

Disability in the United Kingdom 2013

Facts and Figures



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Introduction

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

Disability cannot be regarded as a marginal issue, as it affects 1 in 5 people in the UK directly and many more indirectly. The disability rights movement has come a long way in terms of public attitudes to disability, access to buildings, transport and employment. But as this report shows, disabled people are still experiencing disadvantages in almost all aspects of life.

Disabled people are more likely to be economically disadvantaged. This report shows that there is a complex relationship between disability, poverty, low skills and worklessness.

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



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.

Methodology

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.

The 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

To find out more about this report and how the data was collected, please get in touch with our researcher Adela Xu:



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² Equality Act 2010



Key statistics

- Almost 1 in 5 people (19%) in the UK have a disability. This figure has remained relatively constant over time. ¹
- Only 17% of disabled people were born with their disabilities. The majority of disabled people acquire their disability later in life. ²
- The prevalence of disability rises with age: in 2011/12, 6% of children were disabled (0.8 million), compared to around 16% of adults of working age (5.8 million), and 45% of adults over state pension age (5.3 million). ³
- 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. ⁴
- 44.3% of working age disabled people are economically inactive. This figure is nearly 4 times higher than non-disabled people (11.5%). ⁵
- At 26 years of age, disabled people are nearly 4 times as likely to be unemployed or involuntarily out of work as non-disabled people. ⁶
- The 2 most commonly stated enablers of employment for adults with impairments are flexible hours/days and tax credits. ⁷
- The 2 most common barriers to work among adults with impairments are a lack of job opportunities (43%), and difficulty with transport (29%). ⁸
- 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. ⁹
- Disabled adults are twice as likely as non-disabled adults to have no formal qualifications, 26% and 12% respectively. ¹⁰
- At the age of 18, disabled young people are more likely than their non-disabled peers to not be in any form of education, employment or training (NEET) (22% compared to 15%). ¹¹
- The internet has become a key tool for those looking for work. But in 2013, one third (33%) of disabled people had never used the internet. Disabled



people are 4 times more likely to have never used the internet than non-disabled people. ¹²

- 19% of households that include a disabled person live in relative income poverty, compared to 15% of those without a disabled person. ¹³
- The main reason why so many disabled people are in low income households is their high levels of worklessness. ¹⁴
- Disabled people's day to day living costs are 25% higher than those of non-disabled people. ¹⁵
- 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%. ¹⁶
- 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. ¹⁷
- Disabled people experience much lower economic life and living standards than their peers. ¹⁸
- 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. ¹⁹
- The majority of impairments are not visible – less than 8% of disabled people use wheelchairs. ²⁰
- Disabled people are more likely than non-disabled people to live in a deprived area, and are more likely to live in poor housing. ²¹
- There is a clear shortage of housing that is specifically designed to meet disabled people's needs. ²²
- Around 15% of households that contained 1 or more disabled person felt that their current home was not suitable for their needs and needed adaptations. ²³
- 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. ²⁴
- 14% of people in the general population have a mobility impairment. ²⁵



- More than 20% of disabled people have experienced harassment in public because of their impairment. ²⁶
- 9 out of 10 people with a learning disability have been a victim of hate crime and bullying. ²⁷
- The annual cost of bringing up a disabled child is 3 times greater than that of bringing up a non-disabled child. ²⁸
- Children in families with at least 1 disabled person are almost twice as likely to live in low income households than those in families with none (33% compared to 19%). ²⁹
- About 60% of children and young people with both learning disabilities and mental ill health live in poverty. ³⁰
- 1 in 4 people will experience mental ill health in any given year. ³¹
- Overall, 1 in 10 adults in Britain experience depression at any one time. ³²
- Over 1 in 4 disabled people say that they frequently do not have choice and control over their daily lives. ³³
- Disabled people are likely to be under represented in public life. In 2012/13, 1 in 5 people were disabled, but only about 5.3% of public appointments and reappointments were filled by disabled people. ³⁴
- 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. ³⁵

Age and gender

- Almost 1 in 5 people (19%) in the UK have a disability. This figure has remained relatively constant over time. ³⁶
- There are more disabled women than men in the UK. In 2011/12, there were 6.4 million disabled women (21%) and 5.5 million disabled men (18%).

