

Healthy Life Years (HLY) at age 65 for Germany based on SILC (2005-2015) Impacts of methodological changes

Key points:

Political measures and preventive healthcare require an indicator which captures limitations to usual activities. GALI was developed to measure such trends in limitations over time.

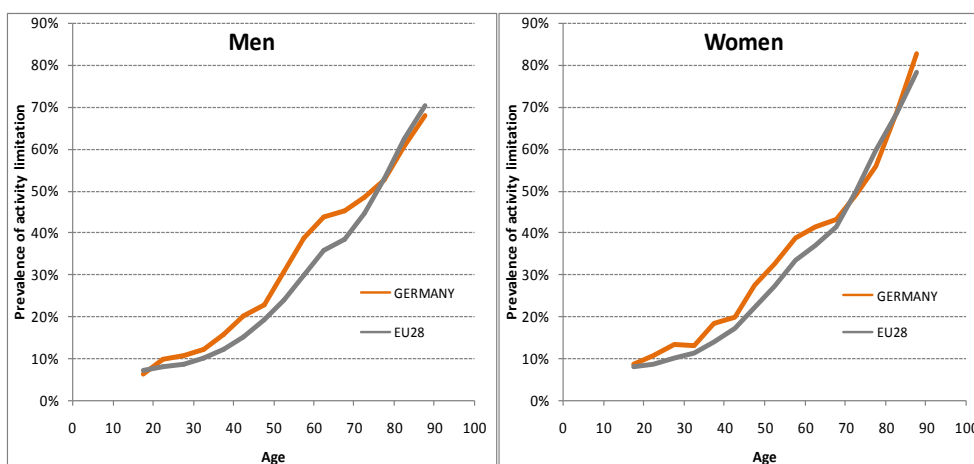
GALI collects information based on self-rated limitations. Therefore, it is essential that people fully comprehend the questions and dimensions of the items.

GALI was originally operationalized using one question for the complex topic of the existence of limitations as well as their severity and duration. In Germany, GALI was surveyed in 2015 using a routed, three-question version reading as follows:

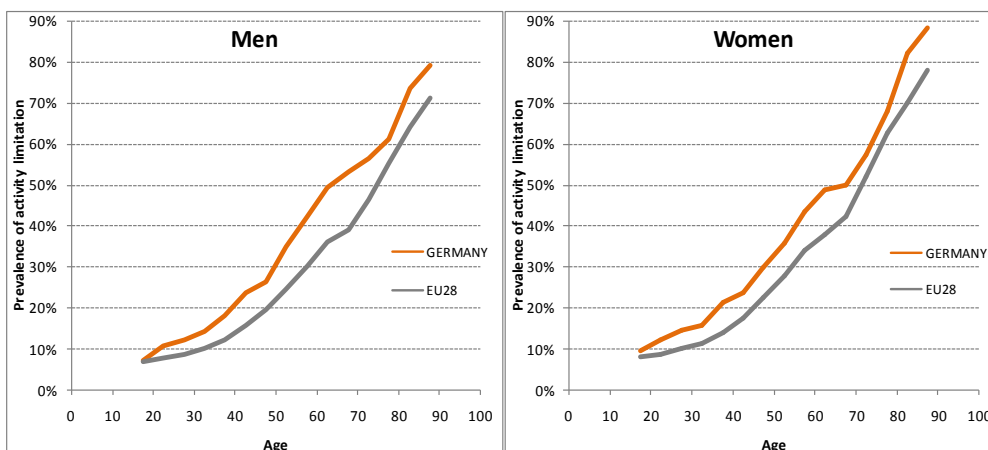
'Are you limited because of a health problem in activities people usually do? (Yes/No)' and for respondents answering 'Yes' the additional questions: a) 'How severely are you limited in your usual activities? (Severely limited/ Moderately limited)' and b) 'For how long have you been limited? (For less than six months/ For six months or longer)'.¹ Changes in the formulation mean that results from Germany cannot be compared with the results from previous surveys.

The impact of changing the formulation can be seen when comparing the mean prevalence of activity limitation in Germany and the EU28 in 2013-2015 to 2012-2014 (see graphs below). With the new question, Germany's mean prevalence by sex and age group in 2013-2015 moves closer to the European Union's (EU28) average. The differences in prevalence observed in Germany between 2012-2014 and 2013-2015 underline that GALI is sensitive to changes in the formulation of the questions.

Prevalence of activity limitation in Germany and in the European Union (EU28) based on the GALI question, by sex and age group (SILC, Mean 2013-2015)



Prevalence of activity limitation in Germany and in the European Union (EU28) based on the GALI question, by sex and age group (SILC, Mean 2012-2014)



¹ von der Lippe E, Fehr A, Lange C (2017) Limitations to usual activities due to health problems in Germany. Journal of Health Monitoring 2(3):84–90