Social and economic outcomes for disabled people
Findings from the 2013 Disability Survey
# Contents

List of tables and figures ........................................................................................................4

1 Purpose and key points ........................................................................................................5
    Purpose ...............................................................................................................................5
    Key points ..........................................................................................................................5

2 About the Disability Survey .................................................................................................6

3 Labour force status and work .............................................................................................7
    Labour force status ..........................................................................................................7
    Employment status .........................................................................................................7
    Occupation .......................................................................................................................8

4 Income ..................................................................................................................................9
    Total personal income ....................................................................................................9

5 Education ..........................................................................................................................10
    Highest qualification .......................................................................................................10

6 Safety, crime, and discrimination .......................................................................................11
    Feelings of safety ............................................................................................................11
    Experience of crime ........................................................................................................11
    Experience of discrimination ..........................................................................................11

7 Social contact and participation in community ................................................................13
    Contact with family and friends ....................................................................................13
    Participation in leisure activities ....................................................................................13
    Feelings of loneliness ......................................................................................................14

8 Overall well-being .............................................................................................................15
    Self-assessed health status ..............................................................................................15
    Overall life satisfaction ..................................................................................................15

References and further reading ............................................................................................17
    References .......................................................................................................................17
    Further reading ...............................................................................................................17

Appendix 1: Methodology .....................................................................................................18
    About the New Zealand Disability Survey ....................................................................18
    Data used in this report ...................................................................................................18

Appendix 2: Definitions of terms used in this report ...........................................................19
List of tables and figures

List of tables
1 Work and labour force status, disabled and non-disabled adults aged 15 years and over .................................................................................................................................................. 7

List of figures
1 Occupation of employed adults 15 years and over, by disability status ............... 8
2 Total annual personal income for adults 15 years and over, by disability status .... 9
3 Highest educational qualification for adults 15 years and over, by disability status .. 10
4 Percentage of adults who were victims of crime in last 12 months, by disability status ........................................................................................................................................... 11
5 Frequency of discrimination experienced by adults in last 12 months, by disability status ........................................................................................................................................... 12
6 Percentage of adults who felt lonely in the last four weeks, by age group and disability status ........................................................................................................................................... 14
7 Self-assessed health status, by disability status ................................................................. 15
8 Overall life satisfaction for disabled adults 15 years and over, by age group .......... 16
1 Purpose and key points

Purpose

Social and economic outcomes for disabled people compares disabled and non-disabled people across a range of social and economic characteristics. We used the findings from the 2013 New Zealand Disability Survey to examine various life aspects such as employment, income, education, safety, social contact, and overall well-being.

Key points

In 2013:

- The labour force participation rate for disabled adults was 50 percent, compared with 76 percent for non-disabled adults.
- 45 percent of disabled adults were employed compared with 72 percent of non-disabled adults. Full-time work was more common among non-disabled adults.
- 64 percent of disabled adults had an annual gross income of $30,000 or lower, compared with 45 percent of non-disabled adults. In contrast, only 18 percent of disabled adults received an annual income higher than $50,000 compared with 33 percent of non-disabled adults.
- Disabled people were less likely to hold a formal qualification, with 67 percent holding a school or tertiary qualification. This compared with 85 percent of non-disabled adults.
- Disabled adults were less likely than non-disabled adults to go out after dark alone and, when they did so, they were less likely to feel safe.
- Discrimination was experienced by more disabled adults than non-disabled adults and was also experienced more often by disabled people.
- 38 percent of disabled adults said they had felt lonely, at least occasionally, in the past four weeks, compared with 29 percent of non-disabled adults.
- Disabled adults and children were less likely to participate in many popular leisure activities than their non-disabled peers.
- 10 percent of disabled people said their health was excellent compared with 33 percent of non-disabled people.
- On a scale of 0–10, disabled adults were less likely to report a life satisfaction score greater than 8 (55 percent). This compared with 72 percent of non-disabled adults.
2 About the Disability Survey

Since 1996, the New Zealand Disability Survey has been carried out in the same year as the Census of Population and Dwellings. It is the official source of information on disability prevalence in New Zealand.

Disability is experienced by people with impairments when they are limited in carrying out everyday activities, or are restricted in accessing places, that others take for granted.

