

Article

Outcomes for disabled people in the UK: 2020

Outcomes for disabled people across areas of life: education, employment, social participation, housing, well-being, loneliness and crime. Analysis by disability status and by age, sex, impairment type and severity, country and region based on survey data.

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1 . Main points

- 23.0% of disabled people aged 21 to 64 years in the UK had a degree as their highest qualification compared with 39.7% of non-disabled people; 15.1% of disabled people had no qualifications compared with 5.4% of non-disabled people (year ending June 2020).
- Around half of disabled people aged 16 to 64 years (52.1%) in the UK were in employment compared with around 8 in 10 (81.3%) for non-disabled people (July to September 2020); disabled people with autism were among those disabled people with the lowest employment rate.
- A higher proportion of disabled people aged 16 years and over in England were involved in civic participation (41.5%), such as signing a petition or attending a public rally, than non-disabled people (35.1%) (year ending March 2019).
- Disabled people aged 16 to 64 years in the UK were less likely to own their own home (40.9%) than non-disabled people (53.4%), and more likely to have rented social housing (at 24.9% compared with 7.8%) (year ending June 2020).
- Disabled people's (aged 16 to 64 years) average well-being ratings in the UK were poorer than those for non-disabled people for happiness, worthwhile and life satisfaction measures; average anxiety levels were higher for disabled people at 4.47 out of 10, compared with 2.91 out of 10 for non-disabled people (year ending June 2020).
- The proportion of disabled people (13.9%) aged 16 years and over in England, who reported feeling lonely "often or always" was almost four times that of non-disabled people (3.8%) (year ending March 2019).
- Around 1 in 7 (14.3%) disabled people aged 16 to 59 years in England and Wales experienced domestic abuse in the last 12 months, compared with about 1 in 20 (5.1%) non-disabled people; disabled women (17.5%) were more than twice as likely to experience domestic abuse in the last year than non-disabled women (6.7%) (year ending March 2020).

Statistician's comment

"An important part of ONS's work is to identify inequalities in society. As today's findings show, there are some stark differences between the experience of disabled and non-disabled people, from education and work to the experience of crime, including domestic abuse."

Josephine Foubert, Census and disability analysis team, Office for National Statistics.

2 . Improving disability data in the UK

This article explores a selection of outcomes for disabled people in the UK: education, employment, social participation, housing, well-being, loneliness and crime. It updates a series of articles launched by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in 2019 as part of a research programme to continue [improving disability data in the UK](#).

The need to improve disability data is driven by advances in promoting equality for disabled people, such as the [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\)](#), [Sustainable Development Goals](#) and the [Equality Act 2010 in Great Britain](#) (or the [Disability Discrimination Act, 1995](#) in Northern Ireland).

This article presents a brief summary of findings about each topic, with further data related to each topic including [confidence intervals](#) for the estimates contained in the [associated datasets](#). The datasets cover the period 2013 to 2020 where possible to allow for comparison over time. They draw on information from annual household surveys to disaggregate information about disabled people by characteristics such as age and sex, and geographical breakdowns, as well as specific aspects of disability such as main impairment type and severity.

Definition of disability

Across this release, a person is considered disabled if they have a self-reported long-standing illness, condition or impairment, which causes difficulty with day-to-day activities. This definition is consistent with the Equality Act 2010 and the Government Statistical Service (GSS) harmonised definition. For further information on disability and impairment definitions see the [Glossary](#).

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and data on disabled people

This article focuses on estimates from the year 2019 to 2020 where possible (period covered dependent on data source), which does not allow for direct assessment of the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) on outcomes of disabled people. However, it provides insight into potential risk factors for adverse outcomes of COVID-19. The ONS also publishes further analyses of the [social impacts of coronavirus \(COVID-19\) on disabled people](#) and [COVID-19-related deaths by disability status](#).

There is significant public and policy interest in how employment, population and migration have been affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. At the same time the pandemic has affected our ability to collect data – including the need to pause face-to-face surveys. This [blog](#) outlines the main challenges, how the ONS is addressing them, the progress made so far and next steps across different areas.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has affected data collection and weighting methodology of specific surveys used in this release (such as the Annual Population Survey). More information is available in the [methodological article](#) published with this release. The ONS continues to examine potential bias and methodology and may make adjustments if appropriate in future.

3 . Education

The education analysis was carried out using the Annual Population Survey (APS), using UK data for the year ending June 2020, except for the impairment breakdown where analysis was carried out on the six months ending June 2020. Since January 2020, autism (including Autism Spectrum Condition, Asperger syndrome) was added as [response option](#) to the APS questionnaire. To use this information, the analysis was restricted to the collection period where the updated questionnaire was used.

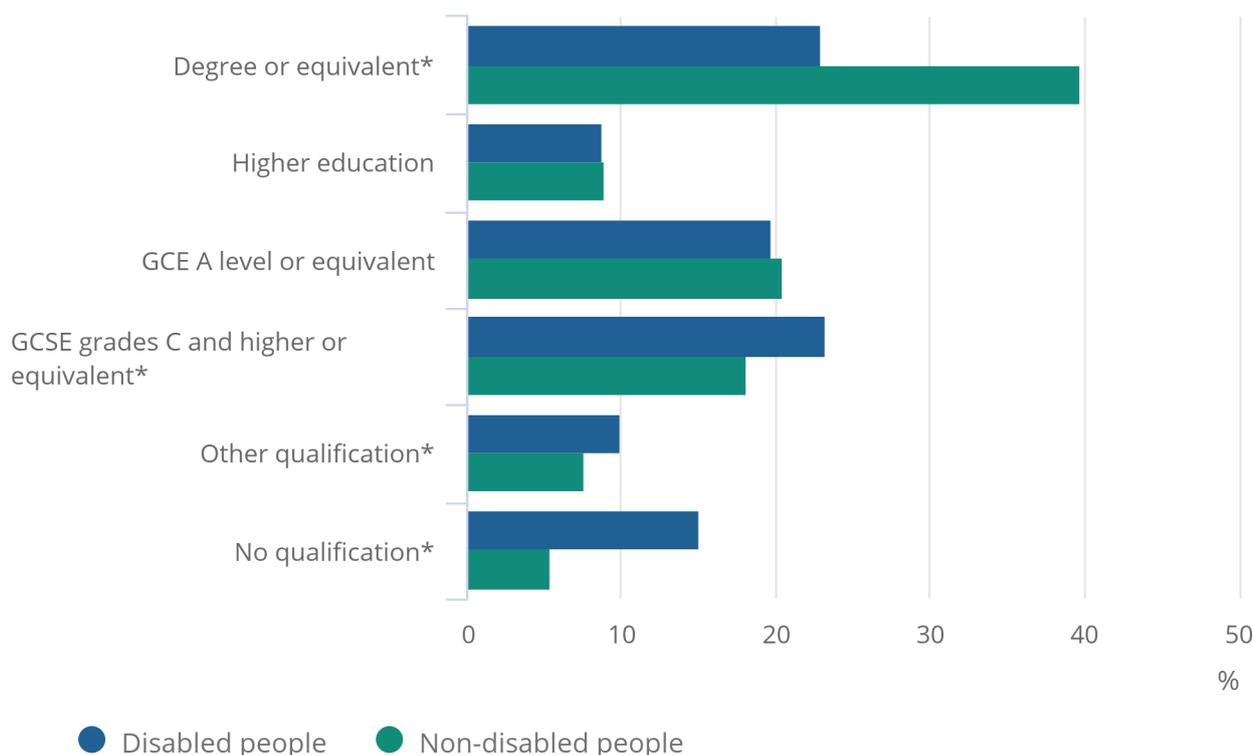
Please see the [Data sources and quality](#) section for more information on the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) on the APS data collection and what the ONS is doing to mitigate this impact.

