

Research

Disability in Scotland 2004

Key Facts and Figures

Scotland

The Disability Rights Commission

The Disability Rights Commission (DRC) is an independent body, established by Act of Parliament to eliminate the discrimination faced by disabled people and promote equality of opportunity. When disabled people participate – as citizens, customers and employees – everyone benefits. So we have set ourselves the goal of ‘a society where all disabled people can participate fully as equal citizens’.

We work with disabled people and their organisations, the business community, Government and public sector agencies to achieve practical solutions that are effective for employers, service providers and disabled people alike.

There are about 10 million disabled people in Britain. This includes people with epilepsy, cancer, schizophrenia, Down’s syndrome and many other types of impairment.

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, legal rights and obligations affecting disabled people’s access to services, education and employment are already in force. Others became law in 2004.

Many disabled people are still not aware that they have these rights. And employers, education providers and service providers are often unsure how to implement ‘best practice’ to make it easier for disabled people to use their services, access education or gain employment.

The DRC has offices in England, Scotland and Wales. For further details of how we can help you, please contact our Helpline – contact details are featured on the back cover of this publication.

Ten Scottish Facts and Figures

- Scotland is estimated to have 1 million disabled adults likely to be covered by the DDA. About one in five of the population.
- In Scotland, there is a disabled person or a person with a long-term illness living in just over one in three households.
- Approximately four in ten (42 per cent) of all households with a disabled person have an income of £10,000 or less.
- Of the working age population 45 per cent of disabled people are in employment compared to 82 per cent of non-disabled people.
- Households with a disabled person, or a person with a long-term illness, are more likely to rent from a local authority or a housing association than to rent privately or to own their home.
- Five per cent of students in higher education in Scotland report they have a disability.
- The annual spending power of adults in Britain covered by the DDA is estimated at £80 billion per year.
- Fifty-eight per cent of disabled people (with or without a long-term illness) have no qualifications compared to 24 per cent of non-disabled people.
- Disabled people hold 3 per cent of public appointments.
- One in five disabled Scots have experienced harassment because of their disability.

Introduction

This publication provides the latest facts and figures about disability in Scotland. Statistics have been chosen which represent the current economic and social profile of disabled people in Scotland.

Disability Rights Commission in Scotland

The DRC's office in Scotland has two main aims:

- to make sure the DRC is able to effectively deliver rights for disabled people in Scotland
- to make sure that Scottish issues are at the fore of the DRC's work across Britain.

The DRC in Scotland works with the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Executive to improve access for disabled people to essential services such as health (through the Fair for All partnership initiative) and education. We also work with employers, providers of goods and services and in partnership with a number of statutory and voluntary bodies, to ensure that disabled people's rights are met and to raise awareness of disability issues. We campaign to raise public awareness of disability rights issues and to promote participation.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995

The DDA introduced new measures aimed at ending the discrimination which many disabled people face. A disabled person is defined in the DDA as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on [their] ability to carry out day-to-day activities'.

It protects disabled people in the areas of:

- employment
- access to goods, facilities and services
- the management, buying or renting of land or property
- education.

A number of new DDA duties came into force in October 2004. These duties require that:

- Service providers have to consider making changes to physical features that make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to use their services. The DRC website **www.drc-gb.org** has guidance on the new regulations, including information for service providers and disabled people.
- It is unlawful for any employer to discriminate against a disabled person when choosing someone for a job or considering people for promotion, dismissal or redundancy.
- All employers (except the Armed Forces) have a duty not to discriminate against disabled people.
- Qualifications bodies are covered by the employment provisions. Disabled people trying to obtain professional qualifications will be able to seek redress in the event of potential discrimination.
- Before October 2004, the employment duties only applied to employers with 15 or more employees. These duties now apply to employers with fewer than 15 employees.

The DRC has a number of publications which provide information on the new duties which came into force in October 2004. All the publications are available from the DRC's website or Helpline.

Disabled People in Scotland

There is not one definitive estimate of the number of disabled people in Scotland. A number of sources have been used to give the fullest picture of the number of disabled people in Scotland.

