



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

STATISTICS

# Wellbeing of Wales, 2023

The report helps us assess whether we are making progress against the 7 national wellbeing goals.

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# Foreword

## Foreword by the Chief Statistician

Each year the Wellbeing of Wales report provides a chance to step back and look at how people and places in Wales are changing. The Well-being of Future Generations Act provides us with the framework for doing this: the seven well-being goals. These goals form the basis of the chapters in this report.

With inflation rising sharply during the last year, the impact on the cost of living features regularly throughout this report. Inflation hit a high of over 11% in October 2022, resulting in reductions in people's real incomes. Some of the impacts of the crisis are yet to fully play out, but this report includes evidence to date on the situation in Wales. Analysis suggests that the impact of the crisis has been felt most severely by people on low incomes.

This year's report is the first to include a measure of "consumption emissions" which includes greenhouse gas emissions attributed to items produced outside of Wales but consumed here. And for the first time since 2015 there is an update to the global footprint, a measure of the environmental burden we place on the planet. Both of these indicators show that progress is being made but we will need to move faster to reduce our global impact.

There is also evidence this year that children and young people are faring worse in some areas since the pandemic than adults. The percentage of babies with a low birth weight has risen to its highest level this year. Fewer four-year-olds were at the expected level in maths, language, literacy and communication than pre-pandemic. Data on life satisfaction levels declined for young people (while for adults it improved), and fewer 16 to 24 year olds were in education, employment or training. In addition, the School Sport Survey 2022 recorded the lowest levels of sport participation outside of school among children, in contrast to the improving picture in regular sport participation among adults. And according to the 2021 Census, children were the group to experience the largest

decrease in the percentage who could speak Welsh. These findings may have long term consequences for the progress towards the well-being goals.

## Ethnicity and wellbeing

This year we have published a supplementary report alongside the Wellbeing of Wales report which focuses on ethnicity and wellbeing. Throughout the development of the Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan, the availability of data and evidence was a recurring theme. The supplementary report aims to bring together existing evidence in order to explore progress towards the well-being goals for different ethnic groups. Alongside other types of evidence, this can be used to help inform decision-making to create a more equal Wales.

## New this year

Last year's Wellbeing of Wales report was the first to report against the generational targets known as national milestones. This year's report expands this further by including the second wave of milestones that were set in late 2022. One of these new milestones, to increase the percentage of people who volunteer by 10%, appears to have been met in 2022-23 but will need to be sustained over future years.

We've also made some improvements based on feedback from the Office for Statistics Regulation as part of their assessment last year of this report. We've aimed to improve how we communicate any uncertainty in the data by putting short term changes in the context of long term trends. Where we use survey data, we have also commented on whether these changes are "statistically significant", meaning they are unlikely to have occurred by chance. We are also developing a framework which sets out how we decide which types of data sources to use in this report and to measure the national indicators, which will be published ahead of next year's release. I hope this provides further reassurance about the quality and value of the Wellbeing of Wales report.

Stephanie Howarth  
Chief Statistician

## Main points

## Main points

Wales, along with the rest of the UK, has experienced a cost living crisis: inflation has risen sharply to reach a high of 11.1% in October 2022, resulting in reductions in people's real incomes. As the increase in prices has been particularly concentrated in energy and food prices, the impact has been felt most severely by people on low incomes who spend a higher share of their budget on these goods, despite the measures put in place by the UK and Welsh Governments to protect the most vulnerable.

There was a slight fall in the employment rate in Wales in the year ending March 2023, whilst the UK rate rose slightly. Economic inactivity rose during 2022 and the beginning of 2023 with inactivity due to ill health at historically high levels.

A national milestone on participation in education and the labour market was set in 2021 which is that at least 90% of 16 to 24 year olds will be in education, employment, or training by 2050. Provisional estimates for 2021, show a decrease in young people's participation in education and the labour market, driven by an increase in the economic inactivity rate (excluding students) for 16 to 18 year olds. It is too soon to assess the full impact of the pandemic on this trend.

In April 2022, the (full-time) gender pay gap was 6.1%, increasing from 4.4% the previous year. The disability pay difference was 9.7% meaning that disabled employees in Wales earned, on average, £1.32 less per hour than non-disabled employees. This has narrowed by £0.13 (1.7 percentage points) compared to the previous year.

In 2022, the ethnicity pay difference was £2.23 an hour (or 16.8%), meaning that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees in Wales earned, on average, £2.23 less per hour than White employees. The pay difference has widened by £1.38 (9.9 percentage points) compared to the previous year.

Our global footprint is the total environmental burden that society places on the planet. The national milestone for the global footprint indicator is that Wales will only use its fair share of the world's resources by 2050. Recent estimates suggest that the global footprint per person reduced by nearly a third between 2004 and 2018. However, this remains over twice the estimated biocapacity of Wales. If the entire world population lived like the citizens of Wales, humanity would require 2.08 Earths.

The latest comprehensive assessment of Welsh natural resources (SoNaRR 2020) shows that overall, biological diversity is declining. The national milestone on biodiversity is to reverse the decline in biodiversity with an improvement in the status of species and ecosystems by 2030 and their clear recovery by 2050. An experimental indicator on the status of biological diversity in Wales published in 2021 showed that the distribution of species in Wales has declined over the long term but has been stable more recently.

Wales has seen decreases in waste generation and considerable improvements in recycling rate, but we continue to use up resources faster than they can be replenished.

The national milestone on healthy life expectancy is to increase the healthy life expectancy of adults and narrow the gap in healthy life expectancy between the least and the most deprived by at least 15% by 2050. The data shows healthy life expectancy continues to be worse for those living in more deprived areas but has remained relatively stable between 2011-13 and 2018-20.

The national milestone is to increase the percentage of adults with two or more healthy behaviours to 97% by 2050. In 2022-23 the majority (92%) of adults reported following two or more of the five healthy lifestyle behaviours.

The national milestone is to increase the percentage of children with two or more healthy behaviours to 94% by 2035 and more than 99% by 2050. The data shows the percentage of young people meeting the national milestone in 2021 was 90%, slightly higher than the 88% reported in 2019 and 2017.

The national milestone on mental wellbeing is to improve adult and children's mean mental wellbeing and eliminate the gap in between the most and least deprived areas in Wales by 2050. Adult average mental wellbeing was broadly unchanged this year, however, due to the difference in data collection modes, it is difficult to draw longer term comparisons for this indicator.

Between 2019-20 and 2021-22, over a fifth of the population (21%) were living in relative income poverty after paying their housing costs.

Girls continue to achieve better educational outcomes at GCSE. In summer 2022, girls were awarded more grades at A\*-C than boys. The largest grade disparity was at the A\* and A grade: girls were awarded 6.5 and 4.5 percentage points, respectively, more than boys. The grade disparity at A\* widened in 2022.

There remains a gap in educational outcomes of children in school eligible for free school meals and those who are not, with the gap at GCSE level widening in the last 6 years.

In 2022-23, life satisfaction scores continued to be similar to pre-pandemic levels for all age groups except those aged 16 to 24 years and 25 to 44 years. People aged 16 to 24 are still more likely to report being lonely than those aged 65 and over. Other than young people, there are some other groups who are more likely to report feeling lonely. These include disabled people with a limiting long-standing impairment, Black, Asian and minority ethnic people, and people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual.

Community cohesion indicators had been broadly stable since first collected in 2012 until a sizeable increase in 2020-21. The same year also saw a positive step change in people feeling they can influence local decisions. Whether the increases in 2020-21 and 2021-22 will be sustained will not become clear until

data is available for a number of future years.

The national milestone to have 30% of people volunteering has been reached this year but will need to be sustained. Volunteering increased during the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2022-23 results show this higher level has been maintained (from 26% in 2019-20, to 29% in 2021-22 and 30% in 2022-23).

There was little change this year in the number of households that approached their local authority for support as they were threatened with homelessness. But there was an increase in the number of households assessed as homeless and the number of households in temporary accommodation in 2022-23 compared to 2021-22.

More adults are taking part in sport regularly this year. 39% of adults said they take part in sport three or more times a week. There was a fall in the percentage who said they did no sport or physical activity – down from 44% in 2021-22 to 40% this year.

Fewer children are taking part in regular sport outside of school. 39% of pupils took part in organised sport three or more times a week in 2022, down by 9 percentage points from the last survey in 2018.

The number and percentage of people able to speak Welsh fell according to Census 2021, with the percentage now the lowest ever recorded in a census. There is a national milestone for one million Welsh speakers by 2050. According to the census, 538,000 people were able to speak Welsh in 2021, down from close to one million in 1911.

In 2021, it was estimated that greenhouse gas emissions released into the atmosphere directly from within Wales totalled 36.3 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (MtCO<sub>2</sub>e), an increase of 7% from 2020.

# A prosperous Wales

## The goal for a prosperous Wales

Authors: Jonathan Price and Sue Leake

A prosperous Wales: An innovative, productive and low carbon society which recognises the limits of the global environment and therefore uses resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change); and which develops a skilled and well-educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through securing decent work.

## What have we learnt from the data in the last year?

The consequences of the war in Ukraine, compounding the challenges arising from the legacy of the pandemic, have dominated other factors impacting economic outcomes, including the transition to a new trading relationship with the European Union. The cost-of-living crisis, and its adverse effect on living standards, has of course been the most prominent of those consequences.

Wales, along with the rest of the UK, has experienced a cost living crisis: inflation has risen sharply to reach a high of 11.1% in October 2022, resulting in reductions in people's real incomes. As the increase in prices has been particularly concentrated in energy and food prices, the impact has been felt most severely by people on low incomes who spend a higher share of their budget on these goods, despite the measures put in place by the UK and Welsh Governments to protect the most vulnerable. ONS experimental statistics have shown that lower income groups have recently experienced higher than average rates of inflation.

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Increases in interest rates have also adversely affected borrowers, and particularly mortgage holders. Many of the national indicators included in this chapter relate to earlier years and do not yet reflect the more recent effects of these factors.

Recent data for Great Britain has shown that real wages have fallen, although the decline has reversed in the latest data from spring 2023.

Between 2019-20 and 2021-22, 21% of all people in Wales were living in relative income poverty (after housing costs were paid).

Underlying Welsh economic performance continues to be weaker than the UK as a whole in terms of economic output (gross value added) and household income (gross disposable household income and median household income), but is broadly similar to some other parts of the UK with similar features and characteristics.

Labour market data from surveys can be volatile over the short term and it is important not to over-interpret recent reported changes. For a more rounded picture of the Labour market data from the Labour Force Survey and Annual Population Survey for Wales should be considered alongside other sources, including administrative data. With this caveat, labour market data suggests the pandemic has impacted Welsh economic performance in a way that is broadly similar to the UK (excluding London).

There was a slight fall in the employment rate in Wales in the year ending March 2023, whilst the UK rate rose slightly. Economic inactivity rose during 2022 and the beginning of 2023 with inactivity due to ill health at historically high levels.

A national milestone on participation in education and the labour market was set in 2021 which is that at least 90% of 16 to 24 year olds will be in education, employment, or training by 2050. Provisional estimates for 2021, show a decrease in young people's participation in education and the labour market, driven by an increase in the economic inactivity rate (excluding students) for 16 to 18 year olds. It is too soon to assess the full impact of the pandemic on this

trend.

A new national indicator on the proportion of employees whose pay is set by collective bargaining was introduced in December 2021. 52% of employees were covered by collective bargaining arrangements in 2022, where pay and conditions are negotiated between an employer and a trade union. This is slightly lower than in recent years.

In April 2022, the (full-time) gender pay gap was 6.1%, increasing from 4.4% the previous year. The disability pay difference was 9.7% meaning that disabled employees in Wales earned, on average, £1.32 less per hour than non-disabled employees. This has narrowed by £0.13 (1.7 percentage points) compared to the previous year.

In 2022, the ethnicity pay difference was £2.23 an hour (or 16.8%), meaning that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees in Wales earned, on average, £2.23 less per hour than White employees. The pay difference has widened by £1.38 (9.9 percentage points) compared to the previous year.

Data on travel and journeys shows us that the volume of traffic has returned to levels seen before the COVID-19 pandemic, although bus journeys remain well below where they were. The vast majority (82%) of Welsh residents travel to work in a car, whereas the majority of young people aged 11 to 16 years old either walk to school or use public transport (68%).

The qualification profile of the Welsh working age population has been improving over time, up to 2021. Estimates for 2022 cannot be compared to previous years following changes to the questions on qualification in the source data.

## **What is the longer term progress towards the goal?**

Progress towards the goal has been mixed, with improvements in overall labour

market performance compared with the period prior to devolution but less progress in addressing poverty, low productivity and pay, and low income levels. Progress has been made on decarbonisation, but more rapid change will be needed in future to meet targets.

The war in Ukraine, following the pandemic, and the associated cost-of-living crisis have had a dominant effect on the most recent data, and the implications for longer term trends is unclear. For this reason, many of the following conclusions are drawn on the basis of pre-pandemic evidence or recent data which is not wholly compatible with data captured prior to the pandemic.

As across the UK as a whole, the growth in the economy and in real incomes has been very sluggish since the recession of 2008, reflecting weak productivity growth. While a slowdown in productivity growth has affected most developed countries over this period, the UK has been amongst the most severely affected.

These adverse outcomes in the most recent years follow the prolonged period of more than fifteen years – unprecedented in modern history – of very slow growth in real wages and incomes across the UK, including Wales.

At the time of writing, the evolution of the cost-of-living crisis is highly uncertain, depending heavily on the global context, including developments in the Ukraine conflict. In addition, the UK Government could put in place further measures which mitigate some of the effects.

Recent research and analysis, including by the Bank of England, has indicated that negative effects on economic activity of the shift to new trading relations with the European are already identifiable, though many of the consequences will play out only over time.

Over the longer run, since 1998, Wales has broadly kept pace with the UK as a whole, but its economic performance continues to be weak compared with many other parts of the UK.

While Welsh performance on pay and productivity remains less positive than labour market performance, data indicates modest improvements in Wales'

relative productivity over the last decade, reversing deterioration prior to the recession of 2008.

The percentage of people living in relative income poverty has been relatively stable in Wales for over 17 years, with children more likely to be in relative income poverty than the population overall.

It is too soon to assess the effects of the pandemic on young people, though early evidence indicates that they have been disproportionately affected by the socio-economic consequences. There is evidence in particular that the disruptive effects on education have affected young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and that there have been continuing effects on school attendance. Depending on the effectiveness of mitigations in place, the adverse effects could play out in the labour market over coming years or even decades. Average household incomes in Wales are considerably closer to the UK average than gross value added (GVA) per head, with differences depending on the measure used and with the gap smallest when assessed for the median household.

The national milestone on employment (based on the Annual Population Survey) is to eradicate the gap between the employment rate in Wales and the UK by 2050, with a focus on fair work and raising labour market participation of under-represented groups. The historical gaps in employment and activity rates between Wales and other parts of the UK have narrowed since the period of devolution, with Wales out-performing some English regions over the medium term. This represents a marked change from the period prior to devolution in the 1980s and 1990s.

Wales has more people in low paid work than some other parts of the UK. In addition, the evidence on other aspects of the quality of work suggests a mixed picture in Wales.

The qualification profile of the Welsh working age population has been improving over time, with data up to 2021 showing an improvement in the share of people qualified at higher levels, but there was also an increase in the proportion of working age adults with no qualifications. Statistics for 2022 are, however, not

comparable with previous years.

One of the national milestones on qualifications is that 75% of working age adults in Wales will be qualified to level 3 or higher by 2050. In 2022, 66.8% of working age adults in Wales were qualified to the level 3 threshold. The other national milestone on qualifications is that the percentage of working age adults with no qualifications will be 5% or below in every local authority in Wales by 2050. In 2022, three of Wales's 22 local authorities have 5% or less of working age adults with no qualifications.

Attainment in secondary schools rose in the years before the pandemic. Public examinations were disrupted in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Data for the 2021/22 school year, which was a transitional year in which pupils sat written exams with some adjustments, shows some continuing improvement compared to pre-pandemic years. However, children from deprived backgrounds still have poorer outcomes.

Management of the interaction between economic growth and the development of an innovative, low carbon economy is complex and poses challenges, but there are positive signs in some sectors.

Since the 2008 recession, investment in business innovation in Welsh firms has fluctuated, with some improvement in businesses being actively innovative recorded prior to the pandemic.

Travel makes a substantial contribution to carbon emissions, but there is no evidence of a shift away from cars as the main method of travel.

The pandemic appears to have accelerated the trend to remote economic activity, including working from home. In the year to December 2022 25% of employed persons did part or all of their job from home or another remote location.

Increased home working and internet retail may increase the challenges faced by some urban centres and may have implications for the housing market. Evidence from the UK as a whole indicates that the greater scope for home

working may have encouraged more women to participate in the labour market.

GB data shows that traffic levels and public transport use have recovered following the pandemic but have yet to regain pre-pandemic levels, with bus use particularly impacted.

## Economic performance

As across the UK as a whole, the growth in the economy and in real incomes has been sluggish since the recession of 2008, reflecting poor productivity growth. Productivity growth has also been weak over this period in most other developed countries, but the UK has fared particularly badly. The prolonged period of slow growth in productivity and real incomes is unprecedented in modern times.

Immediate prospects also appear poor, with high inflation reducing real incomes and the prospects of a continuing economic slowdown.

Over the longer run, since 1998, and taking economic indicators in the round, Wales has broadly kept pace with the UK. While its economic performance continues to be weak compared with many other parts of the UK, productivity data over the last decade gives some grounds for optimism. However, the gap with the UK as a whole remains large, and the UK itself does not perform strongly when productivity levels are compared internationally.

Gross value added (GVA) represents the value of all goods and services produced in an area. It is both the source of the real incomes people earn and the base on which taxes can be levied to fund public services.

While GVA per head of population in Wales has grown broadly in line with the UK since 1998, it remains lower than almost all other countries and regions of the UK.

Latest data (for 2021) shows that GVA per head in Wales was 74.1% of the UK

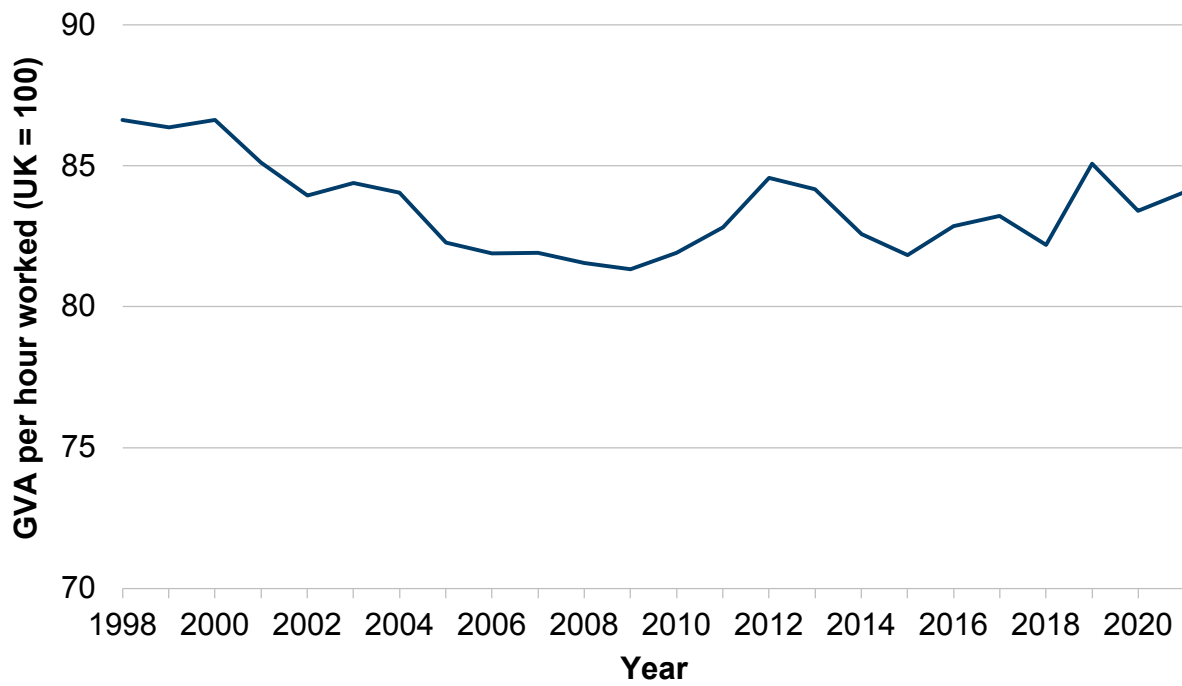
average, the second lowest of the 12 UK countries and English regions, ahead of the North East.

Economic data does not yet permit a definitive assessment of Wales's comparative economic performance over the course of the pandemic and during the cost-of-living crisis. In broad terms the relative scale of the impact of both events looks similar in Wales to the UK as a whole.

Welsh performance on GVA per head is mainly a reflection of relatively low productivity levels. Productivity, measured as GVA per hour worked continues to be lower in Wales than almost all other parts of the UK. In 2021 it was 84.1% of the UK figure, an increase of 0.7 percentage points over the previous year.

Data covering the most recent decade confirms modest improvements in relative productivity (GVA per hour worked), perhaps reversing a trend of deterioration prior to the recession.

**Figure 1.1: Welsh gross value added per hour worked, relative to the UK, 1998 to 2021**



Description of Figure 1.1: A line chart showing that GVA (gross value added) per hour worked in Wales relative to the UK (current price index UK = 100) has been stable since 1998, with Welsh productivity remaining below the UK average.

Source: Welsh Government analysis of Regional labour productivity, UK, 1998 to 2021, Office for National Statistics

## Innovation in businesses

The latest information from the UK innovation survey, for a period prior to the pandemic (2018-2020), indicates that 44% of Welsh businesses are innovation-active. This means that they are undertaking activities such as introducing new



or significantly improved products, services, processes; or business structures or practices; or investing in research and development or training.

Since the 2008 recession, investment in business innovation has fluctuated. The latest period (2018-2020) shows an improvement from 34% of Welsh businesses being innovation-active in 2016-18; and represents the eighth highest proportion of innovative firms of the 12 countries and regions of the UK. Data from the pandemic period is not yet available.

Spending on research and development in Wales remains relatively low compared to many other parts of the UK.

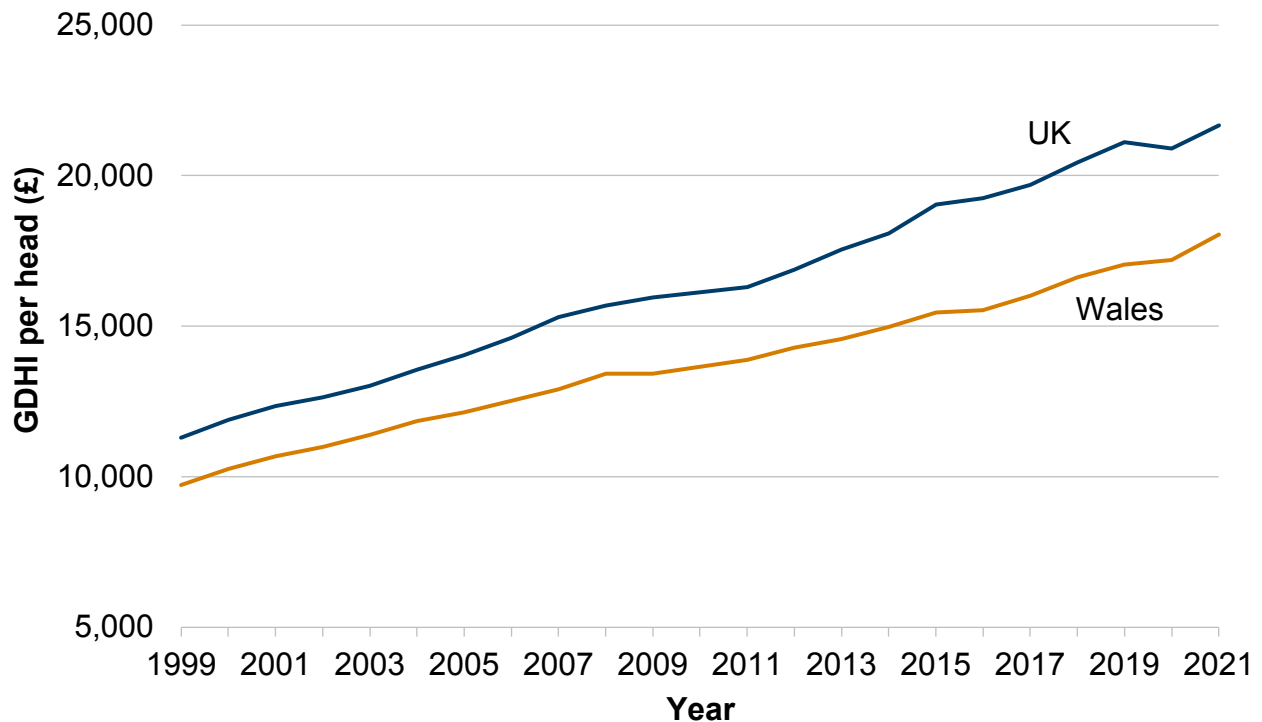
## Household income

Household income is a better indicator of people's prosperity and material wellbeing than GVA. Average household incomes in Wales are considerably closer to the UK average than GVA per head, but there are differences depending on the measure used, with the gap narrowest when median incomes are considered. Data for gross disposable household income (GDHI) is currently available only up until 2021, so this section focuses on longer run trends.

The national indicator on income uses the measure gross disposable household income (GDHI). On this measure Wales, according to the most recent data (2021), is at 83% of the UK figure, having fallen from 88% at its peak in 2003. This relative fall has partly been driven by a steep increase in household incomes in London, which has helped to drive up the UK average.

Whilst Wales has the third lowest GDHI per head of the UK countries and regions, it is broadly comparable to areas of the UK with similar characteristics.

**Figure 1.2: Gross disposable household income per head, Wales and UK, 1999 to 2021**



Description of Figure 1.2: A line chart showing that gross disposable household income (GDHI) per head has increased overall in Wales and the UK since 1999, with the value for Wales remaining below the UK across the timeseries.

Source: Regional Gross Disposable Household Income, Office for National Statistics

Please note that comparisons between 2020 and 2021 for GDHI per head estimates are classed as unreliable due to a discontinuity in population data for some areas, caused by differences in the timing of census updates.

# Labour market

Over the last year, changes in the Welsh labour market have reflected the recovery from effects of the pandemic. Looking over the medium term, the performance of the labour market in Wales has improved relative to the UK in comparison to the position prior to devolution.

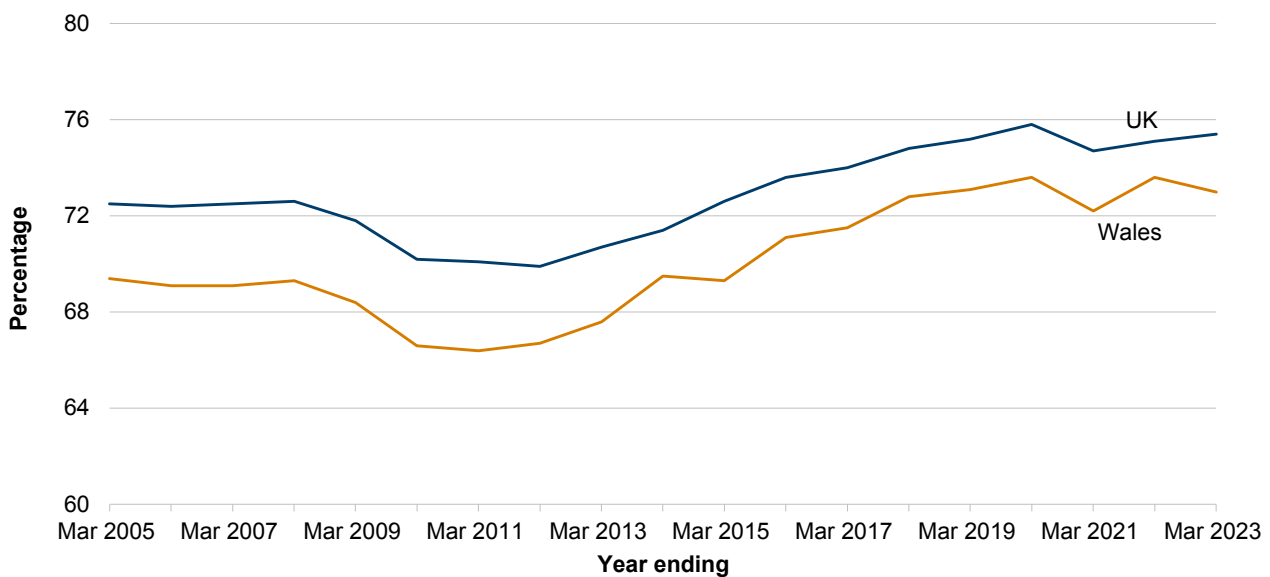
Whilst the Labour Force Survey (LFS) remains the main source for headline labour market indicators at a Wales level over the last year, the LFS data has been particularly volatile, making it difficult to draw conclusions about broad trends. The larger sample of the Annual Population Survey (APS) allows for estimates at a local authority level and for sub-groups of the population, and is the source for the national indicators and related national milestones. As most labour market data is survey-based and volatile, short term changes should not be over-interpreted. The national milestone on employment (based on the APS) is to eradicate the gap between the employment rate in Wales and the UK by 2050, with a focus on fair work and raising labour market participation of under-represented groups. According to the APS, the employment rate for people aged 16 to 64 in Wales was 73.0% in the year ending March 2023 whilst the UK rate was 75.4%. Since 2001, the employment rate has increased by 5.9 percentage points in Wales and by 3.1 percentage points in the UK.

COVID-19 had adverse labour market effects which have disproportionately affected groups that were already disadvantaged. This includes people in low paid jobs, in less secure employment, young people, people reaching the end of their working lives, and people in various groups that were already experiencing labour market inequalities. However, many of the adverse effects have subsequently reduced or reversed. Further analysis of the impact on inequalities is included in the [More Equal Wales chapter](#).

Data from more timely administrative sources indicates that the labour market in Wales has generally tracked the wider UK (excluding London). Data from the PAYE real time information shows that the number of paid employees has generally increased in recent years, though it fell during the pandemic and then

recovered. The most recent data shows that, since the start of 2020 (before the pandemic) the number of paid employees has increased more in Wales than the UK as whole. This data set does not include those that are self-employed, but paints a picture which contrasts with that painted by the most recent APS and LFS data.

**Figure 1.3: Employment rate for people aged 16 to 64, year ending March 2005 to March 2023**

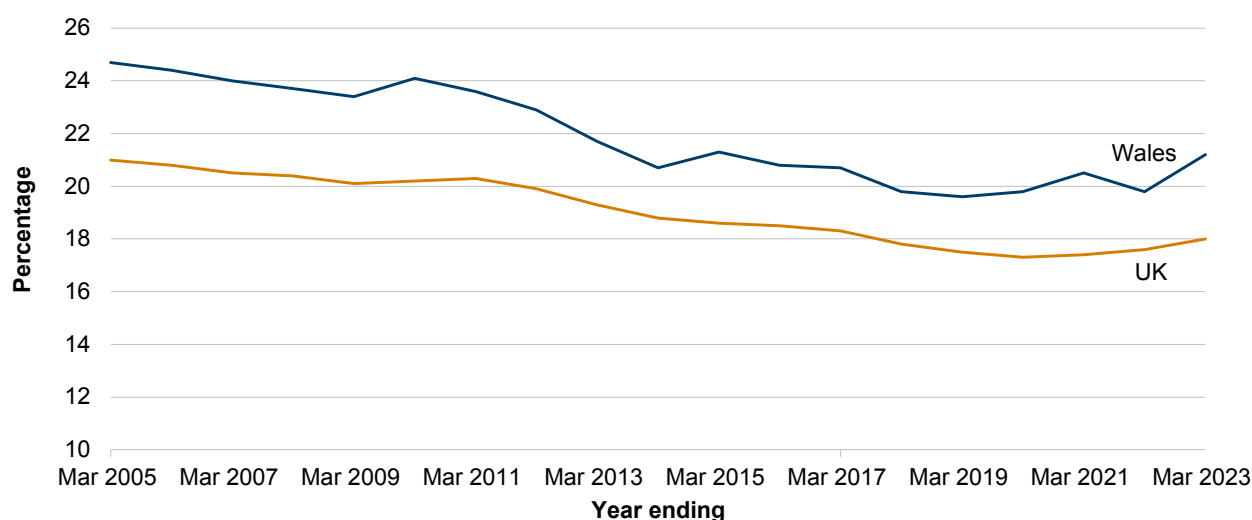


Description of Figure 1.3: A line chart showing the employment rate for those aged 16 to 64 has generally increased since the year ending March 2011 in both Wales and the UK. Over the last three years (since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic) the rate has been more volatile for both areas. The UK rate has remained higher than the Wales rate since the year ending March 2005.

Source: Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics.

**Figure 1.4: Economic inactivity rate (excluding students) for people aged 16 to 64, year ending March 2005 to**

## March 2023



Description of Figure 1.4: A line chart showing the economic inactivity rate (excluding students) has steadily decreased since the year ending March 2005 in both Wales and the UK, however over the last three years (since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic) the rate has increased for both. The Welsh rate has always been higher than the UK rate, with the size of the gap fluctuating over time.

Source: Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics

## Participation in education and the labour market

A national milestone on participation in education and the labour market was set in 2021 which is that at least 90% of 16 to 24 year olds will be in education, employment or training by 2050.

Provisional estimates for 2021 show that 84.5% of 16 to 24 year olds were in education, employment or training, down from 85.4% in 2020. The decrease was

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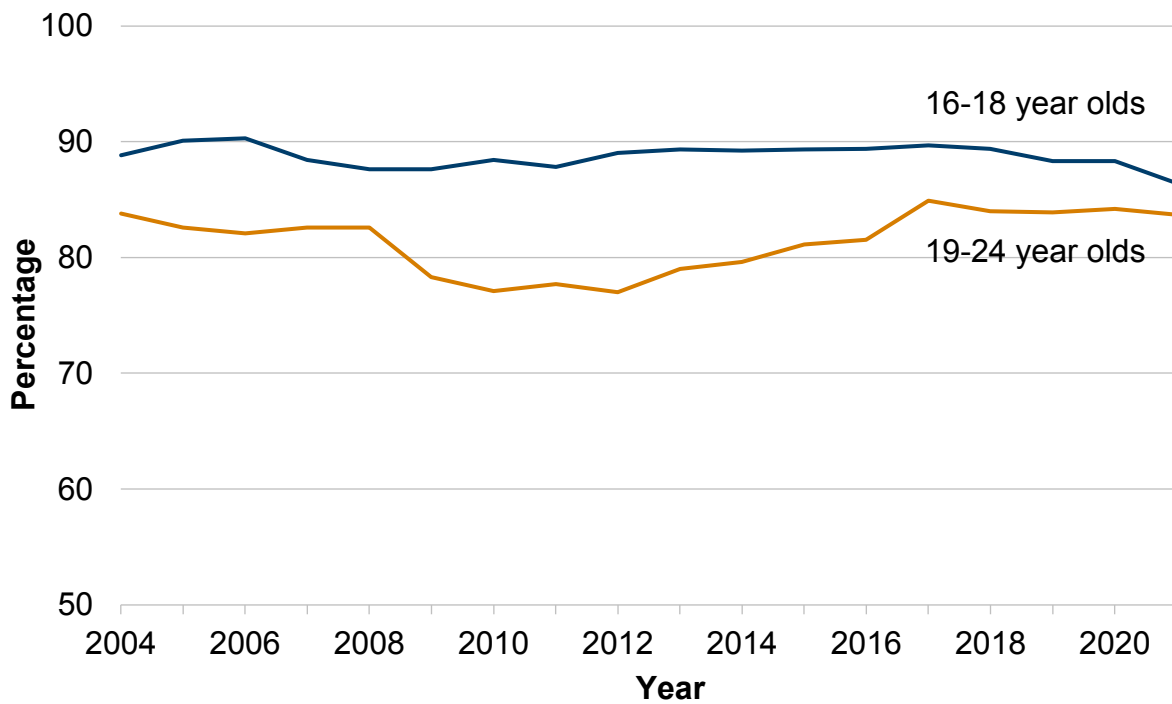
largely driven by an increase in the economic inactivity rate (excluding students) for 16 to 18 year olds. Data for later years, when available, will give an indication of the longer term impact of the pandemic on this trend.

Using the main measure of young people in education, employment or training, there had been decreases in both the 16 to 18 and 19 to 24 age groups between 2019 and 2021, with the overall decrease for those aged 16 to 18 (1.9 percentage points) being greater than the overall decrease for those aged 19 to 24 (0.2 percentage points). For 16 to 18 year olds, this followed a period where the proportion remained stable at around 89-90% between 2012 and 2018.

The effect of the 2008 recession was felt more sharply by the 19 to 24 age group. However, between 2012 and 2017, the share in education or the labour market gradually increased for this age group. At the end of 2021, the rate stood at 83.7%, nearly 7 percentage points higher than in 2012.

More recent figures on young people in education, employment or training are available from a secondary, less robust source. These suggest an increase in participation in 2022, more so for the 16 to 18 age group.

**Figure 1.5: Percentage of young people in Wales in education, employment or training, 2004 to 2021 [Note 1]**



Description of Figure 1.5: A line chart showing that the percentage of young people in Wales aged 16 to 18 years in education, employment or training has remained relatively steady since 2004, whilst the percentage of those aged 19 to 24 years fell below 80% between 2009 and 2014 but has since recovered to 84% in 2021.

Source: Participation of young people in education and the labour market, Welsh Government

[Note 1] Chart axis does not start at zero.

# Fair work and earnings

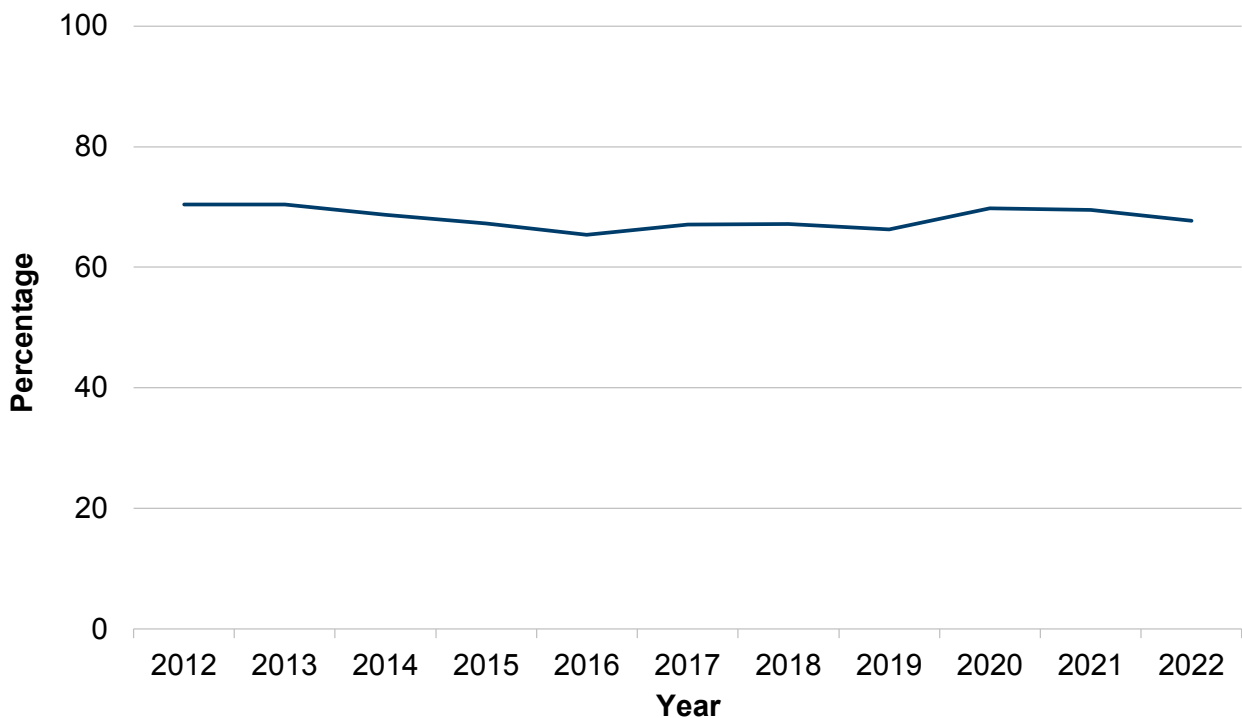
A national indicator on the proportion of employees whose pay is set by collective bargaining was introduced in December 2021, based on data from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE). Some 52% of employee jobs were covered by collective bargaining arrangements in 2022, where pay and conditions are negotiated between an employer and a trade union. This is lower than in recent years, however it is considerably higher than the majority of the other UK countries and England regions, and reflects the relatively higher share of employees in Wales who work in the public sector and in manufacturing.

One of the national indicators on fair work and earnings was amended in December 2021 and now considers the percentage of people in employment, who are on permanent contracts (or on temporary contracts, and not seeking permanent employment) and who earn at least the real living wage. The real living wage is calculated by the Living Wage Foundation who determine the methodology. It aims to reflect the cost of living.

In 2022, 68% of those people on permanent contracts (or on temporary contracts, and not seeking permanent employment) earned at least the real living wage, slightly lower than in 2020 and 2021, however higher than between 2015 to 2019. This is based on the real living wage for 2022-23 as published in September 2022.



## Figure 1.6: Percentage of people in employment, who are on permanent contracts (or on temporary contracts, and not seeking permanent employment) and who earn at least the real living wage, 2012 to 2022



Description of Figure 1.6: A bar chart showing that the number of people in employment earning the real living wage in Wales has fluctuated between 65% and 70% across the last ten years, with 68% earning at least the real living wage in 2022.

