

Youth work in Wales, 2021-22

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SDR 215/2022

Youth work provides and facilitates an environment within which young people can relax, have fun, and feel secure, supported and valued. It is intended that through non-formal and informal educational opportunities and experiences youth workers challenge young people to enhance their life chances.

Young people aged 11 to 25 can be registered members of the youth work sector and have the opportunity to gain national accreditations such as the Duke of Edinburgh award.

Youth work in Wales is delivered through the 22 local authorities each year and also through the voluntary sector. This release relates to information collated by the statutory youth work sector in Wales.

This set of statistics covers part of the period of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Some of the figures in last year's release, in particular the 'members' section, were substantially impacted as outreach was affected by the pandemic and restrictions in place. These figures in this release show large changes compared to the 2020-21 period as numbers begin to return to previous levels. This should be kept in mind when making comparisons to previous years.

Compared with the previous year, youth work membership increased substantially whilst staffing increased slightly. Income and expenditure also both increased compared with the previous year.

Main points

- There were 68,766 registered members of statutory youth work sector provision in 2021-22, up 110% on 2020-21 but still below levels seen before then.
- At March 2022, there were around 801 full-time equivalent youth work management and delivery staff working in local authorities in Wales, an increase of 6% compared with the previous year.
- The total income for youth work provision across Wales in 2021-22 was £42.7 million. Total income increased by 11% compared with 2020-21, with core budget increasing by 7% and additional income increasing by 14% compared with 2020-21.
- The total spend for youth work provision across Wales in 2021-22 was £42.5 million, an increase of 12% compared with the previous year.

About this release

This annual statistical release presents detailed information about the statutory youth work sector in Wales for the 2021-22 financial year. The release includes some comparisons with previous years.

The quality of the data continues to develop, as centrally we improve the guidance and definitions used within the survey, and local authorities providing youth work refine their management systems and data. The known quality issues are highlighted in the [Key Quality Information section](#).

Detailed data can be found on [StatsWales](#).

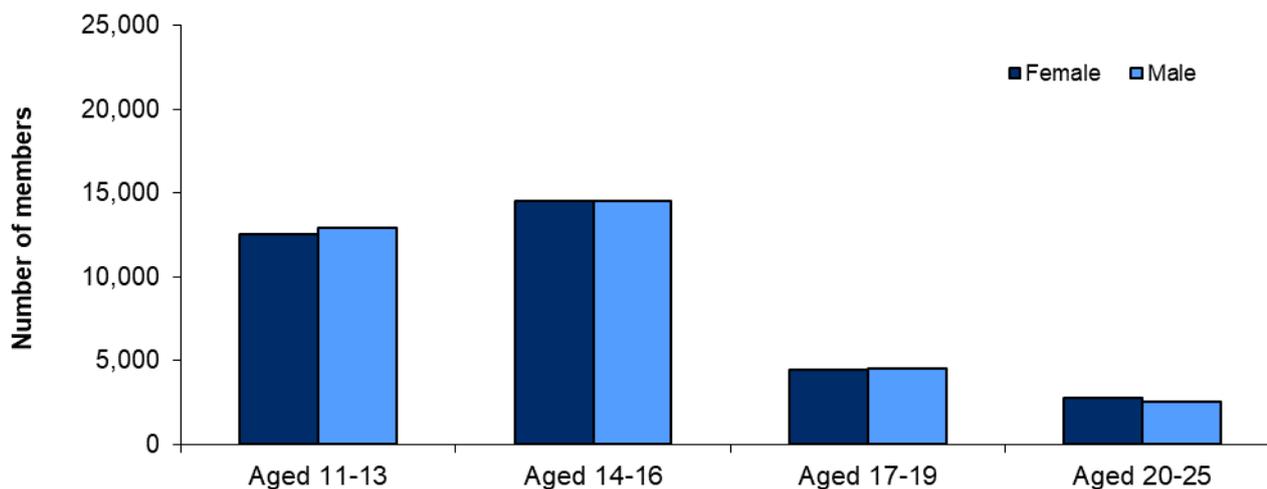
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Registered members of youth work provision in Wales¹

This section mainly contains comparisons with 2020-21 but also some with 2019-20. Isle of Anglesey did not submit data in 2019-20 and the comparisons should be considered with this in mind.

Chart 1: Registered members of youth work provision by age and gender, 2021-22



There were 68,766 registered members of youth work provision in 2021-22, an increase of 110% compared to 2020-21. There was a substantial drop in registered members between 2019-20 and 2020-21. The number of registered members in 2021-22 is 17% lower than the figure recorded for the 2019-20 period.

The total of registered members comprised of 50% female and 50% male, a slight change from last year (51% female and 49% male). Of all 11 to 25 year olds, 12% were registered members of youth work provision in 2021-22, up from 6% in 2020-21. 42% of all registered members were in the 14-16 age group.

¹ Young people registered on local authority Reach systems as active during the year (i.e. those for whom a name, address and date of birth was known).

