

3 December: International Day of Persons with Disabilities

1 in 4 people in the EU reported long-standing limitations in usual activities in 2015

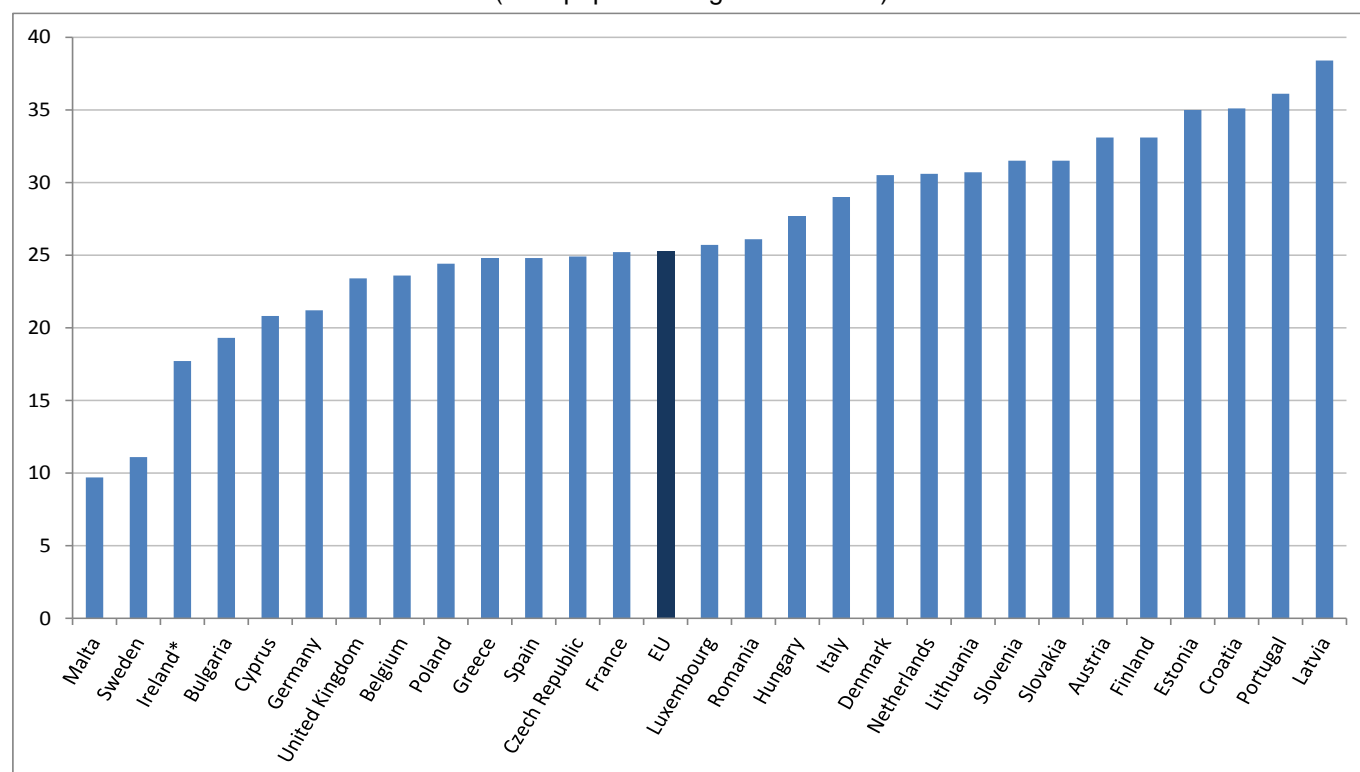
Women and the poorest more affected

A quarter (25.3%) of the population aged 16 or over in the **European Union** (EU) reported long-standing limitations, i.e. some or severe long-standing limitation in usual activities due to health problems in 2015. This means that they feel limited in performing everyday activities, such as studying at school, occupational activities, housekeeping or participating in leisure activities for six months or longer.