Figure 1: Disabled people were less likely to obtain a degree than non-disabled people

Proportion of disabled and non-disabled people, by highest level of qualification, aged 21 to 64 years, UK, year ending June 2020

Figure 1: Disabled people were less likely to obtain a degree than non-disabled people

Proportion of disabled and non-disabled people, by highest level of qualification, aged 21 to 64 years, UK, year ending June 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Annual Population Survey

Notes:

1. "*" Indicates significant differences between disabled and non-disabled people within each highest education level. Not all differences in the chart are significant. Please refer to the confidence intervals in the Disability and Education dataset for more information. Confidence intervals are measures of the statistical precision of an estimate and show the range of uncertainty around the calculated estimate. They should be considered when assessing significant differences across groups.
2. The analysis is restricted to those who are likely to have finished their education (aged 21 years and over) and also removes those currently enrolled in a course.

Figure 1 shows that 23.0% of disabled people aged 21 to 64 years had a degree or equivalent as their highest qualification, compared with 39.7% of non-disabled people. In addition, 15.1% of disabled people had no qualifications, which is almost three times the proportion of non-disabled people (5.4%). Both differences are significant. Similar proportions of disabled and non-disabled people had higher education or GCE A level or equivalent as their highest qualification.

Compared with the year ending June 2019, no significant differences in the highest qualification levels of disabled people, nor between disabled and non-disabled people were observed.

The remainder of this section explores the differences between attaining no qualifications and degree or equivalent further by looking into additional characteristics.

Across all age groups (21 to 64 years), disabled people were significantly less likely to obtain a degree and significantly more likely to have no qualifications. The oldest age group (60 to 64 years) had the highest significant proportion of no qualification for both disabled (22.0%) and non-disabled (9.4%) people. This age group also saw the largest disparity between disabled and non-disabled people.

The disparity between disabled and non-disabled people differs significantly by sex. Disabled men were three times more likely to have no qualifications than non-disabled men, 17.1% compared with 5.7% respectively. This disparity was smaller but consistent for women, with 13.6% of disabled women attaining no qualifications in comparison with 5.0% of non-disabled women.

Disabled people who self-report that their ability to carry out day-to-day activities is “limited a lot” in comparison with “limited a little” had poorer educational outcomes. In 2020, 6.3% of disabled people had a degree and were limited a lot, compared with 39.7% of non-disabled people who had a degree, a significant difference of 33.4 percentage points. The gap was smaller for less severely disabled people (those “limited a little”) when compared with non-disabled people (22.9 percentage points – a significant difference).

Additionally, disabled people who were “limited a lot” were almost twice as likely to have no qualifications than non-disabled people (10.1% compared with 5.4% – a significant difference).

Across UK countries, Northern Ireland had the largest significant difference between disabled (13.5%) and non-disabled (35.2%) people achieving a degree (a difference of 21.7 percentage points). The significant difference between disabled and non-disabled people achieving a degree in England (disabled people: 23.9% and non-disabled people: 40.1%, 16.2 percentage points), Scotland (20.4% and 38.6%, 18.2 percentage points) and Wales (18.2% and 35.5%, 17.3 percentage points) was broadly similar.

There was greater disparity among those gaining no qualifications between countries. England had the lowest proportions of disabled people obtaining no qualifications (13.9%) and Northern Ireland the highest (28.8%).

Across English regions, London had the highest proportion of people obtaining degrees for both disabled people (34.6%) and non-disabled people (57.5%), however this region also had the largest significant disparity between disabled and non-disabled people (22.9 percentage points). The North East had one of the largest significant disparities for obtaining no qualifications (12.5 percentage points), 18.5% of disabled people compared with 6.0% for non-disabled people.

More data on education can be found in the [Disability and education dataset](#) published alongside this article.

Further analysis on higher education outcomes by disability can be found looking at [Higher Education Statistics Agency data on disability \(2014/15 to 2019/20\)](#), and statistics on pupils with [special education needs \(SEN\)](#).

4 . Employment

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) publishes quarterly updates on the labour market status of disabled people in the [Labour market status of disabled people datasets](#). Based on the [Labour Force Survey \(LFS\)](#), those tables showed that around half of disabled people (52.1%) aged 16 to 64 years in the UK were employed in 2020 (July to September 2020) compared with around 8 in 10 (81.3%) of non-disabled people. Compared with the same quarter in period in 2019 (July to September 2019), similar employment rates can be seen for both disabled (53.2%) and non-disabled people (81.8%).

While similar patterns were seen for both sexes (July to September 2020), a larger gap was seen in the employment rate between disabled and non-disabled men (32.2 percentage points), than for women (26.0 percentage points). The larger disparity was driven by the higher employment rate for non-disabled men (84.4%) than for non-disabled women (78.0%) while the employment rates for disabled people of both sexes were similar (52.2% for men and 52.0% for women).

All further employment analysis was carried out using the [Annual population survey \(APS\)](#) to enable further breakdowns, using UK data for the year ending June 2020, except for the impairment breakdown where analysis was carried out on the six months ending June 2020. Since January 2020, autism (including Autism Spectrum Condition, Asperger syndrome) was added as [response option](#) to the APS questionnaire. To use this information, the analysis was restricted to the collection period where the updated questionnaire was used.

