

Employment rates and qualifications by sensory impairments for disabled people

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Executive summary

The accompanying spreadsheet gives the number of disabled people in Great Britain, as defined by the Equality Act 2010, by sensory impairments, and the associated employment rates and qualifications. These estimates have been calculated using data from the Labour Force Survey for April to June 2011.

Caution should be taken when making direct comparisons with disabled people and non-disabled people due to the uncertainty around the estimates.

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1 Background

DWP aims to improve equality by promoting work for disabled people, developing new ways to deliver Access to Work and introducing Work Choice to provide employment support for disabled people facing the greatest barriers. In addition, the welfare system is undergoing a series of significant reforms which aim to encourage disabled people to engage more actively with the labour market.

The accompanying spreadsheets give the number of disabled people, as defined by the Equality Act 2010, in Great Britain, and the associated employment rates and proportions with degree level qualifications and no qualifications by sensory impairments. Disabled people are defined as those who have a long-term disability which substantially limits their day-to-day activities.

2 Methodology

2.1 Working Age Disabled Population

The working age disabled population figures have been drawn from non-seasonally adjusted data from the Labour Force Survey for April to June 2011. The definition of working age is changing over time due to the equalisation of State Pension age for women from April 2010. The estimates presented here are based on fixed age groups. The employment rates and proportions with degree level and no qualifications for all people aged 16-64 are given, consistent with the main definition used by the Office for National Statistics, along with the former working age definition of 16-64 for men and 16-59 for women, which is a closer proxy for the current working age. A high level of rounding (to the nearest 1,000) has been applied to reflect the uncertainty of the survey based estimates, some of which are based on relatively small sample sizes.

2.2 Central Estimates

Central estimates have been calculated for employment rates and for the proportion of disabled people with degree level qualifications and with no qualifications. Non-seasonally adjusted data from the Labour Force Survey, for April to June 2011 has been used.

2.3 Upper and Lower Ranges

The Labour Force Survey provides a representative sample of the true population. Calculating employment rates and qualifications based on a sample involves an inherent level of uncertainty. To reflect the uncertainty of using survey based data, a 95% confidence interval has been calculated using the following formula:

$$\hat{p} \pm z_{1-\alpha/2} \sqrt{\frac{\hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{n}}$$

where:

- \hat{p} is the central estimate of the April to June 2011 employment rate and qualifications, as described above;
- n is the sample size of all disabled people in the relevant age group or those with a particular impairment; and
- $z_{1-\alpha/2}$ is approximated to be 1.96 (the approximate value of the 97.5th percentile point of the normal distribution).

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Adding the confidence interval to the central estimate gives the upper estimate, and subtracting it from the central estimate gives the lower estimate. There is a 95% probability that the true estimate falls within this range. This illustrates the level of uncertainty surrounding each of the central estimates.

The accompanying spreadsheet shows the disabled population, employment rates, qualifications and 95% confidence interval ranges for all and those with sensory impairments.

Caution should be taken when making direct comparisons with all disabled and non-disabled people due to the uncertainty around the estimates.