



# **Disability Rights Commission**

**Disability Rights Commission  
Disability Briefing  
June 2005**

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## Introduction

Welcome to the June 2005 issue of the DRC Disability Briefing. Section one of this edition contains an analysis of disabled people's participation in the labour market using Autumn 2004 LFS data, and thus updates the core tables presented in the December Briefing. The time series data will be updated and expanded in the next issue, once the spring 2005 LFS data is released.

Section two of the current issue has not been updated, as we have not received any recent estimates of the disabled population from the Family Resources Survey (FRS).

Section three 'DRC Research projects update' provides a brief overview of recently published DRC research, plus details of how to obtain the full report.

If you have any comments or queries on the content of this current edition or suggestions for future Briefings, please contact Breda Twomey at the DRC by email:  
[Breda.Twomey@drc-gb.org](mailto:Breda.Twomey@drc-gb.org)

The next DRC Disability Briefing will be published in December 2005.

## Definitions of disability used in the LFS

Since spring 1997, the LFS has provided information about disability using the following range of definitions:

**Current DDA disabled:** Includes people who have a long term health problem or disability which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

**Work limiting disabled:** Includes people who have a long-term health problem or disability which affects the kind or amount of paid work which a person might do.

**Long term disabled:** Includes people who meet the criteria for either current DDA or work-limiting definitions of disability (or both – as is often the case) are defined as having a current long-term disability.

Clearly, estimates for the different definitions may vary, and it should be noted that the difference between the DDA definition estimates and those based on work-limiting disabilities may be exaggerated due to people not being able to assess the extent to which their work limiting disability would also affect their ability to carry out normal day to day activities. It follows that including all those with current long term disabilities improves the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the estimates.

**Please note that throughout this briefing, people who are ‘long term disabled’ will be referred to as ‘All disabled’, unless otherwise specified.**

Further information on the disability questions in the LFS is included in the *Technical Note* at the end of this briefing.

## Some Key Facts and Figures

Analysis from the Autumn 2004 LFS indicates that:

- There are 6.8 million disabled people of working age in Britain, one fifth of the total working age population. Fifty two per cent (3.5 million) are men and forty eight per cent (3.3 million) are women.
- Across Britain there are regional variations in the prevalence of disability. The North East of England and Wales have the highest proportions of disabled people, with about one quarter of the working age population in these regions disabled – 26 per cent and 24 per cent respectively. London and the South East have lower than average proportions of disabled people at 17 per cent.
- Disability rates increase with age; whilst 9 per cent of adults aged 16-24 are disabled, this increases to over 40 per cent for the 50 to retirement age group.
- In Autumn 2004, the overall employment rate for disabled people in Britain was 51 per cent, compared with 81 per cent for non disabled people.
- Employment rates vary greatly according to the type of impairment a person has. Disabled people with mental health problems have the lowest employment rates of all impairment categories, at only 21 per cent. For people with learning difficulties, the employment rate is 26 per cent.
- The unemployment rate for disabled people is near twice that for non disabled people, 7 per cent compared with 4 per cent.
- Disabled people are three times more likely to be economically inactive as non disabled people, 45 per cent compared with 15 per cent. However, over one third of inactive disabled people said they would like to work.

- Disabled people in employment are more likely to work in manual and lower occupations, and less likely to work in managerial, professional and high-skilled occupations.
- At £9.52 per hour, the average gross hourly pay of disabled employees is about 10 per cent less than that of non disabled employees (£10.43 per hour).
- Disabled people are still only half as likely as non disabled people to be qualified to degree level and are twice as likely as non disabled people to have no qualification at all.

## Section 1: Autumn 2004 LFS Data

**Table 1: Economic status of disabled people in Britain**

Great Britain, autumn 2004, LFS, not seasonally adjusted.

