

DISABLED PEOPLE - STATISTICS

Available statistics show that the proportion of people with a disability generally lies between 10% and 15% of the population. This rate depends on the age structure of the population. It can be seen that the proportion of people with an impairment increases significantly with age, almost exponentially.

Information on the nature of disabilities poses the problem of comparability between the nomenclatures used. But despite this reservation, data show that incapacities linked to movement are the most frequent.

Statistics relating to the number of disabled pupils in ordinary education are relatively rare. But with regard to special education, available information shows that girls are under-represented. For employment, the quota system remains an important way for disabled people to find jobs. It should be noted, in conclusion, that disabled people are particularly affected by unemployment.

INTRODUCTION

Despite the high number of disabled people, reliable data in this field remain scant on European level.

This bulletin contains the main results of a first study carried out during 1990 and 1991 in order to collect the relevant data currently available in the member states.

Data were collected in two stages: in the first stage, carried out in 1990, statistics for Germany, Greece, France, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Portugal were collected and in the second stage, in 1991, Belgium,

Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom were covered. Data for Germany relate to the territorial situation before 3 October 1990 and include West Berlin.

It should be noted at the outset that Member States use a terminology which often differs from that used in the International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps (ICIDH). Caution should therefore be exercised when comparisons between Member States are drawn.

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THE DISABLED POPULATION

The statistics were obtained from census data, national surveys and from public services providing disability-linked assistance.

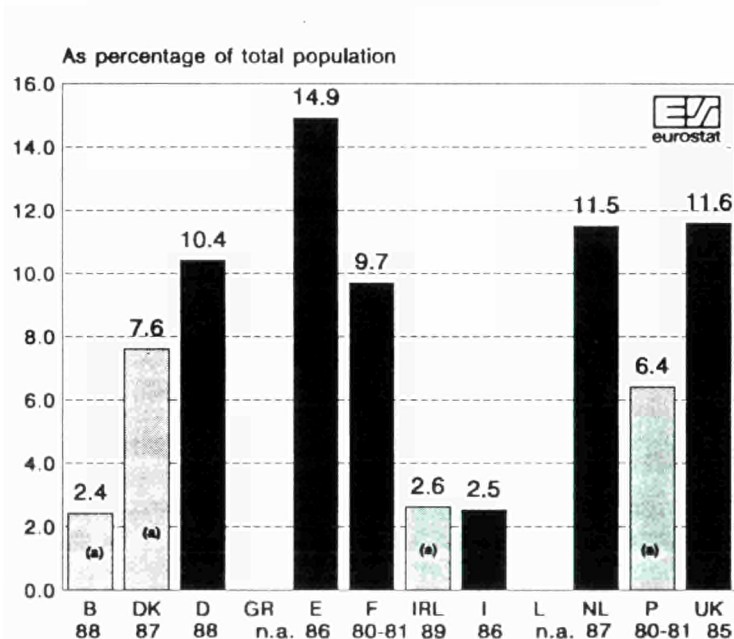
Fig. 1 shows estimates of the proportion of disabled people in the total population. These estimates are produced by the National Statistical Institutes or by the bodies responsible for censuses and surveys in the Member States. In general, the percentage shown in Fig. 1 covers people suffering a partial or total reduction in their capacity to carry out certain activities as a result of an impairment or chronic illness. It should be noted that the percentages shown are determined in large measure

by the definition of the disabilities included and their extent. In general terms the data in Fig. 1 cover people who are seriously disabled.

Fig. 1 shows that, in general, the proportion of people with a disability is between 10% and 15% (the 1988 survey in Great Britain gives 19% but the definition used is relatively broad). These rates are higher than the 10% normally used for rough approximation.

It should be noted that the percentages given relate to people with a disability. If people with an impairment (which does not necessarily involve a disability) are included, the proportion is much higher, for example 19.9% (1986) in Spain and 33.0% (1988) in Great Britain.

Fig 1 : Population of disabled people (estimates)



(a): Available data underestimate the number of disabled people. They only include people of working age who are economically inactive due to a disability.

B: Adults (between 14 and retirement age) incapable of work.