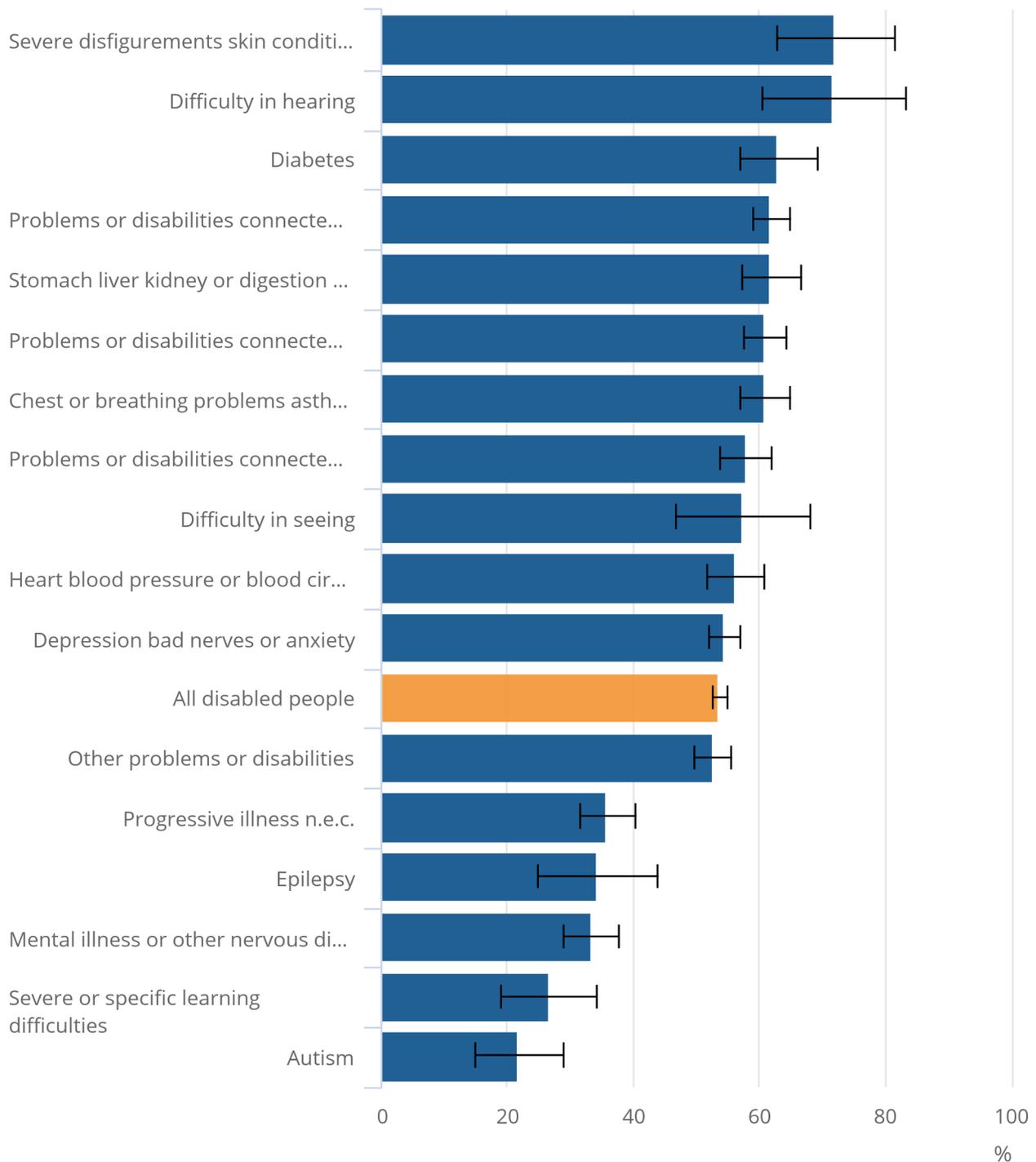
Please see the [Data sources and quality](#) section for more information on the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) on the LFS and APS data collection and what the ONS is doing to mitigate this impact.

Figure 2: Disabled people with autism were among those disabled people with the lowest employment rate

Employment rates of disabled people, by main impairment, aged 16 to 64 years, UK, 6 months year ending June 2020

Figure 2: Disabled people with autism were among those disabled people with the lowest employment rate

Employment rates of disabled people, by main impairment, aged 16 to 64 years, UK, 6 months year ending June 2020



Notes:

1. The impairments or condition categories compared in this article relate to the categories within the question in the survey, the exception is speech impediment which has been grouped with the 'other problems or disabilities' category due to low sample size.
2. Analysis by impairment is based on the "main impairment" as reported by the respondent. People often experience more than one impairment, but this analysis does not account for co-morbidities or the cumulative impact of living with more than one impairment simultaneously.
3. The employment rate of all disabled people is including disabled people with any type of impairment and those who didn't know or refused give an impairment type. This is included in order to show if the employment rate of disabled people with a particular main impairment was lower or higher than that of disabled people as a whole.
4. Lower and upper 95% confidence levels form a confidence interval, which is a measure of the statistical precision of an estimate and shows the range of uncertainty around the calculated estimate. As a general rule, if the confidence interval around one estimate overlaps with the interval around another, we cannot say with certainty that there is more than a chance difference between the two estimates.

Figure 2 shows how the employment rates of disabled people varied across main impairment types. Disabled people with autism (21.7%), severe or specific learning difficulties (26.5%), mental illness or other nervous disorders (33.3%), epilepsy (34.2%) and progressive illnesses (35.8%) had employment rates which were significantly lower than the employment rate for the disabled population (aged 16 to 64 years) as whole for the same period (53.6% – slightly higher than the rate using the LFS data because of different sampling methods and periods).

For all countries in the UK and across all English regions, disabled people had significantly lower employment rates than non-disabled people. The highest employment rates for disabled and non-disabled people in English regions were seen in the South East (60.2% disabled people, 83.7% non-disabled people) and South West (57.5% disabled people, 84.2% non-disabled people). Despite having the lowest employment rate for both groups, the North East (46.4% for disabled people, 79.4% for non-disabled people) also had the largest disparity in employment rates between disabled people and non-disabled people, 33.0 percentage points.

Type of occupation and working patterns

Disabled people in work were significantly less likely to be employed as managers, directors or senior officials, or to be employed in professional occupations (27.2% for these two occupation groups combined) than non-disabled people (34.5% for both occupations combined). Disabled people in work were significantly more likely to hold elementary occupations, 12.1% compared with 9.6% of working non-disabled people. Disabled people in work were also significantly more likely to be employed in caring, leisure or other service occupations (12.3%), or sales or customer service occupations (9.1%) than non-disabled people (8.7% and 6.8% respectively).

Over one-third (34.6%) of disabled people in work (16 to 64 years), worked part-time compared with under one-quarter (22.9%) of non-disabled people, a significant difference. Similar proportions of disabled people in work were self-employed compared with non-disabled people (15.0% for disabled people, 14.0% for non-disabled people). However disabled men were significantly more likely to be self-employed (20.2%) than non-disabled men (17.3%).

More data on employment can be found in the [Disability and employment dataset](#) published alongside this article.

Further analysis on employment outcomes of disabled people can be found in the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) article [The employment of disabled people 2019](#), which also explores movement in and out of work. The [Labour market economic analysis](#) due to be published 19 February 2021 will include information on redundancies by disability status.

5 . Social participation

All social participation analysis was carried out using the [Community Life Survey \(CLS\)](#) collected in England for the year ending March 2019. For definitions of civic participation, civic consultations, civic activism and social action please see the [accompanying methodology article's glossary](#).

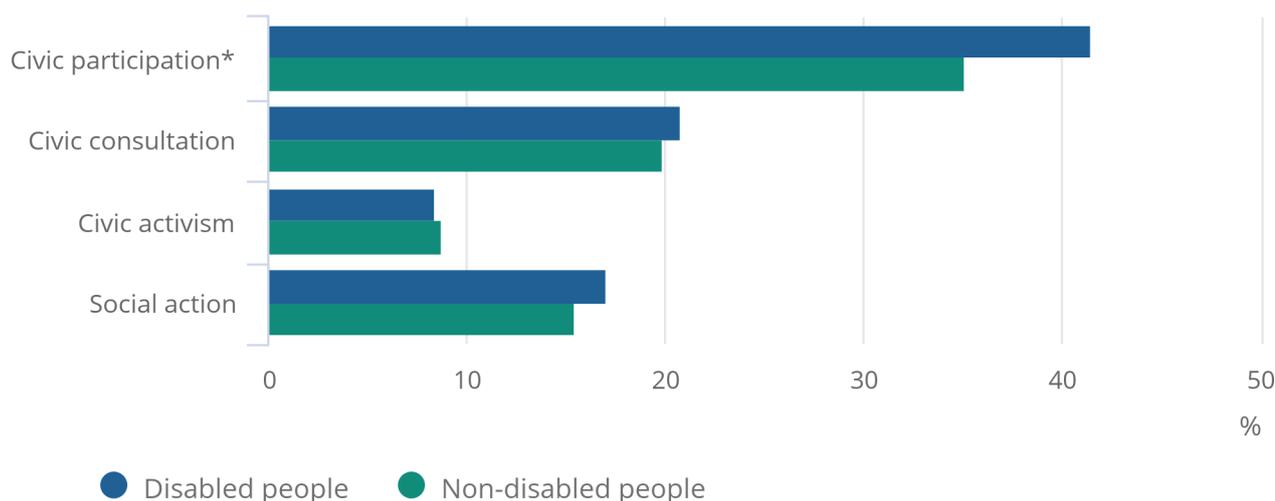
Civic engagement and social action

Figure 3: Disabled people were more likely to be involved in civic participation than non-disabled people