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- Among disabled children, boys have a higher rate of disability than girls, and are more likely to experience learning, memory, concentration and communication difficulties. ³⁸
- The prevalence of disability rises with age: in 2011/12, 6% of children were disabled (0.8 million), compared to around 16% of adults of working age (5.8 million), and 45% of adults over state pension age (5.3 million). ³⁹
- Only 9% of disabled adults are under the age of 35. ⁴⁰
- Only 17% of disabled people were born with their disabilities. The majority of disabled people acquire their disability later in life. ⁴¹
- In 2011/12, the most common impairments that disabled people had were mobility (56%), lifting and carrying (54%), manual dexterity (24%) and physical coordination (24%). ⁴²
- For disabled children, the most common impairments are communication, memory, learning, concentration, mobility and recognising when in danger.

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Disability and geography

- Disabled people tend to be concentrated in poorer areas as a result of lower incomes and social housing allocations policy. ⁴⁴
- Rates of disability are highest within deprived and poorer areas, as well as areas with a legacy of heavy industry, especially coal mining. ⁴⁵
- The North East, the North West and Wales have the largest percentage of adults with impairments in Great Britain (34%, 31% and 31% respectively). ⁴⁶
- London, the East of England and the South East have the lowest percentage of adults with impairments in Great Britain (25%, 27% and 27% respectively). ⁴⁷
- The counties with the highest proportions of people who have a limiting long term illness are Durham (24.5%), Tyne and Wear (23%), and South



Yorkshire (22.3%). Buckinghamshire (12.8%), Oxfordshire (13.4%), and Surrey (13.5%) have the lowest levels. ⁴⁸

- 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. ⁴⁹
- 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. ⁵⁰

Disability and ethnicity

- The prevalence and profile of disability varies by ethnicity.
- In Great Britain, white adults (29%) report the highest percentage of impairments, while Chinese and other ethnic groups show the lowest percentage (19%). ⁵¹
- In the 2011 Census, White Irish reported the highest percentage of long term health issues or disability (26%), while the Other White reported the lowest (9%), followed by Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups (10%), and Black/African/Caribbean/Black British (11%). ⁵²
- A recent study shows there is evidence that Indian Asian people are significantly more likely to experience higher rates of disability than Europeans. ⁵³
- 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. ⁵⁴



Employment

- Over 50% of working age people who are out of work (either unemployed or economically inactive) are disabled people. ⁵⁵
- Two thirds of workless families include a parent with an impairment or long term health condition. ⁵⁶
- In March 2013, 20.8% of the working age population in the UK (8.3 million people) had a disability. Working age population is defined as 16-64 years old for both males and females. ⁵⁷
- The employment rate gap between disabled and non-disabled people has decreased from 37.2% in 2006 to 32.8% in 2013. ⁵⁸
- In March 2013, the economically inactive rate for working age disabled people was 44.3%. For non-disabled people this figure is nearly 4 times higher (11.5%). ⁵⁹
- 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. ⁶⁰
- 57% of adults with impairments experience barriers to employment (in the type or amount of paid work they do), compared with 26% of adults without impairments. ⁶¹
- The 2 most commonly stated enablers for employment among adults with impairments are flexible hours/days and tax credits. ⁶²
- The 2 most common barriers to work among adults with impairments are a lack of job opportunities (43%) and difficulty with transport (29%). ⁶³
- One third (33%) of employed adults with impairments are limited in the type or amount of paid work that they can do, compared to 18% of adults without impairments. ⁶⁴
- More than one third of disabled people who are not in work would like to work. However, they are less likely than their non-disabled peers to report this. 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 as non-disabled people to be unemployed or involuntarily out of work. ⁶⁷
- Employment rates differ across impairments. People with depression, anxiety and severe learning disabilities find keeping and finding a job the hardest. ⁶⁸
- Employment rates are particularly poor for those with learning disabilities (less than 1 in 5), and mental ill health (just over 1 in 10). ⁶⁹
- The highest employment rates (6 in 10) exist for people with diabetes, skin conditions or chest/breathing problems. ⁷⁰
- 1 in 6 people who become disabled while in work lose their job during the first year after becoming disabled. ⁷¹
- 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. ⁷²
- Long term inactivity or unemployment can increase the difficulty of returning to work. ⁷³
- 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. ⁷⁴
- Disabled people are approximately 3 times more likely to stop working. ⁷⁵
- 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. ⁷⁶
- The top 3 types of discrimination identified by employed adults who experienced workplace discrimination (due to a health condition, illness or impairment or a disability) are: being given fewer responsibilities (17%), not being promoted (11%), being refused a job (8%). ⁷⁷



