

Statistics Release

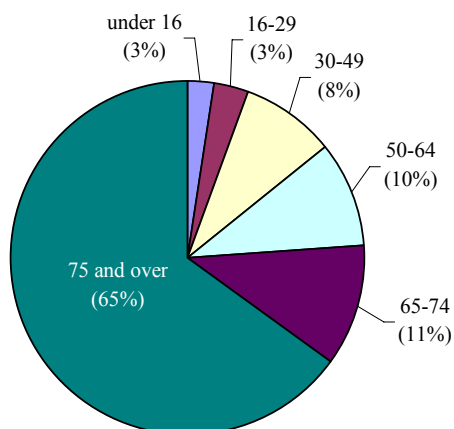
Registered Blind and Partially Sighted Persons, Scotland 2006

Introduction

The purpose of this Statistics Release is to present national figures on visually impaired persons registered with Local Authorities in Scotland. All figures relate to the 31st March 2006 and are provisional and, as such, may be subject to change. The final figures will be published in future publications.

Registration with Local Authorities for blind and partially sighted persons is not compulsory. Research studies suggest that between a quarter and a third of visually impaired people are in fact registered with Local Authorities (see background note for more details).

Chart 1: Registered Visually Impaired Persons by Age Group, 2006



Main points

Information collected on visually impaired persons show that: -

- In 2006, the number of people registered as blind or partially sighted was estimated to be just under 37,000
- There were 3,439 cases registered during the period 1 April 2005 to 31 March 2006, down less than 1 per cent on 2005.
- The majority, 58 per cent, of those on the register were blind, 42 per cent were partially sighted.
- 38 per cent of those on the register were male and 62 per cent were female.
- Over three-quarters (76%) of those registered were over the age of 65.
- 11,415 persons (31 per cent) of those registered as visually impaired had additional disabilities. Of these, a quarter were deaf.

Section 1: Blind Persons

There were 21561 registered blind persons in 2006. The number registered blind has shown a drop of 7 per cent over the last year. This continues the trend of small, but steady falls since 2000 (see background note for more details).

The number of new cases registered during the year was 1,512. This is down 10 per cent on the previous year.

The ratio of registered blind per 1,000 population is 4.3 for 2006. (see table 1a).

Table 1a: Number of Registered Blind Persons and New Registrations during the Year 1998-2006

Year ¹	New Cases	Total	Registered per 1000 Pop'n
2006	1,512	21,561	4.3
2005	1,682	23,248	4.6
2004	1,566	23,172	4.6
2003	1,743	23,557	4.7
2002	1,713	23,451	4.6
2001	1,766	24,748	4.9
2000	1,903	24,839	4.9
1999	1,714	24,514	4.8
1998	1,796	24,096	4.7

¹ Care should be taken when commenting on trends as the fall in numbers between 2000 and 2002 is explained in part by improvements in reporting procedures by some local authorities.

Source: Registration of Blind and Partially Sighted Persons Return Form SWB

Over three-quarters of registered blind persons are over the age of 65, with two-thirds being over 75. There are significantly more women registered blind (62 per cent) than men (38 per cent).

Almost half (46%) of all registered blind people are women aged 75 and over (see table 1b). This is also reflected in the new

registrations where just under half (48%) of the new registered cases are women aged 75 and over.

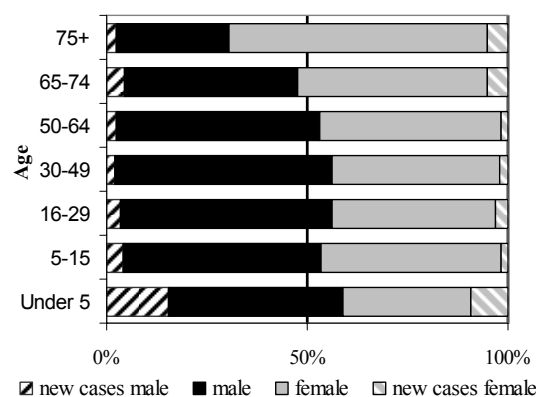
Excluding the '75 and over' age group there is a much more even split between the sexes. (See Table 1b & Chart 1b).

