Harmonised Concepts and Questions for Social Data Sources

Primary Principles

Long-lasting Health Conditions and Illnesses; Impairments and Disability
About This Document and Update History

Primary Principles

About this document
This document forms part of a series that replaces the original Harmonised Concepts and Questions for Government Social Surveys. This series will make topics easier to find, with clearer guidance and consistent layouts. By using a series of documents, updates will be simpler and faster, and new topics will be easier to incorporate.

This document is part of the set of Harmonised Primary Principles for social sources. These are concepts and questions that apply to most major government social surveys.

For more information, please see the Introductory Document, available on our website.

This is Version 1.1 published in May 2015
This document was updated to Version 1.1 to correct minor formatting errors and to change the term ‘Harmonised Standards’ to ‘Harmonised Principles’ as agreed by the National Statistics Harmonisation Group.

Previous versions:

Version 1.0 published in August 2011.
This document was produced to include the revised set of questions for long lasting health conditions and illnesses (including impairment and disability). These revised questions reflect significant changes in disability data inputs. Previously, a basic set of these questions appeared in the Secondary Principle, ‘General Health and Carers’ (now revised and now a Primary Principle). These changes have been ratified by the Heads of Profession for Statistics and were developed through consultation with the GSS Disability and General Health Topic Group.

Please note that version control is new to this edition. Please ensure that you always use up-to-date versions of questions and outputs by checking our website for new editions – the version number will be incremented when changes are made.
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Introduction

Primary Principles

These harmonised principles cover the collection of data to measure long-lasting illness, functional impairment and activity restriction succinctly for use in generating statistical outputs relevant to the needs of local, national and European administrations.

The Equalities Data Review, published in 2007 identified a need to improve the co-ordination, comparability, quality, accessibility and presentation of disability statistics through developing and applying a principled approach to data collection and its propagation. ONS and ODI were tasked to develop harmonised principles to meet this need and began deliberating in 2008 to this end. The objectives of the project were to:

a) establish a conceptual framework for disability definition
b) develop questions to measure disability in accordance with the definitions
c) test the performance of these questions in terms of interpretability and coherence with established sources
d) recommend an implementation across social survey sources to harmonise data collection and the presentation of disability statistics.

The harmonised principles are designed to be consistent with a conceptual framework of disability that encompasses medical, individual and societal factors as documented in the International Classification of Functioning (ICF), the World Health Organisation's definition of disability and the disablement process. This approach is consistent with the collection of traditional data on activity restriction, long-standing illness and impairment, as well as data on the importance of aspects of society which restrict the participation of people with impairments relative to those without impairments. The primary principles apply to the collection of data on health conditions or illnesses of a long-lasting nature, the type of impairment associated with the condition(s), and the impact on day-to-day activities. The secondary principle, once ratified will cover the data inputs and outputs to measure participation in key areas of life and the importance of social barriers, such as building design and transport inadequacies, affecting participation differentially among people who either have impairments or do not.

These principles take account of the needs of national and European administrations for data continuity and the definitions and guidelines contained in UK and EU legislation, including the Equality Act and the EU-SILC regulation. The questions are intended as a suite, not all of which has to be used in every situation.

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Long-lasting Health Conditions and Illnesses

Inputs

Long-standing physical or mental health conditions or illnesses

One question providing a measure of any self-reported health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last a year or more for use in social surveys and suitable for data collection using CAPI, CATI. This question can be used with paper-based and online self completion forms too.

This question focuses exclusively on the capture of physical or mental health conditions or illnesses long-lasting in nature (that is, lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more). The focus here is on a long-lasting condition which the person is likely to have for the remainder of their lives, and is likely to require some level of supervision and treatment over a long period of time such as diabetes. The reason for including future judgement is that for most conditions, while symptoms can be controlled with medication and/or other treatment, they are not curable and therefore relevant to the individual for the foreseeable future.

An important difference in this new harmonised question compared with previous question versions is the exclusion of the term disability. The conceptual framework of disability applied in the construction of this suite of questions separates out the components leading to a simplified classification of disability, which is defined as activity restriction and participation restriction. If disability is included in this question, then we would make an assumption of restricted participation and activities before this information has been elicited and assume health conditions and illnesses and disabilities are interchangeable terms.

The existing questions collected in the General Lifestyle Survey (GLF), Family Resources Survey (FRS) and other surveys mix the concepts of illness, disability and infirmity. However, the importance of the social model approach to classifying disability outlined in the Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit document \(^1\), the Equality Act legislation \(^2\) and the clear distinction drawn in EU-SILC guidelines \(^3\) for collecting information on chronic illness distinct from disability strongly opposes this mixing of concepts in this question. Furthermore, the findings from the extensive consultation across government, academia and the voluntary sector, and the lessons learnt from cognitive and field testing undertaken as part of the development of the Life Opportunity Survey \(^4\) also strongly supported the disentanglement of the concepts of health conditions and illnesses and those of impairment and disability.