Education and skills

- Disabled adults are twice as likely as non-disabled adults to have no formal qualifications, 26% and 12% respectively. ⁷⁸
- At 18 years of age, 35% of disabled young people do not have a qualification higher than Level 2, compared to only 21% of non-disabled young people. ⁷⁹
- At 18 years of age, 64% of disabled people do not have a qualification higher than Level 3, compared to only 51% of non-disabled people. ⁸⁰
- Adults with impairments experience much higher barriers to education and training opportunities than their peers, 16% and 9% respectively. ⁸¹
- The 2 main barriers to educational opportunities for disabled adults are finance (48%) and insufficient time (21%). ⁸²
- At 18 years of age, disabled young people are more likely to not be in any form of education, employment or training (NEET) as their non-disabled peers (22% compared to 15%). ⁸³
- Disabled people are twice as likely as non-disabled people to remain in the long term NEET group (over 12 months) - 15% compared to 8%. ⁸⁴
- In 2011/12, of the 879,015 people who entered higher education, only 9% were disabled learners (78,910). ⁸⁵
- It is predicted that by 2020, 42% of jobs will require a degree level qualification or above. ⁸⁶
- The internet has become a key tool for those looking for work. But in 2013, one third (33%) of disabled people had never used the internet. Disabled people are 4 times more likely to have never used the internet than non-disabled people. ⁸⁷
- At all levels of qualification, the proportion of disabled people who don't have, but want, paid work is much greater than for non-disabled people. ⁸⁸
- In January 2013, 2.8% (229,390) of pupils in England had statements of Special Educational Needs (SEN). 53% of these attended mainstream schools, 39.6% attended state funded special schools, 4.9% attended



independent schools, and 1.8% attended non-maintained special schools.

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- In January 2013, 16% (1.32 million) of pupils in England had SEN without statements.⁹⁰

Income and pay

- The poverty rate for disabled adults in the UK (30%) is twice as high as that for non-disabled adults.⁹¹ This is particularly the case for people living in families containing 1 or more disabled family member 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.⁹²
- The main reason why so many disabled people are in low income households is their high levels of worklessness. 49% of working age disabled adults are in paid employment, compared to 81.8% of non-disabled people.⁹³
- 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%).⁹⁴
- 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%.⁹⁵
- In 2011, the average hourly wage rate for a disabled person was £11.78, nearly 10% lower than for a non-disabled person (£12.88).⁹⁶
- The likelihood of disability or limiting longstanding illness increases as income decreases.⁹⁷
- For all family types, a disabled adult's risk of having a lower income is much greater than that for a non-disabled adult, by at least 10% in each case.⁹⁸
- 40% of all adults aged 45-64 years who are on below average incomes have a limiting longstanding illness or disability.⁹⁹



- More than half (55%) of disabled people reported having no savings, compared to around 12% of the general population. ¹⁰⁰
- 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. ¹⁰¹
- 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. ¹⁰²
- Disabled adults aged from 25 to retirement age are twice as likely as non-disabled people to live in low income households (31% compared with 16%). ¹⁰³

Living standards

- A substantially higher proportion of people who live in families with disabled family members live in poverty, compared to people who live in families where no one is disabled. ¹⁰⁴
- 19% of households that include a disabled person live in relative income poverty, compared to 15% of those without a disabled person. ¹⁰⁵
- Disabled people experience much lower economic life and 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. ¹⁰⁶
- 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. ¹⁰⁷
- 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. ¹⁰⁸
- 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% of families with disabled children have incomes that are less than half the UK mean. ¹⁰⁹





