



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

STATISTICS

Labour market statistics (Annual Population Survey): 2021

Labour market data for UK countries and regions and also for local areas for 2021.

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Background

The Annual Population Survey (APS) combines the boosted samples of the Labour Force Survey (LFS). It provides rolling four-quarter labour market data for UK countries and regions as well as for local areas.

The LFS remains the main source for **headline labour market indicators** at a Wales level. The larger sample of the APS allows for estimates at a local authority level and for sub-groups of the population.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic impacted the full time period covered in this release. In the **Labour market overview**, we have included analysis on data sources that provide more timely indications on how the pandemic continues to affect the labour market in Wales.

Welsh Government published a more detailed analysis of **protected characteristics in the labour market in Wales** on 16 December 2021. We welcome your feedback on this publication and priorities for future analyses, please see contact details at the end of this release.

2021 Reweighting

ONS plan to reweight the APS dataset, including data from the year ending March 2020 onwards. Further details of their plans will be provided once they have finalised a timeline.

Employment

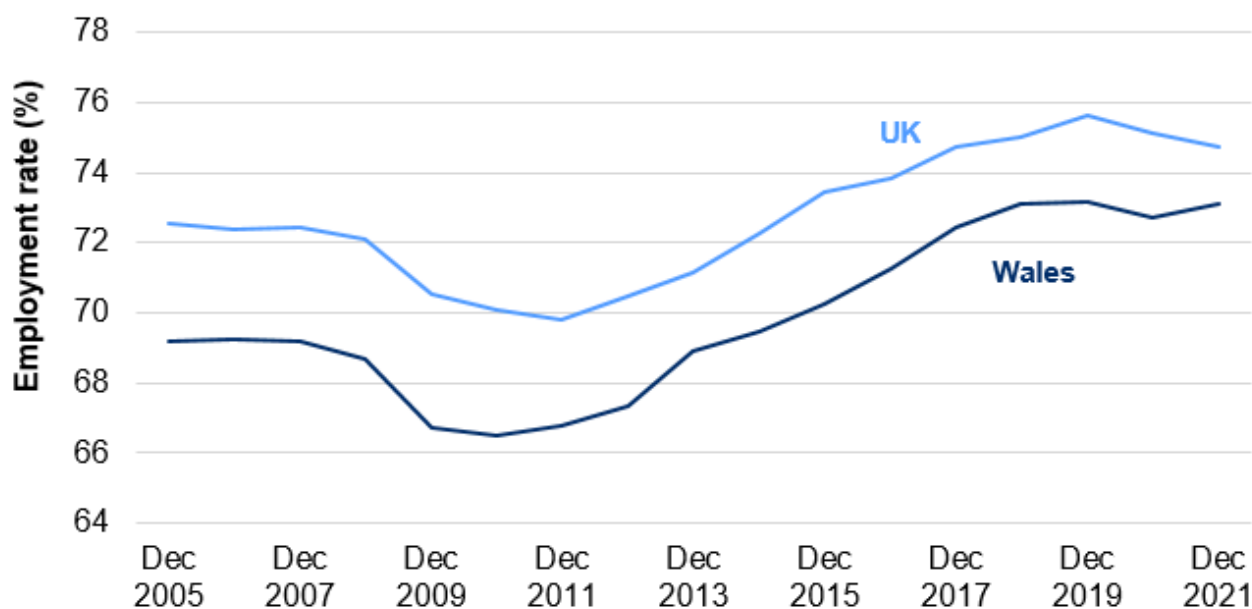
The employment rate for people aged 16 to 64 in Wales was 73.1% in the year

ending December 2021, up 0.4 percentage points on the previous year The UK rate was 74.7%, down 0.4 percentage points over the year.

Since 2001, the employment rate has increased by 6.0 percentage points in Wales and by 2.5 percentage points in the UK.

The largest increases in employment rates over the year were in Merthyr Tydfil (up 4.6 percentage points to 69.2%), Rhondda Cynon Taf (up 4.3 percentage points to 71.6%) and Neath Port Talbot (up 3.2 percentage points to 72.8%).

