



Statistics on the labour force characteristics of people with disabilities: A Compendium of national methodologies¹

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Exclusion Group of the Gender, Equality and
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Summary

There is strong policy interest in establishing and monitoring the impact of legislation to promote employment opportunities for people with disabilities. However, comprehensive data on the employment situation of this population group is rarely available at the required level of detail and periodicity; in a number of countries there are currently no data at all on employment status in conjunction with disability.

This compendium provides an overview of the main characteristics of various approaches used by the countries in addressing disability in national census and surveys and describes the methodologies currently in use in 114 countries to compile statistics on the labour force characteristics of the people with disabilities. The analysis of the main characteristics (definition and concepts, questions used, coverage, periodicity, etc.) draw on the survey conducted in 2014 by ILO Department of Statistics in collaboration with the Disability Equality and Exclusion Group of the ILO Gender, Equality and Diversity Branch. The compilation exercise was undertaken as part of the ILO/Irish Aid programme *Promoting Rights and Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities in Employment through Legislation* (PROPEL Global).

The results show that although currently statistics on people with disabilities are more widely available in a number of countries, these data still tend to be heterogeneous in many respects. There are wide differences between countries and data sources with respect to the definition of the concept of 'disability', the terminology used, the coverage of the data sources, the classifications used, periodicity of data collection and reference period. Countries mainly rely on population censuses and household surveys to compile these statistics, which means that information is generally collected at 5- or 10-years intervals or for one point in time only. While these sources cover a number of variables related to labour force characteristics of people with disabilities, the data are not always tabulated in a way that would provide comprehensive picture of the situation of people with disabilities in the labour market. Compared with the situation around 2000, it has been found that increasing number of countries/sources are using the concept of activity limitations instead of impairment.

Significant activities are needed to further standardise approaches used in measuring disability (in line with the recommendations of the Washington City Group on disability statistics and the concepts embedded in the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health) increase national capacity to venture into new data collection initiatives as well as to increase the frequency of data collection so that more comprehensive information regarding labour force characteristics of people with disabilities can be produced.

1. Introduction

The UN General Assembly has shown a strong policy interest in establishing and monitoring the impact of legislation to promote employment opportunities for people with disabilities. However, useful data on the employment situation of this population group is rarely available at the required level of detail and periodicity; in a number of countries there are currently no data at all on the employment status in conjunction with disability.

The information gap was illustrated by a worldwide survey carried out in 2003 by the ILO, to gather methodological information on sources of statistics that were then available at country level. The results² showed that information was generally collected at 5- or 10-yearly intervals or for one point in time only. It was found that the sources usually used definitions of disability that come from national legislation or that have been developed by national statistical offices, ministries and/or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) concerned with disability; and that more than 50 per cent use questions focused on physical impairments rather than activity limitations and abilities. In the decade since the publication of this ILO compendium, the Washington Group on Disability Statistics has continued its work to promote the inclusion of a standard set of questions relating to disability in population censuses and national surveys, including labour force surveys. A number of agencies (e.g. the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the World Bank) have also encouraged and assisted countries in improving the quality of disability statistics.

At the same time, many countries have made significant efforts to improve availability and quality of statistics on their labour markets. Regular labour force surveys have been set up and the use of international standards and definitions has been intensified. As a result, accurate and up-to-date labour market information is now available for many countries of the world.

In spite of considerable progress made in terms of availability of data concerning people with disabilities, it was noted at the UN Statistics Commission meeting in March 2014 that further concerted efforts are needed to incorporate questions on disability into regular data collection and improve the comparability and quality of the information compiled. Such data is called for in the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)*³ which requires States Parties to compile statistical data compliant with international standards to 'enable them to formulate and implement policies to give effect to the present Convention'.

The on-going negotiations around Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda and Sustainable development goals (SDG) signal both the need for more attention to persons with disabilities and more attention to statistics. The outcome document agreed by UN Member States on 1 August 2015⁴ for example calls, under SDG target 8.5 for achieving, by 2030, full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.

Given the development over the past decade, and the need to assess the current situation in terms of the scope and limitations of existing disability data, the ILO has arranged for an update of the 2003 Compendium.

² *Statistics on the employment situation of people with disabilities: A Compendium of national methodologies*, Geneva, 2003. Available at http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---stat/documents/publication/wcms_087881.pdf

³ <http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml>

⁴ Transforming Our World – Finalised Text for Adoption (1 August). Available at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015>

This edition contains methodological information about 140 sources of statistics in 118 countries and analyses the different approaches currently used.

The methodological information compiled may be used as a source of material for developing statistical guidelines on this topic. It may also serve as a quick-reference guide providing examples of practices for countries wanting to establish their own data collection on labour force characteristics of persons with disabilities.

In selecting the surveys to be included, the following criteria were used (i) the survey was fielded in 2006 or later, (ii) if not fielded since 2000, the survey contains significant disability-related content or other information of particular relevance to persons with disabilities. Two surveys (LFS in Albania and Azerbaijan) did not collect information on persons with disabilities, but were included in the descriptions because they are to cover this topic in near future. Due to resource constraints, not all surveys meeting the above criteria were identified and described. A tabular, quick-reference summary of the features of the 140 surveys is provided in [Annex 1](#); more detailed text summaries of each survey are provided in Chapter 5: Methodological descriptions.

2. Compilation of information

The ILO Statistics Department, in collaboration with the ILO Disability Equality and Exclusion Group of the Gender, Equality and Diversity Branch, launched a project to analyse the existing national statistics on the labour force characteristics of persons with disabilities. In order to have an overview of the different approaches used, a questionnaire was sent to ministries of labour and national statistics offices in selected countries (countries that did not provide information for the 2003 edition of the compendium but believed to produce statistics on labour force status of people with disabilities) in September 2014. For developed countries and developing countries that responded to the 2003 inquiry the descriptions were updated by reviewing the material available on the national websites, national publications available at the ILO, and/or international repositories. The main objective of this exercise was (i) to determine the availability of statistics on persons with disabilities, especially about their employment situation, (ii) to identify available sources of information and studies at national level that contribute to characterising the situation of people with disabilities in relation to labour markets, (iii) to collect methodological information about the sources of these sources of statistics. The information compiled has been used to prepare the methodological descriptions presented in this Compendium.