Proportion of people who participated in civic engagements or social action by disability, aged 16 years and over, England, year ending March 2019

Figure 3: Disabled people were more likely to be involved in civic participation than non-disabled people

Proportion of people who participated in civic engagements or social action by disability, aged 16 years and over, England, year ending March 2019



Source: Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport – Community and Life Survey

Notes:

1. "*" Indicates significant differences between disabled and non-disabled people within each civic engagement and social action group. Not all differences in the chart are significant. Please refer to the confidence intervals in the Disability and Social participation dataset for more information. Confidence intervals are measures of the statistical precision of an estimate and show the range of uncertainty around the calculated estimate. They should be considered when assessing significant differences across groups.
2. Civic participation refers to engagement in democratic processes, both in person and online, including contacting a local official (such as a local councillor or MP), signing a petition, or attending a public rally (this excludes voting).
3. Civic consultation refers to taking part in a consultation about local services or problems in the local area through completing a questionnaire, attending a public meeting, or being involved in a face-to-face or online group.
4. Civic activism refers to involvement in activities in the local community, such as being a local councillor, school governor, volunteer special constable or magistrate (for those aged 18 years or over). Civic action also includes involvement (in person or online) in decision-making groups in the local area, for example, a group making decisions about local health or education services, a tenants' decision-making group, or a group set up to tackle local crime problems or to regenerate the local area.
5. Social action refers to involvement with issues affecting the local area by doing things like setting up a new service or amenity; stopping the closure of a service or amenity; stopping something happening in the local area; running a local service on a voluntary basis; or helping to organise a community event.

A significantly higher proportion of disabled people aged 16 years and over were involved in civic participation (41.5%), such as signing a petition or attending a public rally, than non-disabled people (35.1%). Disabled people were just as likely to have been involved in civic consultations, civic activism and social action as non-disabled people. Similar patterns were seen when comparing disabled and non-disabled people of each sex.

A similar trend was seen in 2018 with civic participation the only type of civic engagement where a significant disparity was seen between disabled and non-disabled people (45.5% disabled people, 38.4% non-disabled people).

Young disabled people aged 16 to 24 years were more likely to be involved in civic participation (46.9%) than non-disabled (30.9%) people of the same age, a significant disparity of 16.0 percentage points. Disabled people aged 35 to 49 years and 50 to 64 years also saw significantly higher proportions of involvement than non-disabled people although the disparity was not as large, 8.9 and 7.8 percentage points respectively.

For civic consultation, civic activism and social action, the proportions of disabled people who participated were not significantly different to those of non-disabled people in all age groups.

Volunteering

Volunteering can be informal (giving unpaid help as an individual to people who are not a relative) or formal (giving unpaid help through groups, clubs or organisations). Disabled people showed similar proportions of participation in either formal or informal volunteering (37.5 % for formal and 55.7% for informal) in the past 12 months as non-disabled people (39.8 % for formal and 52.1% for informal). Similar trends were seen when comparing disabled and non-disabled people of each sex.

Nearly half (49.6%) of non-disabled people aged 65 to 74 years participated in formal volunteering in the past 12 months, significantly higher when compared with 39.6% of disabled people in the same age group. Similar (significant) differences were noted in people aged 50 to 64 years (41.2 % for non-disabled, 33.1% for disabled). In contrast, nearly 6 in 10 (59.5%) disabled people aged 16 to 24 years participated in informal volunteering compared with 43.8% of non-disabled people in that age group, a significant difference.

More data on social participation can be found in the [Disability and social participation dataset](#) published alongside this article.

Estimates of social participation in other countries of the UK are available from the [National Survey for Wales](#), [Scotland's Wellbeing: national outcomes for disabled people](#), and the [Experience of volunteering by adults in Northern Ireland](#) publications.

6 . Housing

All housing analysis was carried out using the [Annual Population Survey \(APS\)](#), using UK data for the year ending June 2020, except for the impairment breakdown where analysis was carried out on the six months ending June 2020. Since January 2020, autism (including Autism Spectrum Condition, Asperger syndrome) was added as [response option](#) to the APS questionnaire. To use this information, the analysis was restricted to the collection period where the updated questionnaire was used.

For a definition of housing situation which is carried out at person level (not household level) please see the [accompanying methodology article's glossary](#).

Because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, all face-to-face interviewing for the Annual Population Survey (APS), was suspended and replaced with telephone interviewing. This change in mode for first interviews has changed the non-response bias of the survey, particularly in relation to the composition of household tenure within the sample. Although estimates presented in this release have been weighted to account for this bias, the estimates should be interpreted with caution. The Office for National Statistics continues to examine the non-response bias and may make updates in future if appropriate.

Nearly 1 in 4 (24.9%) of disabled people aged 16 to 64 years rented social housing compared with less than 1 in 10 (7.8%) of non-disabled people, a significant difference. Disabled people were significantly less likely to own their own home (40.9%) or to live with parents (15.6%) than non-disabled people (53.4% and 18.6% respectively)¹

Comparing the housing situation of disabled people to 2019 (year ending June 2019), a significant decrease was seen in the proportion of home ownership (42.4% in 2019, 40.9% in 2020). In contrast, disabled people were significantly more likely to have lived with parents in 2020 than in 2019 (14.4% in 2019, 15.6% in 2020). No significant differences were seen for non-disabled people when comparing to 2019.

The housing situation of disabled people varied across age groups. Young disabled people aged 16 to 24 years were as likely to live with parents as non-disabled people of the same age, with similar proportions seen for each (71.7 % for disabled people, 74.4% for non-disabled people). Disabled people in older age groups, up to age 49 years were significantly more likely to live with parents, with the largest disparity seen for ages 30 to 34 years, at which age 15.5% of disabled people lived with parents compared with 9.5% of non-disabled people.

