

Wellbeing of Wales: 2026



A report about how Wales is doing now and for future generations. This document was written by the Welsh Government. It is an easy read version of Wellbeing of Wales: 2026. The report looks at how Wales is making progress towards the 7 wellbeing goals. The report uses information from surveys, research and official statistics.

Date: October 2026

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How to use this document



This is an easy read document.
You may still need help to read it.
You can ask someone you trust to help you.



Words in **blue bold writing** may be difficult to understand. The meanings of these words are explained in the glossary on page 47.



Llywodraeth Cymru
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Introduction

10th



This is the 10th report about **wellbeing** in Wales. When we talk about **wellbeing**, we mean:



Economic Wellbeing

- **Economic wellbeing** is about jobs, businesses and money.



Social Wellbeing

- **Social wellbeing** is about people, communities and getting on with others.



Environmental Wellbeing

- **Environmental wellbeing** is about nature, land, water and air.



Cultural Wellbeing

- **Cultural wellbeing** is about language, history, arts and traditions.

- It also includes your own **wellbeing**.



Wellbeing means being healthy, happy and able to live a good life.



We write this report to see how Wales is doing against the **7 well-being goals**.

These goals are part of the **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act**.



This law aims to make Wales a better place to live now and in the future.



The law has **7 goals** to help Wales become more **sustainable**.

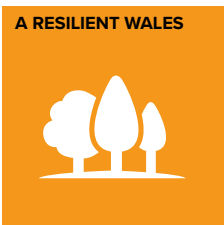
Sustainable means using what we need today while making sure there is enough for future generations.

These **goals** describe the kind of Wales we want in the future.

The **7 wellbeing goals** for Wales are:



1. A prosperous Wales.



2. A resilient Wales.



3. A healthier Wales.



4. A more equal Wales.



5. A Wales of cohesive communities.

**A WALES OF VIBRANT
CULTURE & THRIVING
WELSH LANGUAGE**



6. A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language.

**A GLOBALLY
RESPONSIBLE WALES**



7. A globally responsible Wales.

**We will talk more about these
goals and what they mean in
the document.**

How we measure wellbeing



To find out how Wales is doing, we collect information and data. We use 50 national indicators to measure progress towards the **well-being goals**.



National indicators are things we measure to help us see whether Wales is improving.



We also have milestones.

Milestones are targets that show where we want to get to in the future. They help us see whether Wales is making enough progress.



The rest of this document explains how Wales is doing against each of the **well-being goals**.

1. A prosperous Wales



This goal is about helping people in Wales have good jobs, enough money and the skills they need for the future.

It means:



- Helping people find work.
- Making sure people are paid fairly.
- Helping people learn new skills.
- Helping businesses grow.
- Looking after the environment while Wales grows.

What we found out:



- The **economy** in the UK has grown slowly in the last two years.



The **economy** is the money people, businesses and governments spend and earn.



- Fewer jobs are available than a few years ago.
- Wales is more like other parts of the UK than it used to be when it comes to **employment**.

Employment means people being in work.

-
- Some businesses are finding new ways to work and developing new products and services.

- Wales still has fewer businesses doing this than many other parts of the UK.



- People in Wales still earn less money than people in many other parts of the UK.

- **Household incomes** have increased over time.

Household income is the money coming into a home.



- Many people in Wales do not have enough money for everyday living costs.
- Households with children are more likely to live in **poverty** than those with just adults.

Poverty means not having enough money for a safe and comfortable life.

- More people are struggling to pay their energy bills than a few years ago.
- About 1 in 4 households are estimated to be in **fuel poverty**.

Fuel poverty means not being able to afford to keep your home warm.



- About 2 out of 3 workers earn at least the **real living wage**.

The **real living wage** is a pay rate designed to cover everyday living costs.



- Women and men are paid more equally than they were 20 years ago.



- Disabled people and people from some ethnic minority groups still earn less on average.

