

Scottish Disability Awareness Survey 2003

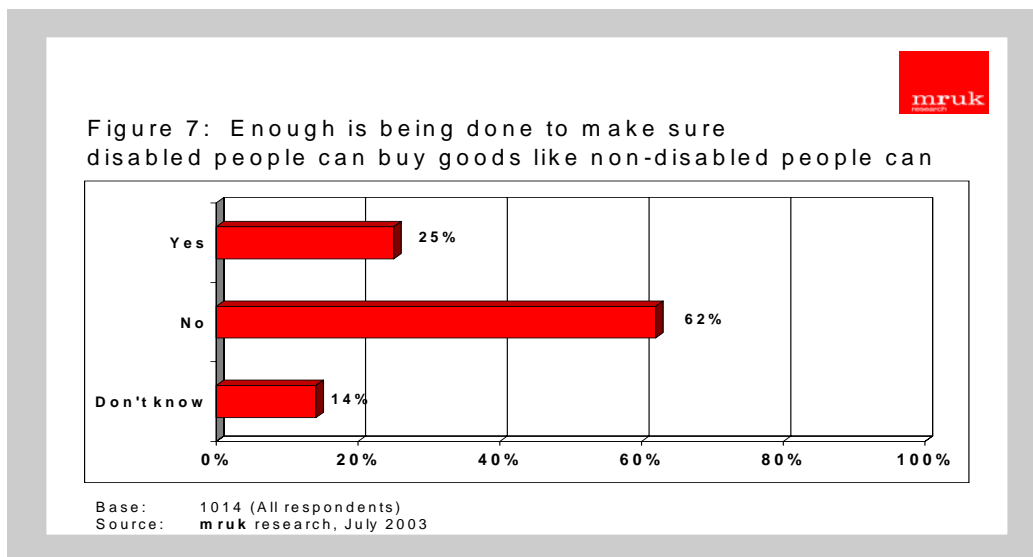
Open 4 All Statistics

In July 2003, a 'snapshot' survey of 1,014 people aged 16+ years, living in Scotland, was conducted by MRUK Research on behalf of the Disability Rights Commission, Scotland. This paper outlines the findings from the 2003 survey in relation to access to goods, facilities and services for disabled people under Part III of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The paper also highlights the relevant findings from the previous 2001-2002 awareness surveys.

Key Findings

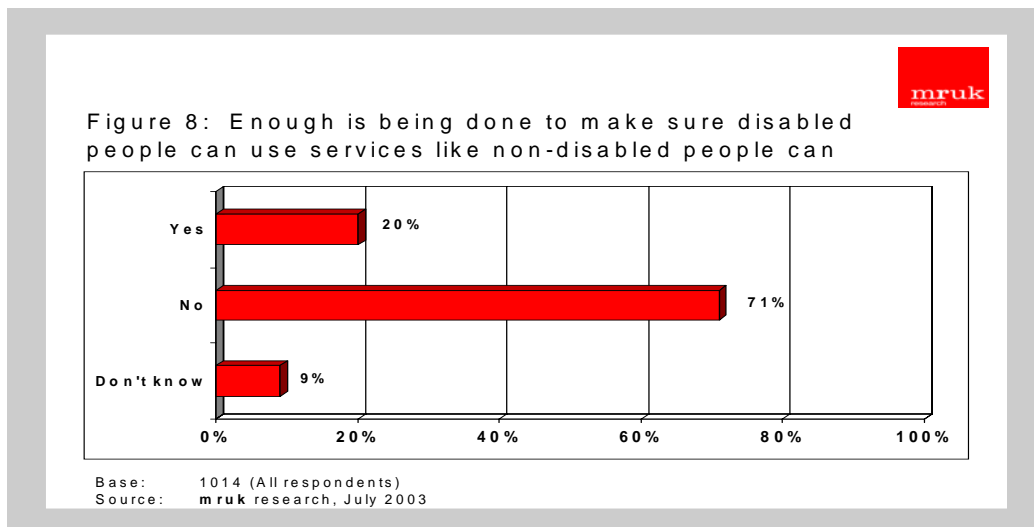
The respondents were asked:

- Is enough being done to make sure disabled people can buy **goods** like non-disabled people can?