There is no intention to capture temporary conditions with this question, however serious they might be; the possible impact on the individuals daily activities is also irrelevant. As a guide the following are included:

- conditions which flare up intermittently, but the exacerbation has a shorter duration than 12 months;
- problems which may not be perceived as serious or are well-controlled and managed by treatment and lifestyle adjustments and do not perceptibly affect day-to-day activities, but are nevertheless long-lasting;

The question is designed to include sensory deficits, non temporary mobility problems including dyspraxia and cerebral palsy, developmental conditions such as autism and Asperger’s syndrome, conditions associated with learning impairment (disability) such as Down’s syndrome or dyslexia as well as common conditions and illnesses such as asthma, diabetes, heart and other circulatory conditions, respiratory conditions, digestive conditions, anxiety and depression etc. are relevant if they have lasted or are expected to last 12 months or more. Seasonal conditions such as hay fever which recur and have lasted or are expected to recur in the future should also be included.

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\(^1\) Improving the life chances of disabled people, PMSU, London 2005
**Long-lasting Health Conditions and Illnesses**

**Inputs**

**HARMONISED QUESTION**

ASK IN PERSON IF AGE >=16  
ASK BY PROXY IF AGE <16 OR NOT FIT TO RESPOND IN PERSON

Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more?  
1. Yes;  
2. No.

Spontaneous only:  
3. Don’t know  
4. Refusal

As an Introduction to the question, the interviewer should state:

*This question asks you about any health conditions, illnesses or impairments you may have.*

Interviewers should provide guidance regarding the coverage of conditions and illnesses if asked for clarification: for example, a respondent may state their mobility is impaired but is unsure whether this classifies as a long-lasting condition or illness. Interviewers should guide the respondent in line with the examples given above.

Spontaneous responses can be recorded but should not be presented as options to respondents.

If respondents are too ill to respond on their own behalf, if present, proxy responses from a family member or friend can be recorded. For those not able to speak English, translators should be used to assist with the data collection.

This question is designed to replace the following question variants used in national government social surveys.

**FAMILY RESOURCES SURVEY**

HEALTH  
Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? By 'long-standing' I mean anything that has troubled you over a period of at least 12 months or that is likely to affect you over a period of at least 12 months  
1. Yes  
2. No

**ANNUAL POPULATION SURVEY\LABOUR FORCE SURVEY**

LNGLIM  
Do you have any health problems or disabilities that you expect will last for more than a year?  
1 Yes  
2 No

**INTEGRATED HOUSEHOLD SURVEY GENERAL LIFESTYLE MODULE\CONTINUOUS HOUSEHOLD SURVEY\HEALTH SURVEY FOR ENGLAND**

LSILL; LONGILL;  
Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity by long-standing I mean anything that has troubled you over a period of time or is likely to affect you over a period of time?
Long-lasting Health Conditions and Illnesses

Inputs

1. Yes
2. No

LIFE OPPORTUNITIES SURVEY

Health
Do you have any long-standing physical or mental impairment, illness or disability? By long-standing I mean anything that has affected you over a period of at least 12 months or that is likely to affect you over a period of at least 12 months?

1. Yes
2. No
Long-lasting Health Conditions and Illnesses

Outputs

The following table shows the output categories for long-lasting illness. Coding of these categories should comply with the specific coding conventions applied in the specific survey source. ONS is not prescribing a code but an example is given in the table.

Output categories: Long lasting physical or mental health conditions or Illnesses

Suggested variable name: HealIll

**Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Has a long-lasting health condition or illness</th>
<th>Example Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>Numeric 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications for classifications</td>
<td>Numeric 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Refusal = 9

**EU-SILC: Long-standing health problem or Illness**

Equality Act: Not core currently disabled

= 1

= 2
Impairments

Inputs

Impairments associated with any long-lasting physical or mental health conditions or illnesses reported above (Standard version)

One question designed to provide a measure of impairment and co-impairment for use in social surveys and suitable for data collection using CAPI and CATI. This question should not be used in paper-based and online self completion forms until further testing has been completed.

The usefulness of collecting information on the type of impairment was emphasised in consultations and harmonisation group deliberations as it fits the ICF framework and disablement process and enables the identification of the type of functional deficit experienced by the person reporting a long-lasting health condition or illness, for example a mobility deficit.