Table 1b: Number of Registered Blind Persons and New Registrations by Age and Gender, 2006

AGE	New Cases		Total		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Under 5 years	15	9	57	40	97
5-15	15	6	198	173	371
16-29	20	17	322	253	575
30-49	39	42	1,085	843	1,928
50-64	54	40	1,155	1,021	2,176
65-74	100	114	1,071	1,173	2,244
75 and over	317	724	4,341	9,829	14,170
All ages-Total	560	952	8,229	13,332	21,561

Source: Registration of Blind and Partially Sighted Persons Return Form SWB

Chart 1b: Number of Registered Blind Persons and New Registrations by Age and Gender, 2006



An estimated 7,004 (32 per cent) of all registered blind persons have additional

disabilities, a quarter of which are deaf. Nearly three-quarters (71%) of those with additional disabilities were over the age of 65 (see Table 1c).

Note that the figures for additional disabilities have increased substantially since last year due to improved reporting by Glasgow.

The ratio of registered blind per 1,000 population is 4.3 for the whole of Scotland. This varies from 1.0 in East Dunbartonshire to 9.2 in the City of Glasgow. The breakdown of this ratio and over 65/under 65 by sex is shown at a local authority level in Annex A on page 9.

Table 1c: Number of Registered Blind Persons with Additional Disabilities by Age, 2006

Additional Disability	AGE				Total
	Under 5	5-15	16-64	65 and over	
Deaf	1	8	287	1,368	1,664
Physically Disabled	12	87	762	2,578	3,439
Learning Difficulties	2	20	337	74	433
Mental Health Problems	2	1	225	650	878
Multiple Disabilities	8	66	196	320	590
Total	25	182	1,807	4,990	7,004

Source: Registration of Blind and Partially Sighted Persons Return Form SWB

Section 2: Partially Sighted Persons

There were an estimated 15,435 registered partially sighted persons in 2006. This is approximately the same as last year.

The number of people registered as partially sighted has been steadily rising over the last 8 years to 2005 with a slight rise in numbers in 2006.

The number of new cases registered during the year was 1,927. This is up 10 per cent on the previous year. The ratio of registered partially sighted per 1,000 population is 3.1 for this year. This has been increasing slightly each year since 1998 (see Table 2a).

Table 2a: Number of Registered Partially Sighted Persons and New Registrations during the years 1998-2006

Year ¹	New Cases	Total	Registered per 1000 Pop'n
2006	1,927	15,435	3.1
2005	1,759	15,339	3.0
2004	1,855	14,770	2.9
2003	1,748	14,443	2.9
2002	2,061	13,972	2.8
2001	1,856	13,676	2.7
2000	1,776	13,287	2.6
1999	1,672	12,536	2.5
1998	1,658	11,870	2.3

¹ Care should be taken when commenting on trends as the fall in numbers since 2000 is explained in part by improvements in reporting procedures by some local authorities.

Source: Registration of Blind and Partially Sighted Persons Return Form SWB

Data on registered partially sighted individuals shows a similar picture to that of registered blind individuals. Approximately 76 per cent of registered partially sighted persons are over the age of 65, with approximately two-thirds (64%) being aged 75 or over. There are significantly more women registered as partially sighted (64 per cent) than men (36 per cent). Again, just under half (46%) of all registered partially sighted people are women aged 75 and over (see table 2b).

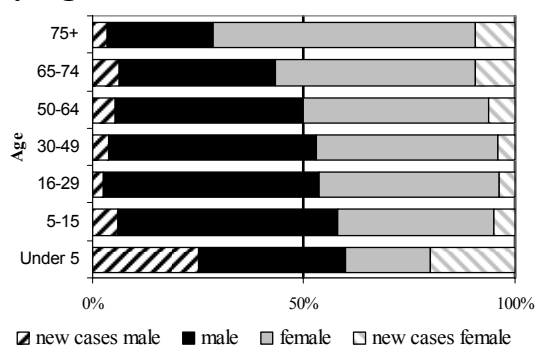
This large proportion of partially sighted women aged 75 or over is also mirrored in the new registrations where 47 per cent of the new registered cases are women aged 75 and over. Excluding the '75 and over' age group there is a much more even split between the sexes (see Table 2b & Chart 2b).