A very high percentage of respondents (62%) felt **not** enough was being done to ensure disabled people could buy goods like non-disabled people. Respondents in the West of Scotland (70%) expressed the most concern that not enough was being done. Of those that were personally disabled nearly a third (32%) thought enough was already being done to make the purchase of goods more accessible, compared to 26% of respondents who knew someone that was disabled.

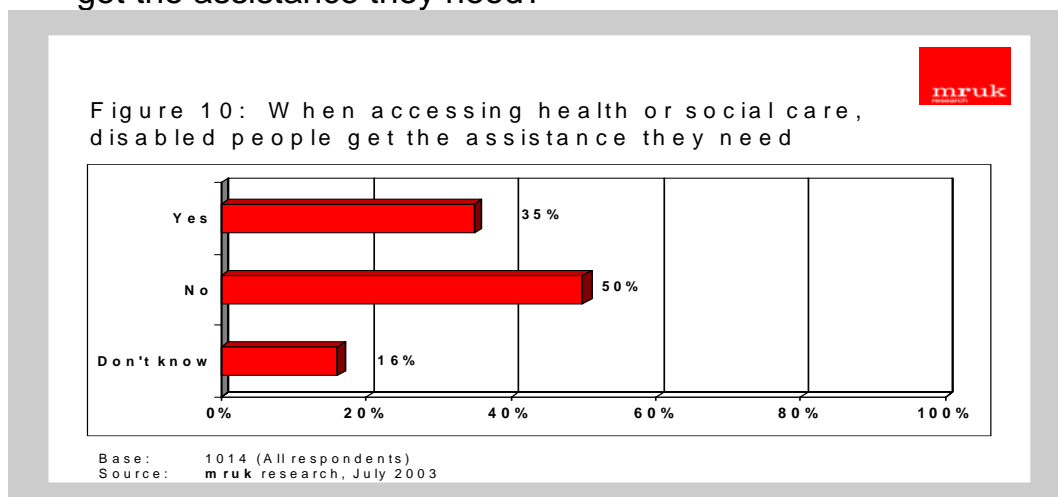
- Is enough being done to make sure disabled people can use **services** like non-disabled people?



The majority of respondents (71%) perceived that **not** enough was being done to make sure disabled people could buy **services** like non-disabled people. Once again respondents in the West felt the most strongly (79%) that not enough was being done.

In 2001 and 2002 respondents were asked, 'Do you think enough is being done to ensure that disabled people can buy **goods** and use **services** like non-disabled people can do?'. In 2001, only 27% and in 2002, only 24% of respondents agreed that enough was being done to ensure that disabled people can buy goods and use services

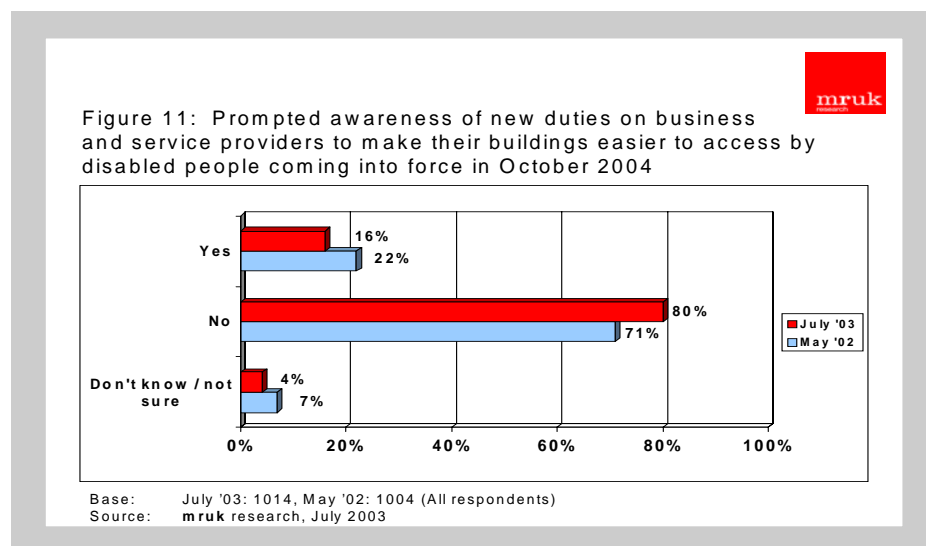
- When accessing health or social care, do disabled people get the assistance they need?