- The Family Resources Survey reports there are about 10 million disabled adults and 700,000 disabled children covered by the DDA in Great Britain (Bajekal et al, 2004). Scotland is estimated to have almost 1 million (0.9 million) disabled adults likely to be covered by the DDA.
- The 2001 Census found that 20 per cent of the Scottish population reported having a long-term illness, health condition or disability (General Register Office Scotland, 2003).
- Scotland has an ageing population and the probability of having a disability increases with age. The average age of a person with a long-term illness, health condition or disability is 58 years (General Register Office Scotland, 2003).
- It is estimated that there are 180,000 people in Scotland who have serious sight problems (RNIB Scotland).
- In May 2003 an estimated 18,066 adults with learning disabilities were known to local authorities throughout Scotland (Scottish Executive, 2004f).
- It is estimated that 729,000 people have some form of hearing loss, deafness or may be a Deaf person. Eighty per cent of hearing impaired people are aged over 60 years (Scottish Executive, 2003b).
- One in four people will experience a mental health problem at some point in their lives (Scottish Association for Mental Health).

Employment

The economic activity of disabled people is much lower than non-disabled people. The 2003 Labour Force Survey found (Scottish Executive, 2004e: 63 and 65):

- Of the working population, 45 per cent of disabled people are in employment compared to 82 per cent of non-disabled people.
- Twenty-one per cent (662,000) of the Scottish working age population were estimated to have a disability. Just under half (49 per cent) of these people were economically active in the labour force, compared to 86 per cent of non-disabled people.

Income

A 2001/02 survey found approximately four in ten (42 per cent) of all households with a disabled person have an income of £10,000 or less (Scottish Executive, 2003c: table 6-64). Around a quarter (26 per cent) of households without a disabled person have an income of £10,000 or less. Four in ten (40 per cent) households without a disabled person have an income over £20,000 compared to only 16 per cent of households with a disabled person.

Housing

The Scottish House Condition Survey 2002 revealed (Communities Scotland, 2003: chapter 8):

- There is a disabled person or a person with a long-term illness living in just over one in three (35 per cent) households.
- Households with a disabled person or a person with a long-term illness are more likely to live in housing association or local authority housing than to rent privately or to own their home.

- Around half of all local authority housing and housing association dwelling houses have at least one disabled person or a person with a long-term illness, compared to just over a quarter of privately owned or rented accommodation.

In October 2003, of the 328 homeless people who slept rough in Scotland, 28 per cent had a mental health problem (George Street Research, 2003: 37). Thirty-seven per cent of disabled adults or adults with a long-term illness have experienced homelessness (Scottish Executive, 2004d: table 4.50).

Harassment

Evidence from the **Scottish Disability Awareness Survey 2003** revealed that (Disability Rights Commission, 2003b):

- One in five disabled Scots have experienced harassment because of their disability.
- Over a third (35 per cent) of people who knew a disabled person have witnessed that person being harassed.

The DRC were concerned about the extent and nature of hate crimes committed against disabled people, and commissioned independent qualitative research entitled **Hate Crimes Against Disabled People in Scotland: A Survey Report**. A hate crime is a crime motivated by malice or ill-will towards a social group.

The research findings show:

- Approximately half the disabled people (47 per cent) who responded to the survey have experienced hate crime because of their disability.

- Hate crimes are most likely to occur in public places, such as in the street or park, in shops or on public transport.
- Those who took part in the survey described feeling scared, embarrassed, humiliated and stressed by the attacks.

Education

Fifty-eight per cent of disabled people (with or without a long-term illness) have no qualifications compared to 24 per cent of non-disabled people (Scottish Executive, 2004e: 57).

Schools

The Pupil Census 2003 found:

- About 3 per cent of primary school pupils and 3 per cent of secondary school pupils have a Record of Needs or an Individualised Education Plan (Scottish Executive, 2004c:1).

The three most commonly recorded learning difficulties are set out in table 1.

Table 1 Three most common recorded difficulties in learning for primary and secondary school pupils in 2003			
	Moderate learning difficulties	Specific learning difficulties	Social and emotional difficulties
No. of primary school pupils	3,041	3,439	1,654
No. of secondary school pupils	2,343	2,907	1,422
(Scottish Executive, 2004c: table 6 and table 8)			

Higher Education

The Higher Education Statistics Agency (2004) showed:

- In 2002/03, 5 per cent of students in higher education in Scotland indicated they had a disability (3,400 students). There has been little change from 2001/02 where 4.5 per cent of students stated they had a disability (3,152 students).
- Dyslexia is the most commonly reported disability for students in higher education. There is a fairly even gender split. Forty-six per cent of dyslexic students are female and 54 per cent are male.
- Hidden disability, such as diabetes, epilepsy and asthma are the second most commonly reported disability for higher education students.

