

United Kingdom- ANED country profile

The information contained in this summary was compiled by the Academic Network of European Disability experts (ANED) in April 2009.

Academic networks and resources

The UK [Disability Studies Association](#) (DSA) provides opportunities for networking amongst disability researchers and holds an international academic conference every two years.

There are several relevant academic research journals. The main title based in the UK is [Disability & Society](#)

Policy and enforcement bodies

The key national bodies with responsibility for disability law and policy implementation include:

The [Office for Disability Issues](#) (ODI) is the government agency that works across all departments to help deliver a national strategy for disabled people's equality.

The [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) (EHRC) is the independent agency that promotes and enforces equality in relation to disability, race, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief, as well as human rights. Individual complaints and cases of discrimination can be taken to this body.

Organisations of disabled people

The national organisation representing disabled people at the European level (European Disability Forum) is:

The [United Kingdom's Disabled People's Council](#) (UKDPC), which represents more than 80 full [member organisations](#). These organisations must have at least 51% of their voting membership and at least 75% of their executive body made up of disabled people.

Other significant national organisations of disabled people include:

[National Centre for Independent Living](#) (NCIL)

[British Deaf Association](#) (BDA)

[National Federation of the Blind of the UK](#)

[People First](#)

National law and strategy

The UK has signed the [United Nations Convention](#) but not the [Optional Protocol](#).

Important national laws, policies and strategies concerning disabled people include:

[Disability Discrimination Act](#) (1995 and 2005), which establishes the rights of disabled people to non-discrimination in employment, education, access to goods,



services and the built environment, buying and renting property, and the duties of public bodies to monitor and promote disability equality.

[Part M of the Building Regulations](#) provides technical guidance on the specification of 'Access and Facilities for Disabled People'

[Improving the life chances of disabled people](#) (2005), which sets out a national vision for the equality of disabled people by 2025.

[Independent Living: A cross-government strategy about independent living for disabled people](#) (2008), which sets out a five-year plan to provide greater choice and control for disabled people and increase access to , education, employment, leisure, transport opportunities and participation in family and community life.

Facts and figures

Data on population indicate that:

17.6% of the general population have a 'limiting long-term illness or disability' (9 million people in England Wales), of which 46.7% male and 53.2% female. Of these, 5.6% were aged under 18; 50.7% aged 18-64; 43.6% aged over 65. New disability questions are planned for the 2011 Census ([2001 National Census](#)).

2007 national survey data included 66% people with physical impairment; 15% hearing impairment; 12% visual impairment; 11% a fluctuating condition; 10% a mental health condition; 2% learning difficulties; and 20% 'other'. 47% of disabled people were over retirement age (compared with 20% of the general population). ([ODI/NOP survey](#))

Data on employment indicate that:

In 2007 the employment rate of disabled people was 47.2% compared to 74.9% for general population (UK Labour Force Survey)

The employment rate of disabled people increased (from 38.1% in 1998).

In 2007 the employment rate gap between disabled people and the general population was 26.5% (reduced from 35% in 1998).

Data on education indicate that:

In 2006/7 there were 89,400 children enrolled in special schools in England, about 1% of the school population, or 40% of children with a statement of special educational need (Pupil Level Annual Schools Census)

Between 2005/06 and 2006/07, the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs exams at grades A*-C increased (National Pupil Database).

Data on accessibility indicate that:

In 2007, 24% of disabled people experienced any difficulty using transport, little changed from 25% in 2005 (ONS Omnibus Survey)



The percentage of buses with low floor wheelchair access increased from 50.4% in 2005/06 to 62% in 2007/08 (Department for Transport's annual sample survey of bus operators)

In 2001, 35.7% of people with 'long-term limiting illness or disability' lived in a household with access to a car, compared to 19.4% of the general population (2001 Census)

In 2006/7, 78% of disabled people requiring adaptations to their home felt their accommodation was suitable for their needs (Survey of English Housing).

Between 2005 and 2007, the percentage of disabled people experiencing difficulties in accessing goods or services decreased from 37% to 33% (ONS Omnibus Survey)

In 2008, all of the public service broadcasters were providing 100% TV captioning (or close to it) compared to a maximum of 85% in 2005. The 10% audio description quota was also exceeded ([Ofcom](#) Code on Television Access Services)

In 2006, 49% of households where someone is disabled had access to the Internet, compared to 71% households where no-one is disabled and this gap increased from 2005 (British Social Attitudes Survey)

[Data from the MeAC accessibility survey](#) (2007) showed that

1 out of 6 of the selected public websites, and none of the commercial websites, passed the manual accessibility evaluation

The main emergency number was accessible by text phone,

Both public television channels provided more than 97% national language TV programs with subtitling, and some programmes with signing (c5%) or audio description.

