Disability statistics - access to information and communication technologies

Statistics Explained

Data extracted in: December 2024.
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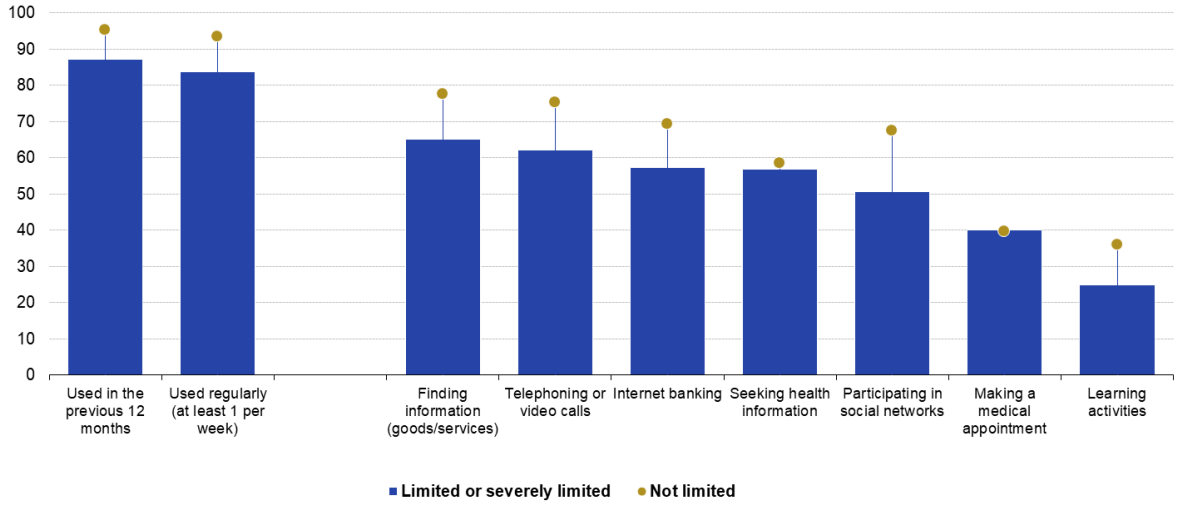
Highlights

" In 2024, 87.2% of people with a disability in the EU had used the internet during the previous 12 months, compared to 95.2% of people without a disability. "

" In 2024 in the EU, people with and without dis-abilities used the internet for making medical appointments and seeking health information at similar rates. "

Share of people aged 16–74 years having used the internet with selected frequencies and for selected purposes, by disability status, EU, 2024
(%)



Source: Eurostat (online data codes: dsb_ictiu01, dsb_ictiu02, dsb_ictiu03, dsb_ictiu04, dsb_ictiu05, dsb_ictiu06, dsb_ictiu07, dsb_ictiu08 and dsb_ictiu09)

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Share of people aged 16–74 years having used the internet with selected frequencies and for selected purposes, by disability status, EU, 2024 (%) Source: Eurostat (dsb_ictiu01), (dsb_ictiu02), (dsb_ictiu03), (dsb_ictiu04), (dsb_ictiu05), (dsb_ictiu06), (dsb_ictiu07), (dsb_ictiu08) and (dsb_ictiu09)

This article is part of a set of articles on disability and presents various aspects of the lives of people with a disability (activity limitation). Participation in the digital society is a key element of the social integration of individuals. The findings presented in this article are based on the European Union's (EU) survey on the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in households and by individuals .

Disability is approximated according to the concept of global activity limitation, which is defined as self-assessment

of own level of limitation – because of health problems – in carrying out usual activities, for at least the previous 6 months (that is, being limited or severely limited in an everyday activity that people usually do).

Use of the internet in general

People with a disability were less likely to have used the internet

In 2024, the share of people in the EU who had used the internet in the previous 12 months was 87.2% among people with a disability and 95.2% among those without (see Figure 1).

In all EU countries, the share of people who had used the internet within the previous 12 months was lower among people with a disability than among those without. In relative terms, the widest disability gaps in 2024 were observed in Bulgaria and Greece, where the shares for people without a disability were, respectively, 1.6 and 1.5 times higher than those for people with a disability. The narrowest disability gap was in the Netherlands, followed by Sweden, Ireland, Luxembourg and Finland.

