

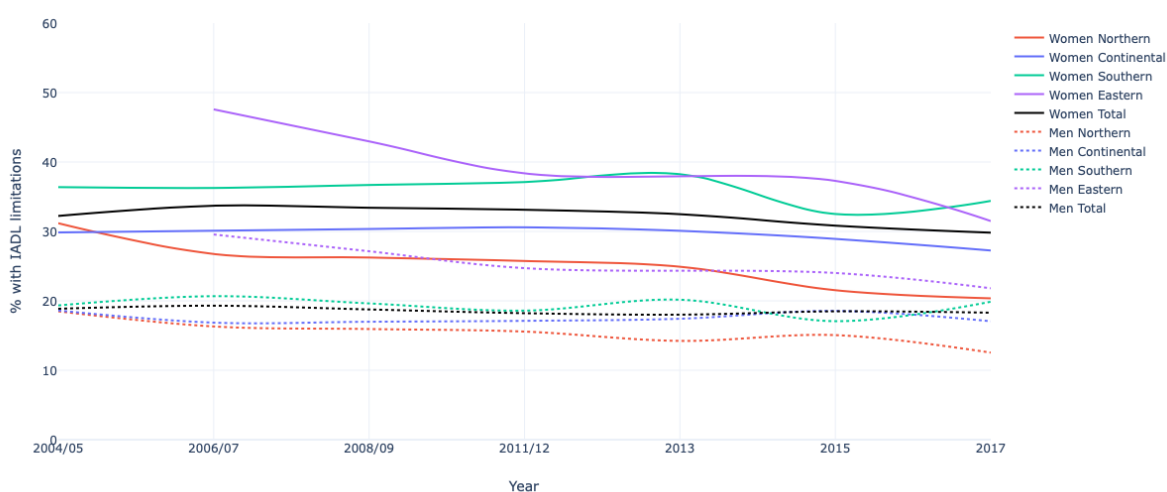
DATA NAVIGATOR: Trends in Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs) by gender and socio-economic status

Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADLs) comprise a range of complex activities needed to live independently. Limitations in one's ability to accomplish these tasks are indicative of capability to live independently. Activities included in IADLs consist of managing personal finances, taking medication, doing housework, planning and preparing meals, going shopping, using the phone, and taking transportation.

The prevalence of IADL limitations is higher among women than among men in all four European regions. The overall stable trend that is observed in women's functional health limitations over the last decade or so means that the gender gap continues to exist to the disadvantage of women (Figure 1). IADL limitations by gender and region also reveal important differences in trends across Europe. While the prevalence of IADL limitations decreased significantly both among women and men in the Eastern and Northern region resulting in the narrowing of the gender gap, the gender difference remained relatively stable especially in the Southern, but also in the Continental region, over the same period.

Figure 1: Prevalence of IADL limitations by gender and region (65+)

Own calculations based on SHARE data release 7.0.0



Trends in IADL limitations by gender and socio-economic status, measured by income, show that women and men with lower income continue to suffer from functional health problems to a much greater degree than their higher income counterparts (Figure 2 & 3). Moreover, prevalence rates by income status show a widening gap over time between lower and higher income men in all, but the Eastern European region. For women, the same pattern holds in the Continental group of countries. Nevertheless, the gap in IADL rates remains consistently larger between lower and higher income women compared to that of men in all four regions confirming the particular importance financial resources have in late life health outcomes for women.

Figure 2: Prevalence of IADL limitations among women by income status and region (65+)