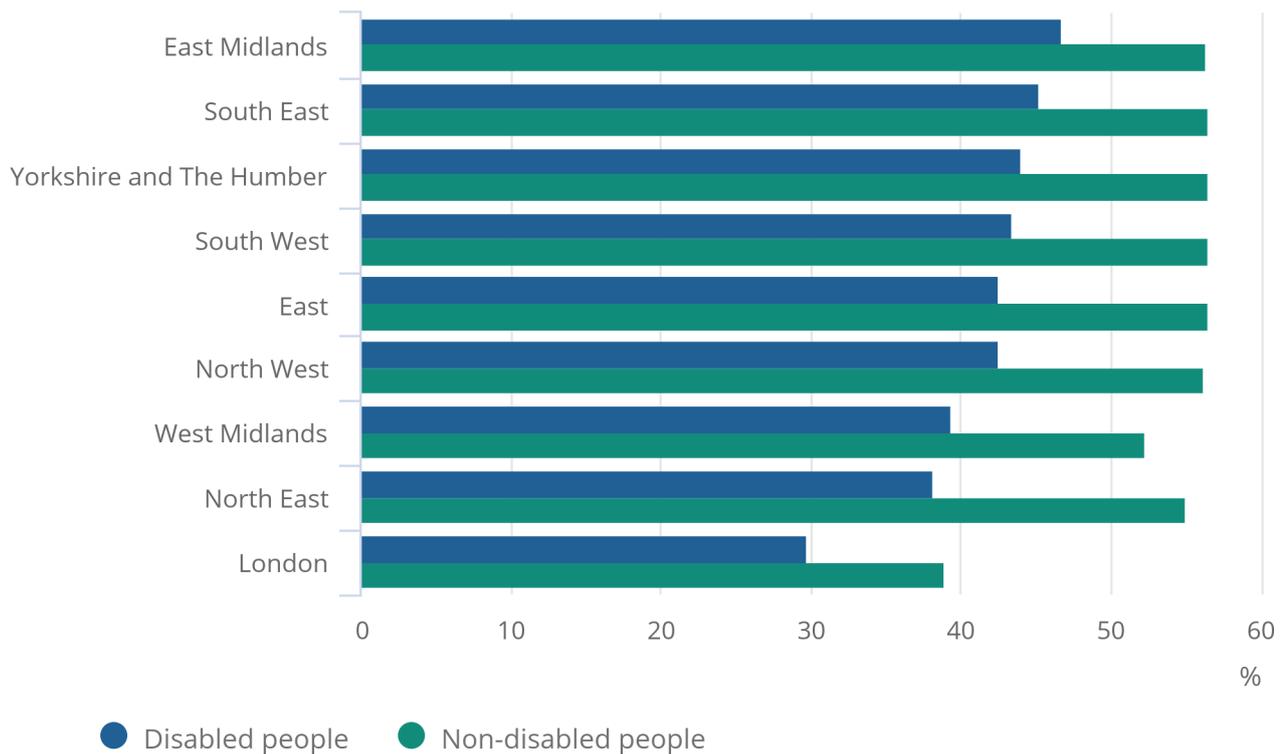
Housing situation tended to differ by impairment type, though the variability of the estimates indicates comparisons between impairment types should be made with caution. Disabled people with autism or severe or specific learning difficulties were significantly more likely (than any other main impairment type) to be living with parents with proportions of 74.5% and 67.1% respectively.

Figure 4: Disabled people were less likely to own their own home than non-disabled people in all English regions

Proportion of disabled and non-disabled people who are owner occupiers, aged 16 to 64 years, by English region, year ending June 2020

Figure 4: Disabled people were less likely to own their own home than non-disabled people in all English regions

Proportion of disabled and non-disabled people who are owner occupiers, aged 16 to 64 years, by English region, year ending June 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Annual Population Survey

Notes:

1. All differences (depicted in this chart) between disabled and non-disabled people within each region are significant. Please refer to the confidence intervals in the Disability and Housing dataset for more information. Confidence intervals are measures of the statistical precision of an estimate and show the range of uncertainty around the calculated estimate. They should be considered when assessing significant differences across groups.

Across all countries in the UK and within all English regions, disabled people were significantly less likely to own their own home compared with non-disabled people. Of all countries in the UK, Scotland had the lowest rate of home ownership for disabled people (37.5%) but the second highest for non-disabled people (56.8%), and the largest disparity.

Excluding London where the rates of home ownership were significantly lower (for both disabled 29.8 % and non-disabled people 39.0%), the lowest proportion of home ownership for disabled people was found in the North East (38.2%), which was significantly lower than the highest region, the East Midlands (46.7%). The North East also saw the largest disparity in home ownership between disabled and non-disabled people 16.9 percentage points (38.2% for disabled people, 55.1 % for non-disabled people).

More data on housing can be found in the [Disability and housing dataset](#) published alongside this article.

Further analysis on housing outcomes of disabled people are produced using [The English Housing Survey \(HSE\)](#), with more detailed findings also produced on [accessibility](#). The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) also produced an [inquiry](#) exploring whether accessible and adaptable housing available in Great Britain is fulfilling disabled people's rights to live independently.

Notes for: Housing

1. Living with parents also includes students at boarding school or those in halls of residence, as it is considered that their parents' home is their main residence and the student accommodation is temporary.

7 . Well-being

Well-being measures were taken from the [Annual Population Survey \(APS\)](#), using UK data from the year ending June 2020, except for the impairment breakdown where analysis was carried out on the six months ending June 2020. Since January 2020, autism (including Autism Spectrum Condition, Asperger syndrome) was added as [response option](#) to the APS questionnaire. To use this information, the analysis was restricted to the collection period where the updated questionnaire was used.

Definitions for well-being measures can be found in the [accompanying methodology article's glossary](#).

Please see the [Data sources and quality section](#) for more information on the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) on the APS data collection and what the Office for National Statistics (ONS) is doing to mitigate this impact.

Figure 5 shows that, on average, disabled people aged 16 to 64 years had significantly poorer ratings than non-disabled people on all four personal well-being measures, with the greatest disparity in average anxiety levels. In the year ending June 2020, the mean scores on these measures were:

- for happiness yesterday, 6.46 out of 10 for disabled people, compared with 7.58 for non-disabled people
- for feeling that the things done in life are worthwhile, 7.06 out of 10 for disabled people, compared with 7.98 for non-disabled people
- for life satisfaction, 6.62 out of 10 for disabled people, compared with 7.81 for non-disabled people
- for anxiety yesterday, 4.47 out of 10 for disabled people, compared with 2.91 for non-disabled people (higher numbers equate to poorer well-being in this measure)

Compared with the year ending June 2019, disabled people had a significantly higher average anxiety rating in the year ending June 2020. Average ratings of other well-being measures stayed on a similar level. Although disabled people still had poorer ratings, non-disabled people showed significantly poorer average well-being ratings on all measures in the year ending June 2020 compared with the year ending June 2019.

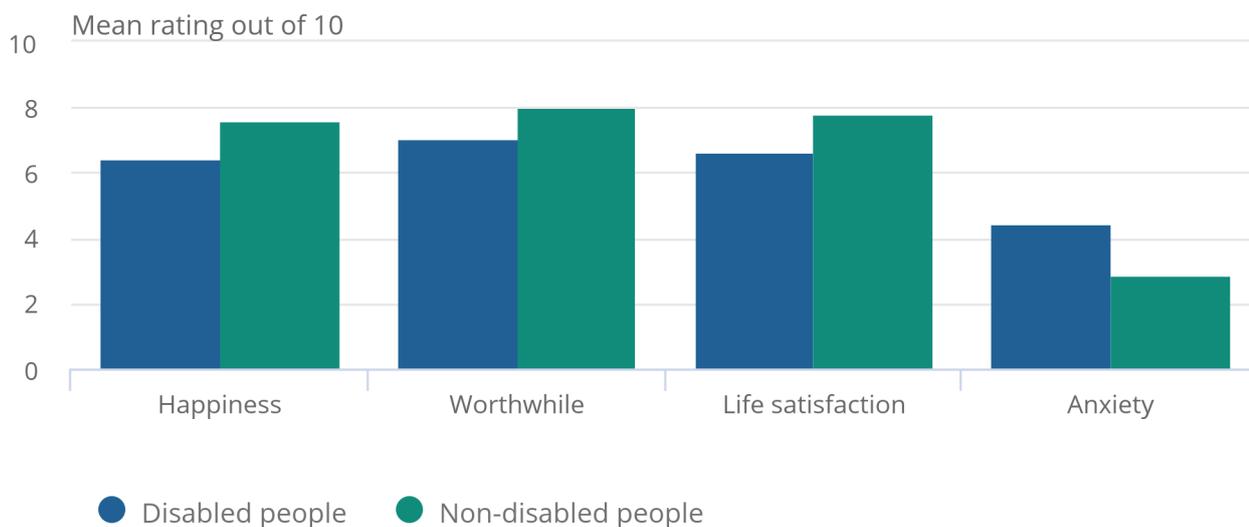
Please note the data for the year ending June 2020 uses data both collected before and during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, which does not allow for assessment of the impact of the pandemic on well-being. Please refer to the [Coronavirus and the social impacts on disabled people](#) article for more data on the impact on well-being of disabled people throughout the pandemic and to the latest [Personal well-being statistics for the UK](#) bulletin for further insights.