The information compiled has been analysed in order to determine the different types of approaches used by countries, which will be used later by the ILO in developing ILO guidelines for countries that are setting up or improving their statistics in this field. As part of this exercise, in addition to collecting methodological information about the sources of statistics on employment situation of people with disabilities, national statistical publications and tables and were compiled as well as were survey instruments used in national surveys. These can be consulted at <http://www.ilo.org/surveydata/index.php/catalog/DISABILITIES/about>.

2.1 Terms and definitions

An understanding of the main terms used in this compendium is essential to compare information obtained from countries. Therefore, an overview of the most important international standards relevant to the subject is provided below. Many countries already make use of these standards in the field of employment and unemployment and /or disability, which would also serve as a useful framework for others that currently apply their own national concepts, definitions and classifications.

The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) is the world standard classification of functioning and disability, endorsed by 191 countries at the World Health Assembly (2001). It is the successor of the International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps (ICIDH), issued in 1980. ICF is a classification system that provides a conceptual framework with terminology and definitions of the terms, and classifications of the contextual components associated with disability including both participation and environmental factors.

ICF distinguishes multiple dimensions that can be used to monitor the situation of persons with disability. The system is divided into two parts each with two components;

1. Functioning and disability, which include the components: (i) Body functions and body structures (impairments) (ii) Activities (limitations) and participation (restrictions)
2. Contextual factors which include the components: (i) Environmental factors (ii) Personal factors.

ICF provides classification schemes for all these elements except for personal factors. The definitions of these components of ICF are as follows:

- Body Functions are physiological functions of body systems (including psychological functions).

- Body Structures are anatomical parts of the body such as organs, limbs and their components.
- Impairments are problems in body function or structure such as a significant deviation or loss.
- Activity is the execution of a task or action by an individual. Participation is involvement in a life situation.
- Activity Limitations are difficulties an individual may have in executing activities.
- Participation Restrictions are problems an individual may experience in involvement in life situations.
- Environmental Factors make up the physical, social and attitudinal environment in which people live and conduct their lives.

The term 'Disability' is used as an umbrella term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions.

The terms and definitions concerning the employment situation are drawn from the relevant ILO recommendations given in the following resolutions adopted by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS):

Resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment (19th ICLS, 2013), which gives definitions of the following:

- Employed persons, comprising all persons of working age who during the reference period were engaged in any activity to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit.
- Unemployed persons, comprising all persons of working age who during the reference period were not in employment, carried out activities to seek employment during a specified recent period and were currently available to take up employment given a job opportunity.
- Persons outside the labour force, comprising all persons of working age who were neither in employment nor in unemployment in the short reference period.

Resolution on the International Classification of Status in Employment ICSE (15th ICLS, 1993) recommends different categories for the status of an economically active person with respect to his or her employment.

2.2 Process of information compilation

A methodological questionnaire was designed to provide a synthesized picture of the country practices in compiling statistics on labour force characteristics of people with disabilities, while at the same time, allowing for comparisons between the practices of how countries compile disability information.

The questionnaire was prepared in three languages (English, French, and Spanish) and sent out to selected countries believed to have some statistics on employment situation of people with disabilities in September 2014. The questionnaires were sent in electronic version by e-mail to ministries of labour as well as national statistical offices.

Addressees were requested to consider involving national bodies, such as ministries of health or education and training, which in many countries also compile statistics and carry out research on the employment situation of persons with disabilities. They were asked to participate in the completion of the questionnaire or completion of the questionnaire themselves. However, only a few respondents forwarded it to the national employment services, which often compile statistics on unemployed persons with disabilities.

At the end of December 2014, the ILO Department of Statistics had received completed questionnaires for 36 surveys in developing countries. 3 countries indicated that they do not have statistics on the employment situation of people with disabilities. Half of the respondents concentrated only on the main national source, and did not describe other sources. Nevertheless, 18 countries had two different sources each and one country provided information about three sources.

Given the low response rate, the information available and disseminated on the websites of the National Statistical Offices or other government agencies, was used to obtain additional information on approximately 100 surveys in 80 countries. In total methodological information about sources of statistics on labour force characteristics of people with disabilities from 140 surveys in 118 countries was prepared and added to this Compendium. The distribution of sources by continent is as follows.

- Asia 39
- Africa 33
- Europe 44
- America 20
- Oceania 4

2.3 The methodological descriptions

The methodological descriptions are structured to provide a synthesized picture of the country practices in compiling statistics on labour force characteristics of people with disabilities, while at the same time, allowing for comparisons between the practices of how countries compile disability information. Information is structured into following standard headings and sub-headings:

- SOURCE
 - Name of source
 - Institution responsible for the statistics
 - Type of source
 - Periodicity Every ten years
 - Objectives

- COVERAGE
 - Disabilities
 - Population groups
 - Total population covered
 - Economic activities
 - Sectors covered
 - Labour force status
 - Status in Employment
 - Geographic areas
 - Establishments
 - Other limitations

- TERMS AND DEFINITIONS
 - Term used to denote 'disability' ‘
 - Definition of this term
 - Questions used to identify persons with disabilities ‘
 - Source of this definition)
 - Minimum duration to be considered as a person with disability

- CLASSIFICATION
 - Classifications
 - Cross-classifications

- REFERENCE PERIOD

- DISSEMINATION
 - National publications
 - Website

If there is more than one source of data in a country, a separate description is presented for each data source. The main features of the 140 surveys are presented in synoptic tables in Annex 1.

3. Main characteristics of methodologies currently used by country to compile statistics on the labour force characteristics of people with disabilities

The aim of this compendium is to present comprehensive descriptions of various used by the countries to compile statistics on labour force characteristics of people with disabilities, which then could form a basis for formulating recommendations and guidelines to assist those countries that are setting up or wishing to improve their statistics in this field. Furthermore, it would be helpful if countries whose sources are omitted could also provide information on their sources and statistics, and in this way help to complete this database.