The prescribed sample coverage for this question is to restrict coverage to those reporting a long-lasting health condition or illness, approximately a third of the sampled population. Stage 1 field testing had shown that while the prevalence of impairment itself is somewhat lower in the routed sample, there was no evidence of a knock-on effect for measures of activity restriction (that is disability), suggesting the additional impairments captured by non-routeing are not associated with activity restriction. As it is the impaired population with activity restriction that is the most useful for policy, the additional costs incurred by administering the impairment question across the whole sample is unjustified. However, for those wanting to capture impairment comprehensively, an alternative version of this question is available for use which excludes routeing.

The content of the independent category list of this question made reference to a number of sources including the DDA list of capacities used to estimate the population prevalence of disability for FRS publications, the Scottish Health Conditions 2011 Census question and the impairment categories captured on the Life Opportunities Survey. While the DDA had specified a list of capacities for disability classification purposes, the Equality Act, which replaces it, does not, which provided greater flexibility in what to include.

The stages 1 and 2 field test findings and further consultation with stakeholders refined this list further:

a) the addition of the word ‘Fatigue’ to the ‘Stamina and Breathing’ category
b) the expansion of the mobility category into a mobility-specific category, which encompasses an ability to walk short distances and climb stairs; and a dexterity category, which involves moving and carrying objects and using work related devices such as a keyboard.

The latter change improves consistency with the Life Opportunities Survey categories and takes account of the different policy needs presented by mobility and dexterity impairment for care and fitness for work.

The purpose of this question is to add detail; whether the reported health condition or illness affects functioning in specified areas. There is a deliberate distinction drawn here between impairments and specific health conditions, illnesses or diseases: This question focuses on the capture of impairment, not the type of health condition By ‘impairment’ we mean the functions that the individual cannot either perform or has difficulty performing because of their health condition (for example, glaucoma is a condition, being unable to see or being partially sighted is an impairment). These categories enable the outcomes for disabled people to be disaggregated by impairment type.

This question collects data using a show card which the interviewer reads out before handing it to the respondent to select which categories apply. There are 9 substantive categories and a free text category to record other impairments not included on the list. Up to 10 categories can be coded.
Impairments

Inputs

HARMONISED QUESTION

ASK IN PERSON IF AGE >=16 AND RESPONDS ‘YES’ TO QUESTION ON ANY LONG-LASTING PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS OR ILLNESSES
ASK BY PROXY IF AGE IS <16 AND A PROXY RESPONSE OF ‘YES’ TO QUESTION ASKING ABOUT ANY LONG-LASTING PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS OR ILLNESS
ASK BY PROXY IF NOT FIT TO RESPOND IN PERSON AND A PROXY RESPONSE OF ‘YES’ TO ANY LONG-LASTING PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS OR ILLNESSES

Do any of these conditions or illnesses affect you in any of the following areas?

Show card and code all that apply asking the respondent to read out which apply to him/her:

1. Vision (for example blindness or partial sight)
2. Hearing (for example deafness or partial hearing)
3. Mobility (for example walking short distances or climbing stairs)
4. Dexterity (for example lifting and carrying objects, using a keyboard)
5. Learning or understanding or concentrating
6. Memory
7. Mental health
8. Stamina or breathing or fatigue
9. Socially or behaviourally (for example associated with autism, attention deficit disorder or Asperger's syndrome)
10. Other (please specify)

Spontaneous only:

11. None of the above
12. Refusal

As an introduction to the question interviewers should state:

The purpose of this question is to establish the type of impairment(s) you experience currently as a result of your health condition or illness. In answering this question, you should consider whether you are affected in any of these areas whilst receiving any treatment or medication or using devices to help you such as a hearing aid for example.

Guidance can be given regarding the category response or responses where clarification is requested. Respondents can select as many responses that apply to them. Interviewers should steer respondents to using the pre-defined categories wherever possible, and avoid collecting precise conditions such as obstructive pulmonary disease, which would code to the category stamina or breathing or fatigue.

Spontaneous responses should not appear on the show card, but refusals or a response that none of the categories apply should be coded.

If respondents are too ill to respond on their own behalf, and if present, proxy responses from a family member or friend can be recorded. For those not able to speak English, translators should be used to assist with the data collection.

This is an additional question, not intended to replace existing questions.
Impairments

Inputs

Impairments associated with any long-lasting physical or mental health conditions or illnesses, whether reported in the previous question or not (Optional alternative version)

One question designed to provide a measure of impairment and co-impairment for use in social surveys and suitable for data collection using CAPI and CATI. This question should not be used in paper-based and online self completion forms until further testing has been completed.

This version is for those surveys wanting to capture impairment type among the general population with or without a long-lasting physical or mental health condition or illness. This is to mitigate any perceived risk of under-reporting of impairment because the respondent does not believe they have a long-lasting physical or mental health condition or illness, but does have an impairment To achieve this differing need, the routeing rule is dispensed with; but this will add to survey costs and the evidence from field testing suggests it is unnecessary.