Source: Welsh Government analysis of the Annual Population Survey

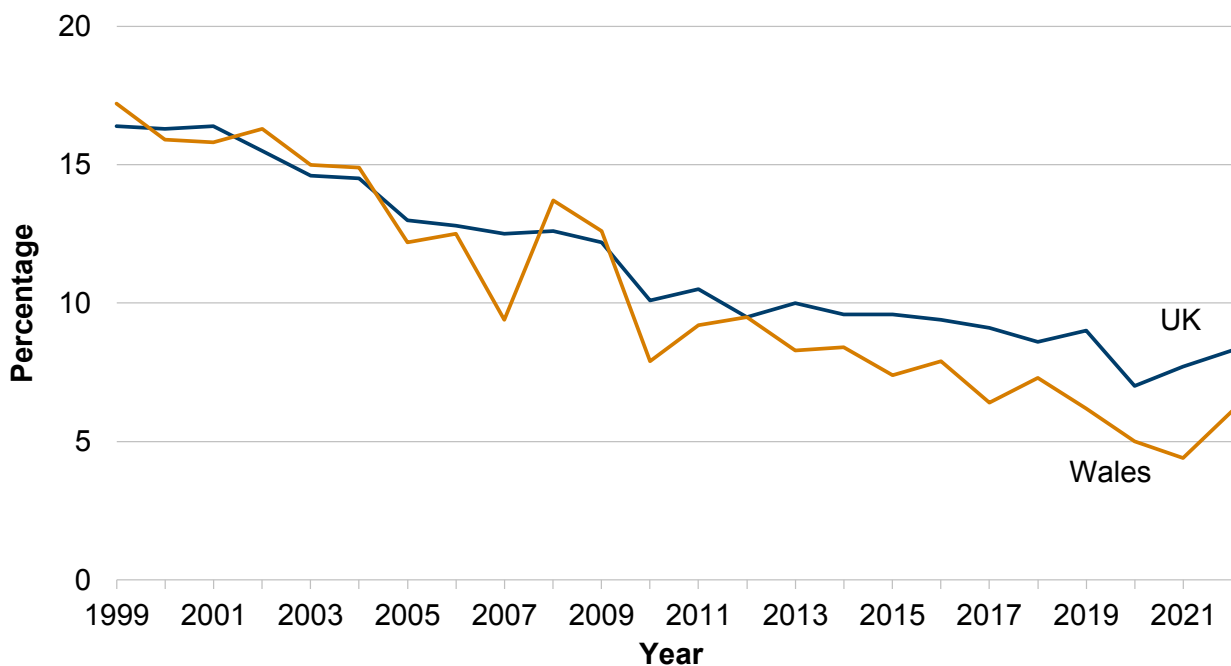
Data from the National Survey for Wales suggests that the percentage of people satisfied with their job remains broadly unchanged, standing at 83% in 2022-23. Job satisfaction tends to increase with age.

A national milestone has been set, to eliminate the pay gap for gender, disability and ethnicity by 2050. Over the long-term, the gender pay gap (on a median hourly full-time basis and excluding overtime) has narrowed. In April 2022, the (full-time) gender pay gap was 6.1%, up from 4.4% in the previous year. The gap widened in the UK to 8.3%.

The gender pay gap for all employees remains considerably higher at 11.4%. This is because women fill more part-time jobs, which in comparison with full-time jobs have lower hourly median pay.

These gaps do not take into account differences in education levels and experience, which vary across genders and affect earning levels.

**Figure 1.7: Percentage difference in median hourly full-time earnings between men and women, 1999 to 2022**  
[Note 1]



Description of Figure 1.7: A line chart showing that the difference in median

hourly full-time earnings between men and women has decreased over the last 20 years for both Wales and the UK. Wales has had a narrower gender pay gap than the UK since 2013.

Source: Welsh Government Analysis of the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings, Office for National Statistics

[Note 1] A pay difference greater than zero means men's earnings are higher than women's.

In 2022, the disability pay difference in Wales was £1.32 an hour (or 9.7%). This means that disabled employees in Wales earned, on average £1.32 less per hour than non-disabled employees. The pay difference has narrowed by £0.13 (1.7 percentage points) compared to the previous year. Since 2019, the disability pay difference has seen an overall decrease of £0.44 (5.4 percentage points).

In 2022, the ethnicity pay difference in Wales was £2.23 an hour (or 16.8%). This means that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees in Wales earned, on average £2.23 less per hour than White employees. The pay difference has widened by £1.38 (9.9 percentage points) compared to the previous year which has been caused by a decrease of £0.44 in average hourly earnings for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees in addition to an increase of £0.94 in average hourly earnings for White employees.

It is worth noting that due to the high volatility in the data for the ethnicity pay difference in Wales, short-term changes should be considered alongside longer-term trends where possible. Since 2019, the ethnicity pay difference has seen an overall increase where average hourly earnings for White employees have gradually increased and average hourly earnings for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees have remained relatively stable.

## Poverty and deprivation

Last year the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) did not publish the

usual range of poverty and material deprivation data because of data quality issues with 2020-21 data, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For 2021-22 data, although there remains some impact on quality due to the continued reliance on telephone interviews rather than face-to-face interviews, the DWP have assessed the data quality to be more robust.

## Household income distribution

Single year figures for the whole of the UK show an increase in real terms median household income between 2020-21 and 2021-22. The increase was 0.5% before housing costs (BHC) and 1.6% after housing costs (AHC). The growth in UK household income (BHC) varied across the income distribution:

- the household incomes of individuals in the bottom quarter of the income distribution showed real terms reductions.
- those between the 25th and 75th percentiles recorded increases in real incomes.
- there was a more mixed picture for the highest income quintile.

## Relative income poverty

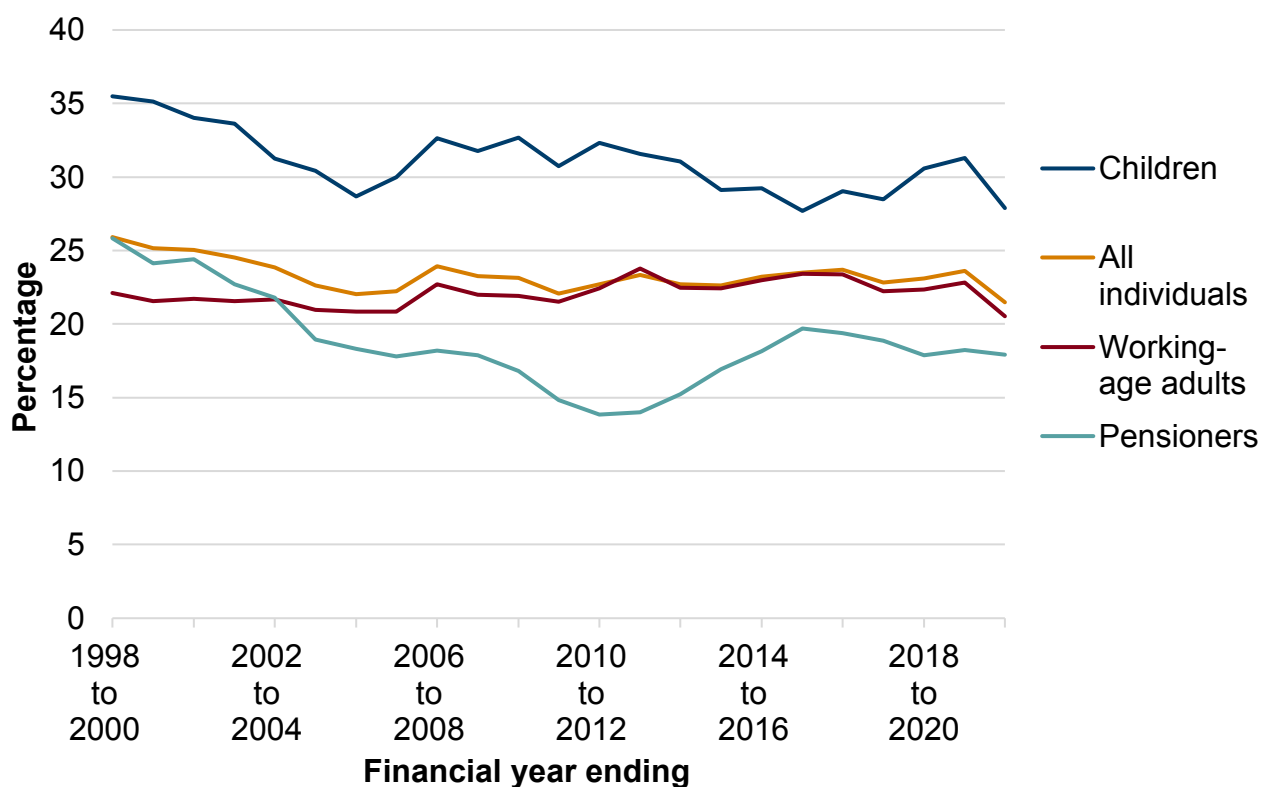
People living in relative income poverty are those who live in a household where the total household income from all sources is less than 60% of the average UK household income (as given by the median).

For regions and countries of the UK, the latest data point published this year is for the period between 2019-20 and 2021-22. Estimates do not include 2020-21 survey data in calculations, as data for that year is judged to be of too low quality, as mentioned above.

Between 2019-20 and 2021-22, 21% of all people in Wales were living in relative income poverty (after housing costs were paid).

The percentage of people living in relative income poverty has been relatively stable in Wales for over 17 years, with children more likely to be in relative income poverty than the population overall. Although rates of people living in relative income poverty in Wales decreased in the most recent period across the age groups, none of these changes were statistically significant.

**Figure 1.8: Percentage of each age group in Wales living in relative income poverty (after housing costs), three-financial-year averages**



Description of Figure 1.8: A line chart showing people in Wales living in relative income poverty (after housing costs were paid) from 1998 onwards. The percentage of people living in relative income poverty has been relatively stable in Wales for over 17 years, with children more likely to be in relative income poverty than the population overall.

Source: Welsh Government Analysis of the DWP's Households below average income dataset, based on the Family Resource Survey

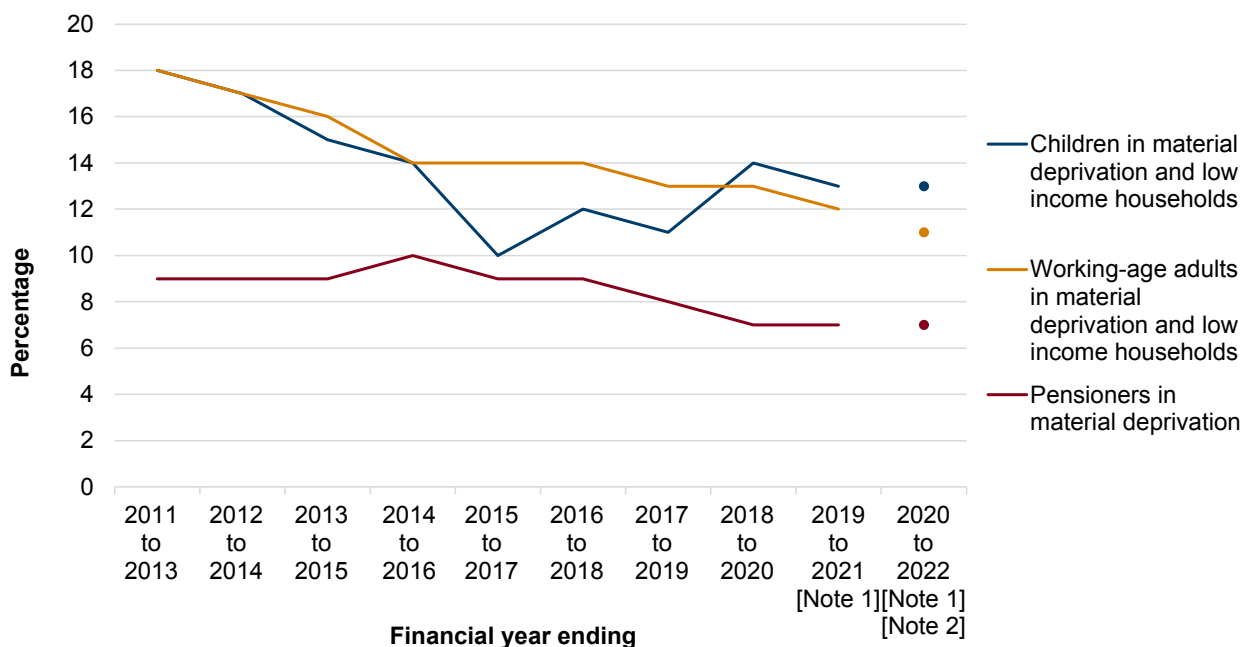
[Note 1] Estimates for periods which span 2020-21 do not include the data collected during 2020-21 in calculations. For the latest two periods shown, estimates formerly calculated as 3 year rolling averages are based on 2 year rolling averages that omit the 2020-21 survey data. 2020-21 estimates are unreliable as they are based on data collected during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, when lockdown rules severely disrupted the data collection.

## Material deprivation

Material deprivation is a measure of living standards, and a person is defined to be living in material deprivation if they are not able to access a certain number of goods and services. Low income households are those that had a total household income below 70% of the UK average household income, before housing costs were paid.

The continuation of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions into 2021-22 affected the measurement of material deprivation, as it did in 2020-21. The restrictions that remained in place affected people's access to some social opportunities or services, regardless of deprivation or financial constraint. This means that statistics for both years are not directly comparable with the pre-pandemic period.

**Figure 1.9: Percentage of people in material deprivation (for pensioners) and combined relative low income (for children and working age adults) in Wales, financial years 2010-11 to 2021-22**



Description of Figure 1.9: A line graph showing that the proportion of working-age adults living in low-income households which were materially deprived and of pensioners who were materially deprived both fell prior to the pandemic. The trend for children living in low-income households which were materially deprived has fluctuated much more.

Source: Welsh Government Analysis of the DWP's Households below average income dataset, based on the Family Resource Survey

[Note 1] Estimates for periods which span 2020-21 do not include the data collected during 2020-21 in calculations. For the two new data points, estimates formerly calculated as 3 year rolling averages are based on 2 year rolling averages that omit the 2020-21 survey data. 2020-21 estimates are unreliable as they are based on data collected during the first year of the COVID-19

pandemic, when lockdown rules severely disrupted the data collection.

[Note 2] For 2021-22, estimates of material deprivation are not strictly comparable with the pre-pandemic period. Several of the questions asked as part of the material deprivation measure were affected by pandemic-related restrictions on access to social opportunities and services.

In the years prior to the pandemic, the proportion of working-age adults living in low income households which were materially deprived followed a downward trend from 18% in the period between 2010-11 and 2012-13, to 13% in 2017-18 to 2019-20. There was also a decrease in material deprivation among pensioners (income is not considered for this measure), although less steep. There was a decrease in the earlier part of this period for children, but after the period ending 2016-17 rates of combined low income and material deprivation for children fluctuated.

As explained above, the latest estimates are for the period between 2019-20 and 2021-22 and are not directly comparable with the pre-pandemic period. For this period, 13% of children, and 11% of working-age adults living in Wales were living in low income households which were materially deprived. 7% of pensioners living in Wales were in material deprivation (income is not considered for this measure).

In 2022-23, 3% of households said they had received food from a food bank due to a lack of money in the last 12 months, with a further 3% saying they hadn't but had wanted to.

## **Persistent poverty**

A person is considered to be in persistent poverty if they are in relative income poverty in at least 3 out of 4 consecutive years. Data from the Understanding Society survey shows that an individual in Wales had a 12% likelihood of being in persistent poverty between 2017 and 2021 (after housing costs were paid). A child in Wales had a higher likelihood of being in persistent poverty at 17%.



## Income spent on housing costs

A national indicator on the percentage of households spending 30% or more of income on housing costs was added to the national indicator set in December 2021, based on data from the DWP Family Resources Survey. Data collection for the Family Resources Survey was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020-21 so survey data for that year is not included in the calculations for the most recent period (2019-20 to 2021-22) as it is judged to be of low quality.

For the latest period for which sufficient data is available (2019-20 to 2021-22), 18% of households spent 30% or more of their income on housing costs. This percentage has been fairly consistent at 19% since the period 2011-12 to 2013-14, but varies by housing tenure. It is too early to say whether the change indicated in the most recent period is a genuine decrease or whether it is due to the greater volatility as a result of the reduced survey sample size.

In the period to 2019-20 to 2021-22, only 2% of households who own their own home outright and 14% of those who own a home with a mortgage spent 30% or more of their income on housing cost. Percentages are higher for the other two tenures: 36% for private rented households, 43% of those in social rented housing.

Rising household energy costs have been a notable feature of the last couple of years and this has led to an increase in the percentage of households in fuel poverty. Whilst the 2021 headline figure was that an estimated 14% of households were living in fuel poverty, this is estimated to have risen to as much as 45% by April 2022. The percentage of households in severe fuel poverty is estimated to have risen from 3% to 8% over the same period.

The significant increases in fuel prices are a major factor in escalating costs for both households and businesses with all types of fuel reaching a peak in 2022. Compared to 2010, costs in 2022 were 95% higher for electricity, 67% higher for gas, 24% higher for solid fuel, and 46% higher for liquid fuel. A number of support schemes were introduced, such as the Energy Price Guarantee and the

Winter Fuel Support Scheme in Wales, to reduce the impact of these increases on households and businesses.

Fuel poverty affects different households disproportionately, with those living in the oldest dwellings (pre-1919) more likely to be in fuel poverty (22% of such households in 2021), and almost three quarters (74%) of all households on the lowest 10% of incomes in Wales likely to have been in fuel poverty in 2021.

## Qualifications

The qualification profile of the Welsh population has been improving over time, up to 2021. Data for 2022 is not comparable with previous years due to changes to the questions on qualifications in the Annual Population Survey, which now reflect the current qualifications framework.

Skills and qualifications are the biggest single influence on people's chance of being in employment and on their incomes.

In 2022, 43.3% of working age adults (aged 18 to 64 years) were qualified to at least higher education level (level 4). This proportion was nearly 14 percentage points higher in 2021 than when comparable statistics were first produced on the 18 to 64 working age adults definition in 2008.

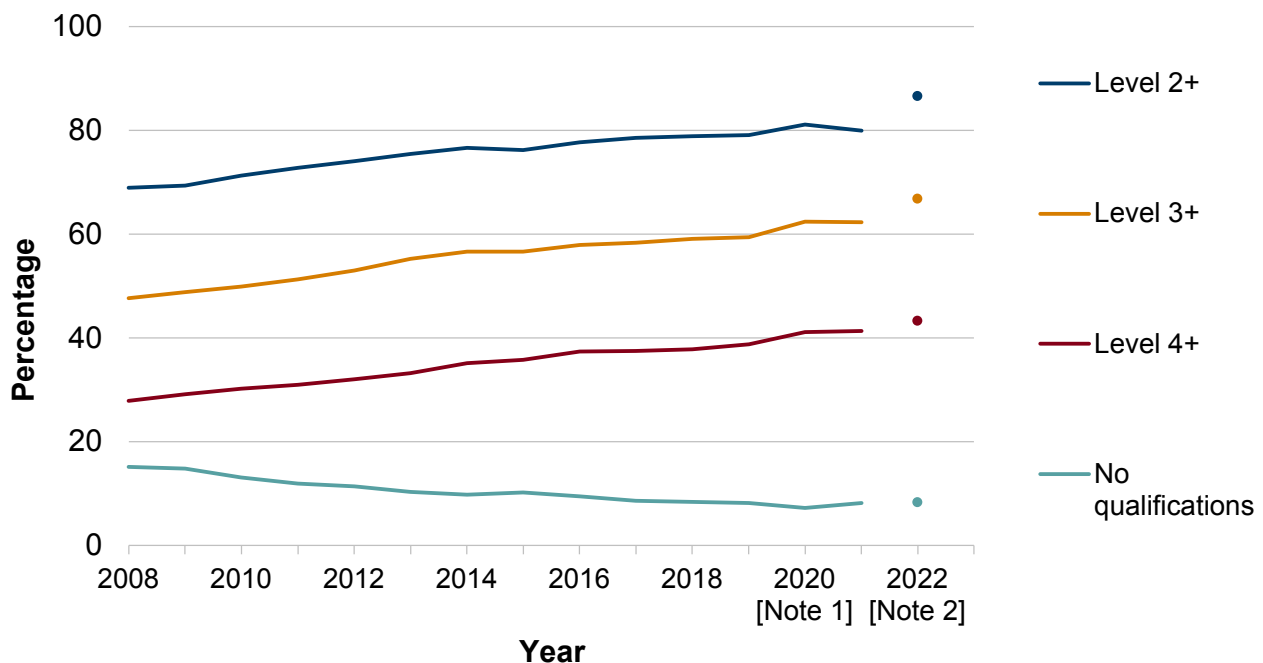
One of the national milestones on qualifications is that 75% of working age adults in Wales will be qualified to level 3 or higher by 2050. In 2022, 66.8% of working age adults in Wales were qualified to the level 3 threshold.

Between 2008 and 2021, there were large falls in the share of working age adults with no qualifications. This proportion stood at 8.3% in 2022. The proportion of working age adults qualified to at least level 2 (equivalent to 5+ GCSEs at grade A\* to C) stood at 86.6% in 2022.

Older adults are more likely to have no qualifications than younger adults.

There are higher proportions of males than females with no qualifications in age groups up to and including 35 to 49 year olds. Females are more likely to hold qualifications at or above level 4.

**Figure 1.10: Highest level of qualification held by adults of working age, 2008 to 2022**



Description of Figure 1.10: Qualification levels in Wales have steadily increased since 2008, though there is a break in the series between 2021 and 2022 due to comparability issues.

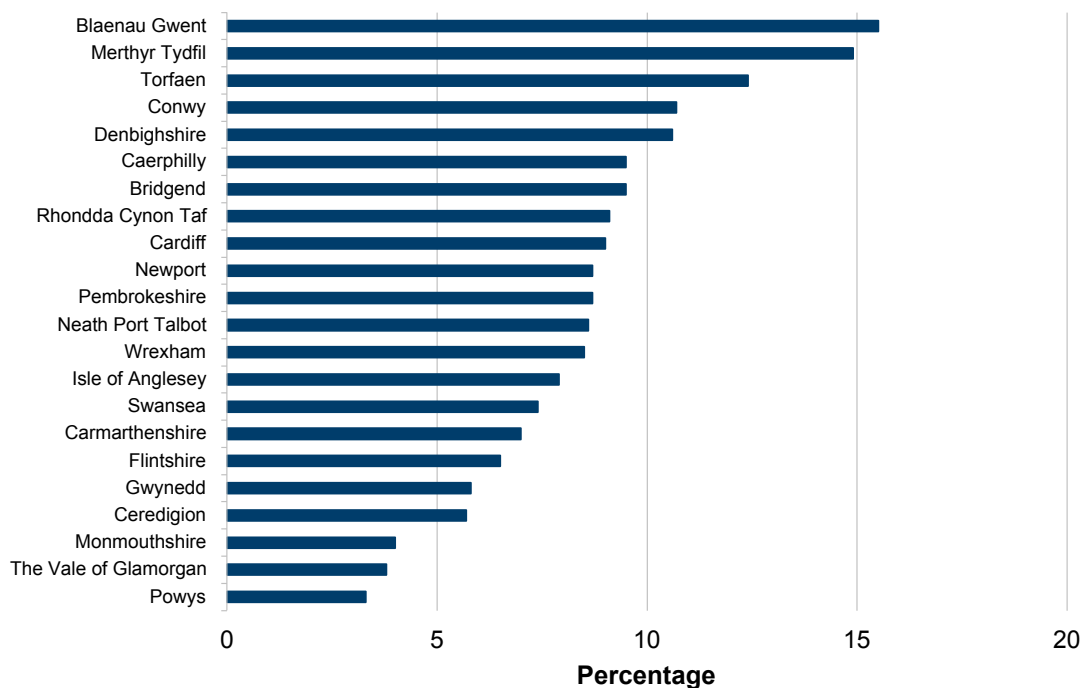
Source: Welsh Government Analysis of Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics

[Note 1] Previously published estimates for 2020 and 2021 have been revised following a reweighting of the Annual Population Survey.

[Note 2] Estimates for 2022 cannot be compared to previous years following changes to the questions on qualifications in the Annual Population Survey.

The other national milestone on qualifications is that the percentage of working age adults with no qualifications will be 5% or below in every local authority in Wales by 2050. In 2022, three of Wales's 22 local authorities have 5% or less of working age adults with no qualifications – Powys (3.3%), the Vale of Glamorgan (3.8%), and Monmouthshire (4.0%). The proportion of working age adults with no qualifications was highest in Blaenau Gwent (15.5%) and Merthyr Tydfil (14.9%).

**Figure 1.11: Proportion of working age population with no qualification by local authority, 2022**



Description for Figure 1.11: A bar chart showing the proportion of the working age population with no qualifications in each local authority in 2022. The proportion is less than 5% in Powys, The Vale of Glamorgan and

Monmouthshire, but is over 15% in Blaenau Gwent.

Source: Welsh Government Analysis of Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics

## Attainment in schools

Attainment in schools rose in the years prior to the pandemic, although children from deprived backgrounds still have poorer outcomes.

In the 2021/22 academic year, 54% of pupils aged 4 were at a stage of development in mathematics that would be consistent with or greater than their age according to the Foundation Phase framework, with 87% of pupils within one stage of the development consistent with their age. In language, literacy and communication in English, 53% of pupils were at a stage of development that would be consistent with or greater than their age, with 85% of pupils within one stage of the development consistent with their age. These figures are lower than in 2019. The picture is different for language, literacy and communication in Welsh, where 27% of children were at a stage consistent with their development. This is due to children from non-Welsh speaking families being enrolled in Welsh medium schools.

Following the cancellation of public examinations in summer 2020 and summer 2021, all grades that would have been awarded following an examination were replaced with the centre assessed or determined grade. The 2022 examination period was a transitional year, where relevant qualifications sat by Welsh pupils returned to written examinations. This was not a complete return to pre-pandemic examinations. To compensate for any disruption to the school timetable, pupils who sat exams in 2022 were given a wider choice of questions from the syllabus, with Qualifications Wales setting results broadly midway between 2019 (the last time examinations were sat) and 2021 outcomes.

From 2018/19, when written exams were last sat, to 2021/22 the percentage of

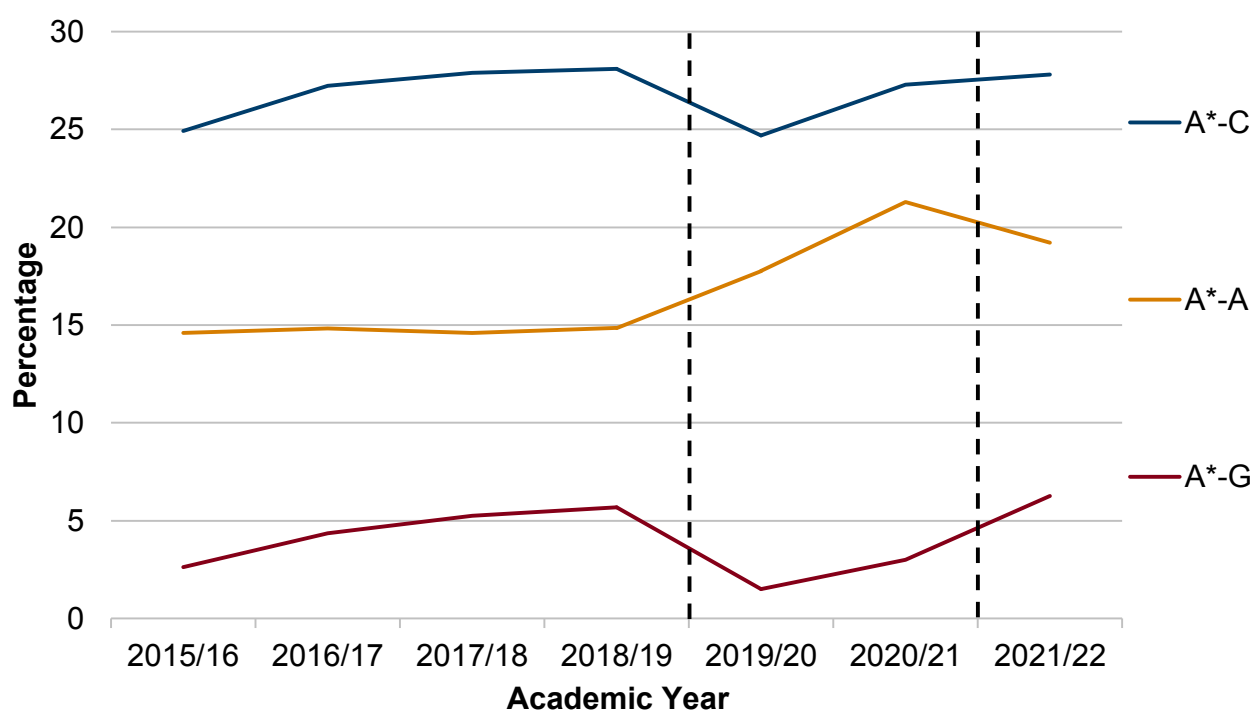
entries awarded A\* to A and A\* to C grades at GCSE have increased. In this period the percentage of A\* to A grades increased from 19.5% to 25.9%. However, this is a decrease of 3.6 percentage points compared to the results obtained in 2020/21, where qualifications were awarded based on centre determined grades. A similar pattern was seen at the A\* to C grade range.

There remains a gap in educational outcomes of children in school eligible for free school meals and those who are not. The gap in entries achieving A\* to A grades at GCSE has widened in the last seven years, with the gap in entries achieving A\* to C grades being relatively stable. Data up to 2019 indicates that the gap in educational outcomes widens as pupils get older.

In 2021/22, the gap between pupils not eligible for free school meals (FSM) and pupils eligible for FSM awarded GCSE grades A\* to A narrowed to 19.2 percentage points, from 21.3 percentage points in 2020/21. The gap had previously been relatively stable at around 14.7 percentage points between 2015/16 and 2018/19 before widening in the most recent 3 years.

In 2021/22 the gap between pupils not eligible for FSM and pupils eligible for FSM awarded grades A\* to C widened to 27.8 percentage points, returning to a gap similar in size to the years leading up to the pandemic after a fall to 27.3 percentage points in 2020/21.

**Figure 1.12: Gap between percentages of pupils eligible for FSM and pupils not eligible for FSM achieving A\*-A, A\*-C and A\*-G at GCSE, 2015/16 to 2021/22 [Note 1]**



Description of Figure 1.12: A line chart showing the gap between percentages of students eligible for free school meals and students not eligible for free school meals achieving A\*-A, A\*-C, and A\*-G at GCSE from 2015/16 to 2020/21. Between 2020/21 and 2021/22, the gap increased for the A\*-C and A\*-G grade ranges but decreased for A\*-A.

Source: Examination Results, Welsh Government

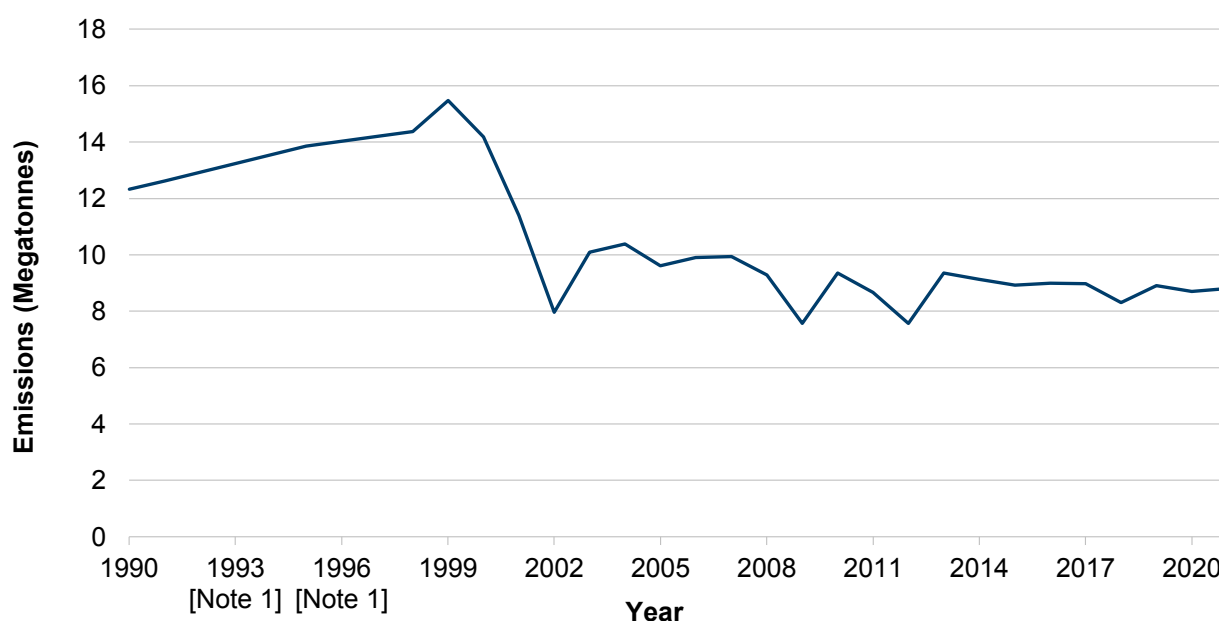
[Note 1] Between dashed lines indicate when qualifications were awarded using centre assessed or determined grades.

# Greenhouse gas emissions from business

Managing the interaction between economic growth and an innovative, low carbon economy is complex and poses challenges, but greenhouse gas emissions from the business sector remain much lower than in the 1990's.

Overall, greenhouse gas emissions have fallen by 35% since the base year (1990). Emissions from the business sector accounted for just under a quarter of Welsh territorial emissions (24%) in 2021; the second largest source of emissions in Wales after the energy supply sector. Emissions from the business sector have decreased by 29% since 1990 predominantly due to a reduction in emissions from the iron and steel industry. The majority, around 60% in 2021, of business emissions come from the iron and steel industry.

**Figure 1.13: Greenhouse gas emissions from the business sector, 1990 to 2021**



Description of Figure 1.13: A line chart showing the volume of territorial



greenhouse gas emissions (megatonnes) in from businesses in between 1990 and 2021. Emissions from Welsh businesses have fallen by 29% since the base year (1990).

Source: Welsh Government Analysis of National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

[Note 1] Values for 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996 and 1997 have been estimated.

[Note 2] The sector definition of the greenhouse gas inventory (GHGI) varies from both the Low Carbon Delivery Plan (Carbon Budget period 1, 2016-2020) and the Net Zero Wales Plan (Carbon Budget Period 2, 2021-2025).

## Mode of travel

Some forms of travel, including road traffic, make a substantial contribution to carbon emissions. There is no evidence of a shift away from cars as the main method of travel in Wales.

Following a sharp decrease in travel in 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, road traffic volume in 2022 in Wales almost returned to pre-pandemic levels. Road traffic volume in 2022 increased by 10% compared to 2021, and 24% compared to 2020.

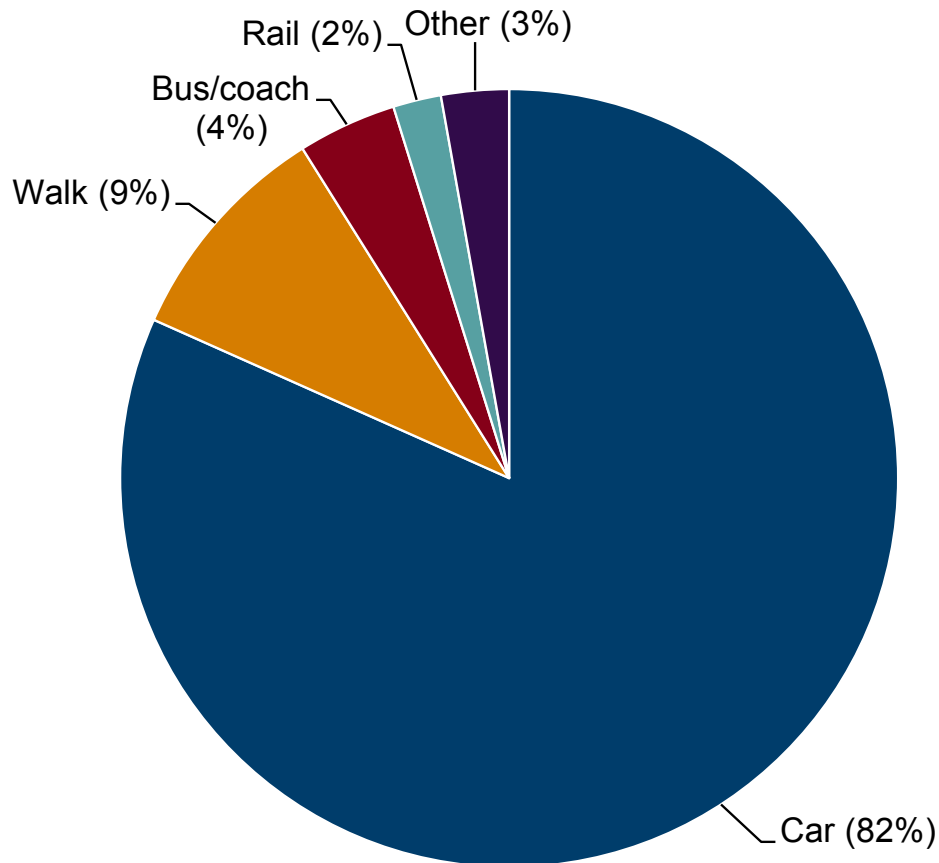
Compared to 2020-21, local bus journeys more than doubled in 2021-22, the largest increase since records began, however, this represents a 42.5% decrease in passenger journeys compared to 2019-20 (pre-pandemic levels). The total distance travelled in 2021-22 by local bus increased by 27.9% compared to the previous year.

More timely GB data indicates that traffic levels and public transport use have recovered following the pandemic but have yet to regain pre-pandemic levels, with bus use particularly impacted.

A national indicator on the percentage of journeys by walking, cycling or public transport was added to the national indicator set in December 2021. This data will be sourced from a National Travel Survey for Wales which is currently under development. In the short-term, data from the Labour Force Survey on usual mode of travel to work and data from the Student Health and Wellbeing Survey on mode of travel to school can be considered.

As in most other parts of the UK outside London, private road transport remains the dominant mode of travel and accounts for the overwhelming majority of commuting journeys in Wales. In 2021, 82% of commuters in Wales used a car as their usual method of travel to work, slightly higher than prior to the pandemic.

**Figure 1.14: Usual mode of travel to work by Welsh residents, 2021**



Description of Figure 1.14: A pie chart showing that the majority (82%) of Welsh residents travelled to work by car in 2021. 9% of residents walked, with 4% using a bus or coach, and 2% using rail services.

Source: Transport Statistics Great Britain: Usual method of travel to work by region of residence

[Note 1] Respondents were asked what their usual method of travel was, assuming coronavirus restrictions were not in place.

[Note 2] Categories that have been suppressed due to low quality have been included in the “Other” category.

The two most common modes of travel to school reported by young people aged 11 to 16 years old in 2021/22 were public transport and walking (both 34% of students), followed closely by private transport (30%). Active travel to school (e.g. travelling to school by walking or cycling) was reported by 35% of young people.

In the 2022-23 National Survey, people were asked about environmental behaviours as part of every day life. 28% of people avoided or cut down travelling by plane and 40% avoided or cut down travelling by car. Of those reducing car travel, 18% said that concerns about pollution/limiting the effects of climate change was the main reason and 12% said that helping them keep fit was the main reason. Cost was given as the main reason for 43% of people. However, there is as yet no evidence of such behaviours resulting in an identifiable change in overall travel patterns.

There has been a considerable increase in the number of newly registered ultra-low emission vehicles in Wales in recent years. In 2022, there were over 8,000 newly registered ultra-low emission vehicles, a 34% increase compared to the previous year.

At the end of 2022, there were over 22,700 licensed ultra-low emission vehicles registered in Wales. Over time, reduced reliance on petrol and diesel vehicles and increased use of ultra-low emission vehicles could contribute to a reduction in emissions.

## Further reading

**Inflation and cost of living for household groups, UK (Office for National Statistics)** provides information on the impact of inflation on different types of households.

**Labour market overview**, provides a monthly update on the Welsh labour market.

The **Welsh economy in numbers** dashboard shows trends in the key economic outcomes for Wales, compared to the UK.

**Transport Statistics Great Britain (Department of Transport)** is an annual compendium of transport statistics, including data for Wales on a number of topics.

Data is also available from the Census of Population on highest qualification levels. **Census in Education in Wales (Census 2021)** provides a summary of the data for Wales. The statistics available from the Census are not directly comparable to those presented in this Wellbeing of Wales report. As well as the different data collection modes, these statistics are based on working age adults (aged 18 to 64) whereas those from the Census are based on all usual residents aged 16 and over.

Information on the awarding of grades for school and college qualifications (GCSE, A Level, AS , Skills Challenge Certificate and Welsh Baccalaureate) in the years impacted by COVID-19 is available in the statements below:

- **Statement from the Minister for Education, Kirsty Williams, August 2020**
- **Written Statement: Update on General Qualifications in 2021 (20 January 2021)**

## Data sources

The following data sources were used in this narrative.

## **Economic performance**

[Regional gross value added \(balanced\) per head and income components \(Office for National Statistics\)](#)

[Regional and sub-regional productivity in the UK: July 2022 \(Office for National Statistics\)](#)

## **Household income**

[Gross disposable household income \(Office for National Statistics\)](#)

[Regional gross disposable household income, UK statistical bulletins \(Office for National Statistics\)](#)

## **Labour market**

[Labour market statistics \(Annual Population Survey\)](#)

[Labour Market Overview, Wales](#)

[Regional labour market statistics in the UK Statistical bulletins \(Office for National Statistics\)](#)

[Earnings and employment from Pay As You Earn Real Time Information, seasonally adjusted \(Office for National Statistics\)](#)

## **Participation in education and the labour market**

[Participation of young people in education and the labour market](#)

[Estimated 16 to 24 year olds not in education, training or employment by](#)

[economic activity and age groups \(StatsWales\)](#)

## **Fair work and earnings**

[Calculate the Real Living Wage \(Living Wage Foundation\)](#)

[Percentage of people moderately or very satisfied with their jobs by age \(StatsWales\)](#)

[Proportion of employees whose pay is set by collective bargaining \(Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings\)](#)

[Percentage of people in employment, who are on permanent contracts \(or on temporary contracts, and not seeking permanent employment\) and who earn at least the real Living Wage, 2012 to 2021 \(StatsWales\)](#)

[Gender pay difference in Wales by year \(median hourly earnings full-time employees excluding overtime\) \(StatsWales\)](#)

[Annual survey of hours and earnings: 2022](#)

## **Poverty**

[Relative income poverty](#)

[Material deprivation](#)

[Persistent poverty](#)

[Fuel poverty estimates](#)

## Qualifications

Highest qualification levels of working age adults by year and qualification

## Education

Academic achievement of pupils in Foundation Phase baseline assessment and at Key Stage 3, 2022

Examination results: September 2021 to August 2022

## Businesses

Emissions of greenhouse gases by year (StatsWales)

## Travel

Transport Statistics: Great Britain 2021 (Department for Transport)

Road traffic

Student Health and Wellbeing Survey 2021/22 (School Health Research Network)

Public service vehicles (buses and taxis)

Ultra-low emission vehicle statistics (Department for Transport)



# A resilient Wales

## The goal for a resilient Wales

Author: Luned Jones

A resilient Wales: A nation which maintains and enhances a bio-diverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change (for example, climate change).