DK: Adults (between 15 and 64) incapable of work.

D: People with an impairment or chronic illness. A survey organised by the Federal Ministry of Transport in 1981-83 gives a rate of 12.1%.

GR: No data available

E: People with a disability, living at home.

F: People living at home experiencing difficulties in daily life.

IRL: Adults (between 15 and retirement age) incapable of work.

I: People with a permanent disability. Disability is defined in a restricted sense. Data do not include all ICIDH categories.

L: No data available.

NL: Physically handicapped people (aged 5 and above) living at home.

P: Permanently unsuitable for work.

UK: Adults (of working age) with a disability, in Great Britain. The 1988 general household survey gives 19% for Great Britain.

Sources:

The data were obtained from censuses and national surveys organised in Member States.

Fig 2 : Disabled people receiving the main forms of disability-linked assistance

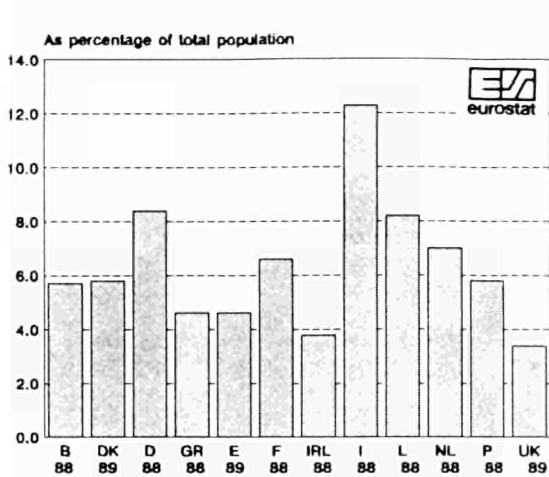


Fig. 2 shows the percentage of the total population receiving the main forms of financial assistance linked to an impairment or disability. This proportion varies significantly between Member States, mainly due to different conditions of entitlement and computing errors. These errors arise mainly from duplication (one person may receive more than one type of assistance) and from the non-identification of certain groups (replacement of invalidity pension by old age pension at retirement age). Duplications have been reduced as much as possible, but some still remain. For this reason, the data in Fig. 2 cannot be used to compare social protection systems to assist the disabled.

Fig. 2 shows that the proportion of people receiving assistance varies between 4% and 8%, depending on the Member State but more especially on the national structures of the social protection benefits.

Broken down by sex, the data supplied by social security (contributory benefits) show a relatively high proportion of men. This is due to the fact that different types of invalidity pension are paid to those eligible for social benefits. In contrast, data relating to social assistance (non-contributory benefits) show a relatively high proportion of women.

- B: Those receiving disability pension, industrial accident allowance or pension, compensation for an occupational disease, allowance for disabled adults and the elderly disabled, and family allowances for disabled children.
- DK: Those receiving early retirement pension, disability allowance and families receiving disability-linked assistance.
- D: Those benefiting from the law on severely disabled people.
- GR: Those receiving a disability pension (IKA, OGA and special schemes).
- E: Those receiving permanent disability pension, the temporarily disabled and those benefiting from the law on the social integration of the disabled.
- F: Those receiving disability pension, disabled adult allowance, special education allowance, military disability pension and industrial accident pension.
- IRL: Those receiving compensation for incapacity, disability pension, industrial accident and occupational disease pensions and care allowance.
- I: Those receiving disability pension, assistance pensions and occupational incapacity pensions. A person may continue to draw disability pension at retirement age, while in other Member States it is generally replaced by an old age pension.
- L: Those receiving disability pension, special allowance for disabled and invalid children and industrial accident pension.
- NL: Those receiving sickness benefit giving rise to a disability benefit, those receiving disability benefit and chronically ill and disabled patients in institutions.
- P: Those receiving disability pension, occupational disease and industrial accident pension, supplementary allowance for disabled children and young people and travel allowance.
- UK: Those receiving compensation for disability, serious incapacity allowance, occupational incapacity pension, low-wage allowance and military disability pension.

N.B.:

In some cases the data contain duplications or underestimate certain groups.