The question collects data using a show card which the interviewer reads out to the respondent before handing it to them to select which categories apply. There are 9 substantive categories, a free text category to record other impairments not included on the list, and a category to code no impairment. Up to 10 categories can be coded.

HARMONISED QUESTION

ASK IN PERSON IF AGE >=16
ASK BY PROXY IF AGE <16 OR NOT FIT TO RESPOND IN PERSON

Do you have any health conditions or illnesses which affect you in any of the following areas? Show card and code all that apply asking the respondent to read out which apply to him/her:

1. Vision (for example blindness or partial sight)
2. Hearing (for example deafness or partial hearing)
3. Mobility (for example walking short distances or climbing stairs)
4. Dexterity (for example lifting and carrying objects, using a keyboard)
5. Learning or understanding or concentrating
6. Memory
7. Mental health
8. Stamina or breathing or fatigue
9. Socially or behaviourally (for example associated with autism, attention deficit disorder or Asperger's syndrome)
10. Other (please specify)
11. None of the above

Spontaneous only:

12. Refusal

As an introduction to the question interviewers should state:

The purpose of this question is to ask you about any impairment(s) you have. In answering this question, you should consider whether you are affected in any of these areas whilst receiving any treatment or medication or using devices to help you such as a hearing aid for example.

Guidance can be given regarding the category response or responses where clarification is requested. Respondents can select as many responses that apply to them. Interviewers should steer respondents to using the pre-defined categories wherever possible, and avoid collecting precise conditions such as obstructive pulmonary disease, which would code to the category stamina or breathing or fatigue.

A spontaneous response of refusal should not appear on the show card but should be coded.

If respondents are too ill to respond on their own behalf, and if present, proxy responses from a family member or friend can be recorded. For those not able to speak English, translators should be used to assist with the data collection.
**Impairments**

**Outputs**

**Output categories: Impairments (standard version)**
The following table shows the output categories for impairments. Coding of these categories should comply with the specific coding conventions applied in the specific survey source. ONS is not prescribing a code but an example is given in the table. These data are independent and therefore more than one category can apply to a record, up to a maximum of 10. Data output files will need 10 variables to cover this item, 9 numeric and 1 string free text variable up to 255 characters in length.

Suggested variable names: IMPCAT_1 THRU IMPCAT_10

**Do any of these conditions or illnesses affect you in any of the following areas?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Example Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has a Vision impairment</td>
<td>Numeric 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a Hearing impairment</td>
<td>Numeric 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a Mobility impairment</td>
<td>Numeric 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a dexterity impairment</td>
<td>Numeric 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a Learning impairment</td>
<td>Numeric 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a Memory impairment</td>
<td>Numeric 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a Mental Health impairment</td>
<td>Numeric 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a Stamina, Breathing or Fatigue impairment</td>
<td>Numeric 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a Developmental impairment</td>
<td>Numeric 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has other type of impairment</td>
<td>String (255)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| None of the above                                           | Numeric -8   |
| Refusal                                                     | Numeric -9   |

**Output categories: Impairments (alternative version)**
The following table shows the output categories for impairments using the alternative version for comprehensive sample coverage. Coding of these categories should comply with the specific coding conventions applied in the specific survey source. ONS is not prescribing a code but an example is given in the table. These data are independent and therefore more than one category can apply to a record, up to a maximum of 10. Data output files will need 11 variables to cover this item, 10 numerical and 1 string free text variable up to 255 characters in length. A code of ‘None of the above’ in the alternative version is a substantive category.

Suggested variable names: IMPCAT_1 THRU IMPCAT_11

**Do you have any health conditions or illnesses which affect you in any of the following areas?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Example Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has a Vision impairment</td>
<td>Numeric 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a Hearing impairment</td>
<td>Numeric 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a Mobility impairment</td>
<td>Numeric 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a Dexterity impairment</td>
<td>Numeric 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a Learning impairment</td>
<td>Numeric 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a Memory impairment</td>
<td>Numeric 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a Mental Health impairment</td>
<td>Numeric 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a Stamina, Breathing or Fatigue impairment</td>
<td>Numeric 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has a Developmental impairment</td>
<td>Numeric 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has other type of impairment</td>
<td>String 255</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| None of the above                                           | Numeric 10   |
| Refusal                                                     | Numeric -9   |
**Activity Restriction**

**Inputs**

**Activity restriction (limitation) and its duration associated with any long-lasting physical or mental health conditions or illnesses reported**

Two questions providing a measure of restriction carrying-out day-to-day activities by extent and duration. These can be used in social surveys and suitable for data collection using CAPI, CATI. These questions can also be used with paper-based and online self completion forms too.

These can be used to establish whether a person with a long-lasting physical or mental health condition or illness is restricted in carrying-out normal day-to-day activities.