Own calculations based on SHARE data release 7.0.0

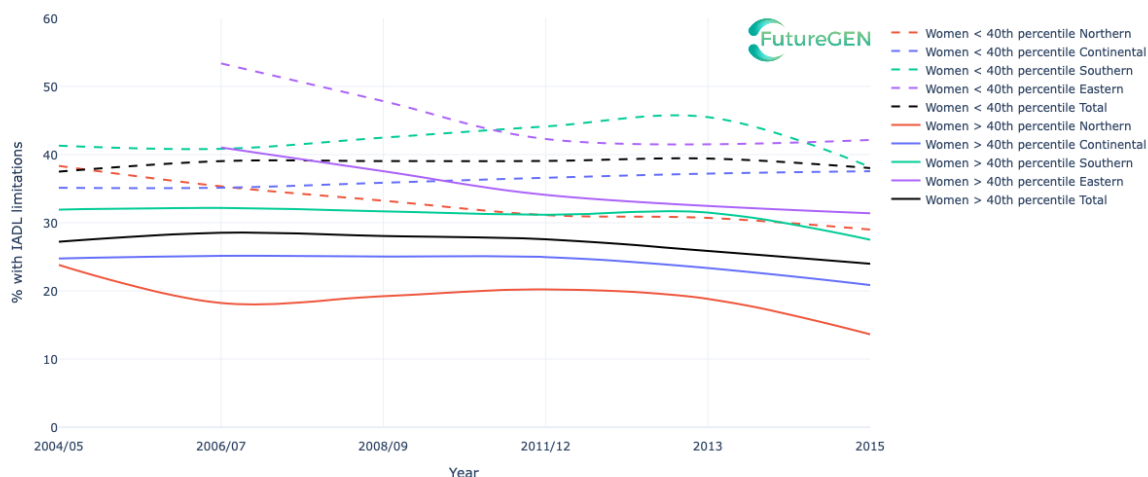
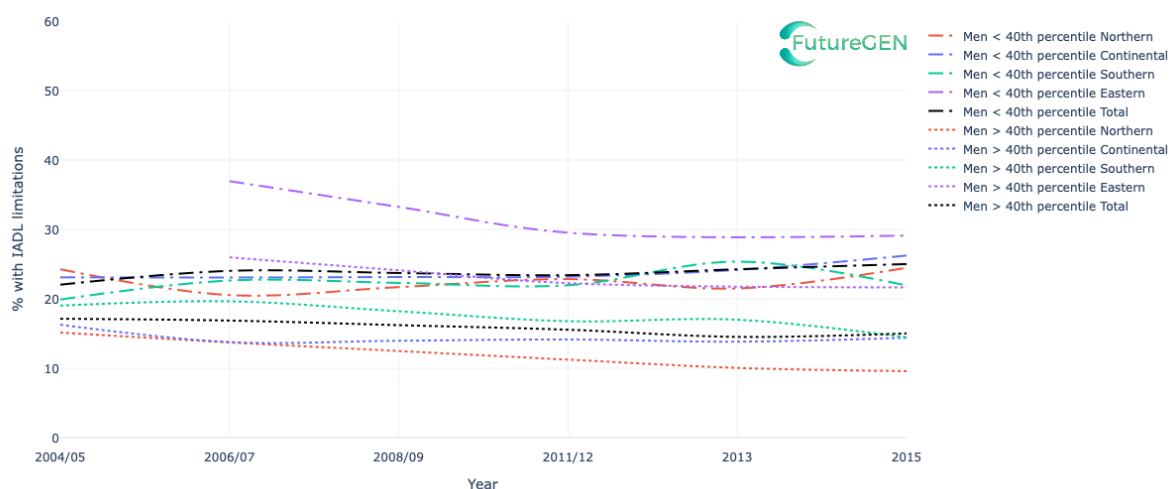


Figure 3: Prevalence of IADL limitations among men by income status and region (65+)

Own calculations based on SHARE data release 7.0.0



As changes in the prevalence of IADL limitations over time reveal, women in Europe still face more difficulties in their ability to live independently than men, although trends in the extent of gender differences vary across the four regions. The role of individual resources, such as income, and of broader socio-economic conditions in shaping these outcomes is also evident in the above trends. Policies should prevent and limit these current negative trends and intensified efforts should be made to (further) reduce gender inequalities in late life health and well-being among others by removing barriers that hinder women's (particularly those of lower socio-economic status) access to personal resources, to community-based long-term care services and assistive technologies and devices.

For more details, visit the Data Navigator:

<https://futuregen.euro.centre.org/trends-iadls/>