



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

STATISTICS, DOCUMENT

Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET): July 2022 to June 2023

Data for young people by age, gender, region and disability for July 2022 to June 2023.

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Introduction

This release summarises the available statistics on young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) in Wales. The definitive source for this information is the annual statistical first release (SFR), Participation of young people in education and the labour market (also published on 31 October 2023) which uses a range of data sources to estimate participation and provides final estimates for 2021 and provisional estimates for 2022.

Additionally, this release provides users with more detailed, but less statistically robust, statistics from the Annual Population Survey (APS). APS estimates have become increasingly volatile in recent years, and there is increasing divergence between the APS and SFR estimates.

It should be noted that each of these sources are estimates. Our guide to [understanding the different sources of statistics on young people not in education, employment or training \(NEET\) in Wales](#) provides further information.

Estimates from 2020 onwards cover the period of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Some of the changes observed may result from conditions brought about by the pandemic. For example, delayed or missed learning, changes to examinations and assessments and changing labour market conditions during the period of the pandemic.

There is additional uncertainty around these estimates, owing to issues with some of the data sources used to derive them. An explanation is provided in the section containing key quality information.

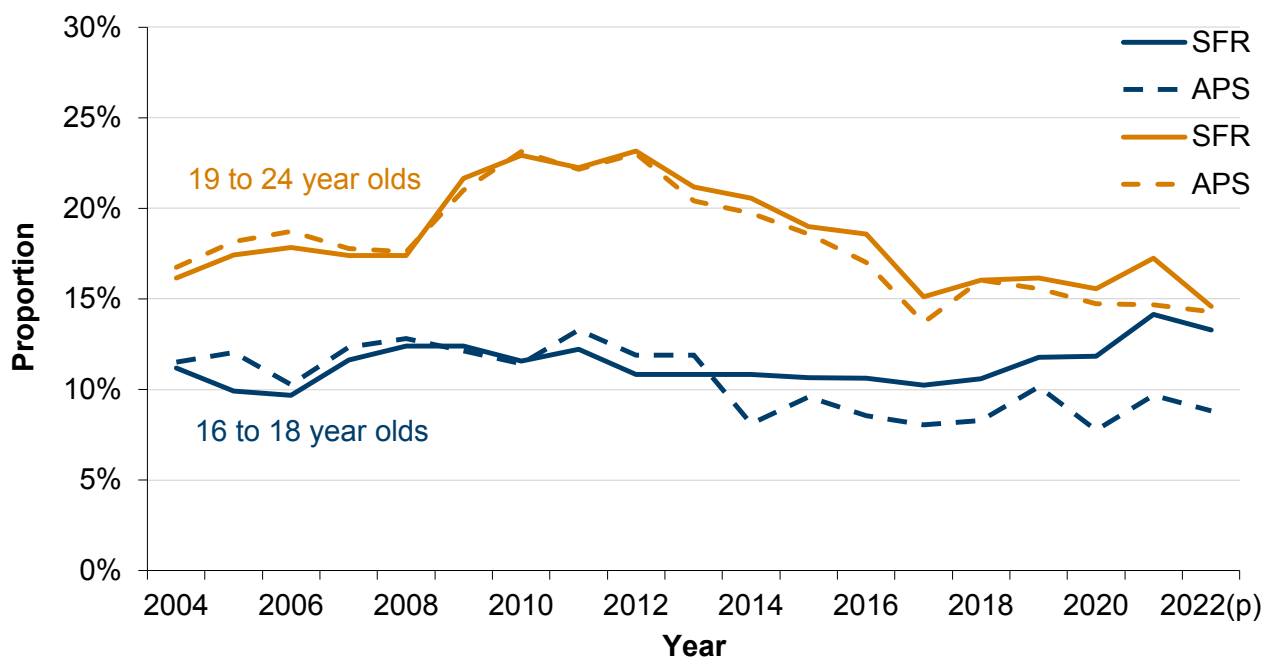
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Main points

Figure 1: Young people not in education, employment or training in Wales, 2004 to 2022



Description of Figure 1: A line chart comparing the NEET rates on the SFR basis to the APS basis for both 16 to 18 year olds and 19 to 24 year olds. Both measures show that NEET rates have decreased in 2022 with the SFR showing a higher rate, particularly for 16 to 18 year olds.

Source: Welsh Government analysis of the SFR series and APS series on NEETs

16 to 18 year olds

- There was a small gradual decrease in the proportion of 16 to 18 year olds who were NEET between 2011 and 2017. On the Statistical First Release (SFR) basis, this proportion has increased since. On the Annual Population Survey (APS) basis, the proportion is also higher in 2022 than it was in 2017 but has fluctuated in that time. There is an increasing divergence between the SFR and APS NEET estimates. See the Key Quality Information for more detail.
- On the SFR basis, provisional figures indicate that 13.3% (14,400) of 16 to 18 year olds were NEET at end 2022, compared with 14.2% (14,900) at end 2021.
- Timelier data from the APS series indicates that NEET rates have since increased. On the APS basis, for the year ending June 2023, 10.5% of 16 to 18 year olds were estimated to be NEET, compared with 6.3% for the year ending June 2022. It should be noted that the figures for the year ending June 2022 and June 2023 is based on between approximately 25 and 40 responses and is categorised as being of limited quality.

19 to 24 year olds

- On the Statistical First Release (SFR) basis, provisional figures indicate that 14.6% (34,500) of 19 to 24 year olds were NEET at end 2022, a decrease compared with 17.3% (39,600) in 2021.
- After the start of the 2008 recession the proportion of 19 to 24 year olds who were NEET saw a large increase from 17.4% in 2008 to around 22% to 23% from 2009 to 2012, decreasing in each subsequent year up to 2017. The decrease was driven by increased labour market activity, with participation in education and training remaining fairly stable.
- On the Annual Population Survey (APS) basis, for the year ending June 2023, 15.8% of 19 to 24 year olds were estimated to be NEET, compared

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with 15.1% for the year ending June 2022.