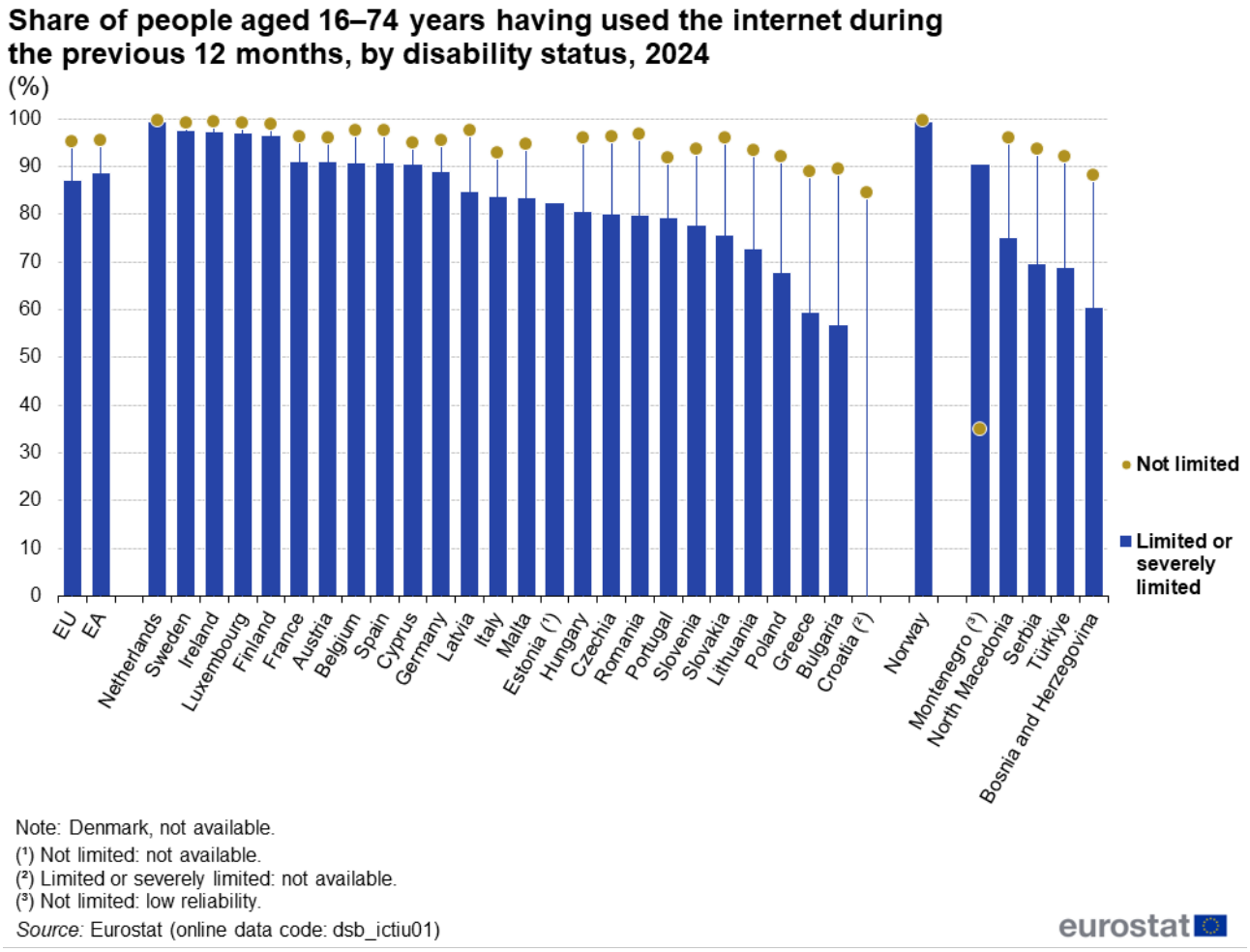

Figure 1: Share of people aged 16–74 years having used the internet during the previous 12 months, by disability status, 2024 (%) Source: Eurostat (dsb_ictiu01)

Figure 2 looks at regular internet use, in other words having used the internet at least once a week, during the previous 3 months (including daily use). In 2024, the share of people in the EU who used the internet regularly was

93.5% among people without a disability, 86.0% for people who were limited in their activity and 78.2% among people who were severely limited.

When analysed by age and sex, the disability gaps for regular internet use in the EU in 2024 were quite similar, always with a higher share of use for people without a disability and a lower share for people who were severely limited. The gender disability gaps were relatively narrow

- among people without a disability or who were limited in their activity, the shares of regular users were marginally higher among men
- among people who were severely limited, the share of regular users was higher among women.

Unlike the analysis by sex, an analysis by age shows substantial differences in regular internet use. There was a clear age gradient, with a notably lower proportion of internet use among people aged 55 to 74 years than among younger people, regardless of their disability status. Furthermore, the disability gap was larger for people aged 55 to 74 years than for people aged 16 to 24 years.

- 98.7% of people in the EU aged 16 to 24 years without a disability regularly used the internet in 2024, compared with 98.1% for people of the same age who were limited in their activity and 87.4% for people of the same age who were severely limited.
- 84.3% of people in the EU aged 55 to 74 years without a disability regularly used the internet in 2024, compared with 78.2% for people of the same age who were limited in their activity and 70.8% for people of the same age who were severely limited.