Sources:

Ministries and institutions responsible for social security in the Member States.

ORIGIN OF DISABILITIES

Social security statistics relating to Belgium, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom show that "illness" is the main source of disabilities, covering more than 80% of severe disabilities in these Member States. However, the importance of "illness" as a cause could indicate a problem in processing information. For instance, when categories such as senility are taken into account, the significance of illness as a cause is considerably reduced.

With regard to industrial accidents resulting in incapacity, information available shows that they are decreasing in number. Nevertheless, in the extractive industries, construction and the agricultural sector show a relatively high rate of accidents resulting in permanent incapacity.

NATURE OF DISABILITIES

Table 1 shows a breakdown of disabled people by the nature of their impairment.

Data are taken either from national surveys (Spain, Italy, Great Britain) or from social security. No data for France are given in Table 1, as those available relate only to disabled people in institutions.

Surveys cover the entire population and, therefore, a wider spread of incapacities. In contrast, social security covers certain incapacities among people of working

age. In addition, data from surveys show significantly higher proportions of people with linguistic and sensory impairments.

For these reasons, data should be interpreted with caution.

Data are broken down by main impairment. However, in the case of Spain, one person may declare several impairments. This explains why the total for Table 1 is greater than 100%.

Table 1 : Breakdown by nature of impairments of disabled people

	B	DK	D	GR	E	F	IRL	I	L	NL	P	UK
Impairments	1989		1987		1986			1989	1987	1988	1988	1986
Intellectual and mental	21.3		5.0		7.8			11.4	13.3	25.9	21.2	5.4
Linguistic, speech-related, auditory and visual	6.2		8.0		30.2			38.1	1.4	5.6	3.1	10.9
Internal organs and specific functions			38.2		32.9				24.2	40.7		32.7
Musculoskeletal	} 72.5		33.5		34.1			50.5	39.3	27.8	25.4	30.0
Other			15.3		21.3				21.9		50.3	21.0
Total %	100		100		(c)			100	100	100	100	100
Total 1000	181.8	n.a.	5 127	n.a.	5 741	n.a.	n.a.	1 579	2.2	756	35.4	6 722

B:(b) Invalids. Speech impairments, etc., include nervous system deficiencies.

DK: No data available.

D:(b) Severely disabled people. The heading "Internal organs..." includes disfigurements. "Others" includes impaired brain function (6.1%).

GR: No data available.

E:(a) Incapacitated persons. The percentages show the number of people with, at the least, an intellectual impairment, etc.

F: Data are not comparable.

IRL: No data available.

I:(a) Permanent invalids. The survey does not cover all impairments.

L:(b) Invalidities recognised in 1987.

NL:(b) Those receiving invalidity benefit. The heading "Internal organs..." also includes "Others".

P:(b) Those receiving supplementary benefit for disabled children and young people. "Others" includes non-defined cases (33.1%).

UK:(a) Economically active people with a health problem or impairment. (L.F.S.)

N.B.:

(a) Data provided by national surveys

(b) Data provided by social security authority.

(c) People may declare several impairments. The percentage total is therefore greater than 100%

Sources:

National surveys and social security.

Few Member States use the International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps (ICIDH). Two notable exceptions are Spain and the United Kingdom. The results of studies carried out in these countries are

presented in Table 2. The survey in Great Britain stresses the capacity to lead a normal life. This partly explains the high rate for incapacities relating to hygiene.

**Table 2 : Persons suffering restrictions in their activities
Breakdown by nature of disability**

	ESPAÑA		UNITED KINGDOM ^(b)	
	Year : 1986		Year : 1985	
INCAPACITY RELATING TO	x 1000	%	x 1000	%
Behaviour				
- awareness	387.1	6.7	1 855	28.3
- relationships	296.9	5.2	1 583	24.1
Communication				
- oral	194.4	3.4	1 323	20.2
- aural	911.6	15.9	2 654	40.5
- visual	833.3	14.5	1 690	25.8
- other	220.0	3.8		
Hygiene	440.4	7.7	4 101	62.5
Movement			4 432	67.6
- walking	857.8	14.9	-	-
- climbing stairs	2 529.1	44.0	-	-
- running	4 031.8	70.2	-	-
- leaving one's home	812.1	14.1	-	-
Using the body in certain (daily) tasks	893.0	15.5	1 252	19.1
Clumsiness	-	-	1 775	27.1
Revealed by certain situations				
- dependency and resistance	1 334.0	23.2	-	-
- physical environment	275.7	4.8	-	-
- other	-	-	-	-
Particular aptitudes	-	-	-	-
Other restrictions	20.9 ^(a)	0.4	410 ^{(c) (d)}	6.2
Total	5 743.3		6 560^(e)	

