

EUNAD-IP

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Intellectual disability
General learning disability
Mental disability

General information

- People with intellectual disabilities are amongst the most disadvantaged social groups in Europe (European Intellectual Disability Network, 2003). As traditional patterns of care tend to institutionalize these people, social isolation and exclusion are frequent.
- Therefore some European countries started to increase social inclusion of persons with intellectual disabilities. The common trend goes to community living and away from institutionalization.

Common terms

- General learning disability
- Intellectual disability
- Mental disability

These terms refer to a generalized neurodevelopmental disorder, which includes impaired intellectual and adaptive functioning

DSM IV definition

- *The American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, (DSM-IV-TR, 2000) defines [intellectual impairment] as a central nervous system dysfunction producing an IQ below 70; this results in significant deficiencies in two or more life skills, such as self-direction, academic skills, social skills, communication, health, and work. Five subdivisions are identified: mild (IQ 50/55 to 69), moderate (35/40 – 50/55), severe (20/25 – 35/40), profound (under 30/25) and severity unspecified (suspected, but not testable).*

Definition of intellectual disability

- It involves significant impairment in intellectual functioning with significant impairment of at least two areas of adaptive functioning as well as the onset before the year of 18.

Characteristics

- Intelligence score below 70
- Various difficulties in managing everyday living autonomously
- Developmental delay in childhood and adolescence regarding intellectual and social functioning

Severity

- Persons with mild intellectual disability may be able to function at a semi-independent level. Nevertheless, they require assistance and support throughout their lives.
- Persons with severe forms of intellectual disabilities strongly depend on the health care system.

Associated syndromes

- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Cerebral palsy
- Down Syndrome
- Fragile X syndrome
- Meningomyelocele
- Neurofibromatosis
- Prader Willi Syndrome
- Velocardiofacial Syndrome
- Williams Syndrome.

European prevalence

- Less than 1% in all European Countries
- Epidemiological studies suggest that in 1000 individuals of all ages 3 to 4 suffer from severe intellectual disability
- In 15 countries of the European Union there is an estimation from 1 to 1,5 million people who suffer severe mental disability
- Mild intellectual disability: studies estimate from 2,3 to 2,7 million people in the EU.

Global prevalence

- Among adults, the rates vary between 3-6 per 1000
- Among children the rates are between 3-14 per 1000. A 2011 meta-analysis of international studies state the prevalence of individuals across the life span to be 1.04% (Maulik, Mascarenhas, Mathers, Dua, & Saxena, 2011).
- A follow-up meta-analysis of international studies found the ID prevalence of children/adolescents and adults to range from .05 to 1.55% (McKenzie, Milton, Smith & Ouellette-Kuntz, 2016)

(see:http://www.asha.org/PRPSpecificTopic.aspx?folderid=8589942540§ion=Incidence_and_Prevalence)