(Thousands, per cent, £)

	All Disabled	DDA disabled	Work limiting disabled	Not disabled
<b>All people of working age (000s)</b>	<b>6,830</b>	<b>5,704</b>	<b>5,251</b>	<b>28,477</b>
Per cent of total population	19	16	15	81
Per cent from ethnic minority group	7	7	8	10
Per cent women <sup>1</sup>	48	49	47	49
Per cent with no qualifications	26	28	30	11
<b>On state benefits<sup>2</sup> and not in work (000s)</b>	<b>2,457</b>	<b>2,287</b>	<b>2,369</b>	<b>1,182</b>
Per cent of population	36	40	45	4
<b>...would like work and available to start in a fortnight (000s)</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>489</b>
Per cent of population	4	4	5	2
<b>In work (000s)</b>	<b>3,471</b>	<b>2,696</b>	<b>2,147</b>	<b>23,050</b>
Per cent of population	51	47	41	81
<b>Per cent of all in work:</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>87</b>
Self-employed	14	15	12	12
Working part-time	29	30	32	23
In a permanent job	94	95	93	94
<b>Average gross hourly wage (£)</b>	<b>£9.52</b>	<b>£9.51</b>	<b>£9.10</b>	<b>£10.43</b>
<b>ILO unemployed<sup>3</sup> (000s)</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>1,075</b>
ILO unemployment rate (%)	7	6	9	4
Per cent of all ILO unemployed who are unemployed for a year or more	28	28	28	17
<b>Inactive (000s)</b>	<b>3,096</b>	<b>2,822</b>	<b>2,882</b>	<b>4,352</b>
Per cent of total population	45	49	55	15
<b>Inactive - not in work, would like work<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>912</b>	<b>831</b>	<b>861</b>	<b>1,020</b>
Per cent of total population	13	15	16	4

Source: Labour Force Survey

Base: All people of working age (men 16-64, women 16-59)

<sup>1</sup> Lower numbers may reflect the fact that women aged 60-64 are not included in the working age population.

<sup>2</sup> This includes state pension, allowances or National Insurance credits, but excludes child benefit.

<sup>3</sup> ILO refers to international labour organisation.

<sup>4</sup> Not included whether available for work or not.

## Table 2: Economic status of disabled people of working age in England, Scotland and Wales

Great Britain, autumn 2004, LFS, not seasonally adjusted.

(Thousands and per cent)

	Great Britain	England	Scotland	Wales
<b>All long term disabled</b>	<b>6,830</b>	<b>5,763</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>418</b>
Economically Active	3,734	3,210	330	193
<b>Economic Activity Rate (%)</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>46</b>
In employment	3,471	2,986	307	178
<b>Employment rate (%)</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>43</b>
ILO unemployed	263	224	24	15
<b>Unemployment rate (%)</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
Economic inactivity	3,096	2,553	318	225
<b>Not disabled</b>	<b>28,477</b>	<b>24,672</b>	<b>2,477</b>	<b>1,328</b>
Economically Active	24,790	20,827	2,161	1,137
<b>Economic Activity Rate (%)</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>86</b>
In employment	23,050	19,912	2,048	1,089
<b>Employment rate (%)</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>82</b>
ILO unemployed	1,075	915	113	48
<b>Unemployment rate (%)</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
Economic inactivity	4,352	3,845	316	191

Source: Labour Force Survey

Base: All people of working age (men 16-64, women 16-59)

**Table 3: Disabled people by age and ethnic group**

Great Britain, autumn 2004, LFS, not seasonally adjusted.

(Thousands)

	<b>All aged 16-59/64</b>	<b>16-24</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-49</b>	<b>50-59/64</b>
<b>All disabled</b>	<b>6,830</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>933</b>	<b>2,318</b>	<b>2,966</b>
<b>White</b>	6,316 92%	559	844	2,113	2,800
<b>Mixed</b>	45 1%	11	*	18	*
<b>Asian or Asian British</b>	262 4%	20	47	95	101
<b>Black or Black British</b>	129 2%	16	20	62	31
<b>Chinese</b>	11 0%	*	*	*	*
<b>Other Ethnic minority groups</b>	64 1%	*	13	25	21

(Per cent)

	<b>All aged 16- 59/64 = 100%</b>	<b>16-24</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-49</b>	<b>50-59/64</b>
<b>All disabled</b>	6,830	9	14	34	43
<b>White</b>	6,316	9	13	33	44
<b>Mixed</b>	45	25	*	40	*
<b>Asian or Asian British</b>	262	8	18	36	38
<b>Black or Black British</b>	129	12	16	48	24
<b>Chinese</b>	11	*	*	*	*
<b>Other</b>	64	*	20	38	32

Source: Labour Force Survey

Base: All people of working age (men 16-64, women 16-59)

\* Sample size too small for a reliable estimate

## Table 4: Highest Qualification attained and employment rates of disabled and non-disabled people

Great Britain, autumn 2004, LFS, not seasonally adjusted.