Chart 2: Proportion of registered members of youth work provision by age 2021-22

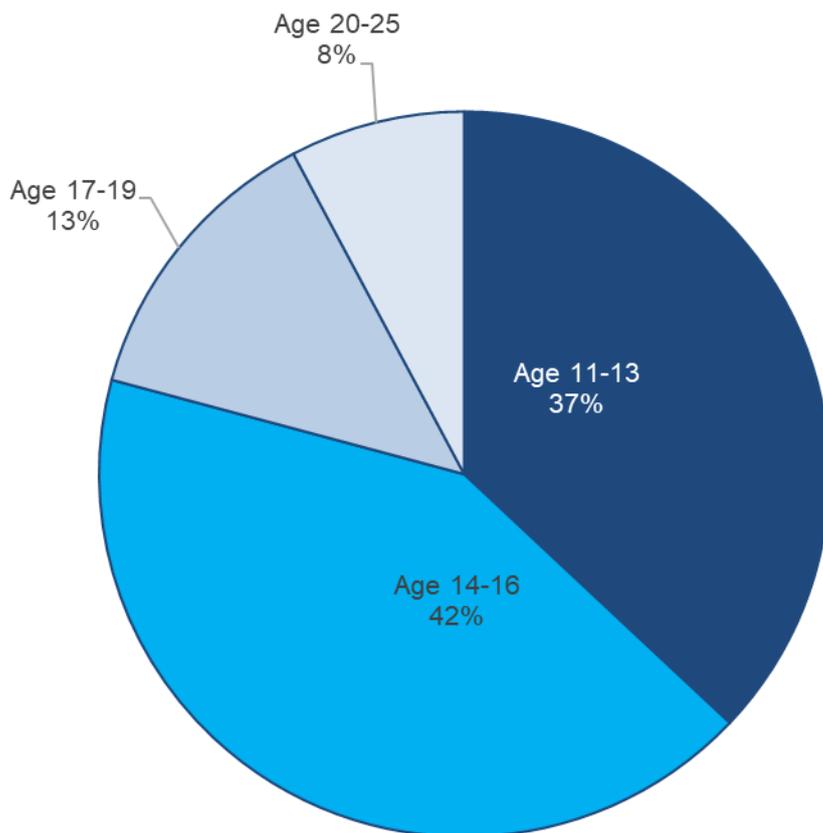
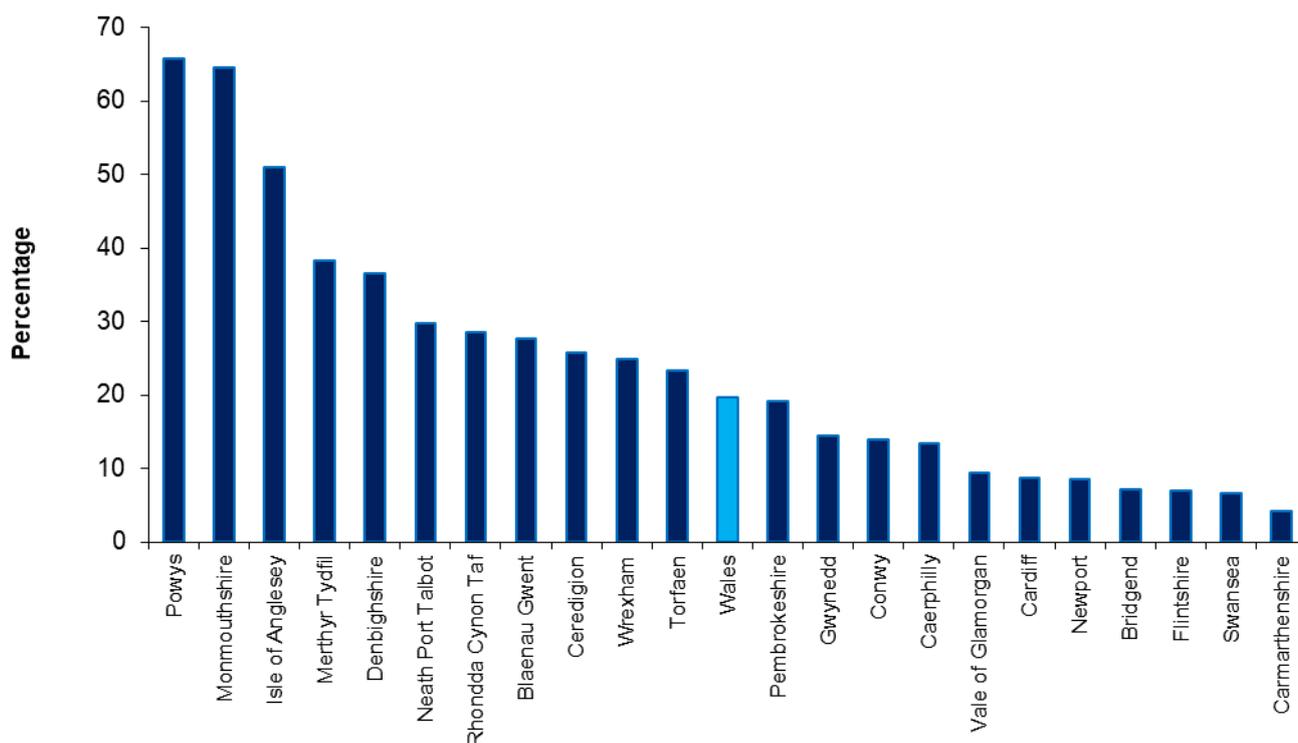


Chart 3: Registered members of youth work provision as a proportion of the population, aged 11 to 19, 2021-22