Health and social care

- Disabled people make up around one third of the NHS users in Britain. ¹¹⁰
- 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. ¹¹¹
- 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. ¹¹²
- People with learning disabilities or long term mental ill health on average die 5 to 10 years younger, often from preventable illnesses. ¹¹³
- The majority of impairments are not visible – less than 8% of disabled people use wheelchairs. ¹¹⁴
- Only 28% of wheelchair users are under the age of 60. ¹¹⁵
- In 2011, there were approximately 22,100 organisations in England providing or organising social care for adults and employing social care workers – an increase of 1% from 2010. ¹¹⁶
- There were approximately 1.85 million adult social care jobs in England in 2011 – an increase of 4.5% from 2010. There are around 1.63 million people doing these jobs. ¹¹⁷
- 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. ¹¹⁸
- The adult social care workforce is predominantly female (82%), the overall vacancy rate for staff is 3% with an overall turnover rate of 19%. ¹¹⁹
- In 2012/13, local authorities in England spent £17.1 billion on adult social services for 1.3 million service users. ¹²⁰
- Around 1.3 million service users received social services in 2012/13, down 9% from 2011/12. ¹²¹



- Around 1.1 million service users received community based services (non-residential) in 2012/13, a fall of 10% from 2011/12. Of those, 80% were aged 65 and over. ¹²²
- In 2012/13, 609,000 people received self-directed support – an increase of 16% from 2011/12. Of these, 151,000 received a direct payment.
- Around 5.1 million people are carers – 8% of the population. In 2011/12, 10% of working age adults, 12% of state pension age adults, and 1% of children were carers. ¹²³
- The employment rate for carers is at 67%. 1 in 5 carers give up their employment to care. ¹²⁴
- The economic value of the contribution made by carers in the UK is £119 billion per year. ¹²⁵
- For adults with impairments, a family member or relative normally provides assistance (81%), followed by a friend or neighbour (25%). ¹²⁶
- 63% of carers spent up to 19 hours per week caring for others. 1 in 10 carers (9%) spent 100 or more hours per week caring for others. ¹²⁷
- 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. ¹²⁸
- As of 2012, about 15 million people in England had a long term condition for which there is currently no cure, and are managed with drugs and other treatment. Those people now account for about 50% of all GP appointments, 64% of all outpatient appointments and over 70% of all inpatient bed days. ¹²⁹



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.¹³⁰
- Disabled people are twice as likely as non-disabled people to be social housing tenants.¹³¹
- There is a shortage of housing that is specifically designed to meet disabled people's needs.¹³²
- There are around 22.8 million homes in England, and the great majority (84%) do not allow someone using a wheelchair to get to and through the front door without difficulty.¹³³
- It is estimated that there are between 650,000 and 700,000 wheelchair households in the UK.¹³⁴
- In 2011/12 there were 6.5 million households that included 1 or more person with a long term limiting illness or disability.
 - Some 726,000 households contained at least 1 person who used a wheelchair at least some of the time.¹³⁵
 - Three quarters (75%) of these people live in older households, where the oldest person was aged 60 or over.¹³⁶
 - 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.¹³⁷
- Some 1.9 million households contained at least 1 person who felt that their condition meant that they required some adaptations to their home.¹³⁸
- The most common adaptations needed were:
 - grab rails inside the dwelling
 - a bath/shower seat or other aids to use a bath/shower
 - a shower to replace the bath, and
 - a special toilet seat.¹³⁹



- Households renting from housing associations were more likely than households who rented from local authorities to have all of the adaptations they needed (57% compared with 42%).¹⁴⁰
- 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.¹⁴¹
- The 4 features which are considered to be necessary for a home to be 'visitable' by people with limited mobility are:
 - level access
 - flush threshold
 - sufficiently wide door and circulation space to move around
 - use of a toilet on the ground or entry floor.¹⁴²
- According to the 2011 English Housing Survey, only 1.1 million dwellings (5%) possessed all 4 'visitable' features. Almost 6 million dwellings (26%) had none of these 4 features.¹⁴³
- 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.¹⁴⁴
- Children and older people tend to be more at risk from poor housing conditions in terms of their health and safety.¹⁴⁵
- 53% of disabled children under the age of 15 live in unsuitable accommodation.¹⁴⁶

Travel and transportation

- Disabled people travel a third less often than the general public.¹⁴⁷
- 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.¹⁴⁸