The analysis below is based on the information submitted to the ILO in response to the questionnaires and data collected through National Publications or online sources of NSOs across countries. Given the fact that (i) many countries did not respond to the ILO questionnaire, (ii) some countries described only one of several data sources, (iii) some of the survey available at the national level might have been omitted especially if information available on the web was in local languages only; the compendium should not be viewed as being a full inventory of all national practices.

3.1 Sources

Type of sources

A number of sources are used to generate statistics on the employment situation of people with disabilities. These are commonly obtained through population censuses, household surveys, establishment surveys or as a by-product of administrative systems.

The most frequently used source is a **household survey**, which appeared in 81 descriptions (58 per cent). Among the household based surveys the predominate source of information are labour force surveys (LFS) and specialised disability surveys (more than 60 countries). Although LFS are usually conducted at yearly or even shorter intervals, questions on disability are not a regular part of these surveys but are often concentrated in a module that is attached to the survey on the ad hoc basis. As a result, information on the employment situation of people with disabilities is often compiled by such LFS only once every five years or so, or at irregular intervals. The specialised stand-alone disability surveys provide more comprehensive picture of people with disabilities in various areas of life but also not conducted with regular frequency, and in the most of the countries have been done only once. Other types of household surveys that contain data on the prevalence of chronic diseases (though they are not always called or categorised as such) and which usually include questions on the employment situation of the population include household income and expenditure surveys, health and demographic surveys, and other multipurpose household surveys. They are conducted with diverse frequency.

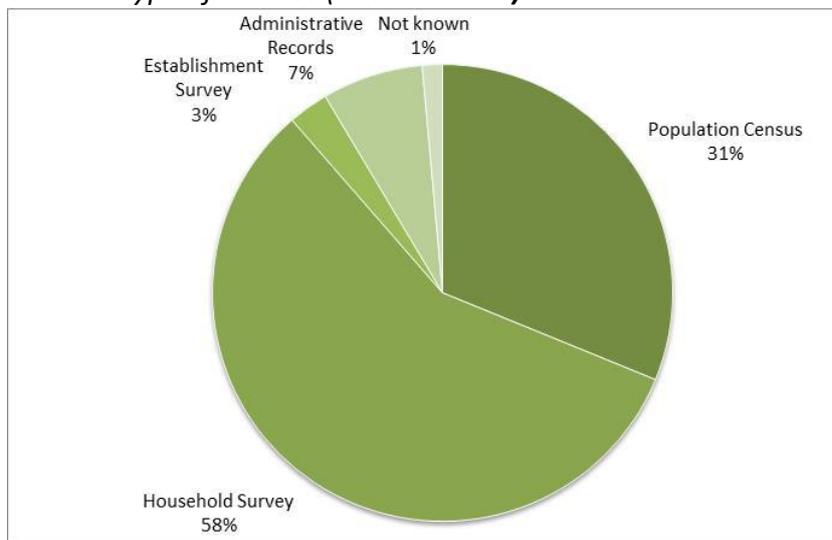
In 44 countries the main source of information on labour force characteristics of people with disabilities are **population censuses** (31 per cent). In most of the developing countries the population census is very often the only available source. By definition, population censuses cover almost the total population but they are carried out generally only every ten years. With view to the compilation of statistics to assist in planning and policymaking this type of source might be very useful each ten years, but to determine the effect of different types of legislation it is regarded as a useful instrument only in few cases. Furthermore censuses are overloaded by numerous questions related to various fields of living and housing conditions, and include only limited number of disability related questions. Additional constrain of the population censuses is that although data on both disability and labour force status are compiled and available, very often they are not cross tabulated in the same table.

Establishment surveys are less widely used instrument for compiling information on the employment situation of people with disabilities and are being reported as regular source of information in only 3

countries. Since - as mentioned above - some countries described only one (the main) of the various sources they have, this type of source may in fact be used more frequently. The information compiled indicates that establishment surveys are used as a monitoring tool in countries that have established quota legislation for the employment of people with disabilities. These surveys are usually directed to establishments exceeding a certain size (number of employees), which is laid down in the quota legislation.

Administrative records as a source of statistics on the employment situation of people with disabilities are being used in 10 countries. Again, this low frequency probably does not mirror the real scale; this type of source may be more prevalent, but may be subject to the same omissions as mentioned above for establishment surveys. These administrative registers are generally operated by public employment services in order to provide information on disabled jobseekers. In addition, data records are provided by administrations that are responsible for disability benefits (pensioners, veterans etc.). These data compilations are based on regulations in countries where a person's reduced ability to work is officially certified.

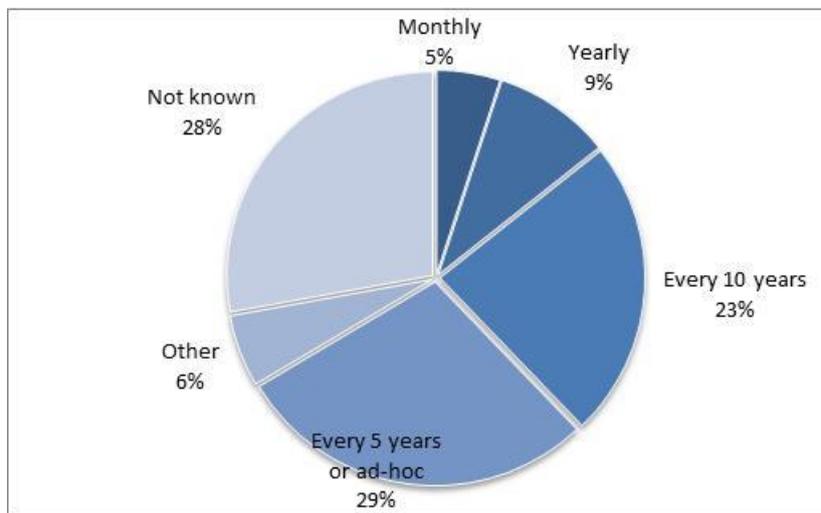
Chart 1: Type of sources (118 countries)