Both commercial TV channels provided more than 90% national language programs with subtitling and provided signing (90.6% in one case) or audio description (10-16%).

Neither of the two main banks had installed talking ATMs.

Data on poverty and incomes indicate that:

In 2006/7, 27% of people in households where someone is disabled were living in income poverty (below 60% median income after housing costs), compared to 20% in households where no-one is disabled (Family Resources Survey)

In 2006/7, 31% of disabled adults (aged 25 to retirement) were living in low-income households (compared to 16% of non-disabled adults). 'The main reason that disabled working-age adults are more likely to be in low-income households is because they are less likely to be in work'. ([The Poverty Site](#))

Data on attitudes indicate that:

In 2001, 8% of respondents identified themselves as disabled, above the EU15 average of 5% ([Eurobarometer 54.2](#))



Between 2005 and 2007, the percentage of the general population aware of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) decreased from 73.2% to 71.6% (ONS Omnibus Survey)

The [2007 Special Eurobarometer on Discrimination in Europe](#) showed that 66% of people knew someone who was disabled (compared to 55% EU average) and 74% acknowledged that being disabled tended to be disadvantage in society (EU average 79%).

Disability discrimination was viewed as widespread by 47% (EU average 53%); 25% thought that disability discrimination was more widespread than five years ago. 46% thought that not enough was being done to combat discrimination in general (EU average 51%).

80% thought that more disabled people should be in the workplace (EU average 77%) and 83% thought specific measures on equal opportunities were needed in this field.

Data on public spending indicate that:

In 2006 the UK spent 8.7% of total social benefit expenditure on disability benefits compared to the EU27 average of 7.5% (European System of Integrated Social Protection Statistics, provisional data).

In 2005 the UK spent 2.4% of GDP on incapacity related benefits (including all public, mandatory private, cash and in-kind benefits) compared to the OECD average of 2.6% (OECD Social Expenditure Database).

Social protection

Key features of the national system include (including adapted items from the [MISSOC](#) database December 2008):

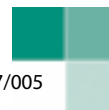
Disability benefits

The number of working-age people in the UK receiving 'out of work' benefits fell from around 6 million in 1997 to less than 5 million in 2007, although the number receiving sickness or disability related benefits within this group remained constant at around 2.7 million (the number receiving such benefits for more than two years increased from 1.9 million to around 2.2 million in the same period) ([Department of Work and Pensions](#))

In 2008, 2,659,650 people were claiming Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance (1,133,790 female and 1,525,860 male). The average weekly amount of Incapacity Benefit received was £52.57 (£47.31 for women and £56.25 for men).

In 2008, 2,969.34 people were claiming Disability Living Allowance (with no significant gender difference). The average weekly amount received was £64.43.

In October 2008 the Welfare Reform Act 2007 replaced Incapacity Benefit with a new 'Employment and Support Allowance' (most people of working age will be expected to engage in some work-related activity).



Rehabilitation and re-training

Preventive health care, medical rehabilitation and therapy are provided free of charge by the National Health Service.

Vocational assessment and rehabilitation, and supported employment (covering workshops and placements) are provided by the Disabled Persons (Employment) Acts 1944 and 1958, and the Employment and Training Act 1973. There is similar provision in Northern Ireland.

Allowances are payable during rehabilitation and training.

Preferential employment and quotas

There is no preferential employment quota scheme in the UK

Long-term support and care

No single, discrete long-term care scheme. Care homes for elderly and disabled people provided by local authorities, private and charitable organisations.

Full cost of care benefits for severely disabled people [Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance and Severe Disablement Allowance (not since 2001)] financed by the State (link to department?).

Non-contributory, state-financed system providing cash benefits and benefits in kind for elderly or disabled persons and their carers.

Local authorities can provide homecare, meals on wheels, assistive aids and equipment, adaptations to the home and attendance at day care centres (or direct payments to enable the person to meet equivalent needs). Direct payments are also available from the national Independent Living (1993) Fund.

Local authorities can arrange admission to a care home. In general, the local authority pays for the accommodation and personal care costs unless the person can afford to pay part or all of the cost. All the direct costs of care from a registered nurse are paid for by the NHS.

Temporary respite care in a care home can be arranged by local authority.

Additional information

Useful sources of more detailed information about the situation of disabled people, and the policies and support available, include:

[Official guide to all of the support and benefits](#) available to disabled people (DirectGov)

[Key fact sheets](#) on civic participation, crime, culture and leisure, employment, housing and transport (Office for Disability Issues)

Links to [all recent legislation referring to disability](#) (Office of Public Sector Information)

Detailed [data on disability equality indicators](#) are published as an Annex to the ODI Annual Report (December 2008)