- Most young people are in education, training or work. The number is close to the Welsh Government target.



- More people have **qualifications** than in the past.

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- Fewer people have no **qualifications**.

Qualifications are certificates, awards or grades gained through learning.



- Children from poorer families often do less well at school than other children. This gap has not gone away.

2. A resilient Wales



This goal is about protecting nature and helping Wales cope with change.

It means:



- Looking after animals and plants.
- Keeping our air, land and water healthy.
- Not wasting things we get from nature.
- Being ready for big changes like climate change.



What we found out:



- Some animals and plants are at risk of disappearing.



- The **soil** in most parts of Wales is staying healthy.
- Air and water quality have improved, but more needs to be done.
- Wales is very good at recycling and reducing waste.

Soil is the layer of earth that plants grow in.



- The quality of water is better than it used to be.

- There is still more work to do to improve rivers, streams and the sea.



- Many homes and buildings in Wales are at risk of flooding.

- Flood defences help protect some of these places.

- Flooding happens when water covers land that is usually dry.

- **Air pollution** has reduced over time. But it can still harm people and nature.



Air pollution is pollution caused by things such as traffic, factories and heating.



- Wales **recycles** more household waste than almost any other country.
- People throw away less waste than before.



Recycling means turning waste into something that can be used again.

- Wales is still using water, land and other things from nature faster than they can be replaced.
- Around 1 in 3 units of electricity made in Wales comes from wind, sunlight and other **renewable** sources.

-
- More energy is being made this way than in the past.

Renewable energy comes from sources that do not run out, such as wind and sunlight.

- Many homes could be better at keeping heat in and using less energy.
- This could help people save money on bills.
- A report by Natural Resources Wales says nature in Wales still faces serious challenges.
- **Climate change**, pollution and the loss of wildlife are still causing problems.

Climate change is the long-term change in the Earth's weather caused mainly by pollution.

3. A healthier Wales



This goal is about helping people in Wales to be as healthy as possible.

It means:



- Helping people stay physically healthy.
- Helping people stay mentally healthy.



Understand

- Supporting people to make healthy choices.
- Helping people stay healthy as they get older.

What we found out:

- People in Wales are living longer.
- But improvements are slower than they used to be.



- People are spending less of their lives in good health.
- People living in poorer areas spend less time in good health.



- More babies are being born at a low weight than in the past.

Low birth weight means a baby is lighter than expected at birth.

-
- Many adults make healthy choices.



- Some signs suggest **healthy habits** have improved in recent years.
- More young people are following **healthy habits** than in the past.

Healthy habits include things like not smoking, eating healthy food and being active.

- Smoking and drinking among young people have become less common.
- Adults' **mental wellbeing** has stayed about the same in recent years.

Mental wellbeing is how we feel and cope with everyday life.

-
- Young people's **mental wellbeing** has become worse over time.
 - Young people from poorer families are more likely to have lower wellbeing.
 - The gap between richer and poorer areas has grown.
 - Homes in Wales are safer and in better condition than they used to be.
 - Good housing can help people stay healthy.
 - **Dementia**, Alzheimer's disease and heart disease remain some of the most common causes of death in Wales.



Dementia affects memory, thinking and everyday activities.

4. A more equal Wales



This goal is about making sure everyone in Wales has a fair chance in life.

It means:



- Treating people fairly.
- Helping everyone do well in life.



- Making sure people are not held back because of who they are.

What we found out:



- Around 1 in 5 people in Wales live in **poverty**.



- Children are more likely to live in **poverty** than adults.

Poverty means not having enough money for a safe and comfortable life.

- Girls usually do better at school than boys.
- Women are less likely to be in work than men.
- Women are still paid less than men, but the gap is smaller than it used to be.





- Men are more likely than women to say they feel safe.
- Older people often report better **wellbeing** than younger people.
- Older people are less likely to feel lonely.

Wellbeing means being healthy, happy and able to live a good life.