Periodicity

The periodicities of the different sources vary from 10 years (population censuses) to monthly intervals (statistics on jobseekers with disabilities compiled by public employment services). LFS, the main source of data on employment status in the majority of countries, generally collect data on people with disabilities at intervals of more than one (often 5) year. In the European Union members states the LFS ad-hoc module on disabled workers is repeated at interval of at least 5 years. In least developing countries, where the source of information is population census, the periodicity is 10 years. The Chart 2 shows distribution of sources by periodicity of data collection. It striking that more than half of the countries collect data only once every 10 years, or have collected these data on an ad-hoc basis or once every 5 years. This type of periodicity is the most common in countries that use a disability module attached to the labour force survey in a particular year or have a specialised disability or health survey. Monthly (4 countries) and quarterly (3 countries) periodicity are very rare for collecting data on labour force characteristics of people with disabilities. For almost one third of the countries the periodicity of data collection is not known.

Chart 2: Periodicity of data collection (118 countries)



3.2 Coverage

Types of disabilities

According to the information available 100 out of 140 sources cover all types of disabilities, such as seeing difficulties, hearing difficulties, speaking difficulties, moving/mobility difficulties, body movement difficulties, gripping/holding difficulties, learning difficulties, behavioural difficulties, personal care difficulties and other. A number of sources however target physical impairments (blind, mute, deaf, loss of limbs, etc.) rather than types of activity limitations. A couple of sources cover disabilities together with chronic diseases, and one a source is limited to intellectual disability only. In many sources learning and behavioural difficulties are categorised as 'mental problems'. Where administrative sources are used, the disabilities covered are those that are medically-recognized.

On the other hand, even if all different types of disabilities are covered, many countries do not classify these categories separately. Yet, even where separately identifies some countries use classification schemes that are slightly different from the internationally agreed classifications.

Population groups and total population covered

Where population censuses are main source of information ((one third of sources the total population of all age groups is covered. Other sources, such as LFS, establishment surveys and administrative records often cover persons of working age only. All household based surveys exclude the institutional population.

Economic activities

Close to 80 per cent of the sources cover all economic activities. A few countries, such as the United States, exclude extra-territorial organizations and bodies. No information is available on the economic activities coverage in the remaining 20 per cent of the sources.

Sectors covered

The analysis shows that the rate of coverage is very high- close to 80 per cent of the surveys cover all sectors of the economy such as private, public, formal, informal and other. For 22 surveys (16 per cent) no information is available on sectors covered. The rest of the sources cover only some sectors. Informal sector is excluded especially where the source are establishment surveys or administrative records.

Labour force status

Majority of the sources include a variable on the labour force status (employed, unemployed, outside labour force).

Status in employment

Information related to the employment situation indicates that about two thirds of all sources collect information of the status in employment (employees, employers, own account workers, contributing family workers, members of producers' cooperatives). For the rest of the sources the information is not available or they (mainly establishment surveys) cover only employees.

Geographic areas

Close to 80 per cent of the sources cover the whole country. The geographical coverage of some sources is limited to exclude regions which are remote and/or sparsely settled because data for these regions are very expensive to obtain and, on the other hand, they only have a minor impact on any aggregate statistics.

Establishments

Information on the types and sizes of establishments covered is available for only 8 surveys. It appears that this type of coverage is only relevant for establishment surveys and not to population censuses and household based surveys, since these surveys in general, are focusing on individuals and households rather than on institutions. Even where questions on the characteristics of establishments where a person is employed are asked in censuses and household surveys, the reliability of answers depends on the extent of survey respondents' knowledge.

Limitations

For many sources it is not known if there are any other limitations of the coverage. Only 15 per cent of the sources specify the population categories that are not covered in the survey and mention the difficulties faced during the data collection, in particular with the identification of the type of disability.

3.3 Terms and definitions used

Terms used to denote 'disability'

In addition to the deficiencies in the coverage of the sources, a comparability of data may be affected by a wide range of approaches of how surveys and censuses around the world address the issue of disability and differences in the survey's population understanding of the term 'disability'.

The term used to denote 'disability' varies across countries and from one source to another. According to information available the most widely used term is 'disability' or a term similar to this one in the national language (two thirds of the sources). . When the word 'disability' is not used, sometimes the term 'health condition' is used in its place, while other surveys refer to difficulties in performing daily life activities. All the EU member countries practice a standardized term 'disability or longstanding health problem', for which an identical definition was also implemented in compliance with Commission Regulation (EC). A number of sources use terms such as 'impairment', or 'work related disability'.

It is interesting, however, to note that, since 2000, many countries have shifted the focus of the definition and measurement from impairments to activity limitations, and functional implications resulting from these impairments.

Source of definition

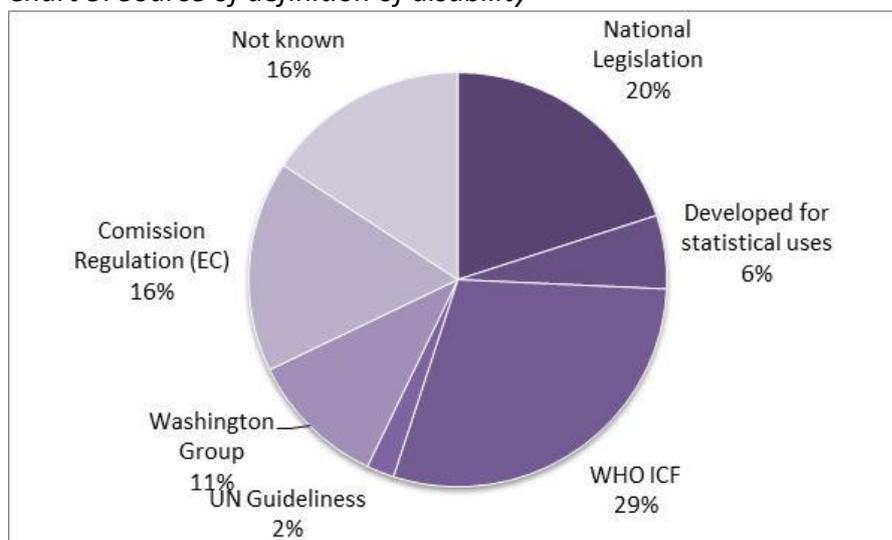
Disability is defined and measured by using different approaches, that explicitly or implicitly rely on international standards, mainly concepts inherent to the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (2001) or its earlier versions, as well as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

- 35 of the sources make explicit reference the WHO International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF).