Figure 5: Disabled people reported poorer average well-being levels than non-disabled people

Average well-being ratings for disabled and non-disabled people, aged 16 to 64 years, UK, year ending June 2020

Figure 5: Disabled people reported poorer average well-being levels than non-disabled people

Average well-being ratings for disabled and non-disabled people, aged 16 to 64 years, UK, year ending June 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Annual Population Survey

Notes:

1. Higher numbers equate to poorer well-being when considering the anxiety measure.
2. All differences (depicted in this chart) between disabled and non-disabled people within each well-being measure are significant. Please refer to the confidence intervals in the Disability and well-being dataset for more information. Confidence intervals are measures of the statistical precision of an estimate and show the range of uncertainty around the calculated estimate. They should be considered when assessing significant differences across groups.

Considering anxiety, both disabled men and women had significantly higher anxiety levels than their non-disabled counterparts. For disabled women, anxiety levels were scored 1.57 points higher at 4.69, compared with 3.12 for non-disabled women. On average, disabled men (4.15) had significantly higher anxiety levels than non-disabled men (2.71; a difference of 1.44 points). Women reported significantly higher anxiety levels than men, this was consistent for both disabled and non-disabled people.

The average well-being ratings of disabled people varied with impairment type, though the variability of the estimates indicates comparisons between impairment types should be made with caution. Anxiety ratings tended to be highest among those disabled people with a mental illness or other nervous disorder (5.89), depression (5.58) and autism (5.07) as their main condition. Lowest anxiety levels were seen among disabled people with difficulties in hearing (3.16) and those with epilepsy (4.13).

Across UK countries, similar anxiety scores were seen in England (4.44), Scotland (4.56), Wales (4.57) and Northern Ireland (4.72) for disabled people. No significant variation was seen across English regions.

More data on well-being can be found in the [Disability and well-being dataset](#) published alongside this article.

8 . Loneliness

Loneliness data are taken from the [Community Life Survey \(CLS\)](#), covering England for the year ending March 2019. Definitions for loneliness can be found in the [accompanying methodology article's glossary](#).

A significantly higher percentage of disabled people aged 16 years and over felt lonely compared with non-disabled people. The proportion of disabled people (13.9%) who reported feeling lonely “often or always” was nearly four times that of non-disabled people (3.8%). Similar proportions were observed for both groups in the year ending March 2018.

The proportion of disabled people feeling “often or always” lonely varied by age, with 7.2% of people aged 65 years or over feeling lonely, significantly lower when compared with 20.7% of 25 to 34-year-olds.

In all age groups, however, the proportion of people who felt lonely “often or always” was significantly higher for disabled people than for non-disabled people. The largest disparity between disabled and non-disabled people was seen for the 35- to 49-year age group (17.8 percentage points). While the level of loneliness for disabled people was among one of the highest (20.6 %) in this age group, the level of loneliness for non-disabled people (2.8%) was significantly lower than younger non-disabled people.

Both disabled men and women were more likely to report feeling lonely compared with their non-disabled counterparts. When comparing disabled (13.8%) and non-disabled (3.3%) men, there was a significant difference of 10.5 percentage points. For women, this difference of 9.6 percentage points was also significant (13.9% for disabled women and 4.3% for non-disabled women). The difference between disabled women and men is not significant.

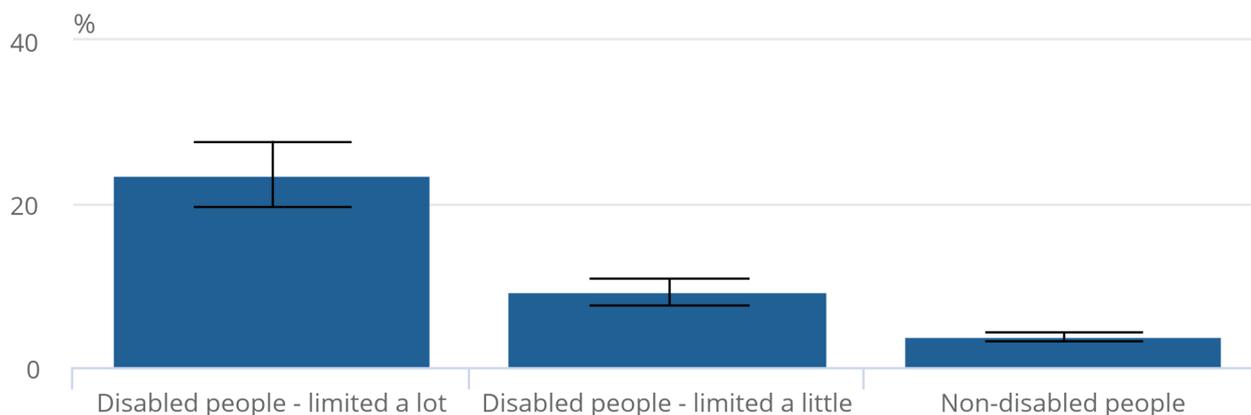
As shown in Figure 6, disabled people who stated that their ability to carry out day-to-day activities is “limited a lot” reported feeling lonely more often (23.6%) compared with disabled people who were “limited a little” (9.2%), a significant difference of 14.4 percentage points. A smaller gap was seen between disabled people who were “limited a little” and non-disabled people (5.4 percentage points – a significant difference).

Figure 6: The proportion of people who felt lonely was highest in disabled people who were limited a lot

Proportion of people who feel lonely "often or always" by impairment severity, aged 16 years and over, England, year ending March 2019

Figure 6: The proportion of people who felt lonely was highest in disabled people who were limited a lot

Proportion of people who feel lonely "often or always" by impairment severity, aged 16 years and over, England, year ending March 2019



Source: Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport – Community and Life Survey

Notes:

1. Lower and upper 95% confidence levels form a confidence interval, which is a measure of the statistical precision of an estimate and shows the range of uncertainty around the calculated estimate. As a general rule, if the confidence interval around one estimate overlaps with the interval around another, we cannot say with certainty that there is more than a chance difference between the two estimates.

In all English regions the proportion of people who felt lonely "often or always" was significantly higher for disabled people than non-disabled people. The highest proportion of disabled people who reported feeling lonely was seen in London (21.2%) and the North East (17.4%)¹. When comparing disabled and non-disabled people, the highest disparity was in London with 16.5 percentage points difference (non-disabled people at 4.7%), compared with 6.7 percentage points in the South East (disabled people: 10.5% and non-disabled people: 3.8%).