- Children from some **ethnic minority groups** do better at school than other children.
- People from **ethnic minority groups** are less likely to be in work than white people, but the gap is smaller than it used to be.

- People from **ethnic minority groups** are paid less than white people.
- People from **ethnic minority groups** are more likely to live in poverty.
- People from **ethnic minority groups** report higher wellbeing than white people, but are also more likely to feel lonely.



Ethnic minority groups are groups of people whose ethnic background is different from most people in Wales.



Lower



- Disabled people are less likely to be in work than non-disabled people.
- Disabled people are more likely to live in poverty.



- Disabled people earn less money than non-disabled people.
- Disabled people are more likely to feel lonely and report lower well-being.
- Lesbian, gay and bisexual people are more likely to be in poverty.
- Lesbian, gay and bisexual people are more likely to feel lonely than other people.
- Lesbian, gay and bisexual people are less likely to say they feel safe when travelling or in their local area.
- Young people who do not identify as a boy or a girl report lower wellbeing and higher loneliness.

-
- Young people who do not identify as a boy or a girl are less likely to report healthy habits.
 - Married people report better wellbeing than people who are single.
 - Married people are less likely to feel lonely.
 - Religious people had higher wellbeing than non-religious people. Christians and non-religious people were less likely to be lonely.

5. A Wales of cohesive communities



This goal is about helping communities in Wales feel safe, welcoming and well connected.

It means:



- Making places nice to live in.



- Helping people get on well together.



- Making sure people feel safe.



- Helping people stay connected to each other and to services.

What we found out:

6 out of 10



- Nearly 6 in 10 people feel part of their local community.
- Older people are more likely to feel this way than younger people.

8 out of 10



- More than 8 in 10 people are happy with their local area as a place to live.
- Most people can get to the services and facilities they need. People in rural areas can find this harder.
- Fewer people feel they can influence decisions in their area.

7 out of 10



- Around 7 in 10 people feel safe after dark.



- Men are more likely than women to feel safe.

3 out of 10



- Around 3 in 10 adults **volunteer**.
- More people are **volunteering** than in recent years.

Volunteering means giving your time to help people or organisations without being paid.

- About 1 in 8 people say they feel lonely.
- Younger adults are more likely to feel lonely than older adults.
- Most people use the internet.
- Older people are less likely to use the internet than younger people.

-
- More households were helped to avoid **homelessness** than in the previous year.

Homelessness means not having a permanent home.

- Fewer people were living in **temporary accommodation**.

Temporary accommodation is short-term housing for people who do not have a permanent home.

- Fewer people were **sleeping rough** than in the previous year.

Sleeping rough means sleeping outside because you do not have a home.

-
- Some people do not feel confident that the **justice system** is fair and works well.

The justice system includes courts and other organisations that deal with the law.

- Fewer people say they have been victims of crime.



- Fewer crimes were recorded by the police.



- Many people think crime has increased across the country.

- Fewer people think crime has increased in their local area.

-
- More **hate crimes** were recorded by the police.
 - Most recorded **hate crimes** were linked to a person's race or ethnic background.

A hate crime is a crime that targets someone because of who they are.

6. A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language



This goal is about celebrating Welsh culture and helping the Welsh language grow.

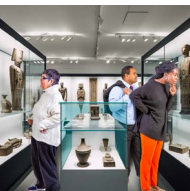
It means:



- Looking after Welsh traditions, history and language.



- Helping people enjoy arts, music, sport and other activities.



- Making sure everyone can take part.

- Protecting important places from the past

What we found out:



- Around 7 in 10 adults go to or take part in **arts, culture or heritage activities**. This has changed very little in recent years.

Arts, culture and heritage activities include things like music, theatre, museums and historic places.



- More children are going to arts activities than a few years ago.
- Most children take part in arts activities.
- More museums and **archive** services are meeting quality standards than in the past.