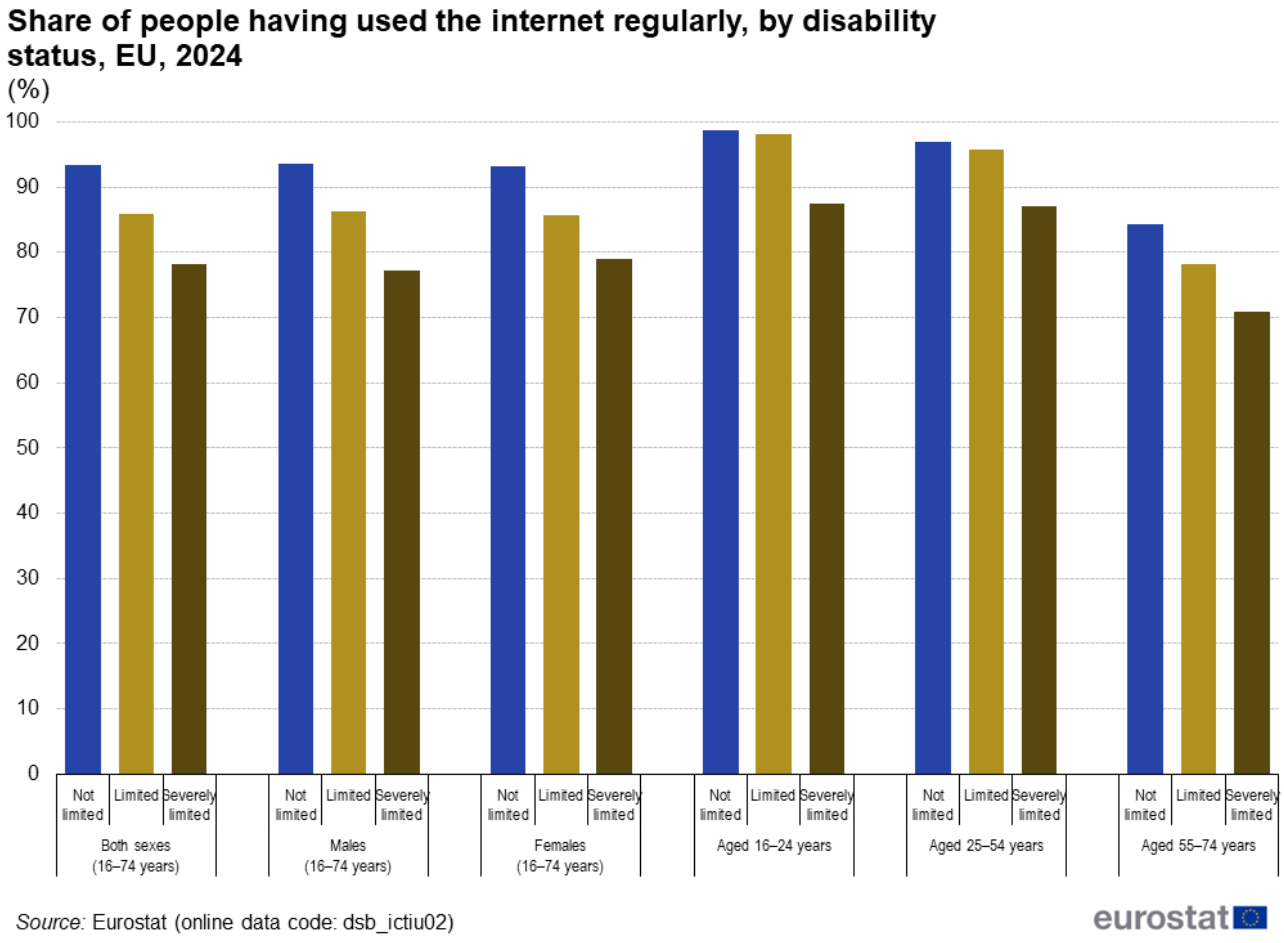

Figure 2: Share of people having used the internet regularly, by disability status, EU, 2024 (%) Source: Eurostat (dsb_ictiu02)

Use for specific activities

Table 1 shows the shares of people aged 16 to 74 years reporting in 2024 that they had participated in 6 specific internet activities during the previous 3 months. Two of these – participating in social networks and making a medical appointment – are also presented in Figures 3 and 4.

- The share of people who reported that they had used the internet for learning activities was 35.8% for people without a disability, 1.4 times higher than the share among people with a disability (25.0%). In every EU country, the share was higher for people without a disability. The largest relative disability gap was in Greece, where the share among people without a disability was 18.3 times higher than among people with a disability.
- The share of people who reported that they had used the internet for telephoning or video calls was 75.3% for people without a disability, 1.2 times higher than the share among people with a disability (62.2%). In every EU country, the share was higher for people without a disability. The largest relative disability gap was in Bulgaria, where the share among people without a disability was 2.0 times higher than among people with a disability.
- The share of people who reported that they had used the internet for finding information on goods and services was 77.5% for people without a disability, 1.2 times higher than the share among people with a disability (65.1%). In every EU country, the share was higher for people without a disability. The largest relative disability gap was in Bulgaria, where the share among people without a disability was 2.0 times higher than among people with a disability.
- The share of people who reported that they had used the internet for banking was 69.3% for people without a disability, again 1.2 times higher than the share among people with a disability (57.2%). In every EU country, the share was higher for people without a disability. The largest relative disability gap was in Romania, where the share among people without a disability was 3.7 times higher than among people with a disability.

Share of people aged 16–74 years having used the internet for particular activities during the previous 3 months, by disability status, 2024
(%)