(Thousands and per cent)

	Disabled		Not disabled	
	Thousands	Employment rate (%)	Thousands	Employment rate (%)
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	6,830	51	28,477	81
<b>Degree or equivalent</b>	697	75	5,563	89
<b>Higher education</b>	527	69	2,502	89
<b>GCE A Level or equivalent</b>	1,440	61	6,932	82
<b>GCSE grades A-C or equivalent</b>	1,342	56	6,809	78
<b>Other qualifications</b>	1,009	50	3,421	78
<b>No qualification</b>	1,776	24	3,031	66

Source: Labour Force Survey

Base: All people of working age (men 16-64, women 16-59)

<sup>1</sup> The numbers in this column do not add up to the total as there is a small proportion of disabled people for whom the highest qualifications not known.

## Table 5: Proportion of disabled and non disabled people with no qualifications by age group

Great Britain, autumn 2004, LFS, not seasonally adjusted.

(Thousands and per cent)

	Total	16-24	25-34	35-49	50-59/64
<b>All persons</b>	<b>4,807</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>644</b>	<b>1,545</b>	<b>1,972</b>
Per cent of population	14	10	9	12	22
<b>Long term disabled</b>	1,776	131	167	536	941
	26	21	18	23	32
<b>Not disabled</b>	3,031	516	476	1,009	1,031
	11	9	7	10	18

Source: Labour Force Survey

Base: All people of working age (men 16-64, women 16-59)

**Table 6: Employment and unemployment rates by main type of impairment**

Great Britain, autumn 2004, LFS, not seasonally adjusted.

(Thousands and per cent)

	Number with this as main impairment (% of all disabled)	Number in employment and employment rate	Number on state benefits <sup>1</sup> and not in work (% of total)
<b>All disabled</b>	6,830 19	3,471 51	2,436 36
<b>Problems with ...arms, hands<sup>2</sup></b>	391 6	207 53	129 33
<b>... legs or feet</b>	716 10	340 47	299 42
<b>... back or neck</b>	1,117 16	545 49	426 38
<b>Difficulty in seeing</b>	109 2	59 54	36 33
<b>Difficulty in hearing</b>	101 1	66 66	19 18
<b>Speech impediment</b>	* *	* *	* *
<b>Skin conditions, allergies</b>	113 2	74 66	20 17
<b>Chest breathing problems</b>	807 12	529 66	168 21
<b>Heart, blood pressure, circulation</b>	826 12	482 58	225 27
<b>Stomach, liver, kidney, digestion</b>	340 5	188 55	107 31
<b>Diabetes</b>	388 6	266 68	76 19
<b>Mental illness</b>	673 10	138 21	446 66
<b>Epilepsy</b>	153 2	71 46	64 41
<b>Learning difficulties</b>	161 2	42 26	98 61
<b>Progressive illness n.e.c.<sup>3</sup></b>	325 5	140 43	150 46
<b>Other problems, disabilities</b>	565 8	308 55	170 30

Source: Labour Force Survey

Base: All people of working age (men 16-64, women 16-59)

<sup>1</sup> This includes state pension, allowances or National Insurance credits, and excludes child benefit.

<sup>2</sup> Including arthritis or rheumatism.

<sup>3</sup> Progressive illness not elsewhere classified (e.g. cancer, multiple sclerosis, symptomatic HIV, Parkinson's disease, muscular dystrophy).

**Table 7: Employment and unemployment rates of disabled people by region**

Great Britain, autumn 2004, LFS, not seasonally adjusted.