These limitations may be due to the physical characteristics of the environment in which disabled people live or the attitudes they encounter. Disabled people may be seriously disadvantaged by exclusion, and unable to participate in society on an equal basis with others.

The Disability Survey allows us to compare disabled and non-disabled people across selected social and economic outcomes. Understanding these aspects of the lives of disabled people is fundamental to New Zealand’s commitment, under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ‘to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity’ (United Nations, 2006).

This report updates information from earlier surveys on disabled people’s labour force participation, personal income, and educational achievement. The 2013 Disability Survey provides data on a range of social outcomes not collected in earlier surveys and, as a result, information in this report includes:

- participation in leisure activities
- contact with family and friends
- feelings of loneliness
- experience of crime victimisation and discrimination
- self-assessed health and well-being.

A set of Excel tables on our website accompanies this report and provides more detailed data.

See 2013 Disability Survey: Social and economic outcomes tables
3 Labour force status and work

Labour force status
The labour force includes people who are employed, and those who are unemployed and actively looking for work.

In 2013, half (50 percent) of disabled adults 15 years and over were in the labour force, compared with three-quarters (76 percent) of non-disabled adults. Lower rates of labour force participation by disabled people were evident for both men and women and for all of the three age groups for which data are available (15–44, 45–64, and 65+).

Within both the disabled and non-disabled populations, men had higher rates of labour force participation than women and labour force participation rates fall after the age of 65.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Work and labour force status</th>
<th>Disabled</th>
<th>Non-disabled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work and labour force status</td>
<td>Number (000)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed full-time</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>1,415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed part-time</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total employed</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>1,816</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total labour force</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>1,918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in the labour force</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total working-age population</td>
<td>917</td>
<td>2,530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment rate</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour force participation rate</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Employment status
Disabled adults were much less likely than non-disabled adults to be employed (45 percent compared with 72 percent). Among those who were employed, disabled adults were less likely than non-disabled adults to work full-time (70 percent compared with 78 percent for non-disabled). These patterns were consistent across both sexes and for each of the main age groups.

Within both the disabled and non-disabled populations, men were more likely than women to be employed, and more likely to be in full-time employment.

Unemployment rates were considerably higher among disabled adults – 9 percent compared with 5 percent for non-disabled adults. Within the disabled population, those aged 15–44 were more likely to be unemployed than those aged 45+ (14 percent compared with 6 percent, respectively).
Occupation

Disabled and non-disabled workers had similar occupational profiles, with professionals and managers being the largest occupational groups for both disabled and non-disabled workers. However, disabled workers were less likely than non-disabled worker to be employed in these occupations: 35 percent of employed disabled people worked in professional or managerial occupations compared with 44 percent of non-disabled.

Disabled people were more likely to work in low-skilled occupations. Labourers and machine operators and drivers made up 21 percent of the employed disabled workforce compared with 15 percent for non-disabled people.

Within the disabled population, men were more likely than women to be employed as:

- technicians and trades workers (21 percent compared with 5 percent for women)
- machine operators and drivers (11 percent compared with 3 percent for women)
- labourers (17 percent compared with 9 percent for women).

Compared with disabled men, disabled women were more likely to be employed as:

- clerical and administrative workers (21 percent compared with 5 percent for men)
- community and personal service workers (14 percent compared with 4 percent for men)

These differences between men and women were consistent with those in the non-disabled workforce.

Figure 1

Occupation[1] for employed adults 15 years and over
By disability status
2013

1. Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO V1.1).

Source: Statistics New Zealand
4 Income

Total personal income

Total personal income includes gross income from all sources and relates to the year ended 31 March 2013.

Disabled adults tend to have lower incomes than non-disabled adults. In 2013, 64 percent of disabled adults (15 years and over) received an annual income of $30,000 or lower, compared with 45 percent of non-disabled adults. Only 18 percent of disabled adults received an annual income higher than $50,000 compared with 33 percent of non-disabled adults.

This pattern partly reflects the older age profile and lower employment rates among disabled people, with many being dependent on New Zealand Superannuation or government benefits. Among the employed, higher rates of part-time employment and over-representation in lower-skilled occupations also contribute to income disparities.