The purpose of capturing information on restriction carrying-out day-to-day activities is to enable the operationalisation of the core definition of currently disabled people made statute in the Equality Act 2010; but also have functionality to capture data required by the European Union's Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC).

The Equality Act generally defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental health condition or impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This differs from the definition previously stipulated in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, which also required the disabled person to show that their normal day-to-day activities produced a substantial adverse effect in one or more of one specified capacities such as mobility, speech, or memory. The current EU-SILC regulation variable guideline requires capturing data on limitation carrying-out daily activities people usually do for the past six months by extent of limitation.

The term ‘day-to-day activities’ was generally taken by respondents to refer to routine activities; cooking, shopping, dressing, bathing and gardening, difficulty crossing the road, lifting items above the head and walking a defined distance were some of the functional difficulties identified in cognitive testing.

The capture of the extent to which daily activities are affected was deemed beneficial in consultations; but required testing to examine any relationship with the term substantial used in the Equality Act and the term ‘severely’ limited used in the European Health Interview Survey which the EU-SILC data were required to harmonise with. The use of the responses categories ‘limited a lot’ and ‘limited a little’ in the Census 2011 question on disability and the preference for response categories containing the plain English terms ‘a lot’ and ‘a little’ was adopted in the field testing of these questions.

It was also agreed that activity restriction would only be captured among the sub-sample of respondents with a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last a year or more, to ensure compatibility with the Equality Act definition.

Field testing of this question had three principal objectives:

a) To establish the level of coherence with other data sources capturing similar data

b) To determine the relationship between the terms ‘substantial long-term effect’ used in the FRS and LOS, ‘limited’ and ‘strongly limited’ used in the GLF, ‘limited a lot’ and ‘limited a little’ used in the Census 2011 question, and the terms ‘a lot’ of reduced ability and ‘a little’ reduced ability used in the field test question.

c) To assess whether the prevalence of activity restriction is artefactually inflated by capturing extent compared with simple dichotomised responses of ‘Yes’ or ‘No’.

There was a good level of agreement between the estimate derived from the FRS criterion of substantial difficulty in one or more capacity domains and the estimates from both the field test conflated categories of ‘Yes, a lot’ or ‘Yes, a little’ reduced ability carrying-out day-to-day activities and the field tested 2011 Census question’s conflated categories of ‘Yes, limited a lot’ and ‘Yes, limited a little’. This suggests the term ‘substantial’ concurs with the combined plain English response categories used in the harmonised question and the 2011 Census question. Table 1 shows the comparative prevalence calculated from each external source together with the field test stage 2 estimates.
Activity Restriction

Inputs

Table 1  Per Cent prevalence of activity restriction by extent, persons aged 16 years and over

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field test harmonised principle question — Opinions 2010</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your condition or illness do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry-out day-to-day activities 'Yes a lot' or 'Yes a little'?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Yes, a lot'</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Yes, a little'</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRS question – 2008–09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does this/do these health problems or disabilities mean that you have substantial difficulties with any of these areas of your life? Mobility; lifting; manual dexterity; continence; communication; memory, concentrate, understand or learn; physical danger; balance; other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Yes, a lot'</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Yes, a little'</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRS question – 2009–10 interim results</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does this/do these health problems or disabilities mean that you have substantial difficulties with any of these areas of your life? Mobility; lifting; manual dexterity; continence; communication; memory, concentrate, understand or learn; physical danger; balance; other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Yes, a lot'</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Yes, a little'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOS question 2009–10 interim results</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does this/do these health problems or disabilities mean that you have substantial difficulties with any of these areas of your life? Mobility; lifting; manual dexterity; continence; communication; memory, concentrate, understand or learn; physical danger; balance; other</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Yes, a lot'</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Yes, a little'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLF question 2009</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does this illness(es) or disability(ies) limit your activities in any way? Limited or strongly limited</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Yes, limited a lot'</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly limited</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Test of 2011 Census question — Opinions 2010</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted or is expected to last 12 months or more</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, limited a lot or yes limited a little</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, limited a lot</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, limited a little</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


There was no evidence in the field testing that the capture of extent produced an artefactual inflation in prevalence by conflating extent categories compared with questions using dichotomised ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ responses.
Activity Restriction

Inputs

HARMONISED QUESTION

ASK IN PERSON IF AGE>=16 AND RESPONDS ‘YES’ TO QUESTION ASKING ABOUT ANY LONG-LASTING PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS OR ILLNESSES

ASK BY PROXY IF AGE IS <16 AND A PROXY RESPONSE OF ‘YES’ TO QUESTION ASKING ABOUT ANY LONG-LASTING PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS OR ILLNESS

ASK BY PROXY IF NOT FIT TO RESPOND IN PERSON AND A PROXY RESPONSE OF ‘YES’ TO ANY LONG-LASTING PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS OR ILLNESSES

Does your condition or illness/do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry-out day-to-day activities?