## What have we learnt from the data in the last year?

Many of the national indicators used to measure progress towards this goal are long-term indicators that measure gradual change. These indicators are therefore updated periodically rather than annually. From those national indicators updated within the last year:

- estimates recently produced by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) suggest that Wales's global footprint has continued to decrease, meaning that Wales is gradually reducing the area of land it needs to support its use of global resources
- average concentrations to which people are exposed, of nitrogen dioxide remained broadly similar between 2020 and 2021 and average concentrations for particulate matter increased slightly between 2020 and 2021, but remained lower than prior to the COVID-19 pandemic; annual variations can be due to a number of factors including the weather
- the amount of household waste generated, but not recycled per person decreased slightly, though remains similar to the pre-pandemic rate
- the total capacity of renewable energy projects installed in 2021 was more

than double that installed in 2020; however, 2021's installation rate remains the second lowest in the last decade

## What is the longer term progress towards the goal?

Data for some of the national indicators suggest that progress is being made towards the resilient Wales goal, but some of this progress has slowed recently, and further improvements are needed in order to reach the goal and national milestones.

However, other indicators show that overall, the majority of endangered, vulnerable, rare and/or endemic species and habitats are not in a very good state, mirroring the global picture of declining biological diversity.

Our global footprint is the total environmental burden that society places on the planet. The national milestone for the global footprint indicator is that Wales will only use its fair share of the world's resources by 2050. Recent estimates produced by JNCC and the Global Footprint Network suggest that the global footprint per person reduced by nearly a third between 2004 and 2018. However, this remains over twice the estimated biocapacity of Wales. If the entire world population lived like the citizens of Wales, humanity would require 2.08 Earths. Further analysis of the global footprint is included in the [A Globally Responsible Wales chapter](#).

The latest comprehensive assessment of Welsh natural resources (SoNaRR 2020) shows that overall, biological diversity is declining. The national milestone on biodiversity is to reverse the decline in biodiversity with an improvement in the status of species and ecosystems by 2030 and their clear recovery by 2050. An experimental indicator on the status of biological diversity in Wales published in 2021 showed that the distribution of species in Wales has declined over the long term but has been stable more recently.

The quality of our water whether in seas, rivers, streams or the ground is generally improving. But, whilst good progress has been made in protecting and enhancing our waters over recent decades, there is still a long way to go.

The national indicator on soil shows that the concentration of carbon in our soil is generally stable, apart from in habitat land where a loss of carbon has recently been observed.

Air quality has improved greatly since the 1970s, but remains a risk to human health and nature.

Wales has seen decreases in waste generation and considerable improvements in recycling rate, but we continue to use up resources faster than they can be replenished.

Installed electrical capacity from renewable energy continues to increase but at a slower pace than in recent years.

SoNaRR 2020 provides a comprehensive assessment of progress against the four aims of the sustainable management of natural resources.

## **Biodiversity and habitats**

The national milestone on biodiversity is to reverse the decline in biodiversity with an improvement in the status of species and ecosystems by 2030 and their clear recovery by 2050.

An experimental indicator on the status of biological diversity in Wales published in 2021 showed that the distribution of species in Wales has declined over the long term but has been stable more recently. Although there have been improvements in the status of populations of some species in Wales, SoNaRR 2020 shows that, overall, biodiversity is declining. Further analysis on this topic is available in the Wellbeing of Wales report 2021.

In addition to the national indicator on biodiversity, there are schemes in place which monitor specific species. The UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme is a long-term monitoring scheme. Data for 2022 shows that trends for UK butterfly species vary, with about a third of butterfly species assessed in the UK showing a significant long-term decline in abundance (33%), compared to 29% showing a significant long-term increase. However, over the last decade the majority of species are stable, with 4 species (7%) showing a statistically significant increase and no species showing a significant decline. In Wales, out of the species with sufficient data to be assessed, there are both long- and short-term declines in several species. Eight species are showing a long-term increase in Wales.

Key drivers responsible for long-term declines in abundance include changes in the extent, condition and fragmentation of habitats caused by the intensification of farming, changes in forestry practices, urban development, pollution and climate change. Some drivers, such as climate change, are likely to have mixed, species-dependent impacts.

The Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) is a partnership jointly funded by the BTO, RSPB and JNCC, launched in 1994, and is a citizen science monitoring scheme. In 2022, a total of 231 bird species were recorded in 3,919 BBS squares and data presented on UK long-term trends (1995-2021) for 117 species. 37 species showed statistically significant increases and 41 species had significantly declined. Population increases include the expansion of recent colonists (including Egyptian Goose) and non-native species. BBS trends for 60 species are reported for Wales, of which 19 species have statistically significant long-term increases (1995-2021) and 18 species have significant long-term declines. Of greatest concern was the long-term decline of 61% for rooks between 1995-2021 and a 50% decline in the last ten years.

Most habitat types have seen a reduction in diversity over the last 100 years, with the rate of decline increasing from the 1970s onwards. In the 2019 Wellbeing of Wales report we reported that 31% of our land was considered semi-natural. This national indicator is used to assess the proportion of our land that has semi-natural, less modified habitats as these are most likely to form

healthy and resilient ecosystems. An updated indicator will be available in 2024.

Additional information from NRW's condition assessments for marine Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas in Wales and the Terrestrial and Freshwater Protected sites baseline assessment were included in the Wellbeing of Wales report 2022.

Well managed soil will safeguard food production, support habitats, help manage flood risk and reduce water treatment costs. The national indicator on soil for 2013-16, shows that the concentration of carbon in our soil is generally stable, apart from in habitat land where a loss of carbon has recently been observed.

## Water and flood risk

The quality of our water whether in seas, rivers, streams or the ground is generally improving.

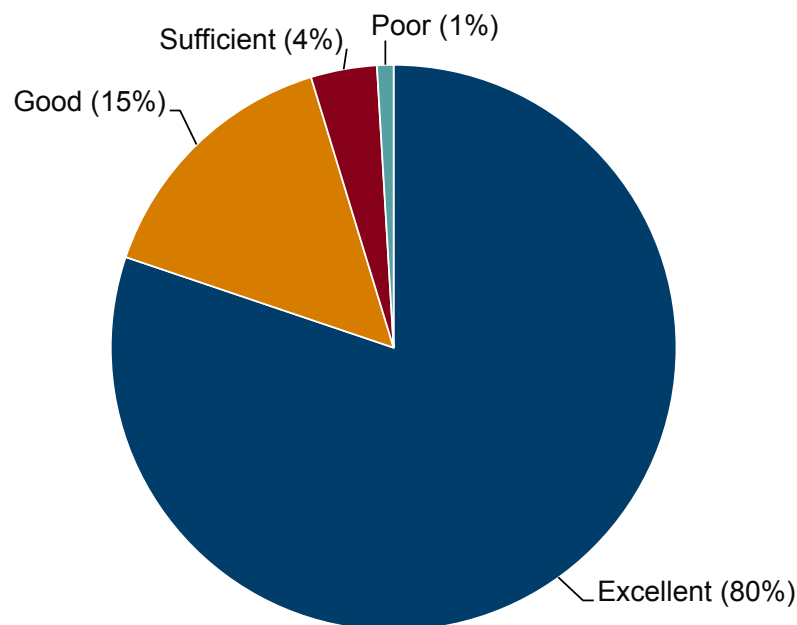
Water is one of Wales's natural resources which we rely on constantly including for drinking water, the economy, industry, sewage treatment and agriculture. In 2021-22 Welsh Water and Hafren Dyfrdwy provided around 900 megalitres per day (MI/d) of potable water to meet demand, with higher demand experienced during peak periods such as during hot dry weather or tourism hot spots. Private water supplies (not on mains) are estimated as 13.8 MI/d.

Latest data on the status of surface and ground water shows that 40% of 933 surface and ground water bodies were at good or better status in 2021. This represents a 3 percentage point increase from that reported in 2015 and an 8 percentage point improvement since 2009. A further update is expected in the autumn of 2024.

Good quality bathing waters are very important for coastal communities, visitors and the economy in Wales. Bathing water quality was monitored at 106 designated sites around Wales' coast in 2022. 105 bathing waters met the

standards set by the Bathing Water Regulations. 85 were classified as excellent, 16 achieved good and 4 were classified as the minimum, sufficient, standard. 1 bathing water failed to achieve the standard and was assessed as poor.

**Figure 2.1: Bathing water quality, percentage of designated sites, 2022**



Description of Figure 2.1: A pie chart showing bathing water quality for designated sites in Wales in 2022. 80% were classed as excellent, 15% as good, 4% as sufficient and 1% as poor.

Source: NRW Bathing Water Quality Report 2022

The latest flood risk assessment shows that some homes in Wales are at risk of flooding from seas, rivers and surface water, with some properties at risk from more than one type of flooding.

In 2019, nearly 42,000 properties in Wales were at high or medium risk of flooding from rivers and over 60,000 properties at high or medium risk of tidal flooding. This covers both residential and non-residential properties. Of these, over 20,000 benefit from river flood defences and over 50,000 from tidal flood defences. It's currently not possible to consider trends over time due to changes in methodology.

## Air quality

Air quality has improved greatly since the 1970s, but remains a risk to human health.

The national indicator on nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) emissions shows that overall, the average concentration levels to which people are exposed have been declining over the past decade. After a period of relative stability between 2017 and 2019 (at around 9 µg/m<sup>3</sup>), the average concentration decreased to 7 µg/m<sup>3</sup> in 2020 and remained at 7 µg/m<sup>3</sup> in 2021. Average concentrations to which people are exposed of particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub>) increased slightly between 2020 and 2021 though remained below pre-pandemic levels.

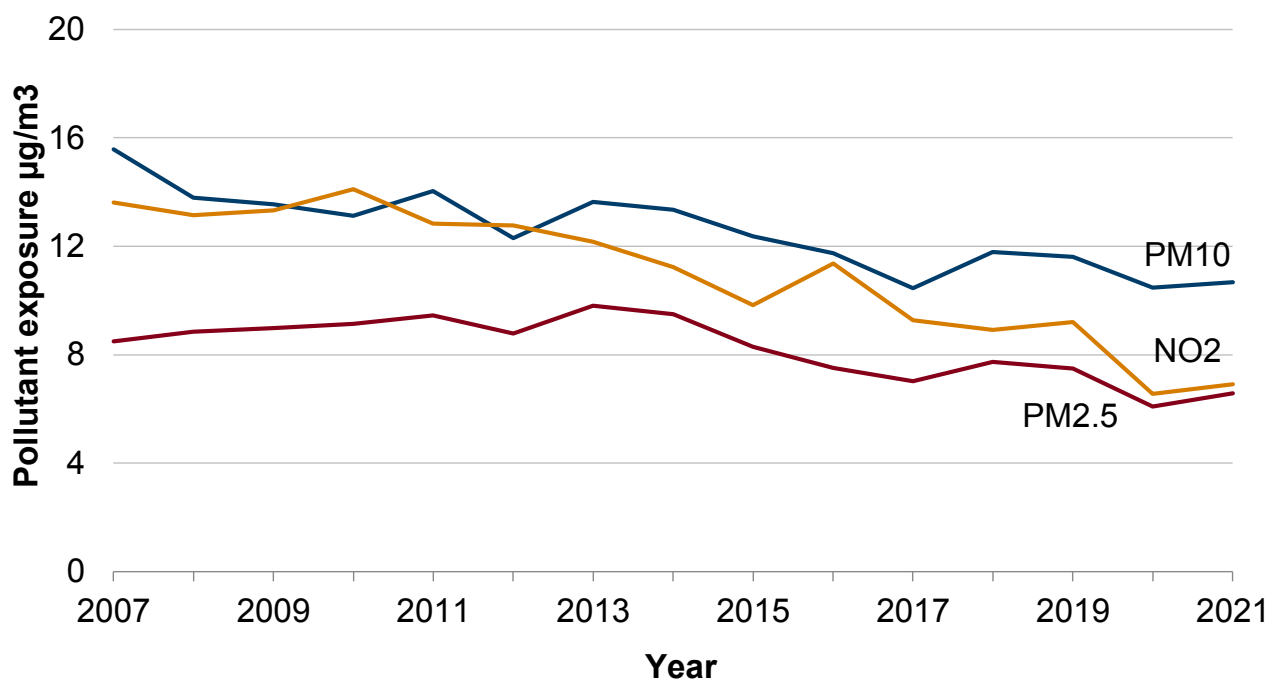
The highest concentrations of nitrogen dioxide emissions are found in urban areas and near busy roads, reflecting the contribution of traffic and urban activities to poor air quality.

Air pollution has a significant effect on public health. There are currently 44 air quality management areas declared in Wales. One was designated due to the risk of PM<sub>10</sub> particulate matter levels exceeding the daily 24-hour mean air quality objective for PM<sub>10</sub>, and the remainder designated where levels of NO<sub>2</sub> exceed or risk exceeding the air quality objectives for NO<sub>2</sub>.

Last year, using 2019 data, the UK Health Security Agency reported the mortality burden attributed to long term outdoor air pollution in the UK has 'an effect equivalent to' between 29,000 and 43,000 deaths per year. This was

amongst adults aged 30 years and over. The estimate for Wales is 'an effect equivalent to' 1,200 to 2,000 deaths amongst those aged 30 years and over. It is important to note these are not actual deaths; the estimate relates to air pollution being regarded as contributing to mortality is based on evidence that shows air pollution reduces life expectancy for everyone.

**Figure 2.2: Air quality indicators, 2007 to 2021**



Description of Figure 2.2: A line chart showing a general improvement in air quality indicators over the period 2007 to 2021.

Source: Air Quality Emissions Indicators

## Waste and recycling

Wales has made considerable progress in managing waste over the last decade



by increasing the amount sent for recycling, and reducing the amount sent for disposal. Wales is a world leader in household recycling, but we continue to use up resources faster than they can be replenished.

There was a considerable decrease in the amount of waste generated, that is not recycled, per person, between 2012 and 2019 (from 794kg to 523kg). The amount of waste not recycled decreased for each of the three components that comprise this national indicator:

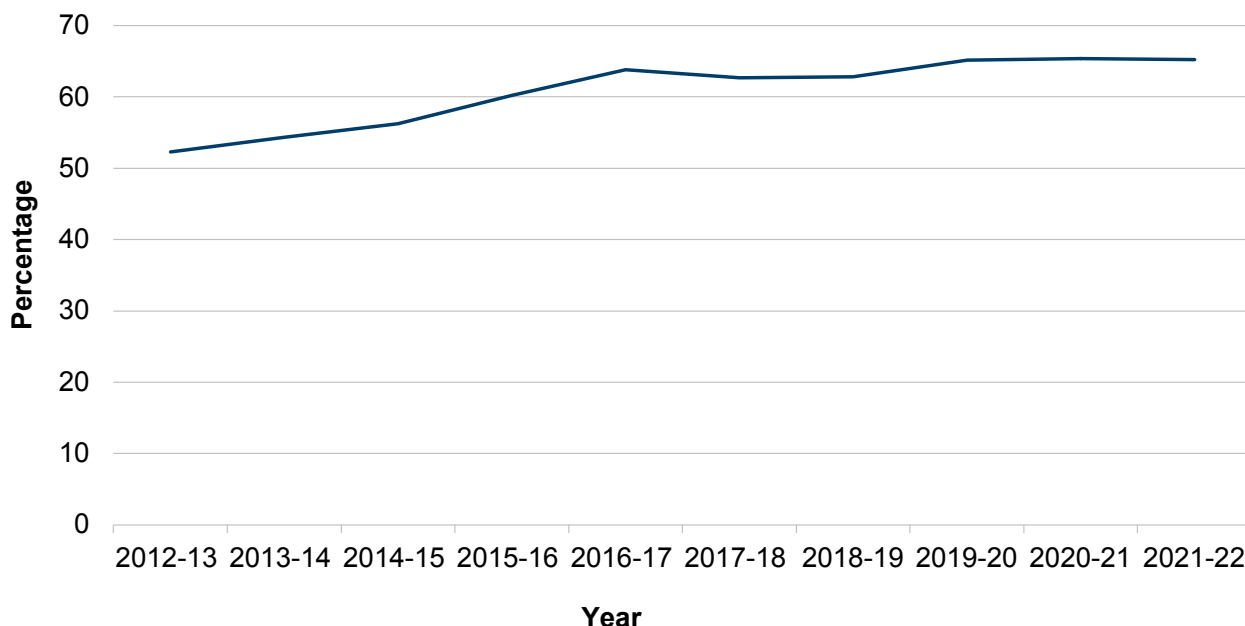
- Household waste
- Industrial and commercial waste
- Construction and demolition waste

Whilst the industrial and commercial, and the construction and demolition waste components are measured periodically through surveys, more regular and up-to-date data is available on household waste.

The amount of household waste generated, but not recycled per person has generally decreased over the last decade, with some fluctuation in 2019-20 and 2020-21 likely due to COVID-19. In 2021-22, on average 178kg of waste generated was not recycled per person.

The recycling rate (i.e. the percentage of local authority municipal waste that was reused, recycled or composted) has increased considerably during the last two decades – from around 5% in the late 1990s to nearly two-thirds (65.2%) in 2021-22. Although the recycling rate decreased very slightly in the latest year, it remained slightly higher than prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Figure 2.3: Percentage of local authority municipal waste reused/recycled/composted, 2012-13 to 2021-22**



Description of Figure 2.3: A line chart showing that the percentage of municipal waste reused/recycled/composted in Wales generally increased from 52.3% in 2012-13 to 65.2% in 2021-22.

Source: Local Authority Municipal Waste

As part of the National Survey 2022-23, people were asked about environmental behaviours as part of everyday life. Over a half (53%) of people minimised the purchase of brand-new items, an increase from the previous year (46%). 43% of people said cost was the main reason they had minimised their purchase of brand-new things compared with 30% the previous year.

The vast majority of people (90%) have either sold or given away items in the previous 12 months, with women more likely to do so than men. 70% of people have either received or bought second-hand items in the last 12 months, an increase from 57% in 2018-19.

# Renewable energy generation

Electricity consumption in Wales is estimated to have increased at a faster rate than renewable electricity generation in Wales in 2021. As a result, the equivalent percentage of Welsh electricity consumption met by renewable electricity generation reduced slightly from 56% in 2020 to 55% in 2021.

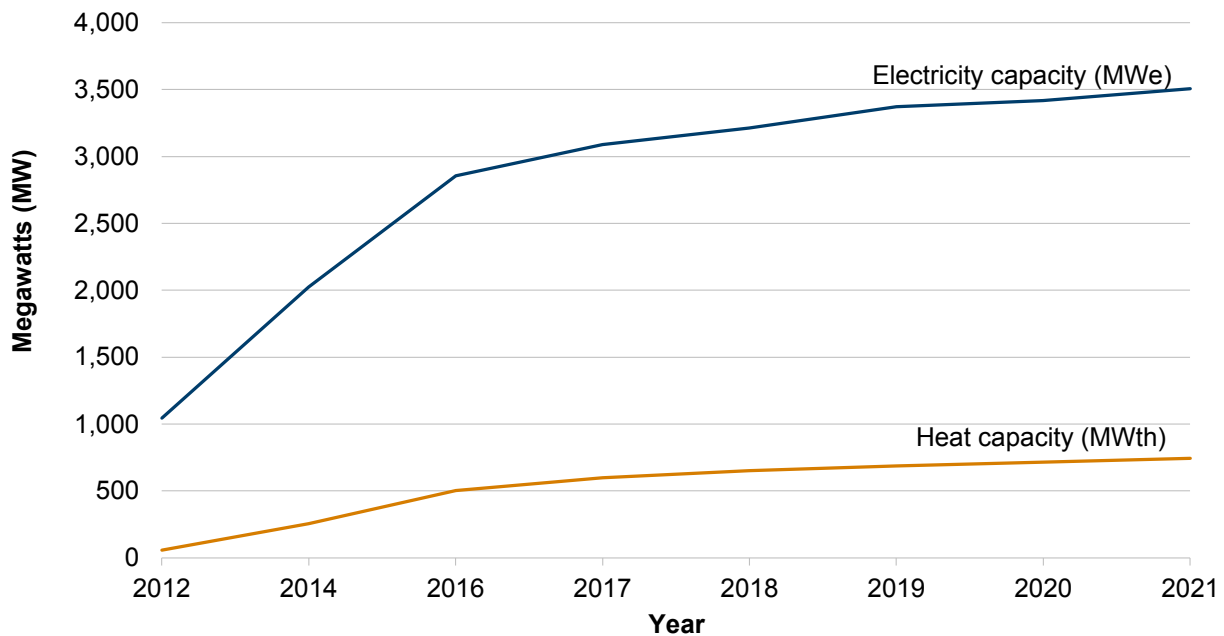
Around 28% of electricity generated in Wales was from renewable sources in 2021, a lower proportion than in 2020, but slightly higher than in 2019. The recent annual decrease is due to an increase in the total amount of electricity generated as a result of gas-fired power stations in Wales increasing their output back to pre COVID-19 generation levels.

The majority (over three-quarters) of renewable energy capacity in Wales generates renewable electricity, while the remaining quarter produces renewable heat.

The capacity of renewable energy projects in Wales (electricity and heat) has increased considerably over the last decade, though progress has slowed in recent years. At the end of 2021, the installed electrical capacity for renewable energy was 3,508 megawatts (MW), slightly higher than the previous year and more than twice the capacity in 2012. At the end of 2021, the total renewable heat capacity in Wales was 742 MW, slightly higher than the previous year and nearly thirteen times the heat capacity in 2012. However, the installation rate in 2021 remains the second lowest in the last decade and is nearly 90% lower than the 2015 peak, when more than 1 GW of renewable energy capacity was installed.

Wales remains a net exporter of electricity, generating nearly twice as much electricity as it consumes on an annual basis.

**Figure 2.4: Renewable energy generation capacity, 2012 to 2021**



Description of Figure 2.4: A line chart showing an overall considerable increase in both renewable electrical and heat capacity in Wales between 2012 and 2021.

Source: Energy Generation in Wales report

The national milestone on dwelling energy performance is that all homes in Wales will have adequate and cost-effective energy performance by 2050. According to the Welsh Housing Conditions Survey, 2017-18, 47% of residential dwellings were considered to have adequate energy performance (a SAP rating of 65 or above).

According to the National Survey for Wales, three quarters of people minimised the use of energy in their home, an increase from 62% the previous year. Of these, cost was the reason given by most people (84%).

## Further reading

Previous versions of the [Wellbeing of Wales report](#) include further analysis of:

- flooding
- semi-natural habitats
- biodiversity
- green spaces
- quality of soil
- energy efficiency of homes

[State of Natural Resources Report 2020 \(Natural Resources Wales\)](#) provides a comprehensive assessment of the extent to which natural resources are being sustainably managed.

[National Survey for Wales](#) provides data on people's views on environmental issues.

[Nature Positive 2030 evidence report](#): produced by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, NatureScot and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency.

[Natural Resources Wales: Wales Environmental Information Portal](#)

## Data sources

The following data sources were used in this narrative.

## Global footprint

[Understanding the Global Environmental Footprint and Impacts of Welsh Consumption, JNCC](#)

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Go to <https://www.gov.wales/wellbeing-wales-2023-html> for the latest version.

Get [information on copyright](#).

## **Biodiversity and habitat**

[State of Natural Resources report \(Natural Resources Wales\)](#)

[ERAMMP report: development of Indicator-44 \(Status of Biological Diversity in Wales\) \(ERAMMP\)](#)

[UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme \(UKBMS\)](#)

[Breeding Bird Survey \(BBS\)](#)

[Summary of Glastir Monitoring and Evaluation Programme \(GMEP\) results](#)

## **Water**

[State of Natural Resources Report \(Natural Resources Wales\)](#)

[River Basin Management Plans, 2021 - 2027 \(Natural Resources Wales\)](#)

[Wales Bathing Water Report \(Natural Resources Wales\)](#)

[Flood Risk Assessment Wales \(Natural Resources Wales\)](#)

## **Air quality**

[Air quality average concentration indicators \(StatsWales\)](#)

[Air quality management areas \(Air Quality Wales\)](#)

[Chemical hazards and poisons report: issue 28 \(UK Health Security Agency\)](#)

## **Recycling and resource use**

[Local authority municipal waste \(StatsWales\)](#)

[UK Statistics on waste \(Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs\)](#)

[Survey of Industrial and Commercial Waste Generated in Wales 2018 \(Natural Resources Wales\)](#)

[2019 Wales Construction & Demolition Waste Arisings Survey \(Natural Resources Wales\)](#)

[National Survey for Wales](#)

## **Energy**

[Low carbon energy generation data \(StatsWales\)](#)

[Energy generation in Wales 2021](#)

[Welsh Housing Condition Survey](#)

[National Survey for Wales](#)

## **A healthier Wales**

### **The goal for a healthier Wales**

Author: Dr William Perks

A society in which people's physical and mental wellbeing is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.

## What have we learnt from the data in the last year?

- Data covered in this chapter now captures the impact of at least a period of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and in some cases beyond.
- Life expectancy fell in the most recent period available (2018-20), which includes part of the period of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Life expectancy is higher for women, however the proportion of life spent in good health is higher for men.
- Analysis (based on 2018 to 2020) shows that the gap in healthy life expectancy between the most and least deprived has remained wide but relatively stable, closing slightly amongst males.
- In 2022, there were 35,694 deaths from all causes, a decrease compared to the high number of deaths seen in 2020 and 2021 but still higher than the numbers recorded prior to the pandemic.
- The majority of adults and young people reported following two or more of the five healthy lifestyle behaviours.
- Pregnant women's healthy lifestyle behaviours at initial assessment were mixed, with a lower percentage of women self-reporting as smokers, but a higher percentage recorded as obese or with a mental health condition than the previous year.
- Both adults and young people reported slightly lower but similar levels of mental wellbeing to previous years.
- Data on life satisfaction and anxiety levels for adults improved after falls seen during the pandemic but data on life satisfaction declined for young people.

## What is the longer term progress towards the goal?

Limited progress appears to have been made towards achieving the goal, with



many of the healthier Wales national indicators remaining relatively stable and not showing significant change over the periods in which they are available. The pandemic has also had a dominant effect on many of the trends in the most recent data, and the implications for longer term trends is unclear. For this reason, the following long term conclusions are drawn mainly on the basis of pre-pandemic evidence.

Life expectancy had been rising since the Second World War, although at a slower pace in the past decade. However, it has fallen for the most recent period, likely reflecting the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The national milestone on healthy life expectancy is to increase the healthy life expectancy of adults and narrow the gap in healthy life expectancy between the least and the most deprived by at least 15% by 2050. The data shows healthy life expectancy continues to be worse for those living in more deprived areas but has remained relatively stable between 2011-13 and 2018-20.

Over the long-term, age-standardised mortality rates have been improving, falling from 1,406 deaths per 100,000 people in 1994 to 1,087 deaths per 100,000 people in 2021. This has been negatively impacted in recent years due to the increased numbers of deaths associated with the pandemic.

The proportion of babies born with a low birth weight has remained relatively steady over the course of the time series, typically fluctuating between 5% and 6%, although it has seen a slight upward trend in recent years.

The national milestone is to increase the percentage of adults with two or more healthy behaviours to 97% by 2050. Due to the change in the mode of the National Survey for Wales, it's not possible to compare recent trends for healthy lifestyle measures for adults. Prior to the pandemic, between 2016-18 and 2019-20 there was no significant change in the proportion of adults who reported two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours and is short of the national milestone. In 2022-23 the majority (92%) of adults reported following two or more of the five healthy lifestyle behaviours.

The national milestone is to increase the percentage of children with two or more healthy behaviours to 94% by 2035 and more than 99% by 2050. The data shows the percentage of young people meeting the national milestone in 2021 was 90% slightly higher than the 88% reported in 2019 and 2017.

The national milestone on mental wellbeing is to improve adult and children's mean mental wellbeing and eliminate the gap in adult and children's mean mental wellbeing between the most deprived and least deprived areas in Wales by 2050. Adult average mental wellbeing was similar compared to the year prior. However, due to the difference in collection mode, it is difficult to draw longer term comparisons for this indicator.

When measuring young people's mental wellbeing using the new measure (SWEMWBS) for the national indicator, the average score for young people was marginally lower in 2021-22 compared to 2019-20 and 2017-18, indicating a slight fall in mental wellbeing.

Average life satisfaction had been increasing for adults since 2011-12, with slight reductions in average anxiety levels. However, the year prior to the pandemic saw a slight deterioration in levels of both life satisfaction and anxiety. This trend continued in the first year of the pandemic with levels falling below those seen in 2011-12. But more recently, improved scores were seen in 2022 compared to 2021.

Average life satisfaction for young people has declined from 2017-18 when 85% said they were satisfied with their life, compared to 78% in 2021-22.

Housing conditions have improved in the last 10 years. The most recent Welsh Housing Conditions Survey showed that 82% of dwellings were free from the most serious (category 1) hazards in 2017-18, compared with 71% in 2008. There were improvements in all tenures

# Life expectancy

Life expectancy had been rising since the Second World War, although at a slower pace in the past decade.

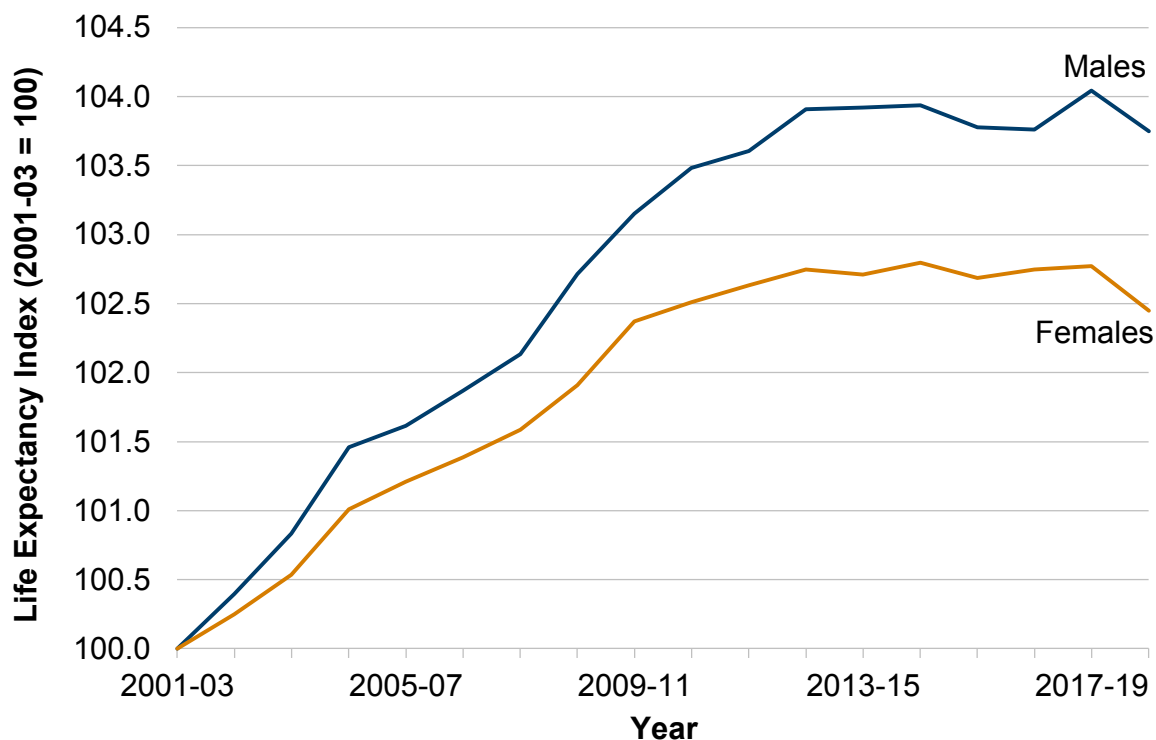
Analysis shows that for both males and females, people aged around 60 to 84 years were the main contributors to increasing life expectancy, but these improvements have slowed down considerably.

Life expectancy fell in the most recent period available (2018-20), which includes part of the period of the COVID-19 pandemic, compared to the previous period (2017-19).

Life expectancy at birth was 82 years for women and 78 years for men for 2018-20. This was a slight reduction for both males and females, following higher death rates in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Healthy life expectancy was 62 years for females and 61 years for males in 2018-20.

**Figure 3.1: Index of life expectancy at birth, by sex (2001-03 = 100), 2001-03 to 2018-20**



Description of Figure 3.1: A line chart showing increases in life expectancy for males and females have stalled in recent years and in the most recent period fallen, reflecting the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Source: Life expectancy, Office for National Statistics

## Causes of deaths

In 2022, there were 35,694 deaths from all causes, a decrease compared to the high number of deaths seen in 2020 and 2021 but still higher than the numbers recorded prior to the pandemic.

For causes of deaths recorded in the year to date, the five-year average for 2023 has been provided for 2017-19, 2021 and 2022, providing an up-to-date comparison that is still close to representing a usual (non-pandemic year), but not including the exceptionally high number of deaths seen in 2020.

The highest number of deaths in the year-to-date (January to July 2023) were from Ischaemic heart diseases, followed by Dementia and Alzheimer's disease, both with almost double the number of deaths than any other cause of death. These have historically been the highest causes of death. COVID-19 was the ninth highest cause of death in the year-to-date after being the leading cause of death in 2020 and second in 2021.

Age-standardised mortality rates (ASMRs) allow for better comparisons over time and area because they account for the population size and age structure.

Based on data up to 2021, over the long-term ASMRs have been improving, falling from 1,406 deaths per 100,000 people in 1994 to 1,087 deaths per 100,000 people in 2021. However this has been negatively impacted in the latest two years due to the increased numbers of deaths associated with the pandemic.

In 2021, the ASMRs were significantly higher for males (1,272 deaths per 100,000 males) than for females (935 deaths per 100,000 females).

The most recent data on avoidable mortality is from 2020, when the rate for Wales was statistically significantly higher than all years since 2012. Around two thirds of avoidable deaths were attributed to preventable conditions, and one third to treatable conditions. Looking at broad groupings of cause of death, the leading cause of avoidable mortality was neoplasms (tumour). COVID-19 was the third leading cause.

In 2021, there were 322 drug poisoning deaths registered in Wales, and of these 210 were drug misuse deaths. The general trend in drug poisoning and drug misuse deaths in Wales has been upwards since the first statistics in 1993. The figures for 2021 are the second highest on record for drug poisoning (almost

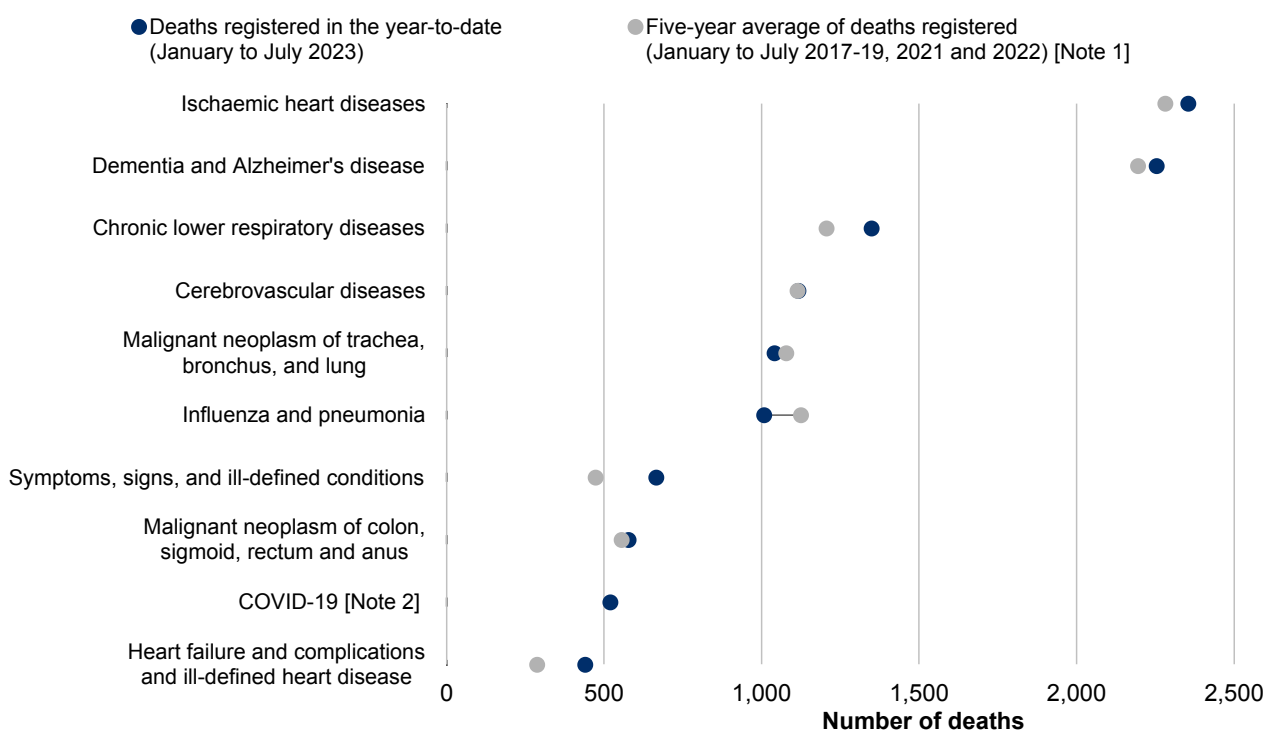
reaching the high of 2018), and the highest on record for drug misuse. Drug deaths were more common among men than women and higher rates of drug poisoning deaths were found in more deprived areas.

These figures are based on the year in which the death was registered, rather than when it occurred. Because of registration delays, around half of these deaths will have occurred in years prior to 2021. Delays in death registrations, which increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, are likely to have affected the figures.

Over the long-term, suicide rates have fluctuated from year to year but have generally been falling. At 12.7 suicide deaths per 100,000 people, 2021 registrations showed suicide rates were not statistically significantly higher than 2020, and were similar to levels seen in years before the pandemic. The non-significant increase in 2021 compared with 2020 is likely to reflect disruption to coroners' inquests caused by the pandemic and delays in death registrations. The latest figures include deaths that occurred in 2020 and were subsequently registered in 2021.

Although a slight increase was seen in 2021, rates of alcohol specific deaths have stayed relatively stable in recent years.

**Figure 3.2: Causes of death, ranked by the number of deaths registered in the year-to-date (January to July 2023), compared with the 2017-2019, 2021 and 2022 average**



Description of Figure 3.2: A dumbbell chart showing top 10 causes of death in the year-to-date, compared with the 2017-19, 2021 and 2022 average, with ischaemic heart disease the highest.

Source: Monthly mortality analysis, England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

[Note 1] The five-year average for 2023 has been provided for 2017-19, 2021 and 2022, providing an up-to-date comparison that is still close to representing a usual (non-pandemic year), but not including the exceptionally high number of deaths seen in 2020.

[Note 2] The five-year average is intended to show what is expected in a non-pandemic year. Therefore, this is not applicable for the five-year average for COVID-19.

## Inequalities in life expectancy and mortality

The national milestone on healthy life expectancy is to increase the healthy life expectancy of adults and narrow the gap in healthy life expectancy between the least and the most deprived by at least 15% by 2050.

Inequalities in life expectancy and mortality remain wide.

Analysis based on 2018-20 data shows that the overall gap in healthy life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas has remained relatively stable between 2011-13 and 2018-20. In the most recent time period, this gap seems to have reduced slightly for males (13.3 years) and increased slightly for females (16.9 years).

The life expectancy gap is much narrower at 7.6 years for males and 6.3 years for females. But has been generally increasing in recent years for males and females, suggestive of growing inequality.

Males spend more of their life in good health (78.5%) compared to females (76.0%).

Further breakdowns of the gap in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy by health board and local authority can be found in the further reading section below.

The most recent data on avoidable mortality is from 2020 where the proportion of total deaths that were avoidable continued to be substantially larger in the most deprived areas compared with the least deprived areas. Avoidable deaths accounted for 37.0% of all male deaths in the most deprived areas compared with 18.9% in the least deprived areas. For females the equivalent figures were

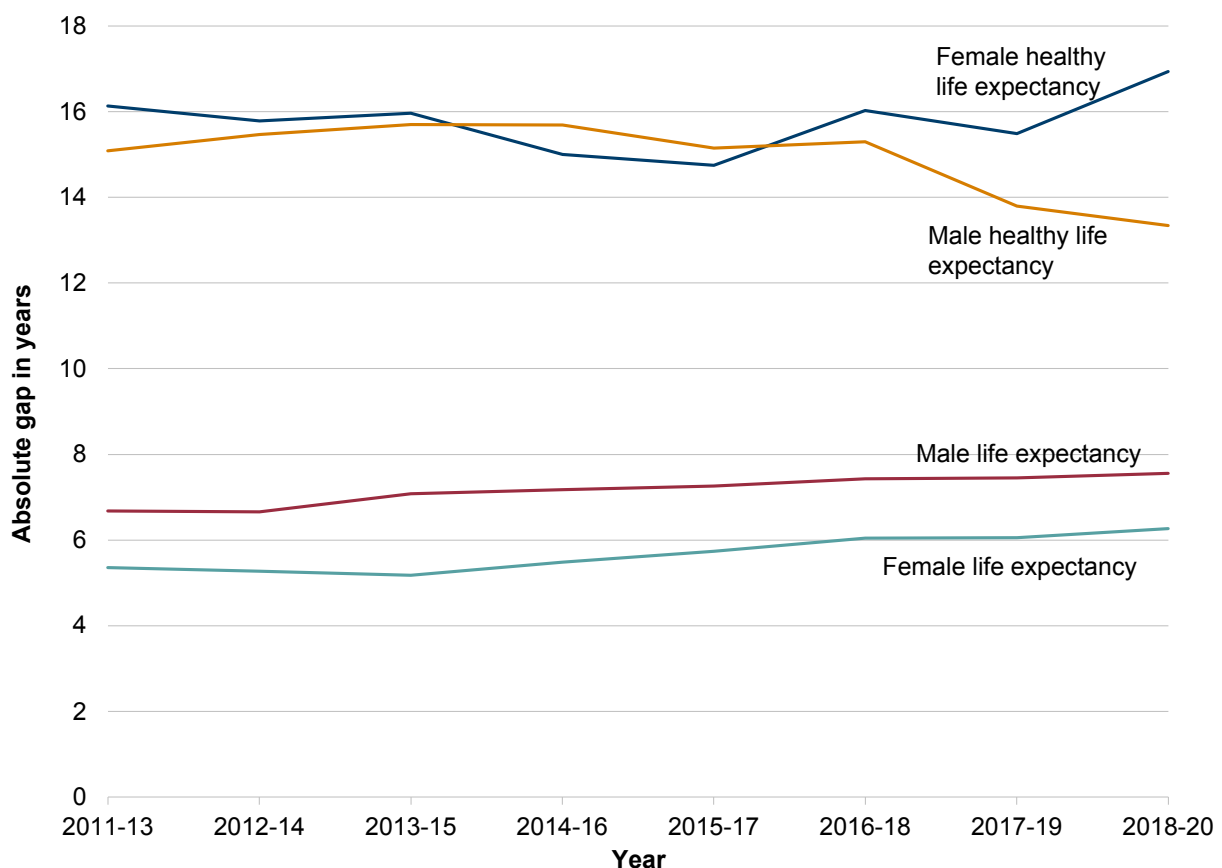


25.7% in the most deprived areas and 14.1% in the least deprived areas.