	Learning activities		Telephoning or video calls		Participating in social networks		Finding information (goods/services)		Internet banking		Making a medical appointment	
	Not limited	Limited / severely limited	Not limited	Limited / severely limited	Not limited	Limited / severely limited	Not limited	Limited / severely limited	Not limited	Limited / severely limited	Not limited	Limited / severely limited
EU	35.8	25.0	75.3	62.2	67.6	50.8	77.5	65.1	69.3	57.2	39.7	40.0
EA	39.5	27.1	76.7	64.4	66.1	51.4	78.4	67.4	72.4	60.8	44.3	43.7
Belgium	43.1	21.4	78.6	65.6	75.4	59.5	83.7	71.3	85.8	73.0	57.8	47.9
Bulgaria	15.6	12.3	74.0	37.2	68.3	21.0	64.1	32.2	32.5	15.9	18.5	5.2
Czechia	32.1	11.2	74.0	48.2	74.6	40.4	89.3	64.9	86.8	61.2	20.5	13.5
Denmark	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Germany	29.5	17.9	78.5	65.1	61.3	43.4	79.8	68.4	70.0	52.9	34.7	35.1
Estonia	:	27.2	:	48.0	:	51.9	:	65.8	:	69.4	:	35.4
Ireland	66.9	55.9	83.5	75.8	74.6	74.3	93.6	91.6	86.8	86.4	38.4	38.7
Greece	24.2	1.3	76.3	41.8	71.3	32.2	81.4	51.7	56.3	23.5	30.9	14.7
Spain	53.2	32.3	79.6	66.3	67.2	52.7	82.6	67.8	77.8	61.7	62.8	54.9
France	39.0	28.4	68.7	59.6	:	:	78.0	68.3	73.4	66.2	58.9	57.2
Croatia	26.4	:	63.0	:	61.0	:	73.6	:	61.7	:	25.8	:
Italy	35.5	25.7	77.5	65.5	59.4	47.1	61.1	53.5	58.8	49.5	31.0	35.9
Cyprus	11.3	7.6	92.4	86.1	87.6	73.6	89.9	77.9	81.3	67.8	4.5	4.9
Latvia	39.0	17.1	81.2	62.3	80.8	57.7	77.4	54.4	91.3	69.2	31.2	23.7
Lithuania	35.8	18.0	82.1	54.2	75.6	47.2	84.4	58.5	85.1	55.1	50.6	31.3
Luxembourg	47.1	34.2	76.2	65.1	70.4	58.8	75.1	63.6	79.2	65.4	55.7	49.3
Hungary	32.2	14.6	79.2	56.2	83.8	62.7	85.9	65.4	71.0	39.4	34.0	26.3
Malta	39.1	19.7	85.7	68.3	78.3	62.7	82.8	62.5	76.7	49.8	31.5	18.5
Netherlands	66.6	48.8	88.7	79.6	81.8	74.3	97.0	94.0	97.4	92.9	51.3	57.5
Austria	34.4	20.4	70.3	61.8	67.5	52.8	79.9	68.3	81.2	65.1	26.7	26.7
Poland	18.4	7.7	61.9	34.6	63.5	35.8	71.7	44.7	59.0	33.8	23.3	14.2
Portugal	41.0	26.5	78.7	59.9	74.0	57.9	82.0	62.8	67.7	48.7	29.8	22.1
Romania	12.1	2.8	75.0	52.2	79.7	50.7	60.9	33.4	31.6	8.5	9.8	5.4
Slovenia	37.8	21.5	63.1	43.0	66.9	48.7	80.8	65.8	67.0	43.4	33.5	31.0
Slovakia	35.8	16.3	68.6	46.0	62.7	35.5	74.4	52.6	62.2	41.0	30.6	20.5
Finland	59.3	45.7	80.6	71.5	82.2	71.5	90.4	84.4	96.4	91.8	64.4	62.5
Sweden	51.1	44.7	80.2	69.6	76.0	69.1	92.7	84.3	86.8	78.2	52.5	55.4
Norway	47.5	41.1	80.0	76.8	90.7	89.2	96.0	93.2	96.8	97.2	72.2	70.4
Bosnia and Herzegovina	41.1	12.2	83.3	54.5	68.2	27.0	70.3	29.2	26.5	5.7	7.8	3.8
Montenegro (1)	9.3	15.9	22.8	88.2	32.3	79.5	10.1	56.2	0.0	16.4	5.1	27.1
North Macedonia	18.8	6.0	91.3	63.9	83.3	48.3	73.0	36.5	42.0	14.3	13.0	5.0
Serbia	24.0	2.9	85.8	51.2	75.1	29.1	72.6	31.2	38.3	10.9	5.1	1.5
Türkiye	13.6	4.5	85.5	61.2	81.0	52.3	70.5	38.0	66.7	36.9	54.3	34.3

(1) Not limited: low reliability.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: dsb_ictiu03, dsb_ictiu04, dsb_ictiu05, dsb_ictiu06, dsb_ictiu07 and dsb_ictiu09)

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Table 1: Share of people aged 16–74 years having used the internet for particular activities during the previous 3 months, by disability status, 2024 (%) Source: Eurostat (dsb_ictiu03), (dsb_ictiu04), (dsb_ictiu05), (dsb_ictiu06), (dsb_ictiu07) and (dsb_ictiu09)

In 2024, the share of people aged 16 to 74 years who reported that they had used the internet for participating in social networks during the previous 3 months was 67.6% for people without a disability, 1.3 times higher than the share among people with a disability (50.8%) – see Figure 3. In every EU country, the share was higher for people without a disability. The largest relative disability gap was in
Bulgaria, where the share among people without a disability was 3.3 times higher than among people with a disability.