In both the disabled and non-disabled populations, men received higher annual incomes than women. Among disabled people, 71 percent of women received an annual income of $30,000 or lower compared with 55 percent of men. Conversely, 24 percent of men received an annual income higher than $50,000 compared with just 13 percent of women.

Lower incomes were most common among older people, with over three-quarters (76 percent) of disabled adults aged 65+ receiving an annual income of $30,000 or lower, compared with 60 percent of non-disabled adults in the same age group.

Figure 2

Total annual personal income for adults 15 years and over
By disability status
2013

Source: Statistics New Zealand
5 Education

Highest qualification

Disabled adults were less likely than non-disabled adults to have formal educational qualifications. In 2013, 67 percent of disabled adults held a formal qualification, compared with 85 percent of non-disabled adults. The gap was particularly evident at the level of university qualifications, with just 12 percent of disabled adults having a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared with 25 percent of non-disabled adults.

The educational profile of disabled people is reflected in their over-representation in lower-skilled occupations.

Figure 3

![Highest educational qualification for adults 15 years and over](chart)

Percent of adults

- **Level 1-6 qualification**: 50% (Disabled), 65% (Non-disabled)
- **Bachelor’s degree or higher**: 12% (Disabled), 25% (Non-disabled)

Source: Statistics New Zealand

Among disabled adults there was little difference between men and women in terms of educational attainment. However, a considerable difference by age group was evident. Those aged 65+ were most likely to hold no formal qualification (42 percent) compared with 31 percent of those aged 45–64, and 24 percent of those aged 15–44. Disabled adults aged 65+ were also the least likely to hold university qualifications (8 percent compared with 14 percent of 15–44-year-olds and 14 percent of 45–64-year-olds).

This pattern of lower levels of qualifications in the older age groups mirrors that in the non-disabled population, although disabled adults tend to be less qualified than non-disabled across all age groups.
6 Safety, crime, and discrimination

Feelings of safety

Regardless of disabled status, almost all adults said they felt safe in their homes alone during the day or after dark. Similarly, almost all adults said they felt safe in their neighbourhood during the day.

It is when they’re out alone in their neighbourhood after dark that people do not always feel safe. Disabled adults were less likely to go out after dark alone and were less likely to feel safe when they did so (78 percent compared with 86 percent of non-disabled adults).

Among both disabled and non-disabled adults, women were less likely than men to feel safe or very safe when alone after dark, particularly when out in their neighbourhood. Sixty-seven percent of disabled women felt safe or very safe when out alone in the neighbourhood after dark, compared with 78 percent of non-disabled women.

Experience of crime

Twelve percent of disabled adults said they had been the victim of crime in the past 12 months, including 4 percent who had experienced violent crime. These figures were slightly higher than those for non-disabled adults (10 percent and 2 percent, respectively).

Within the disabled population, the experience of crime victimisation by men and women was similar. However, older adults were less likely to have experienced crime than younger adults – just 6 percent of those aged 65+ were victims of any crime in the previous 12 months.

Figure 4

Percentage of adults who were victims of crime in last 12 months
By disability status
2013

Experience of discrimination

Most disabled adults (86 percent) said they did not experience discrimination in the previous 12 months. However:

- 2 percent experienced discrimination once during that period
- 4 percent experienced discrimination two or three times
- 8 percent experienced three or more instances of discrimination.
Disabled adults were more likely to say they experienced discrimination in the past 12 months (14 percent compared with 9 percent of non-disabled) including 8 percent who said they experienced discrimination three or more times (compared with 4 percent for non-disabled).

The difference in experience of discrimination between disabled and non-disabled adults was driven by the experience of adults under 65 years. Twenty percent of disabled adults under 65 years old experienced discrimination in the past 12 months, compared with 10 percent for non-disabled in this age group. There was no evidence of any difference between disabled and non-disabled adults aged 65+ in the experience of discrimination.

**Figure 5**

**Frequency of discrimination experienced by adults in last 12 months**

*By disability status*

2013

Within the disabled population, there was no evidence of difference between men and women in the experience of discrimination. However, older disabled adults aged 65+ were less likely to experience discrimination (4 percent) than younger disabled adults under 65 years (20 percent).
7 Social contact and participation in community

Contact with family and friends
Regardless of disability status, most adults said that in the past four weeks they had contact with family and friends they don’t live with.