Education Legislation

The **Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001** (SENDA) amended the DDA, introducing a new Part 4. Providers of school education were given duties not to discriminate against disabled children. Part 4 came into force in September 2002.

The **Education (Disability Strategies and Pupils' Educational Records) (Scotland) Act 2002** (DSPERA) requires providers of school education to produce accessibility strategies, to increase disabled children's participation in the school curriculum, to improve the physical environment of the school and to improve communication with disabled children.

In September 2005, new duties to make reasonable adjustments to the physical environment in the post-16 education sector, such as universities and colleges, will also come into force.

In 2002/03, schools, local authorities, parents of children with a Record of Needs or parents that had contacted Enquire (the information and advice service run by Children in Scotland), were all questioned about their awareness and understanding of the DDA, SENDA and DSPERA (Disability Rights Commission, 2004b).

The results show:

- Over half (51 per cent) of parents had not heard of the DDA and almost three quarters (72 per cent) of parents reported that they did not know about the changes that SENDA has made to the DDA.
- Parents of children with social, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties were least likely to have heard of the DDA. All of the school staff had heard of the DDA and 92 per cent knew about the changes SENDA made to the DDA.
- Seventy-seven per cent of parents and 31 per cent of school staff reported they had little or no understanding or awareness of DSPERA, whereas 72 per cent of local authorities reported that they had a good understanding and awareness of DSPERA.

The **Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004** comes into force in autumn 2005. The Act introduces a number of key changes, these include:

- the removal of the Record of Needs and the introduction of the new coordinated support plan
- the new concept of 'additional support needs' which is much wider and more encompassing than 'special educational needs'.

Access to Goods and Services

Part 3 of the DDA makes it unlawful for those who provide goods, facilities and services for instance in pubs, clubs, shops and restaurants to discriminate against disabled people. From October 2004 service providers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to the physical features of their premises that make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for a disabled person to use their services.

The annual spending power of adults in Britain covered by the DDA is estimated at £80 billion per year (Department for Work and Pensions, 2004).

The DRC asked 200 Scottish businesses about their attitudes and awareness of the duties under Part 3 (Disability Rights Commission, 2004c). Around three quarters of the businesses surveyed indicated it was important their premises were accessible to disabled people. Businesses that had made changes to make their premises more accessible were most likely to install a ramp (57 per cent), or make doorways wider (44 per cent).

1,000 members of the Scottish general public were polled in the DRC's **Disability Awareness Survey 2003** (2003b). The findings show:

- Almost eight in ten (79 per cent) of people surveyed feel the most important disability access issue was to ensure cafes, shops and banks were more accessible to disabled people.
- The majority of respondents (71 per cent) perceived that not enough was being done to make sure that disabled people could use services like non-disabled people.

- Awareness of the impending new duties under Part 3 of the DDA was very low, with 80 per cent of respondents unaware of the new duties.

Seventy-seven per cent of the Scottish population agreed that shops and bank should be forced to make themselves easier for disabled people to use, even if this leads to higher prices (Scottish Executive, 2003a: 80).

In October 2003, as part of a GB wide survey, 100 disabled people in Scotland were surveyed about their experiences of service provision (Disability Rights Commission, 2003a). The factor which caused the most difficulty for disabled customers (51 per cent) was heavy doors, followed closely by steps at the entrance to a building (48 per cent). Fifty-six per cent of respondents were likely to tell friends not to use a service if there was poor access provision. Forty-four per cent of respondents considered positive staff attitudes towards disabled people as having most influence in them continuing to use a service.

Table 2 shows that disabled people generally find accessing goods and services more inconvenient than non-disabled people (Scottish Executive, 2003c). Hospital outpatients departments appear to cause the most inconvenience.

Table 2 Percentage finding services very or fairly inconvenient by adult population with any long-term illness or disability		
	All people with a long-term illness or disability	All people*
Post office	13	7
Bank	25	19
Doctor's surgery	22	15
Grocery/food shop	13	7
Chemist/pharmacist	17	11
Hospital outpatients department	41	32
Public transport	20	15
(Scottish Executive, 2003c)		
* 'All people' means all the 28,667 adults surveyed including disabled people, people with a long-term illness and/or health problem and non-disabled people.		