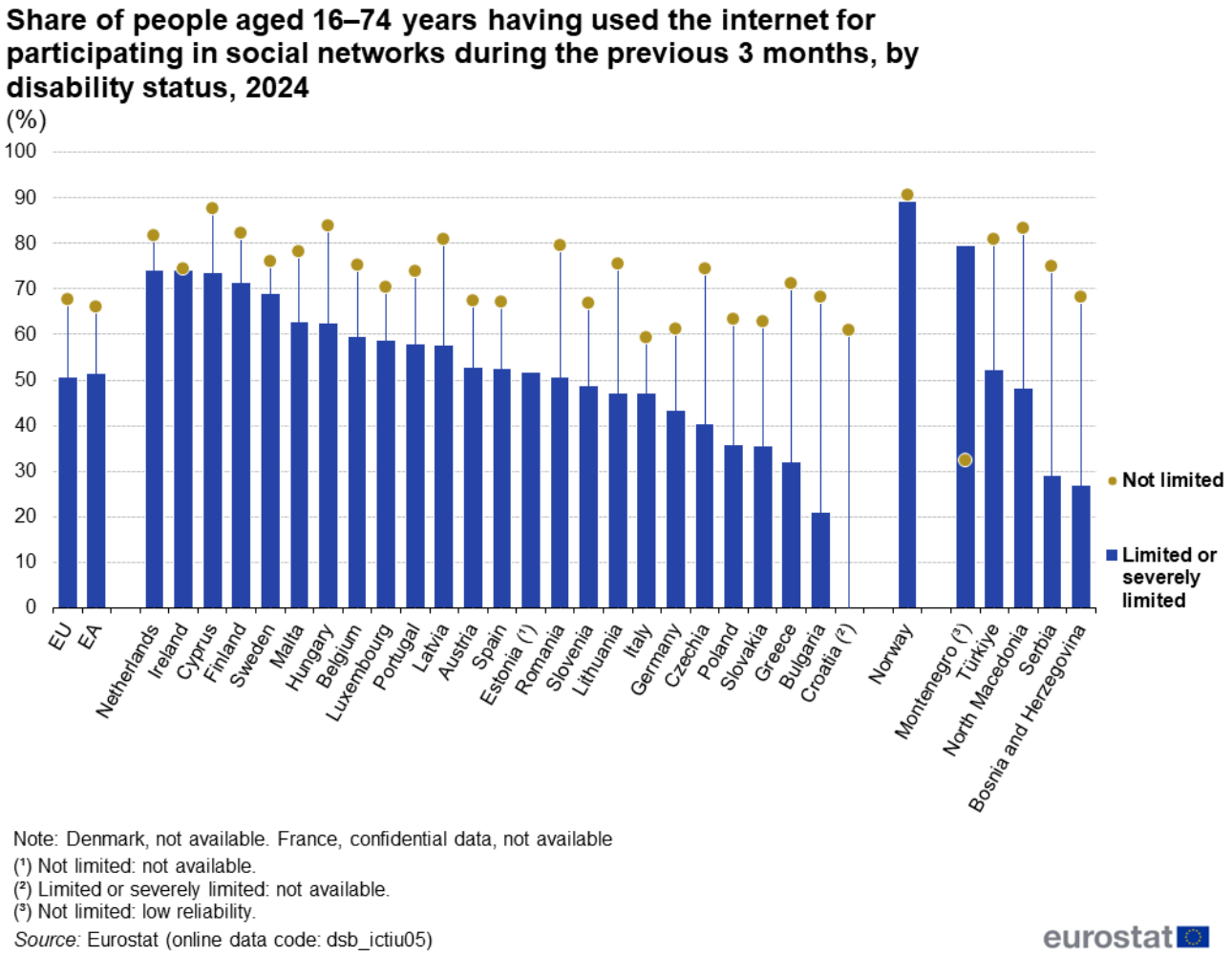

Figure 3: Share of people aged 16–74 years having used the internet for participating in social networks during the previous 3 months, by disability status, 2024 (%) Source: Eurostat (dsb_ictiu05)

In 2024, the share of people aged 16 to 74 years who reported that they had used the internet for making a medical appointment during the previous 3 months was 39.7% for people without a disability, marginally lower than the share among people with a disability (40.0%) – see Figure 4. In a majority of EU countries, the share was higher for people without a disability. The largest relative disability gap was in Bulgaria, where the share among people without a disability was 3.6 times higher than for people with a disability. In Austria, the shares were the same for people with or without a disability. In Italy, the Netherlands, Cyprus, Sweden, Germany and Ireland, the shares were higher for people with a disability.