(Thousands and per cent)

	<b>Total number of disabled people (000s) and as a per cent of local population</b>	<b>In employment (000s) and employment rate (%)</b>	<b>On state benefits<sup>1</sup> and not in work (000s and as a % of total)</b>
<b>All disabled</b>	<b>6,830</b> 19	<b>3,471</b> 51	<b>2,457</b> 36
<b>North East</b>	396 26	161 41	184 46
<b>North West and Merseyside</b>	867 21	402 46	361 42
<b>Yorkshire and Humberside</b>	642 21	327 51	231 36
<b>East Midlands</b>	531 21	276 52	177 33
<b>West Midlands</b>	609 19	326 53	207 34
<b>Eastern</b>	521 16	309 59	141 27
<b>London</b>	802 17	342 43	330 41
<b>South East</b>	825 17	511 62	203 25
<b>South West</b>	569 19	332 58	167 29
<b>Wales</b>	418 24	178 43	183 44
<b>Scotland</b>	648 21	307 47	274 42

Source: Labour Force Survey

Base: All people of working age (men 16-64, women 16-59)

<sup>1</sup> This includes state pension, allowances or National Insurance credits, and excludes child benefit.

## Table 8: Disabled people in employment by occupation

Great Britain, autumn 2004, LFS, not seasonally adjusted.

(Thousands and per cent)

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Disabled</b>	<b>Not disabled</b>
<b>All in employment</b>	26,520 100	3,471 100	23,050 100
<b>Managers and Senior Officials</b>	3,998 15	481 14	3,516 15
<b>Professional occupations</b>	3,287 12	343 10	2,944 13
<b>Associate Professional and Technical</b>	3,685 14	415 12	3,270 14
<b>Administrative and Secretarial</b>	3,304 12	459 13	2,845 12
<b>Skilled Trades Occupations</b>	3,062 12	413 12	2,649 11
<b>Personal Service Occupations</b>	2,008 8	310 9	1,698 7
<b>Sales and Customer Service Occupations</b>	2,085 8	272 8	1,812 8
<b>Process Plant and Machine Operatives</b>	1,989 8	302 9	1,687 7
<b>Elementary Occupations</b>	3,042 11	464 13	2,578 11

Source: Labour Force Survey

Base: All people of working age (men 16-64, women 16-59)

## Table 9: Disabled people in employment by industry sector

Great Britain, autumn 2004, LFS, not seasonally adjusted.

(Thousands and per cent)

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Disabled</b>	<b>Not disabled</b>
<b>All in employment</b>	<b>26,520</b> <b>100</b>	<b>3,471</b> <b>100</b>	<b>23,050</b> <b>100</b>
<b>Agriculture &amp; fishing</b>	312 1	42 1	270 1
<b>Energy &amp; water</b>	270 1	32 1	238 1
<b>Manufacturing</b>	3,617 14	457 13	3,161 14
<b>Construction</b>	2,131 8	284 8	1,848 8
<b>Distribution hotels &amp; restaurants</b>	5,195 20	662 19	4,533 20
<b>Transport &amp; communication</b>	1,816 7	256 7	1,559 7
<b>Banking, finance &amp; insurance etc</b>	4,162 16	462 13	3,700 16
<b>Public admin, education &amp; health</b>	7,354 28	1,050 30	6,304 27
<b>Other services</b>	1,592 6	213 6	1,379 6

Source: Labour Force Survey

Base: All people of working age (men 16-64, women 16-59)

**Table 10: Labour market status of disabled people and benefit receipt<sup>1</sup>**

Great Britain, autumn 2004 LFS, not seasonally adjusted.

(Thousands and per cent)

	Long-term disabled		Not disabled	
	Number	% of total population	Number	% of total population
<b>Total number</b>	<b>6,830</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>28,477</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>IN WORK</b>				
<b>Total number</b>	<b>3,471</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>23,050</b>	<b>81</b>
Not on state benefits	2,483	36	17,574	62
Receiving state benefits	453	7	1,224	4
...Receiving sickness/ disability benefits	206	3	86	*
...Receiving Incapacity Benefit (IB)	62	1	*	*
<b>NOT IN WORK</b>				
<b>Total number</b>	<b>3,359</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>5,427</b>	<b>19</b>
Not on state benefits	658	10	3,039	11
<b>Receiving state benefits</b>	<b>2,457</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>1,182</b>	<b>4</b>
...and would like work	885	13	695	2
...and available for work	289	4	489	2
...and would not like work	1,571	23	486	2
<b>Receiving sickness/ disability benefit</b>	<b>1,869</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>1</b>
...and would like work	593	9	55	0.2
...and available for work	118	2	21	0.1
...and would not like work	1,276	19	93	0.3
<b>Receiving Incapacity Benefit (IB)</b>	<b>1,247</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>0.1</b>
...and would like work	412	6	19	0.1
...and available for work	74	1	*	*
...and would not like work	834	12	14	0.0

Source: Labour Force Survey

Base: All people of working age (men 16-64, women 16-59)

<sup>1</sup> This includes state pension, allowances or National Insurance credits, and excludes child benefit.