People often access goods on the Internet, and service providers are increasingly providing their services via the Internet. Just over one in ten (12 per cent) of disabled people and 14 per cent of people with a long-term illness had personal access to the Internet compared to 39 per cent of non-disabled people (Scottish Executive, 2003c).

Independent Living

In 2001, 207 people were receiving direct payments. By 2004 the number of people receiving direct payments increased to 912 (Scottish Executive, 2004g). Disabled people with physical disabilities are most likely to be in receipt of direct payments.

The Scottish House Condition Survey 2002 (Communities Scotland, 2003: Chapter 8) found:

- About one in ten households in Scotland has a person who uses a mobility aid.

- The majority of households that require an adaptation (132,000 households) only need one change to be made.
- The most common adaptation is for handrails (204,000 households), followed by adaptations to a bath/shower (134,000 households). Bath/shower adaptations are listed as the most common adaptation still needing to be done.

Transport

Disabled people should be able to enjoy the same rights, choices and opportunities to use the whole transport and travel environment as non-disabled people. Under current DDA duties it is unlawful to discriminate in the provision of transport infrastructure (eg, airports, ferry terminals, bus stations, railway stations) and information and ticketing services, but not in or on the transport itself.

A survey of 373 disabled people and carers of disabled people revealed that bus/coach and car/van were the most popular forms of transport (Capability Scotland, 2004).

The survey also found:

- Taxis were also popular, being used as a regular form of transport by 20 per cent of respondents. However, two-thirds of the respondents felt that the cost of taxis meant that they could not go out as often as they would like.
- Fifteen per cent of the survey respondents had cancelled a hospital or doctor's appointment because of problems with public transport.

The Scottish Executive's publication **Transport Provision for Disabled People in Scotland** (Reid Howie Associates Ltd, 2004) found that:

- The main barrier facing many disabled people is the simple lack of accessible transport vehicles.
- When disabled people transfer between modes of transport this often requires a substantial wait.
- Attitudes of public transport staff and disabled people's experiences of this can be a significant contributory factor in whether they are likely to attempt to travel at all.
- Many disabled people live on low incomes, and transport costs can represent a relatively high percentage of that income.

The Blue Badge scheme is for parking. It is given to some disabled people who find it difficult to get around without using a car. The number of blue badge holders has increased from 209,599 holders in 2002 to 223,995 holders in 2004 (Scottish Executive, 2004a).

Public Life and Participation

At the Scottish Parliament and Council elections on 1 May 2003 a survey of access to voting was conducted by disabled voters and other voters with experience of disability (Capability Scotland, 2003). Just over a third of the survey respondents had a disability or long-term medical condition or illness.

The survey found:

- Polling stations in church halls and community centres were less easily accessed than schools.

- Just under a fifth of voters (disabled people and carers) felt that the experience of voting was easier than last time. One in ten disabled people felt that it was more difficult, with people aged over 55 years old and those voting in church halls most likely to say it was more difficult.

In the Scottish May 2003 Council elections, 9 per cent of councillors said they had a long-term illness, health problem or disability which limits their daily activities or the type of work they do (COSLA, 2003: 12). Nine per cent of male councillors and seven per cent of female councillors stated they had a long-term illness, health problem or disability.

Ninety-five per cent of the Scottish public said they would not mind if their MSP was a disabled person (Scottish Executive, 2003a: 74).

Six per cent of the Scottish Parliament's staff considered themselves to have a disability (Scottish Parliament, 2004: 10).

Table 3 shows that the number of disabled people serving on public bodies in Scotland has remained fairly static over the last three years. In June 2004 there were 22 disabled people (3 per cent) in public appointments.

Table 3 Number of disabled people in public appointments in Scotland			
	June 2002	June 2003	June 2004
Number of total appointments	1116	958	870
Percentage of disabled people	2%	2%	3%
Number of disabled people	20	18	22
(Scottish Executive, 2004b)			

Definitions of Disability

The terminology and phrases used in this publication are often taken from the questions used to collect the information. They are not always the terms the DRC would choose, but have been used to accurately represent the data. In research, different questions and definitions are used to clarify whether someone is disabled. This can cause difficulties when trying to compare survey results.

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