More data on loneliness can be found in the [Disability and loneliness dataset](#) published alongside this article.

Estimates related to loneliness for the other UK countries are available from the [Loneliness in Northern Ireland 2019/20](#), [Loneliness \(National Survey for Wales\): April 2019 to March 2020](#) and the [Scottish Household Survey 2019: annual report](#) publications.

Notes for: Loneliness

- Loneliness estimates of disabled people in the North East are based on a small sample size; as such, the estimates and comparisons made with it should be interpreted with caution.

9 . Crime

All crime analysis was carried out using the [Crime Survey for England and Wales \(CSEW\)](#) from the year ending March 2020. For definitions please see the [accompanying methodology article's glossary](#).

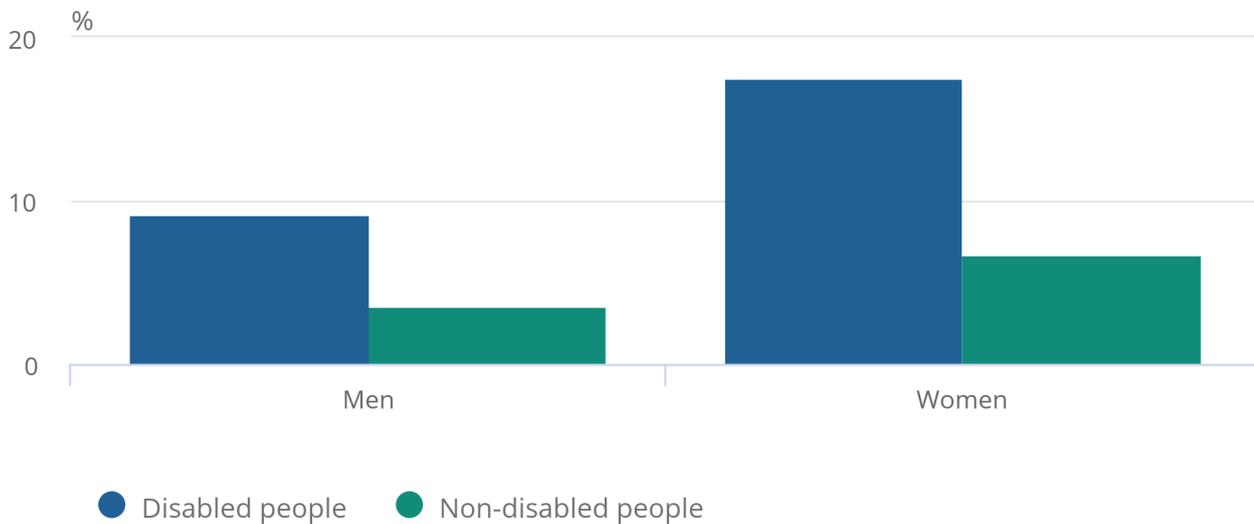
In the year ending March 2020, around 1 in 7 (14.3%) disabled people aged 16 to 59 years experienced any form of domestic abuse in the last year in England and Wales, significantly higher when compared with 1 in 20 (5.1%) for non-disabled people of the same age. Similar proportions for both groups were observed in the year ending March 2019.

Figure 7: Disabled women were more than twice as likely to experience domestic abuse in the last year than non-disabled women

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for people, aged 16 to 59 years, by disability and sex, England and Wales, year ending March 2020

Figure 7: Disabled women were more than twice as likely to experience domestic abuse in the last year than non-disabled women

Prevalence of domestic abuse in the last year for people, aged 16 to 59 years, by disability and sex, England and Wales, year ending March 2020



Source: Office for National Statistics – Crime Survey for England and Wales

Notes:

- The differences (depicted in this chart) between disabled and non-disabled people for each sex are significant. Please refer to the confidence intervals in the Disability and Crime dataset for more information. Confidence intervals are measures of the statistical precision of an estimate and show the range of uncertainty around the calculated estimate. They should be considered when assessing significant differences across groups.

Figure 7 shows that women were more likely to have experienced domestic abuse in the last year than men regardless of disability status in the year ending March 2020. Disabled women (17.5%) were more than twice as likely to experience domestic abuse than non-disabled women (6.7%), a significant difference. While disabled men (9.2%) were significantly less likely to experience domestic abuse than disabled women, they were more than twice as likely to have experienced domestic abuse than non-disabled men (3.6%), a significant difference.

Disabled people were significantly more likely to experience domestic abuse than non-disabled people, regardless of age. Disabled people aged 16 to 24 years were almost three times more likely to have experienced any form of domestic abuse in the last year (19.5%) than non-disabled people of the same age (7.3%).

The experience of domestic abuse also varied with impairment type, though the variability of the estimates indicates comparisons between impairment types should be made with caution. In the year ending March 2020, disabled people aged 16 to 59 years who reported a mental health (20.5%), a social or behavioural (20.0%) or a learning impairment (19.1%) tended to have experienced the highest levels of domestic abuse in the last year.

More data on crime can be found in the [Disability and crime dataset](#) published alongside this article.

The [Domestic Abuse during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#) release provides indicators to assess the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on domestic abuse in England and Wales. Estimates on hate crime related to disability also published for [England and Wales](#), [Scotland](#) and [Northern Ireland](#).

Additional datasets related to crime in England and Wales with breakdowns by disability status are available from the [ONS website](#), with statistics for Scotland produced using [The Scottish crime and justice survey](#), and Northern Ireland using [The Northern Ireland safe community survey](#).

10 . Outcomes for disabled people in the UK data

[Disability and education](#)

Dataset | Released on 18 February 2021

Educational outcomes for disabled people in the UK aged 21 to 64 years, with analysis by age, sex, impairment type, impairment severity, country and region using Annual Population Survey (APS) data.

[Disability and employment](#)

Dataset | Released on 18 February 2021

Employment outcomes for disabled people in the UK aged 16 to 64 years, with analysis by age, sex, impairment type, country, region, type of occupation and working patterns using Annual Population Survey (APS) data.

[Disability and housing](#)

Dataset | Released on 18 February 2021

Housing outcomes for disabled people in the UK aged 16 to 64 years, with analysis by age, sex, impairment type, country and region using Annual Population Survey (APS) data.

[Disability and well-being](#)

Dataset | Released on 18 February 2021

Average well-being outcomes for disabled people in the UK aged 16 to 64 years, with analysis by age, sex, impairment type, impairment severity, country and region using Annual Population Survey (APS) data.

[Disability and crime](#)

Dataset | Released on 18 February 2021

Domestic abuse and sexual assault outcomes for disabled people in England and Wales aged 16 to 59 years, with analysis by age, sex, impairment type, impairment severity, country and region using the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) data.

[Disability and loneliness](#)

Dataset | Released on 18 February 2021

Loneliness outcomes for disabled people in England aged 16 years and over, with analysis by age, sex, impairment severity and region using the Community Life Survey (CLS) data.

[Disability and social participation](#)

Dataset | Released on 18 February 2021

Social participation outcomes for disabled people in England aged 16 years and over, with analysis of participation in civic engagements; social action; volunteering; and groups, clubs or organisations by age, sex, impairment severity and region using the Community Life Survey (CLS) data.

11 . Glossary

For details on all definitions used in this article, please refer to the [accompanying methodology article's glossary](#).