- 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. ¹⁴⁹
- Disabled people use buses, taxis and minicabs more often than the general public. ¹⁵⁰
- 75% of adults with an impairment experience barriers to using transport, compared with 60% of adults without an impairment. ¹⁵¹
- The 3 modes of transport adults with an impairment report they use 'less than would like' are motor vehicles (25%), local buses (18%), and long distance trains (18%). ¹⁵²
- 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. ¹⁵³
- The percentage of people with limited mobility in the general population is 14%. ¹⁵⁴
- Limited mobility tends to affect older people more than younger people. 39% of those aged 70 or over have problems walking or using a bus, compared with 4% of those aged 16 to 49. ¹⁵⁵
- 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. ¹⁵⁶
- At the end of 2012, 88% of buses were either totally accessible or had low floor access in Great Britain. This figure has increased steadily in recent years. ¹⁵⁷
- Nearly 40% of all stops and stations across London's rail based public transport network are currently step up free, up from around 30% in 2008. ¹⁵⁸
- There are currently 66 'step free' stations on the London Tube (or 24% of the 270 Tube stations). ¹⁵⁹
- In London, all buses are wheelchair accessible, all black cabs are wheelchair accessible, and access to all trams is step free. ¹⁶⁰



- In March 2012, the estimated number of valid Blue Badge holders was 2.62 million. This represents 5% of the English population. ¹⁶¹
- In 2011/12, the estimated number of Blue Badges issued in England was 905,000, a decrease of 3.4% from the previous year. ¹⁶²
- There are an estimated 2 million licensed disabled drivers in the UK. Drivers with DVLA listed medical conditions form approximately 6% of the 34 million licensed drivers in the UK. ¹⁶³

Safety and security

- Disabled people are significantly more likely to be crime victims 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. ¹⁶⁴
- In 2011-12, there were 1,744 disability hate crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales. Of these offences, 63% involved violence against the person, and 1 in 5 (20%) involved injury. ¹⁶⁵
- Disabled people are less likely than non-disabled people to think the criminal justice system is fair. This gap is largest among 16-34 year olds (42% compared to 52%). ¹⁶⁶
- A similar pattern is observed in attitudes of disabled and non-disabled people to whether the criminal justice system is effective. ¹⁶⁷
- More than 20% of disabled people have experienced harassment in public because of their impairment. ¹⁶⁸
- Harassment is the most common crime experienced by disabled people. Verbal abuse outside homes and repeat burglaries are common experiences. ¹⁶⁹
- 9 out of 10 of people with a learning disability have been a victim of hate crime and bullying. ¹⁷⁰
- Disabled people are significantly more likely than non-disabled people to experience unfair treatment at work (19% compared with 13%). ¹⁷¹



Children, disability and poverty

- In 2011/12, 6% (or 0.8 million) of children under the age of 16 in the UK were disabled. ¹⁷²
- The annual cost of bringing up a disabled child is 3 times greater than that of bringing up a non-disabled child. ¹⁷³
- 29% of households with a disabled child live in poverty, compared to 21% of households with no disabled children. ¹⁷⁴
- Children in families with at least 1 disabled person are almost twice as likely to live in low income households than those in families with none (33% compared to 19%). ¹⁷⁵
- 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. ¹⁷⁶
- 84% of mothers of disabled children do not work, compared with 39% of mothers of non-disabled children ¹⁷⁷ – only 3% of mothers of disabled children work full time and 13% work part time. ¹⁷⁸
- Only 1 in 13 disabled children receive a regular support service of any sort from their local authority. ¹⁷⁹
- According to the 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 adaptations, and 86% go without leisure activities. ¹⁸⁰
- It is estimated that around 748,000 children and young people aged 5 to 16 in Great Britain have mental ill health. Around 78,000 of these have autistic spectrum disorders. ¹⁸¹
- Around 132,000 children and young people aged 5 to 16 have a learning disability. Of these, 51,000 also have mental ill health. ¹⁸²
- About 60% of children and young people with both learning disabilities and mental ill health live in poverty. ¹⁸³



- Children with a learning disability are often socially excluded, and 8 out of 10 children with a learning disability are bullied. ¹⁸⁴