- 23 surveys use concepts, definitions and approaches designed to comply with EU Commission Regulation (EC) n°317/2010 concerning the specification of the 2011 ad hoc module on employment of disabled people. This regulation uses the term ‘longstanding health condition’, where: ‘longstanding’ means that the health condition or disease has lasted or is likely to last for at least 6 months. The main characteristics of a longstanding condition or disease are that it is permanent and may be expected to require a long period of supervision, observation or care. Therefore, any acute (temporary) health problem, such as a sprained ankle, broken leg, appendicitis or a respiratory tract infection is not of interest. It is used in 23 surveys.
- 26 sources used concepts and definitions developed on the basis of national legislations. They refer to the concept of ‘work related disability’ or ‘physically or mentally impaired persons’, that is, people having a physical, sensory or mental impairment which results in a longstanding reduced ability to satisfy the personal needs of daily life, including the capacity to work. Thus, in most countries the legal definition of disability includes long-term diseases and health conditions or difficulties (physical or mental) in performing basic (work) activities.
- 15 sources use the approaches that focus on activity limitations, developed by the Washington Group on disability statistics.
- 11 sources used concepts and definitions developed for statistical purposes, or based on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities⁵ or other UN guidelines.
- 22 sources are based on other concepts or concepts are not known.

The type of definitions and approach used in measuring disability is closely related to the type of the source used. In household surveys and population censuses the definitions are commonly based on the EC Regulations and concepts inherent to the WHO International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF). Whilst establishment surveys and administrative sources practice definitions based on WHO ICF and/or National Legislations.

Chart 3: Source of definition of disability



Questions used to identify persons with disabilities

There is significant variation in the type of questions asked in surveys. Sometimes the question mentions different types of disabilities or health conditions, but sometime surveys simply ask a question inclusive of all possible disabilities or health conditions. When a survey mentions different types of disabilities, health

⁵ The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities defines people with disabilities as 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’

conditions, or difficulties, sometimes they are combined in a single question, but often they are broken into separate questions. There is some variation in response categories as well. Some surveys use a yes/no response, while others employ a set of scaled responses. In few of the countries disability is considered to exist only if it is medically certified or if the respondent reports a condition that directly prevents her/his from working or studying.

The questions used in the sources to identify persons with disabilities can be grouped into two types (i) direct questions related to functional disability and (ii) questions related to difficulties disabled people face while performing daily activities. In close to 60 per cent of the sources disability is defined on the basis of difficulties in performing activities, a shift from impairment definition predominantly used 15 years ago.

In sources that use direct functional disability questions a binary response categories (Yes/No) are used. In sources that use questions related to activity limitations, respondents who indicate that they have some impairments are usually asked to indicate the level of difficulties. The actual wording of these categories varies across countries/sources but the most common response categories are 'No difficulty, Some Difficulty, A Lot of Difficulty, Unable to Do.'

A lot of variations also exist in the type of disabilities separately identified in the surveys. Sometimes a question does not mention different types of disabilities (or health conditions) but simply asks a question inclusive of all possible conditions. For example, 'Do you have a disability?' Other times, different types of disabilities, difficulties, or health conditions are mentioned. At times, when a survey mentions multiple types of disabilities, health conditions, or difficulties they are combined in a single question -- for example, 'Do you have a physical, sensory, or mental disability?' Other times, they are broken out into separate questions. In this example, 'Do you have a physical disability?', 'Do you have a sensory disability?', 'Do you have a mental disability?'

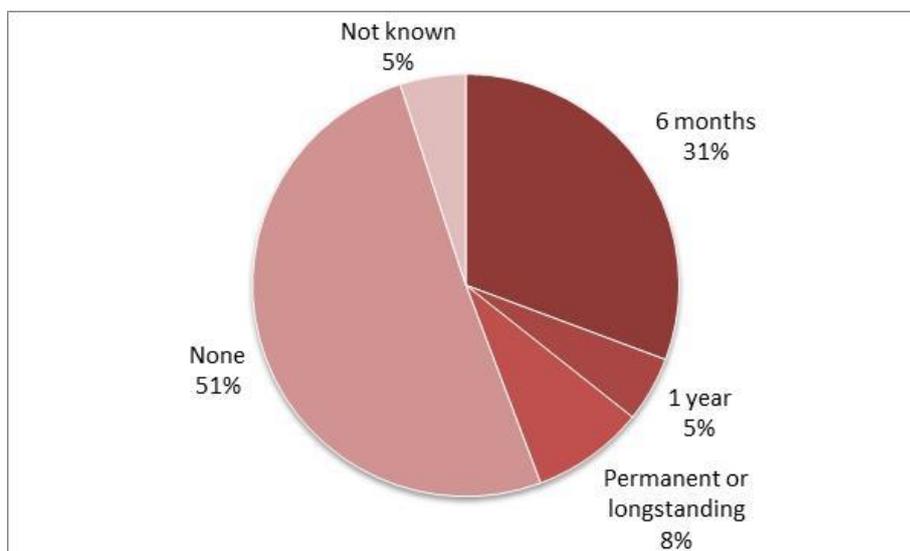
In specialised disability surveys, in addition to type and severity of disability, information about duration of disability, origin of disability, use of support equipment, need for and amount of assistance, need for special equipment/adaptation of workplace, accessibility of transport, etc. are usually collected as well as other questions related to sensitivity and attitudes towards people with disabilities.