In 2020, the absolute gap in avoidable mortality between the most and least deprived areas widened to the highest level since 2003 for males and since the data time series began for females.

Avoidable mortality rates with COVID-19 as an underlying cause of death were statistically significantly higher in the most deprived areas compared with the least deprived areas.

**Figure 3.3: Absolute gap in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy between most and least deprived areas, males and females, 2011-13 to 2018-20 [Note 1]**



Description of Figure 3.3: A line chart showing absolute gap in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy for males and females between 2011-13 to 2018-20 with females having a higher life expectancy but males having a higher healthy life expectancy.

Source: Health expectancies in Wales with inequality gap, Public Health Wales

[Note 1] The gap in health expectancies is calculated as the absolute difference between the least and most deprived fifths. This is a change of method since previous health expectancies releases, to improve the stability of the measure at local authority level. The gap was previously calculated using the Slope Index of Inequality (SII). ONS continue to publish the SII at national level as part of their [Health state life expectancies release \(ONS\)](#).

## Low birth weight babies

The percentage of low birth weight babies has remained relatively steady over the course of the time series, typically fluctuating between 5% and 6%.

The lowest figures on record were recorded in 2014 and 2015. Since then there has been a slight upward trend in the number of low birth weight babies, with 2022 being the highest on record.

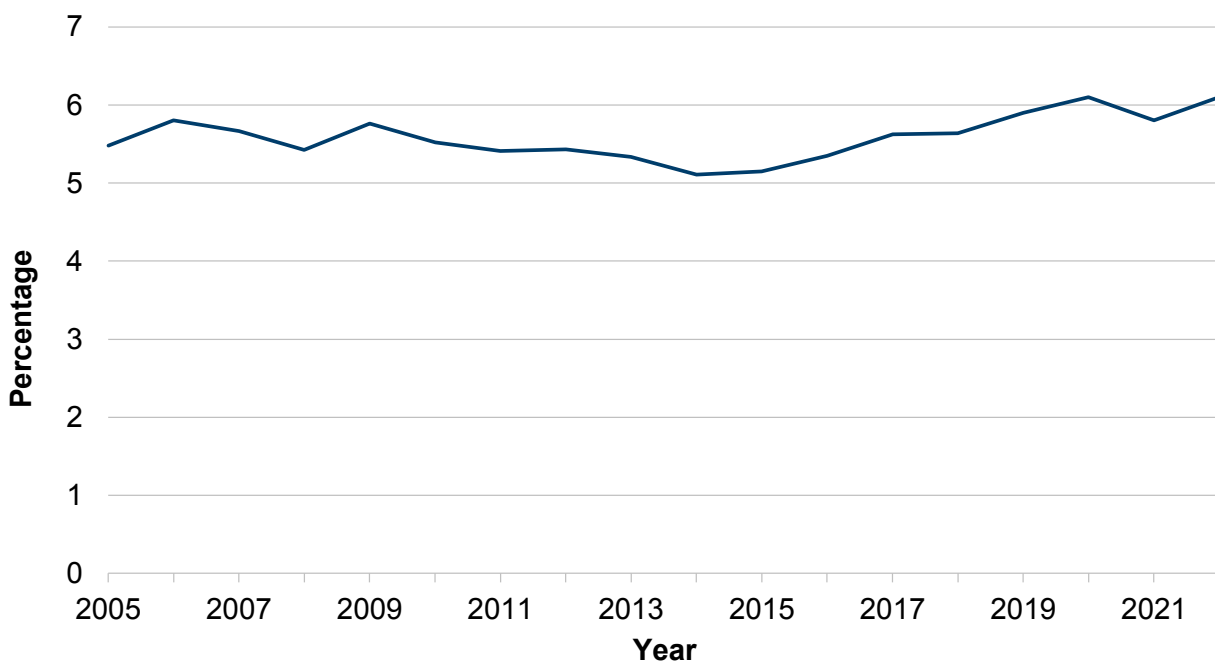
In 2022, a slightly higher percentage of female babies had low birth weight (6.9%) compared to male babies (5.3%). This is broadly consistent with the longer-term trend.

The proportion of live births with low birth weight or low gestational age was highest in the youngest and oldest mothers in 2022, though there are only a small number of births to mothers in these age groups. The percentage of babies with low gestational age and the percentage of babies with low birth weight has remained broadly stable across age groups over the last 10 years.

Breastfeeding has health benefits for babies and their mothers. In the last

decade breastfeeding rates at birth have been increasing. The latest annual data in 2022 showed the percentage of babies breastfed at birth was around 63%. This was 1.6 percentage points higher than in 2018. Babies of older mothers are more likely to be breastfed than those of younger mothers.

**Figure 3.4: Percentage of singleton births with a birth weight of under 2,500g, 2005 to 2022**



Description of Figure 3.4: A line chart showing the percentage of live singleton births with a birth weight of under 2,500g. The rate has typically fluctuated between 5% and 6% over the course of the time series, with a slight upward trend since 2014.

Source: Maternity and birth statistics, Welsh Government

# Maternal health

In 2022, the data shows mixed results for healthy lifestyle behaviours of pregnant women at initial assessment, with a lower percentage of women self-reporting as smokers, but a higher percentage recorded as obese or as having a mental health condition than in the previous year.

In 2022, 14% of pregnant women were recorded as smokers at their initial assessment. This continues the downward trend since data was first collected in 2016 and is one percentage point lower than in the previous year. However, since 2021 nearly all data has been self-reported, rather than being carbon monoxide monitored and may impact direct comparisons prior to this.

A greater proportion of younger women were smokers at initial assessment than older women. Three out of ten (29%) women aged 16 to 19 were recorded as smokers at initial assessment compared to one in ten (10%) women aged 30 or over. Smoking rates at initial assessment have fallen over the last six years for all age groups, (other than those aged under 16, which is subject to year-to-year volatility due to the low number of women in this group).

Three out of ten (31%) pregnant women had a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or greater at their initial assessment. The longer-term upward trend continued as the percentage in 2022 was one percentage point higher than in the previous year and five percentage points higher than in 2016 (the first year of comparable data).

Three out of ten (30%) pregnant women reported a mental health condition at their initial assessment. This also continued a longer-term upward trend, with the latest data one percentage point higher than in the previous year, and eleven percentage points higher than in 2016 (the first year of comparable data).

The number of live births decreased marginally, continuing a declining trend broadly seen since 2010. The percentage of new-borns from each ethnic group has increased other than those from a White ethnic group (which has

decreased) since 2018.

The percentage of young mothers continues to fall. Most mothers giving birth in the year were aged between 25 and 34.

## Healthy lifestyle behaviours

The national milestones on adult and children's healthy lifestyle behaviours are:

- to increase the percentage with two or more healthy behaviours to more than 97% for adults by 2050.
- to increase the percentage with two or more healthy behaviours to 94% for children by 2035, and to more 99% by 2050.

The National Survey for Wales has been adapted due to the pandemic, with a change in the mode of the survey (telephone interviews replacing face-to-face interviews) and changes to some questions compared with previous years. As these topics can be sensitive to such changes it is not possible to compare the results directly with data from years prior to 2020-21.

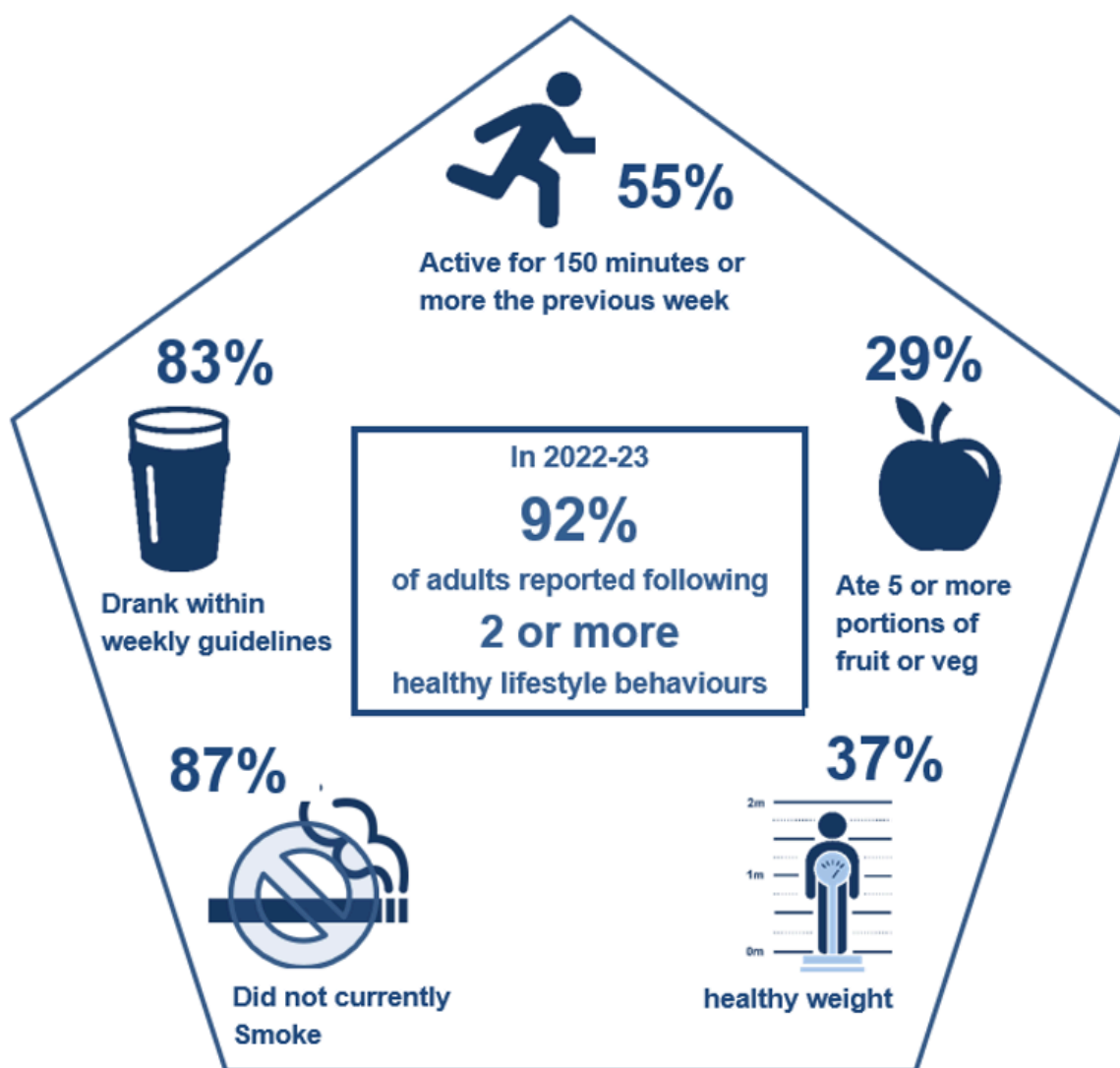
Prior to the pandemic, between 2016-18 and 2019-20 there was no significant change in the proportion of adults who reported two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours and is short of the national milestone

The data presented here is for April 2022 to March 2023.

The majority (92%) of adults reported following two or more of the five healthy lifestyle behaviours. This includes not currently smoking, drinking within weekly guidelines, eating five or more portions of fruit or vegetables the previous day, being active for 150 minutes or more the previous week and being a healthy weight. 30% of adults followed four or five of the healthy lifestyle behaviours.

There was no significant change in most lifestyle behaviours between 2021-22 and 2022-23, however there was an increase in use of e-cigarettes.

**Figure 3.5: Infographic of the percentage of adults reporting following individual healthy lifestyle behaviours [Note 1]**



Source: National Survey for Wales 2022-23, Welsh Government

[Note 1] Drank within weekly guidelines includes those who do not drink.

In 2022-23, the percentage of adults with two or more healthy lifestyle

behaviours was lower for males (compared with females), people aged between 45 to 64 (compared to those from younger or older age groups) and people from a more deprived area (compared with those from a less deprived area).

Due to the sample size of the National Survey for Wales, breakdowns by other protected characteristics is limited, therefore the below analysis combines 4 years of data (from 2016-17 to 2019-20) to be able to analyse these. In addition, this analysis is based on age-standardised results to take account of differences in the age profile in different groups.

Adults identifying as bisexual were more likely to report having two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours (compared with those in other sexual orientation groups) as were adults who were not disabled (compared with those who were disabled).

Adults reporting no religion were less likely to report having two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours than those in other religious groups; those identifying as Muslim were most likely to do so (although the difference compared with the Other religion group was not statistically significant) and adults who were married or in a civil partnership were more likely to report having two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours than those who were single or those who were separated or divorced.

The School Health Research Network Student Health and Wellbeing survey showed the percentage of young people (11 to 16 year olds) meeting the national milestone in 2021/22 academic year was 90%, slightly higher than the 88% reported in 2019/20 and 2017/18 academic years.

These healthy lifestyle behaviours include not smoking, never or rarely drinking alcohol, eating fruit or vegetables every day and being physically active for an hour or more per day, over the past seven days. For these underlying behaviours in 2021/22 academic year:

- 95% of young people reported that they did not smoke
- 83% of young people reported that they never or rarely drank alcohol

- 45% of young people reported that they ate fruit or vegetables every day
- 16% of young people reported that they had been physically active for an hour or more per day, over the past seven days

Between 2017/18 and 2021/22 academic years those reported that they did not smoke and that they never or rarely drank alcohol has shown slight improvements. Whereas those reporting that they ate fruit or vegetables every day or had been physically active for an hour or more per day over the past seven days have shown a slight decline.

In 2021/22 academic year, those who were younger, male (91%) and in the high family affluence group (90%) had the highest percentage of young people with two or more healthy lifestyle behaviours, compared to those who identified as neither a boy nor a girl (84%), were in the low family affluence group (89%) or were older, who had the lowest.

Reported physical activity levels declined with age in secondary school, and boys (rather than girls or young people who identified as neither a boy nor a girl) and those in the high family affluence group (rather than medium or low family affluence) were more likely to report being physically active for an hour or more per day, over the past seven days.

The percentage of young people who reported that they eat fruit or vegetables every day also declined with age in secondary school, with girls (rather than boys or young people who identified as neither a boy nor a girl) and those in the high family affluence group (rather than medium or low family affluence ) more likely to report that they eat fruit or vegetables every day.

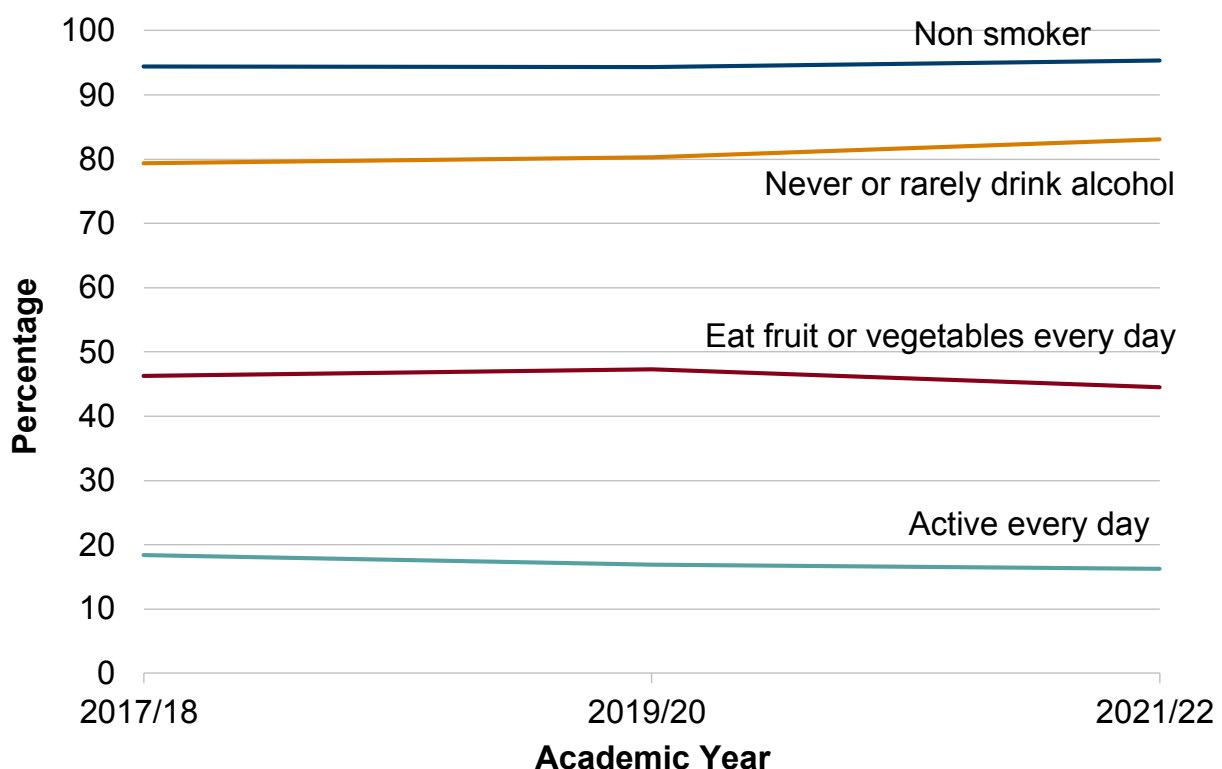
The percentage of young people who reported that they did not smoke declined with age during secondary school. Both girls and boys (compared with young people who identified as neither a boy nor a girl) and those in the high and medium family affluence group (compared with low family affluence) were more likely to report they did not smoke.

The percentage of young people who reported that they never or rarely drank



alcohol fell with age during secondary school. Both girls and boys (compared with young people who identified as neither a boy nor a girl) and those in the low family affluence group (compared with high and medium family affluence) were more likely to report that they never or rarely drank alcohol.

**Figure 3.6: Percentage of young people aged 11 to 16 following selected healthy behaviours, 2017/18 (academic year) to 2021/22**



Description of Figure 3.6: A line chart showing minor improvements or a stable trend in percentage of young people who are non smokers, active every day, eat fruit and vegetables every day and never or rarely drink alcohol, between 2017/18 and 2021/22 academic years.

Source: School Health Research Network Student Health and Wellbeing Survey

# Mental health and wellbeing in adults

The national milestone on mental wellbeing is to improve adults' and children's mean mental wellbeing and eliminate the gap in adults' and children's mean mental wellbeing between the most deprived and least deprived areas in Wales by 2050

The National Survey for Wales has been adapted due to the pandemic, with a change in the mode of the survey (telephone interviews replacing face-to-face interviews) and changes to some questions compared with previous years. Adults were asked about their mental wellbeing and results were scored using the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS). A higher score (58 to 70) suggests high mental wellbeing, while scoring 44 or lower suggests having a low mental wellbeing. Scoring between 45 and 57 suggests the person has medium mental wellbeing.

The overall average WEMWBS score in 2022-23 was 48, meaning on average responders had medium mental wellbeing. This is a similar average WEMWBS score to that in 2021-22.

When looking at the breakdowns of responder scores, 32% of adults scores corresponded to a low mental wellbeing, 55% to a medium mental wellbeing and 13% to a high mental wellbeing.

On average younger adults have lower mental wellbeing (with those aged 16 to 24 having a WEMWBS score of 47) than those aged 65 and over (WEMWBS score of 51).

Adults who described their general health as bad or very bad had an average WEMWBS score of 39, which was lower than for people with better general health.

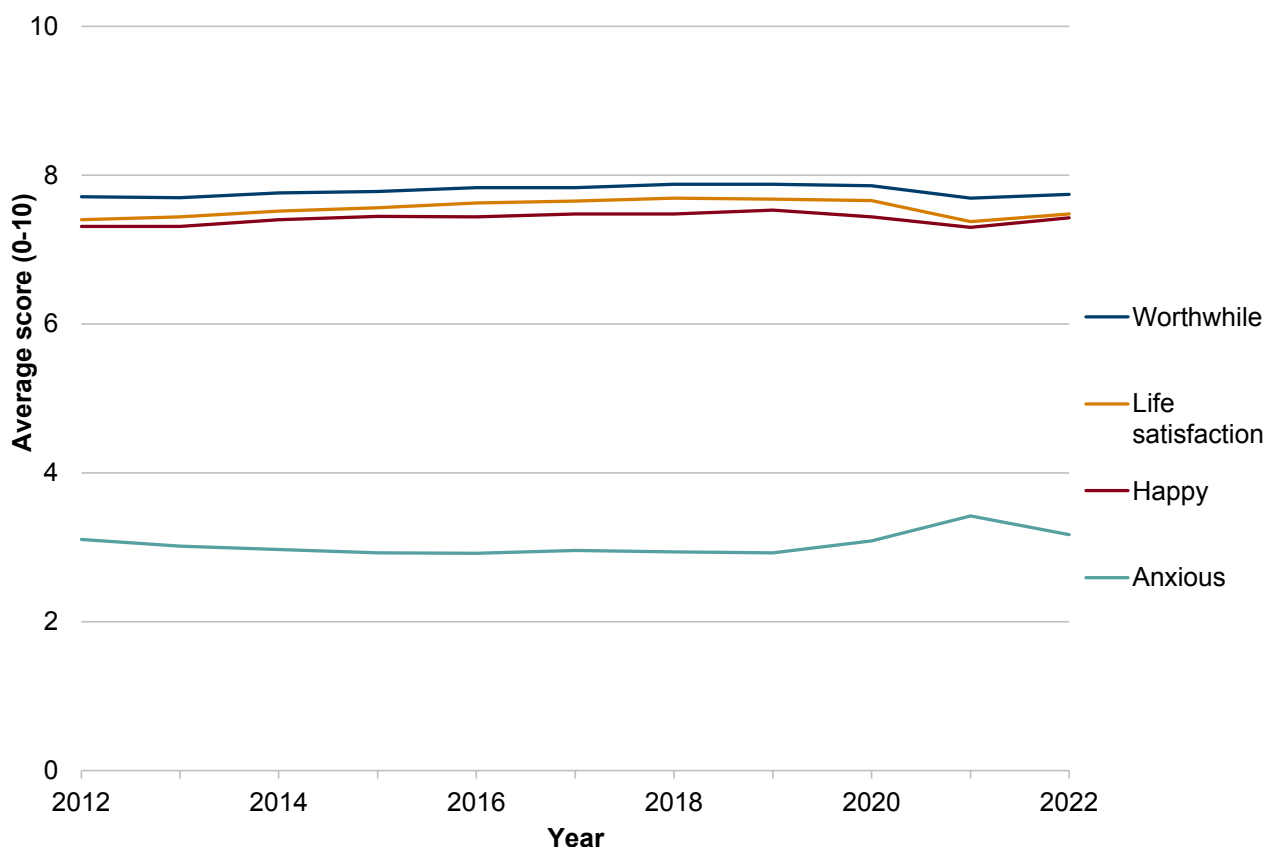
Adults who say they are lonely also have lower mental wellbeing on average (WEMWBS score of 39) than those who are sometimes lonely (WEMWBS score

of 47) or never lonely (WEMWBS score of 52).

These interactions with age and health show the same trend as previous years, but the change in mode should also be considered when comparing the results.

Average life satisfaction had been increasing for almost a decade since 2011-12, accompanied with slight reductions in average anxiety levels. However, in 2020-21 life satisfaction and anxiety levels deteriorated to levels worse than those seen in 2011-12, likely due to impacts from the pandemic. In 2021-22 scores improved for both life satisfaction and anxiety, undoing some of the decline seen in 2020-21 but has not returned to pre-pandemic levels.

**Figure 3.7: Headline measures of personal well-being (average scores out of 10), 2012 to 2022**



Description of Figure 3.7: A line chart showing increasing scores for life satisfaction, feeling worthwhile, feeling happy and reducing scores for feeling anxious from 2012 to 2019, before a fall in 2020 to 2021. But improved scores were seen in 2022 compared to 2021.

Source: Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics

## Mental health and wellbeing in children

The underlying measure used to calculate the national indicator for children's mental well-being has changed compared to previous updates of the Wellbeing of Wales report. This indicator is now calculated using the Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS) using the School Health Research Network Student Health and Wellbeing Survey. The indicator was previously measured using the Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ). This change has been made as SWEMWBS, which captures both a person's happiness and the extent to which a person is fully functional, is better aligned to the national indicator compared to the SDQ, which is a screening questionnaire for measuring psychological strengths and difficulties. The new measure also aligns better with the measure used for adults' mental well-being (WEMWBS).

When measuring children's mental wellbeing using the new measure (SWEMWBS) for the national indicator, the average SWEMWBS score for young people (11-16 year olds) was marginally lower in the 2021/22 academic year (23), compared to 2019/20 and 2017/18 academic years (both 24) indicating a slight fall in mental wellbeing. A higher overall SWEMWBS score is indicative of more positive mental wellbeing. Scores from the SWEMWBS is based on a shorter set of questions to the adult WEMWBS and so scores are not directly equivalent.

Breakdowns by gender, showed those self-identifying as neither a boy nor a girl reported the lowest mental wellbeing, and girls reported lower mental wellbeing

than boys. Mental wellbeing scores also declined with age and were lowest in the low family affluence group.

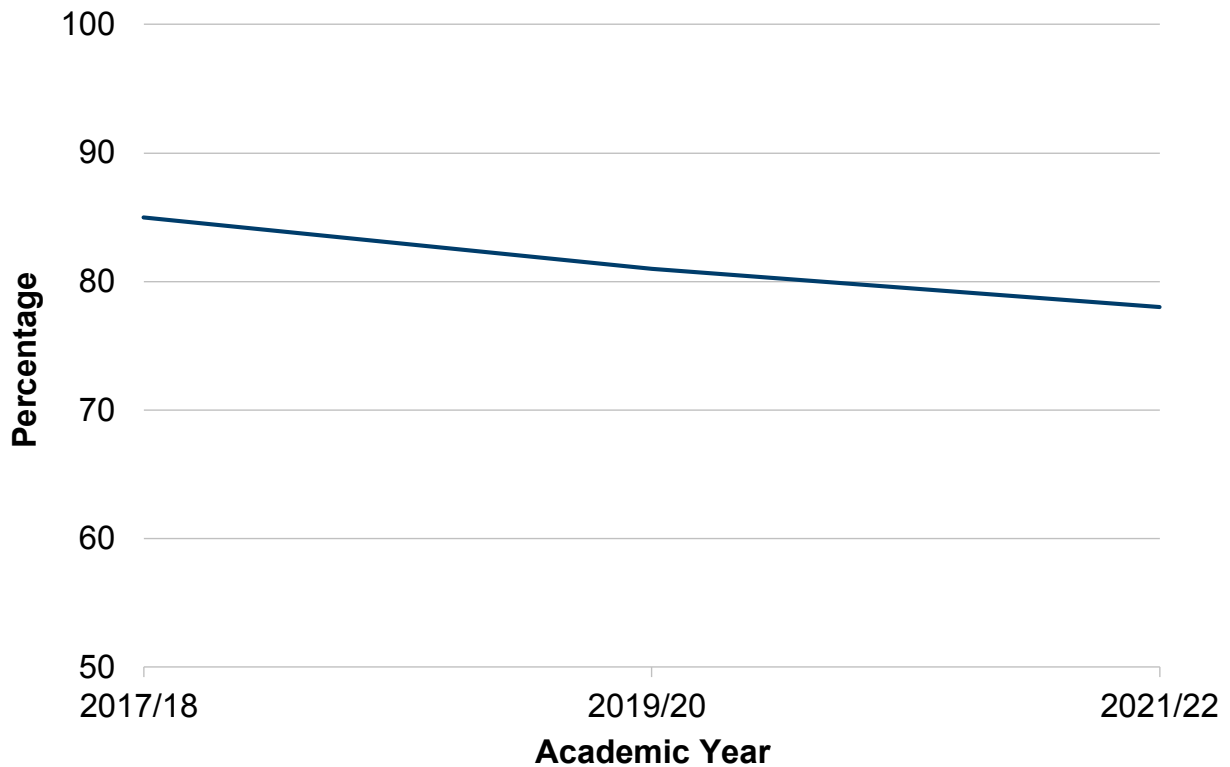
78% of young people rated their life satisfaction as 6 or above on the Cantril Ladder (where scores range from 0 to 10, and a score of 6 or above was defined as high life satisfaction) in the 2021/22 academic year, showing a declining trend from the 2017/18 academic year when 85% of young people rated their life satisfaction as 6 or above.

Boys (85%) were more likely than girls (74%) to be satisfied with their life, while life satisfaction was markedly lower among young people who identified as neither a boy nor a girl (43%).

Life satisfaction also declined with age and was lowest in the low family affluence group.

Further data on health behaviour in school-aged children is available from the [School Health Research Network Student Health and Wellbeing Survey](#).

**Figure 3.8: Percentage of young people aged 11-16 satisfied with their life, 2017/18 (academic year) to 2021/22**



Description of Figure 3.8: A line chart showing a decline in the life satisfaction of young people aged 11 to 16, between 2017/18 and 2021/22 academic years.

Source: School Health Research Network Student Health and Wellbeing Survey

## Hazardous housing

A range of factors are important to everyone's health. For example employment, air pollution and housing all impact on overall health outcomes.

Housing conditions in Wales have improved over the last 10 years, reducing the potential risk to the health of occupants.

The most recent Welsh Housing Conditions Survey (WHCS) showed that 82% of dwellings were free from the most serious (category 1) hazards in 2017-18, compared with 71% in 2008. There were improvements in all tenures.

The Welsh Government also collects data on Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) assessments carried out by local authorities. The latest data shows that in 2021-22, 71% of local authority HHSRS assessments were free from category 1 hazards. Local authority HHSRS assessments are generally carried out in the private rented sector and only under particular circumstances (for example, when a complaint is received about a dwelling). For this reason, data on local authority HHSRS assessments is not directly comparable with the results of the WHCS.

## Further reading

### [Health expectancies in Wales with inequality gap profile \(Public Health Wales\)](#)

Previous [Well-being of Wales reports](#), have included further analysis of:

- cancer survival
- problematic social media use

This report covers a wide range of subjects, and therefore in this report it is only possible to consider high level measures of progress. More in depth analysis of many of these topics are available through the range of statistical releases published by [Welsh Government](#), the [Office for National Statistics](#) or other statistical producers.

# Data sources

The following data sources were used in this narrative.

**Alcohol-specific deaths in the UK (Office for National Statistics)**

**Annual personal well-being estimate (Office for National Statistics)**

**Avoidable mortality in Great Britain (Office for National Statistics)**

**Breastfeeding data**

**Deaths involving COVID-19 by local area and socioeconomic deprivation (Office for National Statistics)**

**Deaths registered in England and Wales (Office for National Statistics)**

**Deaths registered summary statistics (Office for National Statistics)**

**Deaths related to drug poisoning in England and Wales (Office for National Statistics)**

**Health expectancies in Wales with inequality gap (Public Health Wales)**

**Life expectancy for local areas of the UK (Office for National Statistics)**

**Life expectancy and mortality in Wales (Public Health Wales)**

**Maternity and birth statistics**

**Monthly mortality analysis, England and Wales (Office for National Statistics)**

**National Survey for Wales**

**Socioeconomic inequalities in avoidable mortality in Wales (Office for**



National Statistics)

Student Health and Wellbeing Survey (School Health Research Network)

Suicides in England and Wales (Office for National Statistics)

Welsh Housing Conditions Survey (assessment of elements of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard)

Housing hazards and licences

## A more equal Wales

### The goal for a more equal Wales

Author: Scott Clifford

A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio-economic background and circumstances).

This chapter aims to bring together equality breakdowns for the indicators where these are available. However, there are equality data throughout this report on how Wales is progressing to being a more equal Wales. Alongside this year's main report, there is also a supplementary report that focuses on ethnicity. For that reason, most indicator breakdowns by ethnicity will be covered in that supplementary report rather than this chapter.

In June 2022 the Welsh Government published its **Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan** (ARWAP) which includes guidance on Anti-Racist language. This chapter uses a range of data sources employing different categorisations of ethnic group and, as such, may not necessarily align with the ARWAP guidance. However, where possible, we have used language in this chapter that aligns with Anti-

Racist language.

In 2002 the Welsh Government adopted the social model of disability. This model sets out a different way to view disability. Rather than defining people as disabled by their impairment (i.e. the medical model of disability), people with impairments are considered to be disabled by physical, attitudinal and organisational barriers created by society.

The data reported here are derived from a range of sources reflecting the most reliable, recent data available. Many of these sources use definitions of disability which are informed by the medical model in line with the Equality Act 2010 definition. In the Equality Act a disability means a physical or a mental condition which has a substantial and long-term impact on your ability to do normal day to day activities. However, where possible, we have used language in this chapter that aligns with the social model of disability.

## **What have we learnt from the data in the last year?**

### **Age**

- Children continue to be the population group most likely to be in relative income poverty. Latest figures show that this was the case for 28% of children in Wales compared to 18% of pensioners.
- Provisional estimates for 2021, show a decrease in young people's participation in education and the labour market largely driven by an increase in the economic inactivity rate (excluding students) for 16 to 18 year olds. It is too soon to assess the full impact of the pandemic on this trend.

### **Disability**

- The employment rate among disabled adults aged 16 to 64 remains lower

than among those who are not disabled. 49.1% of disabled adults aged 16 to 64 were employed in the year ending March 2023.

- In 2022-23 one in four (25%) disabled people lived in a household in material deprivation. This is more than twice as high as for people who are not disabled (11%).
- The disability pay difference in Wales was 9.7% in 2022, down from 11.4% in 2021. This means that disabled people in Wales earned, on average, 9.7% less per hour than non-disabled people.
- There were 864 hate crimes recorded by police in 2021-22 in which someone being disabled was considered a motivating factor, increasing by 71% from 504 in the previous year. These accounted for 14% of all recorded hate crimes.

## Ethnicity

- Children from some ethnic groups continue to achieve better on average in school compared to others, with greater proportions of GCSE entries by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic pupils awarded A\*-A and A\*-C grades in summer 2022 than White British pupils.
- There was a 27% increase in recorded race hate crimes between 2020-21 and 2021-22, although the proportion of hate crimes with race as a motivation factor decreased slightly.

## Gender

- Girls continue to achieve better educational outcomes at GCSE. In summer 2022, girls were awarded more grades at A\*-C than boys. The largest grade disparity was at the A\* and A grade: girls were awarded 6.5 and 4.5 percentage points, respectively, more than boys. The grade disparity at A\* widened in 2022.
- In April 2022, the (full-time) gender pay gap was 6.1%, an increase of 1.7 percentage points compared to the previous year.

## Gender identity

- Data from the 2021 Census shows that more than 10,000 people (0.4% of the population) indicated that their gender identity was different from their sex registered at birth.

## Marital status

- It remains true that those who are married are less likely to be in material deprivation than those who are separated or divorced.
- In 2020, marriage rates in England and Wales fell to their lowest level since 1862. While marriage rates had been declining since 2016, the large decrease between 2019 and 2020 is likely due to the pandemic restrictions that were in place for parts of the year.

## Religion

- Census 2021 data shows that for the first time in Wales, the proportion of the population stating they had no religion (46.5%) was higher than the proportion identifying as Christian (43.6%). 2.2% of the population identified as Muslim and 1.4% with another religion (other than Christianity or Islam).
- The number of police recorded hate crimes reported to have been motivated by religion increased by 51% between 2020-21 and 2021-22.

## Sexual orientation

- Data from the 2021 Census shows that 3.0% of the Welsh population identified as gay or lesbian, bisexual or another sexuality (other than heterosexual).
- There were 151 same-sex marriages in 2020, whilst same-sex civil partnerships have reduced substantially to around 30 a year.

- The latest National Survey for Wales results available (2022-23) indicate that people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual are about twice as likely to report feeling lonely than others.
- There were 1,329 hate crimes recorded by police in which sexual orientation was considered a motivating factor in 2021-22, increasing by 50% from 884 in the previous year. The proportion of hate crimes with sexual orientation as a motivation factor increased slightly.

## **Socio-economic disadvantage**

- Between 2019-20 and 2021-22, over a fifth of the population (21%) were living in relative income poverty after paying their housing costs.
- In 2022-23, 16% of adults were classed as materially deprived (that is, unable to afford certain things such as keeping the house warm enough, making regular savings, or having a holiday once a year). Over half (56%) of single parents were in material deprivation in 2022-23 and 3% of households said they had received food from a food bank during 2022-23.
- Data on housing affordability shows that for the latest financial years for which data is available (2019-20 to 2021-2022) 18% of households spend 30% or more of their income on housing costs.

## **What is the longer term progress towards the goal?**

There seems to have been limited progress towards achieving the goal, with many of the More Equal Wales indicators and related equality data showing little sign of improvement in the last 5 years.

The recent cost of living crisis and longer term impacts from the pandemic are both likely to have exacerbated inequality for people who were already disadvantaged. However, the ongoing impacts of these events may not yet be fully reflected in recent data trends.

- The national indicator on relative income poverty shows that the percentage of people living in relative income poverty has been relatively stable in Wales for over 17 years.
- Those who are divorced, separated or never married are still more likely to struggle financially, with single parent households most likely to be in material deprivation.
- There remains a gap in educational outcomes of children in school eligible for free school meals and those who are not, with the gap at GCSE level widening in the last 6 years.
- There is a national milestone to eliminate the pay gap for gender, disability and ethnicity by 2050. The gender pay gap has generally been narrowing. Latest data also shows that the ethnicity pay gap has increased but estimates are volatile. On average, ethnic minority employees earn around 16.8% per hour less than White British employees. The disability pay gap, which rose between 2014 and 2019 now appears to be reducing.
- In 2022-23, life satisfaction scores continued to be similar to pre-pandemic levels for all age groups except those aged 16 to 24 years and 25 to 44 years. People aged 16 to 24 are still more likely to report being lonely than those aged 65 and over.
- Other than young people, there are some other groups who are more likely to report feeling lonely. These include disabled people with a limiting long-standing impairment, Black, Asian and minority ethnic people, and people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual.
- Children from some ethnic minority communities continue to achieve better on average in school compared to others, with greater proportions of GCSE entries by Black, Asian and minority ethnic pupils awarded A\*-A and A\*-C grades in summer 2022 than White British pupils.
- Race is still judged to be a motivating factor in nearly two-thirds of all recorded hate crime. There was a rise in recorded race hate crimes in 2021-22, however this rise was lower than those seen for the other motivating factors.
- There is a longer term trend for fewer people to identify their religion as Christian and more people to state they had no religion. These remain the largest categories whilst the proportion of people identifying as Muslim has

remained between 1% and 2%.

- The number of same-sex marriages decreased to 151 in 2020 (from 397 in 2019). However, this decrease is likely due to the pandemic restrictions that were in place for parts of the year.
- Hate crimes recorded by police in which sexual orientation was considered a motivating factor have continued to increase and now account for over one fifth of all recorded hate crimes.
- Employment rates for disabled people remain steady at just under 50%. The employment rate among disabled adults (aged 16 to 64) remains lower than among those who are not disabled.
- Households including someone who is disabled are still more likely to struggle financially.
- In general, educational outcomes for children with special educational needs or additional learning needs have remained consistent.

## Socio-economic disadvantage

Overall poverty rates have remained relatively stable in Wales for over 17 years. The impact of the cost of living crisis will have particularly affected people on low incomes. However, this impact may not yet be fully reflected in the latest available data.

Between 2019-20 and 2021-22, over a fifth of the population (21%) were living in relative income poverty after paying their housing costs.

In December 2021, a national milestone was set to reduce the poverty gap between people in Wales with certain key and protected characteristics (which mean they are most likely to be in poverty) and those without those characteristics by 2035. Income poverty estimates for people in Wales with protected characteristics can be found later in this chapter.

In 2022-23, 16% of adults were classed as materially deprived (that is, unable to afford certain things such as keeping the house warm enough, making regular

savings, or having a holiday once a year). Single parent households are more likely to be materially deprived than other types of households. Over half (56%) of single parents were materially deprived in 2022-23.

Across all tenures, for the latest financial years for which Family Resources Survey data is available (2019-20 to 2021-22) 18% of households spend 30% or more of their income on housing costs. This percentage has been fairly consistent over the period 2011-12 to 2020-21, but varies by housing tenure. Further analysis of this indicator can be found in the A More Prosperous Wales chapter of this report.. The costs of domestic energy use such as gas and electricity are excluded from these housing costs as data on such costs are not collected in the FRS, but latest fuel poverty estimates are provided below.

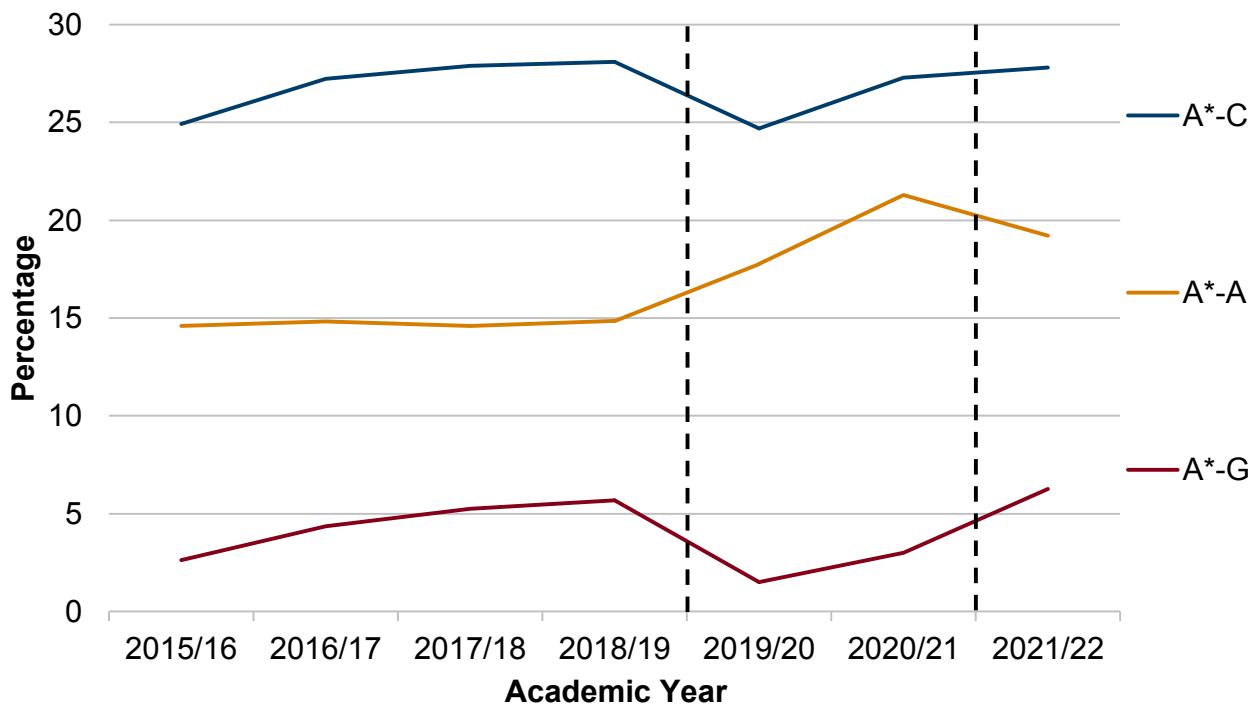
In 2022-23, 3% of households said they had received food from a food bank due to a lack of money in the last 12 months, with a further 3% saying they hadn't but had wanted to.

