

Disability in Ireland Facts+Figures Factsheet

Disability happens more than you imagine:

- 595,355 people reported having a disability in Census 2011[1], equivalent to 13% of the population of Ireland.
- However, the National Disability Survey (2006), which uses a broader definition of disability and chronic illness, recorded a disability rate of 18%, comparable to other developed countries.
- At least 1 in 10 adults of working age have a disability (15-64 years).
- Disability is age-related and increases sharply with age. Three out of every five people aged over sixty years has at least one chronic condition.

People with Disabilities are more likely to experience poverty[2]:

- Disabled people experience high levels of consistent poverty (13% compared to 2% of those at work). While 51% of people not at work due to illness or disability suffer enforced deprivation (an increase of over 40% since 2008), in contrast to the national average of 29%. This means that they have a low income and have difficulty with basic provision such as a meal with meat or fish every second day or the ability to have adequate heating.
- Families where the head of the household was not at work due to illness or disability, with the exception of students, had the lowest average annual disposable income in 2014. This was €24,914 compared to €54,430 for those at work. This represents a 21% drop since 2009 compared to a 7% drop for those at work.
- Additional costs of disability such as health care, assistance, aids and devices have been estimated to be a third of average weekly income.[3]

People with Disabilities have poorer educational outcomes[4]:

- Just 24.5% of people with a disability have completed third-level education, compared to 38.7% of the general population.
- In 2010, 50% of people with a disability had less than full second-level education, compared with 22% without a disability.
- In fact, among people with disabilities generally, 43% have not progressed beyond primary education. This compares with 19% of all adults.
- About one third of people with disabilities have been found to leave education before they intended because of their disability.

Disability affects a person's employment opportunities:

- Of people with disabilities, 30% were active in the labour force representing a participation rate of less than half that of the overall population. (Census, 2011).
 - However, over one third of people with disabilities, and almost two thirds of younger people in the 18-34 age groups would like to work if the circumstances were right.⁴
 - People with disabilities are much more likely to be unemployed, with the rate of unemployment for this group increasing from 8% to 22% over the period 2004-2010. (IHREC, 2015).
1. Census 2011, Small Area Population Statistics www.cso.ie.
 2. CSO (2015) Survey on Income and Living Conditions. <http://www.cso.ie>
 3. Cullinan, J., Lyons, S., and Nolan, B. (2010) 'Estimating the Extra Cost of Living for People with Disabilities', *Health Economics*.
 4. Census 2011, Nolan, B., Disability, Social Inclusion, and Poverty, and Watson (2015), D., Banks J., & Lyons, S. (2015) Educational and Employment Experiences of People with a Disability in Ireland. ESRI



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