over 65 by 2033; people over 65 hold unmortgaged equity estimated to be worth £460 billion and nearly half of over 65s expect to access this wealth. ³⁴⁴

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