An estimated 14% of households of Wales were living in fuel poverty in October 2021. Despite interventions to mitigate the impact, up to 45% (614,000) of households could be in fuel poverty following the price cap increase on April 2022.

At GCSE level there remains a gap in educational outcomes of children in school eligible for free school meals and those who are not. The gap in entries achieving A\*-A grades at GCSE has widened in the last three years, with the gap in entries achieving A\*-C grades being relatively stable.



**Figure 4.1: Gap between percentages of pupils eligible for FSM and pupils not eligible for FSM achieving A\*-A, A\*-C and A\*-G at GCSE, 2015/16 to 2021/22 [Note 1]**



Description of Figure 4.1: A line chart showing the gap between percentages of students eligible for free school meals and students not eligible for free school meals achieving A\*-A, A\*-C, and A\*-G at GCSE from 2015/16 to 2020/21. Between 2020/21 and 2021/22, the gap increased for the A\*-C and A\*-G grade ranges but decreased for A\*-A.

Source: Examination results, Welsh Government

[Note 1] Between dashed lines indicate when qualifications were awarded using centre assessed or determined grades.

# Gender

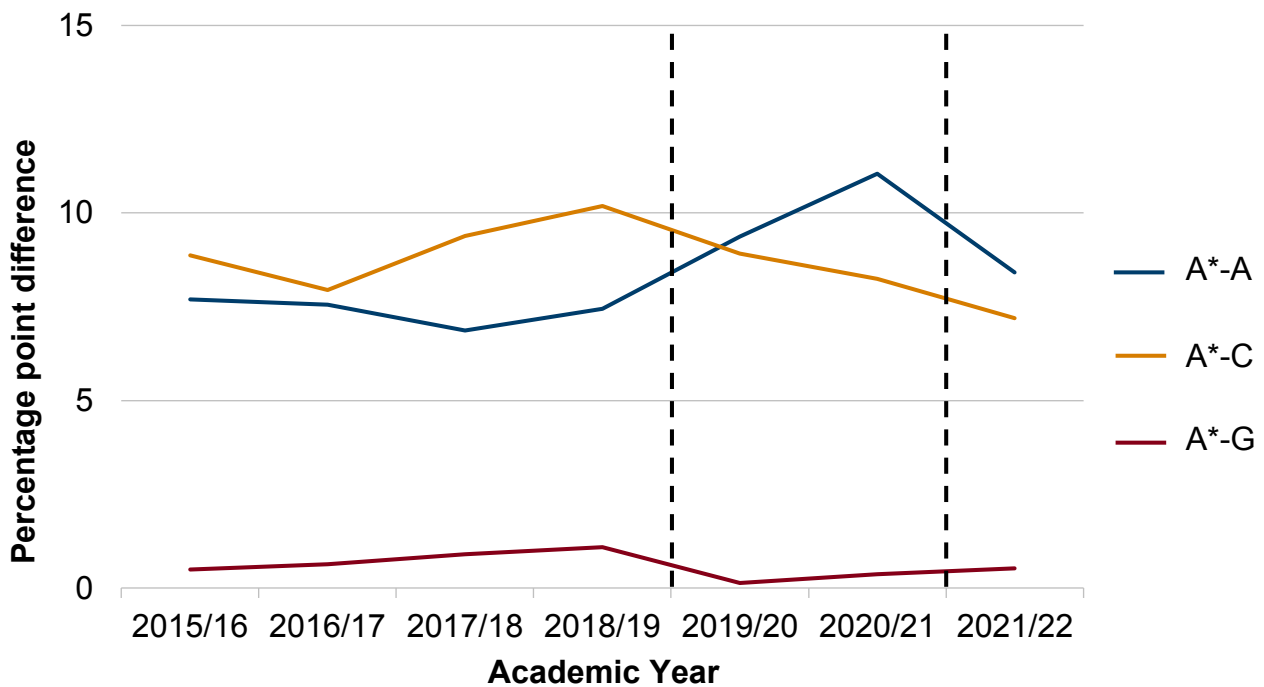
Girls continue to achieve better educational outcomes at GCSE and are more likely to continue in full time education beyond age 16. The gender pay gap increased in Wales in 2022, and employment rates remain lower for women than men.

Life expectancy is still longer for women than for men, but the proportion of life spent in good health is higher for men. For more in-depth information on life expectancy by gender see a healthier Wales chapter.

In 2022-23, mental wellbeing (as measured by the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale for adults) was slightly higher for men than women, with males having a mean score of 48.4 and females having a mean score of 48.1. Suicide rates, however, remain more than three times higher for men than women.

Girls continue to achieve better educational outcomes at GCSE. In summer 2022, girls were awarded more grades at A\*-C than boys. The largest grade disparity was at the A\* and A grades: girls were awarded 4.4 and 4.0 percentage points, respectively, more than boys.

**Figure 4.2: Gap between boys and girls achieving A\*-A, A\*-C and A\*-G at GSCE, 2015/16 to 2021/22 [Note 1]**



Description of Figure 4.2: A line chart showing the gap between percentages of girls and boys achieving A\*-A, A\*-C, and A\*-G at GCSE. The gap at A\*-A peaked in 2020/21 and then decreased between 2020/21 and 2021/22. The gap at A\*-C decreased again between 2020/21 and 2021/22. The gap at A\*-G increased but remains small.

Source: Examination results, Welsh Government

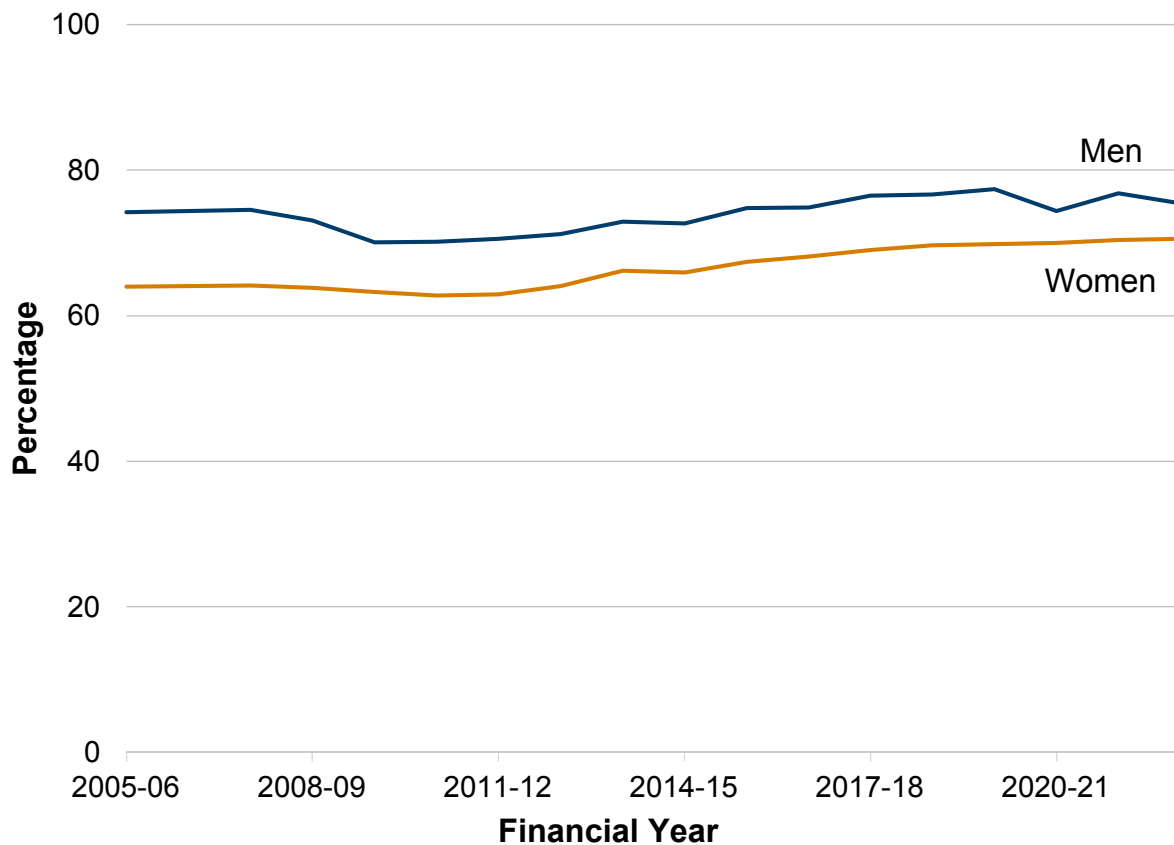
[Note 1] Between dashed lines indicate when qualifications were awarded using centre assessed or determined grades.

A higher proportion of females aged 16 to 18 than males remain in full-time education. This is also the case for those aged 19 to 24 years old.

In terms of the working age population, females are more likely to hold qualifications at or above level 4, whereas there are higher proportions of males than females with no qualifications in age groups up to and including 35 to 49 year olds. However, a higher proportion of females hold no qualifications in the 50 to 59 and 60 to 64 age groups.

Employment rates in Wales are lower for females than for males (70.6% and 75.4% respectively in the year ending March 2023). Economic inactivity rates (excluding students) are higher for females (24.7%) than males (17.8%) over this period. However, this difference is likely driven by caring responsibilities being among the potential reasons for economic inactivity.

**Figure 4.3: Employment rate (percentage of population aged 16 to 64) in Wales by sex and year, 2005 to 2023 (rates for year ending March)**



Description of Figure 4.3: A line chart showing employment rates for those aged between 16 and 64 by sex between 2005 and 2023. The employment rate gap narrowed in 2023 as the employment rate for men decreased by 1.4 percentage points to 75.4%, while the employment rate for women increased slightly to 70.6%.

Source: Welsh Government analysis of the Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics

The gender pay gap, based on median hourly full-time earnings (excluding

overtime), stood at 6.1% in 2022, slightly increasing from the previous year. However, for part-time employees in Wales, women were paid 3.5% more than men on average (an increase of 1.7 percentage points compared to the previous year).

When considering both full time and part time employees, the gender pay gap remains considerably higher at 11.4% in 2022. This is higher than for each of full-time employees and part-time employees, because women fill more part-time jobs, which in comparison with full-time jobs have lower hourly median pay. Of the 11 UK countries and regions where men earn more than women (full-time employees), Wales has the third smallest pay gap.

The real Living Wage is the only UK wage rate based on the cost of living. In 2022, the proportion of women earning a real living wage (63.7%) is much lower than for men (71.6%), again largely reflecting the fact that women are more likely to work part-time and part-time jobs tend to be lower paid.

Following increases between 2016 and 2020, the percentage of men in employment earning a real living wage has fallen in the last two years back to a similar level to 2016 (71.4%). However, the comparative percentage for women in employment has not seen an equivalent decrease to 2016 levels (59.5%)

In 2022-23, a higher percentage of females (19%) relative to males (12%) were classed as materially deprived.

## Age

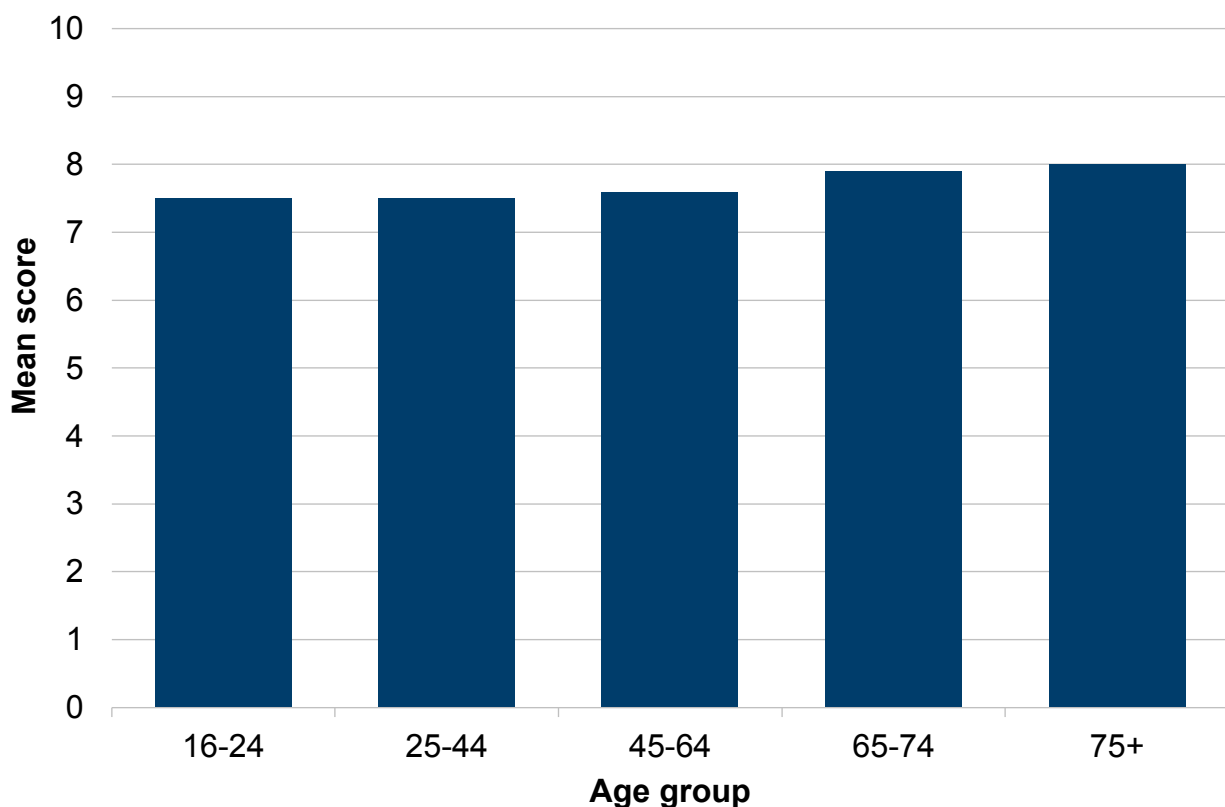
Our satisfaction with life tends to be higher in the older age groups. Relative income poverty is higher in the working population than in pensioner households.

Initial results from the 2021 Census reveal the trend in population ageing has continued, with more people than ever before in older age groups in Wales. The proportion of the population who were aged 65 years or older in March 2021 was

21.3% (up from 18.4% in 2011). The size of the population aged 90 years or older in Wales (29,700, 1.0%) has increased since 2011 (when 25,200 (0.8%) were 90 years or older).

Subjective wellbeing tends to be higher in the older age groups. In 2022-23 the highest average life satisfaction scores are for the 75 and over age group (8.0) and for the 65 to 74 age group (7.9), and the lowest are for those aged 16 to 24 and 25 to 44 (7.5). Life satisfaction for people aged 16 to 24 years and 25 to 44 years remains lower in 2022-23 compared with prior to the pandemic (2019-20), life satisfaction scores for other age groups have broadly returned to pre-pandemic levels.

**Figure 4.4: Life satisfaction by age group, 2022-23**



Description of Figure 4.4: A bar chart showing mean life satisfaction by age

group. Working age groups (16-24, 25-44, 45-64) have lower mean satisfaction scores than those aged 65+. The age group 75+ has the highest mean satisfaction score (8.1).

Source: National Survey for Wales, Welsh Government

Children are the population group most likely to be in relative income poverty. The most recent figures show that this was the case for 28% of children in Wales compared to 18% of pensioners.

In recent years a higher proportion of the working-age population has been in relative poverty than pensioner households.

A national milestone on participation in education and the labour market by 16-24 year olds was set in 2021. Provisional estimates for 2021 show a slight decrease in young people's participation in education and the labour market compared to the previous year.

## Ethnicity

Alongside this year's main report, there is a supplementary report that focuses on ethnicity, for that reason, the bulk of indicator breakdowns by ethnicity will be covered in that report rather than this chapter.

Children from some ethnic groups (for example, Asian and children with a mixed ethnic background) tend to achieve better on average in school compared to others. However, employment rates and average pay remain lower for people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups and people from these groups are more likely to be in relative income poverty.

93.8% of the Welsh population (2.9 million usual residents) identified within the high-level ethnic group category "White" on Census day 2021. This compares with 95.6% in 2011.

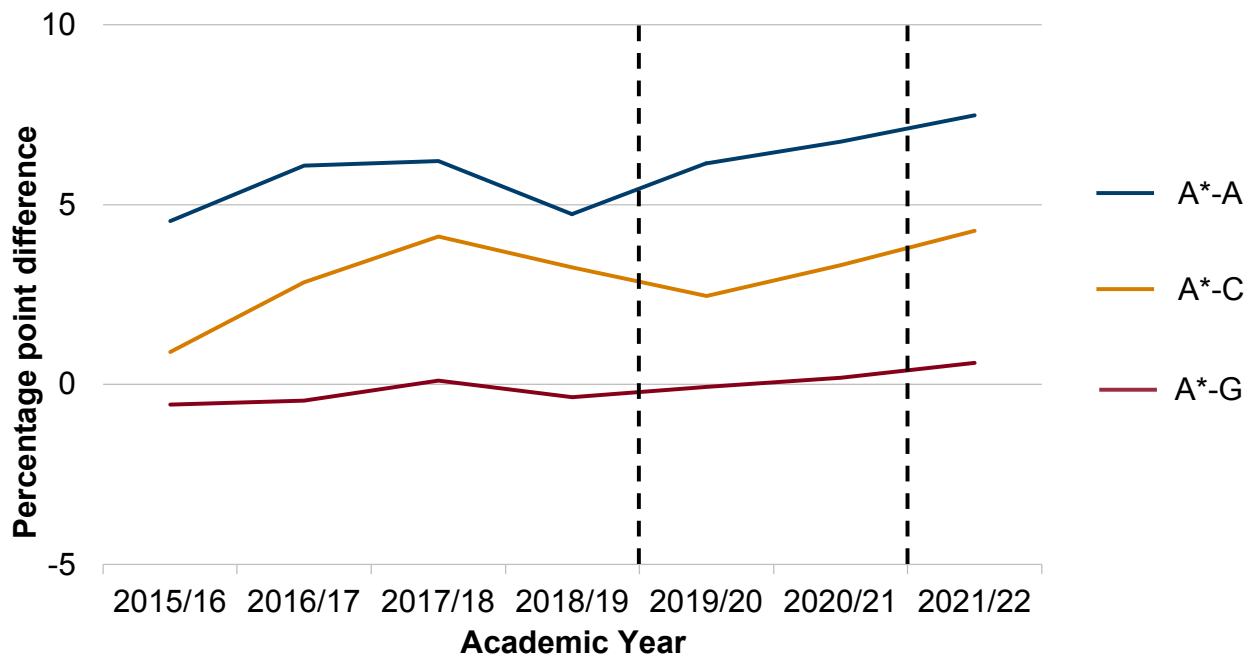


The second largest high-level category in Wales in 2021 was “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British”, with 2.9% of the population (89,000 people) identifying within this category (compared to 2.3% in 2011).

1.6% of the population (49,000 people) in Wales identified within the high-level category “Mixed or multiple ethnic groups”, 0.9% of the population (28,000) identified within the high-level category “Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African” and 0.9% of the population (26,000 people) identified within the high-level category “Other ethnic group” (compared with 1.0%, 0.6% and 0.5% respectively in 2011).

GCSE results for 2021/22 show that 32.6% of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic pupils achieved A\*-A grades compared to 25.1% of White pupils. This gap has been widening since 2015/16 (from 4.5 percentage points in 2015/16 to 7.5 percentage points in 2021/22). The gap in pupils achieving A\*-C grades has also widened (from 0.9 percentage points in 2015/16 to 4.5 percentage points in 2021/22).

**Figure 4.5: Gap between percentage of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic pupils and White pupils achieving A\*-A, A\*-C and A\*-G at GCSE, 2015/16 to 2021/22 [Note 1]**



Description of Figure 4.5: A line chart showing the gap between percentages of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students and White students achieving A\*-A, A\*-C, and A\*-G at GCSE in 2021/22. The gap increased in all three grade ranges between 2020/21 and 2021/22. The difference at A\*-G remains very small.

Source: Examination results, Welsh Government

[Note 1] Between dashed lines indicate when qualifications were awarded using centre assessed or determined grades.

Data from Census 2021 shows that people in the high-level “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British” ethnic group were most likely to hold a qualification at Level 4 or

above (43.9%) whilst those in the high-level “White” ethnic group were the least likely (31.0%).

People who identified as “White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller” were the most likely to hold no qualifications out of all ethnic groups (58.8%), followed by “White: Roma” (31.8%) and “Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British: Bangladeshi” (30.9%).

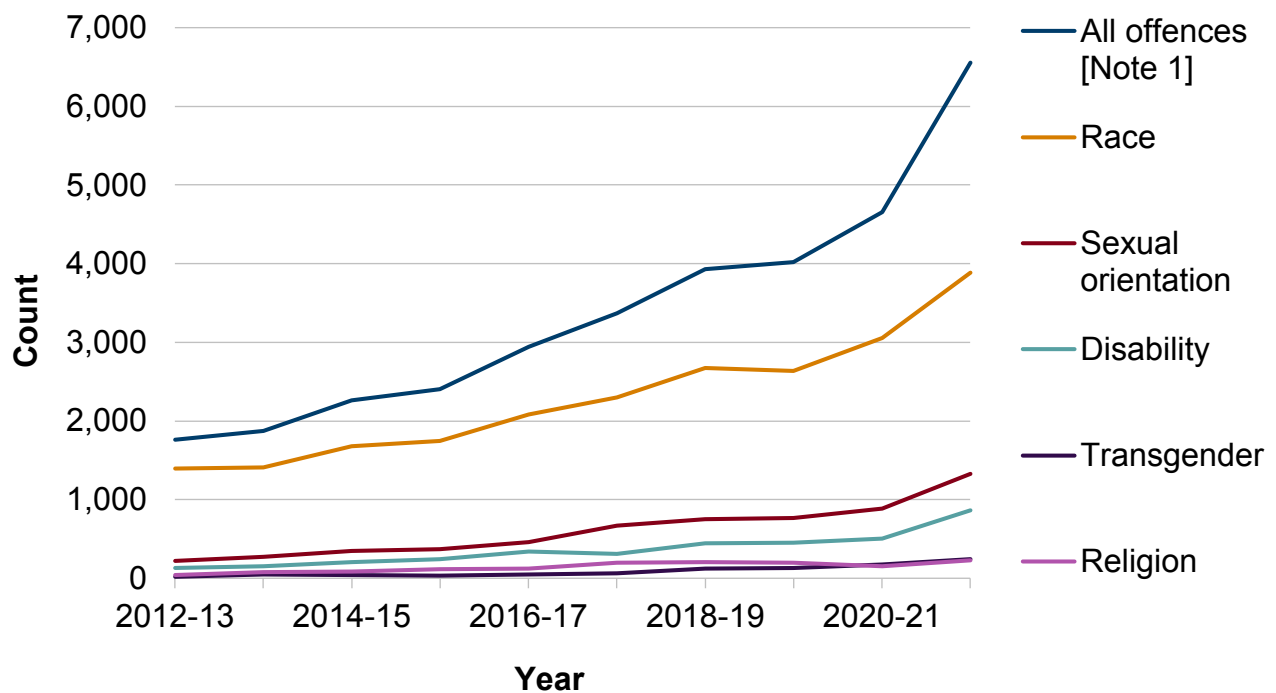
Employment rates (year ending March 2023) among the Welsh population aged 16 to 64 are slightly higher among individuals from a White ethnic background (73.1%) than for individuals from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background (71.4%).

The ethnicity pay difference in Wales was £2.23 (or 16.8%) in 2022. This means that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employees earned, on average £2.23 less per hour than White employees. This compares to an ethnicity pay difference of £0.85 (or 6.9%) in 2021. However, there is particularly high volatility in the ethnicity pay difference data in Wales and therefore short-term changes should be considered alongside longer-term trends where possible.

Being part of an ethnic minority group is linked with a greater likelihood of relative income poverty. For the period 2017-18 to 2021-22 there was a 40% likelihood of people whose head of household comes from an ethnic minority group to be living in relative income poverty. This compares to a 22% likelihood for those whose head of household comes from a White ethnic group.

Race was judged to be a motivating factor in 62% of all hate crimes recorded in Wales in 2021-22, a slightly lower proportion to that in 2020-21. However, numbers of police-recorded race hate crimes increased by 27% in 2021-22 compared with 2020-21.

**Figure 4.6: Hate crime offences in Wales by motivating factor, 2012-13 to 2021-22 [Note 1]**



Description of Figure 4.6: A line chart showing the number of hate crime offences reported in Wales between 2012-13 and 2021-22 by motivating factor. Reported hate crimes increased for all motivations in 2021-22 compared to 2020-21. Race remains the primary motivating factor, accounting for around two thirds of reported crimes.

Source: Home Office

[Note 1] A crime may be flagged with more than one motivating factor. Therefore, the sum of the categories of hate crime is higher than 'all offences'.

Note that data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales for 2018-2020

suggests that only around half of all hate crime incidents come to the attention of the police in England and Wales.

## Religion

On Census day 2021, 1.4 million usual residents in Wales reported that they had “No religion” (46.5% of the population, up from 32.1% in 2011). For the first time, more people reported “No religion” than any single religious affiliation.

43.6% of usual residents described their religion as “Christian” in 2021. This religious affiliation had previously been selected by over half of residents in Wales (57.6%) in the 2011 Census.

The next largest religious affiliation in Wales was “Muslim”, with 2.2% of the population (67,000 usual residents) identifying as “Muslim” in 2021. This was an increase from 1.5% in 2011.

There was little change from 2011 in the proportions of the population identifying with other religious groups included within the tick boxes included on the Census form.

A higher proportion of women than men identified as having a religion (53.9% compared with 46.6%). The proportion of people identifying as having a religion generally increased by age group. However, those aged 15 and under and 16 to 24 were slightly more likely to identify as having a religion than the 25 to 34 age group. The Muslim population has a younger age profile than most other religions in Wales.

Religion was judged to be a motivating factor in 4% of hate crimes recorded in Wales in 2021-22, up from 3% in 2020-21. A total of 227 religious based hate crimes were recorded by police in Wales in 2021-22, 77 more than in 2020-21.

Employment rates for those who identify as Christian or with no religion were broadly similar (at 73.5% and 73.0% respectively) in the year ending March

2023.

## Sexual orientation

A voluntary question on sexual orientation was asked for the first time in Census 2021. Respondents aged 16 and over were asked their sexual orientation, and the different options that they could choose from included “Straight/Heterosexual”, “Gay or Lesbian”, “Bisexual”, and “Other sexual orientation”. If the respondent selected “Other sexual orientation”, they were asked to write in the sexual orientation they identified with.

On Census day 2021, 2.3 million people (89.4% of the population aged 16 years and over) described themselves as “Straight/Heterosexual”. Whereas 38,000 (1.5%) described themselves as “Gay or Lesbian” and 32,000 (1.2%) described themselves as “Bisexual”. A further 7,000 (0.3%) wrote in a different sexual orientation.

Overall, 77,000 usual residents in Wales (3.0% of the population aged 16 or over) selected an LGB+ sexual orientation in 2021.

The remaining 194,000 people aged 16 years and over (7.6%) did not answer the question on sexual orientation.

The number of same-sex marriages decreased in 2020 (to 151 from 397 in 2019). However, this decrease is likely due to the pandemic restrictions that were in place for parts of the year. Same-sex marriages continue to be more common than same-sex civil partnerships.

In 2022-23 a lower proportion of adults who identified as heterosexual were in material deprivation (15%) compared with those who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual (25%).

The latest National Survey for Wales results available (2022-23) indicate that people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual are about twice as likely to report feeling

lonely than others.

Sexual orientation was judged to be a motivating factor in 1,329 hate crimes recorded by police in Wales in 2021-22, up 50% from 884 in 2020-21. This represents 21% of all recorded hate crimes, a slightly higher proportion than in recent years.

## Gender identity

A voluntary question on gender identity was asked for the first time in Census 2021. Respondents aged 16 and over were also asked “Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?” and had the option of selecting either “Yes” or selecting “No” and writing in their gender identity.

There were responses from 2.4 million people in Wales (93.7% of the population aged 16 years and over) to this question.

93.3% of respondents aged 16 years and over answered “Yes”, indicating that their gender identity was the same as their sex registered at birth.

More than 10,000 people (0.4%) answered “No”, indicating that their gender identity was different from their sex registered at birth.

1,900 people identified as a trans man, 1,900 people identified as a trans woman, and 1,500 people identified as non-binary. 4,000 people answered “No” but did not provide a write-in response.

The School Health Research Network’s Student Health and Wellbeing survey collects data on mental wellbeing for 11-16 year olds, as measured by the Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale. Breakdowns by gender showed those self-identifying as neither a boy nor a girl reported the lowest mental wellbeing, and girls reported lower mental wellbeing than boys.

Transgender identity was judged to be a motivating factor in 247 hate crimes in

Wales in 2021-22, equivalent to 4% of all hate crime recorded in Wales. This is an increase of 43% (74 more recorded crimes) compared with 2020-21.

## Disability

Whilst over time employment rates for disabled people have been rising, a disability pay gap remains and households including someone who is disabled are still more likely to struggle financially.

As in 2011, Census 2021 asked usual residents to report if they had a long-term health condition or illness, lasting or expected to last 12 months or more. However, the question was worded slightly differently from 2011, to collect data that more closely aligned with the definition of disability in the Equality Act (2010). Respondents who reported a long-term physical or mental health condition and whose day-to-day activities are limited were defined as disabled.

In 2021, the proportion of disabled people in Wales was 21.1% (670,000 people). This proportion has decreased (by 2.3 percentage points) from 2011, when it was 23.4% (696,000 people).

The proportion of non-disabled people has increased (78.9%, 2.44 million) from 76.6% (2.37 million) in 2011.

National Survey for Wales data (2022-23) shows that life satisfaction was generally lower for people aged 16+ with a limiting long-standing illness or disability (their mean score was 7.0) than for those without (8.0).

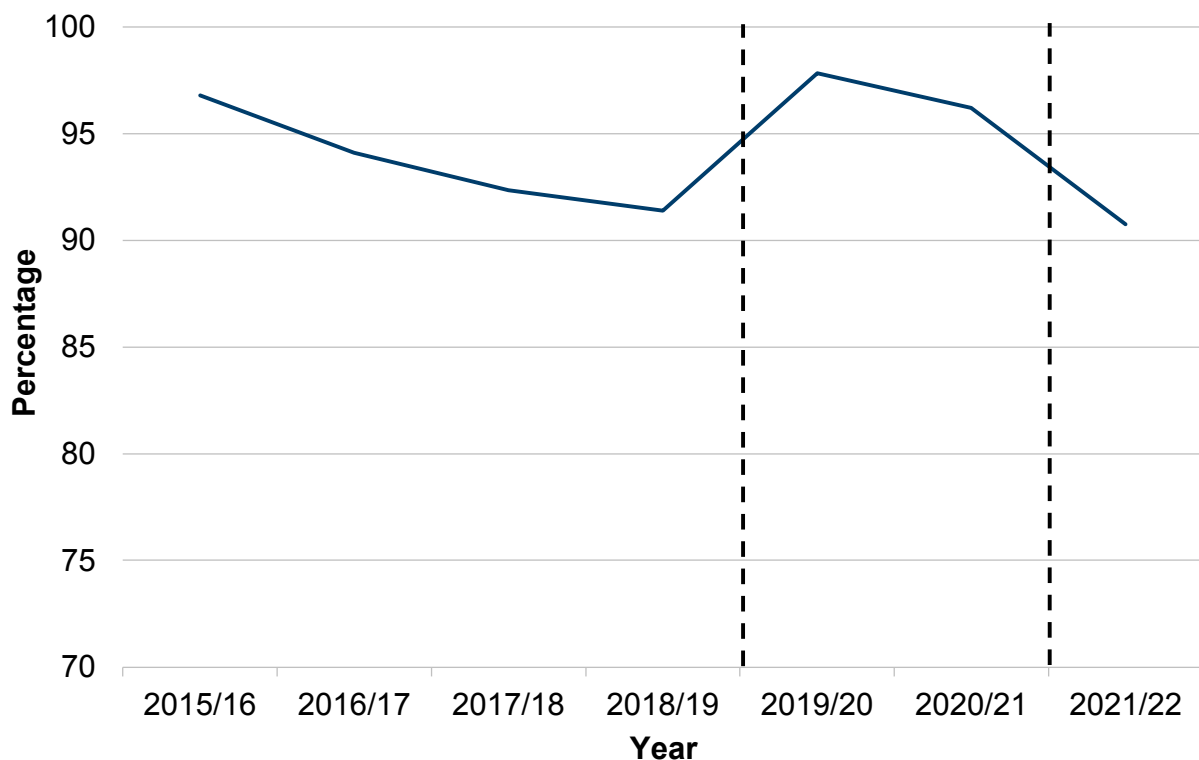
National Survey for Wales data (2022-23) also indicates that disabled adults or those with a limiting long-standing illness are much more likely to say they feel lonely most or all of the time (22%) compared with those without such illnesses or disabilities (7%).

The educational outcomes of pupils with special educational needs or additional learning needs have fluctuated over the past 8 years but broadly mirror the



pattern seen in all pupils. In 2021/22, 90% of GCSE entries by pupils in year 11 with a special educational need were awarded a grade at A\* to G, down from 96% in 2020/21.

**Figure 4.7: Percentage of Pupils with SEN or ALN provision achieving A\*-G in Key Stage 4, for pupils in year 11 in all subjects, 2015/16 to 2021/22 [Note 1] [Note 2]**



Description of Figure 4.7: A line chart showing the percentage of students with a statement of special educational need achieving A\*-G at GCSE in 2021/22. After a steep increase in 2019/20, the percentage decreased slightly in 2020/21 and then decreased further in 2021/22 to the lowest value in the time series.

Source: [Examination results](#), Welsh Government

[Note 1] Chart axis does not start at zero.

[Note 2] Between dashed lines indicate when qualifications were awarded using centre assessed or determined grades.

Of the working-age population, disabled people (16%) are more likely to have no qualifications than non-disabled people (5%) and are less likely to hold qualifications above level 2.

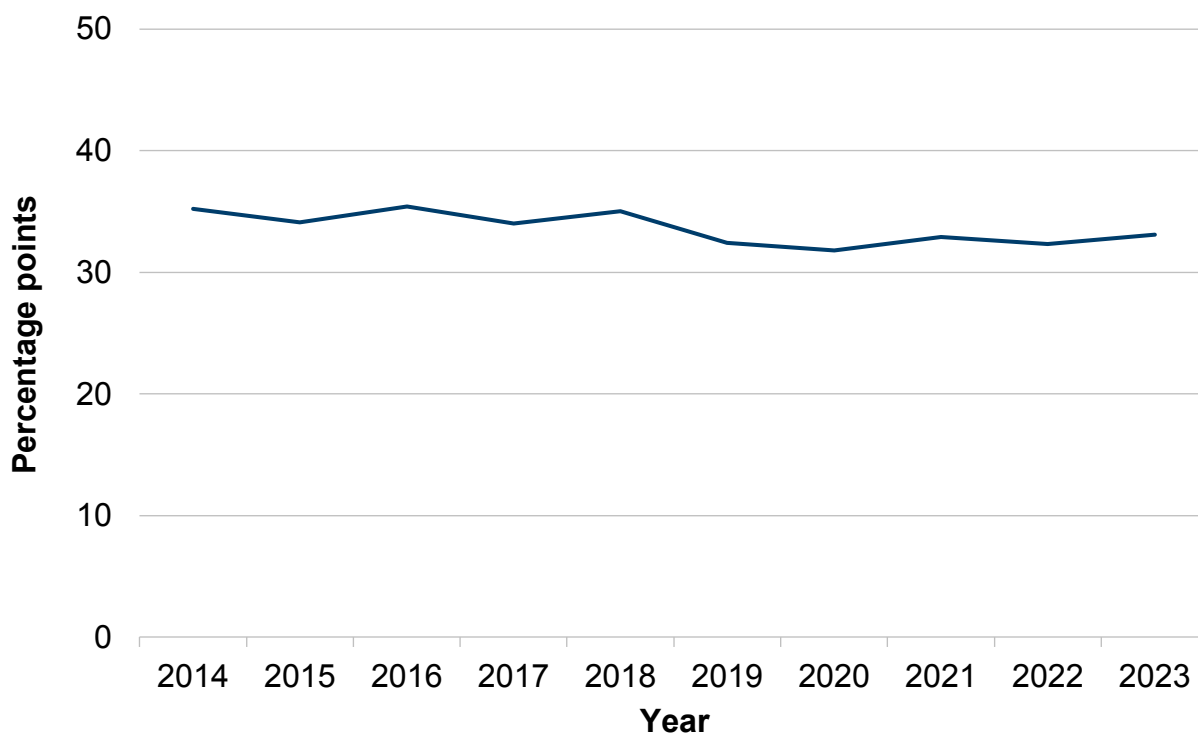
In the latest period (2019-20 to 2021-22), 31% of children who lived in a household where there was someone who was disabled were in relative income poverty compared with 26% in households where no-one was disabled. Similarly, 28% of working-age adults who lived in a household where there was someone who was disabled were in relative income poverty compared with 16% of those who lived in a household where no-one was disabled.

In 2022-23, disabled people or people with a limiting long-standing illness were more than twice as likely to live in a household in material deprivation than those who are not disabled. One in four disabled people or people with a limiting long-standing illness (25%) lived in a household in material deprivation compared with 11% of people who were not disabled.

For the year ending 31 March 2023 the employment rate among disabled people aged 16-64 in Wales was 49.1% whilst the rate for people who are not disabled was 82.2%. The disability employment gap for 2023, of 33.1 percentage points, is reduced compared to 7 years ago when it was 35.4 percentage points.

The disability pay difference in Wales was £1.32 (9.7%) in 2022. This means that disabled people in Wales earned, on average, £1.32 less per hour than non-disabled people. The difference has continued to steadily decrease from a peak of 15.1% in 2019.

**Figure 4.8: Disability employment rate gap, year ending 31 March 2016 to year ending 31 March 2023**



Description of Figure 4.8: A bar chart showing the disability employment rate gap for the years ending 31 March 2016 to 2023. Following a decrease between 2018 and 2019, the gap has remained broadly stable between 32 and 33 percentage points.

Source: Summary of economic activity in Wales by year and disabled status, from April 2013, StatsWales

Whether someone was disabled was judged to be a motivating factor in 14% of hate crimes recorded in Wales in 2021-22, a higher proportion compared to recent years. The Crime Survey for England and Wales found that in the year ending March 2022, a significantly higher proportion of disabled adults in England and Wales experienced domestic abuse (10.3%), compared to non-disabled adults (4.0%).

# Marital status

Being married is associated with higher satisfaction with life and a lower likelihood of being materially deprived. Single parent households continue to face challenges, being more likely to be materially deprived than other types of households.

There were 4,039 marriages formed in Wales in 2020, down from 2019 (11,699). This decrease was likely due to the pandemic restrictions that were in place for parts of the year. The majority of marriages involved opposite-sex couples (96.3%) with 151 marriages between same-sex couples in Wales, with 60% (90) of these between female couples.

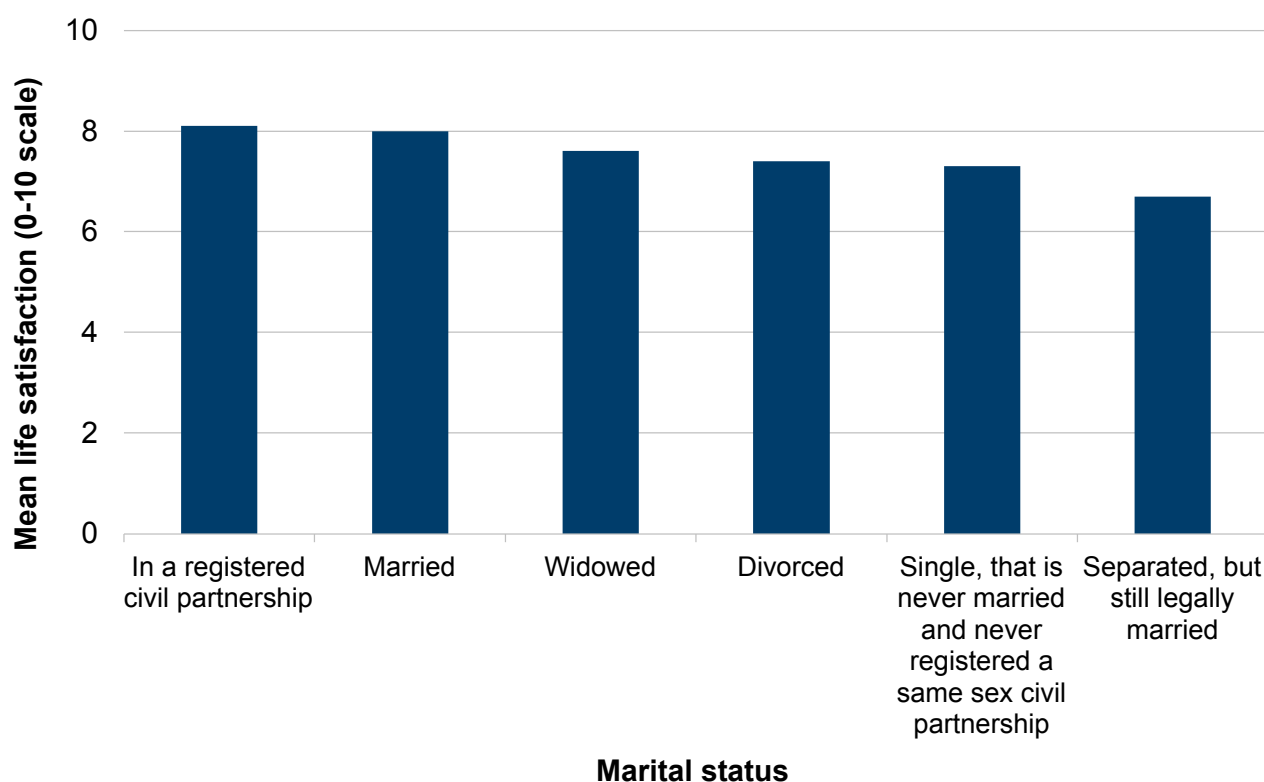
In 2021, there were 236 opposite-sex civil partnerships and 28 same-sex civil partnerships formed in Wales. This is the second year for which civil partnerships between opposite-sex couples have been reported following the change in legislation to extend civil partnerships to opposite-sex couples from 31 December 2019.