Archives are places that keep important records and documents.



- More adults take part in sport regularly than in the past.

- About 1 in 3 adults do sport at least 3 times a week.



- Fewer children take part in sport outside school than in the past.

- Most children say they would like to do more sport.

- The number of people who can speak Welsh fell between the last two censuses.



- The percentage of Welsh speakers is the lowest ever recorded in a census.

- The number of people speaking Welsh every day has changed very little in recent years.

-
- More people say they can speak some Welsh than in the past.



- Historic buildings in Wales are in slightly better condition than they were 10 years ago.

- Historic **monuments** are in a worse condition than they were a few years ago.

- Their condition has been more stable in recent years.



Monuments are old places such as castles, ruins and ancient sites.

-
- Some groups of people are more likely to take part in arts and sport than others.
 - Younger people, people in good health and people living in better-off areas are often more likely to take part.

7. A globally responsible Wales



This goal is about helping people in Wales and around the world.

It means:



- Thinking about how our actions affect other people.
- Looking after the Earth.
- Not wasting things.
- Helping people have a good life.

What we found out:

- Wales is putting less pollution into the air than before.
- Wales is using less of the Earth's land, water and materials than before. But we are still using more than our fair share.
- Most people still drive a car to work. This has changed very little in recent years.
- Some people in Wales help with problems that affect people around the world.
- They may give money, raise money or change what they buy.



- More people were reported as possible victims of **modern slavery**.



Modern slavery is when a person is controlled by someone else and cannot choose how they live or work.

- A small number of people in Wales need help because of **forced marriage** or **female genital mutilation**.

Forced marriage is when someone is made to marry against their wishes.

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is when a girl's or woman's body is harmed by cutting parts of her private area.

-
- Many young people learn about world issues in school and college.
 - Some people do not always have enough money for food.
 - Some people use food banks for help.
 - More than 3,100 people were getting support while waiting to hear if they could stay in the UK.
 - The number has stayed about the same in recent years.



- Most young children still get their **vaccinations**.
- Fewer children are getting them than a few years ago.

Vaccinations help protect people from serious illnesses.

More information about this report



This report is about the well-being of Wales. The Welsh Government makes this report every year. A law says the Welsh Government must make this report.



The law is called the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

The report uses information from:

- surveys
- research
- other reports



This information helps us understand how people in Wales are doing.
The full report is available online at:
www.gov.wales/wellbeing-wales



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

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Hard words

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Household income is the money coming into a home.

Poverty means not having enough money for a safe and comfortable life.

Fuel poverty means not being able to afford to keep your home warm.

The **real living wage** is a pay rate designed to cover everyday living costs.

Qualifications are certificates, awards or grades gained through learning.

Soil is the layer of earth that plants grow in.

Air pollution is pollution caused by things such as traffic, factories and heating.

Recycling means turning waste into something that can be used again.

Renewable energy comes from sources that do not run out, such as wind and sunlight.

Climate change is the long-term change in the Earth's weather caused mainly by pollution.

Low birth weight means a baby is smaller and lighter than expected at birth.

Healthy habits include things like not smoking, eating healthy food and being active.

Mental wellbeing is how we feel and cope with everyday life.

Dementia affects memory, thinking and everyday activities.

Poverty means not having enough money for a safe and comfortable life.

Wellbeing means being healthy, happy and able to live a good life.

Ethnic minority groups are groups of people whose ethnic background is different from most people in Wales.

Volunteering means giving your time to help people or organisations without being paid.

Homelessness means not having a permanent home.

Temporary accommodation is short-term housing for people who do not have a permanent home.

Sleeping rough means sleeping outside because you do not have a home.

The justice system includes courts and other organisations that deal with the law.

A hate crime is a crime that targets someone because of who they are.

Arts and culture include things like music, theatre, museums and historic places.

Archives are places that keep important records and documents.

Monuments are old places such as castles, ruins and ancient sites.

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