For disabled adults:

- 83 percent had face-to-face contact with family
- 92 percent had non-face-to-face contact with family
- 90 percent had face-to-face contact with friends
- 87 percent had non-face-to-face contact with friends.

Satisfaction with the amount of contact they had was similar for disabled and non-disabled adults:

- 72 percent of disabled adults and 74 percent of non-disabled said they had ‘about the right’ amount of contact with family
- 75 percent of both disabled adults and non-disabled said they had ‘about the right’ amount of contact with friends.

Disabled women were less likely to have ‘about the right’ amount of contact with family compared with non-disabled women (72 percent and 76 percent, respectively)

The proportion of disabled adults for whom contact with family was ‘about right’ increased with age (63 percent for 15–44 age group, 69 percent for 45–64, and 82 percent for 65+). These age differences are similar to those found for contact with friends.

Participation in leisure activities

Leisure activities for children
The most common leisure activities for disabled children were:

- going out with family or friends in the last four weeks (93 percent)
- visiting friends in the last four weeks (78 percent)
- going away on holiday in the last 12 months (76 percent).

Non-disabled children were more likely to participate in leisure activities than disabled children. The exception was for belonging to a club, such as Girl Guides or Scouts, where there was no evidence of difference between disabled and non-disabled children.

The biggest differences between disabled and non-disabled children were for:

- participating in a team sport (47 percent compared with 63 percent for non-disabled)
- doing other physical activity such as swimming or gymnastics (53 percent compared with 65 percent for non-disabled)
- visiting friends (78 percent compared with 92 percent for non-disabled).
Leisure activities for adults

The most common leisure activities for disabled adults were:

- going to a café, restaurant, or pub in the last four weeks (71 percent)
- going away on holiday in last 12 months (53 percent)
- doing voluntary work in the last four weeks (34 percent).

Disabled adults were less likely to participate in most leisure activities than non-disabled adults. The exception was voluntary work where there was no evidence of difference between the participation rates for disabled and non-disabled adults.

The biggest differences between disabled and non-disabled adults were for:

- going away on holiday in the last 12 months (53 percent compared with 72 percent for non-disabled)
- playing sport (20 percent compared with 38 percent for non-disabled).

Feelings of loneliness

Disabled adults were more likely than non-disabled adults to say they had felt lonely, at least occasionally, in the past four weeks (38 percent compared with 29 percent of non-disabled).

Regardless of disability status, women were more likely to feel lonely at least occasionally than men:

- 43 percent of disabled women felt lonely compared with 34 percent of disabled men
- 32 percent of non-disabled women felt lonely compared with 26 percent of non-disabled men

Younger adults were more likely than older adults to report feeling lonely in the past four weeks, and this was particularly so for disabled adults. Of disabled adults, 53 percent of those aged 15–44 said they had felt lonely, compared with 35 percent of those aged 45–64 and 29 percent of those aged 65+.

Figure 6

Percentage of adults who felt lonely in the last four weeks

By age group and disability status

2013

Source: Statistics New Zealand
8 Overall well-being

Self-assessed health status

Disabled people were far less likely to say they had very good or excellent health – only 10 percent said their health was excellent compared with 33 percent of non-disabled people.

Disabled people were more likely than non-disabled to say their health was good or fair/poor. Over a quarter (29 percent) rated their health fair or poor compared with only 4 percent of non-disabled people. These patterns were similar for men and women.

Within the disabled population, there is no evidence of any difference between males and females in terms of self-assessed health.

Figure 7

Self-assessed health status
By disability status
2013

An overall health status rating of excellent was more likely for disabled children (29 percent) than disabled adults 15+ (8 percent). An overall health status rating of fair or poor was less likely for disabled children (14 percent) than disabled adults 15+ (30 percent).

Overall life satisfaction

Life satisfaction is measured on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is the lowest and 10 is the highest level of satisfaction.

While the majority of adults rated their overall life satisfaction at 8 or higher, disabled adults were far less likely than non-disabled adults to report this (55 percent for disabled compared with 72 percent for non-disabled).