In 2022-23, 22% of divorced adults and 36% of adults who are separated (but still legally married) were in material deprivation compared with 10% of adults who were married and 10% who were widowed. Over half (56%) of single parents were materially deprived.

National Survey for Wales results for 2022-23 confirmed that a higher proportion of the married population report a high satisfaction with life, feeling that the things they do in life are worthwhile and high levels of happiness compared to adults that have never married, the separated, divorced, or widowed.

In 2022-23, people who were married were least likely to report being lonely (8%), while people who were separated but legally married were the most likely (21%). People who were single (that is, had never been married or registered in a civil partnership), divorced, or widowed were also more likely to report loneliness than people who were married (17%, 17% and 14% respectively).

**Figure 4.9: Life Satisfaction by marital status, 2022-23**



Description of Figure 4.9: A bar graph showing mean life satisfaction score by marital status in 2022-23. Those who are married or in a civil partnership have the highest mean scores (8.0 and 8.1 respectively) while those who are separated but still legally married have the lowest (6.7). Those who are single, divorced or widowed have similar life satisfaction scores.

Source: National Survey for Wales

Of those aged between 16 and 64, people who were married or in a civil partnership had the highest employment rates (79.3%) in 2022-23 compared to people who were separated or divorced (69.7%), single (68.3%) or widowed (59.5%). Employment rates are generally lower for women than for men and this is particularly the case for women who are married or in a civil partnership. The employment rate in 2022-23 for married men was 84.8% compared to 74.2% for

married women.

## Further reading

**Is Wales Fairer? (2018) (Equality and Human Rights Commission)**

**Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Units Strategy**

**Report of the 2021/22 School Health Research Network Student Health and Wellbeing Survey (School Health Research Network)**

**Centre for Equality and Inclusion (Office for National Statistics), GSS Equalities Data Navigator Tool**

**GSS Equalities Data Navigator Tool (GSS)**

**Cost of living and depression in adults, Great Britain (Office for National Statistics)**

**Sexual orientation, England and Wales: Census 2021 (Office for National Statistics)**

**National LGBT Survey 2017 Data viewer (Government Equalities Office)**

**Gender identity, England and Wales: Census 2021 (Office for National Statistics)**

**Disabled people's experiences with activities, good and services, UK (Office for National Statistics)**

## Data sources

The following data sources were used in this narrative.

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**Ethnic group, national identity, language and religion in Wales (Census 2021)**

**Sexual orientation and gender identity in Wales (Census 2021)**

**Health, disability and provision of unpaid care in Wales (Census 2021)**

**Ethnic group differences in health, housing, education and economic status in Wales (Census 2021)**

**National Survey for Wales**, on life satisfaction, sense of community, feeling of safety, material deprivation, use of food banks, mental wellbeing

**Population and household estimates for Wales (Census 2021)**

## **Health and wellbeing**

**Comparing findings from the 2019 and 2021 School Health Research Network Student Health and Wellbeing survey (Student Health Research Network)**

**Screening Division Inequities Report 2020-21 (Public Health Wales)**

## **Poverty**

**Relative income poverty**

**National Survey for Wales (StatsWales)**

**Fuel poverty**

## **Mortality**

[Health state life expectancies \(Office for National Statistics\)](#)

[Suicides in England and Wales \(Office for National Statistics\)](#)

## **Education**

[Exam results](#)

[Participation of young people in education and the labour market](#)

[Level of highest qualification held by working age adults](#)

## **Labour market**

[Labour market statistics \(Annual Population Survey\)](#)

[Participation in the Labour Market \(StatsWales\)](#)

## **Pay gaps**

[Gender Pay Gap \(StatsWales\)](#)

[Disability and ethnicity pay difference in Wales 2014 to 2022](#)

## **Marriages and Civil Partnerships**

[Marriages in England and Wales \(Office for National Statistics\)](#)



## Crime and justice

[Hate Crime, England and Wales \(Home Office\)](#)

[Hate Crime reporting rates \(Crime Survey for England and Wales\)](#)

## A Wales of cohesive communities

### The goal for a Wales of cohesive communities

Author: Dr Steven Marshall

A Wales of cohesive communities: Attractive, viable, safe and well-connected communities.

### What have we learnt from the data in the last year?

Most of the indicators from the National Survey for Wales relating to cohesive communities have not been updated this year. The general point on change remains in that the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic had widespread effects on the lives of people in Wales as elsewhere which affected the indicators in the chapter in different ways.

Volunteering increased during the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2022-23 results show this higher level has been maintained (from 26% in 2019-20, to 29% in 2021-22 and 30% in 2022-23).

Loneliness, based on a composite of six separate measures, has remained largely the same over the last three years (2020-21 to 2022-23) and lower than

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2019-20. Within the overall measure, the percentage that 'miss having people around' has followed a different pattern with a substantially increased percentage in 2020-21 and 2021-22 but with 2022-23 back to 2019-20 levels.

There was little change this year in the number of households that approached their local authority for support as they were threatened with homelessness. But there was an increase in the number of households assessed as homeless and the number of households in temporary accommodation in 2022-23 compared to 2021-22.

Data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (excluding fraud) in 2022-23 shows 6.6% of adults were victims of crime and 2.5% were victims of personal crime. Due to changes in how the survey was run during the pandemic, this data cannot be compared to the previous year.

## What is the longer term progress towards the goal?

Some of the indicators for cohesive communities are still relatively recent measures collected in the National Survey for Wales and it is therefore difficult to comment confidently on changes over time. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as changes in the way the National Survey is collected, also affect comparability with earlier data. But with that in mind, a number of measures related to community cohesion and engagement seem to have experienced positive change during the 2020s.

- Community cohesion indicators had been broadly stable since first collected in 2012 until a sizeable increase in 2020-21. The same year also saw a positive step change in people feeling they can influence local decisions. Whether the increases in 2020-21 and 2021-22 will be sustained will not become clear until data is available for a number of future years.
- There have been slight improvements over the long term in people's satisfaction with their local area. People feeling safe after dark has remained

relatively constant since first asked in 2016-17 and stood at 66% in 2021-22.

- The percentage of people volunteering had been falling but is another indicator that has seen increases in the 2020s. The national milestone to have 30% of people volunteering has been reached.
- Most of the indicators within this goal have had detailed analysis carried out to determine the factors that are linked with differences in the level of the indicator. There are connections between the different measures of cohesive communities, both the other national indicators as well as other measures collected in the National Survey related to this topic (for example, being satisfied with the services and facilities in the local area). The associations can easily work in either direction, for example, lonely people may be less likely to volunteer but also volunteering may help to reduce loneliness.
- Unlike earlier analysis, the most recent analysis based on the 2021-22 National survey results shows that age, health and deprivation are important for some but not all of the indicators.
- People feel that crime has increased a lot in recent years, although the picture from recorded crime is more mixed. During the COVID-19 pandemic there was a decrease in most types of crime.
- It is not yet clear if there are any sustained behaviour changes as a result of the pandemic that may impact on the long term progress towards the goal.

## Community cohesion

Nearly two-thirds of adults agreed with all three measures of community cohesion (belonging to the local area, people from different backgrounds getting on well together, and treating each other with respect and consideration) in 2021-22 when data on this indicator was last collected by the National Survey for Wales. This is an increase on pre-pandemic years and a slight drop since 2020-21.

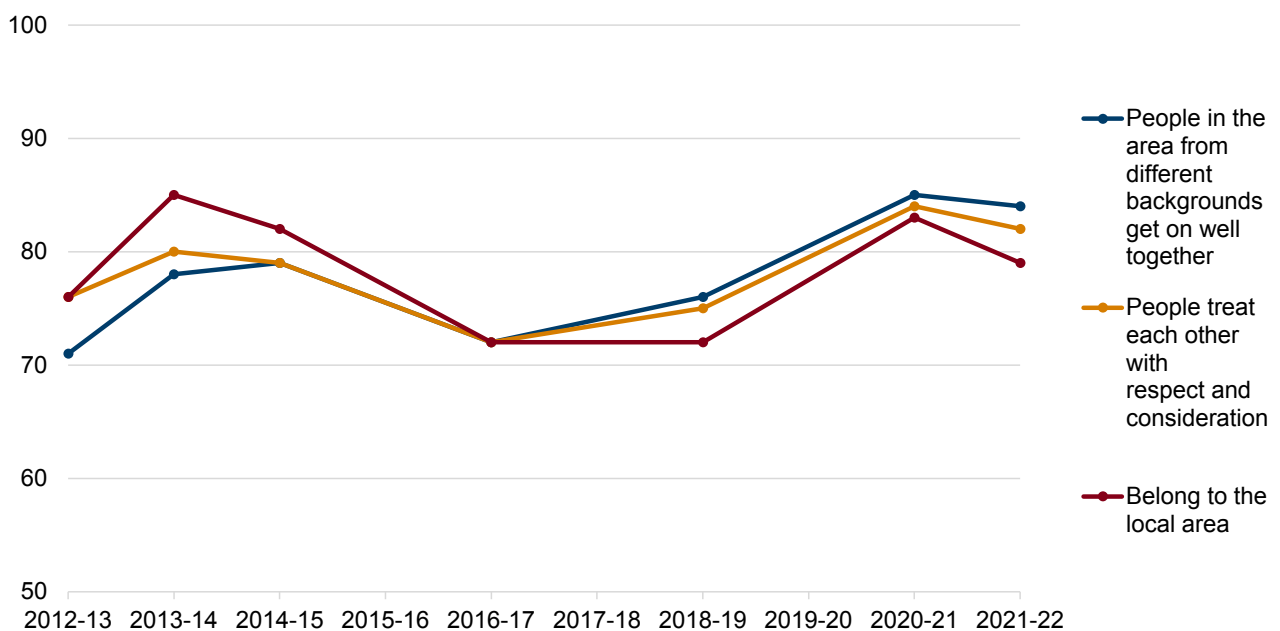
In 2021-22, 64% of people agreed with all three statements about their local area that make up the national indicator, while 95% agreed with at least one statement.

These figures have been broadly stable since they were first collected in 2012 until the sizeable increase in 2020-21. Whether the increases in 2020-21 and 2021-22 are a short-term effect of the pandemic (with communities coming together locally) and whether they will be sustained or partly sustained will not become clear until data is available for a number of future years.

There is no statistically significant difference between men and women on either the individual measures or agreeing with all three statements.

There is a clear trend towards increased community cohesion as deprivation in the area falls.

**Figure 5.1: Percentage of people agreeing with statements about their local area, by year [Note 1]**



Description of Figure 5.1: Bar chart showing percentage of people who agree with three statements about their local area from 2012-13 until 2021-22.

Source: National Survey for Wales

[Note 1] The years 2015-16, 2017-18 and 2019-20 have no data associated with them.

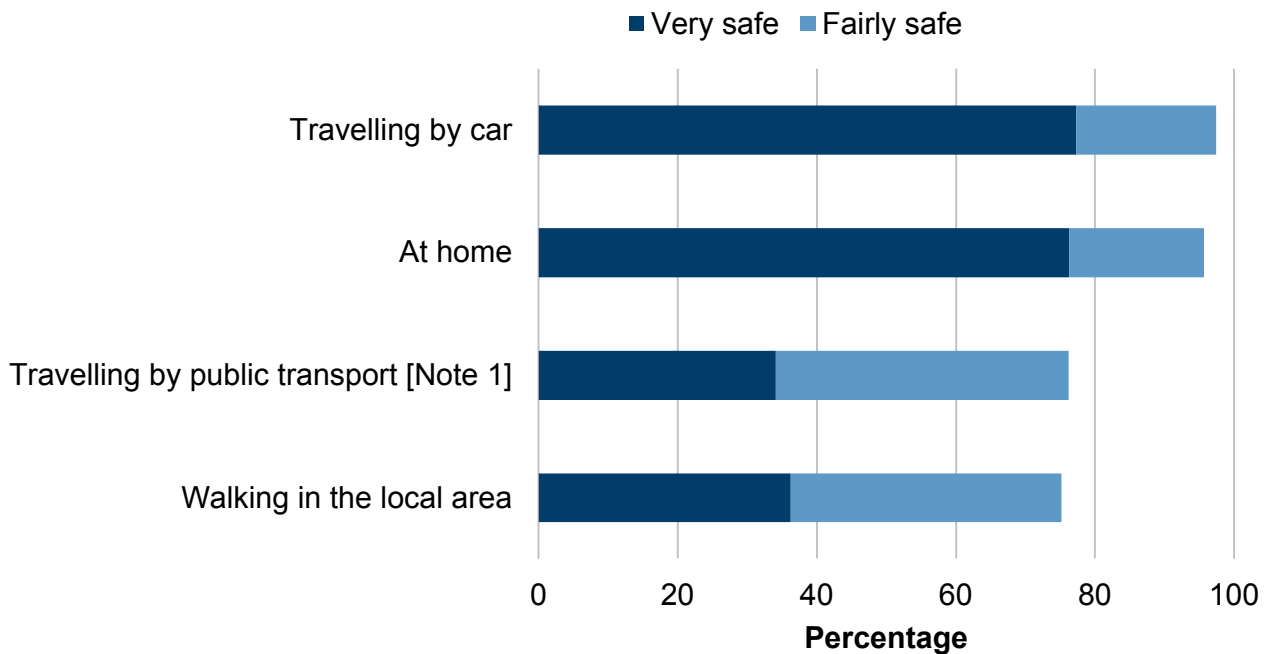
## Feeling safe after dark

Two-thirds of adults feel safe in various situations after dark.

The national indicator is the percentage of people that agreed with four statements about feeling safe after dark: at home, walking in their local area, travelling by public transport or travelling by car. In 2021-22, 66% of people felt safe in all four situations. These results have remained relatively constant across the years since first asked in 2016-17.

Men feel safer (81%) than women (51%). There is a clear trend towards an increased feeling of safety as deprivation in the area falls, with 72% of people who live in the least deprived areas feeling safe in all situations compared with 54% of people who live in the most deprived areas.

**Figure 5.2: Percentage of people agreeing with statements about feeling safe after dark, 2021-22**



Description of Figure 5.2: A bar chart showing the percentage of people agreeing with statements about feeling safe after dark in 2021-22. 96% felt safe at home, 97% felt safe travelling by car, 75% felt safe walking in the local area and 76% felt safe travelling by public transport.

Source: National Survey for Wales

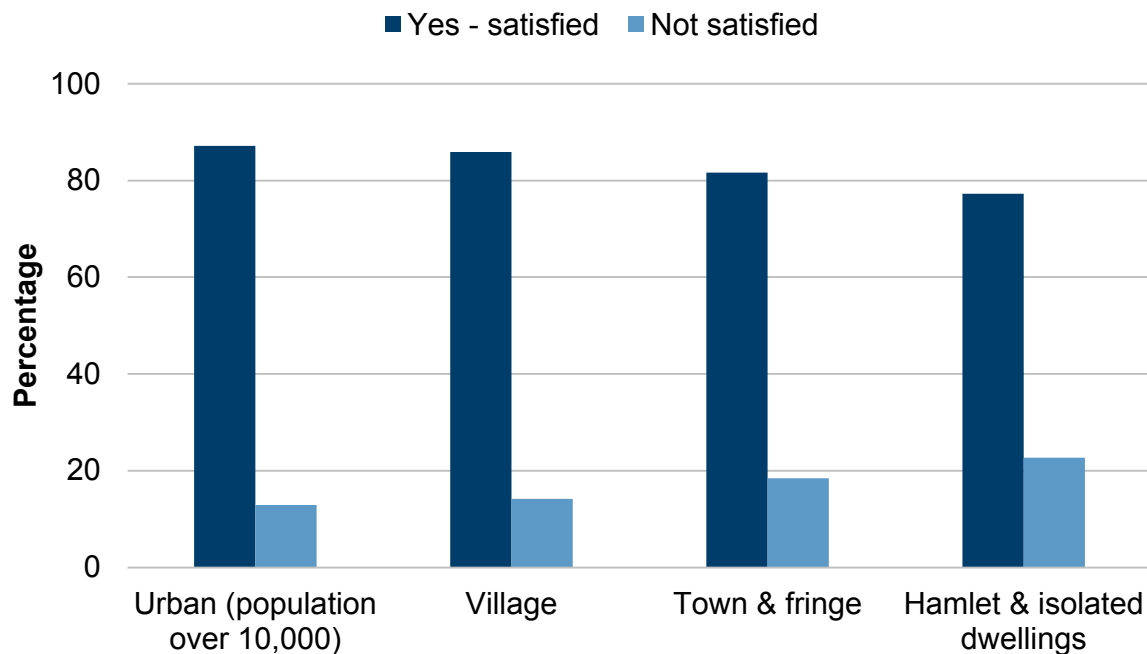
[Note 1] 27% of people who were asked said 'Don't know' to the question about public transport and were excluded from the analysis. As a result, the proportion of people feeling safe in all 4 situations is lower than the individual results would suggest.

# Satisfaction with local area

Overall, according to the 2021-22 National Survey, 89% of people say they are satisfied with their local area as a place to live, slightly higher than the results in 2020-21, 2018-19 and 2016-17.

86% of people were satisfied that they were able to get to or access the services they need, slightly down on 2020-21 but an increase since 2018-19 (83%). The latest slight fall was not statistically significant. This varied by the type of area with a significantly lower percentage of people from rural areas having a good access to services and facilities compared to those from urban areas (83% vs 87%). Unsurprisingly, occupants of hamlets and isolated buildings were the least satisfied with the access to services and facilities, with only 77% showing as satisfied on this indicator.

**Figure 5.3: Access to good services and facilities by area, 2021-22**



Description of Figure 5.3: Bar chart showing percentage of people who are satisfied with their access to services and facilities. 87% of people in urban areas are satisfied compared with 77% of people who live in hamlets and isolated dwellings.

Source: National Survey for Wales

Fewer than 60% of people (in 2021-22) said that municipal services such as community centres, secondary schools, libraries and youth or sports clubs were available in their local area. In contrast, over 80% said public transport links, shops and pubs were all within a 15 to 20 minute walk from their home.

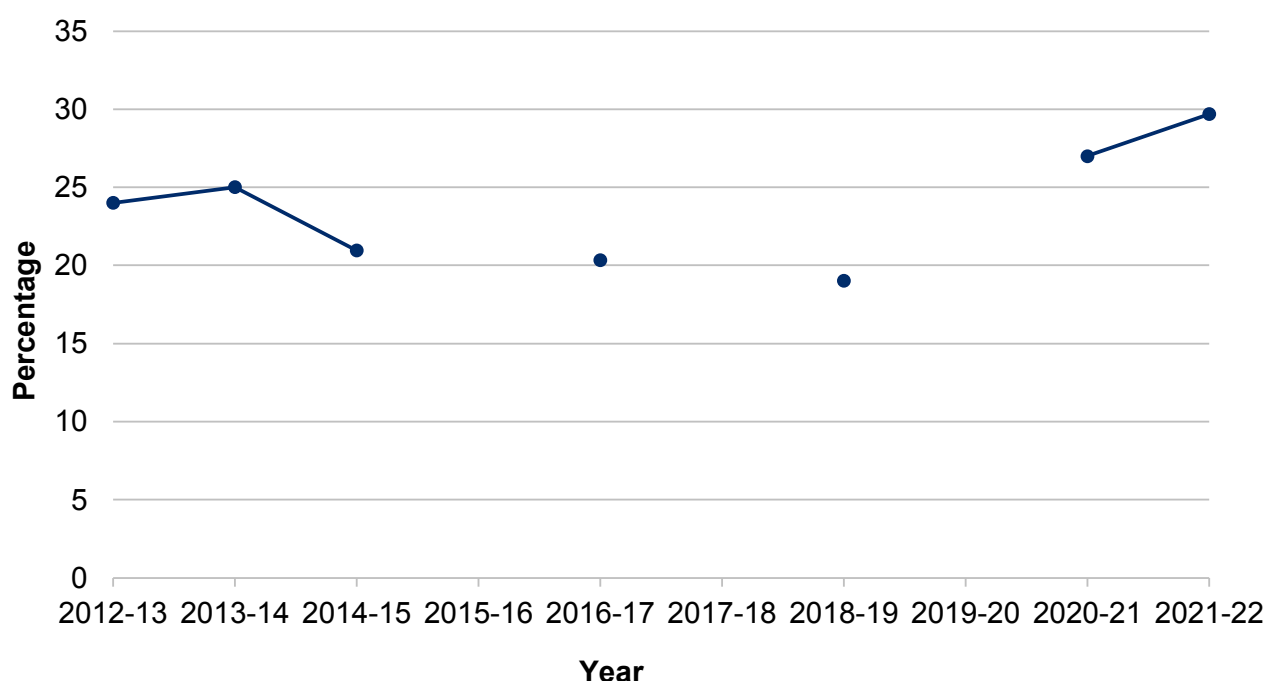


# Influencing local decisions

More people now feel they can influence local decisions.

In 2021-22, 30% of people felt that they could influence decisions affecting their local area compared with 26% in 2020-21 and 19% in 2018-19. This is a marked increase since before 2020 and may reflect real change as a direct result of the pandemic, but it requires monitoring in future survey years.

**Figure 5.4: Percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions affecting local area, 2012–13 to 2021-22**



Description of Figure 5.4: Bar chart showing the percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions affecting their local area. In 2021-22, 30% reported they felt they could influence decisions, this compares with 19% in 2018-19. The 2021-22 result is higher than in all years since first asked in 2012-13.

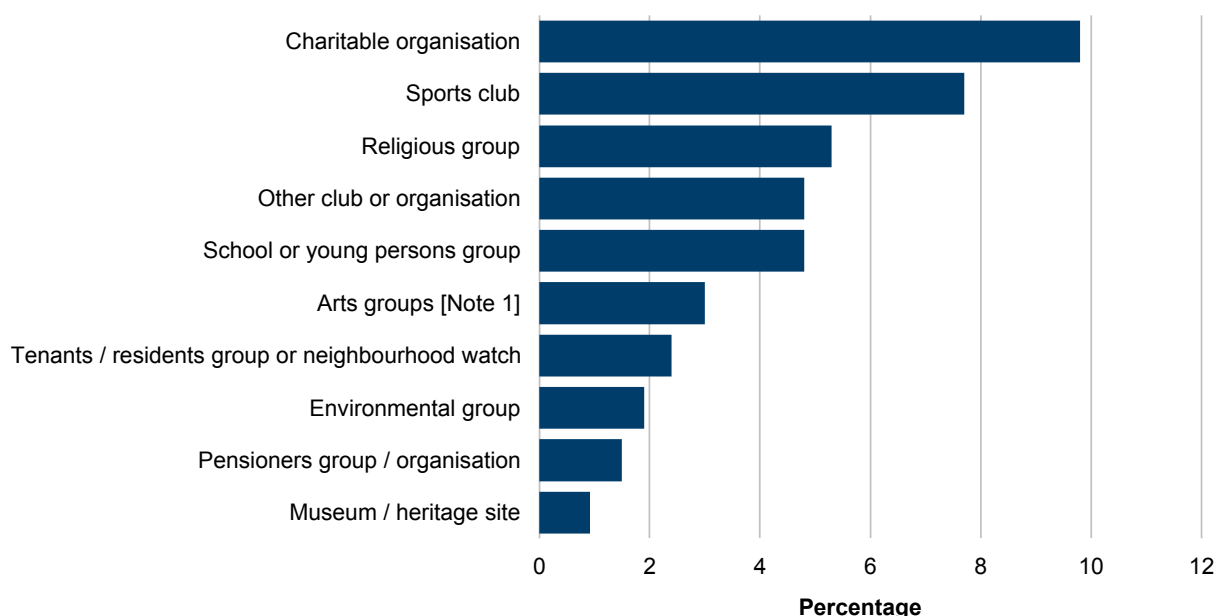
Source: National Survey for Wales

## Volunteering

Results from online data collected as part of the National Survey 2022-23 show that 30% of people say they volunteer for clubs or organisations. This compares with 26% in 2019-20 (when the survey took place face-to-face) and 29% in 2021-22 (when the volunteering questions were asked as part of the online module for the first time). In all years people most commonly volunteered for charities and sports clubs.

Social interaction has been shown to be beneficial to personal wellbeing and volunteering is an aspect of social interaction that has proven positive benefits in terms of both health and wellbeing.

**Figure 5.5: Percentage of people volunteering by type of organisation, 2022-23**



Description of Figure 5.5: Bar chart showing the percentage of people volunteering, by type of organisation, in 2022-23. People are most likely to volunteer for charitable organisations (10%), or sports clubs (8%).

Source: National Survey for Wales

The national milestone for the volunteering indicator is to “increase the percentage of people who volunteer by 10% by 2050, demonstrating Wales’s status as a volunteering nation”. This means reaching a figure of 30% by 2050. This milestone has been met in 2022-23 but, with the uncertainty around how sustainable the increases seen during the COVID-19 pandemic will be, it is still not clear if this level will be maintained.

## Loneliness

The National Survey collects data using the De Jong Gierveld loneliness scale which covers both emotional and social loneliness.

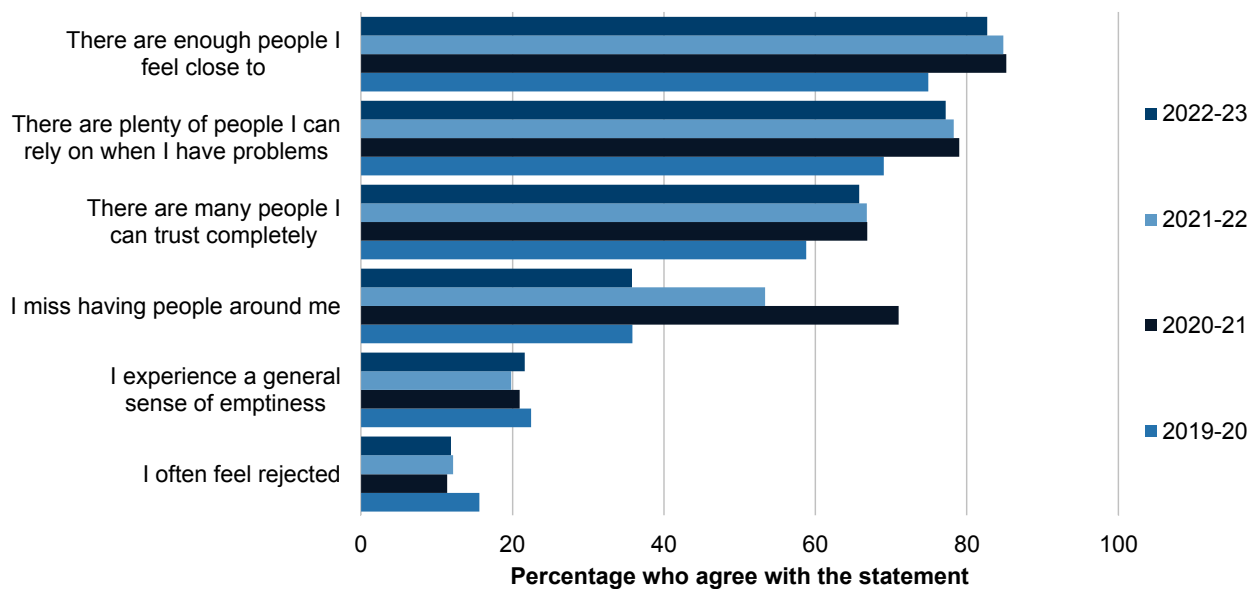
In 2022-23, based on all six measures, 13% of people in Wales were found to be lonely, the same as in the past 2 years (2021-22 and 2020-21) and lower than in 2019-20. However, there are some marked variations in the percentage of people who say they feel lonely in each of the individual measures:

- In 2022-23, 36% of people said they missed having people around which is the same as in 2019-20. However, this was higher in the years between these dates during the COVID-19 pandemic with 53% in 2021-22 and a peak of 71% in 2020-21.
- The percentage of people who report that they have people they can trust completely increased from 59% in 2019-20 to 67% in 2020-21. This was maintained in 2021-22 and 2022-23.
- From 2019-20 to 2021-22 there were increases in the percentage of people who said they had enough people they felt close to, as well as in the percentage having enough people they could rely on. The figures for

2022-23 at 83% and 77% respectively, were slightly lower but not a statistically significant change from 2020-21.

- The most recent results (2022-23) from the National Survey for Wales suggest that younger adults (aged 16 to 44) are more likely to feel lonely than those aged 65 and above.

**Figure 5.6: Percentage of people feeling lonely by reason and year**



Description of Figure 5.6: Bar chart showing the results for 2019-20 to 2022-23 and the six questions asked to create the measure of loneliness. Overall, the responses to the statements show that people are less lonely in 2022-23 compared with 2019-20.

Source: National Survey for Wales

## Digital exclusion

A new national indicator was set in 2021 which will measure the status of digital inclusion. The definition for this indicator will be informed by the result of ongoing research on a minimum digital living standard commissioned by Welsh Government and undertaken by the University of Liverpool.

In the meantime, results from the National Survey in 2022-23 show that 93% of adults personally use the internet at home, work or elsewhere, which remains unchanged from last year. The survey currently also asks questions about digital activity and the skills people have. These are grouped into 5 types of skill:

- Handling information and content
- Communicating
- Transacting
- Problem solving
- Being safe and legal online

The latest data is from 2021-22, where 78% of internet users had performed activities that related to all 5 of these skills compared with 73% in 2019-20.

## Homelessness

The 'no-one left out' approach to supporting homeless households into emergency accommodation has been in place since March 2020. Management information collected since the start of the pandemic indicates that more than 37,300 people who were previously homeless have been supported into emergency temporary accommodation between March 2020 and May 2023.

In 2022-23 the number of households assessed as being threatened with homelessness was similar to in 2021-22, however the rate for prevention for at least 6 months has dropped below 60% in 2022-23, for the first time since

legislation changed in 2015. Before this drop, homelessness had been successfully prevented in around two-thirds of cases since 2017-18.

The number of households assessed as homeless, and the number of households assessed as unintentionally homeless and in priority need have both increased in 2022-23 compared to in 2021-22, by 7% and 25% respectively. Households successfully relieved from homelessness remained relatively stable from 2016-17 to 2019-20 but has been dropping since then, from 41% in 2019-20 to 30% in 2022-23.

The number of households in temporary accommodation at 31 March 2023 was 5,481. This number has increased rapidly since last year and is now more than double the 2,325 households in temporary accommodation at that time.

Management information captured from local authorities since August 2020 shows the estimated number of rough sleepers has fluctuated between 51 and 161 individuals since August 2020. On 31 May 2023 there were an estimated 154 individuals sleeping rough throughout Wales, with Newport, Cardiff and Pembrokeshire having the largest estimated numbers of rough sleepers.

In 2021 there were an estimated 40 deaths among homeless people in Wales, compared with 22 in 2020 and 33 in 2019.

## Crime and justice

A new national indicator was set in 2021 which will measure the percentage of people who have confidence in the justice system. Data is not yet collected for this indicator.

Most people don't experience crime. In the last year police recorded crime has increased whilst the proportion of adults who are victims of crime has remained relatively stable.

Data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (excluding fraud) in 2022-23

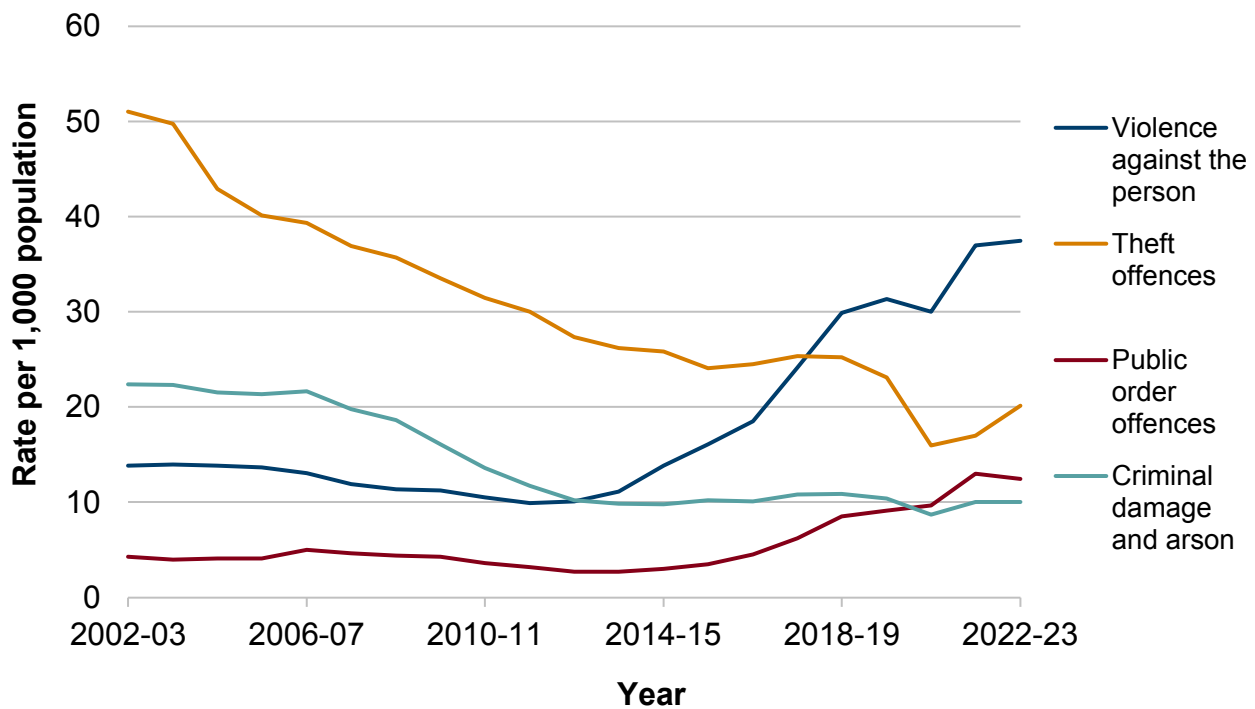
shows 6.6% of adults were victims of crime and 2.5% were victims of personal crime. Due to changes in how the survey was run during the pandemic, this data cannot be compared to the previous year. These are the lowest figures in the available time series (from 2015-16) when the percentages were 14.7% and 4.4%. Year on year the proportion has fallen since this time and for context comparable percentages in 2019-20 were 9.2% and 2.6% respectively.

Police recorded crime increased in 2022-23 by 3%, following a 17% increase in 2021-22. There were increases in 4 of the main offence categories including sexual offences and theft offences. Violent crime and criminal damage and arson saw no percentage change compared with 2021-22. Drug offences and possession of weapons offences decreased compared to 2021-22. It is likely that the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions introduced as public health measures in March 2020 have had an impact on the incidence of many types of crime in 2020-21 and to a lesser extent in 2021-22.

Reported fraud and computer misuse offences have fallen by 11% in Wales between 2021-22 and 2022-23 although the rate remained the same at 5 offences per 1,000 population in Wales.

Latest data on perceptions of crime from the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) in 2022-23 shows 41% of people in Wales believe crime has risen a lot nationally in recent years, a reduction compared with previous years. The percentage of those believing crime in their local area has risen a lot are much smaller (11%). The latest data on violent crime in Wales from the CSEW shows incidence of violent crime in Wales rose to a rate of 29 per 1,000 adults in 2022-23.

**Figure 5.7: Police recorded crime per 1,000 population, 2002-03 to 2022-23**



Description of Figure 5.7: Line chart showing the rates of police recorded crime per 1,000 population since 2002-03. The chart shows theft offences have seen the biggest change in rates falling from more than 50 per 1,000 population to around 20 per 1,000 population. Rates of violence against the person offences have been increasing since 2013-14 and since 2018-19 have the highest rate of those shown. Criminal damage and arson saw a fall in rates until 2016-17 but since this time have been stable. Public order offences had the lowest rate per 1,000 population until 2021-22 when the rate rose above that of criminal damage and arson, rates in this category have been rising since 2015-16.

Source: Police Recorded Crime, Office for National Statistics



## Further reading

Further analysis of the 2021-22 National Survey data included regression analysis to highlight significant factors for some of the indicators:

**Feeling safe in a local area (National Survey for Wales): April 2021 to March 2022**

**What factors are linked to people feeling able to influence decisions affecting their local area?**

**What factors are linked to people being satisfied with the area that they live in?**

**What factors are linked to people agreeing that their local area has a sense of community?**

Other research and analysis that may be of interest.

**Measuring your impact on loneliness in later life (Campaign to end loneliness)**

**Loneliness in the general population: prevalence, determinants and relations to mental health (BMC Psychiatry)**

**Local elections in Wales (The Electoral Commission)**

**Advance voting pilot evaluation (The Electoral Commission)**

## Data sources

The following data sources were used in this narrative:

## Homelessness

[Statutory homelessness open data tables \(StatsWales\)](#)

[Homelessness accommodation provision and rough sleeping monthly management information](#)

[Estimates of deaths amongst homeless people \(Office for National Statistics\)](#)

## Crime

[Crime Survey for England and Wales Perception data \(Office for National Statistics\)](#)

CSEW violent crime incidence comes from the [Personal crime Incidence open data tables \(Office for National Statistics\)](#)

[Police Recorded Crime Open data tables \(Home Office\)](#)

[Police Recorded Crime 2022-23 \(table P2 and P11\) \(Office for National Statistics\)](#)

[Mid Year Estimates \(StatsWales\)](#)

## Other data

All other data are from the [National Survey for Wales](#).

# A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

## A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Author: Stephanie Howarth

A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language: A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage and the Welsh language, and which encourages people to participate in the arts, sports and recreation.

### What have we learnt from the data in the last year?

- The national indicator on regular attendance and participation in arts, culture and heritage fell this year. 65% of adults attended or took part in arts, culture or heritage activities at least three times a year, down from 71% when it was last measured in 2019-20.
- Looking at the arts in more detail, arts attendance appears to have been more negatively affected by the pandemic than arts participation. There is no new data on children's attendance or participation in the arts this year.
- More adults are taking part in sport regularly this year. 39% of adults said they take part in sport three or more times a week. There was a fall in the percentage who said they did no sport or physical activity – down from 44% in 2021-22 to 40% this year.
- In contrast to the increase in sports participation for adults, fewer children are taking part in regular sport outside of school. 39% of pupils took part in organised sport three or more times a week in 2022, down by 9 percentage points from the last survey in 2018.

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- According to Census 2021, 17.8% of people aged three years or older in Wales reported they could speak Welsh, down from 19.0% in Census 2011. This appeared to be driven by a fall in the number of children and young people who were reported as being able to speak Welsh. The National Survey for Wales shows that 11% of people reported they are fluent.
- The conditions of 77% of listed buildings were assessed as “stable or improving” this year, compared to 59% for scheduled monuments. This is broadly unchanged from the previous year.
- The percentage of museums meeting accredited standards has remained unchanged this year at 62%, while 93% of archive services met the accreditation standards.

## What is the longer term progress towards the goal?

A small number of national indicators for this goal have shown a marked decline over the long term, most notably the number of Welsh speakers and adults’ attendance and participation in arts, culture and heritage. The pandemic period may have contributed here, including on children’s sport participation. In contrast, there have been notable long term increases in a range of areas such as children’s participation and attendance in arts, regular participation in sport by adults, and museums and archives achieving accreditation. Wide disparities remain across many indicators for this goal.

- The national indicator on arts, culture and heritage has been collected three times, starting in 2017-18. There have been falls in regular attendance and participation each year it has been collected, down from 75% in 2017-18 to 65% in 2022-23. There continue to be wide differences depending on age, health, deprivation and qualifications, but not for sex or ethnic groups.
- Despite the decrease in attendance for the most recent year (2019), children and young people’s attendance and participation in the arts has increased substantially over the last decade.
- More museums and archive services are meeting accredited standards.

Between 2017 and 2023, there have been larger increases in the percentage of archive services meeting accredited standards (from 57% to 93%) than museums (from 59% to 62%).

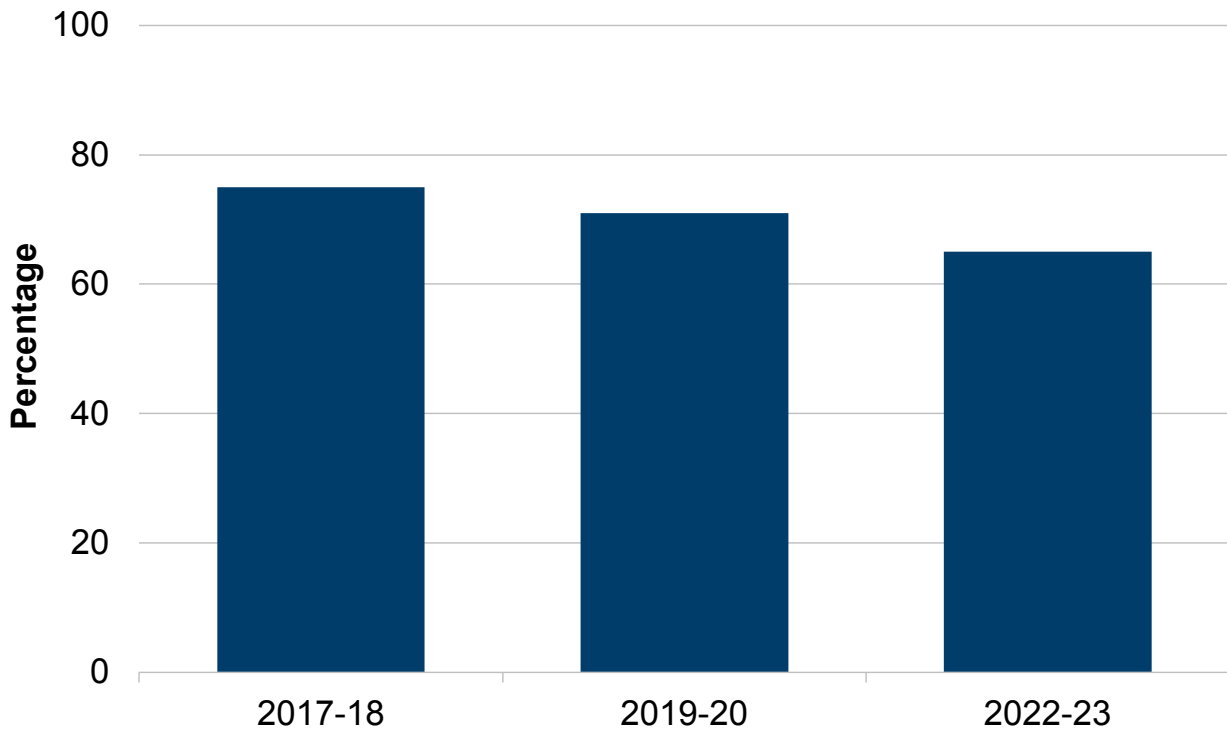
- Since 2016-17, there has been a relatively large increase in regular participation in sport by adults, despite a plateau between 2017-18 and 2019-20. Sports participation amongst school pupils had increased but has now fallen back to similar levels seen in 2013.
- The number and percentage of people able to speak Welsh fell according to Census 2021, with the percentage now the lowest ever recorded in a census. There is a national milestone for one million Welsh speakers by 2050. According to the census, 538,000 people were able to speak Welsh in 2021, down from close to one million in 1911.
- Survey data suggests an increase in non-fluent Welsh speakers over the long term. The percentage of Welsh speakers that use the language every day has been fairly stable.
- Conditions of listed buildings in Wales have improved slightly since 2015, while the conditions of scheduled monuments have recently stabilised.