Chart 1: Employment rate, year ending December 2005 to December 2021



Source: Annual Population Survey, ONS

[Employment data on StatsWales](#)

Unemployment

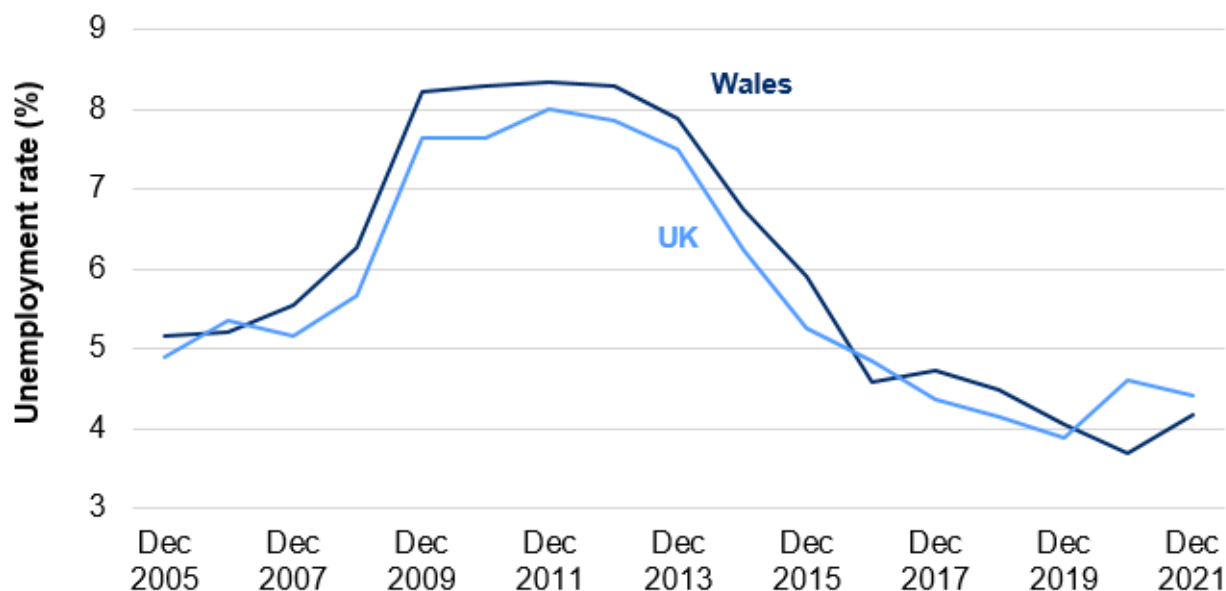
The unemployment rate for people aged 16 and over in Wales was 4.2%, up 0.5 percentage points compared with the previous year. The UK rate was 4.4%, down 0.2 percentage points over the year.

Since 2001, the unemployment rate has fallen by 1.3 percentage points in Wales and by 0.6 percentage points in the UK.

The largest decreases in unemployment rates over the year were in Caerphilly (down 2.5 percentage points to 2.7%), Rhondda Cynon Taf (down 2.1 percentage points to 3.2%) and Ceredigion (down 1.6 percentage points to 3.0%).

Please note data for Flintshire, Neath Port Talbot and Monmouthshire have been suppressed due to sample sizes being too small to provide sufficient data quality.

Chart 2: Unemployment rate, year ending December 2005 to December 2021



Source: Annual Population Survey, ONS

Unemployment data on StatsWales

Economic inactivity (excluding students)

The economic inactivity rate for people aged 16 to 64 in Wales was 19.9%, down 0.3 percentage points compared with the previous year. The UK was 17.6%, up 0.4 percentage points over the year.

Since 2001, the economic inactivity rate fell by 6.5 percentage points in Wales and by 3.8 percentage points in the UK.