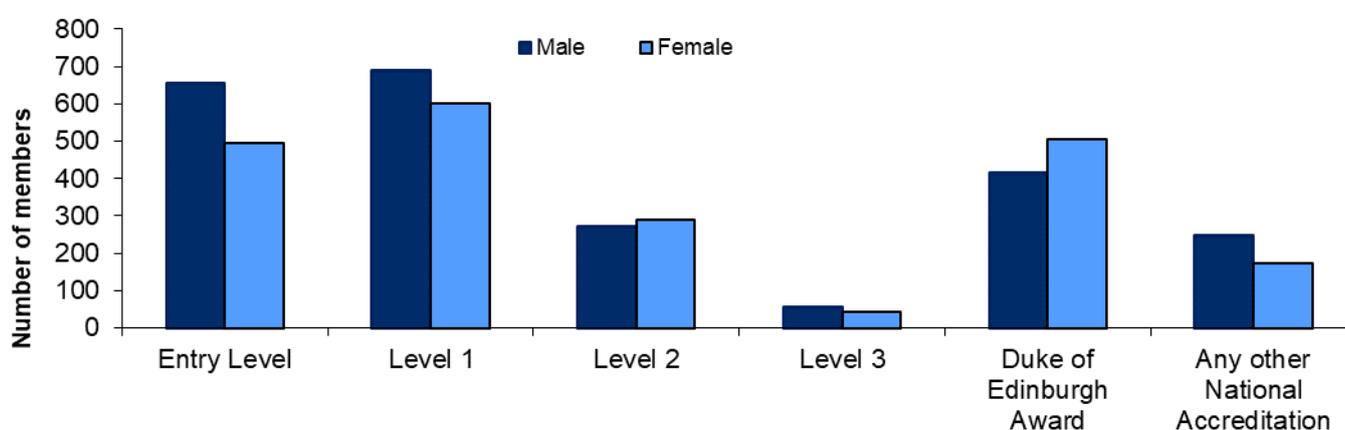
The registered members aged 11-19 years represented 20% of the 11-19 population in 2021-22, up 11 percentage points on 2020-21 and 5 percentage points below 2019-20. The proportion ranged from 66% in Powys to 4% in Carmarthenshire. Almost all local authorities saw an increase in membership as outreach began to recover since the start of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Cardiff and Swansea were the only exceptions, where registered members aged 11-19 as a proportion of the 11-19 population decreased by 0.9 and 0.4 percentage points respectively compared with 2020-21. The greatest increases were seen in Powys (up 55 percentage points) and Isle of Anglesey (up 33 percentage points).

Accreditation of members

The survey collects information on individuals gaining accreditations through youth work provision differentiated between national and locally recognised accreditations. There were 4,444 young people who were reported as having gained a national accreditation in 2021-22, 6% of all registered members. A decrease of 2 percentage points on 2020-21.

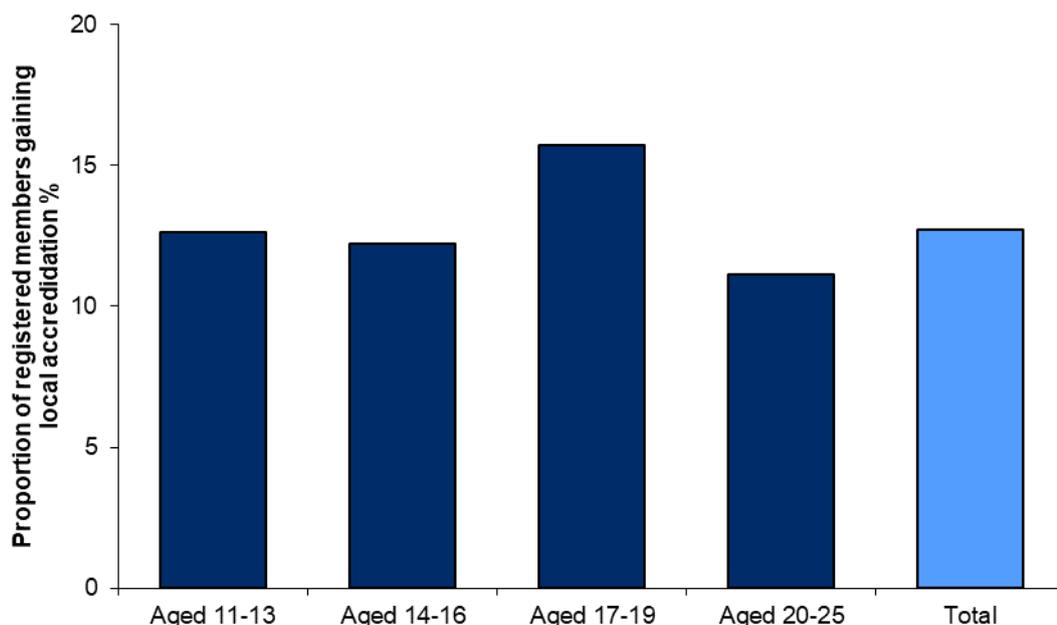
There were 8,762 young people reported as having gained a local accreditation (13% of members, an increase compared to 11% in 2020-21). A young person can gain both national and local accreditations.

Chart 4: Members gaining national accreditations within youth work provision by level and award, 2021-22



Level 1 accounted for the highest proportion of accreditations in 2021-22. The number of Duke of Edinburgh Awards accredited through the statutory youth work sector increased to 919 compared to 503 in 2020-21. The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme is also offered through the voluntary sector, and some schools and colleges. There were increases in the number of members gaining national accreditations across all levels except the 'any other national accreditation' category compared to 2020-21, though the size of the increase varied. Overall, the number of members gaining national accreditations was up 52% on 2020-21.