Running prompt:

1. Yes, a lot
2. Yes, a little
3. Not at all

As an Introduction to the question, the interviewer should state:

This question asks about whether your health condition or illness currently affects your ability to carry-out normal day-to-day activities, either a lot or a little or not at all. In answering this question, you should consider whether you are affected whilst receiving any treatment or medication for your condition or illness and/or using any devices such as a hearing aid, for example.

Guidance can be provided about what is meant by normal day to day activities. These are washing and dressing, household cleaning, cooking, shopping for essentials, using public or private transport, walking a defined distance, climbing stairs, remembering to pay bills, and lifting objects from the ground or a work surface in the kitchen, moderate manual tasks such as gardening, gripping objects such as cutlery and hearing and speaking in a noisy room.

Guidance on interpreting extent categories are in the context of how much assistance a person needs to carry-out daily activities and whether they are house bound; Yes, a lot, for example, would be appropriate for someone usually needing some level of support of family members, friends or personal social services for most normal daily activities.

The respondents should answer on the basis of their current extent of activity restriction, taking account of any treatment, medication or other devices such as a hearing aid they may receive or use.

This question is designed to replace the following question variants used in national government social surveys.

FAMILY RESOURCES SURVEY

HProb
Does this physical or mental illness or disability (Do any of these physical or mental illnesses or disabilities) limit your activities in any way?

1. Yes
2. No
Activity Restriction

Inputs

AND

DisDif
Does this/Do these health problem(s) or disability(ies) mean that you have substantial difficulties with any of these areas of your life?

(1) Moving Mobility (moving about)
(2) Lifting Lifting, carrying or moving objects
(3) Hands Manual dexterity (using your hands to carry out everyday tasks)
(4) Bladder Continence (bladder and bowel control)
(5) Speech Communication (speech, hearing or eyesight)
(6) Learn Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
(7) Danger Recognising when you are in physical danger
(8) Balance Your physical co-ordination (e.g.: balance)
(9) Other Other health problem or disability
(10) None None of these

ANNUAL POPULATION SURVEY\LABOUR FORCE SURVEY

Healim
Do these health problems or disabilities, when taken singly or together, substantially limit your ability to carry out normal day to day activities? If you are receiving medication or treatment, please consider what the situation would be without the medication or treatment.

1 Yes
2 No

INTEGRATED HOUSEHOLD SURVEY GENERAL LIFESTYLE MODULE\CONTINUOUS HOUSEHOLD SURVEY\HEALTH SURVEY FOR ENGLAND

IHS GLF and HSE

LimitAct
Does this illness or disability (Do any of these illnesses or disabilities) limit your activities in any way?

1. Yes
2. No

AND

LimitL6
Would you say your activities are limited or strongly limited?
1. Limited
2. Strongly limited

CHS

ACTILIM
Does this illness or disability limit your activities in any way?

1. Yes
2. No
Activity Restriction
Inputs

LIFE OPPORTUNITIES SURVEY

DisDif
Does this/Do these health problem(s) or disability(ies) mean that you have substantial difficulties with any of these areas of your life?

(1) Moving Mobility (moving about)
(2) Lifting Lifting, carrying or moving objects
(3) Hands Manual dexterity (using your hands to carry out everyday tasks)
(4) Bladder Continence (bladder and bowel control)
(5) Speech Communication (speech, hearing or eyesight)
(6) Learn Memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
(7) Danger Recognising when you are in physical danger
(8) Balance Your physical co-ordination (eg: balance)
(9) Other Other health problem or disability
(10) None None of these

Period of time the person experienced activity restriction

The Equality Act requires that any adverse effect on daily activities resulting from a physical or mental health condition, illness or impairment should be long-term as well as substantial. The Act defines ‘long-term’ as lasting or expected to last a year or more or for the rest of the person’s life. The approach taken in estimating the core currently disabled population used in FRS publications does not include a duration term; similarly, the 2011 Census question does not capture the duration of activity restriction, only the duration of the health condition. The question supplying EU-SILC data asked on the GLF does not specify a time frame for either the long-standing condition or the activity restriction, although the former term implies something other than temporary (the current question asked on the GLF is not compliant with the past six month time frame criterion stipulated in the EU-SILC variable concept). The need for a follow-up question which captured duration for use in a classification of disability was deemed beneficial to improve compliance with the EU-SILC variable concept. The following categories were tested: ‘less than six months’, ‘between 6 months and 12 months’, and ‘12 months or more’.