Half of those surveyed (50%) felt disabled people did **not** get the assistance they needed in accessing health and social care services.

Those living in the West (56%) were more likely to perceive this to be true than those in the North (37%) of Scotland. Of particular concern is that respondents who were personally disabled (61%) disagreed with the above statement, compared to those who knew someone who was disabled (52%) or did not know anyone who was disabled (43%). 58% of respondents who were unemployed felt disabled people did not get the assistance they needed in accessing health and social care compared to 46% of employed respondents.

- Awareness of the new duties under Part III of the DDA on business and service providers to make their buildings more accessible by October 2004



Awareness of the impending new duties under Part III of the DDA was very low, 80% of respondents were unaware of the new duties. Awareness had actually fallen between 2002-2003 by 6%. Awareness of the changes was highest amongst those who were personally disabled (21%) or knew someone who was disabled (20%). Regional variations were also apparent with 38% of the respondents in the South of Scotland aware of the changes compared to 11% of respondents in the East. Awareness was

highest amongst the C1 (22%) category of respondents, compared to 12% of the DE category of respondents.

All respondents were asked to list in order of importance suggested improvements to disabled people's access to buying goods and services.

Suggested improvements to disabled people's access to buying goods and services	July '03 %
Making services more accessible to disabled people to use such as access to cafes, shops and banks	79
Disabled people should be able to use services with the maximum ease / convenience possible	75
Products should be designed with disabled people in mind wherever possible	75
Specific physical improvements should be made such as the provision of ramps, lifts, induction loops	73
Service providers should plan to make changes to improve access to their buildings, fittings and features as part of general refurbishments	70
Staff should be trained in disability awareness	66
Providing information in Braille, large print or other accessible ways	56
Changes should be made to make services accessible even if these mean increased prices for all customers	46
Don't know	1
None of these	-
BASE	1014

The improvement deemed to be the most important by those surveyed (79%) was to ensure the services of cafes, shops and banks were more accessible to disabled people. 75% of respondents felt services should be accessible with maximum ease/convenience and wherever possible products should be designed with giving thought to disabled people's needs.

Conclusions

The statistics revealed that there are significant regional variations regarding the level of knowledge and awareness of disability issues. The perception that **not** enough is being done to assist disabled people in accessing goods, services, health and social care is highest in the West Scotland. Whilst in the South of Scotland the perception is higher that more is being done to assist disabled people access goods and services.

As noted already 46% of respondents thought changes should be made to make services accessible even if these means increased prices for all customers. In the survey **Attitudes to Discrimination in Scotland** (2003) respondents were asked, 'Shops and banks should be forced to make themselves easier for disabled people to use, even if this leads to higher prices', 77% of respondents agreed with this statement.

Note on Legislative Duties under the DDA

From December 1996 discrimination has to be on the basis of the disability:

- Refusal to provide a service
- A lower standard of service
- Provision on worse terms
- Victimisation of people who complain

Since October 1999 the DDA duties extended to include active duties:

- To change policies, practises or procedures which make it impossible or unreasonably difficult to use the service
- To take reasonable steps to provide auxiliary aids or services to allow use of the service

From October 2004 service providers may have to make reasonable adjustments to the physical features of their premises to overcome physical barriers to access.