

WELSH GOVERNMENT INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Title of proposal:	Proposed Changes to Welsh Government Statistics
Official(s) completing the Integrated Impact Assessment (name(s) and name of team):	Melanie Brown, High Priority Statistical Projects Vanessa Allis, Economy and Transport Statistics Cerys Ponting, Trade statistics Lee Thomas, Data collection
Department:	CSI – Statistical services
Head of Division/SRO (name):	Stephanie Howarth
Cabinet Secretary/Minister responsible:	The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Welsh Language is responsible for official statistics matters. However, official statistics are produced independently under the leadership of the Chief Statistician.
Start Date:	October 2025

WHAT ACTION IS THE WELSH GOVERNMENT CONSIDERING AND WHY?

This consultation marks an important step in the transformation of Welsh Government statistics. It responds to growing demand for timely, high-quality data, alongside financial pressures and the need to modernise how we work. The proposed changes - including stopping, reducing, or reformatting some outputs - aim to create space for innovation, improve sustainability, and ensure our statistics continue to deliver value. This response considers the proposals through the lens of the five ways of working and additional impact areas, as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.

Long Term

The proposals are shaped by long-term trends in digital transformation, public sector efficiency, and increasing demand for data. Moving to open-source tools and reproducible analytical pipelines aligns with global best practice and supports a more resilient and adaptable statistics system. It also reflects the need to future-proof our infrastructure ahead of major developments such as Senedd reform and a new government in 2026.

By streamlining outputs and focusing on those most used and valued, we can free up capacity to respond to emerging priorities and invest in new skills and technologies. The proposals mitigate risks associated with outdated workflows and software dependency, while facilitating opportunities to improve quality, timeliness, and relevance for users of statistics.

Prevention

The proposals support prevention by enabling more strategic use of analytical resources. By prioritising outputs that inform policy (including on areas such as poverty, health inequalities, and environmental sustainability), we can better support efforts to break negative cycles and promote long-term well-being. By creating capacity to address new demands, we can support emerging policy areas with the evidence needed to take a preventative approach.

While the proposals respond to a symptom (constrained resources) they also address underlying causes, such as inefficiencies in production and limited interoperability. The shift to open-source tools and reproducible methods helps tackle these root issues, laying the groundwork for more integrated and impactful analysis.

Efforts to minimise negative impacts include reducing duplication, shortening content, and adopting more sustainable formats. These changes can lower resource use, while also encouraging more focused and accessible outputs. Change management will be considered to avoid unintended consequences, such as reduced accessibility or loss of trust among users. For example, we will continue to seek feedback from users through existing forums and engagement channels, and use this insight to inform further adjustments where needed.

Integration

The proposals offer potential for integration across public policy agendas. By ensuring alignment between outputs and the Programme for Government, well-being goals, and the work of Public Service Boards, we can generate multiple benefits. For example, working more collaboratively across the statistical system in Wales and the UK, sharing methods, avoiding duplication, and ensuring that our analysis fits together.

Collaboration

Collaboration has been central to the development of the proposals. Analytical teams have provided feedback on current outputs and potential changes, based on feedback from users within and outside the Welsh Government through established forums. This input has helped shape priorities and identify areas for improvement. Looking ahead, the proposals create capacity and scope for further collaboration as we look to meet new requirements.

Involvement

Involvement is a key part of this consultation. We recognise that people affected by the proposals, including policy makers, researchers, local authorities, and the public, have valuable insights into what matters most. Their feedback will help us understand the impact of proposed changes and ensure that our statistics continue to meet the needs of users across Wales.

In line with the Code of Practice for Statistics, we are committed to involving users in shaping our plans: drawing on feedback from existing forums and engagement channels to ensure our proposals reflect user needs and priorities.

Impact

The proposals offer a pathway to greater efficiency, sustainability, and adaptability. They support the development of a modern, resilient statistics system that can respond flexibly to future demands. However, there are also risks, including the potential loss of long-standing outputs and disruption to users who rely on specific formats or frequencies.

While usage data and internal feedback have informed the proposals, there are gaps in our understanding, particularly around less-visible outputs and underrepresented user groups. This consultation provides an opportunity to explore these arguments more widely and shape a balanced, evidence-informed approach.

Costs and Savings

The proposals involve upfront investment in staff time, training, and change management. However, they are expected to deliver long-term savings through reduced software licensing, more efficient production processes, and increased use of automation. This will allow us to meet new and growing demands for statistics.

Mechanism

No legislative changes are currently proposed. However, any changes to statutory outputs will be carefully reviewed to ensure compliance and transparency. The consultation itself forms part of a broader transformation programme, with the goal of building a more effective and future-proof statistics system for Wales by 2026.

The principles from the statutory Code of Practice for Statistics are applied throughout this consultation.

CONCLUSION

How have people most likely to be affected by the proposal been involved in developing it?

People most likely to be affected by the proposal (primarily users of the statistical outputs) have been involved through informal engagement and feedback mechanisms. Their feedback through regular statistical user engagement has shaped the proposals, and the consultation will be directly aimed at them. This includes internal policy teams, analysts, and external users who access and apply the data. While the proposal is not expected to directly affect children, people with protected characteristics, Welsh speakers, or other specific groups, the consultation process will remain open to all, ensuring inclusive involvement and the opportunity for feedback from a broad range of stakeholders.

What are the most significant impacts, positive and negative?

The most significant impact of the proposal is that some specific or detailed data may become harder to locate. However, the core information will remain available through other sources (or on a less frequent basis), and users will be supported through clear communication and guidance. This change is expected to have a minimal impact on individuals, communities, and sectors. The positive impact is improved timeliness, quality and sustainability of priority statistics, and increased capacity and flexibility to address new statistical demands in future.

In light of the impacts identified, how will the proposal maximise contribution to our well-being objectives and the seven well-being goals; and/or avoid, reduce or mitigate any negative impacts?

To maximise contribution to well-being objectives, the proposal supports sustainable and proportionate use of analytical resources, enabling teams to focus on outputs that better inform policy and public services.

Negative impacts (such as reduced visibility of certain data) will be mitigated by:

- Communicating changes clearly to users
- Presenting updates in existing forums
- Responding to consultation feedback
- Ensuring alternative sources remain accessible

No further action is required at this stage to mitigate impacts, but this will be reviewed following the consultation.

How will the impact of the proposal be monitored and evaluated as it progresses and when it concludes?

The impact of the proposal will be monitored through:

- Feedback received during and after the consultation
- Ongoing engagement with users via established forums
- Internal review of analytical priorities and resource allocation

Evaluation will focus on whether users are able to access the data they need and whether the changes have enabled more efficient and impactful analytical work. Adjustments will be made if significant issues are identified.

DECLARATION

I am satisfied that the impact of the proposed action has been adequately assessed and recorded.

Name of Senior Responsible Officer / Deputy Director: Stephanie Howarth

Department: Statistical Services

Date: 15/10/25