Proportion of young people not in education, employment or training, by characteristic

Gender

From the SFR series it is also possible to produce a gender split of the proportion of young people who are NEET. As this is based on the SFR series, this section contains data up to and including the provisional estimates for the 2022 calendar year. Subsequent analysis in this section (age, disability, ethnicity and region) is based on the APS series and covers data up to and including the year to June 2023.

16 to 18 year olds

Figure 2 shows that the proportion of males and females aged 16 to 18 who are NEET have broadly followed similar trends between 2004 and 2015, with females less likely to be NEET than males due to higher levels of participation in education and training. The gap has since narrowed and even reversed, with the increased volatility resulting in the rate for females exceeding the rate for males in 2020 and 2022. For 2022:

- 11.2% (6,200) of males aged 16 to 18 were NEET, compared to 15.4% (8,300) in 2021.
- 15.5% (8,100) of females aged 16 to 18 were NEET, compared to 12.9% (6,600) in 2021.

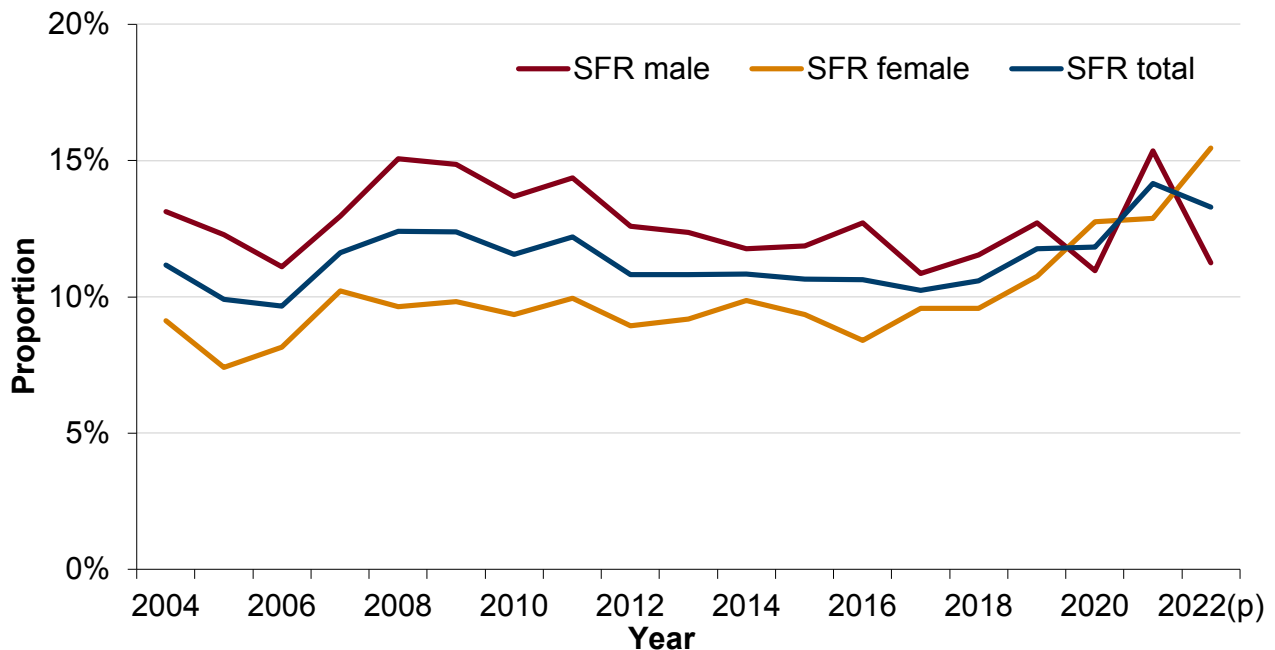
Figure 2: Young people not in education, employment or training in Wales

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aged 16 to 18 by gender, 2004 to 2022



Description of Figure 2: A line chart showing the proportions of 16 to 18 year old males and females who were NEET have converged over recent periods as the rate of females has increased over consecutive years. In 2022 males saw a decrease in the proportion of those who were NEET whilst females saw an increase.

Source: Welsh Government analysis of the SFR series on NEETs

19 to 24 year olds

The proportion of females aged 19 to 24 who are NEET was consistently higher than males up until 2018, when a slightly larger proportion of males were NEET than females. Since then, the rates have fluctuated with increased volatility for both males and females.

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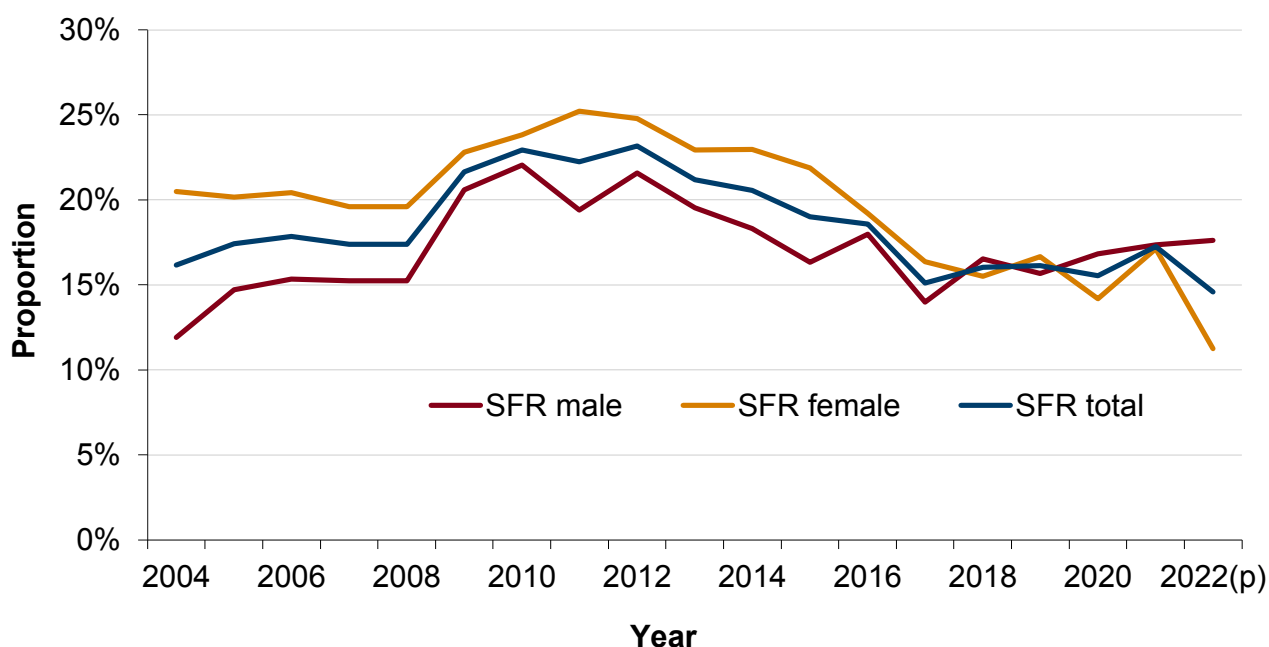
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Provisional figures for 2022 indicate:

- 17.6% (21,900) of males aged 19 to 24 were NEET, an increase from 17.4% (20,700) in 2021.
- 11.2% (12,600) of females aged 19 to 24 were NEET, a decrease from 17.1% (18,900) in 2021.

Figure 3: Young people not in education, employment or training in Wales aged 19 to 24 by gender, 2004 to 2022



Description of Figure 3: A line chart showing the proportions of males and females aged 19 to 24 who were NEET converged in 2016 and remained similar until 2022, when males saw an increase and females saw a large decrease.

Source: Welsh Government analysis of the SFR series on NEETs

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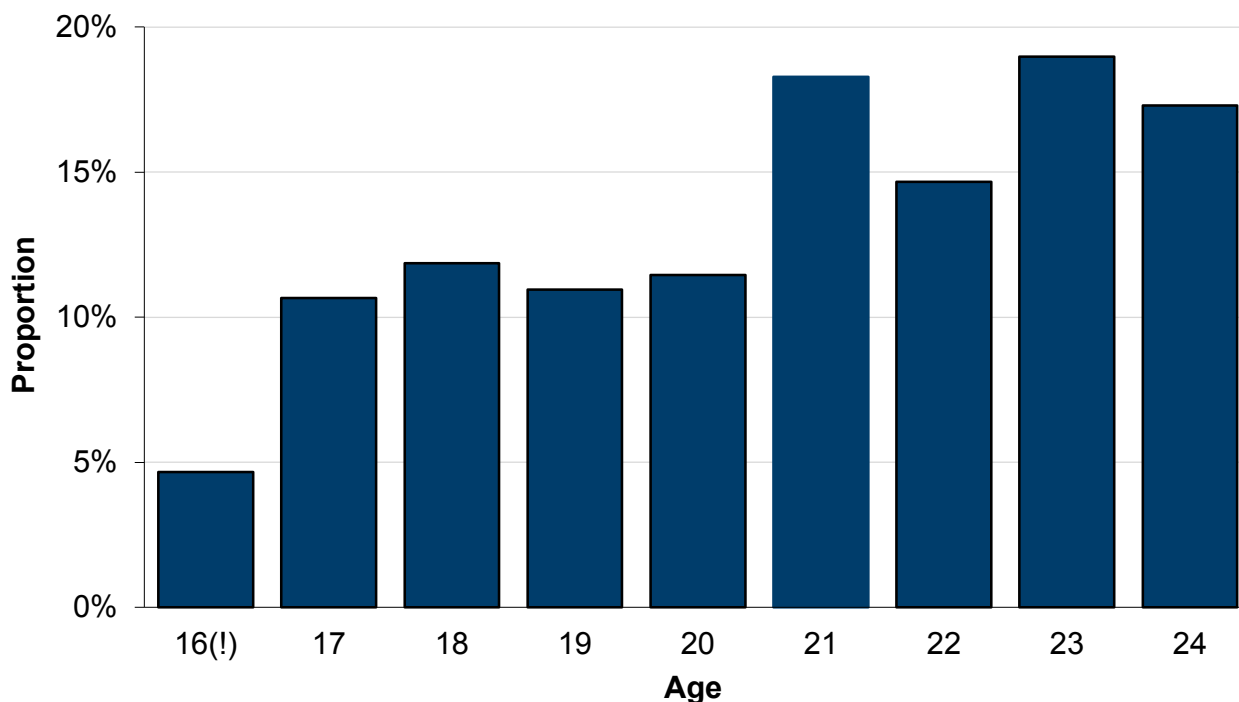
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Age

The Annual Population Survey can be used to provide analysis of NEET rates by characteristics which are not available via the SFR series. Due to small sample sizes, when looking at sub-groups it has been necessary to use estimates based on the average of three periods and therefore should be used to compare groups or regions only.

Figure 4: Young people not in education, employment or training in Wales by age, three year period ending June 2023 [Note 1]



Description of Figure 4: A bar chart showing the proportion of young people who were NEET in the three year period ending June 2023 for each year of age from 16 to 24 years.

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Source: Welsh Government analysis of the APS series on NEETs

[NOTE 1] (!) The data item is based on between approx. 25 and 40 responses and is categorised as being of limited quality.

- The proportion of young people that are NEET is relatively stable for those aged between 17 and 20, and increases for those aged 21 to 24.
- For the three year period ending June 2023, the proportion of young people who were NEET was lowest for those aged 16 (4.7%) and highest for those aged 23 (19.0%).