Approaches taken by various country surveys and censuses in measuring disability are shown in Table 3 of Annex 1. For example, 'Disability/No List' refers simply to asking if the person had a disability. The next column refers to a single question that asks if a person had one of a series of disabilities, while the next one refers to a survey that lists each type of disability in a separate question. The Work Limited column refers to countries that either ask if the person has a condition that limits their work, or have disability or health condition as a response category in a question that asks why the person isn't working more. In a number of cases where the sources of information are administrative records or establishment surveys, people with disabilities are already identified (based on medical documentation), therefore questions are not relevant.

Minimum duration to be considered as a person with disability

In about half of the sources, it has been stated that there is no **minimum duration** of disability for the person to be included in the statistics; about one third identified a minimum duration of disability as six months. Only seven sources have stipulated a minimum duration of one year. Other 11 sources defined the minimum duration of disability as a longstanding or permanent, without specifying the duration. The Chart 5 pictures the distribution of surveys depending on the lengths of minimum duration of disability.

Chart 3: Minimum duration of disability (140 sources)



3.4 Classification

Classifications

According to information available, the majority of sources allow for tabulation by major classifications, such as age, sex, economic activity, occupation, status in employment.

Cross-classifications

Cross-classifications are made for such variables as age/sex and type of disability, age/sex and status in employment etc. In many countries various cross-tabulations can be done on request.

3.5 Reference period

The information about the reference period for which statistics are compiled is available for 84 sources (62 per cent). The reference period depends on the type of the source used by the country; for some it is 1 year, for others it is census day or it can be 3 months etc. Administrative records are continuously updated; the reference period applied depends on the associated administrative procedures and on the rules or laws covering the source.

3.6 Dissemination

Statistics from 115 sources are published in national publications, or disseminated on the web. For a couple of countries, however, data is only available for internal use. Statistics from 130 surveys are available on the web. The type of indicators available varies a lot across countries and sources, which make international analysis more difficult.

4. Conclusion

This Compendium provides an overview of the practices currently in use in countries, and should be useful for those that are trying to establish or to improve their statistics on the labour force characteristics of people with disabilities. The choices of sources and methods as well as standards employed depend on the individual characteristics of a country and the main purpose for compiling the statistics. Particular types of sources and methods that fully meet the needs of one objective might fail to provide useful data for another. Furthermore, international standards and methods are often adjusted to a country's specific characteristics such as culture, geography and social security system, etc. Finally, most of the sources have a number of limitations that have to be taken into consideration when interpreting data. The financial limitations of countries to establish system for properly monitoring employment situation of people with disabilities should also be taken into account. The overall objective for the countries should be for sources to provide data on employment status and disability on the basis of recognized (possibly international) standards and that these data are cross-classified and linked to other personal characteristics such as age, sex, education, etc.

The results show that although currently statistics on people with disabilities are more widely available in a number of countries, these data still tend to be heterogeneous in many respects. There are wide differences between countries and data sources with respect to the definition of the concept of 'disability', the terminology used, the coverage of the data sources, the classifications used, periodicity of data collection and reference period.

The Compendium shows that various sources are used by countries to collect data, including household surveys, population censuses, administrative records and establishment surveys. Household surveys, in general contain comprehensive questions on labour force characteristics as well as some supplementary questions on disability, but may not be fully representative, especially at lower levels of disaggregations. Population censuses describe numerous aspects of the demographic and social situation of a country and can further be used as a framework to set up specialized sample surveys. The drawback of population censuses is that the number of questions covered in censuses has reached a level that makes it difficult to include more detailed questions on the employment situation of disabled people which can limit the usefulness of the source. The data are collected only every 10 years (censuses) or every 5 years (household surveys) in most of the countries.

Establishment surveys and administrative records are not widely used in the countries. Where these sources are used as monitoring tools they are usually based on existing national legislations for the employment of people with disabilities or designed to provide information on disabled jobseekers, and their needs.

A common problem in many countries is that although these sources cover a number of variables related to labour force characteristics of people with disabilities, very often the data are not cross-classified against each other or not tabulated at all. As a result the information collected is not fully utilised in designing inclusive employment policies.

The Compendium reveals that the terms used to denote 'disability' varies across countries and that wide range of approaches is used to address the issue of disability. Some countries ignore the issue, some address it with a single question, and some use an extensive list of questions dealing with the type and degree of disability, the cause, the need for assistance, and the perceived impact of disability on the type and amount of work a person can do.

The concepts, definition and approaches used in measuring disability rely on international standards, mainly the International Classification of Functioning, the Europe Commission Regulation (EC), or approach developed by the Washington Group on disability statistics. Nevertheless some countries use other approaches stemming from ministries, developed specifically for census purposes or the UN Conventions and Guidelines. Compared with the situation around 2000, it has been found that increasing number of countries/sources are using the concept of activity limitations instead of impairments. Also less than 20 per cent of definitions are based on national legislation- a decline from almost 50 per cent 15 years ago.

There is a significant variation across countries in terms of the questions used in censuses and surveys to address disability. Some countries ignore the issue, some address it with a single question, and some contain an extensive list of questions dealing with the type and degree of disability, the cause, the needed for assistance, and even the perceived impact of a disability on the amount or type of work a person can do. It is important to include questions about different types of disabilities. This would allow to make distinction between people with different difficulties (e.g. walking versus seeing) who might experience different barriers, and so may require different type of services. Also it is important to compile information and disaggregate the data by the degree of disability.

The sources questions used in the sources to identify persons with disabilities are focussing either on functional disability or difficulties faced while performing daily activities. In close to 60 per cent of the countries disability is defined on basis of activity limitations, a shift from impairment definition predominantly used 15 years ago.

Most of the developing countries have no minimum duration of disability for a person to be considered as a person with disability. In the EU member states only respondents with health problems that have lasted at least 6 months are considered as persons with disability. Other countries put a threshold of minimum one year or as a longstanding or permanent disability.