The field test results demonstrated the effect of using the duration filter question to classify a case of disability is to reduce prevalence estimates; a 12 months or more time filter reduced prevalence of activity restriction to 18.8 per cent, while a 6 months or more time filter reduced prevalence to 20.7 per cent. Consequently, the application of this filter for use in the UK Equality Act classification will cause a discontinuity from FRS estimates and additionally be incoherent with the Census 2011 question. However, it will provide a conservative estimate of Equality Act disability.

However, application of the time filter improves comparability with EU-SILC historical estimates; the estimate of ‘severely hampered in daily activities’ using the field test question’s category ‘Yes, a lot’ and filtering using the categories between 6 months and 12 months and 12 months or more is 9.9 per cent, while the estimate of ‘hampered in daily activities to some extent’ using the field test question’s category ‘Yes, a little’ and the same duration categories is 11.0 per cent, which compares favourably with the UK estimates published on the Eurostat website for 2009.

Table 2 shows the estimates derived from the harmonised principle questions in the field test with those currently published on the Eurostat website for the UK in 2009.
Activity Restriction

Inputs

Table 2 EU-SILC derived and published disability: per cent prevalence, persons aged 16 years and over

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
<th>95% confidence limits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Field test question – Opinions 2010</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>20.0 – 23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For how long has your ability to carry-out day-to-day activities been reduced?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than six months or between 6 and 12 months or 12 months or more</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.7 – 1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than six months</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.7 – 1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between 6 months and 12 months</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.2 – 2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 months or more</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>17.0 – 20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revised EU-SILC estimate taking account of duration</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>18.8 – 22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revised EU-SILC estimate of 'Severely hampered in daily activities' using the activity restriction category 'Yes, a Lot' and the duration categories 'between six months and 12 months' and '12 months or more'</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>8.5 – 11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revised EU-SILC estimate of 'Hampered in daily activities to some extent' using the activity restriction category 'Yes, a little' and the duration categories 'between six months and 12 months' and '12 months or more'</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>9.3 – 12.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU-SILC 2009 estimate on Eurostat website – conflated categories ‘Severely hampered in daily activities’ and ‘Hampered in daily activities to some extent’</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU-SILC 2009 estimate on Eurostat website – ‘Severely hampered in daily activities’</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU-SILC 2009 estimate on Eurostat website – ‘Hampered in daily activities to some extent’</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: ONS Opinions Survey 2010; Eurostat

Further information on the field testing of these questions can be found in the field test reports which will be published on the ONS website during the autumn 2011, and links to these reports will be added to this document following their publication.

HARMONISED QUESTION

ASK IN PERSON IF AGE>=16 AND RESPONDS ‘YES’ TO QUESTION ASKING ABOUT ANY LONG-LASTING PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS OR ILLNESSES AND Responds YES, A LOT’ OR ‘YES, A LITTLE’ TO THE ACTIVITY RESTRICTION QUESTION

ASK BY PROXY IF AGE IS <16 AND A PROXY RESPONSE OF ‘YES’ TO QUESTION ASKING ABOUT ANY LONG-LASTING PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS OR ILLNESS AND A PROXY RESPONSE OF ‘YES, A LOT’ OR ‘YES, A LITTLE’ TO THE ACTIVITY RESTRICTION QUESTION

ASK BY PROXY IF NOT FIT TO RESPOND IN PERSON AND A PROXY RESPONSE OF ‘YES’ TO ANY LONG-LASTING PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS OR ILLNESSES AND A PROXY RESPONSE OF ‘YES, A LOT’ OR ‘YES, A LITTLE’ TO THE ACTIVITY RESTRICTION QUESTION

For how long has your ability to carry-out day-to-day activities been reduced?

Running prompt:

1. Less than six months
2. Between six months and 12 months
3. 12 months or more

This question follows on naturally from the previous question and does not need a specific introduction by the interviewer.

This question does not replace existing questions.
Activity Restriction

Outputs

Restriction (limitation) carrying out normal day to day activities

The following table shows the output categories for activity restriction. Coding of these categories should comply with the specific coding conventions applied in the specific survey source. ONS is not prescribing a code but an example is given in the table.

Suggested variable name: REDACT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does your condition or illness/do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry-out day-to-day activities?</th>
<th>Example Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, a lot</td>
<td>Numeric 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, a little</td>
<td>Numeric 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, not at all</td>
<td>Numeric 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality Act: Core currently disabled population</td>
<td>= 1 OR 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality Act: Not core currently disabled</td>
<td>= 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU-SILC: Not severely hampered in daily activities</td>
<td>= 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU-SILC: Not hampered in daily activities to some extent</td>
<td>= 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Duration of restriction (limitation) carrying out normal day to day activities

The following table shows the output categories for duration of activity restriction. Coding of these categories should comply with the specific coding conventions applied in the specific survey source. ONS is not prescribing a code but an example is given in the table.