Disability

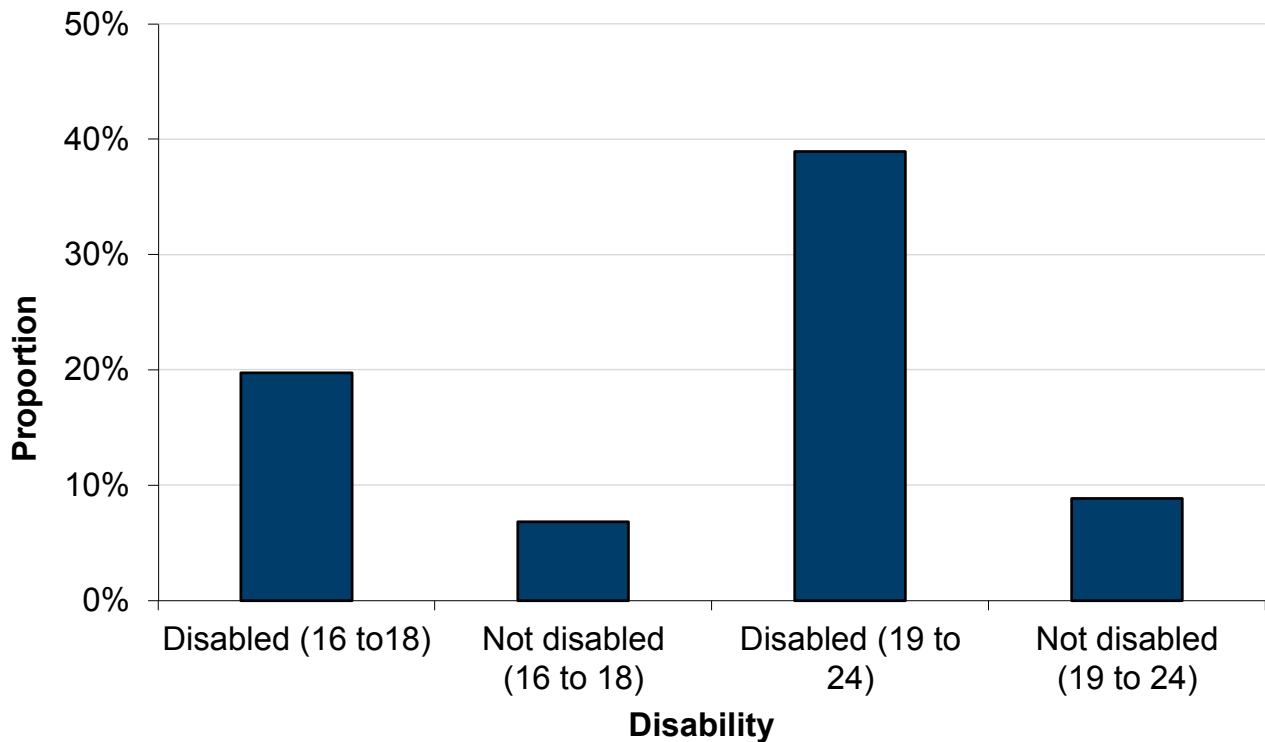
The Annual Population Survey, which is the source of data for this release, captures data using the medical definition of disability used in the Equality Act 2010 (“a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term impact on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities”). For further information please see the [disability definition](#).

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Figure 5: Young people not in education, employment or training in Wales by disability, three year period ending June 2023



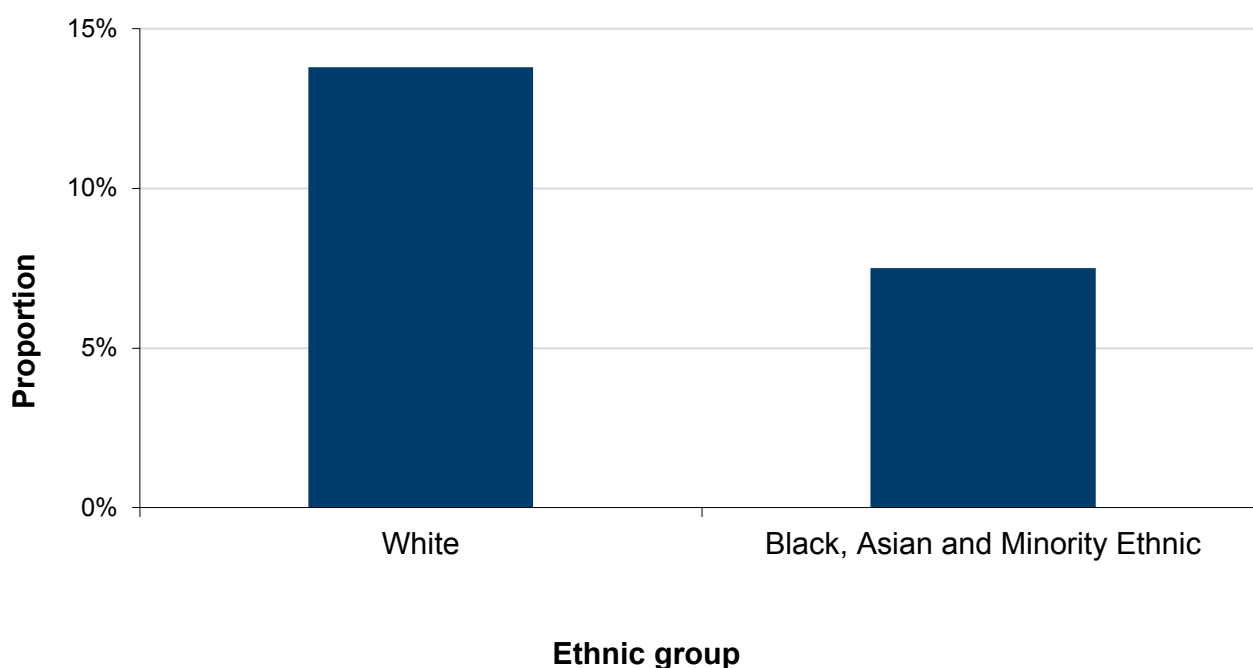
Description of Figure 5: A bar chart showing the proportion of disabled people who are NEET in the three years ending June 2023. Disabled people are more likely to be NEET than people who are not disabled, with the largest proportion of those who are NEET being disabled people aged 19 to 24 (38.9%).