Chart 5: Proportion of members gaining local accreditations within the youth work provision by age group, 2021-22

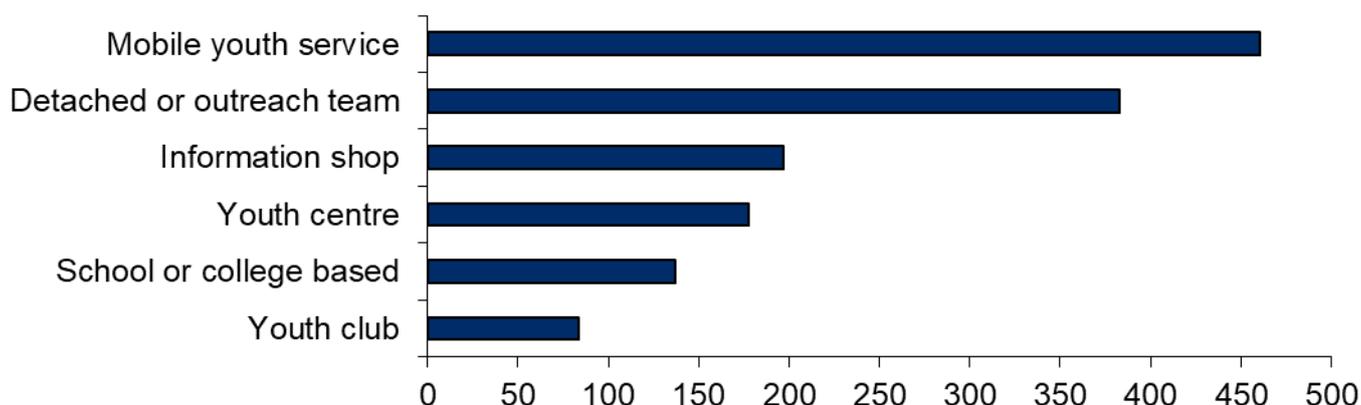


In 2021-22, 13% of all members gained a local accreditation. The highest proportion was by those aged 17-19 (16%) with the lowest by those aged 20-25 (11%). As with national accreditations, the number of members gaining a local accreditation was up substantially on 2020-21 (an increase of 135%).

Youth work settings and projects

The survey collects information about the settings and projects for youth work provision that were running across Wales. Youth work projects may be delivered by the local authority alone, or in partnership with other statutory or voluntary bodies.

Chart 6: Average number of members per youth work setting, 2021-22



Mobile youth services had the highest average number of members per setting in 2021-22 at around 460 registered members per setting. Youth clubs had the lowest, with an average of around 84 registered members per setting. Numbers have increased for all settings with the exception of school or college based settings where the average number of members per setting has decreased from 153 to 137.

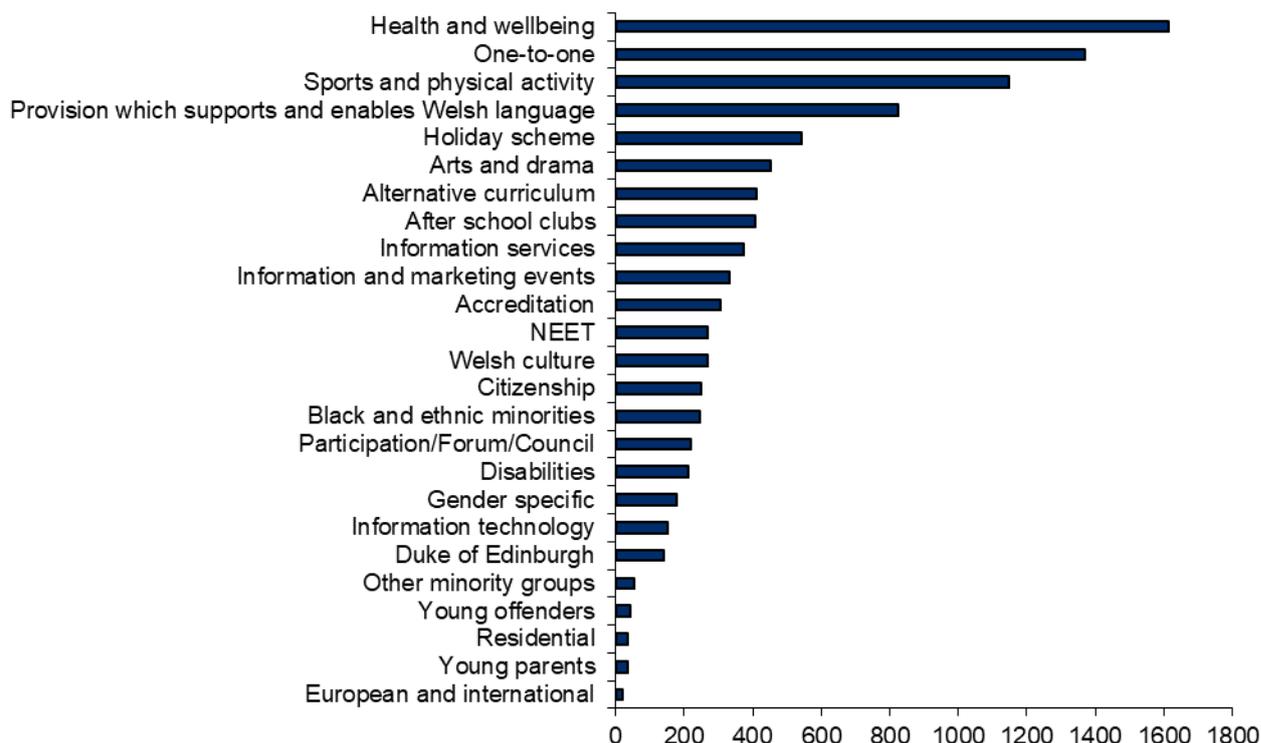
Information shops saw the biggest percentage change compared to 2020-21 where the average number of members per setting increased by 273% from 53 to 197.

