



Working together better in Wales

A law in Wales about working better together
and spending money responsibly to deliver public
services



This document was written by the **Welsh Government**. It is an easy read
version of the '**Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act**'.

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How to use this document



This is an easy read document. But you may still need support to read it. Ask someone you know to help you.



Words in **bold blue writing** may be hard to understand. You can check what the words in blue mean on **page 24**.



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Introduction



This document is about a law called the **Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act**.



We will call it the **Act** for short in this document.



The **Act** is about organisations working together in Wales to deliver **public services**.



Public services are important services everyone needs, like healthcare, transport, and rubbish collection. They are overseen by government and paid for with public money.



The **Act** is also about how **public services** spend their money to pay for goods and services.



They should be run and paid for in a fair and responsible way.



They should help improve peoples' lives.



Deciding who will deliver **public services** should be done in a fair way. And think about the effect it has on people's well-being.

The Act:



- Has set up a group called the **Social Partnership Council**.



- Makes sure Welsh Ministers talk with partners on the **Social Partnership Council** when meeting their well-being goals.



- Makes sure **public bodies** talk to their workers and aim to agree their well-being goals and how they will achieve them.



Public bodies are organisations that run **public services**. For example, the NHS or the local council.



- Will make sure **public bodies** are responsible about **procurement**.



Procurement means paying other organisations to provide things that you need. For example, it could be a local council paying for office furniture.



- Will make sure **public bodies** write a plan for **procurement**.



- Will make sure **public bodies** check that organisations they work with meet their goals and work responsibly.



- Will make sure **public bodies** and Welsh Ministers report on their work to do with **procurement**.

Why this law is important



The Act makes sure that work done for and paid for by the public is done in a fair and responsible way.



The **Act** works with other laws in Wales. For example:

- the **Equality Act 2010**
- and the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**.

The **Act** is also about:

- good **social partnership**



Social partnership means workers and employers working together to solve problems



- setting goals on how to work well together



- and how to help improve the well-being of Wales.



Working together can help make sure everyone can get involved and have a say.



The coronavirus pandemic was very difficult and challenging. But it also gave organisations a chance to work better together.



The **Social Partnership Council** advises Welsh Ministers about the best ways **social partnerships** can work.



The **Social Partnership Council** has a website with useful information. You can see it here: www.gov.wales/social-partnership-council



It is really important for workers in **public services** to be part of this work. Not just the people in charge.



Workers have a good understanding of what services are really like. They should be more involved in making decisions.



This already happens in many countries in Europe.



We want Wales to be a **Fair Work** nation.

Fair Work is work which:

- meets the rights of workers
- supports their well-being
- and gives them a say.

This means our workplaces would offer workers things like:



- Opportunities for training and development in work.



- The ability to have a say and be listened to.



- More security of pay and working hours – this means workers are not likely to lose their pay or hours.



These things are important for making Wales fair and equal.



We can help to make changes in some workforces, but not others.



For example, we have less of a say over:

- the workforces in private businesses



- and the workforces that are run by UK Government.



We have a say about jobs that are overseen by the Welsh Government. Many **public service** jobs are overseen by us.



Procurement is a really important part of making sure we have good **public services**.



Procurement must be done in a careful and responsible way.

We must think about how the way we buy and organise services affects things like:



- our communities



- our environment



- and the **economy**.

The **economy** is about how a country uses its money, land and people to make, use, buy and sell goods and services.



For example, we can try to make sure that the money we spend helps our communities and our environment.

There are lots of ways we could improve **procurement**. For example:



- We need to make sure organisations are **not cutting corners** when they are buying things and delivering their services. The cheapest things are not always the best.



- We need to make sure they are not causing damage to things like our communities and environment.



- We need to improve how we collect information. And we need reports on how organisations are acting responsibly.

The Social Partnership Council



The **Social Partnership Council** is a group made up of government, employers, and workers. They will give advice to Welsh Ministers on different issues.



The workers on the **Social Partnership Council** are represented by someone from a **trade union**.

A **trade union** is a group who try and protect the rights of workers.



The **Social Partnership Council** is a national council for all of Wales.

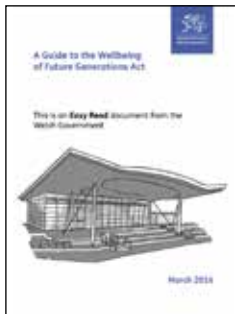


The **Social Partnership Council** is chaired by the First Minister of Wales - Eluned Morgan.



It gives information and advice about the things in the **Act**.

The Act and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act



The **Act** has a lot in common with the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**.



The **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015** looks at the well-being of Wales in different areas, like:

- The **economy**
- The environment
- The future of Wales



There is a list of well-being goals in the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**.



Public bodies have to work towards achieving these goals. And they must set their own well-being goals.

Social Partnership Duty



Public bodies report to the **Social Partnership Council** every year.



They report on how they have worked in **social partnership** when setting and making decisions about meeting their well-being goals.



Welsh Ministers need to talk to the **Social Partnership Council** about their well-being goals, too.

Fair Work



In 2019, a report was written for us by the **Fair Work Commission**. It is called the **Fair Work Wales** report.



It was about the well-being of workers.



We want to make sure employers look after the well-being of their workers.



For example, by making sure workers are paid fairly.

Responsible procurement



Around £10 million pounds is spent in Wales on services and goods through **procurement**.



The UK Government has a new law about **procurement** too. Wales will also have to follow it. It is called the **Procurement Act 2023**.



The **Procurement Act 2023** is more about the process that has to be followed in public **procurement**.



The **Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act** is more about doing **procurement** responsibly.



The **Community Benefits toolkit** is an example of responsible **procurement** in Wales.



It looks at how communities in Wales can benefit from **procurement**. For example, through creating new jobs.



Fair work has also been an important goal in **procurement** in Wales over the past few years.



Public bodies and organisations involved in **procurement** will need to show how they make decisions that support these areas of Welsh life:



- Social – how we all live, work and enjoy life together



- **Economy**



- Environment



- Culture – this is to do with our ideas, traditions and ways of living



The **Act** also says we must have a **procurement strategy**. A **strategy** is a big plan, it will say what must be done for **procurement** to run well.



This will help make sure **public bodies** work in the same ways when it comes to **procurement**.

Why the Act is good for Wales

Here are some of the main things the **Act** helps achieve:



- The **Social Partnership Council** helps give good advice to Welsh Ministers.



- The Act helps to improve **public services** and well-being in Wales.



- The **Social Partnership Council** provides leadership across Wales by providing a good example.



- Workers are more involved in setting well-being goals.



- **Public bodies** are more responsible for their decisions.



- **Public bodies** think more about the importance of fair work.

Hard words

Economy

The economy is about how a country uses its money, land and people to make, use, buy and sell goods and services.

Fair work

This is work which:

- meets the rights of workers
- supports their well-being
- and gives them a say.

Procurement

Procurement means paying other organisations to provide things that you need. For example, it could be a local council paying for office furniture, or for a business to run social care services.

Public bodies

Public bodies are organisations that deliver public services. For example, the NHS.

Public services

Public services are important services everyone needs, like healthcare, transport, schools and rubbish collection. They are overseen by government and paid for with public money.

Social partnership

This means employers, workers and government working together to solve common problems.

Trade Union

This is a group who try and protect the rights of workers.