Source: Welsh Government analysis of the APS series on NEETs

- Disabled young people are far more likely to be NEET than young people that are not disabled.
- This difference is even more pronounced for 19 to 24 year olds compared to 16 to 18 year olds. The proportion of disabled people who are NEET rises from 19.7% at age 16 to 18 to 38.9% at age 19 to 24.

Ethnicity

Figure 6: Young people aged 16 to 24 not in education, employment or training in Wales by ethnicity, three year period ending June 2023



Description of Figure 6: A bar chart showing that young White people are more likely to be NEET than those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people.

Source: Welsh Government analysis of the APS

- In the three year period ending June 2023, young White people were more likely to be NEET than young Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people.
- 13.8% of young White people were estimated to be NEET compared to 7.5% of young Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people.

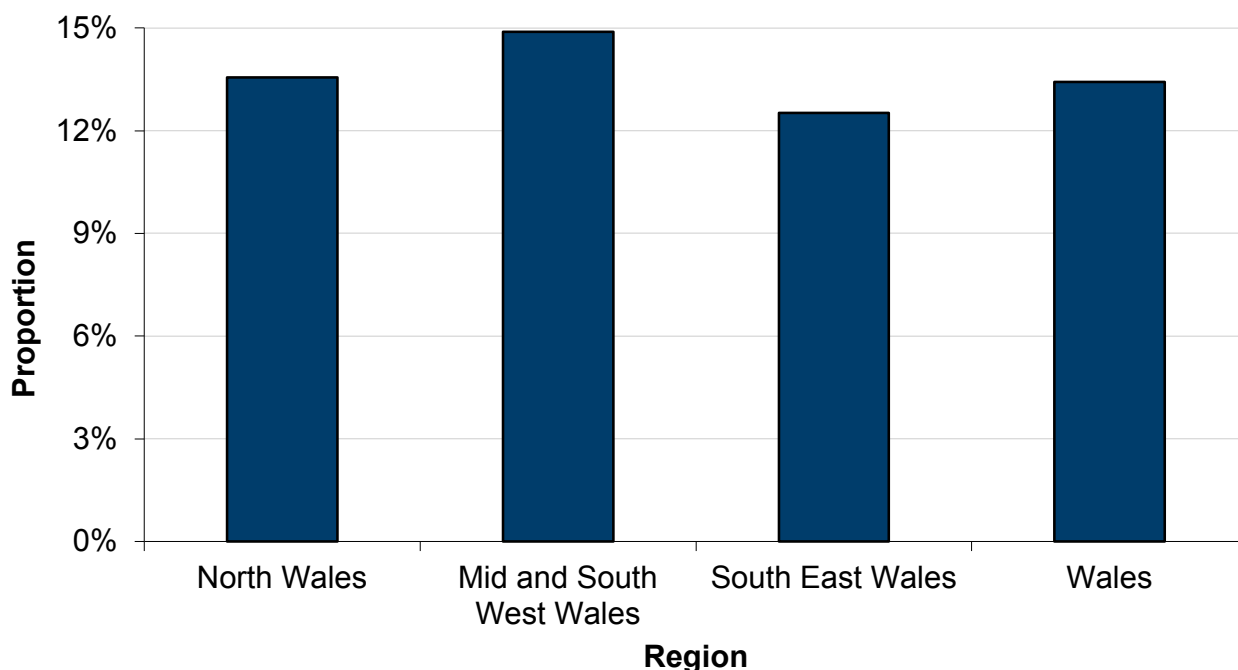
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Region

Figure 7: Young people aged 16 to 24 not in education, employment or training by region of Wales, three year period ending June 2023



Description of Figure 7: A bar chart showing that there are small differences in NEET rates between Welsh regions, with the rate being highest in Mid and South West Wales and lowest in South East Wales.

Source: Welsh Government analysis of the APS

- In the three year period ending June 2023, there were small differences in NEET rates between the Welsh regions. The proportion of young people (aged 16 to 24) who were NEET varied from 12.5% in South East Wales to 14.9% in Mid and South West Wales.

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National indicator and national milestone

This release contains data associated with one of the national wellbeing indicators (22: percentage of people in education, employment or training, measured for different age groups).

There is a national milestone associated with this indicator – ‘at least 90% of 16 to 24 year olds will be in education, employment, or training by 2050’. Whilst this release considers data for 16 to 18 year olds and 19 to 24 year olds separately, the national milestone is based on the full 16 to 24 age range. The national indicator and national milestone also consider young people in education, employment and training (as opposed to those who are not (NEET)).

Provisional estimates show that 85.8% of 16 to 24 year olds were in education, employment or training in 2022, up from 83.7% in 2021.

Definitions

Education and training

For the SFR estimates: it is based on those who are enrolled on a course in a school, Further Education (FE) college, Higher Education (HE) institution (including the Open University (OU)) or with a work-based learning provider in Wales. In addition, an estimate is made of the number of those in employment who undertake off-the job training.

For the APS based estimates: respondents to the APS who are either:

- currently carrying out an apprenticeship
- currently on a government employment or training scheme

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- currently working or studying towards any qualifications
- have undertaken any job-related education or training in the previous 4 weeks
- currently enrolled on any full-time or part-time education course excluding leisure classes and are still attending or waiting for term to (re)start

Employment

The APS is used to estimate the proportion in employment for both the SFR and APS based estimates. In addition employment status from Post-16 enrolment data is used in the SFR series.

From the APS respondents are in employment if they are either:

- employed
- self-employed
- on government employment or training programmes
- an unpaid family worker

Disability

The Welsh Government accepts the social definition of disability, in which it is recognised that barriers in society act to disable people who have impairments or health conditions or who use British Sign Language.

