

Literacy and numeracy needs in Ireland today



The **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Survey of Adult Skills 2023** found that 1 in 5 adults aged 16 to 65 in Ireland has literacy needs (21%) and 1 in 4 has numeracy needs (25%). Having literacy or numeracy needs means you would score at or below Level 1 (out of 5 levels) in this survey. The survey was run by the **Central Statistics Office (CSO)** in Ireland. This factsheet by the **National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA)** presents findings about health, happiness and other social outcomes from the survey.

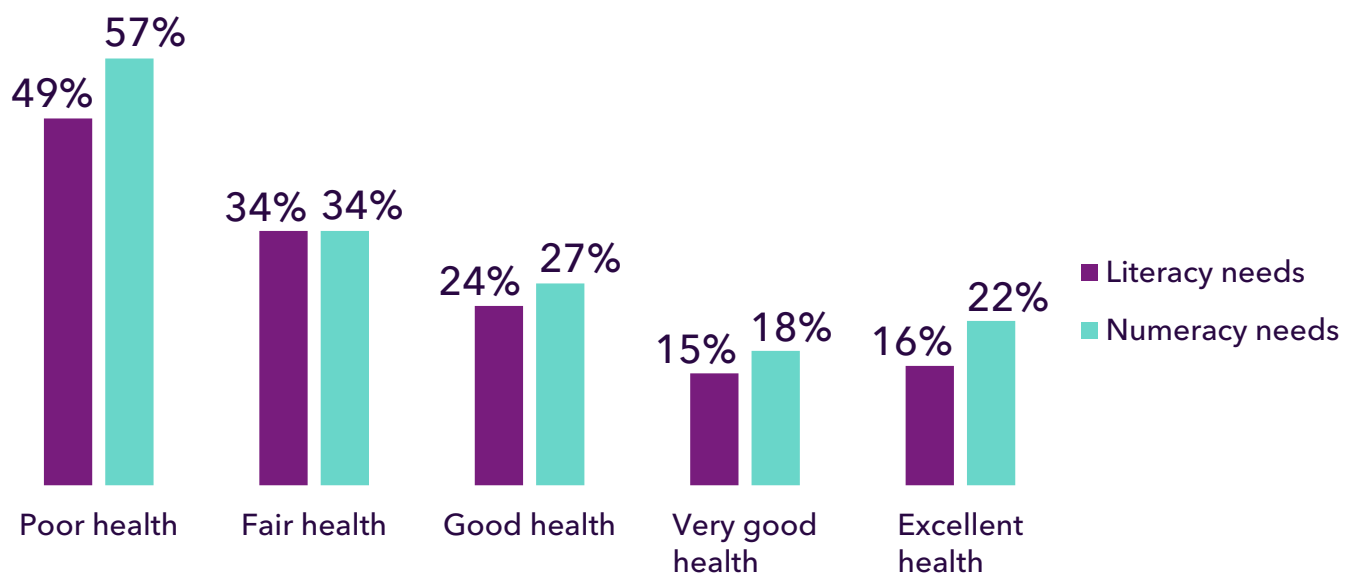
Health, happiness and social outcomes



If you have poor health, you are more likely to have literacy or numeracy needs.

Almost 1 in 2 adults with poor health has literacy needs (49%). Over half of adults with poor health has numeracy needs (57%).

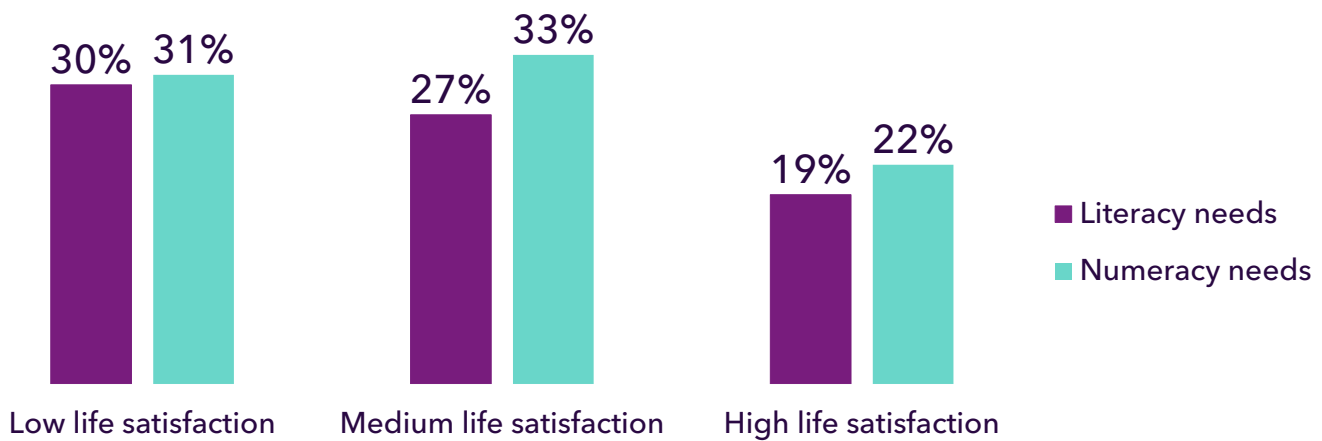
Literacy and numeracy needs by health status