In 2015, women were more likely to report long-standing limitations than men. In the **EU**, a gap of 4.5 percentage points can be observed between the share of long-standing limitations among women (27.5%) and men (23.0%). Moreover, the reported long-standing limitation tends to decrease with the level of income. Almost a third (31.2%) of the poorest (i.e. the 20% of the population with the lowest income) in the **EU** reported long-standing limitations in usual activities, compared with 17.0% of the richest (i.e. the 20% of the population with the highest income).

This information is issued by **Eurostat**, the statistical office of the **European Union**, on the occasion of the International Day of Persons with Disabilities on 3 December.

Population reporting long-standing limitation in the EU Member States, 2015
(% of population aged 16 or over)



* 2014 data instead of 2015

Lowest shares of long-standing limitation in Malta and Sweden, highest in Latvia and Portugal

Across the EU Member States in 2015, the lowest proportions of self-perceived long-standing limitations in usual activities were reported in **Malta** (9.7%) and **Sweden** (11.1%), and the highest in **Latvia** (38.4%), **Portugal** (36.1%), **Croatia** (35.1%), **Estonia** (35.0%), **Austria** and **Finland** (both 33.1%).

In all EU Member States, the share of women reporting long-standing limitations was higher than for men, with the widest gaps being observed in **Portugal** (41.0% for women vs. 30.6% for men, or a difference of 10.4 percentage points – pp), **Finland** (9.4 pp), the **Netherlands** and **Romania** (both 8.8 pp) as well as **Latvia** (8.7 pp). In contrast, the situation was more balanced between genders in **Germany** (21.7% for women vs. 20.6% for men, or a 1.1 pp difference), **Cyprus** (1.2 pp), **Ireland** and **Malta** (both 1.8 pp).

Self-perceived long-standing limitations in usual activities by gender, 2015 (in %)

	Total	Male	Female
EU	25.3	23.0	27.5
Belgium	23.6	21.0	26.0
Bulgaria	19.3	17.1	21.3
Czech Republic	24.9	23.1	26.2
Denmark	30.5	26.8	34.0
Germany	21.2	20.6	21.7
Estonia	35.0	31.2	38.2
Ireland*	17.7	16.8	18.6
Greece	24.8	22.4	27.1
Spain	24.8	22.1	27.4
France	25.2	23.5	26.7
Croatia	35.1	32.4	37.6
Italy	29.0	26.2	31.6
Cyprus	20.8	20.2	21.4
Latvia	38.4	33.6	42.3
Lithuania	30.7	26.8	33.8
Luxembourg	25.7	22.0	29.3
Hungary	27.7	24.7	30.4
Malta	9.7	8.8	10.6
Netherlands	30.6	26.0	34.8
Austria	33.1	31.1	35.0
Poland	24.4	22.3	26.2
Portugal	36.1	30.6	41.0
Romania	26.1	21.6	30.4
Slovenia	31.5	28.1	34.8
Slovakia	31.5	27.8	35.0
Finland	33.1	28.4	37.8
Sweden	11.1	8.4	13.8
United Kingdom	23.4	21.3	25.4
Iceland	18.2	13.3	23.2
Norway	15.9	12.0	19.7
Switzerland*	30.0	26.0	34.0

* 2014 data instead of 2015.

The source dataset is available [here](#).

Income seems to play a role

In every EU Member State except **Greece**, the share of those reporting some or severe long-standing limitations in usual activities was much higher in the two lowest income groups and decreased progressively as income increased.

The largest difference in the share of the population reporting some or severe long-standing limitations between the poorest part (first or second quintile depending on which has the highest level of limitations in the country) and the richest part (fifth quintile) of the population was observed in **Estonia** (51.8% for the poorest vs 18.3% for the richest, or a difference of 33.5 pp), followed by **Lithuania** (30.7 pp) and **Latvia** (29.0 pp). In contrast, the smallest differences in the shares of self-reported long-standing limitations were notably observed in **Italy** (10.9 pp) and **Romania** (11.3 pp).