The Annual Population Survey, which is the source of data for this release, captures data using the medical definition of disability used in the Equality Act 2010 (“a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term impact on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities”). Figures within this release are not comparable to those within releases prior to 2015, which reported those reporting DDA current disability or work-limiting disability.

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Quality information

This release summarises the available statistics on young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) in Wales. It is updated annually with latest estimates from the Annual Population Survey (APS) and the headline SFR series. To supplement this annual output, a headline and tables are published quarterly as new APS data become available. The publication of this release coincides with the availability of new SFR series estimates from the [participation of young people in education and the labour market statistical release](#). This release usually covers APS data up to and including the March of the following year for which SFR estimates are available. This year's bulletin contains APS data up to and including the year ending June 2023, due to the delayed publication of the SFR estimates.

Further information on the SFR and APS series, as well as NEET estimates from the Careers Wales pupil destinations survey, is provided in our guide to [understanding the different sources of statistics on young people not in education, employment or training \(NEET\) in Wales](#).

The data will be used in support of the National Indicator related to 'Percentage of people in education, employment or training' laid under the Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015.

Relevance

The statistics are used within the Welsh Government to monitor trends in the level and proportion of young people who are NEET.

The [Youth Engagement and Progression Framework](#) was originally published in 2013 and was refreshed in September 2022. The Framework is a systematic mechanism to identify and respond to young people at risk of

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becoming NEET, who are NEET and/or who are at risk of being homeless. It focuses on young people aged 11 to 18 and is built of 6 core components:

1. Early identification
2. Brokerage
3. Monitoring progression
4. Provision
5. Employability and employment opportunities
6. Accountability

These statistics are of relevance to **Stronger, Fairer, Greener Wales: A Plan for Employability and Skills**. The technical annex for the strategy refers to the national indicator based on data from this release (see also the Well-being of Future Generations Act section below). These statistics are also part of the evidence base for the **Young Persons Guarantee**.

Accuracy

The Annual Population Survey (APS) is a household survey carried out by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The survey seeks information on respondents' personal circumstances, including their labour market status and their education and training activity. The APS combines the boosted samples of the Labour Force Survey (LFS) and provides rolling four quarter data.

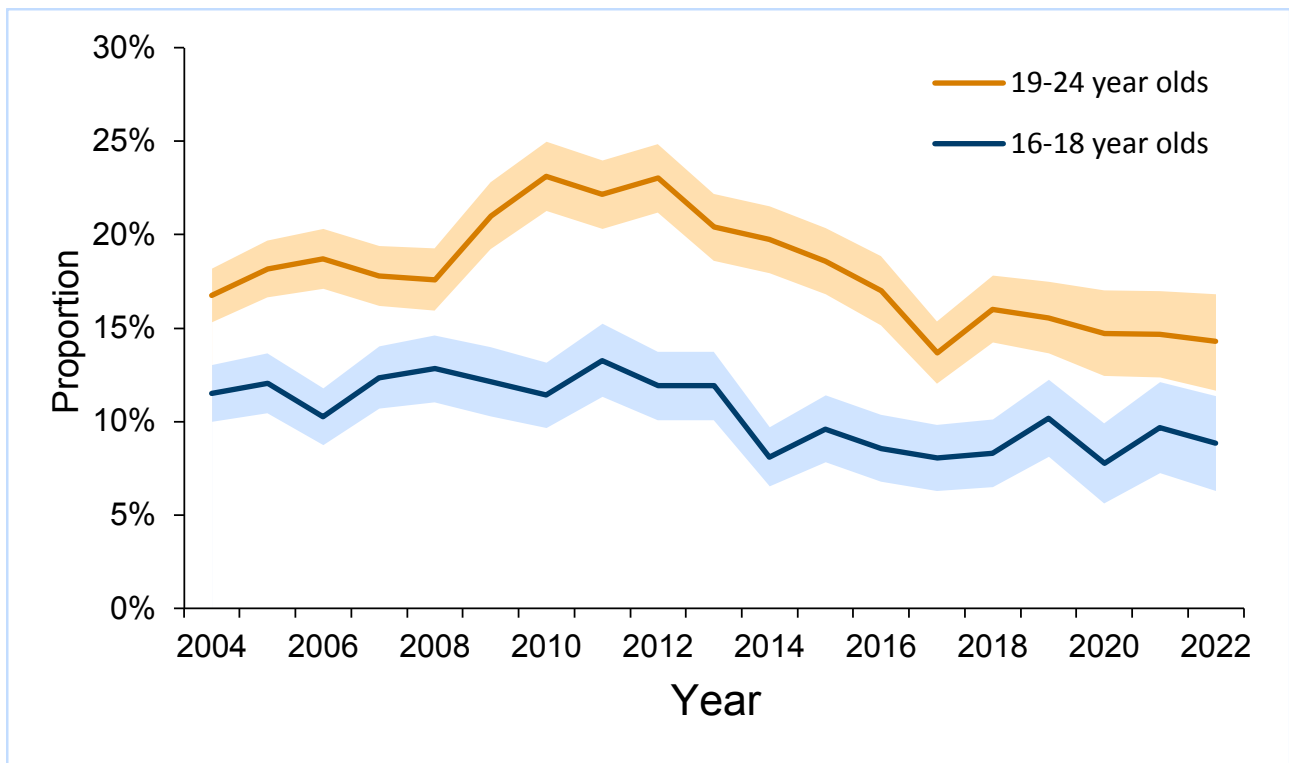
As the data come from a survey, the results are sample-based estimates and are therefore subject to differing degrees of sampling variability, i.e. the true value for any measure lies in a differing range about the estimated value. Approximate 95% confidence intervals have been calculated for the APS estimates of the proportion of young people aged 16 to 18 and 19 to 24 who are NEET in Wales and are included in the web tables published alongside this release. The chart below shows the main APS NEET time series for 16 to 18 and 19 to 24 year olds with 95% confidence intervals included.