(a) Potential incapacities

(b) Data cover Great Britain only

(c) Disfigurement

(d) Includes only disabled people at home

(e) Number for which information is available

N.B.: People may declare several impairments. The percentage total is therefore greater than 100%.

Sources: National surveys.

DISABLED POPULATION BY AGE GROUP

Fig. 3 shows the proportion of disabled people in the same age group of the total population.

The data for certain Member States (Belgium, Denmark and Ireland) are partial and relate only to people of working age who are economically inactive. Data for Italy are also partial. For the other five Member States, data refer to the total population of disabled people. The data were obtained from national surveys.

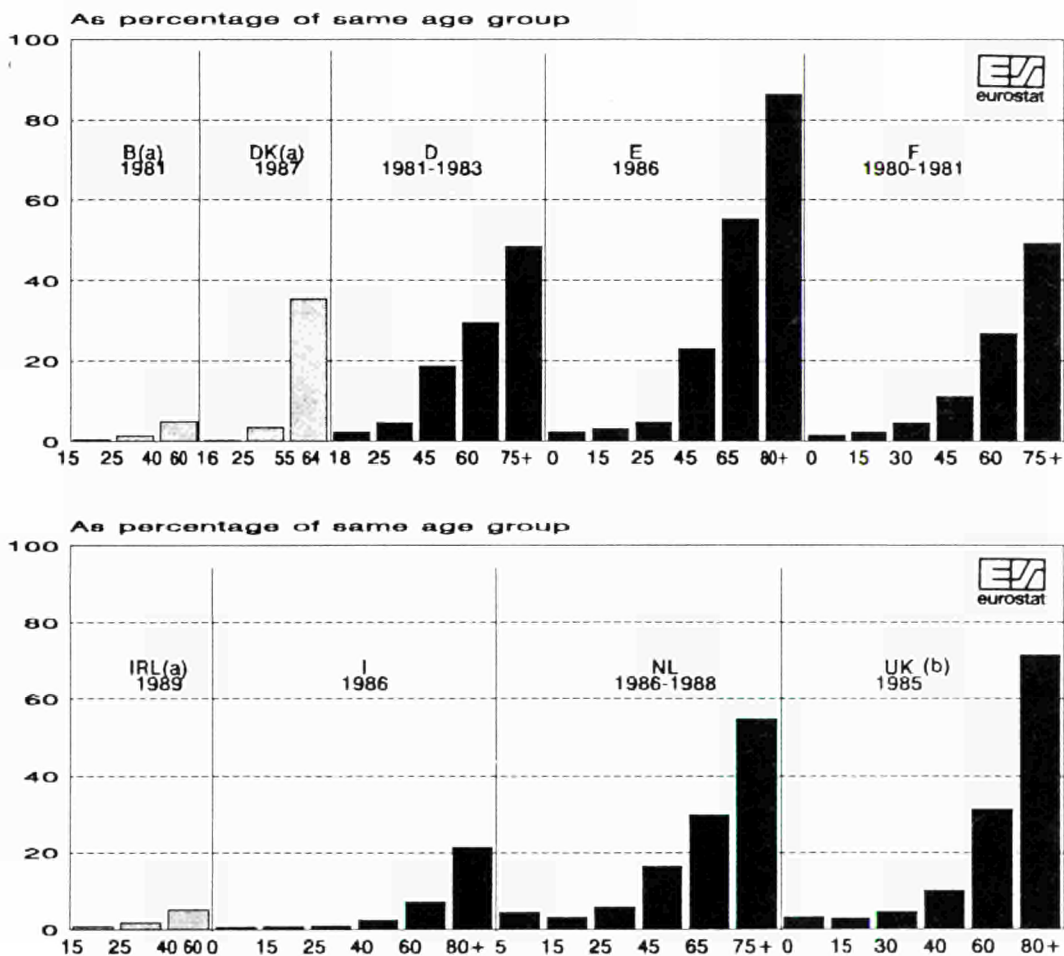
It is worthwhile noting that the proportion of disabled people increases significantly with age, with the survey showing that the proportion of young people with a disability often varies between 2% and 3%, while the rate for people aged 60 and over is between 30% and 50%. For people aged 80 and over, the proportion in Great Britain and Spain is over 70%.