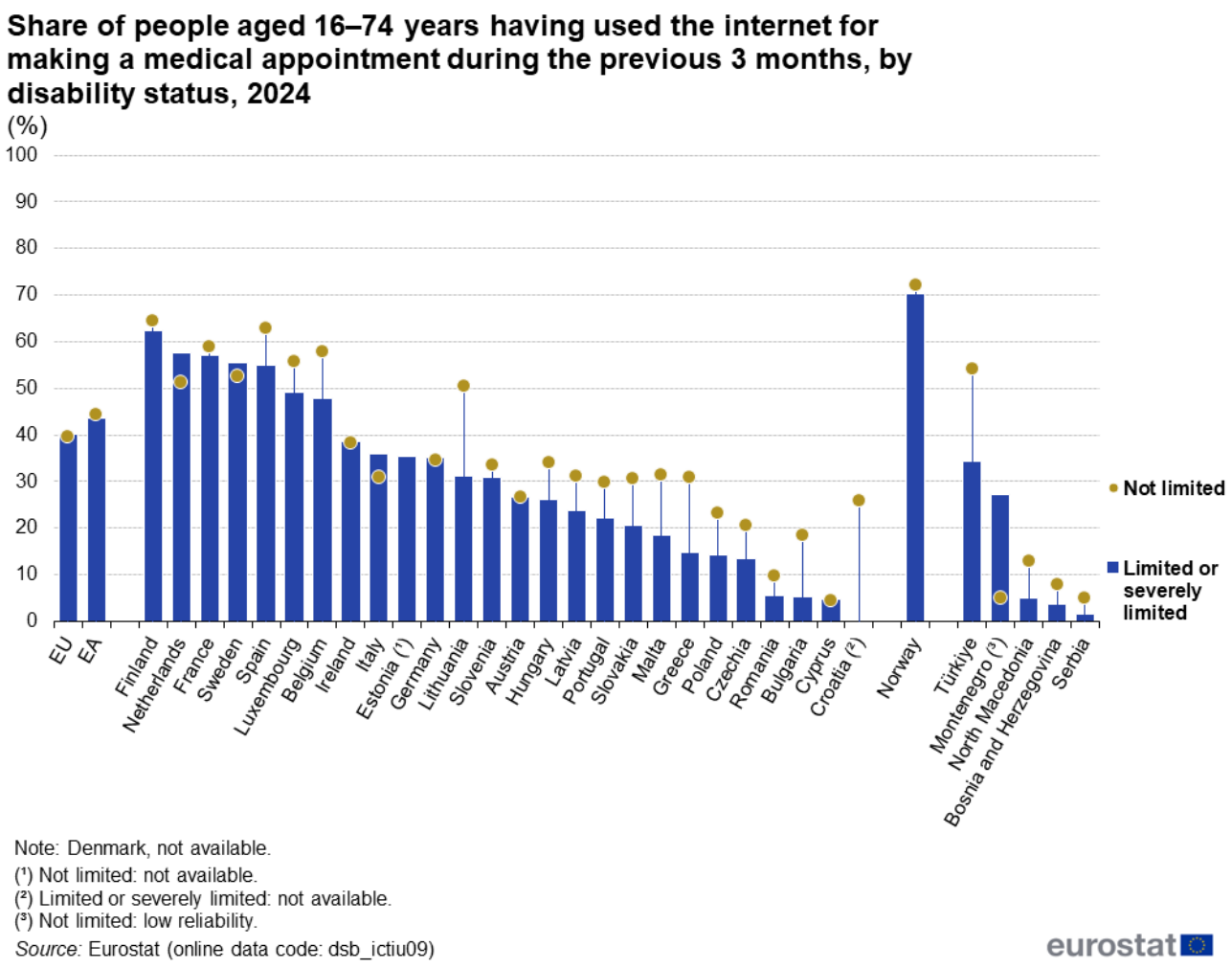

Figure 4: Share of people aged 16–74 years having used the internet for making a medical appointment during the previous 3 months, by disability status, 2024 (%) Source: Eurostat (dsb_ictiu09)

Use for e-government activities

Figure 5 presents analyses by sex and age for the share of people aged 16 to 74 years who reported in 2024 having used the internet during the previous 12 months for 4 specific e-government activities: interaction with public authorities, request official documents or certificates, making an appointment/reservation and using a website or app of public authorities.

- 56.8% of people without a disability used the internet for interacting with public authorities compared with 52.1% of people with a disability.
- 20.1% of people without a disability used the internet to request official documents or certificates compared with 16.6% of people with a disability.
- 35.2% of people without a disability used the internet for making an appointment/reservation (with public authorities) compared with 32.1% of people with a disability.
- 71.4% of people without a disability used a website or app of public authorities compared with 63.3% of people with a disability.
- For making an appointment/reservation, the disability gap was larger for women than for men; for requesting official documents or certificates, the disability gap was larger for men than for women; for interaction with public authorities and for using a website or app of public authorities, the disability gap was almost the same for men and women.
- For interaction with public authorities, requesting official documents or certificates and making an appointment/reservation, the disability gap was largest for older people (people aged 55 to 74 years) and

reversed – indicating a higher share for people with a disability – for people aged 25 to 54 years and the youngest people (aged 16 to 24 years).

- For using a website or app of public authorities, the disability gap was also largest for older people, notably smaller for people aged 25 to 54 years and reversed for the youngest age group.