If you aren't very happy with your life, you are more likely to have literacy or numeracy needs.

Nearly 1 in 3 adults who has a low score on life satisfaction has literacy needs (30%) or numeracy needs (31%). Fewer adults with a high score on life satisfaction have literacy needs (19%) or numeracy needs (22%).

Literacy and numeracy needs by life satisfaction



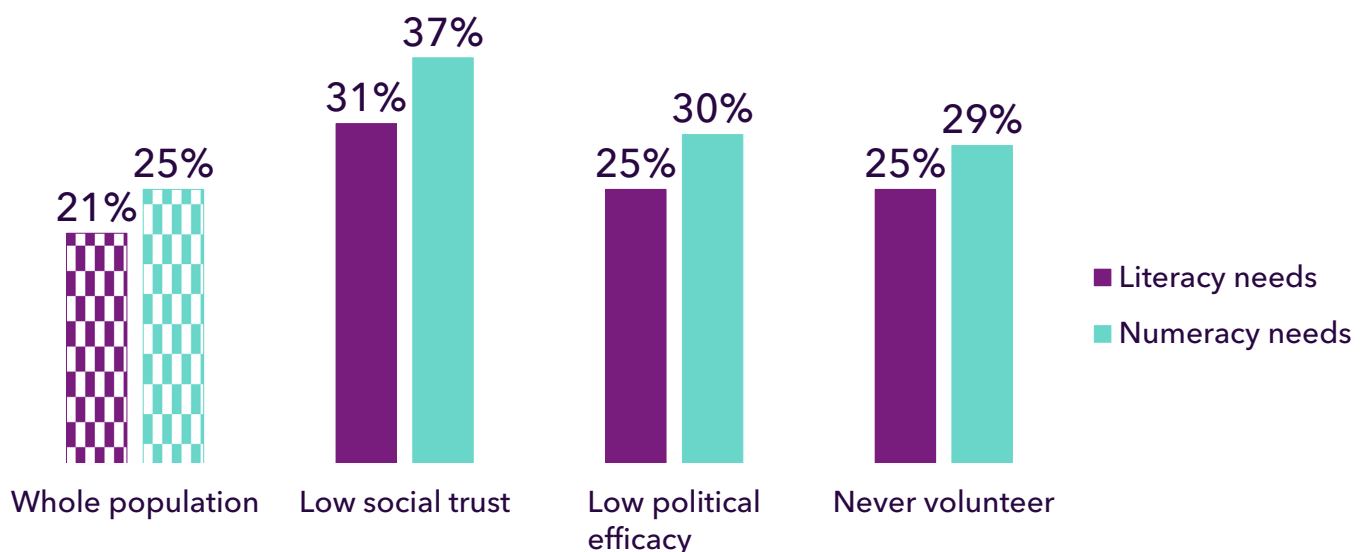
If you have other poor social outcomes, you are also more likely to have literacy or numeracy needs.

These are the three social outcomes we are looking at in this section and what they mean:

1. Social trust – this is about how much you trust other people in general.
2. Political efficacy – this is about how much you feel like people like you have a say in government decisions.
3. Volunteering – this is about your involvement in unpaid work for charities, sports clubs, community groups or other organisations.

The first two bars in the graph below show the rate of literacy and numeracy needs in the whole population of Ireland. The other bars show that adults with low social trust, low political efficacy or who never volunteer are all more likely to have literacy or numeracy needs than the general population. For example, 25% of all adults have numeracy needs and 37% of adults with low social trust have numeracy needs.

Literacy and numeracy needs by poor social outcomes



Find out more

Visit nala.ie/literacy-and-numeracy-in-ireland to learn more about the OECD Survey of Adult Skills 2023 or contact Aoife at acrawford@nala.ie with any questions about this factsheet.