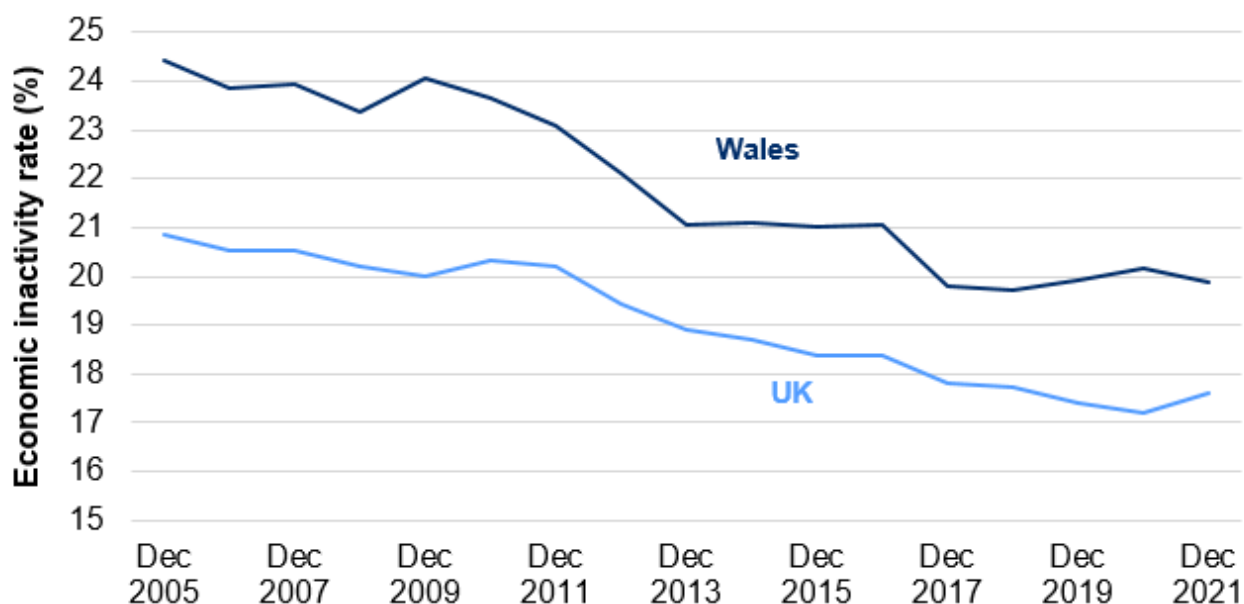
The lowest estimated economic inactivity rates were in the Vale of Glamorgan (15.2%), Cardiff (15.5%) and Powys (15.6%).

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Chart 3: Economic inactivity rate (excluding students), year ending December 2005 to December 2021



Source: Annual Population Survey, ONS

[Economic inactivity data on StatsWales](#)

Youth statistics (aged 16 to 24)

Employment

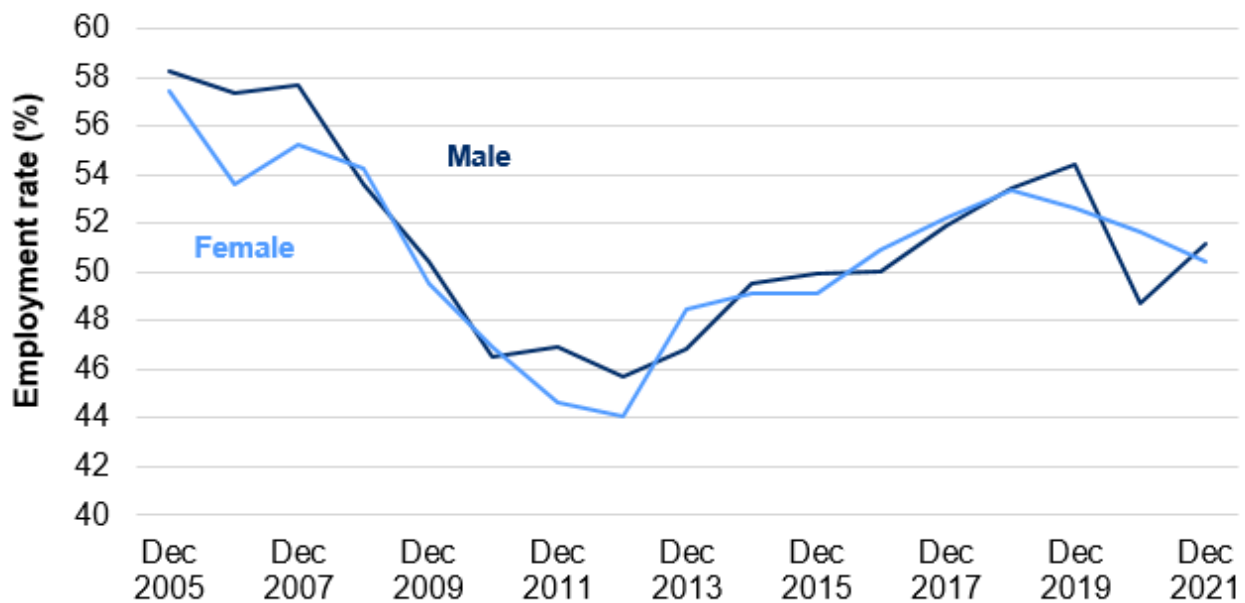
The youth employment rate in Wales was 50.8%, up 0.7 percentage points compared to the previous year. The UK rate was 51.3%, down 1.0 percentage points compared to the previous year.