Self-perceived long-standing limitations in usual activities by income quintile, 2015 (in %)

	Total	First quintile	Second quintile	Third quintile	Fourth quintile	Fifth quintile
EU	25.3	31.2	30.7	26.5	21.2	17.0
Belgium	23.6	36.7	31.2	23.3	15.2	11.5
Bulgaria	19.3	26.8	27.0	17.6	13.8	11.2
Czech Republic	24.9	38.2	31.2	25.2	16.7	11.3
Denmark	30.5	36.0	36.2	31.5	25.1	23.7
Germany	21.2	31.3	24.3	20.6	16.0	13.8
Estonia	35.0	51.8	49.1	28.6	27.2	18.3
Ireland*	17.7	23.1	25.7	16.4	14.5	8.9
Greece	24.8	24.4	28.0	29.6	24.8	17.4
Spain	24.8	24.6	32.2	27.9	22.0	17.3
France	25.2	32.7	29.3	24.3	19.9	19.8
Croatia	35.1	49.8	40.5	33.1	29.0	23.2
Italy	29.0	29.4	33.1	32.6	27.7	22.2
Cyprus	20.8	28.8	25.8	19.5	16.5	13.5
Latvia	38.4	50.9	51.3	38.0	29.9	22.3
Lithuania	30.7	44.2	43.4	31.8	20.4	13.5
Luxembourg	25.7	29.7	28.3	27.9	25.1	17.4
Hungary	27.7	30.4	37.6	31.6	24.9	14.2
Malta	9.7	16.3	13.8	8.5	6.6	3.3
Netherlands	30.6	40.0	36.0	30.1	25.9	21.1
Austria	33.1	40.3	36.3	34.3	29.9	24.6
Poland	24.4	28.6	27.6	26.6	23.6	15.8
Portugal	36.1	44.4	42.6	35.9	31.2	26.5
Romania	26.1	23.4	31.2	29.9	26.4	19.9
Slovenia	31.5	38.8	36.2	30.9	26.7	24.8
Slovakia	31.5	34.4	37.8	34.7	28.9	21.9
Finland	33.1	43.5	41.4	32.2	25.2	23.3
Sweden	11.1	20.0	14.5	8.4	7.5	5.4
United Kingdom	23.4	31.5	32.2	25.1	16.5	11.7
Iceland	18.2	22.8	22.2	19.7	12.1	14.4
Norway	15.9	25.3	20.0	13.8	11.9	8.4
Switzerland*	30.0	42.7	30.1	28.4	26.2	22.7

* 2014 data instead of 2015.

The source dataset is available [here](#).

Geographical information

The **European Union** (EU) includes Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

Methods and definitions

Data presented in this News Release are based on the EU-Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC). The **EU-SILC survey** is the EU reference source for comparative statistics on income distribution, poverty and living conditions. More information can be found [here](#).

Data refer to population aged 16 or over living in private households residing in the territory of the country at the time of data collection. All indicators are expressed as percentages within the population and statistics are broken down by sex and income quintile group.

Self-reported **long-standing limitation** is here defined as some or severe long-standing limitation in usual activities due to health problems (often referred to as long-standing limitation) for at least six months. It measures the respondent's self-assessment of whether he/she is limited (in 'activities people usually do') by any on-going physical, mental or emotional health problem, including disease or impairment, and old age. Consequences of injuries/accidents, congenital conditions, and other, are all included. Only the limitations directly caused by or related to one or more health problems are considered. Limitations due to financial, cultural or other none health-related causes are not taken into account. Usual activities cover all spectrums of activities: work or school, home and leisure activities.

Income quintile groups are computed on the basis of the total equivalised disposable income attributed to each member of the household. The data (of each person) are ordered according to the value of the total equivalised disposable income. Four cut-point values (the so-called quintile cut-off points) of income are identified, dividing the survey population into five groups equally represented by 20% of individuals each. The first quintile group represents the 20% of the population with the lowest income (an income smaller or equal to the first cut-off value), and the fifth quintile group represents the 20% of population with the highest income (an income greater than the fourth cut-off value).

For more information

Eurostat [website section](#) dedicated to statistics on health status and determinants.

Eurostat [database](#) on health status and health determinants.

Eurostat set of [Statistics Explained articles](#) on disability statistics.

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