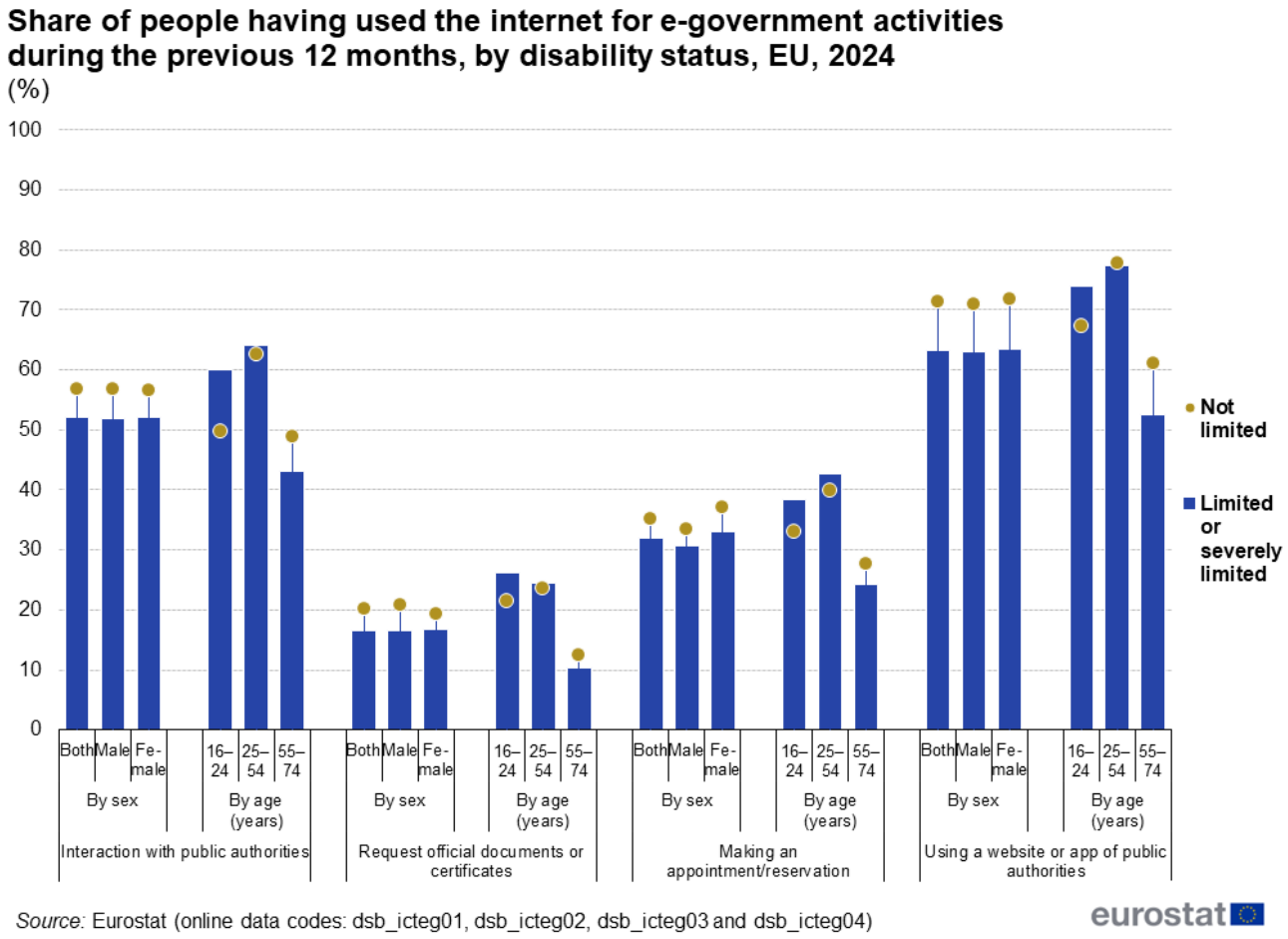

Figure 5: Share of people having used the internet for e-government activities during the previous 12 months, by disability status, EU, 2024 (%) Source: Eurostat (dsb_icteg01), (dsb_icteg02), (dsb_icteg03) and (dsb_icteg04)

Table 2 shows the shares of people aged 16 to 74 years reporting in 2024 that they had used the internet during the previous 12 months for the same 4 e-government activities as shown in Figure 5. Note that data are not available or are incomplete for Denmark, Estonia and Croatia.

- In the EU, the share of people without a disability who reported that in 2024 they had used the internet to interact with public authorities was 1.1 times higher than the share among people with a disability. In nearly every EU country, the share was higher for people without a disability. The largest relative disability gaps were in Romania and Greece, where the shares among people without a disability were, respectively, 2.3 and 2.2 times higher than among people with a disability. The Netherlands and Italy were exceptions in that the shares were marginally higher for people with a disability than for people without a disability, while in Ireland the shares were the same.
- The share of people in the EU who reported that they had used the internet to request official documents or certificates from public authorities in 2024 was 1.2 times higher for people without a disability than the share among people with a disability. In every EU country except for Bulgaria, Sweden and Ireland, the share was higher for people without a disability. The largest relative disability gap was in Romania, where the share among people without a disability was 4.0 times higher than among people with a disability.
- In the EU, the share of people who reported that they had used the internet to make an appointment/reservation with public authorities in 2024 was 1.1 times higher than for people without a

disability than the share among people with a disability. In every EU country except for Italy and Cyprus, the share was higher for people without a disability. The largest relative disability gap was in Bulgaria, where the share among people without a disability was 4.1 times higher than among people with a disability.

- The share of people in the EU who reported that they had used a website or app of public authorities in 2024 was 1.1 times higher for people without a disability than the share among people with a disability. In every EU country, the share was higher for people without a disability. The largest relative disability gap was in Romania, where the share among people without a disability was 2.2 times higher than among people with a disability.

Share of people aged 16–74 years having used the internet for e-government activities during the previous 12 months, by disability status, 2024
(%)

	Interaction with public authorities		Request official documents or certificates		Making an appointment/reservation		Using a website or app of public authorities	
	Not limited	Limited / severely limited	Not limited	Limited / severely limited	Not limited	Limited / severely limited	Not limited	Limited / severely limited
EU	56.8	52.1	20.1	16.6	35.2	32.1	71.4	63.3
EA	59.2	55.0	22.8	18.2	38.9	34.9	74.4	66.9
Belgium	69.6	58.2	29.1	19.4	34.9	24.1	84.5	69.2
Bulgaria	24.6	23.5	5.5	14.2	8.6	2.1	32.3	25.0
Czechia	67.3	48.4	13.5	6.1	41.3	22.1	76.7	55.1
Denmark	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Germany	45.8	41.6	9.1	7.2	26.7	21.9	61.8	53.3
Estonia	:	66.8	:	11.8	:	31.3	:	73.2
Ireland	79.8	79.8	20.4	21.1	40.3	40.0	89.6	87.4
Greece	54.2	24.6	39.0	11.8	41.5	19.1	68.3	39.1
Spain	63.9	50.3	30.1	20.9	60.7	49.6	82.6	66.0
France	71.4	68.2	37.4	33.8	46.1	44.4	88.5	82.0
Croatia	44.6	:	24.1	:	53.2	:	70.3	:
Italy	43.3	43.5	16.2	13.8	26.4	30.4	57.0	55.4
Cyprus	74.3	63.2	14.2	10.0	4.0	4.6	75.8	64.3
Latvia	71.3	50.5	9.9	4.7	36.3	21.8	83.1	57.6
Lithuania	74.2	45.8	21.1	8.3	51.7	32.1	79.0	49.0
Luxembourg	78.2	65.5	59.6	51.1	50.0	44.5	89.6	79.9
Hungary	80.6	54.7	17.5	10.3	32.1	19.9	82.7	58.1
Malta	60.9	43.7	34.9	22.3	22.7	19.3	77.9	58.0
Netherlands	85.1	87.2	21.4	15.8	51.8	48.3	96.1	95.7
Austria	65.6	59.0	19.2	11.9	26.8	19.6	77.2	67.3
Poland	44.8	27.7	7.7	3.2	17.1	9.3	63.5	35.5
Portugal	68.1	52.7	27.3	17.9	36.5	28.8	79.3	63.8
Romania	20.1	8.8	6.1	1.5	11.5	5.4	27.8	12.6
Slovenia	66.5	51.0	13.7	10.5	45.7	37.3	76.0	58.4
Slovakia	63.8	51.8	9.8	6.0	19.1	15.1	73.3	56.4
Finland	91.0	86.8	37.9	32.7	59.2	55.9	96.5	92.8
Sweden	82.5	76.9	24.4	25.8	44.7	41.9	96.2	94.8
Norway	94.8	90.1	21.9	23.1	31.2	36.9	99.8	98.6
Bosnia and Herzegovina	29.3	13.9	11.1	4.2	10.4	5.3	55.7	30.4
Montenegro	0.0	26.6	0.0	11.6	0.0	15.9	0.0	34.1
North Macedonia	27.9	6.1	17.9	5.8	11.3	3.2	40.0	15.7
Serbia	48.3	20.0	12.0	1.2	17.2	3.7	56.5	21.9
Türkiye	75.1	45.1	27.3	11.3	51.1	31.2	78.5	48.4

