

Figures on the different types of Disabled persons in Hong Kong

In August 2001, the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD) published its Special Topics Report (STR) Number 28 on “Persons with disabilities and chronic disease”. The definition of disability, at **Annex A**, was drawn up with reference to the Hong Kong Rehabilitation Programme Plan (1998/99 – 2002/03) and having regard to the definitions adopted by other countries/territories for surveys of similar nature and in consultation with relevant parties in Hong Kong.

2. According to the Report, the total number of PWDs was about 269,500, which did not include an estimated number of mentally handicapped persons, ranging between 62,000 and 87,000^{Note}. Adding the number of mentally handicapped, we estimate that there are about 344,000 PWDs on the basis of the findings of the Report. Detailed breakdown of PWDs by disability type is at **Annex B**.

3. It should be noted that the method of **self-reporting** was adopted for the survey, i.e. no medical certification on disability was requested.

^{Note} Statistical assessment was made by C&SD to eliminate possible under-estimation of mentally handicapped through survey.

Annex A

Special Topics Report Number 28, 2000
by the Census and Statistics Department

Definition of “Disability”

Under the survey framework, “persons with disabilities” were defined as those who –

- (a) had been diagnosed by qualified health personnel (such as practitioners of Western medicine and Chinese medicine, including herbalists, bone-setters and acupuncturists) as having one or more of the following 7 conditions; or
- (b) had perceived themselves as having one or more of the first 4 of the following 7 conditions which had lasted, or were likely to last, for a period of 6 months or more at the time of enumeration:
 - (i) restriction in body movement – those who had been diagnosed as being physically handicapped under medical assessment tests or perceived themselves as having long-term difficulty in movement of upper/lower limb or other parts of the body;
 - (ii) seeing difficulty – those who had been diagnosed as being blind or having low vision under medical assessment tests or perceived themselves as having long-term difficulty in seeing with one eye or both eyes whether with or without correcting glasses/contact lenses;
 - (iii) hearing difficulty – those who had been diagnosed as having hearing impairment under medical assessment tests or perceived themselves as having long-term difficulty in hearing;
 - (iv) speech difficulty - those who had been diagnosed as having speech impairment

- under medical assessment tests or perceived themselves as having long-term difficulty in speaking and being understood by others;
- (v) mental illness - those who had been diagnosed as being mentally ill under medical assessment tests (including ex-mentally ill) or had been/were receiving some form of rehabilitation services;
 - (vi) autism - those who had been diagnosed as being autistic under medical assessment tests; and
 - (vii) mental handicap - those who had been diagnosed as being mentally handicapped under medical assessment tests.

Annex B

Special Topics Report Number 28, 2000
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Breakdown of People with Disabilities Surveyed

Type of disability	Total number of persons
Restriction in body movement	103,500
Seeing difficulty	73,900
Hearing difficulty	69,700
Speech difficulty	18,500
Mental illness	50,500
Autism	3,000
<i>Sub-total</i>	<i>269,500</i> ¹
Mental handicap	62,000 – 87,000 ²
Total	344,400

Say, **344,000**

Notes:

1. A person might have more than one disability, and hence the overall number of persons with disabilities is smaller than the sum of persons with individual disabilities. The total number of disabilities adds up to **319,100**, which includes double counting for people with multiple disabilities.
2. 74,500 people with mental handicap are taken in the calculations.