DEGREE OF DISABILITIES

With regard to the breakdown by degree of disability (incapacity) of people with a disability (incapacity), the data available show that distribution is irregular. In general, there is a high proportion of people with minor disabilities (slightly incapacitated). As the degree of disability (incapacity) increases, the proportion of disabled people decreases.

The data available relate most frequently to industrial accidents. The amount of compensation for industrial accidents depends on the degree of disability. For example, it can be noted that in the United Kingdom in 1989, 48.4% of those receiving occupational incapacity pensions had a degree of incapacity of less than 25%, for 42.4% it was between 25% and 55% and 9.2% had a degree of incapacity greater than 55%. In Portugal in 1988, 68.5% of those receiving an industrial accident pension had a degree of disability of less than 30%, for 19% it was between 30% and 50% and 12.6% had a degree of disability of more than 50%.

Fig 3 : Disabled people in the total population by age



(a) : Available data underestimate the number of disabled people. They only include people of working age who are economically inactive due to a disability.
 (b) : Data cover Great Britain only

N.B.: For definitions see Fig. 1. Data for Germany refer to censuses and national surveys

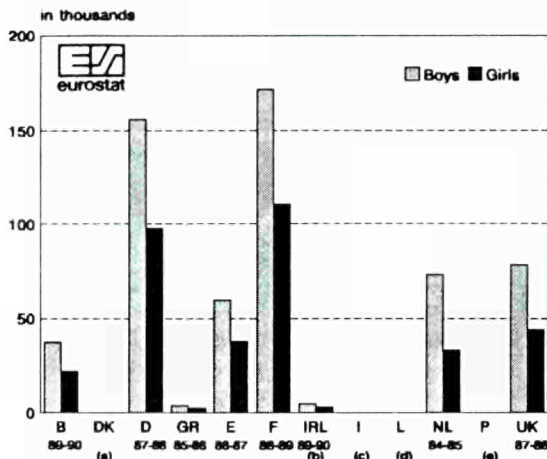
Sources: Censuses and national surveys

YOUNG DISABLED PEOPLE IN EDUCATION

Statistics relating to the number of disabled pupils in ordinary education are relatively rare. Fig. 4 gives the latest available data on the number of disabled pupils in special education. These show that disabled girls are significantly under-represented in that category in the Member States concerned.

With regard to the breakdown of disabled pupils by type of disability, it can be seen that the majority of pupils in special education are mentally handicapped or have learning difficulties.

Fig 4 : Number of disabled people in special education



- (a): Total number in 1986-87: 19 191 disabled pupils.
- (b): Number of pupils in special primary education only.
- (c): Total number in 1986-87: 7 494 disabled pupils.
- (d): Total number in 1984-85: 763 disabled pupils.
- (e): Total number in 1981-82: 12 789 disabled pupils.

Sources: Ministries of Education.