Sensory impairments

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 upwards trend is expected to continue. ¹⁸⁵
- There are around 25,000 blind and partially sighted children between the ages of 0–16. Around half have additional disabilities and/or special educational needs. ¹⁸⁶
- The older people get, the greater the risk of sight loss. 1 out of 9 people in the UK aged 60 and over are living with sight loss. ¹⁸⁷
- In March 2011, 147,800 people were registered as blind, a decrease of 5,200 (3%) from March 2008. 151,000 people were registered as partially sighted, a decrease of 5,300 (3%) from March 2008. ¹⁸⁸
- 64% of blind and 66% of partially sighted people are aged 75 or over. ¹⁸⁹
- 49,300 (33%) of those registered blind and 50,400 (33%) of those registered partially sighted also recorded that they had an additional disability. ¹⁹⁰
- Of those people registered as blind with an additional disability, 66% recorded a physical disability, 22% have a hearing impairment, 8% have a learning disability, and 5% have mental ill health. ¹⁹¹
- Of those people registered as partially sighted with an additional disability, 68% recorded a physical disability, 22% have a hearing impairment, 5% have a learning disability, and 5% have mental ill health. ¹⁹²
- 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. ¹⁹³



- 34% of people with sight loss say they feel unhappy or depressed. One quarter (25%) of people with sight loss say that they are dissatisfied with their life overall. ¹⁹⁴
- 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. ¹⁹⁵

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. ¹⁹⁶
- From the total, 3.7 million are of working age, and 6.3 million are of retirement age (65+). ¹⁹⁷
- There are more than 45,000 deaf children in the UK, plus many more who experience temporary hearing loss. ¹⁹⁸
- More than 800,000 people in the UK are severely or profoundly deaf. ¹⁹⁹
- On 31 March 2010, 56,400 people were registered as deaf and 156,500 people were registered as hard of hearing. ²⁰⁰
- Over half (53%) of people on the deaf register were aged 18-64. 69% of people on the hard of hearing register were aged 75 or over. ²⁰¹
- 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.
- 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.
- 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%. ²⁰²



Learning disabilities

- There are over 1 million adults aged over 20 and 410,000 children aged up to 19 years old who have a learning disability in the UK. Of this, around 230,000-350,000 people are estimated to have severe learning disabilities.²⁰³
- 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 only work part time and are low paid.²⁰⁴
- Just 1 in 3 people with a learning disability take part in some form of education or training.²⁰⁵
- 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 local authorities planned alternative housing.²⁰⁶
- People with a learning disability are more likely to be obese (28.3%), compared to 20.4% of the remaining population.²⁰⁷
- 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.²⁰⁸
- 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.²⁰⁹
- 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.²¹⁰



Mental health

- 1 in 4 people will experience mental ill health in any given year. ²¹¹
- Depression with anxiety is experienced by 9.7% of people in England, and depression without anxiety by 2.6%. Women have a higher prevalence of mixed anxiety and depressive disorder than men. ²¹²
- 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. ²¹³
- Around 1.3% of the population have obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) at any one time. ²¹⁴
- A number of studies indicate that 10-15% of new mothers will experience postnatal depression. ²¹⁵
- Around 2.6% of adults in England experience phobias, one study suggests that women are twice as likely as men to experience phobias. ²¹⁶
- 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. ²¹⁷
- Most studies give a lifetime prevalence of 1% for bipolar disorder. ²¹⁸
- Most studies show a lifetime prevalence for schizophrenia of just under 1%. ²¹⁹
- There are currently 700,000 people living in the UK with dementia. Two thirds of people with dementia live at home and most are supported by unpaid carers. ²²⁰
- 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. ²²¹
- 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. ²²²



- Up to 1.5 million people in the UK care for someone with mental ill health.