## Arts, culture and heritage

The national indicator on arts, culture and heritage shows that regular attendance and participation is falling. In 2022-23, 65% of adults attended or took part in arts, culture or heritage at least three times a year. This has fallen from a high point of 75% when the data was first collected in 2017-18.

There continue to be large differences in attendance and participation between groups. Younger adults, people in good health, people with higher qualifications or people living in the least deprived areas of Wales were more likely to attend or participate in these activities. However there is no difference between males and females, and differences in estimates for ethnic groups were not statistically significant.

**Figure 6.1: Adults attending or participating in arts, culture and heritage three or more times a year, 2017-18 to 2022-23**



Description of Figure 6.1: A bar chart showing three years of data for the national indicator on regularly attending or participating in arts, culture and heritage. The percentage has fallen each year.

Source: National Survey for Wales

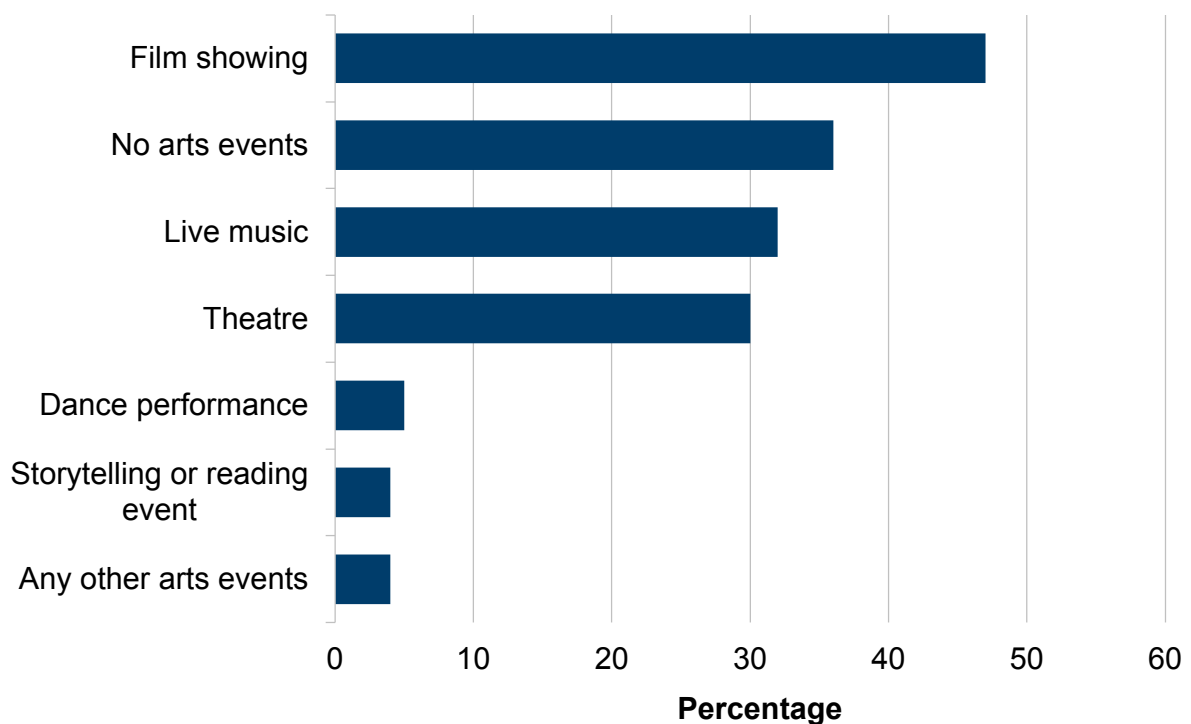
## Arts attendance and participation in adults

Looking at the arts in more detail, the period of the pandemic appears to have

negatively affected arts attendance. In 2022-23, 64% of people attended an arts event over the last year, down from 70% prior to the pandemic. Seeing a film continues to be the art form with the highest level of attendance, with 47% of adults doing this over the last 12 months.

Arts participation continues to be much lower than arts attendance, with 18% of adults participating in the arts in 2022-23. Unlike arts attendance, the pandemic does not appear to have considerably affected arts participation, with a broadly similar share of people taking part in the arts in the most recent year compared to 2019-20. Music, and visual arts and crafts had the highest levels of participation this year, at 7% each.

**Figure 6.2: Adults attending an arts event in the last 12 months, by art form, 2022-23**



Description of Figure 6.2: A bar chart which shows the types of arts events

attended by adults in 2022-23, with film the highest category.

Source: National Survey for Wales

In 2021-22, the National Survey for Wales asked about barriers to going to or taking part in the arts. A lack of interest and difficulty finding time were the most common barriers mentioned, with 28% and 22% of people citing these reasons. However, for older adults, health reasons were reported as their biggest barrier after a lack of interest.

## Children and the arts

Over the long term, there has been an increase in children attending arts events. Children's participation in the arts, however, has been more stable in recent years.

Surveys collected by the Arts Council of Wales were disrupted during the pandemic, so the most recent data available is from 2019. This shows that the share of children and young people attending arts events increased over the last decade, although there was a slight decrease in the most recent year that data is available. It rose from 76.3% in 2010 to 86.7% in 2019.

Arts participation in children has been broadly unchanged over recent years. Around 86% to 87% of children and young people took part in the arts in each of the last four years up to 2019.

## Museums and archives

The latest data shows that 99 museums met the accreditation standard in 2023. This is unchanged from last year but an increase of five since 2019. This means that 62% of museums are now accredited, compared to 59% in 2017 to 2019. The accreditation scheme was paused in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic



so figures are not available for this period.

Visits to museums have fallen compared to pre-pandemic levels. Data from the National Survey for Wales shows that 31% of people visited a museum in the last year, considerably lower than the 43% reported in 2019-20.

14 archive services met the accreditation standard in 2023, equivalent to 93% of archive services. The share of archive services that are accredited has increased from 57% in 2017, but has been more stable over recent years.

According to the National Survey for Wales, the proportion of people using an archive or records office has increased from 5% in 2019-20 to 8% in 2022-23.

## Sport participation

More adults are taking part in sport regularly. The latest results from the National Survey for Wales show that 39% of adults took part in sport three or more times a week in 2022-23, the highest rate recorded by the survey. This is an increase of around 10 percentage points since 2016-17 when the information was first collected.

Regular sports participation decreases with age. 57% of 16 to 24 year olds are estimated to take part in regular sport, declining to 13% of 75+ year olds.

There are higher levels of regular sport participation among:

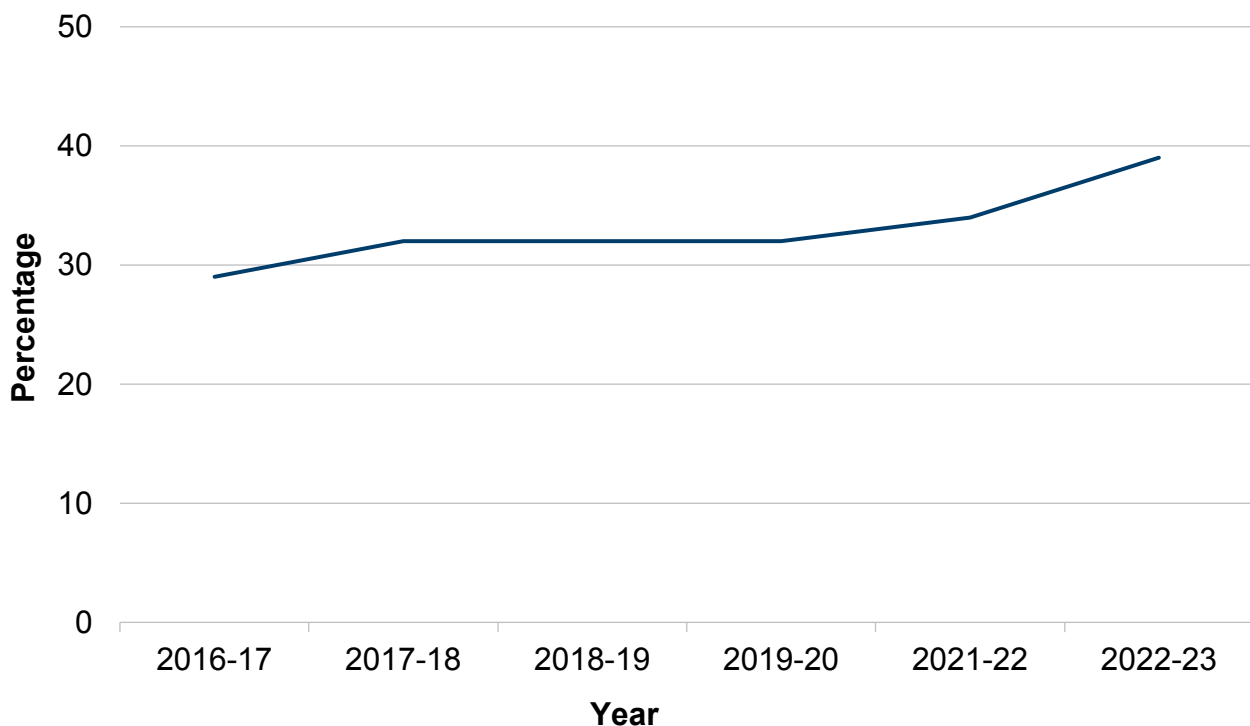
- men
- younger age groups
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people
- people who do not have a long-term illness or condition
- people who speak Welsh
- people who are not in material deprivation.

The percentage of people who take part in no sport or physical activity fell this

year from 44% in 2021-22 to 40% in 2022-23. This year's figure is more in line with previous years. 2021-22 aside, the rate of people who take part in no sport has been broadly unchanged since the data was first collected in 2016-17.

Overall, 27% of adults would like to do more sport or physical activity. This has fallen substantially from previous surveys where almost 60% said they would like to do more.

**Figure 6.3: Percentage of adults participating in sport three or more times a week, 2016-17 to 2022-23**



Description of Figure 6.3: Line chart showing the percentage of adults taking part in sport three or more times a week, which has increased over the long term.

Source: National Survey for Wales

# Children's participation in sport

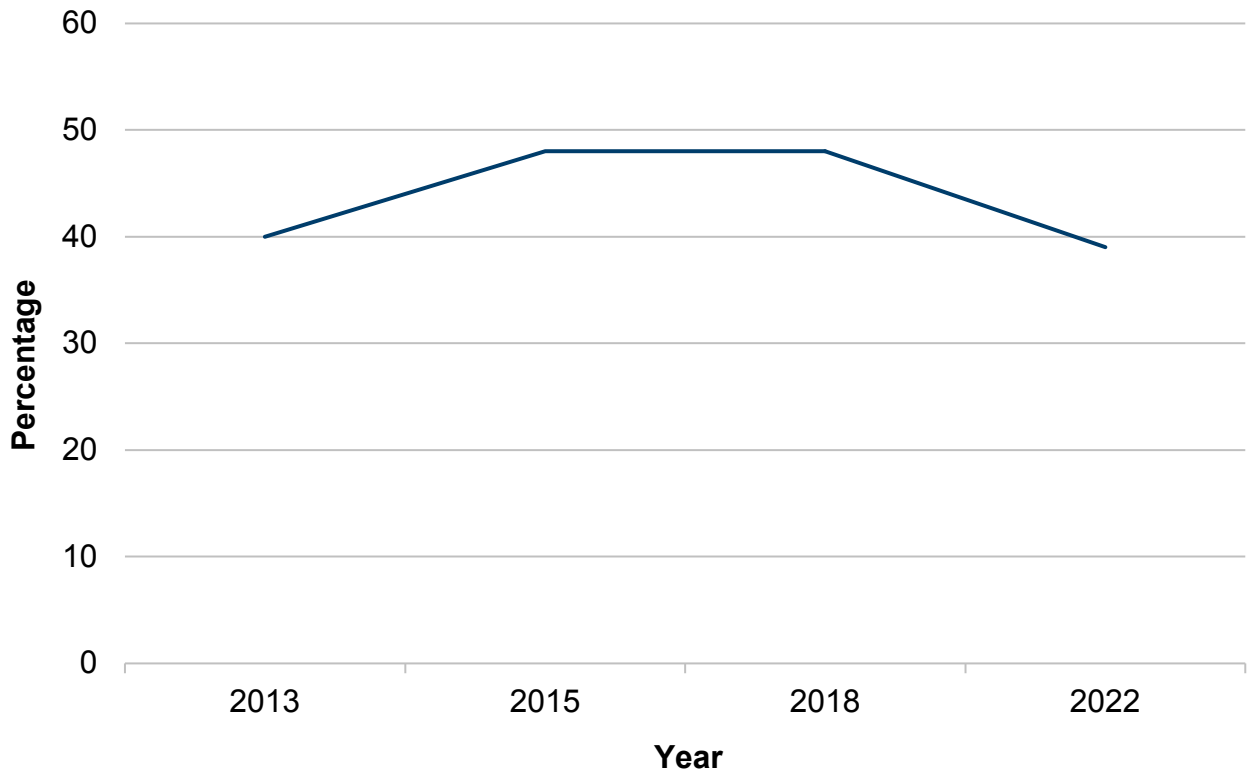
There was a large decrease in children's participation in sport in 2022.

39% of pupils took part in organised sport outside of the curriculum three or more times a week. This was a 9 percentage point decrease from 2018 when the School Sport Survey was last carried out and is now the lowest figure ever recorded by the survey (just surpassing the 40% reported in 2013). There was also a large increase in the percentage who reported no frequent participation in sport outside of school. This stood at 36% in 2022, up from 28% in the previous survey. Despite decreases in participation, the vast majority of pupils (93%) wanted to do more sport.

There were decreases in frequent sport participation for both boys and girls, however boys continue to be more likely to take part in sport. In 2022, 43% of boys took part in organised sport three or more times a week outside of school, compared to 36% of girls. Primary school aged children were slightly less likely to take part in sport regularly than secondary school aged children.

When looking at broad ethnic groups, pupils from Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups had the highest rates of sports participation, with 43% taking part in sport three or more times a week. Pupils who did not give their ethnic group had the lowest levels of regular sport participation, followed by Asian, Asian Welsh and Asian British pupils, at 30%. Information on more detailed ethnic groups is included in the sub-report Ethnicity and Wellbeing in Wales.

**Figure 6.4: Percentage of children participating in sport three or more times a week, 2013 to 2022**



Description of Figure 6.4: A line chart showing the percentage of children regularly participating in sport. Participation has fallen recently back to a similar level seen in 2013.

Source: School Sport Survey

## Welsh speakers

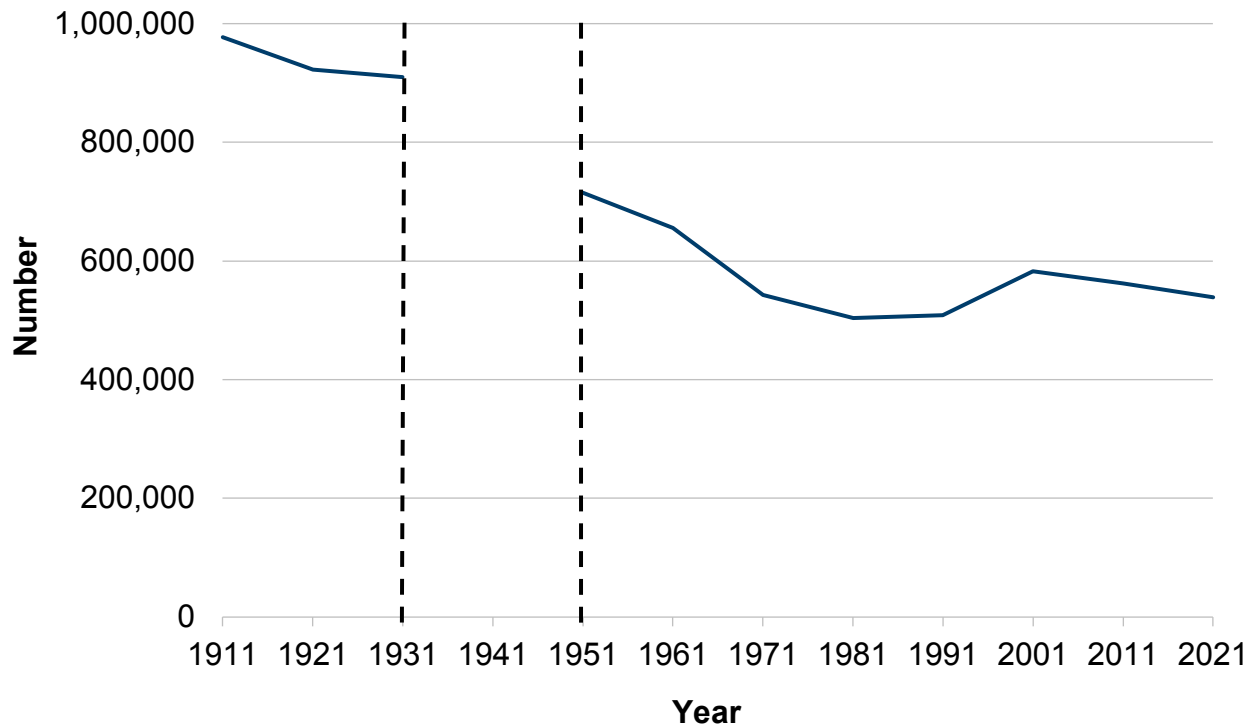
We consider the census to be the main source of information on the number of people who can speak Welsh in Wales. According to Census 2021, 17.8% of people aged three years or older in Wales can speak Welsh. This is down from

19.0% in 2011 and is the lowest percentage ever recorded on a census.

The national milestone on Welsh language is for one million Welsh speakers by 2050. Over the long term, the number of Welsh speakers has been falling from almost one million people in 1911 to 538,000 now. Although the most recent figures showed a fall in the number of Welsh speakers, the number remains above the lowest point in 1981, when under 504,000 people spoke Welsh.

The decrease in both the number and percentage of people aged three years or older able to speak Welsh was mainly driven by a fall among children and young people who were reported as being able to speak Welsh. Census 2021 was held during the COVID-19 pandemic on 21 March 2021. This followed periods of lockdown, remote learning for children and many people were working from home. It is not known if the pandemic impacted people's reported Welsh language ability (or perception of the Welsh language ability of others).

**Figure 6.5: People aged three years and older able to speak Welsh, 1911 to 2021**



Description of Figure 6.5: A line chart showing the number of people able to speak Welsh since 1911. Numbers fell substantially in the first half of the 20th century, with smaller changes since.

[Note 1] There was no census in 1941.

Source: Census of Population

Census 2021 data shows almost one in ten households comprised people who were all able to speak Welsh.

The census shows that the age profile of Welsh speakers is younger than that of the general population. Of those who reported being able to speak Welsh in 2021, more than half were younger than 33 years old, and three-quarters were

younger than 57 years old.

A higher percentage of females are able to speak Welsh than males, with the gap being widest for 16- to 18-year-olds.

Between 2011 and 2021, the percentage of people able to speak Welsh fell in both the White and the Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups. In contrast, there were increases in the percentage of people able to speak Welsh in the Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British ethnic group; in the Black, Black Welsh, Black British, Caribbean or African ethnic group; and in the “Other” ethnic group.

## Welsh language use

The latest Welsh language use survey shows there has been little change in how often people speak Welsh.

In 2019-20, 10% of people aged three or older spoke Welsh daily and could speak more than just a few words of Welsh. This is the same percentage as in the previous Welsh Language Use Survey in 2013-15. More recent data from the National Survey for Wales for people aged 16 or older also suggests there has been little overall change in the rate of people using Welsh daily. Fluent Welsh speakers speak the language more often than those who are not fluent.

Recent analysis of the Welsh Language Use Survey 2019-20 has investigated social use of Welsh.

Almost 70% of Welsh-speaking children and young people say that more of their friends can speak Welsh than can't. Children and young people who are able to speak Welsh are more likely to do so with their friends in school than they are to speak Welsh with friends outside school.

For adults, 24% of Welsh speakers reported that all or most of their extended family could speak Welsh and 18% always or almost always spoke Welsh with their extended family. The figures were lower for friends and people in their local

community. When looking at digital use of Welsh, Welsh-speaking adults were more likely to use Welsh in texts and emails than on social media.

## Fluency in Welsh

Surveys provide information on Welsh language fluency which is not available from the census. Survey data are not comparable with the census as people are usually more likely to report they are able to speak Welsh in surveys. In contrast to the results from Census 2021, surveys have shown increases in the number of Welsh speakers. These differences are being investigated.

According to the National Survey for Wales, the share of Welsh speakers aged 16 years or older who are fluent has remained relatively unchanged over the last 10 years. However, over the long term, there have been increases in Welsh speakers who are not fluent.

The percentage of people who are fluent in Welsh has remained at around 10% or 11% since 2012-13, according to the National Survey for Wales.

23% of people reported they could speak some Welsh, but not fluently in the 2022-23 National Survey. This has increased by around 10 percentage points over the previous decade.

## Historic buildings and monuments

Each year Cadw assesses the conditions of a sample of listed buildings and scheduled monuments in Wales. Conditions of listed buildings in Wales have improved slightly since 2015, while the conditions of scheduled monuments have recently stabilised.

Of the 30,000 listed buildings, 77% are in a stable or improving condition in 2023, up slightly from 74% in 2015. 9% of listed buildings are considered to be



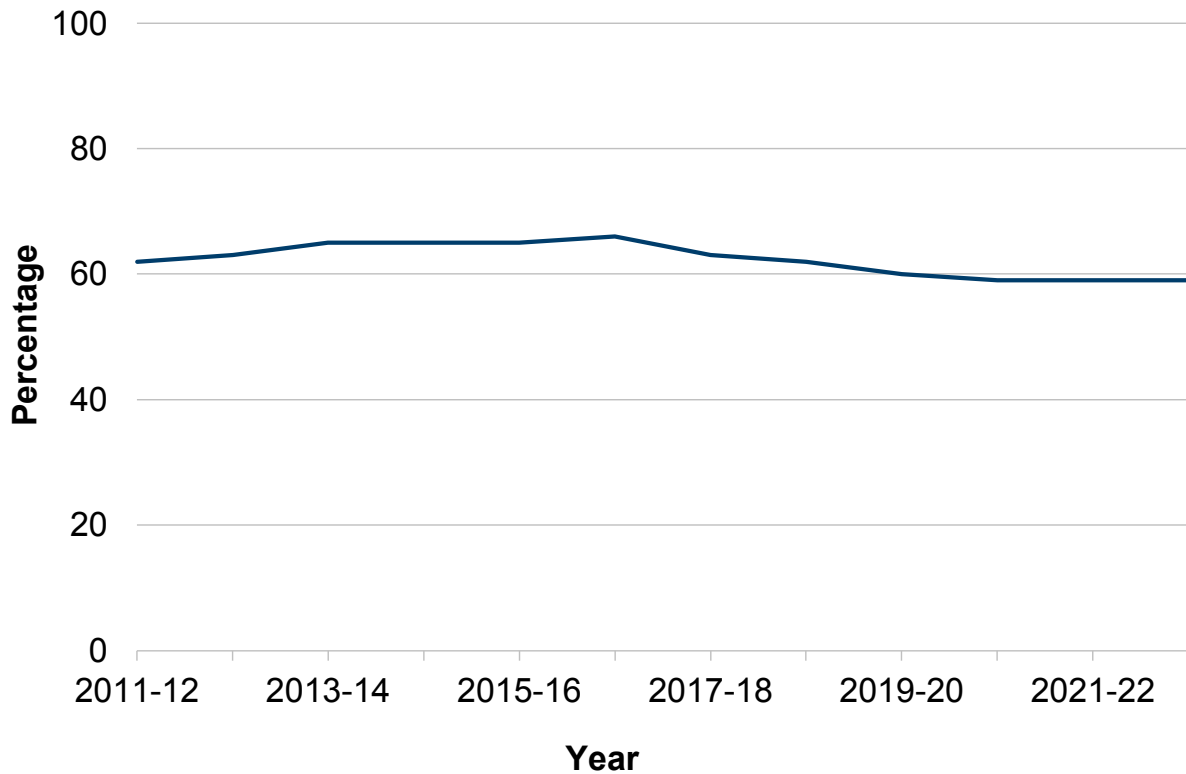
at risk. In general, conditions of listed buildings have remained broadly similar over the past five years, however data collection in 2022-23 was impacted by restrictions imposed by avian flu which limited inspections to urban areas.

The state of conservation of a sample of scheduled monuments are assessed each year. In 2022-23 condition surveys were carried out for 316 scheduled monuments, of which 52% of the sample were found to be stable or improved.

Of the 4,200 scheduled monuments in Wales, overall 59% are assessed to be in a stable or improving condition. This has been unchanged for three years in a row, but over the longer term the figure has been gradually falling since 2016-17, when 66% were in a stable or improving condition. 42% of scheduled monuments are demonstrating deterioration, of which 14% are considered to be at risk. The main impacts are damage and decay due to effects of weathering, vegetation encroachment and stock erosion.

63% of people said they had visited a heritage site in the past year, according to the National Survey for Wales.

**Figure 6.6: Percentage of scheduled monuments that are in a stable or improving condition, 2011-12 to 2022-23**



Description of Figure 6.6: A line chart showing the share of monuments that are in a stable or improving condition. The percentage has only changed slightly over the last ten years.

Source: Cadw

## Further reading

Previous versions of the [Wellbeing of Wales report](#) include further analysis of:

- taking part in volunteering or in arts or sports activities

- barriers to participation in arts and differences between socio-economic and population groups in arts and sports participation
- trends in the types of activities participated
- sport participation during the pandemic
- use of Welsh language by children and young people
- links between Welsh language and arts and culture events

The Arts Council of Wales and Sport Wales produce regular in-depth reports on arts and sports. This includes the Children's Omnibus Survey 2019 and the School Sport Survey.

A range of analysis on the Welsh Language is also available from Census 2021, and in Welsh Language Use Survey reports for 2019-20. The following publications analysed survey data on the Welsh language in more detail or provide more information on the difference between census and survey estimates:

**[Office for National Statistics and Welsh Government joint work plan on coherence of Welsh language statistics](#)**

**[Speaking Welsh \(National Survey for Wales\): April 2018 to March 2019](#)**

**[Welsh language data from the Annual Population Survey: 2001 to 2018](#)**

## **Data sources**

### **Arts attendance and participation**

**[National Survey for Wales](#)**

**[Arts Council of Wales Children's Omnibus Survey 2019](#)**

## **Sports participation**

[National Survey for Wales](#)

[School Sport Survey 2022 \(Sport Wales\)](#)

## **Welsh language**

### **Census 2021**

- [Welsh language in Wales](#)
- [Welsh language by population characteristics](#)
- [Welsh language composition of households](#)

[National Survey for Wales](#)

[Annual Population Survey](#)

[Welsh Language Use Survey](#)

## **Historic buildings and monuments**

[Cadw](#)

## **Museums and archives**

CyMAL: Museums, Archives and Libraries Wales

[National Survey for Wales](#)

# A globally responsible Wales

## A globally responsible Wales

Author: Stefanie Taylor

A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global wellbeing. This goal recognises that in an inter-connected world what we do to make Wales a sustainable nation can have positive and adverse impacts outside of Wales.

## What have we learnt from the data in the last year?

- In 2021, it was estimated that greenhouse gas emissions released into the atmosphere directly from within Wales totalled 36.3 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (MtCO<sub>2</sub>e), an increase of 7% from 2020.
- Consumption emissions associated with goods and services consumed by Welsh households were estimated to be 25.0 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e in 2020, a decrease of 20% from 2019.
- COVID-19 and the resulting national restrictions had significant impacts on the economy and society, which reduced greenhouse gas emissions on both a territorial and consumption basis in 2020.
- Estimates recently produced by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) suggest that Wales's global footprint has continued to decrease, meaning that Wales is gradually reducing the area of land needed to support its use of global resources.
- In 2022, there were 536 referrals of potential victims of modern slavery received by police forces in Wales. This is a 12% increase compared to 2021 (479 referrals). Some of the increase in recent years is probably due to

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improved reporting.

- The Forced Marriage Unit gave advice or support in 6 cases related to a possible forced marriage and/or possible female genital mutilation in 2022 in Wales, which made up 2% of the UK total.
- The National Survey for Wales reported in 2021 to 2022 that 11% of adult have done three or more of the four following actions to help with global issues: donating or raising money, campaigning, volunteering, or changing what they buy.
- In 2022 to 2023, there were 23,622 entrants for the Global Citizenship Challenge at key stage 4, and 13,988 at advanced level who chose the global citizenship challenge component.
- The proportion of children who were up to date with their routine immunisations by four years of age was 84.5% for the year ending March 2023, this is a decrease compared to 87.0% for the year ending March 2022.
- In 2022 to 2023 uptake of the '6 in 1' (DTaP/IPV/Hib/HepB) in one year old children in Wales was 94.5%, a decrease from 95.2% the previous year.
- In 2022 to 2023 MMR uptake of one dose by two years of age decreased to 92.9%, compared to 94.2% in the previous year,, below the target uptake rate of 95%.
- At the end of March 2023, more than 2,400 asylum seekers were receiving support in Wales. The numbers receiving support have increased since the same quarter in 2021, having remained stable between 2016 and 2020, and fallen between 2020 and 2021.
- As at the end of March 2023, a total of 1,479 refugees have been resettled in Wales under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (2016 to 2022) and UK Resettlement Scheme (2021 onwards).
- In 2020 to 2021, there were 21,570 enrolments for higher education institutions in Wales from international students from over 180 countries, comprising 16.6% of all enrolments.

# What is the longer term progress towards the goal?

Data for some of the national indicators suggest that progress is being made towards the globally responsible Wales goal. These include long-term improvements to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, and other national indicators which overlap with the resilient Wales goal. There is a national milestone for greenhouse gases which is for Wales to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. In 2021, it was estimated that greenhouse gas emissions released into the atmosphere directly from within Wales totalled 36.3 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (MtCO<sub>2</sub>e), a decrease of 35% from 1990. Consumption emissions associated with goods and services consumed by Welsh households were estimated to be 25.0 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e in 2020, a decrease of 37% from 2001.

There is also a national milestone relating to global footprint which is for Wales to use only its fair share of the world's resources by 2050. Our global footprint is the total environmental burden that society places on the planet. Recent estimates produced by JNCC and the Global Footprint Network suggest that the global footprint per person reduced by nearly a third between 2004 and 2018. However, this remains over twice the estimated biocapacity of Wales. If the entire world population lived like the citizens of Wales, humanity would require 2.08 Earths.

## Global context, United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

On 1 January 2016, the world began implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the transformative plan of action based on 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to address urgent global challenges over the next 15 years. The SDGs emphasise a universal agenda that requires

all UN member states, both rich and poor alike, to take action to support sustainable development.

There are many factors which dictate whether Wales is becoming a more globally responsible nation.

The Well-being of Future Generations Act, with its Welsh specific well-being goals, provides a framework for Wales' contribution to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. For the most part the other six narrative reports, through their assessment of our progress towards the national well-being goals, demonstrate our overall contribution as a nation to the international sustainable development agenda. For example, we report elsewhere on national trends on issues such as poverty, inequalities and decent work. This narrative on a globally responsible Wales therefore focuses on areas that are most relevant to the global agenda in particular.

The 50 national indicators for Wales have also been mapped for indicative purposes against the 17 Sustainable Development Goals to help you navigate between progress here in Wales, and the relationship to each of the SDGs.

### **National Indicators: mapping to Well-being and UN Sustainable Development Goals (interactive tool)**

Whilst some of the narrative is drawn from national indicators and official statistics, some of the data presented in this section is contextual and uses data or factual statements related to specific policies or programmes, where we have considered it relevant to the overall narrative. These data are not collected through official statistics sources, and although reported here for context, we cannot provide full assurance about data quality. However, where possible, more information about the data can be found in the **Quality Report for National Wellbeing Indicators and the non-indicator quality report**.



# Climate change

Goal 13 of the UN SDGs is to “take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts”.

People in Wales are concerned about climate change.

The National Survey results for 2022 to 23 show that the vast majority (97%) of people in Wales think the world’s climate is changing. In 2022 to 2023, 74% of adults were fairly concerned or very concerned about climate change, similar to the results in 2021-22 (76%) and in 2020-21 (76%).

In 2022 to 2023, 56% of people think that climate change is mainly or entirely due to human activity. 94% think human activity is involved to some extent in the world’s climate changing.

# Greenhouse gas emissions

There is a national milestone for greenhouse gases which is for Wales to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

In 2021, it was estimated that emissions released into the atmosphere directly from within Wales (known as territorial emissions) totalled 36.3 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (MtCO<sub>2</sub>e), an increase of 7% compared to 2020.

Most of the increase in 2021 is due to increases in emissions from power stations, iron and steel production, and road transport, consistent with greater activity in these sectors following the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this increase in 2021, estimated Welsh emissions remain 6% below the 2019 pre-pandemic level.

There has been a fall of 35% since the base year (1990). This decrease was driven by efficiencies in energy generation and business sector heating, the use

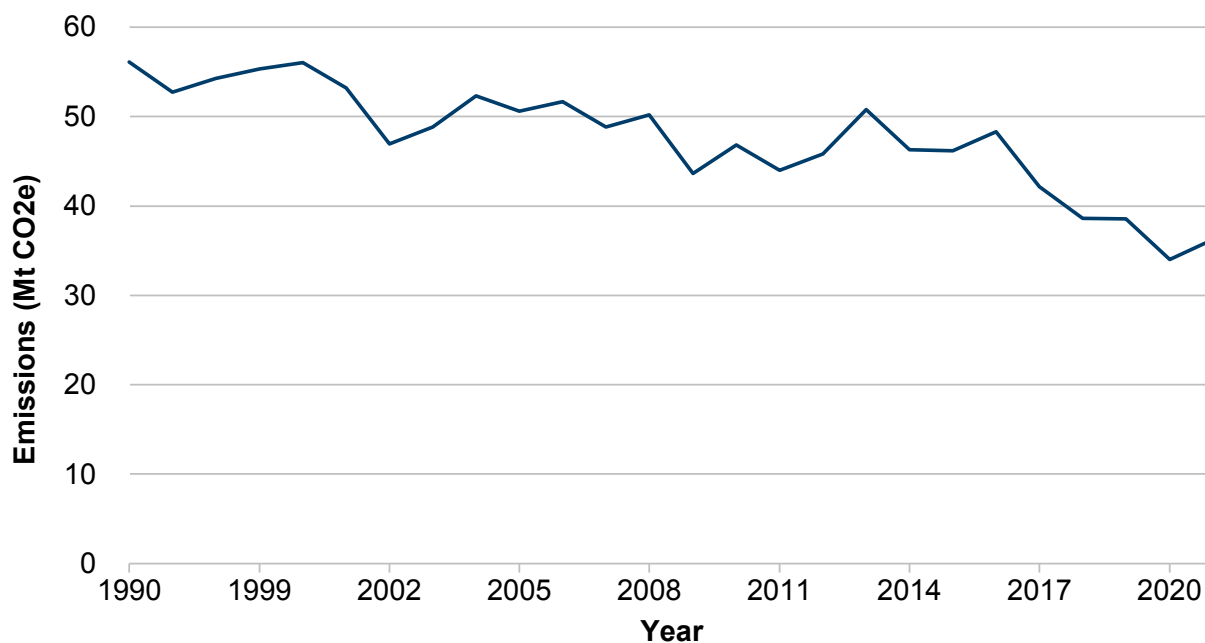
of natural gas to replace some coal and other fuels as well as abatement in some chemical industries. Variations in manufacturing output (for example, in iron and steel, bulk chemical production) have also had a significant impact on the trend.

The largest source of estimated emissions comes from the energy supply sector, which produces 26% of all greenhouse gas emissions in Wales. This sector is dominated by emissions from gas power stations.

The business sector is the second largest source making up 24% of Welsh emissions. This sector is dominated by the combustion of fossil fuels in industrial production, primarily from iron and steel production. This is followed by the agriculture sector (16%), the transport sector (15%), the residential sector (10%), and the industrial processes sector (6%), with other sectors each making smaller contributions of 5% or less.

These figures on territorial greenhouse gas emissions only take account of emissions within Wales. This does not include emissions associated with the production of goods and services outside of Wales even if these are imported into Wales. Equally, emissions associated with the production of goods and services in Wales are counted as Welsh emissions even if these are exported for consumption elsewhere. The coverage of this national indicator was extended in December 2021 to include Wales' share of international aviation and international shipping, this is now included as the National Communication sector 'Exports'.

**Figure 7.1: Estimated Welsh territorial emissions of greenhouse gases (Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e), 1990 to 2021**



Description of Figure 7.1: The line chart shows the volume of territorial greenhouse gas emissions (megatonnes) in Wales in between 1990 and 2021. Emissions in Wales have fallen by 35% since the base year (1990), however there was an increase of 7% in emissions 2021, compared to 2020.

Source: National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory

## **Emissions of greenhouse gases attributed to the consumption of global goods and services in Wales**

Greenhouse gas emissions associated with goods and services consumed by Welsh households (known as consumption emissions or carbon footprint) are estimated. These estimates measure the emissions directly produced by Welsh

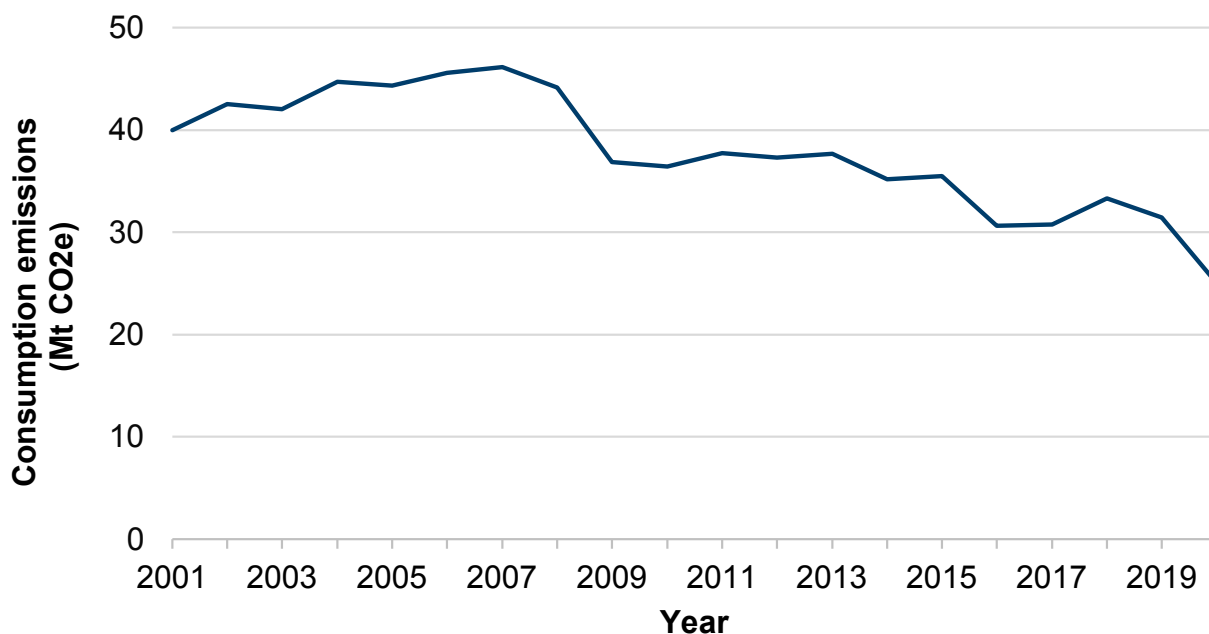
households (including heating and driving, for example), emissions that occur within the UK to produce goods and services consumed in Wales, and 'imported' emissions that occur in other countries to produce goods and services consumed in Wales.

Overall, consumption emissions have decreased since 2001. Between 2001 and 2020 emissions have decreased from 40.0 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e to 25.0 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e (down 37%). When comparing 2001 and 2019 to remove effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the decrease is approximately 21%. Emissions embedded within imported goods and services (consumed in Wales but produced overseas) were the largest source of emissions over this time period.

These estimates have a high degree of uncertainty because it is difficult to measure emissions embedded within imports and these data are scaled to a Welsh level using a survey with a limited sample size. Therefore, variations in annual data may not reflect actual changes to emissions and the longer term trend over time should be considered.

The territorial and consumption emissions can be considered alongside each other. These emission estimates measure different sources of emissions and use different methods, the territorial emissions use more robust data sources and methods so are more certain than consumption emissions. The consumption emissions indicator helps to identify whether decreases to emissions within Wales are being offset by emissions 'imported' from abroad. Unlike other UK nations, territorial emissions are higher in Wales than consumption emissions. This could be due to Wales having a higher level of heavy industry and non-renewable energy generation relative to population than other UK nations.

**Figure 7.2: Estimated Welsh consumption emissions footprint (Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e), 2001 to 2020**



Description of Figure 7.2: The line chart shows the volume of estimated consumption emissions (megatonnes) in Wales show a general downward trend since 2001. Between 2001 and 2020, Wales' estimated consumption emissions footprint has decreased by 37%, from 40 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e to 25 Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e.

Source: Consumption Emissions Footprint, Wales (2001 - 2020) (Mt CO<sub>2</sub>e), University of Leeds consumption based emissions estimate.

## Global footprint

Our global footprint is the total environmental burden that society places on the planet. Globally, we are consuming more natural resources than the world is able to replace.

One way of measuring our global footprint and this ecological deficit is to calculate what is known as an Ecological Footprint, which represents the area of land needed to provide raw materials, energy and food as well as absorb pollution and waste created. It is measured in global hectares.