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Figure 8: APS estimates of young people not in education, employment or training in Wales, with 95% confidence intervals, 2004 to 2022



Description of Figure 8: A line chart showing APS estimates of young people who are NEET in Wales with 95% confidence intervals shown as shaded areas.

Source: Welsh Government analysis of the APS

These have been calculated assuming a simple weighted random sample and do not take into account the design of the sample and thus only provide an indication of the confidence interval. Additionally, the adjustment method for apportioning missing values creates an artificial aggregated sample size used in the calculation of confidence intervals. The sampling variability increases as the detail in the data increases and therefore for the 16 to 18 and 19 to 24 age

groups, of interest in this bulletin, estimates for sub-groups and regions are based on three period averages.

Further information about the quality of the Annual Population Survey (Office for National Statistics)

Figure 1 demonstrates, from 2005 to 2013, the similar levels and trend in young people who are NEET shown between the SFR and APS series in general. From 2014 there has been some divergence in estimates for 16 to 18 year olds which has widened further in the last few years. The cause for this is unclear but officials are exploring the issue with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the Department for Education (who produce the equivalent participation and NEET estimates for England). Further updates and explanations will be included in future iterations of this release.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has recalibrated the weights of Annual Population Survey datasets for periods covering the year ending 2020 quarter 1 to the year ending 2022 quarter 4. Further information on this reweighting and its impact is available in an article published by the ONS on the [Impact of reweighting the Labour Force Survey \(ONS\)](#).

Revisions policy

Provisional 2022 figures for the SFR series will be finalised in next year's publication, currently planned for release in July 2024. Revisions for earlier years are only made in line with revisions to source data.

Population data

Mid-year population estimates up to and including 2021 (based on the 2021 Census for 2021 estimates, and the 2011 census for earlier years), along with

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2020-based population projections, are used in deriving these participation estimates. The Office for National Statistics will be publishing rebased mid-year population estimates and updated projections in November 2023. As a result, we intend to revise previously published participation estimates in next year's release.

This issue may also affect data from the Annual Population Survey.

Timeliness and punctuality

The latest SFR series on NEETs provides new data for 2021 and provisional data for 2022. The provisional estimates use the best data for 2022 currently available for each aspect of participation; this includes some final data, some provisional data and some modelling.

SFR series

Provisional 2022 figures will be finalised in the next SFR publication, due for release in July 2024. The revisions between provisional and final 2021 estimates were larger than those generally seen when provisional estimates are updated with final data. This is partly due to downward revisions in the number of young people in full-time and part-time education between last year's provisional data and the final data available for this release.

APS series

These estimates of young people who are NEET are revised when the Office for National Statistics (ONS) releases revised Annual Population Survey datasets.

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Accessibility and clarity

It is not possible to disaggregate the SFR NEET estimate down to local authority level. This is due to the way the data is put together using enrolment data and because the employment status is estimated using the APS. For 16 to 18 year olds the number of respondents to the APS is relatively small in each local authority.

The APS has been used to estimate the proportion of young people who are NEET by region. However, as the sample sizes for a single year are around 25 to 70 (based on the year to June 2023) in each area for those aged 16 to 18, the estimates have been averaged over three rolling years for 16 to 24 year olds. The regions in use are as follows.

North Wales

- Isle of Anglesey
- Gwynedd
- Conwy
- Denbighshire
- Flintshire
- Wrexham

Mid and South West Wales

- Powys
- Ceredigion
- Pembrokeshire
- Carmarthenshire
- Swansea

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- Neath Port Talbot

South East Wales

- Bridgend
- Vale of Glamorgan
- Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Merthyr Tydfil
- Caerphilly
- Blaenau Gwent
- Torfaen
- Monmouthshire
- Newport
- Cardiff

Comparability and coherence

The method used to define young people who are NEET using the Annual Population Survey (APS) is harmonised with an agreed UK methodology of deriving NEET estimates. More information can be found within the [paper published by the Office for National Statistics](#).

The Department for Education (DfE) publishes estimates of 16 to 18 year old NEET rates for England using similar methodology to the SFR on an annual basis. The most recent statistical release '[Statistics: NEET and participation \(DfE\)](#)' provided 2022 provisional figures. Figure 9 shows a comparison of the English and Welsh estimates. England does not produce an equivalent measure for 19 to 24 year olds:

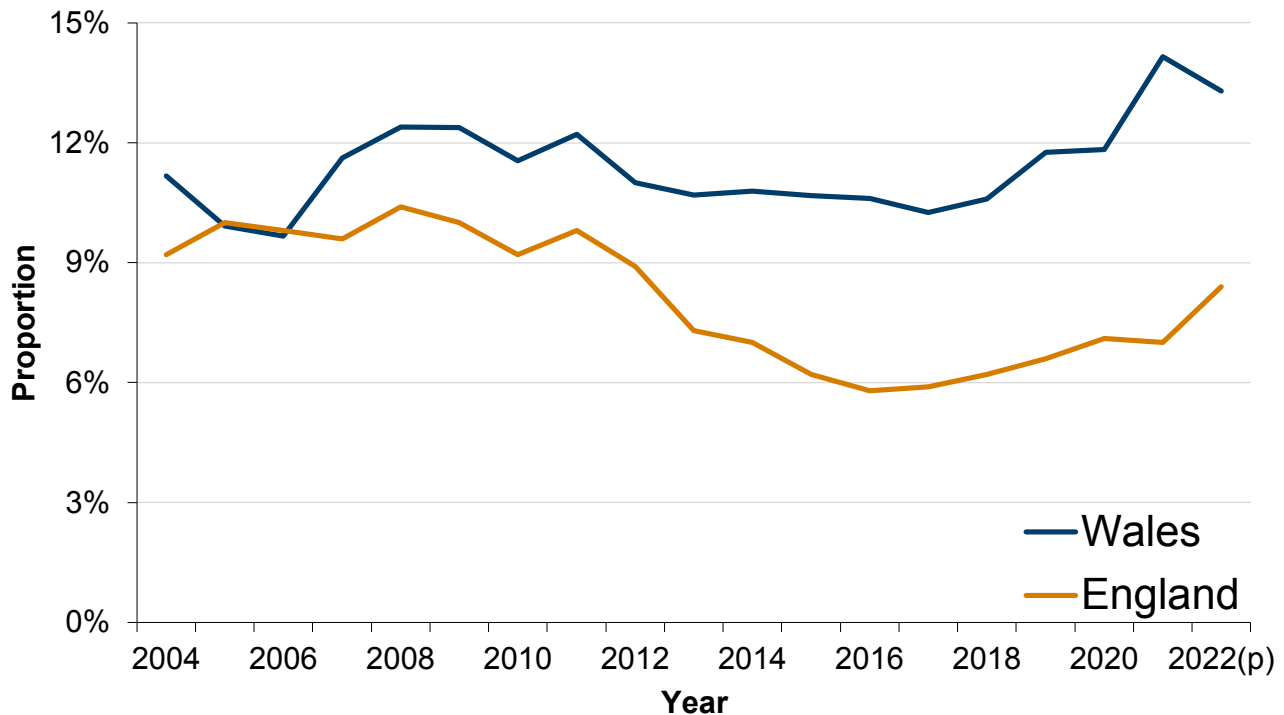
Figure 9: Young people not in education, employment or training