### **Table 11: Average gross hourly pay (£) for disabled and non disabled employees**

Great Britain, autumn 2004 LFS, not seasonally adjusted.

(£)

	<b>All Disabled</b>	<b>Not Disabled</b>
<b>Total (£)</b>	<b>9.52</b>	<b>10.43</b>
Men	10.63	11.62
Women	8.4	9.14

Source: Labour Force Survey

Base: All people of working age (men 16-64, women 16-59)

## **Section 2: Recent disability estimates from the Family Resources Survey (FRS)**

We have received no further FRS disability estimates since the data included in section two of the DRC Disability Briefing December 2004

<http://www.drc.org.uk/publicationsandreports/research.asp>. As soon as we receive further updates we will publish them in the Disability Briefing.

## **Section 3: DRC Research Project Update**

The following section presents an overview of DRC research completed since January 2005. It starts with the most recently completed research.

### **Recently Completed DRC Research**

#### **NEW Literature review on curriculum and qualification design**

Published in June 2005

A GB-wide review of the literature was undertaken in 2004/05 by the Institute of Education for the Disability Rights Commission (DRC) in order to review and gather evidence on the impact of systems, policies and practices of the curriculum, its assessment and examinations on disabled learners. The aim of the review was to determine how effective the current curriculum and examination system is at developing, identifying and consolidating the competencies, skills and knowledge of disabled learners; to research the effectiveness of other curriculum and examination systems; and to identify the key contributing factors of effective systems, including examples of policy and practice internationally.

The DRC has also produced a summary paper to accompany the research report, which includes the key findings and a series of recommendations.

Both the full report and the summary can be viewed and downloaded from the DRC website at

<http://www.drc.org.uk/publicationsandreports/research.asp>

#### **NEW Research study on the experiences of disabled pupils and students and their parents/carers**

Published June 2005

Phase One of this research, undertaken in 2004/05 was a qualitative, exploratory study on the views and experiences of disabled pupils and students and their families in Great Britain. The full report can be viewed and downloaded from the DRC website at

<http://www.drc.org.uk/publicationsandreports/research.asp>.

A summary of this research will shortly be published on the DRC website.

Phase Two should start in June 2005 and be completed by Summer 2006. This project will build on Phase One, as well as previous DRC and other research, and will aim to provide evidence of key issues for young disabled people and their parents and carers in relation to the perceived impact of the DDA Part 4 duties and to education provision generally.

## Technical Note

### The Labour Force Survey Questions on Disability

The focus of and number of questions in the health and disability module of the LFS changed in the spring 1997 to reflect the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA). Since spring 1997 all working age LFS respondents have been asked:

- Do you have any health problems or disabilities that you expect will last more than a year?  
If they answer 'yes' to this question, they are also asked to say what kind(s) of health problem or disability(ies) they have, based on a list read to them by the interviewer.

If they then answer '**yes**' to the following question:

- Does this (do these) health problem(s) or disability(ies) (when taken singly or together) substantially limit your ability to carry out normal day to day activities?

OR

- They said that they had the following health problems: progressive illnesses not included elsewhere (e.g. cancer, multiple sclerosis, symptomatic HIV, Parkinson's disease, muscular dystrophy)

Then they are defined as having a **current DDA disability**.

People whose health problem(s) or disability(ies) are expected to last more than a year are also asked the following questions:

- 'Does this health problem affect the KIND of work that you might do?'
- '..... or the AMOUNT of paid work you might do?'

If the respondent fulfils either of these criteria they are defined as having a **work-limiting disability**.

Those people who meet the criteria for either current DDA or work-limiting definitions of disability (or both – as is usually the case) are defined as having a **current long-term disability**.

## **Further information:**

If you have any queries relating to this briefing, please contact Breda Twomey by email [Breda.Twomey@drc-gb.org](mailto:Breda.Twomey@drc-gb.org).