Table 1: Registered members attending projects at different settings, 2021-22

Setting Type	Total number of Settings	Total number of registered members attending
Detached or outreach team	116	44,431
School or college based	289	39,539
Youth club	262	21,898
Youth centre	91	16,154
Mobile youth service	24	11,046
Information shop	38	7,468
Total	820	140,536

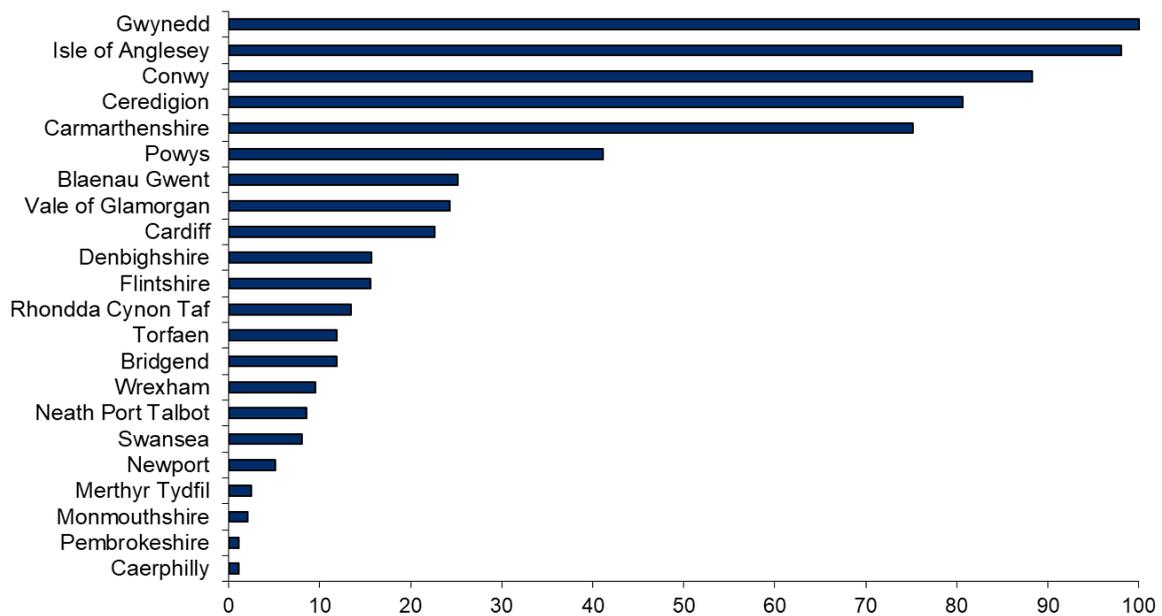
There will be some overlap of membership, with members able to interact with each of the different settings, and for example with more than one youth club or centre.

Chart 7: Number of youth work projects, by type of provision, 2021-22



The type of individual projects was also recorded. Most numerous in terms of projects were health and wellbeing projects with 1,612 in Wales, followed by one-to-one projects (1,369). Projects are recorded multiple times if they are relevant to more than one category. For example the same project could be recorded within arts and drama, Welsh culture and residential.

Chart 8: Percentage of youth work projects delivered entirely or mainly through the medium of Welsh, 2021-22 (r)

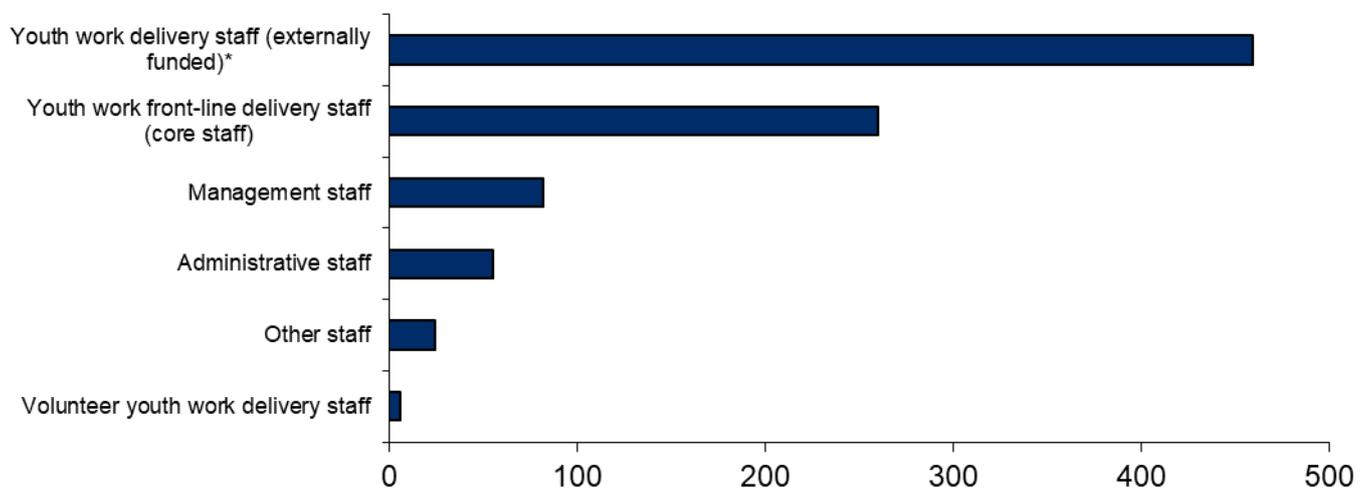


(r) Revised on 10 November 2022. Chart 8 showed that 0% of projects in Pembrokeshire were delivered through the medium of Welsh when the actual figure is 1%.

Of all projects delivered, 24% were delivered entirely or mainly through the medium of Welsh, an 8 percentage point decrease on 2020-21 but above levels seen prior to that (16% in 2019-20 and 2018-19). The proportion of projects delivered entirely or mainly through the Welsh language was highest in Gwynedd (100%) followed by Isle of Anglesey (98%) and Conwy (88%). It was lowest in Caerphilly (1%) and Pembrokeshire (1%).