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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. ²²⁴
- 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 theatres or cinemas (17%). ²²⁵
- Though adults with 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). ²²⁶
- 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. ²²⁷
- The most common barriers to accessing buildings for adults with impairments are:
 - moving around the building – stairs, doors or narrow corridors (44%)
 - a health condition, illness or impairment (39%)
 - a disability (32%)
 - inadequate lifts or escalators (23%)
 - difficulty with approach areas due to lack of ramps/handrails (22%)
 - parking problems (21%)
 - bathroom facilities (location, layout, size) (17%)
 - footpath design and surfaces (15%)



- difficulty with transport getting to the building (14%)
- lack of help or assistance (13%).²²⁸

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.²²⁹
- The 5 most common public services which disabled people have had difficulty accessing are: benefits and pension services (31%), social services (28%), health services (28%), tax services (26%), and justice services (23%).²³⁰
- The most commonly reported barriers to accessing health services for adults with impairments are: difficulties getting appointments (64%), difficulty making contact by phone (38%), unhelpful or inexperienced staff (25%) and difficulty with transport (13%).²³¹
- 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%).²³²
- 75% of GPs have received no training to help them treat people with a learning disability.²³³
- 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.
- A majority of polling stations at the 2010 election included at least 1 significant access barrier.²³⁴
- In reality there are over 10 million disabled people in the UK with an estimated annual household income of £196 billion – and we know that in 2009 disabled people and their travelling parties spent £2 billion on domestic tourism in England alone. Yet in 2010, nearly a third of disabled people had difficulty accessing goods and services.²³⁵



- Disabled people are likely to be under represented in public life. In 2012/13, 1 in 5 people were disabled, but only about 5.3% of public appointments and reappointments were filled by disabled people. ²³⁶

Social life and attitudes

- Over 1 in 4 disabled people say that they frequently do not have choice and control over their daily lives. ²³⁷
- 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. ²³⁸
- Support for extra spending on benefits for disabled people who cannot work has fallen by 21% since 1998 (from 74% in 1998 to 53% in 2011), and by 10% in the last 3 years. ²³⁹
- 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 in need of care, suggesting a degree of 'benevolent prejudice'. ²⁴⁰
- In 2011/12, disabled people remained significantly less likely to participate in cultural, leisure, art and sporting activities than non-disabled people. ²⁴¹
- 72% of adults with an impairment have at least 1 barrier to playing sport, compared with 54% of adults without an impairment. ²⁴²
- In 2012/13, disabled people were less likely to participate in sport compared to those without a longstanding illness or disability (29.3% compared to 51.4%). ²⁴³
- In 2012/13, disabled people had a lower arts engagement rate (72.6%) than non-disabled people (80.9%). This could be due to barriers, for example a lack of suitable transport to art facilities or a lack of hearing loops at the venue enabling disabled people to engage. ²⁴⁴



- 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%).²⁴⁵
- 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.²⁴⁶
- 1 in 4 Britons (24%) believe disabled people often overstate the level of their physical disabilities. Men are more likely to hold this view than women (28% compared with 20%).²⁴⁷
- The Contact a Family survey in 2012 found that parents of disabled children are facing escalating hostility regarding the claiming of benefits.²⁴⁸
- In March 2012, only a small proportion of civil servants were disabled. 8.3% had declared their disability status, an increase of 0.6% from March 2011.²⁴⁹
- However, the proportion of civil servants with a declared disability was greater in lower responsibility levels compared with high responsibility levels. 9.2% of staff declared a disability at the administrative responsibility level, compared with 4.3% at senior civil service level.²⁵⁰

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.²⁵¹
- 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 2020.²⁵²



- 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. ²⁵³
- 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. ²⁵⁴
- 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. ²⁵⁵
- 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. ²⁵⁶
- Under personalisation and up-taking of direct payments and personal budgets, the number of adult social care jobs is projected to grow to around 3.1 million by 2025. ²⁵⁷
- The IPPR Disability 2020 report estimates that by 2020 only 12% of properties are likely to meet the current ‘visitability’ standards for disabled people. ²⁵⁸
- 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. ²⁵⁹
- The ageing population and increased prevalence of long term conditions has a significant impact on health and social care, and may require £5 billion additional expenditure by 2018. ²⁶⁰
- 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%. ²⁶¹
- 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. ²⁶²
- 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. ²⁶³
- Over the next 30 years, the number of carers is projected to rise by 3.4 million (around 60%). ²⁶⁴
- The number of people living with dementia is expected to double to 1.4 million over the next 30 years. ²⁶⁵
- 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. ²⁶⁶

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To find out more about this report and how the data was collected,
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