Table 2b: Number of Registered Partially Sighted Persons and New Registrations by Age and Gender, 2006

AGE	New Cases		Total		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Under 5 years	10	8	24	16	40
5-15	26	21	250	182	432
16-29	14	21	312	270	582
30-49	47	48	643	568	1,211
50-64	77	88	716	722	1,438
65-74	114	174	804	1,051	1,855
75 and over	355	924	2,830	7,047	9,877
All ages-Total	643	1,284	5,579	9,856	15,435

Source: Registration of Blind and Partially Sighted Persons Return Form SWB

Chart 2b: Percentage of Registered Partially Sighted Persons and New Registrations by Age and Gender, 2006



The ratio of registered partially sighted per 1,000 population is 3.1 for the whole of Scotland. This varies from 0.5 in East Dunbartonshire to 5.1 in Argyll and Bute. The breakdown of this ratio and over 65/under 65 by sex, is shown at a local authority level in Annex A on page 9.

An estimated 4,411 (29 per cent) of all registered partially sighted persons have additional disabilities, almost three-quarters (74%) of which are aged 65 and over. Physical disabilities account for over half (55 per cent) and nearly a quarter (22 per cent) are deaf (see Table 2c).

Table 2c: Number of Registered Partially Sighted Persons with Additional Disabilities by Age, 2006

Additional Disability	AGE				Total
	Under 5	5-15	16-64	65 and over	
Deaf	0	7	112	871	990
Physically Disabled	3	60	537	1,833	2,433
Learning Difficulties	0	18	147	43	208
Mental Health Problems	0	2	107	257	366
Multiple Disabilities	8	34	106	266	414
Total	11	121	1,009	3,270	4,411

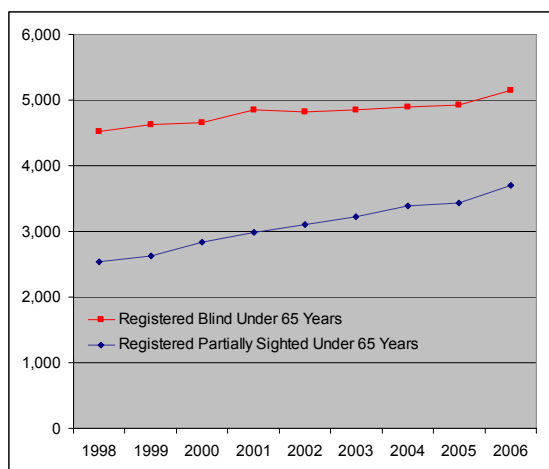
Source: Registration of Blind and Partially Sighted Persons Return Form SWB

Section 3: Visually Impaired Under 65-year-olds

Time series data showing the number of visually impaired people under the age of 65 over the last 8 years is shown in the chart below.

It shows a gradual rise in the number of registered blind persons up until 2001 before remaining relatively constant at between 4,850 and 5,147 from 2001 to 2006. Registered partially sighted persons have increased year on year throughout the 9-year period.

Chart 3: Time Series of Registered Blind and Registered Partially Sighted Persons Aged 65 and Under, 1998-2006



Overall the number of registered visually impaired under 65-year-olds has increased by 6 per cent on last year. The ratio per 1,000 population is at around 2.1 after rising gradually over the past few years (see Table 3a). Data on under 65's by local authority and sex is shown in Annex A on page 6.

Table 3a: Number of Registered Visually Impaired Under 65-year-olds, 1998 - 2006

Year	No. of Registered Visually Impaired under 65 year olds ¹	Registered under 65's per 1,000 Pop'n of under 65's
2006	8,850	2.1
2005	8,354	2.0
2004	8,285	2.0
2003	8,068	1.9
2002	7,928	1.9
2001	7,836	1.8
2000	7,496	1.8
1999	7,250	1.7
1998	7,054	1.6

¹ Data for under 65-year-olds should be more reliable than older age groups due to lower mortality rates.

Source: Registration of Blind and Partially Sighted Persons Return Form SWB

Background Information:

Data was collected on persons registered with local authorities as at 31 March 2006.

The information is derived from returns made to the Scottish Executive by Scottish local authorities. The return asks for the number of blind and partially sighted persons by age, sex and additional disabilities. It does not include persons who may meet the criteria for being blind or partially sighted but have not registered with their local authority.

The Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 gives local authorities the power to maintain a register of people who are blind or partially sighted. However registration is voluntary and while registration provides access to a number of benefits and concessions there remain a large number of people who meet the criteria but are not registered. Research in 1991¹, undertaken at a UK level, indicated that the number of people on registers is some 23 per cent of those eligible. In 2001 they estimated it to be under a third.

'Think dual sensory' published in 1997 by the Department of Health suggested that some 2,000 people in Scotland could have some degree of deafblindness. Our latest figures show that there are 1,732 people registered as deafblind in Scotland. This would suggest that people are more likely to register if they have multiple disabilities.

Additionally, there are known problems with previous years' data where people have not been removed from the register of blind and partially sighted persons. Many local authorities have in recent years improved their registers by comparing with the register of deaths and this may in

part explain the decrease in the number of registered blind persons since 2000.

Returns were received from all local authorities:

Glasgow have substantially revised their figures this year following a move to a new management information system. This has resulted in improvements to data quality for 2006 but care should be taken when comparing 2005 and 2006 figures as many of the changes seen are largely due to changes in the Glasgow figures.

For example, Glasgow have improved their data collection on additional disabilities resulting in an increase in the overall number of visually impaired people with additional disabilities.

Work is still ongoing to improve the Glasgow data and 2007 should show further improvements in this data.

Fife and Scottish Borders were unable to provide complete information on additional disabilities. Care should therefore be taken when interpreting figures as a small amount of data has been estimated for these 2 local authorities.

East Dunbartonshire has undertaken a data cleaning exercise this year which has resulted in significant decreases in the number of people registered as visually impaired.

2002 based population projections from GRO(S) have been used to calculate rates per 1000 population in this Statistics Release.

¹ Blind and Partially Sighted Adults in Britain: The RNIB Survey, Volume 1, HMSO, 1991

Further Information

Further details and analysis of the data presented in this Statistics Release are available on request from the address given below. The Statistics Release is available in large print and on the Internet by accessing the Scottish Executive web site (www.scotland.gov.uk).

Community Care Statistics
Room 3WR
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

Contact: Steven Gillespie
Tel: 0131 244 3777
E-mail: SWStat@scotland.gov.uk

This statistics release was published on 31 October 2006.



Annex A:

Registered Blind by Local Authority, 2006

Local Authority	Under 65 years		Over 65 years		Total	Registered Blind per 1,000 Pop'n
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Aberdeen City	78	57	103	227	465	2.3
Aberdeenshire	58	52	100	219	429	1.9
Angus	40	36	68	175	319	3.0
Argyll & Bute	43	28	121	278	470	5.2
Clackmannanshire	16	12	34	76	138	2.9
Dumfries & Galloway	52	44	107	230	433	3.0
Dundee City	97	66	125	229	517	3.7
East Ayrshire	66	47	108	208	429	3.7
East Dunbartonshire	15	12	23	59	109	1.0
East Lothian	46	35	80	147	308	3.3
East Renfrewshire	35	30	121	231	417	4.6
Edinburgh City	212	177	385	766	1,540	3.4
Eilean Siar	13	10	22	46	91	3.6
Falkirk	75	54	102	211	442	3.0
Fife	158	129	210	482	979	2.8
Glasgow City	596	525	1,318	2,761	5,200	9.2
Highland	123	114	185	462	884	4.3
Inverclyde	46	42	88	200	376	4.6
Midlothian	48	19	62	97	226	2.8
Moray	37	24	91	161	313	3.7
North Ayrshire	100	72	211	395	778	5.8
North Lanarkshire	248	228	641	1,233	2,350	7.3
Orkney Islands	13	4	16	32	65	3.5
Perth & Kinross	33	37	92	224	386	2.8
Renfrewshire	94	76	145	258	573	3.4
Scottish Borders	35	29	96	182	342	3.2
Shetland Islands	7	2	6	22	37	1.7
South Ayrshire	57	41	140	314	552	5.0
South Lanarkshire	213	197	365	622	1,397	4.6
Stirling	42	34	82	149	307	3.5
West Dunbartonshire	59	45	69	134	307	3.4
West Lothian	62	52	96	172	382	2.3
Scotland	2,817	2,330	5,412	11,002	21,561	4.3

Source: Registration of Blind and Partially Sighted Persons Return Form SWB

Annex A:

Registered Partially Sighted by Local Authority, 2006

Local Authority	Under 65 years		Over 65 years		Total	Registered per 1,000 Pop'n
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Aberdeen City	69	60	98	250	477	2.4
Aberdeenshire	59	48	102	230	439	1.9
Angus	37	26	43	143	249	2.3
Argyll & Bute	35	32	148	246	461	5.1
Clackmannanshire	11	14	27	68	120	2.5
Dumfries & Galloway	68	65	131	250	514	3.5
Dundee City	60	39	100	254	453	3.3
East Ayrshire	42	25	64	152	283	2.4
East Dunbartonshire	5	3	12	31	51	0.5
East Lothian	33	33	91	180	337	3.6
East Renfrewshire	14	23	65	156	258	2.8
Edinburgh City	182	153	346	830	1,511	3.4
Eilean Siar	6	6	10	34	56	2.2
Falkirk	43	51	81	195	370	2.5
Fife	109	104	187	425	825	2.3
Glasgow City	353	334	647	1,466	2,800	4.9
Highland	93	82	121	338	634	3.1
Inverclyde	49	23	103	206	381	4.7
Midlothian	33	29	68	128	258	3.2
Moray	17	23	17	51	108	1.3
North Ayrshire	49	49	120	229	447	3.3
North Lanarkshire	116	110	250	449	925	2.9
Orkney Islands	5	6	4	12	27	1.4
Perth & Kinross	44	47	99	236	426	3.1
Renfrewshire	74	77	142	313	606	3.6
Scottish Borders	33	33	96	213	375	3.5
Shetland Islands	4	6	6	16	32	1.5
South Ayrshire	38	30	76	187	331	3.0
South Lanarkshire	126	111	205	396	838	2.8
Stirling	25	24	55	130	234	2.7
West Dunbartonshire	45	27	46	125	243	2.7
West Lothian	68	65	74	159	366	2.2
Scotland	1,945	1,758	3,634	8,098	15,435	3.1

Source: Registration of Blind and Partially Sighted Persons Return Form SWB

Annex A:

Registered Visually Impaired by Local Authority, 2006

Local Authority	Under 65 years		Over 65 years		Total	Registered per 1,000 Pop'n
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Aberdeen City	147	117	201	477	942	4.6
Aberdeenshire	117	100	202	449	868	3.8
Angus	77	62	111	318	568	5.4
Argyll & Bute	78	60	269	524	931	10.3
Clackmannanshire	27	26	61	144	258	5.4
Dumfries & Galloway	120	109	238	480	947	6.5
Dundee City	157	105	225	483	970	7.0
East Ayrshire	108	72	172	360	712	6.1
East Dunbartonshire	20	15	35	90	160	1.5
East Lothian	79	68	171	327	645	6.9
East Renfrewshire	49	53	186	387	675	7.4
Edinburgh City	394	330	731	1,596	3,051	6.8
Eilean Siar	19	16	32	80	147	5.9
Falkirk	118	105	183	406	812	5.5
Fife	267	233	397	907	1,804	5.1
Glasgow City	949	859	1,965	4,227	8,000	14.1
Highland	216	196	306	800	1,518	7.3
Inverclyde	95	65	191	406	757	9.3
Midlothian	81	48	130	225	484	5.9
Moray	54	47	108	212	421	4.9
North Ayrshire	149	121	331	624	1,225	9.2
North Lanarkshire	364	338	891	1,682	3,275	10.2
Orkney Islands	18	10	20	44	92	4.9
Perth & Kinross	77	84	191	460	812	6.0
Renfrewshire	168	153	287	571	1,179	7.0
Scottish Borders	68	62	192	395	717	6.6
Shetland Islands	11	8	12	38	69	3.1
South Ayrshire	95	71	216	501	883	8.0
South Lanarkshire	339	308	570	1,018	2,235	7.4
Stirling	67	58	137	279	541	6.2
West Dunbartonshire	104	72	115	259	550	6.1
West Lothian	130	117	170	331	748	4.5
Scotland	4,762	4,088	9,046	19,100	36,996	7.4

Source: Registration of Blind and Partially Sighted Persons Return Form SWB

ISBN 0 7559 6317 2 (web only publication)