Youth work staff

Chart 9: Number of full-time equivalent youth work staff, 2021-22



* Comprised of 371 non-European funded posts and 88 European funded posts.

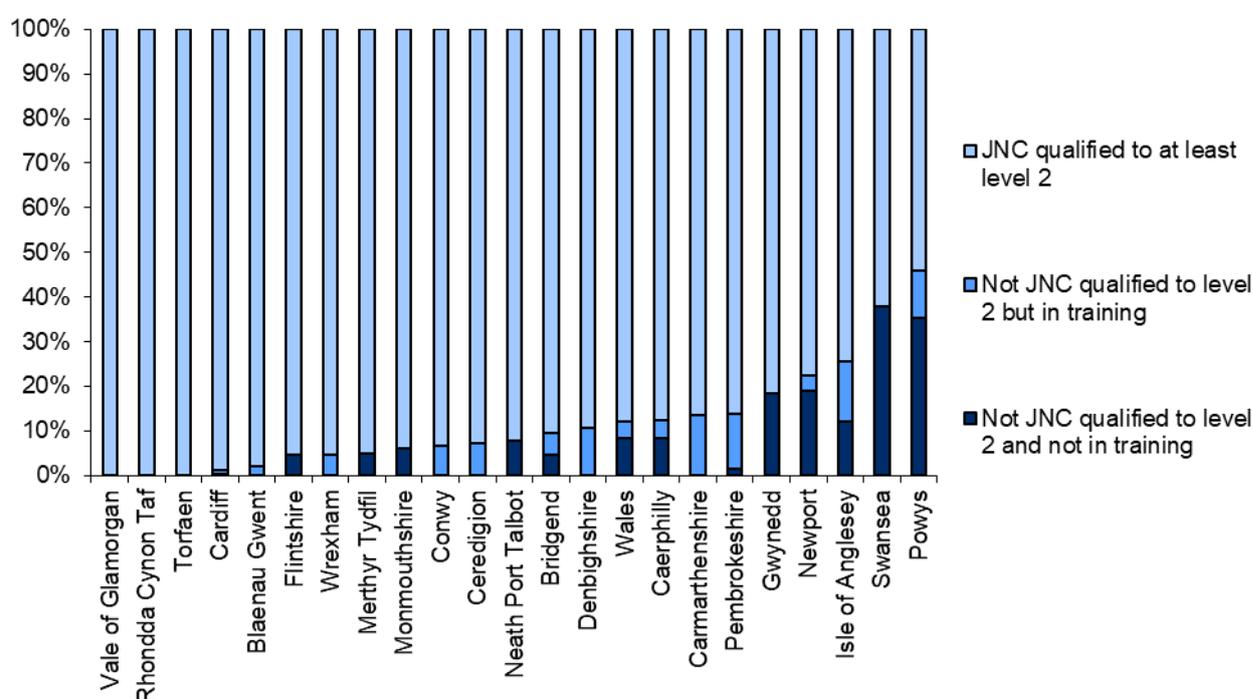
At March 2022, there were 801 full-time equivalent (FTE) youth work delivery staff working across local authorities in Wales (excluding volunteer staff). The FTE delivery posts comprised of 10% management staff and 90% youth work front-line staff (covering both core and externally funded staff).

Compared with the previous year, there was a 6% increase of FTE youth work delivery staff numbers in Wales. Within this increase the number of externally funded delivery staff increased by 15%, core front line delivery staff decreased by 3% and management staff decreased by 3%.

There were a further 6 FTE volunteer youth work delivery staff, and 80 FTE administrative and other staff, giving a total of 886 FTE youth work staff in Wales at March 2022.

Qualifications

Chart 10: Percentage of youth work delivery staff (FTE) by JNC qualification, 2021-22



In 2021-22, 88% of all youth work delivery staff (FTE) held at least level 2 Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) professional qualifications², the same proportion as in 2020-21. Of those without a level 2 or above JNC qualification, 32% were in training (40% in 2020-21). More detailed information can be found on [StatsWales](#).

Staff ratios

The ratio of FTE management staff to other FTE youth work delivery staff in Wales in 2021-22 was around 1:9.

The ratio of registered members aged 11-25 to FTE youth work delivery staff (excluding volunteer and management staff) was 96 young people per worker in 2021-22. For the 11-19 population, the ratio was

² Degree level, diploma, NOCN3, or any other qualification from JNC level 2 upwards. The JNC endorses professional qualifications for youth and community workers.