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: dsb_icteg01, dsb_icteg02, dsb_icteg03 and dsb_icteg04)

eurostat

Table 2: Share of people aged 16–74 years having used the internet for e-government activities during the previous 12 months, by disability status, 2024 (%) Source: Eurostat (dsb_icteg01), (dsb_icteg02), (dsb_icteg03) and (dsb_icteg04)

Source data for tables and graphs

- Disability statistics – access to information and communication technologies: tables and figures

Data sources and availability

The annual survey on ICT usage in households and by individuals is used to benchmark ICT-driven developments, both by following developments for core variables over time and by looking in greater depth at other aspects at a

specific point in time. It provides annual data for EU countries as well as some EFTA and enlargement countries.

The reference period for the survey is in most cases the first quarter of each year; in most countries, the survey is conducted in the second quarter of each year. The survey covers households having at least 1 member in the age group 16 to 74 years old. As such, older people are excluded from the survey. This age coverage limitation is particularly important when comparing analyses of people with a disability based on the ICT survey with similar analyses of people with a disability from sources including older people. Age is an important factor in disability, with older people more likely to report having a disability. Please refer to the article on the population with a disability for information about the incidence of self-reported disability in various age groups. Disability is measured from self-reported data so, to a certain extent, it reflects respondents' subjective perception as well as by their social and cultural background.

Internet users are defined as all individuals aged 16 to 74 years who had used the internet in the 3 months prior to the survey. Regular internet users are individuals who used the internet, on average, at least once a week in the 3 months prior to the survey. Concerning internet use for specific activities, the recall period is either the previous 3 months or the previous 12 months.

The disability gap refers to absolute differences in outcomes experienced by individuals with disabilities compared to those without.

The relative disability gap shows how many times more or less the outcome experienced by individuals without a disability differs to the outcome experienced by individuals with disabilities.

Context

ICTs affect people's everyday lives in many ways; at home, at work, when studying or at leisure, for example, when communicating or buying goods or services online. EU policies range from regulating entire areas such as e-commerce to trying to protect an individual's privacy. The development of the information society is therefore regarded by many as critical for providing the necessary conditions to promote a modern and competitive economy.

Disability statistics are used to measure the impact and effectiveness of EU policy aimed at ensuring equal rights for people with disabilities. The EU has adopted several strategies aimed at improving the lives of people with disabilities

- by reducing discrimination and inequalities;
- by providing support to enjoy fully their human rights, fundamental freedoms and EU rights on an equal basis with others.

In light of this, the 2021–2030 EU Strategy for the rights of people with disabilities sets EU objectives and priority actions in several areas, such as accessibility, citizens' rights, the quality of life, equal access and non-discrimination, and the promotion of the rights of people with disabilities. To find out more, please visit the webpage on the monitoring framework for the objectives and actions of this strategy .

To ensure sound monitoring and reporting of this topic, the European Commission is reinforcing the collection of data on the situation of people with disabilities in areas where knowledge gaps have been identified.

The EU is also a signatory of the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) .

Explore further

Other articles

Online publications

- Disability statistics
- Health in the European Union – facts and figures

Related articles

- Digital economy and society statistics – households and individuals
- Regional digital society statistics

Database

- Disability (dsb) , see:

Access to information and communication technologies (dsb_ict)

Use of internet (dsb_ictiu)

E-government activities via websites (dsb_icteg)

Thematic section

- Digital economy and society
- Disability

Publications

Ageing and living conditions

- Ageing Europe – Looking at the lives of older people in the EU – 2020 edition
- Key figures on European living conditions – 2024 edition

Digital economy and society

- Digital economy and society – publications
- Digitalisation in Europe – 2024 edition

Methodology

Disability

- Disability statistics introduced
- Global activity limitation indicator (GALI) implementation guidelines

Digital economy and society

- Digital economy and society – methodology
- European compilers' manual for statistics on the use of ICT in households and by individuals – 2023 edition
- ICT usage in households and by individuals (isoc_i) (metadata file)

External links

Health

- European Commission – Directorate-General for Health and Public Safety – Public health , see:
  - Social determinants
- Regulation (EU) 2021/522 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 March 2021 establishing a Programme for the Union's action in the field of health ('EU4Health Programme') for the period 2021–2027
  - Summary of Regulation (EU) 2021/522

Disability

- European Commission – Persons with disabilities , see:
  - European disability expertise
  - European disability strategy 2010–2020
  - Strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities 2021–2030
- United Nations – Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
- World Health Organization – International classification of functioning, disability and health (ICF)

Digital economy and society

- A Digital Agenda for Europe
- European Commission – A Europe fit for the digital age
- European Commission – Digital single market – Shaping Europe's digital future
- European Commission – European declaration on digital rights and principles
- European Commission – Europe's digital decade
  - Digital Decade DESI visualisation tool

Legislation

- Summary of EU legislation: statistics on the digital economy and society
- Framework Regulation (EU) 2019/1700
- Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2023/1484 for the survey on the use of ICT in households and by individuals
- Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/1797 specifying the number and titles of the variables for the use of information and communication technologies statistics domain for reference year 2024