The youth employment rate for males increased in Wales by 2.5 percentage

points compared to the previous year to 51.2%.

However, young females were negatively impacted with the employment rate decreasing by 1.2 percentage points over the year to 50.4%.

Chart 4: Youth employment rate by sex in Wales, year ending December 2005 to December 2021



Source: Annual Population Survey, ONS

Employment data on StatsWales

Unemployment

The youth unemployment rate in Wales was 12.3%, below the UK rate of 12.6%.

The youth unemployment rate for males was higher than females in Wales at 14.1% and 10.1% respectively.

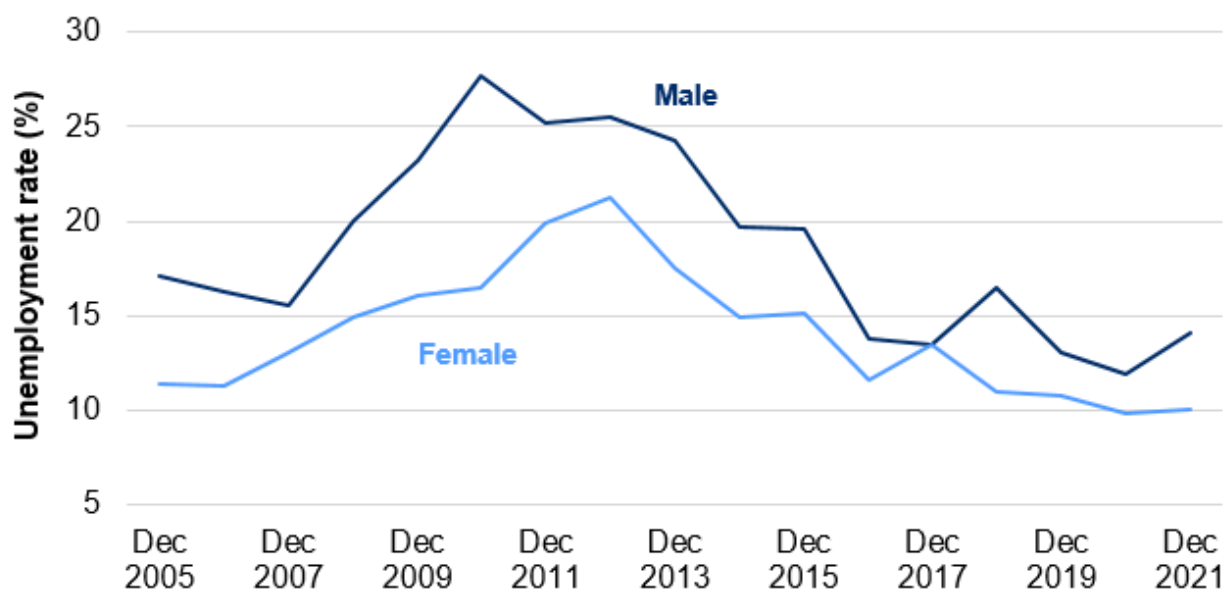
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The youth unemployment gender difference in Wales was 4.0 percentage points in the year ending December 2021, with a higher rate for males than females. This compares to 2.9 percentage points in 2001. The UK gap was 2.5 percentage points, down from 3.1 percentage points in 2001.

Chart 5: Youth unemployment rate by sex in Wales, year ending December 2005 to December 2021



Source: Annual Population Survey, ONS

Unemployment data on StatsWales

Economic Inactivity (excluding students)

The youth economic inactivity rate in Wales was 24.0%, up 2.3 percentage points compared to the previous year. The UK rate was 18.4%, up 1.1 percentage points over the year.