To conclude, there is a need for more comprehensive information regarding labour force characteristics of people with disabilities. Significant activities are needed to increase national capacity to venture into new data collection initiatives as well as to increase the frequency of data collection. Given the fact data in many countries the data are collected but not processed, efforts are needed to improve analytical skills in many developing countries. The statistics collected by countries would benefit from further standardisation by adopting the International Classification of Functioning: Disability and Health (ICF) and ensuring that data collections cover the broad array of ICF domains - impairments, activity limitations and participation restrictions, related health condition, and environmental factors. Indeed it would be desirable to employ 'difficulties in functioning approach' instead to 'impairment approach' and include a set of disability identification questions in the population censuses and in the core LFS questionnaire (or other household based surveys with a labour force module), as recommended by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics and UNSC. This will allow countries to disaggregate standard labour market indicators by disability, as part of the standard tables. Subject to resource availability, the countries may even integrate in the regular household surveys additional questions on the onset of the disability, barriers people with disabilities face in the labour market and needs/use of workplace accommodations. Also it would be useful to include in the surveys the questions connected to the environmental factors (isolation, accessibility to workplaces, learning, access to the financing, training, attitude of the circle of acquaintances) as this will allow to identify and to take into account the attitudes towards and the needs and access to services by people with disabilities..

Besides, for developing countries it will be necessary to put a particular attention on the informal sector as it is the sector, which employs many persons with disabilities.

Table 2: Characteristics of sources of statistics, by country

Country	Type of Source	Definition of the term 'disability'						Minimum duration of disability				Type of questions used to identify disability		Dissemination	
		National Legislation	Developed for Statistical Uses	UN Guidelines	WHO ICF	Washington Group approach	Commission Regulation (EC)	6 months	1 year	Permanent or longstanding	none	Impairments	Difficulties to perform daily activities	National Publication	Web Site
Albania	Household Survey														x
Albania	Population Census				x						x		x	x	x
Algeria	Household Survey				x						x	x	x	x	
Argentina	Population Census							x					x	x	
Armenia	Administrative Records				x			x					x	x	
Armenia	Household Survey										x	x	x	x	
Australia	Household Survey				x			x				x	x	x	
Austria	Household Survey							x					x		x
Azerbaijan	Household Survey	x									x		x	x	
Bangladesh	Household Survey										x	x	x	x	
Bangladesh	Household Survey					x					x	x	x	x	
Belarus	Administrative Records	x									x				x
Belgium	Household Survey							x					x		x
Belize	Population Census		x								x		x	x	x
Bermuda	Administrative Records	x									x		x	x	x
Brazil	Household Survey	x	x									x		x	x
Brazil	Population Census	x				x						x		x	x
Bulgaria	Household Survey	x						x					x	x	x
Burkina Faso	Population Census				x						x	x	x	x	
Cambodia	Population Census	x									x	x	x	x	
Cambodia	Household survey					x					x		x	x	
Cameroun	Population Census				x	x					x	x	x	x	
Canada	Household Survey				x			x					x	x	x
Chile	Household Survey				x						x		x	x	x
China	Household Survey	x									x	x	x	x	
Colombia	Population Census										x		x	x	
Congo	Population Census										x			x	
Costa Rica	Household Survey				x	x					x		x		x
Costa Rica	Population Census				x	x					x		x	x	x
Croatia	Population Census		x					x					x	x	x
Cyprus	Household Survey							x					x	x	x
Czech Republic	Administrative Records	x								x				x	x
Czech Republic	Household Survey							x					x		x
Denmark	Household Survey							x					x		x
Dominica	Population Census		x					x					x	x	x
Dominican Republic	Population Census										x		x	x	
Egypt	Population Census				x						x	x	x	x	
Estonia	Household Survey							x					x		x
Ethiopia	Household Survey				x						x	x	x	x	
Fiji	Population Census		x								x	x			x
Finland	Household Survey							x					x		x
France	Household Survey							x					x	x	x
Gabon	Population Census				x						x	x	x	x	

Germany	Household Survey						x	x					x			x	x
Ghana	Multiple Sources			x						x			x			x	x
Greece	Household Survey				x			x					x			x	x
Greece	Household Survey						x	x						x		x	x
Guinea Conakry	Household Survey				x					x			x			x	x
Haiti	Household Survey					x		x						x		x	x
Hong Kong, China	Household Survey				x			x						x		x	x
Hungary	Household Survey						x	x						x		x	x
Iceland	Administrative Records	x									x					x	x
India	Household Survey										x		x			x	x
India	Population Census			x							x		x			x	x
Indonesia	Population Census			x							x			x			x
Iran	Population Census	x									x					x	x
Iran	Population Census				x						x					x	x
Iraq	Household Survey										x		x			x	x
Ireland	Household Survey						x	x					x			x	x
Israel	Social Survey	x			x			x						x		x	x
Italy	Household Survey						x	x						x		x	x
Italy	Household Survey				x			x						x		x	x
Japan	Establishment Survey	x									x					x	x
Jordan	Household Survey					x					x					x	
Kenya	Household Survey				x						x		x			x	x
Korea	Establishment Survey	x									x						x
Korea	Establishment Survey	x									x					x	x
Korea	Population Census	x									x					x	x
Kosovo	Population Census										x				x		x
Lao Democratic Rep.	Household Survey	x									x		x			x	x
Latvia	Household Survey						x	x						x		x	x
Lesotho	Population Census				x						x			x		x	x
Liberia	Household survey					x								x		x	x
Lithuania	Population Census		x								x			x		x	x
Luxembourg	Household Survey						x	x						x			x
Macau China	Population Census				x			x						x		x	x
Madagascar	Multiple Sources				x						x		x			x	x
Malawi	Household Survey				x									x		x	x
Malaysia	Administrative Records	x									x					x	x
Malaysia	Population Census	x									x			x			
Malta	Household Survey						x	x					x				x
Mauritius	Population Census				x			x						x		x	x
Mexico	Population Census		x					x						x		x	x
Moldova	Establishment Survey	x									x		x				x
Mongolia	Population Census	x								x				x		x	x
Mongolia	Household Survey													x		x	x
Morocco	Population Census				x						x		x			x	x
Mozambique	Household Survey					x		x						x		x	x
Myanmar	Population Census	x									x			x		x	
Myanmar	Household Survey		x								x			x			x
Myanmar	Household survey					x					x			x			
Namibia	Household Survey				x						x		x			x	x
Netherlands	Household Survey										x			x			x
Netherlands	Household Survey						x	x						x			x
New Zealand	Household Survey				x			x						x		x	x
Niger	Population Census				x						x		x			x	x
Norway	Household Survey						x	x						x		x	x
Pakistan, Islamic Rep of	Population Census				x						x		x			x	x