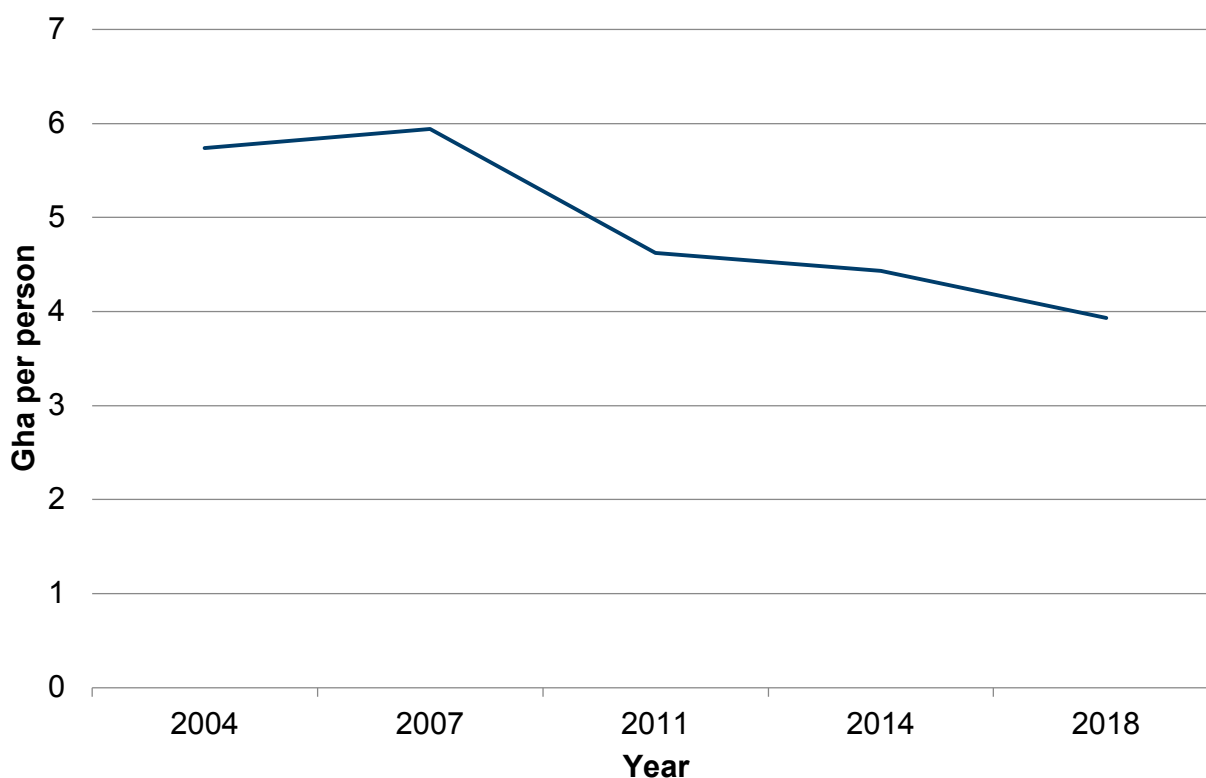
Our global footprint is influenced by the food people eat, the way we travel and the energy we use at home. It also accounts for the purchase of products and services, from insurance to televisions to items of clothing. It also includes impacts from construction activity and investment in infrastructure.

The national milestone for this indicator is that Wales will only use its fair share of the world's resources by 2050. A global footprint for Wales has recently been calculated by JNCC using the Ecological Footprint methodology. This is part of a wider project to improve understanding of the global environmental footprint and impacts of commodities that are consumed within Wales, but that may be produced anywhere in the world.

An Ecological Footprint was produced using two slightly different methodologies – one making use of Wales-specific data (only available for 2019), and the other using different and slightly simpler input data (apportioning UK data to Wales) to enable the production of a time series. Due to its ability to monitor change over time, the latter is being used to report progress against the national indicator and milestone.

Using the Ecological Footprint methodology, Wales's global footprint has generally decreased from around 17.0 million global hectares (gha) in 2004 to 12.3 million gha in 2018. The global footprint per person has reduced by nearly a third over this time period, and stood at 3.9 gha per person in 2018. However, this remains over twice the estimated biocapacity of Wales. In other words, if the entire world population lived like the citizens of Wales, humanity would require 2.08 Earths.

**Figure 7.3: Global footprint, global hectares (gha) per person, 2004 to 2018**



Description of Figure 7.3: A line chart showing the global footprint (gha) per person in Wales, at three or four yearly intervals between 2004 and 2018. The global footprint per person has gradually decreased over the period.

Source: Understanding the Global Environmental Footprint and Impacts of Welsh Consumption, JNCC

An alternative measure of Wales' Ecological Footprint uses slightly higher quality input data, but does not allow for comparison over time. This footprint was around 10.7 million gha in 2019, equivalent to approximately 3.4 gha per person.

# Active global citizenship

In 2021 to 2022 the National Survey for Wales, for the first time, asked people about what activities they had done to help with international issues such as poverty, human rights, war, refugees or climate change. These questions were asked prior to the war in Ukraine.

11% of those surveyed have done three or more of the four following actions to help with global issues: donating or raising money, campaigning, volunteering, or changing what they buy.

31% of people say they have donated money in the preceding three months to help with global issues. The most common issues people donated money for were international poverty (21%) and to support refugees (15%). 36% of women say they gave money, compared with 26% of men.

17% of people say they have campaigned for international issues in last 12 months to help with global issues and 5% say they have volunteered. 11% of people campaigned for human rights issues and 10% against climate change, while 2% volunteered to stop poverty and 2% to help refugees.

54% say they have changed what they buy because of global issues. People aged under 75 are more likely to have changed what they buy (57%) than people aged 75 and over (34%). People aged 25 to 44 were the group most likely to have made changes to what they buy (63%).

## Modern slavery

Referrals of potential victims of modern slavery in Wales continue to have increased in recent years.

The UN SDGs include a target on 'Ending modern slavery and human trafficking'. Modern slavery is the term used within the UK and is defined within



the Modern Slavery Act 2015. The Act categorises offences of Slavery, Servitude and Forced or Compulsory Labour and Human Trafficking.

According to the National Crime Agency (NCA), the recorded incidents of potential victims of slavery to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) or via the Duty to Notify (DtN) process continue to increase each year in Wales.

In 2022, there were 536 referrals of potential victims of modern slavery received by police forces in Wales. This is a 12% increase compared to 2021 (479 referrals).

Some increases in recent years are probably due to improved reporting and changes in how the data are recorded. In 2022, 136 of the referrals were for females (25%) and 400 were for males (75%).

There were 164 (31%) individuals referred for adult exploitation categories and 355 (66%) referred for exploitation as a minor. 17 (3%) were not specified or unknown.

The most common type of exploitation for both adults and minors was criminal.

## **Forced marriage and female genital mutilation**

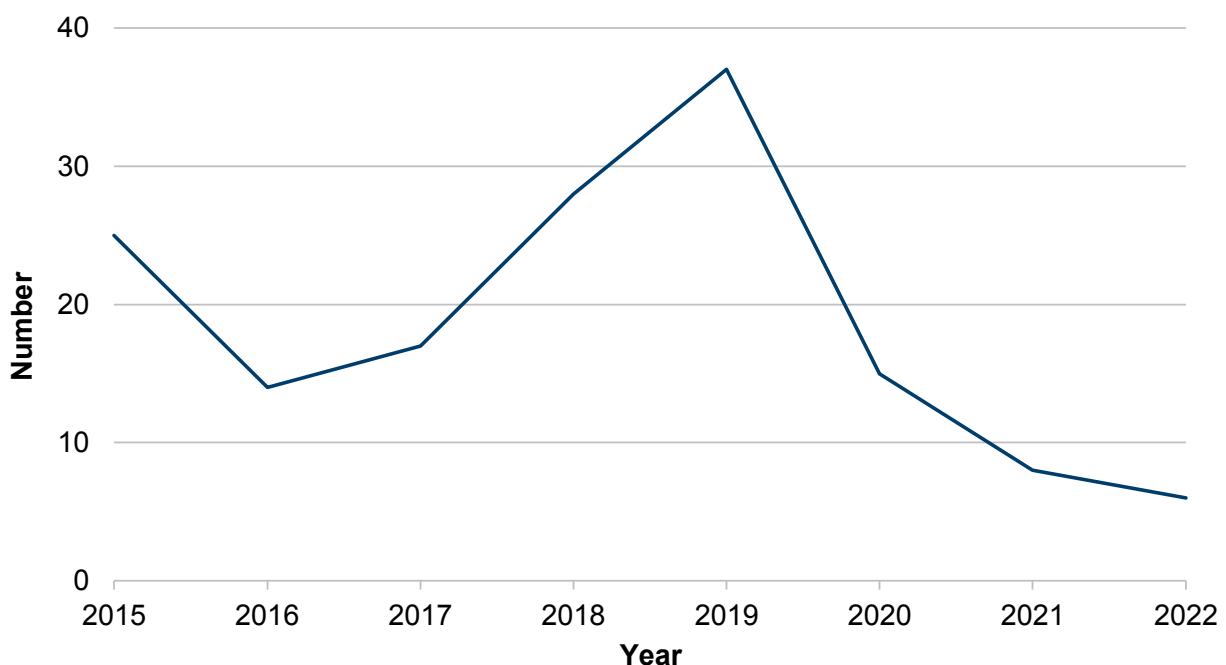
Forced marriage or possible female genital mutilation is being identified in Wales.

Goal 5 of the UN SDGs include a target to 'eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation'.

According to the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) gave advice or support in 6 cases related to a possible forced marriage and/or possible female genital mutilation in 2022 in Wales, which made up 2% of the UK total. This is a small decrease from 8 cases (2% of the UK total) in 2021.

Due to low numbers relative to some other parts of the UK, the trend for Wales has been volatile between 2015 and 2022. Following the introduction of the first lockdown, referrals to the FMU decreased. This may be attributable to reasons derived from the pandemic, such as restrictions on weddings and travel. A procedural change regarding whether to log a new case as a referral or a general enquiry is also likely to have had a minor impact on the overall number of cases compared with previous years and so direct comparisons should be treated with caution.

**Figure 7.4: Number of cases the Forced Marriage Unit gave advice or support to in Wales, 2015 to 2022 [Note 1]**



Description of Figure 7.4: The line chart shows the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) gave advice or support in 6 cases related to a possible forced marriage and/or possible female genital mutilation (FGM) in Wales in 2022. Due to low numbers relative to some other parts of the UK, the trend for Wales has been volatile between 2015 to 2022.

Source: Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, Forced Marriage Unit statistics 2022

[Note 1] Owing to changes in recording practices the data from 2020 are not directly comparable with the data in previous years.

## Global citizenship education

The UN SDG 'Quality Education' recognises the importance of obtaining a quality education and all learners acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality and global citizenship.

In 2022 to 2023, there were 23,622 entrants for the Global Citizenship Challenge at key stage 4, and 13,988 at advanced level who chose the global citizenship challenge component. For key stage 4, provisional data shows 98.8% of entries achieved a level 1 pass or above, and at the advanced level, 99.0% achieved a level 3 pass or above.

## Eco-Schools

Eco-Schools is the world's largest sustainable education programme engaging millions of children across 73 countries. It is designed to empower and inspire young people to make positive environmental changes to their school and wider community, while building on their key skills, including numeracy and literacy. In Wales, Eco-Schools is run by Keep Wales Tidy with funding from Welsh Government, and is free to all state schools.

As of April 2023 there were 811 state schools with Eco-Schools Green Flag accreditation, 454 of which had reached platinum status, for long term commitment to the programme. A further 306 schools have a bronze and/or silver award, working their way towards green flag accreditation.

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During the past year over 1,100 schools have engaged with Keep Wales Tidy to take steps to help the environment through Eco-Schools; My Tree, Our Forest: for Schools; Local Places for Nature; or other Keep Wales Tidy initiatives.

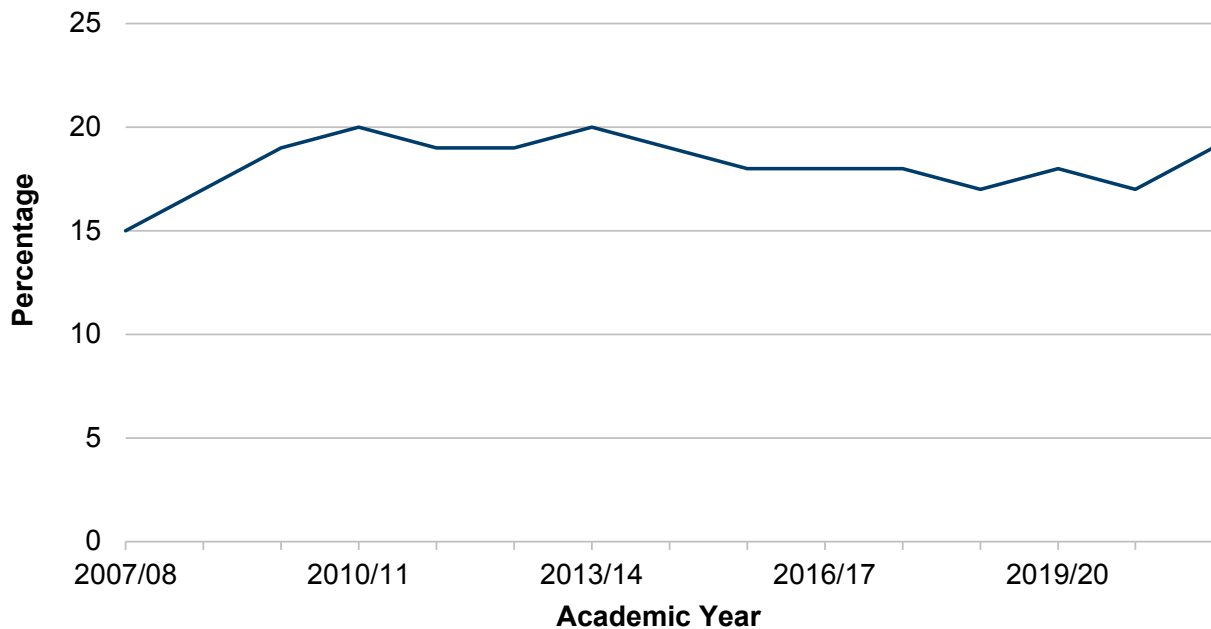
## International students

Young people in Wales are learning about global issues but there's been a decline in recent years in international students attending higher education institutions in Wales.

A large number of students from a range of countries attend higher education institutions in Wales.

In 2021 to 2022, there were 25,090 enrolments from international students for higher education providers in Wales (excluding higher education enrolments at further education providers and enrolments at the Welsh national centre of the Open University). This comprises 19% of enrolments where the student's domicile is known. Of these, 4,170 were from students of European Union domicile (3% of all enrolments), while 20,920 were from students of non-European Union domicile (16% of all enrolments). At its peak in 2010/11, there were 26,290 enrolments in higher education institutions in Wales from international students, which made up 20% of the student population.

**Figure 7.5: Percentage of the student population at Welsh higher education institutions who are international students, 2007 to 2008 to 2021 to 2022 [Note 1]**



Description of Figure 7.5: The line chart shows the percentage of the student population at Welsh higher education institutions who are international students, from 2007 to 2008 to 2021 to 2022. In 2021 to 2022 there were 19% enrolments from international students.

Source: Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA)

[Note 1] Excludes enrolments at the Open University and higher education enrolments in further education institutions in Wales.

# Food poverty

Some adults in Wales are facing food poverty and are concerned about affording food.

The UN SDG 'Zero Hunger' aims to end hunger and achieve food security and improve nutrition.

The 2022 to 2023 National Survey for Wales reported that 3% of households had received food from a food bank in the last 12 months with a further 3% saying they hadn't but had wanted to.

The survey also reported 5% of adults said there was at least one day in the previous fortnight where they had gone without a substantial meal. This was similar to 2021 to 2022 (4%).

# Asylum seekers

The number of asylum seekers receiving support has remained steady in the past few years but has increased since the start of the decade.

Goal 16 of the UN SDGs is to 'promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels'.

Complete figures for the numbers of asylum seekers and refugees who are resettled in Wales are not available. However, figures are published relating to the number of refugees resettled under the UK Resettlement Scheme (and formerly the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme), and the number of those currently receiving asylum support.

As at the end of March 2023, a total of 1,479 refugees have been resettled in Wales under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (2016-2022) and

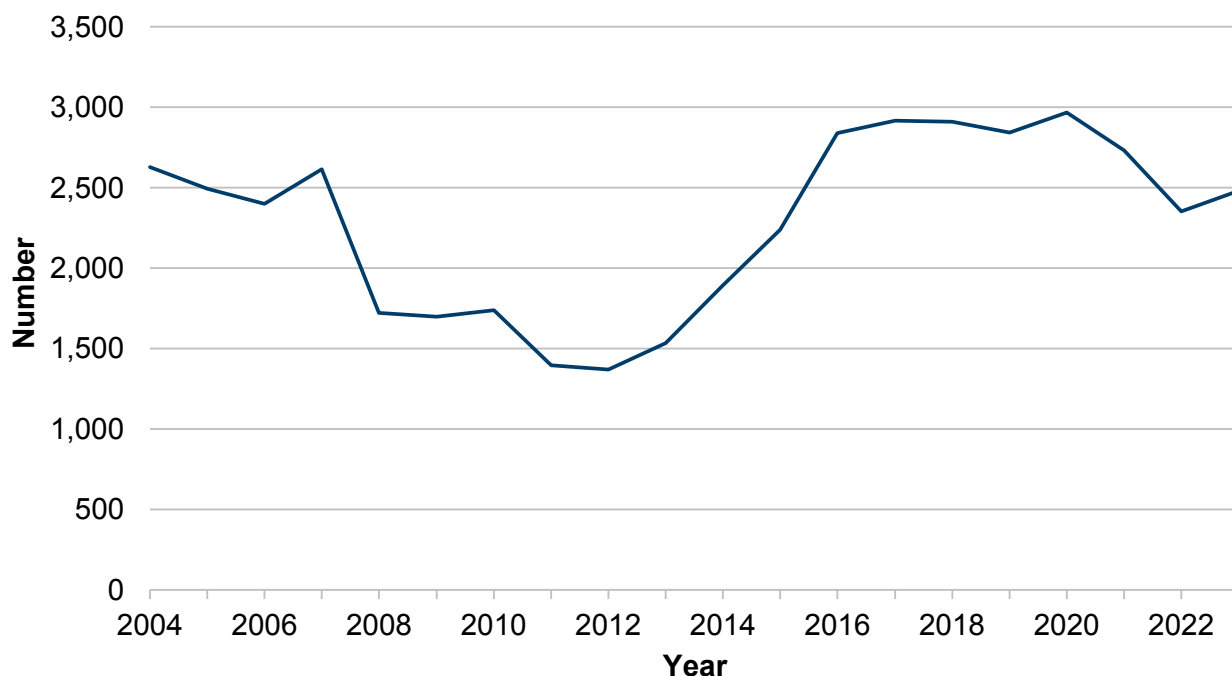
UK Resettlement Scheme (2021 onwards).

Section 95 provides support for asylum seekers who have an asylum claim or appeal outstanding and failed asylum seekers who had children in their household when their appeal rights were exhausted, and includes those in receipt of:

- (a) Dispersed accommodation: those in receipt of accommodation only, or both accommodation and subsistence.
- (b) Subsistence only: whereby the applicant receives cash to support themselves but who have found their own accommodation.

At the end of March 2023, more than 2,400 asylum seekers were receiving support in Wales. The numbers receiving support have increased since the same quarter in 2022, having remained stable between 2016 and 2020, and fallen between 2020 and 2021.

**Figure 7.6: Number of asylum seekers in receipt of Section 95 support, year ending March 2004 to 2023**



Description of Figure 7.6: The line chart shows the number of asylum seekers receiving support remained steady in the years 2016 to 2020, followed by decreases until 2022, with a slight increase in 2023.

Source: Home Office Immigration statistics, year ending March 2023

In 2022 the war in Ukraine caused many people to flee the conflict. As at the end of August 2022, over 9,000 visas have been issued to people from Ukraine with a sponsor in Wales. The Welsh Government provided a “super sponsor” role to over 4,600 of these. Over 6,900 people with sponsors in Wales had arrived in the UK at the 8 August 2023.



# Vaccination coverage

Vaccination uptake in young children continues to be high but has decreased slightly since its highest levels, and there were decreases seen in uptake in 2022 to 2023 compared to 2021 to 2022.

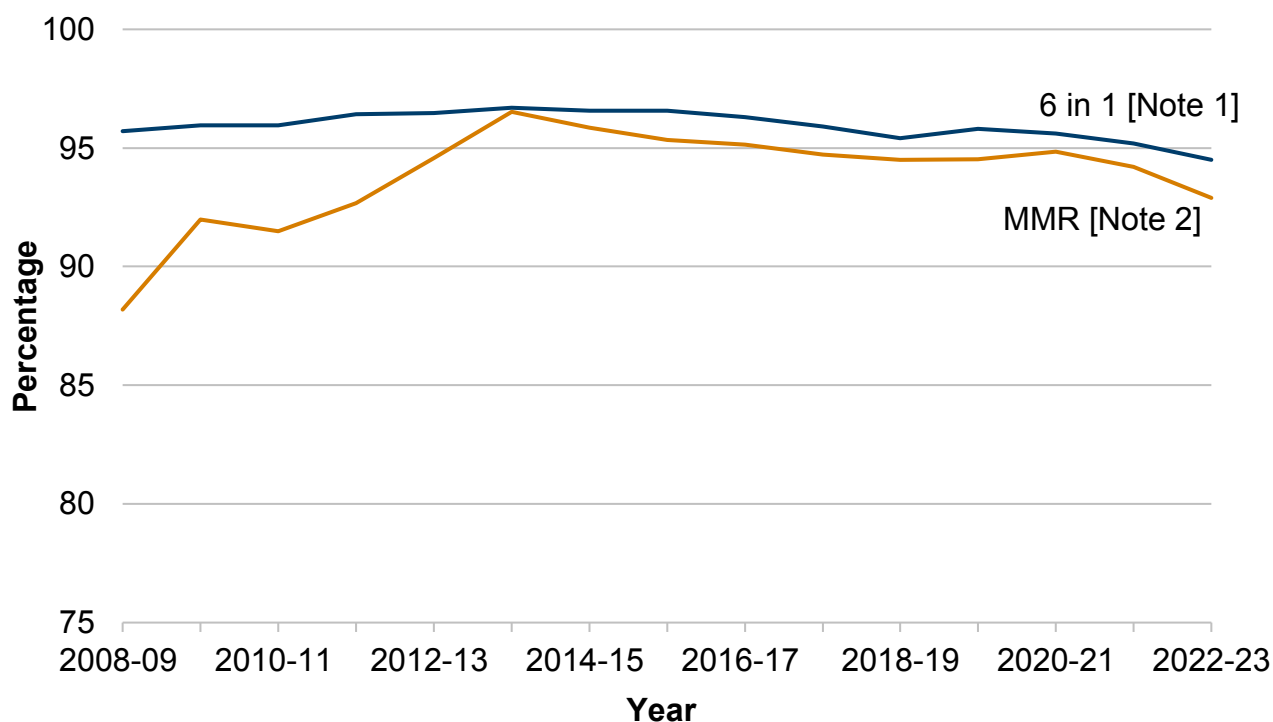
The UN SDG Sustainable Development goal 'Good Health and Well-being' states the importance of providing access to affordable and essential medicines and vaccines. The World Health Organisation has a vision for a world without measles, rubella and congenital rubella syndrome (CRS).

'6 in 1' DTaP/IPV/Hib/HepB1 vaccine uptake (all three doses) in children reaching their first birthday decreased slightly to 94.5%, compared to 95.2% in the previous year.

MMR uptake of one dose by two years of age decreased to 92.9%, compared to 94.2% in the previous year. This is suboptimal for preventing outbreaks of measles (target uptake is 95%).

The proportion of children who were up to date with their routine immunisations by four years of age was 84.5% this year. Nationally, the percentage of children up to date with their routine immunisations by four years of age ranged from 78.4% in the most deprived quintile of LSOAs to 89.6% in the least deprived quintile of LSOAs. The difference in uptake between the least deprived quintile and the most deprived quintile was 11.2 percentage points. This is a widening of the inequality gap compared to 2021 to 2022 (8.5 percentage points). However, further work is needed to identify the root cause of these inequalities and identify interventions to reduce this gap.

**Figure 7.7: Percentage uptake of childhood immunisations in Wales, 2008 to 2009 to 2022 to 2023**



Description of Figure 7.7: The line chart shows percentage uptake of MMR and the 6 in 1 vaccine from 2008-09 to 2022-23. The uptake for the '6 in 1' has remained fairly stable since 2008-09, however there have been a slight decrease in uptake each year since 2019-20. MMR uptake has decreased each year slightly since 2020-21.

Source: National immunisation uptake data, Public Health Wales

[Note 1] The '6 in 1' vaccine, protects against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (Whooping Cough), polio, Hib and Hepatitis B infection. The majority of one year olds referred to in this report would have been eligible for the '6 in 1' vaccine, replacing the '5 in 1' vaccine due at four, eight and 12 months.

[Note 2] MMR protects against measles, mumps and rubella. Data shows uptake

for the first dose at two years of age.

The most recent stage of the COVID-19 vaccination programme was the roll out of the 2023 spring booster for all people 75 years of age and older, the severely immunosuppressed and older adults resident in a care home. At July 2023, for those aged 75 and older, and those with immunosuppression, uptake was higher in men (76.0% and 51.7%) than women (71.8% and 48.2%). This is in contrast to the pattern noted in earlier phases of the COVID-19 vaccination programme, where coverage was usually higher in females. Coverage in care home residents was 71.5% in males and 81.4% in females. Uptake was higher in the Combined White ethnic groups compared to the combined Black, Asian, Mixed and Other ethnic groups. This was the case in all of the spring booster eligibility groups. There was a 28 percentage point gap in uptake between the White (69%) and Black, Asian, Mixed and Other ethnic groups (41%).

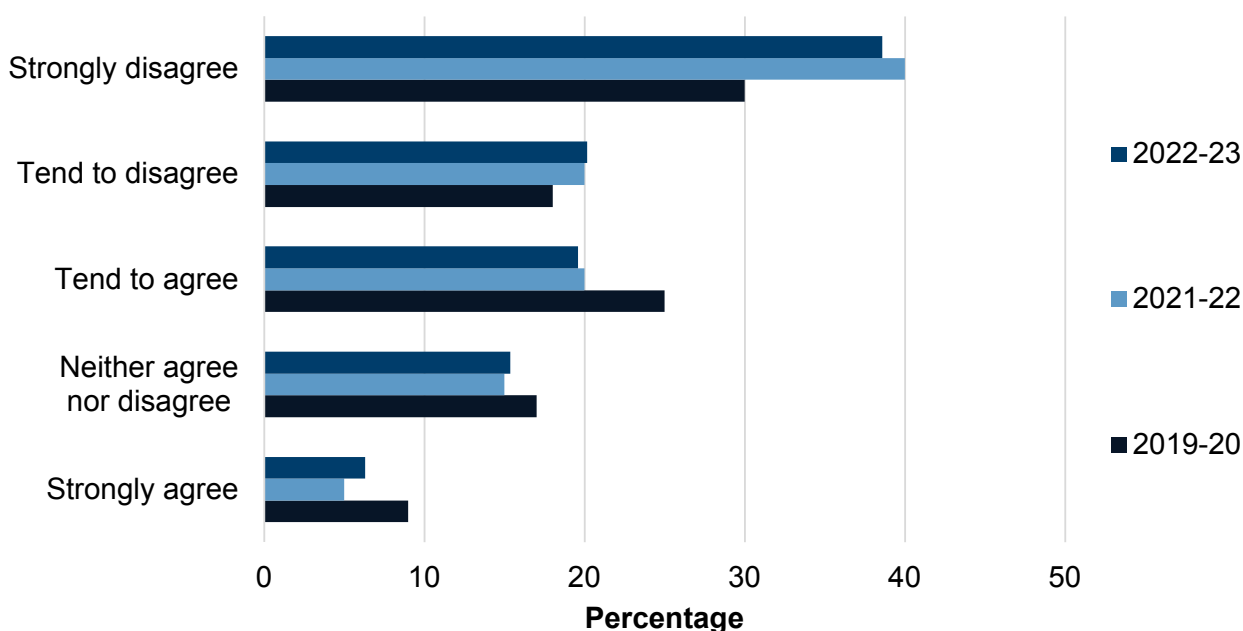
## Physical punishment of children

The physical punishment of children became illegal in Wales on March 21, 2022. The results presented here for 2021 to 2022 were collected from July 2021 to January 2022, before this law came into effect.

Parents and non-parents were asked about their views on smacking children and whether they agreed or disagreed that it was sometimes necessary. There has been a shift in attitudes since this question was asked in 2019 to 2020. In 2019 to 2020, 35% of people said it was sometimes necessary to smack a child compared with 25% in 2021 to 2022, and 26% in 2022 to 2023. The proportion who strongly disagree that smacking is sometimes necessary was 39%, similar to 40% in 2021 to 2022.

In 2022 to 2023, 30% of men and 22% of women responded that it is sometimes necessary to smack a child. 75% of people aged 16 to 24 disagreed or strongly disagreed that smacking is sometimes necessary compared with 40% of people aged 75 and over.

**Figure 7.8: Whether agree smacking is sometimes necessary, 2019 to 2020 to 2022 to 2023 [Note 1]**



Description of Figure 7.8: The bar chart shows whether respondents agree smacking is sometimes necessary, for the years 2019 to 2020 to 2022 to 2023. The majority of responses in 2022 to 2023 disagreed.

[Note 1] In 2019 to 2020 the survey was carried out face to face, from 2021 to 2022 the mode changed to telephone interview.

Source: National Survey for Wales

## World heritage sites

The UN SDG 'Sustainable Cities and Communities' states the importance of protecting and safeguarding the world's natural heritage.

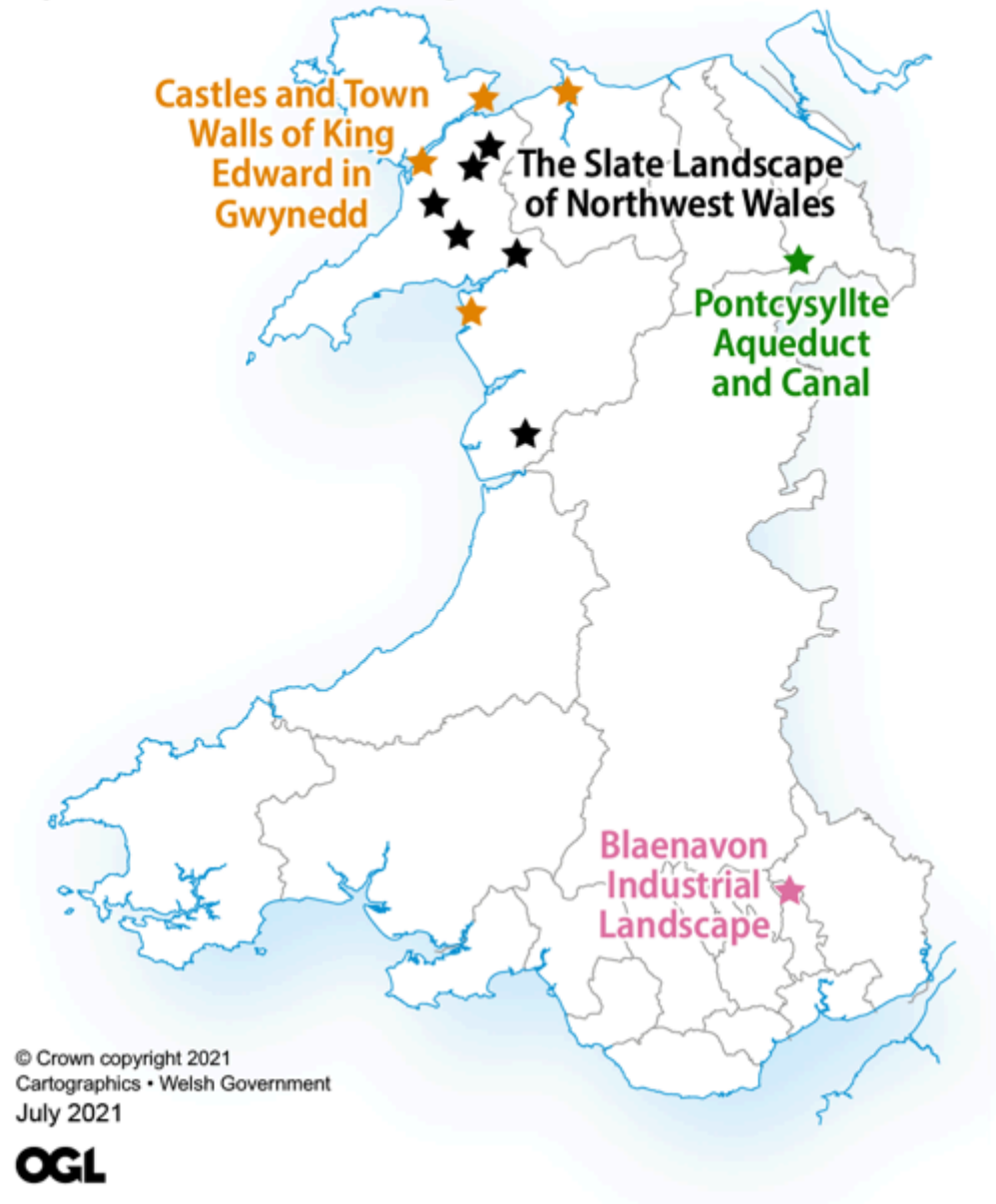
World heritage sites are places of “outstanding universal value to the whole of humanity”. This means that their cultural and/or natural significance is so exceptional that it has special importance for people everywhere, now and in the future.

In 2021 the Slate Landscape of Northwest Wales was added to the UNESCO’s World Heritage List, becoming the fourth in Wales.

This joined Blaenavon Industrial Landscape in south-east Wales, Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal in north-east Wales and the Castles and Town Walls of Edward I in Gwynedd at Caernarfon, Conwy, Beaumaris and Harlech in north-west Wales.

**Figure 7.9: Map of UNESCO world heritage sites in Wales**

**Map of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Wales**



Description of Figure 7.9: Map showing the location of the four world heritage sites in Wales.

Source: [UNESCO World heritage list](#)

## Further reading

[Ending physical punishment of children in Wales](#)

[UNESCO World heritage list \(UNESCO\)](#)

[Statistics on Ukrainians in the UK \(Home Office\)](#)

[Eco Schools](#)

[Keep Wales Tidy \(Eco-Schools\)](#)

## Data sources

Climate change, [National Survey for Wales](#)

[Emissions of greenhouse gases by year, National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory](#)

[Wales Consumption Emissions Footprint](#)

[Understanding the Global Environmental Footprint and Impacts of Welsh Consumption \(JNCC\)](#)

Active Global Citizenship, [National Survey for Wales](#)

[National Referral Mechanism and Duty to Notify statistics UK, end of year summary 2021 \(Home Office\)](#)

[Forced marriage and female genital mutilation \(Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office\)](#)

Global Citizenship Education, analysis provided by WJEC (see corresponding data tables)

Percentage of the student population at Welsh higher education institutions who are international students:

- [StatsWales](#)
- [HESA](#)

Eco-Schools, data provided by Keep Wales Tidy (see corresponding data tables)

Food Poverty, [National Survey for Wales](#)

[Number of asylum seekers in receipt of section 95 support in Wales \(Home Office\)](#)

Ukraine sponsorship scheme statistics, Home Office (HO) and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC):

- [Ukraine Sponsorship scheme](#)
- [Devolved Administrations at local authority level](#)

Vaccination Coverage:

- [National immunisation uptake data \(Public Health Wales\)](#)
- [Wales COVID-19 vaccination enhanced surveillance equality report \(Public Health Wales\)](#)

Physical punishment of children, [National survey for Wales](#)

## Background information

### What is this report?

This report provides an update on progress being made in Wales towards the achievement of the 7 wellbeing goals. It is a statutory report required under the



Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. It is a report concerning the collective progress of Wales as a nation. It is not a report on the performance of an individual organisation. The first report was published in September 2017.

This year we have published a supplementary ethnicity and well-being report. This report contains supplementary analysis of the data contained in the Well-being of Wales report providing breakdowns for ethnic minority groups.

## The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act \(UK legislation\)](#) is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales. It is intended to make the public bodies listed in the Act think more about the long-term, work better with people and communities and each other, look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach. This in turn is intended to create a Wales that we all want to live in, now and in the future.

The Act also puts in place 7 wellbeing goals for a prosperous, healthier, resilient, more equal and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.

For more background information on the Act please see the [Essentials guide](#).

## What are the national indicators for Wales?

The Act required Welsh Ministers to set national indicators to assess progress towards achieving the wellbeing goals. From September 2015 to January 2016 Welsh Government undertook a [widespread public consultation](#) to identify what small set of indicators should be developed to best measure progress against the wellbeing goals. These [national indicators were published in](#)

**March 2016** and laid before the National Assembly for Wales.

In 2021, Welsh Government asked for views on possible new indicators based on the learning from COVID-19. Based on these responses and wider input, some indicators have been updated and 4 new national indicators have been included and **the indicator set was updated in December 2021**.

The national indicators are designed to represent the outcomes for Wales, and its people that will help demonstrate progress towards the 7 wellbeing goals. They are not intended to be performance indicators for an individual organisation.

Full description of the national indicators including their technical definition and information about their data sources and frequency can be found in the **technical document**.

## **How does this relate to the UN Sustainable Development Goals?**

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a transformative plan of action based on **17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals** to address urgent global challenges over the next 15 years. The United Nations' 17 global goals mean that every country on the planet will have to take action to end poverty, promote prosperity and wellbeing for all, protect the environment, and address climate change. Those goals are meant to be far-reaching, people-centred, universal, and transformative. UN member states have committed to working tirelessly towards their implementation by 2030, and Wales will play its part.

Many national indicators will help tell a story of progress in Wales against more than one of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. We have **mapped the indicators** against the goals.

# What are the national milestones?

As well as setting national indicators, the Act also requires Welsh Ministers to set national milestones to assist in measuring whether progress is being made at a national level towards the achievement of the wellbeing goals. Following development and consultation throughout 2021, **the first wave of national milestones were laid before the Senedd in December 2021** and the second wave were laid in November 2022.

# Who produced this report?

The report has been produced by Welsh Government statisticians under the responsibility of the Welsh Government's Chief Statistician. It has been produced in line with the **Code of Practice for Statistics** and is therefore produced independently of political influence.

# Timeliness

The report has been published in September to ensure it is as close as possible to the end of the preceding financial year, but after the publication of the National Survey for Wales which is the source for 13 of the national indicators.

The data for the national indicators will be kept up to date as new datasets are published for those indicators.

# Coverage

This report covers a wide range of subjects, and therefore in this report it is only possible to consider high level measures of progress. More in depth analysis of

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many of these topics are available through the range of statistical releases published by Welsh Government, the ONS or other statistical producers.

The coverage of the report is Wales. For some indicators, reference is made to the position relative to the UK. The narrative against the goals and for each indicator is based on national progress against the goals, and it does not seek to provide a report on progress at different geographical levels. However, data for many indicators are available on [StatsWales](#), or on request, at lower levels of geographical detail.

## Accessibility

This report has been produced as an online report to improve the accessibility, responsiveness, and user experience.

The majority of the data underlying the report, including much more detailed breakdowns, are available on StatsWales and through the StatsWales open data services.

## Are all the data official statistics?

Last year, the Wellbeing of Wales report was given National Statistics status. This means it has been independently assessed as meeting the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality, and value.

Most of the indicators (36) are based on sources that have been published as official statistics. That is, they have been published by government statisticians, or by other public bodies, under the Code of Practice for Statistics.

28 of these indicators are based on sources that have been published as National Statistics. That is the UK Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, signifying compliance with the Code of Practice

for Statistics. This means that they meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality, and public value.

12 indicators are based on other sources such as administrative data held by government departments. 2 indicators currently have no data.

Although not all of the data sources used are from official statistics, the report itself has been developed and published in accordance with the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#).

## What else should I know about the data?

The [quality report for national indicators reports](#) alongside this release provides links to quality information about each of the data sources used to measure the national indicators, or provides that information where it does not exist elsewhere.

Whilst most of the narrative in the Wellbeing of Wales report is drawn from national indicators, some of the contextual data is from other official statistics or other statistics and evidence where we have considered it relevant to the overall narrative. The data not collected through official statistics sources are used in the Wellbeing of Wales report for context, but we cannot always provide assurance about data quality. As the data in the progress report have been sourced from a variety of datasets, the level of quality information available will differ in each case. We have provided links to the original sources and their quality information where they exist.

Throughout the report, references to calendar, financial and academic years are used. When referencing academic years, '/' are used ( e.g. 2021/22), and for financial years '-' are used ( e.g. 2021-22).

# Who are the users of this report?

It is anticipated this report will be used by Welsh Government; the Senedd (including Members of the Senedd and its committees); the media; and the general public to help understand (i) the Wellbeing of Wales (ii) progress being made against the 7 wellbeing goals and (iii) where Wales is making progress against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

The national indicators and milestones can help public bodies who are subject to the future generations law understand further the nature of the change expected in achieving the wellbeing goals. The national indicators should be considered as useful evidence to assist public bodies in understanding the main areas where progress should be made in relation to the wellbeing goals.

The national indicators will also have a specific role as they must be referred to by public services boards in Wales when they are analysing the state of economic, social, environmental, and cultural wellbeing in their areas. The report should also be used by public bodies to develop and review wellbeing assessments and to set and review wellbeing objectives required under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.

The annual Wellbeing of Wales report must also be taken into account by the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales when they prepare and publish their 'Future Generations Report'.

## UK context

For the UK as a whole, the [Office for National Statistics has a National Wellbeing Programme](#). The [well-being dashboard \(Office for National Statistics\)](#) provides a visual overview of 44 headline national wellbeing indicators and can be explored by the 10 areas of life (domains) or by the direction of change.

In Scotland, the National Performance Framework (NPF) sets out a vision for national wellbeing and measures achievement in relation to this. A revised NPF was launched in June 2018 following an open review process and is underpinned by statute (the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015).

The revised NPF maps its eleven National Outcomes to the seventeen UN

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and forms an important part of Scotland's localisation of the SDG agenda. Progress towards the vision set out in the NPF is reported on in an open and transparent way on the [National Performance Framework website](#) through 81 national indicators covering a broad range of social, economic and environmental measures. In addition to showing performance at the national level the data can be explored by a range of demographic and geographic subgroups to see whether outcomes are being realised for different parts of Scottish society.

In Northern Ireland, the principal mechanism for assessing societal wellbeing is the wellbeing framework of 12 outcomes that was developed by the previous Executive, consulted on and refined during 2016-2017. This framework, which contains 49 supporting population indicators, overarches the [Northern Ireland Civil Service Outcomes Delivery Plan](#).

Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency continues to participate in the ONS-led Measuring National Well-being programme and publish a [wellbeing analysis \(Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency\)](#) based on the ONS wellbeing measures, where Northern Ireland data availability allows.

## Other related links

[Well-being of Future Generations Act \(Future Generations Commissioner for Wales\)](#)

[Future Trends](#)

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**National Survey for Wales**

**United Nations Sustainable Development Goals**

**UK Voluntary National Review (Department for International Development)**

**UK voluntary national review: Welsh supplementary report 2019**

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