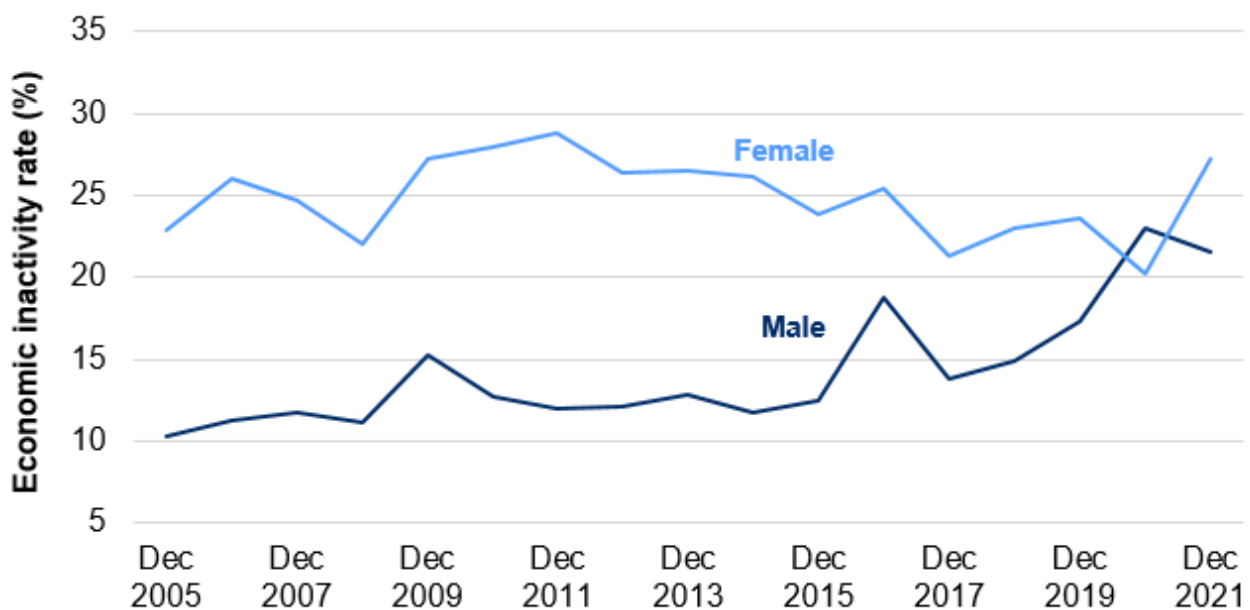
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The youth economic inactivity rate for males decreased by 1.5 percentage points compared to the previous year, whereas the rate for females increased by 7.0 percentage points. Care should be taken when interpreting these changes due to the recent volatility of the series.

Chart 6: Youth economic inactivity rate (excluding students) by sex in Wales, year ending December 2005 to December 2021



Source: Annual Population Survey, ONS

Economic inactivity data on StatsWales

Long-term unemployment

35.2% of unemployed people in Wales had been unemployed for 12 months or more. This compares with 28.5% in the UK.

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The proportion of unemployed people in Wales who have been unemployed for 12 months or more increased by 10.9 percentage points compared to the previous year and increased by 9.2 percentage points compared to pre-pandemic estimates (2019).

38.8% of unemployed males in Wales had been unemployed for 12 months or more, up 10.8 percentage points over the year. This compares with 33.1% in the UK.

30.8% of unemployed females in Wales had been unemployed for 12 months or more, up 10.8 percentage points over the year. This compares with 23.0% in the UK.

Disability status

The employment rate for disabled people in Wales was unchanged on the previous year, compared to a 0.9 percentage point increase for non-disabled people.

Similarly, the unemployment rate increased more for disabled people to 8.7%. This compares to an unemployment rate of 3.4% for non-disabled people in Wales.

Ethnicity

The employment rate for Black, Asian and minority ethnic people aged 16 to 64 in Wales increased by 0.3 percentage points over the year to 64.8%. This compares to 73.5% for white people, also up 0.3 percentage points over the year.

The Welsh unemployment rate for Black, Asian and minority ethnic people was 11.1%. This compared to 3.8% for white people in Wales. It is not possible to provide an annual comparison at this breakdown as data for the unemployment rate for 2020Q4 has been suppressed due to small sample sizes.

Quality and methodology information

Relevance

The labour market in Wales can be measured by both the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the Annual Population Survey (APS). The APS combines the boosted samples of the LFS. It provides rolling four-quarter labour market data for UK countries and regions and also for local areas. The larger sample of the APS allows for estimates at a local authority level and for sub-groups of the population.