Panama	Population Census										x		x	x	x
Paraguay	Population Census	x			x						x	x		x	x
Peru	Household Survey	x									x		x	x	x
Philippines	Population Census				x						x	x		x	x
Poland	Household Survey						x	x					x	x	x
Portugal	Household Survey						x	x					x		x
Russian Federation	Administrative Records				x						x			x	x
Rwanda	Population Census				x	x					x	x		x	x
Saudi Arabia	Household Survey	x									x	x		x	x
Senegal	Household Survey		x		x						x			x	x
Seychelles	Population Census			x							x			x	x
Singapore	Administrative Records	x								x				x	x
Slovakia	Household Survey						x	x					x	x	x
Slovenia	Household Survey						x	x					x	x	x
South Africa	Population Census					x		x					x	x	x
South Africa	Household Survey				x	x		x					x	x	x
Spain	Household Survey				x				x				x	x	x
Spain	Household Survey						x	x					x	x	x
Sri Lanka	Population Census										x	x		x	x
Sudan	Household Survey				x					x			x	x	x
Swaziland	Household Survey				x						x			x	x
Sweden	Household Survey				x						x		x	x	
Switzerland	Household Survey	x						x					x	x	x
Tanzania	Household Survey			x									x	x	x
Thailand	Household Survey	x			x						x		x	x	x
Togo	Household Survey				x	x					x		x	x	x
Tonga	Population Census					x					x		x	x	x
Turkey	Household Survey										x	x		x	x
Uganda	Household Survey				x						x		x	x	x
United Arab Emirates	Household Survey				x			x					x		
United Kingdom	Household Survey									x			x	x	x
United Kingdom	Administrative Records	x									x			x	x
United Kingdom	Population Census							x					x	x	x
United States	Household Survey												x	x	x
Uruguay	Population Census, Household Survey				x				x				x	x	x
Uzbekistan	Administrative Records	x									x			x	x
Venezuela	Household Survey										x			x	x
Vietnam	Household Survey	x			x						x	x		x	x
West Bank and Gaza Strip	Population Census				x			x					x	x	x
Zambia	Household Survey				x	x					x		x	x	x
Zambia	Household survey										x	x		x	x
Zimbabwe	Household Survey	x			x						x	x		x	x

Table 3: Method of disability identification, by country

Country	No question	Disability			Health condition			Difficulties with basic activities			Work limited by condition	Scaled response
		No list	List in single question	List of questions	No list	List in single question	List of questions	No list	List in single question	List of questions		
Albania (census)								x				x
Albania (survey)	Questions not included but planned											
Algeria			x									
Argentina									x			
Armenia	NR											
Armenia (LFS survey)		x										
Australia					x							
Austria						x			x		x	
Azerbaijan	Questions not included but planned											
Bangladesh (survey 2014)									x		x	x
Bangladesh (survey 2010)										x		x
Belarus	NR											
Belgium						x			x		x	x
Belize						x			x			x
Bermuda	Unclear											
Brazil (survey)										x*		
Brazil (census)										x*		
Bulgaria						x			x		x	
Burkina Faso		x										
Cambodia (census)			x									
Cambodia (survey)									x			x
Cameroon		x										
Canada									x			x
Chile		x			x				x		x	x
China			x								x	
Colombia									x			
Congo	Unclear											
Costa Rica (survey)									x			
Costa Rica (census)									x			
Croatia									x			
Cyprus						x			x		x	
Czech Republic (survey)						x			x		x	
Czech Republic	NR											
Denmark					x				x		x	
Dominica				x		x			x			
Dominican Republic									x*			
Egypt			x									
Estonia			x		x				x		x	x
Ethiopia			x						x			
Fiji									x			
Finland						x			x		x	x

Netherlands (survey)		x				x						x	
Netherlands (LFS survey)			x				x					x	
New Zealand									x				
Niger			x										
Norway						x						x	
Panama			x										
Pakistan, Islamic Rep. Of			x										
Paraguay			x										
Peru												x	
Philippines		x											
Poland							x		x			x	x
Portugal							x			x		x	
Russian Federation	NR												
Rwanda			x							x		x	
Saudi Arabia			x										
Senegal		x										x	
Seychelles			x										
Singapore	NR												
Slovakia							x			x		x	
Slovenia							x			x		x	
South Africa (census)										x		x	
South Africa (survey)										x			x
Spain										x		x	
Spain (LFS)		x					x			x		x	
Sri Lanka			x										
Sudan							x						
Swaziland	Unclear												
Sweden							x			x		x	
Switzerland							x			x			x
Tanzania			x				x			x			x
Thailand										x			x
Togo										x			x
Tonga							x			x			x
Turkey	Unclear												
United Arab Emirates			x										
Uganda										x		x	x
United Kingdom												x	
United Kingdom (census)		x										x	
United States												x	
Uruguay (survey)		x					x			x		x	x
Uruguay (census)										x			x
Uzbekistan	NR												
Venezuela	Unclear												
Vietnam		x								x			
West Bank and Gaza		x					x			x			
Zambia (survey 2006)							x			x			x
Zambia (survey 2008)			x										
Zimbabwe	Unclear												

* - mixed with disabilities

NR- not relevant (administrative records or establishment survey)