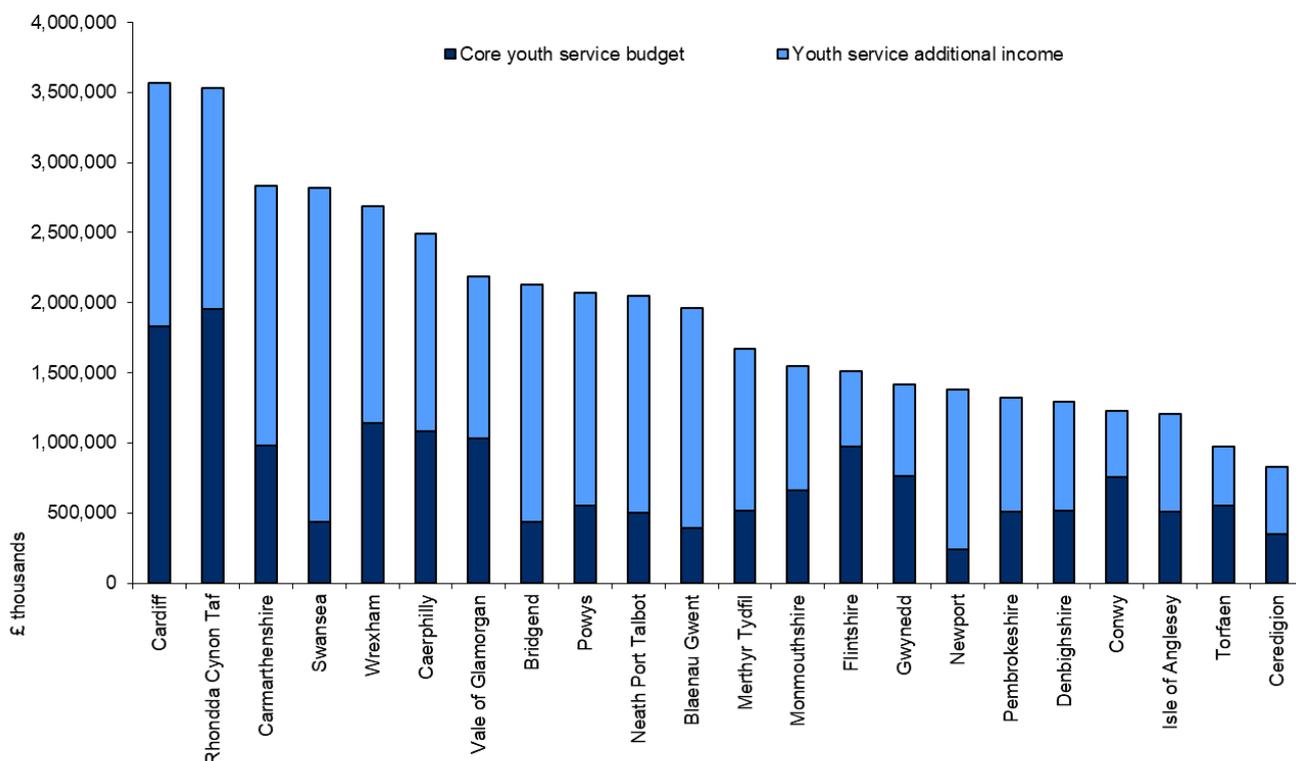
88:1. These ratios reflect the total registered membership and not attendance at sessions. The ratios are substantially higher than in 2020-21 due to the increase in registered members.

Youth work finance

The total income for youth work in 2021-22 was £42.7 million. Compared with the previous year, total income increased by around 11%. There was increase in total income in 19 local authorities.

The total of core youth work budgets in 2021-22 was £16.7 million, a 7% increase compared with 2020-21. The contribution made by core youth work budgets to the total youth work income across Wales varied between authorities, ranging from 64% in Flintshire to 16% in Swansea.

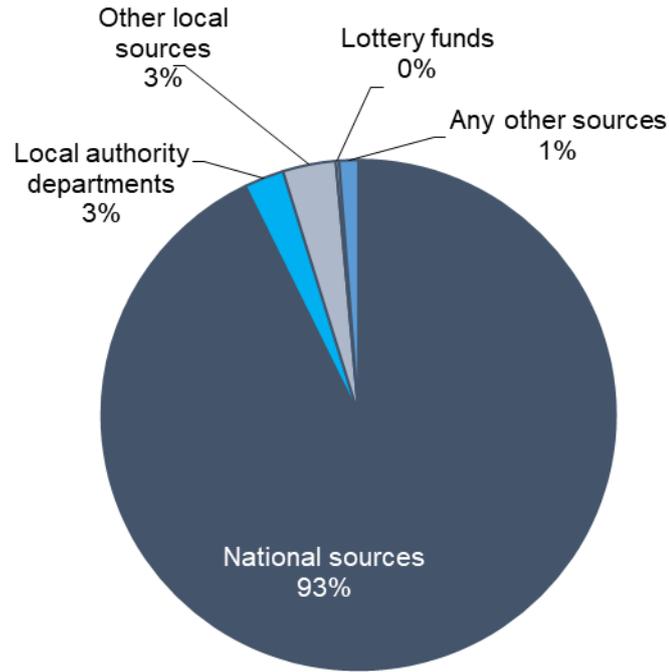
Chart 11: Core youth work budget and youth and additional income, 2021-22 (r)



(r) Revised on 31 October 2022. Chart 11 was not showing a value for core youth service budget for Ceredigion.

In addition to the core youth work budget, the total budget for youth work in Wales for 2021-22 included income of £26.0 million from other sources. ‘National sources’ contributed the majority (£24.1 million or 93%) of these funds. Within that, £4.2 million was provided by Families First and £11.8 million from the Youth Work Strategy Support Grant. More data can be found on [StatsWales](https://stats.wales.gov.uk/).

Chart 12: Source of additional income as percentage of total additional income, 2021-22



Expenditure

The total spend by youth work provision in Wales in 2021-22 was £42.5 million, an increase of around 12% compared with 2020-21. Expenditure ranged from £3.6 million in Cardiff to £0.9 million in Ceredigion.

The majority of spending was on employees, at 72% of all expenditure. The remaining expenditure included 12% on resources and 4% on accommodation.

A further 2% of expenditure was grant aid from statutory youth work sector budgets to the voluntary sector. Including contributions from the wider local authority budget, local authorities provided around £998,000 in grant aid to voluntary youth services in Wales during the year.

Spend per head of population

In 2021-22, the total spend by youth work provision per person aged 11-25 years was £75, a 12% increase compared with 2020-21. The core youth work budget per person aged 11-25 was £29 in 2021-22, an increase of 7% compared with 2020-21. Full details can be seen in Table 4 in the data tables published alongside this release.