Disability

To define disability in this publication we refer to the [Government Statistical Service \(GSS\) harmonised “core” definition](#). This identifies a person as disabled when they have a physical or mental health condition or illness that has lasted or is expected to last 12 months or more, that reduces their ability to carry-out day-to-day activities.

The GSS definition is designed to reflect the definitions that appear in legal terms in the [Disability Discrimination Act \(DDA\) 1995](#) and the subsequent [Equality Act 2010](#).

The GSS harmonised questions are asked of the respondent in the survey, meaning that disability status is self-reported.

Severity

Disabled people whose ability to carry out day-to-day activities is self-reported as "limited a lot" or "limited a little" by their impairment. Respondents were asked: "Does your condition or illness reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?" with the responses, "yes, a lot" and "yes, a little" being taken to indicate severity of disability.

Impairment

For all analysis using the Annual Population Survey (APS), that is, for employment, education, housing and well-being, the following definition of impairment is used:

An impairment is defined as any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more. Respondents were presented with a list of impairments and then asked to select all and subsequently their "main health problem". The commentary in this release refers to the main health problem. Analysis is limited to those who are also defined as disabled and does not explore where disabled people experienced more than one impairment. For further details see [Volume 3: Detail of Labour Force Survey variables](#).

From January 2020 onwards, the list of impairments in the APS changed because of the addition of autism (including autism spectrum condition, Asperger syndrome) as a possible response option. To include the most detailed list, the analysis of impairment types is based on a selection of data that incorporates this change: APS data collected between January 2020 and June 2020. To enable this, this selection of half year data was reweighted to the UK population. This is considered the latest methodological developments to account for the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) on data collection. As the response options changed, comparison with previous years is not recommended.

The impairments or condition categories compared in this release relate to the categories within the question in the survey. The exception is speech impediment, which has been grouped with the "other" category because of low sample size.

All analysis using the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), the [GSS harmonised principle for impairment](#) is used. Respondents were asked to select all impairments that applied to them.

Statistical significance

The [statistical significance](#) of differences noted within the release are determined based on non-overlapping [confidence intervals](#).

12 . Data sources and quality

Different datasets are used to produce the estimates on outcomes in different areas of life as outlined in Table 1. This section provides a brief introduction on the data sources. The [accompanying methodology article](#) provides more details on the surveys, coverage and strengths and limitations of the analysis.

Table 1: Overview of datasets used in “Outcomes for disabled people in the UK: 2020” release

Areas of life	Data source	Population covered
Education	Annual Population Survey	UK
Employment	Labour Force Survey, Annual Population Survey	UK
Housing	Annual Population Survey	UK
Well-being	Annual Population Survey	UK
Crime	Crime Survey for England and Wales	England and Wales
Social participation	Community Life Survey	England
Loneliness	Community Life Survey	England

Source: Office for National Statistics

Labour Force Survey (LFS)

The [Labour Force Survey \(LFS\)](#) is a UK quarterly household survey of approximately 90,000 individuals each quarter. The survey does not cover communal establishments, except for NHS staff accommodation. Those living in student halls of residence or boarding school are included as part of their family household.

The [LFS performance and quality monitoring reports](#) provide data on response rates and other quality-related issues for the LFS, including breakdowns of response by LFS wave, region and by question-specific response issues.

The [Labour Force Survey Quality and Methodology Information \(QMI\)](#) report provides qualitative information on the various dimensions of data quality, as well as providing a summary of the methods used to compile the output.

Annual Population Survey (APS)

The [Annual Population Survey \(APS\)](#) is an annual survey based on data collected in Wave 1 and Wave 5 on the LFS, combined with an annual local area boost sample run in England, Wales and Scotland.

The survey does not cover communal establishments, except for NHS staff accommodation. Those living in student halls of residence or boarding school are included as part of their family household. The APS dataset contains approximately 300,000 individuals.

Coverage and population of the APS and LFS

Analysis conducted using the APS and the LFS has been restricted to 16- to 64-year-olds in the case of employment, housing and well-being analysis because the survey does not collect data for under 16 years and the disability variable is not robust for those aged over 64 years.

The APS datasets are produced for four different overlapping 12-month periods:

- January to December
- April to March
- July to June
- October to September

Analysis for this publication was conducted for the July 2019 to June 2020 period for most breakdowns. This is with the exception of the impairment's analysis using this survey, for which analysis covered the period January to June 2020 to accommodate a change in the main impairment question.

Impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on APS and LFS data collection and statistics

Because of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, all face-to-face interviewing for the [LFS](#), which feeds into the [APS](#), one of the main data sources used in this release, was suspended and replaced with telephone interviewing. This change in mode for first interviews has changed the level of response and the non-response bias of the survey, affecting interviews from March 2020 onwards.

The change in non-response bias was significantly evident in a change to the housing tenure of the Household Reference Person, with a lower proportion of rented addresses being included and an increase in the proportion of those owned outright by the occupier.

To mitigate the impact of this non-response bias, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has introduced housing tenure into the LFS weighting methodology. Estimates presented in this release have been weighted according to the updated methodology. More information on the weighting methodology can be found in the [Coronavirus and its impact on the Labour Force Survey](#) article on the ONS website. The ONS has also published an article which assesses the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and connected to changes in data collection for the APS on well-being estimates. The ONS continues to examine the non-response bias which may lead to further updates in future.

Please note that LFS and APS responses are weighted to official population estimates and projections that do not currently reflect the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The LFS is not designed to measure changes in the levels of population or long-term international migration. Rates published from the LFS and APS remain robust and reliable, however levels and changes in levels should be used with caution. The ONS is analysing the population totals used in the weighting process and may make adjustments if appropriate in future as outlined in this [blog](#).

Community Life Survey (CLS)

The [Community Life Survey \(CLS\)](#) is a household self-completion survey of approximately 10,000 people aged 16 years and over in England only. It is used to calculate loneliness proportions. The survey can be completed either in a paper or online format; the question regarding disability status is asked online only. Analysis was conducted on the year ending March 2019.

The loneliness and social participation analysis is restricted to people aged 16 years and older and England only as the CLS does not collect data for under 16 years or the other countries in the UK. In each domain, participation refers to any involvement in the 12 months prior to completing the survey. For more detail see the accompanying methodology article.

Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW)

The analysis presented in this release uses data from the [Crime Survey for England and Wales \(CSEW\)](#). This is a face-to-face victimisation survey, which asks approximately 35,000 respondents aged 16 years and over residing in households in England and Wales about their experiences of crime in the 12 months prior to the interview. Individuals residing in group residences (for example, care homes or halls of residence) or other institutions are not included in the CSEW sample. This article focuses on domestic abuse of people aged 16 to 59 years as collected by the CSEW.

A full list of the strengths and limitations of the CSEW can be found in the [Crime in England and Wales QMI](#).

13 . Related links

[Family Resources Survey: financial year 2018/19](#)

Report | Released on 26 March 2020

Results from the Family Resources Survey for financial year 2018 to 2019, providing information on income and circumstances of UK households and families. Including statistics on disability prevalence.

[Households below average income:1994/1995 to 2018/19](#)

Report | Released on 26 March 2020

Statistics on the number and percentage of people living in low income households for financial years 1994 /95 to 2018/19.

[Disability report: Being disabled in Britain](#)

Report | Released on 3 April 2017

A review into disability inequality in Great Britain.