

Abstract

In the present study, a comparison of attitudes towards people with disabilities in Germany and the United Kingdom is conducted based on data from the Eurobarometer 54.2 (2001). The paper first discusses differing conceptual and methodological approaches of the theoretical construct “Attitudes towards people with a disability” and addresses potential problems arising from the use of the data at hand. Second, the impact of gender, age, education, contact with people with a disability as well as awareness of disabilities on attitudes towards the disabled is examined through logistic regression models and compared across the two countries. The results on the one hand provide evidence for the assumption that attitudes towards the disabled are considerably more negative in Germany than in the United Kingdom. On the other hand, these attitudes appear to be dependent on modifiable, disability-related characteristics such as contact and awareness of disabilities to a greater extent than on socio-demographic attributes of an individual.

Keywords: Disability, attitudes towards the disabled, cross-cultural study, Eurobarometer