Disabled adults were also more likely than non-disabled to report an overall life satisfaction below 5 (7 percent compared with 2 percent of non-disabled). This pattern was similar for men and women.
Social and economic outcomes for disabled people: Findings from the 2013 Disability Survey

Figure 8

Overall life satisfaction for disabled adults 15 years and over
By age group
2013

Compared with younger disabled adults, those aged 65+ were less likely to rate their overall life satisfaction score as below 5 (4 percent) and more likely to rate their overall life satisfaction as 8 or above (67 percent).

Source: Statistics New Zealand

1. Overall life satisfaction is a self-assessed measure of how a person felt about their life as a whole on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is completely dissatisfied and 10 is completely satisfied.
References and further reading

References


Further reading

See the following publications for more information about the Disability Survey.


Appendix 1: Methodology

About the New Zealand Disability Survey

The New Zealand Disability Survey is currently the most comprehensive source of information about disabled people living in New Zealand. Statistics NZ has conducted a disability survey after every census since 1996.

The 2013 Disability Survey was run from July to October 2013, with a sample of 23,000 children and adults living in private households or group homes (of fewer than five people), and approximately 1,000 adults living in residential care facilities. The outcomes information in this report was not collected for adults living in residential care facilities.

The objective of the 2013 Disability Survey was to answer the following research questions.

1. What is the prevalence of disability in New Zealand, and how does it vary across key subgroups in the population, defined on the basis of age group, sex, and ethnic group?
2. To what extent do the social and economic outcomes of disabled people differ from those of non-disabled people? How do outcomes vary between different groups within the disabled population?
3. To what extent are the needs of disabled people currently met? What level and type of support do they need to perform daily activities?
4. What factors facilitate or hinder the participation of disabled people in important life areas (learning opportunities, paid work, civic society)?
5. Who are the main carers of disabled people and what types of support do they provide?

Data used in this report

This report uses data from the 2013 Disability Survey and the 2013 Census of Population and Dwellings.

To shorten the length of interviews, some of a respondent’s census data was added to their responses from the Disability Survey. This information includes labour force, income, educational qualifications, and occupation.

Information collected in the survey is self-reported or reported on behalf of a disabled person by their parent or main caregiver. All outcomes information for children is reported by either a parent or main caregiver.
Appendix 2: Definitions of terms used in this report

**Adult:** a person who is usually resident in New Zealand and is aged 15 years or over.

**Child:** a person who is usually resident in New Zealand and is below 15 years of age.

**Crime:** includes damage to personal property, theft, assault, and threats. A violent crime is when violence is used, or there is a threat of violence.

**Disabled person:** someone with an impairment that had a long-term, limiting effect on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities. ‘Long-term’ is defined as six months or longer. ‘Limiting effect’ means a restriction or lack of ability to perform. People were not considered to have a disability if an assistive device (such as glasses or crutches) eliminated their impairment.

**Discrimination:** to be discriminated against means to be treated unfairly or differently from other people.

**Employed:** People in the working-age population who, during the week ended 3 March 2013, did at least one of the following:

- worked for pay, profit, or income for an hour or more
- worked without pay in a family business or family farm
- usually worked in a job, business, or farm but were not working during the week ended 3 March 2013 for some reason.

**Employed full-time:** usually working 30 or more hours per week.

**Employed part-time:** usually working fewer than 30 hours per week.

**Employment rate:** the number of employed people as a percentage of the number of people in the working-age population.

**Labour force:** people in the working-age population who during the week ended 3 March 2013 were either 'employed' or 'unemployed'.

**Labour force participation rate:** the number or people in the labour force as a percentage of the number in the working-age population.

**Not in the labour force:** people of working age who were neither employed nor unemployed. This includes those who: were retired; had personal or family responsibilities, such as unpaid housework and childcare; attended at least one educational institution; were permanently unable to work; were temporarily unavailable for work in the week ended 3 March 2013; were not actively seeking work.

**Unemployed:** people in the working-age population who, during the week ended 3 March 2013, were without a paid job and:

- were available for work and had actively sought work in the four weeks ended 3 March 2013
- had a new job to start within the next four weeks.

If a person’s only job search method was to read job advertisements then they are not considered to be actively seeking work.

**Unemployment rate:** the number of unemployed people as a percentage of the number of people in the labour force.
**Working-age population:** the usually resident, non-institutionalised, civilian population of New Zealand aged 15 years and over on census night.