

The [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) defines: “Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”

The [International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health](#) (ICF) is a framework for defining and measurement of functioning and disability. Disability is conceived as an umbrella term for impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions. It denotes the negative aspects of the interaction between a person’s health condition(s) and that individual’s contextual factors (environmental and personal factors).

There are different statistical and operational definitions of disability. Examples of four definitions used within the European Statistical System are provided here:

- Disability measured through a concept of general activity limitation: “Limitation in activities people usually do because of health problems for at least the past six months” which is currently used in [European Health Interview Survey \(EHIS\)](#) and [EU statistics on income and living conditions \(EU-SILC\)](#) . The indicator is based on data collected by the Global Activity Limitation Instrument (GALI): “For at least the past 6 months, to what extent have you been limited because of a health problem in activities people usually do? Would you say you have been . . .”severely limited / limited but not severely or / not limited at all?”;
- “Disabled persons are persons whose longstanding health condition, illness, disease or longstanding difficulty with basic activities (such as seeing, hearing, concentrating, moving round) prevents them to participate in at least one life domain” which is used in the European Health and Social Integration Survey (EHSIS);
- Disabled people are those persons having at least one basic activity difficulty (such as, seeing, hearing, walking, remembering, etc.) (see [Regulation \(EU\) No 317/2010](#) adopting the specifications of the 2011 ad hoc module on employment of disabled people for the labour force sample survey);
- Disabled people (in employment) are those persons having a work limitation caused by a health problem and/or difficulty in a basic activity (see [Regulation \(EU\) No 317/2010](#)).

Disability pension : periodic payments intended to maintain or support the income of someone below the legal or standard retirement age, as established in the reference scheme, who suffers from a disability which impairs his or her ability to work or earn above a minimum amount laid down by legislation.

Related concepts

- [Activity limitation](#)
- [Healthy life years \(HLY\)](#)
- [Basic activity difficulty](#)
- [Longstanding health problems or diseases](#)

Statistical data

- [Health in the European Union – facts and figures](#)
- [Healthy life years statistics](#)