Suggested variable name: DURREDACT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For how long has your ability to carry-out day-to-day activities been reduced?</th>
<th>Example Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 6 months</td>
<td>Numeric 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between six months and 12 months</td>
<td>Numeric 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 months or more</td>
<td>Numeric 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| EU-SILC: Severely hampered in daily activities                              | =2 OR 3 AND  
REDACT = 1                                                                  |
| EU-SILC Hampered in daily activities to some extent                          | =2 OR 3 AND  
REDACT = 2                                                                  |
| EU-SILC Not severely hampered in daily activities                           | = 1          |
| EU-SILC Not hampered in daily activities to some extent                      | = 1          |

Further Information on Harmonisation project

Further information on the harmonisation project can be accessed in two Health Statistics Quarterly articles published in Issue 51 in August 2011. Health Statistics Quarterly can be accessed from the ONS website at:

**Statistical Measures of Disability**

**Inputs**

Statistical Measures of Disability Based on Long-lasting Health Conditions and Illnesses and Activity Restriction

The classification designed to measure the core population of currently disabled people for the Equality Act is shown below in Box 1.

**BOX 1**

Classification of disability in terms of the Equality Act 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Coded 1 (‘Yes’)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AND</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Does your condition or illness do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities? | Coded 1 (Yes, A Lot’)
| OR | Coded 2 (Yes, A Little’)

This population is classified on the basis of having a long-lasting physical or mental health condition or illness which restricts day-to-day activities. The information collected on impairment can be used alongside this classification to provide breakdowns by impairment type.

The harmonised questions and the classifications derivable from them exclude the non-core population of disabled people, covered in the Equality Act 2010. This group encompasses:

- a) those with a progressive condition specified in the Act (namely HIV/AIDS, Cancer or Multiple Sclerosis) whether or not the condition has a substantial adverse effect carrying-out day-to-day activities
- b) those who would be restricted without medication or treatment
- c) those that have been restricted in the past but are no longer restricted

These groups were excluded from the harmonised principles for the following reasons:

- a) the problems associated with capturing valid data on the three specified progressive conditions found in cognitive testing and in the LOS field testing
- b) the prohibitively high additional costs and added interview burden associated with implementing an additional three elements across general social survey sources
- c) the questions capturing these non-core elements of the Equality Act will be maintained in the FRS and the LOS allowing continuity in population prevalence estimates to be maintained using these sources

The classification designed for EU-SILC measures of long-lasting health conditions or illnesses and disability measurement by extent of activity restriction is shown in Box 2. These measures are for cross-country comparisons and for estimates designed to benchmark with a European average.
### Statistical Measures of Disability

#### Inputs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 2</th>
<th>EU-SILC classifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EU-SILC long-standing health condition or illness</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question:</strong></td>
<td>Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coded 1 (‘Yes’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EU-SILC classification of disability by extent</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Estimate of severely hampered in daily activities</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question:</strong></td>
<td>Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coded 1 (‘Yes’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AND</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question:</strong></td>
<td>Does your condition or illness do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry-out day-to-day activities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coded 1 (‘Yes, A Lot’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AND</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question:</strong></td>
<td>For how long has your ability to carry-out day-to-day activities been reduced?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OR</strong></td>
<td>Coded 2 (‘between 6 months and 12 months’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coded 3 (‘12 months or more’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Estimate of hampered in daily activities to some extent</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question:</strong></td>
<td>Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coded 1 (‘Yes’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AND</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question:</strong></td>
<td>Does your condition or illness do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry-out day-to-day activities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coded 2 (‘Yes, A Little’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AND</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question:</strong></td>
<td>For how long has your ability to carry-out day-to-day activities been reduced?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OR</strong></td>
<td>Coded 2 (‘between 6 months and 12 months’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coded 3 (‘12 months or more’)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A pictorial representation of these classifications is shown in the following flow diagram.
Algorithm to derive the core population of disabled people with rights under the Equality Act 2010 and for EU-SILC disability

```
Respondent

Do you have any physical or mental health condition lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?

Yes

EU-SILC long-standing Illness\health problem

No EU-SILC long-standing Illness\health problem

No

Not Disabled EU-SILC and Equality Act

Yes

Does your condition reduce your ability to carry-out day-to-day activities?

Not at all

Yes

Equality Act Disabled

(IF ‘YES, A LOT’) Severe\ly hampered in daily activities

(IF ‘YES, A LITTLE’) Hampered in daily activities to some extent

Yes, a lot OR Yes, a little

Yes, a lot OR Yes, a little

For how long has your ability to carry-out day-to-day activities been reduced?

Between 6 months and 12 months

OR 12 months or more
```