Key quality information

This statistical release, and the accompanying data tables, presents detailed information about the statutory youth work sector in Wales for the year 2021-22. The release is produced annually with the statistics used within the Welsh Government, by local government and practitioners to monitor trends in membership, finance and youth work staff in Wales. The [Youth Work Strategy for Wales](#) was launched in the summer of 2019 and sets out a vision for the future of youth work in Wales. Youth work provides and facilitates an environment within which young people can relax, have fun, feel secure, supported and valued. It is intended that through non-formal and informal educational opportunities and experiences youth workers challenge young people to enhance their life chances.

The Interim Youth Work Board produced its [final report](#) on achieving a sustainable delivery model for youth work services in Wales in September 2021.

Data are collected as part of the statutory youth work sector provision in Wales by a survey carried out each year amongst the 22 local authorities in Wales during the summer. Full returns were obtained from 22 authorities in 2021-22 and 2020-21. Previous editions of this release have contained issues with data completeness and therefore comparisons between years generally need to be made with caution.

Information is collected via Excel spreadsheets which are transferred via the Afon file transfer website which provides a secure method for users to submit data. Copies of the current [youth work data collection form and guidance](#) are available.

The spreadsheets allow respondents to validate their own data before sending to the Welsh Government. Local authorities are asked to provide explanatory comments where large changes have occurred. This helps ensure that the data received by the Welsh Government is already of a high quality. Examples of validation checks within the forms include year-on-year changes, cross checks with other relevant data tables and checks to ensure data is logically consistent, for example comparison of registered membership against population estimates.

Once data is received by Welsh Government, it goes through further validation and verification checks, for example, common sense checks, arithmetic consistency checks, cross checks against the data for the previous year and tolerance checks. Validation errors are followed up with local authorities to seek resolution, in the small number of cases we fail to get an answer within a reasonable timescale, we may use imputation if appropriate to fix the error. The method of imputation and the affected data is highlighted through this 'quality information' section.

The quality of the data collected through the statutory youth work sector provision in Wales survey continues to develop, as centrally we improve the guidance and definitions used within the survey, and local authorities providing youth work provision continue to refine their management systems and data, to ensure that all the data gathered for the audit is robust, consistent, current and accurate. Both of these issues impact upon the comparability of data from year to year.

Known data quality issues are highlighted by section below.

Prior to 2009-10, the collection and publication of statistics about Youth Work in Wales was carried out by the Local Government Data Unit ~ Wales on behalf of the Welsh [Assembly] Government. On 1st April 2010, responsibility for this work transferred to Knowledge and Analytical Services of the Welsh Government. The data have not yet been assessed as National Statistics.

Membership

From the 2010-11 survey onwards, local authorities were asked to only include young people registered on the Reach system as active during the year (i.e. those for whom a name, address and date of birth was known.) (Reach is the term used to measure the number of young people engaged in youth work provision from the youth population within a designated area/local authority.) In previous years some local authorities may have additionally included anonymous members. Given this, and improvements to some authorities recording systems, it is not appropriate to compare this data on a like for like basis with earlier years.

Accreditations

The 2010-11 survey, for the first time, differentiated between young people who had received nationally and locally recognised accreditations:-

Nationally recognised accreditations are those successfully completed under nationally recognised programmes that are assessed and verified, for example: Duke of Edinburgh (DofE), BELA; Agored Cymru/OCN; ASDAN; and Personal Social Development (PSD).

Locally recognised awards are those successfully completed that are not part of the national programme and are assessed locally, for example: individual modules of DofE or PSD; Mayor's Awards; In-house Certification; Children/Youth University and John Muir Award.

Note that an individual may receive nationally and locally recognised accreditations and as such the data from 2010-11 onwards are not comparable with previous years, which was a count of all those with any accreditation.

Prior to 2012-13 information on accreditations was collected by broad age group. For the 2012-13 survey onwards local accreditations continue to be collected on this basis, but national accreditations are now collected by level or award.

Projects

Prior to 2010-11 there is thought to have been inconsistent interpretations in the recording of projects by local authorities, whereby some authorities may have counted one project within a number of project types, whereas others have limited to including each project into one or two project types. From the 2010-11 survey, the location or setting of projects (youth club etc.) has been separated from the type of provision (holiday scheme, Welsh language). Again, this change in the method of collection means that a direct comparison should not be made with previous years.

Note that the count of settings is not the total of projects, as there may be several projects running at each setting. Similarly, the type of project information cannot be summed to give a total number of projects, as the same project can be multiple counted.

From 2013-14, information on the medium of delivery of projects has been collected (although only included in release from 2014-15), with local authorities identifying projects delivered mainly or entirely (70% or above) through the medium of Welsh.

Workforce

From the 2010-11 survey onwards the definition of Management staff has been clarified to be those with less than 10 per cent face-to-face contact with young people. There was also a change in definition from

“Youth work delivery staff – core and Youth work delivery staff – external” to

“Youth work front line staff – core and Youth work staff – externally funded”

This has affected comparability of data with earlier years.

Finance

Improved definitions and validation processes have been applied to the collection of finance information for 2010-11 onwards, resulting in some discontinuity between that data and finance data for prior years.

Other data sources

The release includes population estimate data for 2018 to 2020 from Office for National Statistics mid-year population estimates by local authority and age, as available at October 2022. Where figures are expressed as proportion of the population, 2020 mid-year estimates have been used for data from 2021-22 and 2020-21 as 2021 mid-year estimates are not yet available.

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

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

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

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

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

Further details

The document is available at: <https://gov.wales/youth-work>, with supporting [StatsWales data](#).

Next update

October 2023 (provisional)

We want your feedback

We welcome any feedback on any aspect of these statistics which can be provided by email to post16ed.stats@gov.wales.

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