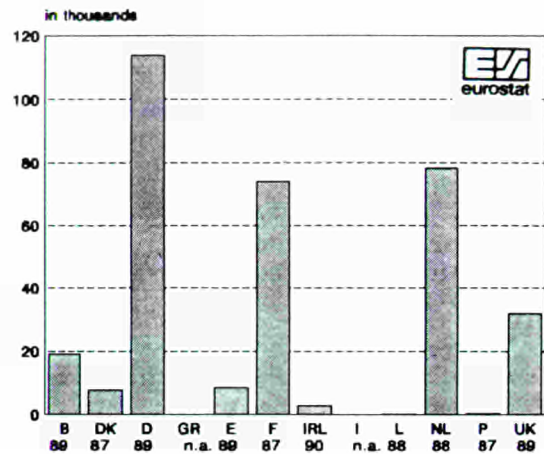
DISABLED PEOPLE AND EMPLOYMENT

Sheltered employment (sheltered workshops, special employment centres, etc.) is an important policy for assisting the integration into working life of disabled people who cannot be integrated into an ordinary working environment.

Fig. 5 shows the number of disabled workers in sheltered employment. Data include workshops and production centres. Centres providing only ergotherapy and social rehabilitation have been excluded.

Broken down by sex, data available show that women are under-represented. Young people, on the other hand, are over-represented.

Fig 5 : Disabled workers in sheltered employment



Sources : Ministries of Employment

The quota system is useful for encouraging the integration of disabled people into an ordinary working environment. It is also the main source of statistics.

Germany, France, Italy, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom have a relatively well-developed quota system. It is a more recent development in Greece and Spain, while Belgium, Denmark and Ireland have only adopted the quota (or priority access) in the public sector. The Netherlands and Portugal do not apply any quota system.

In Germany, approximately 773 000 disabled workers were employed under the quota system in 1988 (within the public and private sectors). In addition, approximately 70 000 disabled workers were employed in an ordinary environment outside the quota system.

In France, approximately 224 000 disabled workers were employed under the quota system in 1988 (within the private sector). It is worthwhile noting here that the law governing the quota system was amended in 1987. As previously defined, there were approximately 474 000 disabled workers in the private sector in 1986. The reduction in the number of disabled workers arises primarily from the exclusion under the new law of workers who have suffered a very minor industrial accident (with a partial permanent incapacity rate of less than 10%).

In Italy, approximately 297 000 disabled people were employed under the quota system in 1989, while in the United Kingdom, for the same year, only approximately 100 000 disabled people benefited.

In the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, it is estimated that approximately 3 000 disabled workers benefited from the quota system in 1988.

The above data must be treated with caution. The French example shows that numbers are easily influenced by the definition of disability adopted. In addition, a certain number of workers with a minor or invisible disability may not reveal (register) their disability in order to avoid being "stigmatised". This partially explains why the surveys show estimates exceeding those arising from the quota system.

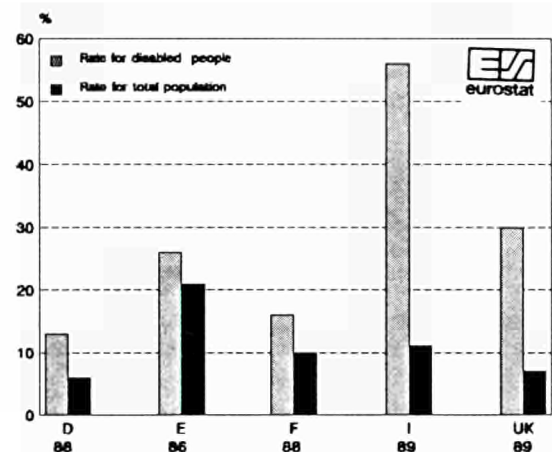
THE DISABLED UNEMPLOYED

Statistics on the number of disabled people seeking work have a limited range, often including only those unemployed people registered as disabled.

In addition, unemployed people with a severe disability and disabled women may consider their chances of obtaining employment to be very low, and will therefore be encouraged to withdraw from the labour market.

Fig. 6 shows unemployment rates among disabled people.

Fig 6 : Unemployment rates among disabled people



Sources: Ministries of Employment and Eurostat

The study has been carried out jointly by Eurostat and the Directorate-General V - Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs (unit "Measures for the disabled" and the programme HELIOS). It is published by Eurostat under the title "Disabled people: statistics" under Theme 3: Population and social conditions, Series D: Studies and analyses. The first volume appeared in 1991 and the second is due to be published in 1992. The contents of these publications do not commit Eurostat or the Commission of the European Communities.

INFORMATION

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