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aged 16 to 18, Wales and England, 2004 to 2022



Description of Figure 9: A line chart showing an increasing gap between Wales and England on the proportion of 16 to 18 years who are estimated to be NEET.

Source: Welsh Government analysis of the SFR

Between 2005 and 2012 the proportion of 16 to 18 year olds who were NEET in England and Wales followed broadly similar trends, but with Wales having a larger proportion of 16 to 18 year olds NEET than England. Since 2012, the gap between England and Wales has widened.

The provisional figures for 2022 show that 13.3% of 16 to 18 year olds in Wales were NEET compared with 8.4% in England. When interpreting trends, it should be noted that there were legislative changes in 2013/14 by the UK Government

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which increased the age to which all young people in England are required to remain in education or training.

For both series, changes in trend need to be interpreted with a degree of caution, as changes could be attributed to sampling effects as well as real effects.

For Scotland and Northern Ireland, directly comparable NEET estimates for 16 to 18 year olds and 19 to 24 year olds are not published.

Labour Force Survey and Annual Population Survey

The DfE also publish an annual brief on young people who are NEET which includes NEET rates estimates based on the quarterly Labour Force Survey (LFS). Additionally from May 2013 the [ONS has produced UK estimates of young people who are NEET](#), also based on the quarterly Labour Force Survey.

The quarterly estimates are not directly comparable with the Welsh APS-only estimates published in this release. A direct comparison for Wales with England and the UK LFS measure is not provided as the sample size for 16 to 18 year olds and 19 to 24 year olds in Wales is not sufficiently large. However, using a similar methodology to that used by the ONS, but using the APS rather than the LFS, we can provide estimates of young people who are NEET across the UK.

These estimates will differ from the official estimates produced by the DfE and ONS and other relevant departments and should therefore be interpreted with caution. [An article explaining the difference between NEET statistics across the UK \(The National Archives\)](#) was published by the ONS, alongside their first publication of UK estimates of young people who are NEET:

Table 1 shows the estimates of the proportion of young people who are NEET

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for each of the UK countries for the years ending June 2022 and June 2023.

For 16 to 18 year olds the proportion estimated to be NEET increased across the UK as a whole.

Country	16 to 18 year olds: year ending June 2022	16 to 18 year olds: year ending June 2023	19 to 24 year olds: year ending June 2022	19 to 24 year olds: year ending June 2023
Wales	6.3% (a)	10.5% (a)	15.1%	15.8%
England	6.0%	8.1%	13.8%	14.7%
Scotland	7.5% (a)	9.3% (a)	12.1%	12.5%
Northern Ireland	5.6% (b)	4.5% (b)	13.0%	10.1%
UK	6.1%	8.2%	13.7%	14.4%

Description of Table 1: A table showing the estimates of the proportion of young people who are NEET by age and UK country from the year ending June 2022 and the year ending June 2023.

Source: Welsh Government analysis of the APS

[NOTE a] The data item is based on between approx. 25 and 40 responses and is categorised as being of limited quality.

[NOTE b] The data item is based on between approx. 10 and 25 responses and is categorised as being of limited quality.

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In the year ending June 2023 the proportion of 16 to 18 year olds estimated to be NEET decreased in Northern Ireland and increased in England, Scotland and Wales from the previous year. The gap between the UK and Wales increased from 0.2 percentage points in the year to June 2022 to 2.3 percentage points in the year to June 2023.

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. The designation of these statistics as National Statistics was confirmed in July 2012 following **a full assessment against the Code of Practice**.

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:

- Included a number of visuals showing long term trends as well as commentary on these trends
- Eliminated un-necessary tables from the release as they are freely available of **StatsWales**
- Improved coherence of the commentary when comparing the two different series

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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.

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being 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 Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the 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 release includes information related to one of the national indicators:

- (22) Percentage of people in education, employment or training, measured for different age groups.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the well-being goals and associated technical information is available in the [Wellbeing of Wales report](#).

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

The Act states national milestones must be set that “...the Welsh Ministers consider would assist in measuring whether progress is being made towards the achievement of the well-being goals.” In doing so Welsh Ministers must specify how we know that a national milestone has been achieved and the time by which it is to be achieved.

National milestones are not performance targets for any individual organisation, but are collective measures of success for Wales.

In this release indicator 22: percentage of people in education, employment or training, measured for different age groups corresponds to a national milestone:

- At least 90% of 16 to 24 year olds will be in education, employment, or training by 2050

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 well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

We want your feedback

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to labourmarket.stats@gov.wales

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