The LFS remains the main source for headline labour market indicators at a Wales level, and the data are updated monthly. The latest LFS data is published by the Welsh Government each month in the [labour market overview](#) release. This release combines LFS data with other data sources (including the APS) to provide a more detailed commentary on the labour market in Wales. ONS also publish a monthly [labour market overview \(Office for National Statistics\)](#) release which provides an overview of the labour market for the UK as a whole and an additional release which provides an [overview of the labour market across the regions and countries of the UK \(Office for National Statistics\)](#).

This release brings together the latest key APS statistics relating to the Welsh labour market with a more detailed commentary on the regions in Wales and the protected characteristics of people within the Welsh labour market.

The statistics in this release are used by the Welsh Government to monitor the headline statistics for the Welsh labour market as well as providing comparisons to the UK labour market. This release is also used to monitor progress against some of the targets in Welsh Government's **Employability Plan**. The release complements the **Welsh Economy in Numbers dashboard**, which provides a broad picture of the Welsh economy and labour market.

This release is used by other public sector organisations, businesses, academia and private individuals as a means of identifying the key trends in the headline economic and labour market statistics for Wales. Our **2012 user consultation** provides more information on how our outputs are used.

The Welsh Government is considering how best to meet user need for analysis of the labour market by protected characteristics. Data is currently available on **StatsWales** and **Nomis**.

Accuracy

The data presented in this release is based on sample surveys, therefore is subject to sampling variability. This means the data is subject to differing degrees of sampling variability, i.e., the true value for any measure lies in a differing range about the estimated value. This range or sampling variability increases as the detail in the data increases, for example individual local authority data are subject to higher variability than Wales data.

Estimates of employment, unemployment and economic inactivity are available from both the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and the APS. Estimates from the LFS are based on a rolling quarter and are updated monthly. LFS sample sizes are too low to produce reliable estimates for geographies below Wales level. Estimates from the APS are based on a rolling twelve months, updated each quarter. The APS uses a bigger sample than the LFS so is used to produce estimates for geographies in Wales. At Wales level, the APS is a slightly more

robust measure than the LFS, but it is less timely and slower to adapt to changes in the labour market.

National Statistics status

The **United Kingdom Statistics Authority** has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the **Code of Practice for Statistics**.

National Statistics status means that official statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value.

All official statistics should comply with all aspects of the Code of Practice for Statistics. They are awarded National Statistics status following an assessment by the UK Statistics Authority's regulatory arm. The Authority considers whether the statistics meet the highest standards of Code compliance, including the value they add to public decisions and debate.

It is Welsh Government's responsibility to maintain compliance with the standards expected of National Statistics. If we become concerned about whether these statistics are still meeting the appropriate standards, we will discuss any concerns with the Authority promptly. National Statistics status can be removed at any point when the highest standards are not maintained, and reinstated when standards are restored.

The continued designation of these statistics as National Statistics was confirmed in March 2010 following a compliance check by the **Office for Statistics Regulation**. These statistics last underwent a **full assessment against the Code of Practice** in March 2010.

Since the latest review by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following

improvements:

- Changed to a HTML release for increased interactivity and increased accessibility for users.
- Expanded the coverage of topics to include more detail about the headline labour market statistics, and added sections on youth employment and long-term unemployment.
- Introduced a new section on the labour market by different protected characteristics.
- Added charts which allow users to clearly see any trends and volatility in the data.

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. The Act puts in place seven wellbeing goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators (“national indicators”) that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the wellbeing goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before Senedd Cymru. Under section 10(8) of the Well-being of Future Generations Act, where the Welsh Ministers revise the national indicators, they must as soon as reasonably practicable (a) publish the indicators as revised and (b) lay a copy of them before the Senedd. These national indicators were laid before the Senedd in 2021. The indicators laid on 14 December 2021 replace the set laid on 16 March 2016 and this releases includes the following national indicator:

- (21) percentage of people in employment

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the wellbeing

goals and associated technical information is available in the [Wellbeing of Wales report](#).

This release includes, contextual indicators, namely the basket of indicators, presented in the wellbeing report.

As a national indicator under the Act they must be referred to in the analyses of local wellbeing produced by public services boards when they are analysing the state of economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing in their areas.

Further information on the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The statistics included in this release could also provide supporting narrative to the national indicators and be used by public services boards in relation to their local wellbeing assessments and local wellbeing plans.

Contact details

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