



National Survey for Wales, 2018-19: Post-compulsory education and training

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SB 08/2020

In 2018-19, the [National Survey for Wales](#) included a new set of questions about post-compulsory education and training (learning beyond school leaving age of 16). This bulletin reports on people's plans to start a new course, the type of training involved, whether the course leads to a qualification and the main reasons for wanting to do further education and training.

Main points

- 31% of people (aged 16 and over) said that they had received some formal education or training in the previous twelve months.
- 27% of people had definite plans to start new learning or training within the next three years, and a further 13% would like to do so in the future.
- 84% of people who have plans to start an education or training course (either within three years or further in the future) say that the course will lead to a qualification at the end.
- 54% of the people planning a course leading to a qualification were doing so with the intention of getting a job or changing job; 37% wanted it to help them in their current job; and 28% wanted to do the course out of interest.
- Full time study, part time study during the day and part time study at evenings or weekends (29%, 29%, and 34% respectively) were equally popular as a mode of study.
- Overall, 32% of those planning a new course would prefer to study at university. This varies by age with 46% of 16 to 24 year olds choosing university compared with 20% of 45 to 64 year olds. Learning in the workplace is the venue most commonly selected by 25 to 64 year olds (76%).



About this bulletin

This bulletin provides more detailed analysis of the 2018-19 results for the questions on post-compulsory education and training.

The full questionnaire is available on the [National Survey web pages](#).

More tables can be found in the [Results viewer](#).

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Introduction

Welsh Government expects learning in the post-16 sector to contribute to its economic and social ambitions for Wales which are set out in the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

The overall intention being to deliver a more equal and prosperous Wales with a thriving Welsh Language. [Taking Wales Forward](#) aims to promote and enhance vocational routes into and through further (FE) and higher education (HE) and develop learning opportunities that will benefit learners of all ages, benefit employers and respond to skills gaps in the labour market.

The strategy aims to encourage providers of post-compulsory education and training to:

- Re-engage young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) and low-skilled adults by improving essential skills with the long-term aim of completing an apprenticeship, achieving A levels or entering higher education;
- Ensure apprentices and those taking college-based vocational courses are ready for employment; and
- Enable adult workers (and the unemployed) to train in areas that meet employers' needs.

Whilst the main focus is on training and skills it is also recognised that lifelong learning, whether to gain a qualification or purely studying something of interest, can contribute to better mental and physical well-being.

In 2018-19 the National Survey included a set of questions about post-compulsory education and training in order to understand the potential interest in and demand for work-based learning and community learning, in addition to further and higher education. People's preferences for mode of study and place of learning will also provide evidence to support the changing governance and funding decisions in this sector.

Recent education and training

All adults (people aged 16 and over)¹ were asked whether they had received any formal education or training in the last 12 months. 31% said that they had. However, this proportion varied widely by age with 73% of 16 to 24 year olds having undertaken some education or training compared with 38% of 25 to 44 year olds, 27% of those aged 45 to 64 and 5% of people aged 65 and over. Overall, there was no difference in the proportion of men and women who had received formal education or training in the past year.

Chart 1: Formal education or training in last 12 months, by long-term limiting health condition and age

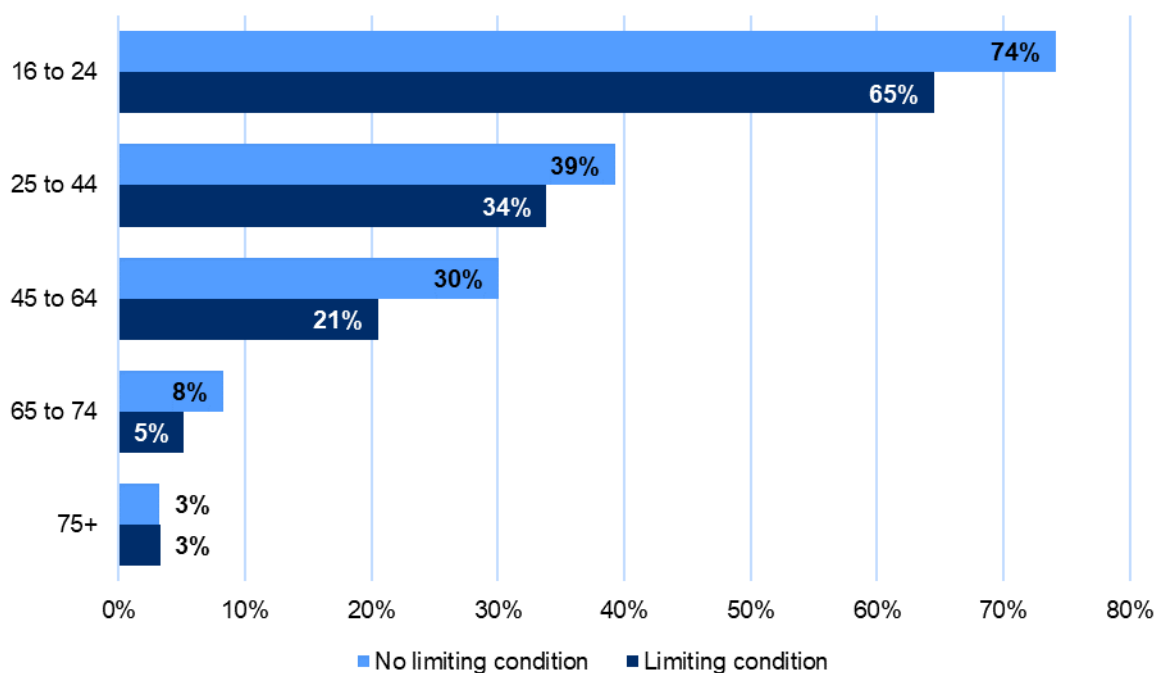


Chart 1 shows that, for the three age groups below 65, people who had a long-term limiting health condition, illness or impairment were less likely to have been in education or training recently than those without such a condition.

Also of interest is the difference based on ethnicity: 30% of people who self-identified as white Welsh / British / English / Scottish / Northern Irish had been on a course in the past year, whilst 45% of people who were of any other ethnicity had done so.

Future plans for education and training

People were then asked whether they had any plans to start an education or training course in the next three years. 27% said that they did, 66% didn't have any plans to do so and 6% said they didn't know yet. Of the people who had no immediate plans to start a course, 13% thought they might like to do so in the future.

For those with definite plans there was a wide variation by age, with 63% of those aged 16 to 24 planning future learning, 38% of the 25 to 44 year olds, and 21% of people aged 45 to 64. This fell

¹ This may include a small number of respondents aged 16 who are still in the final year at school (Year 11).

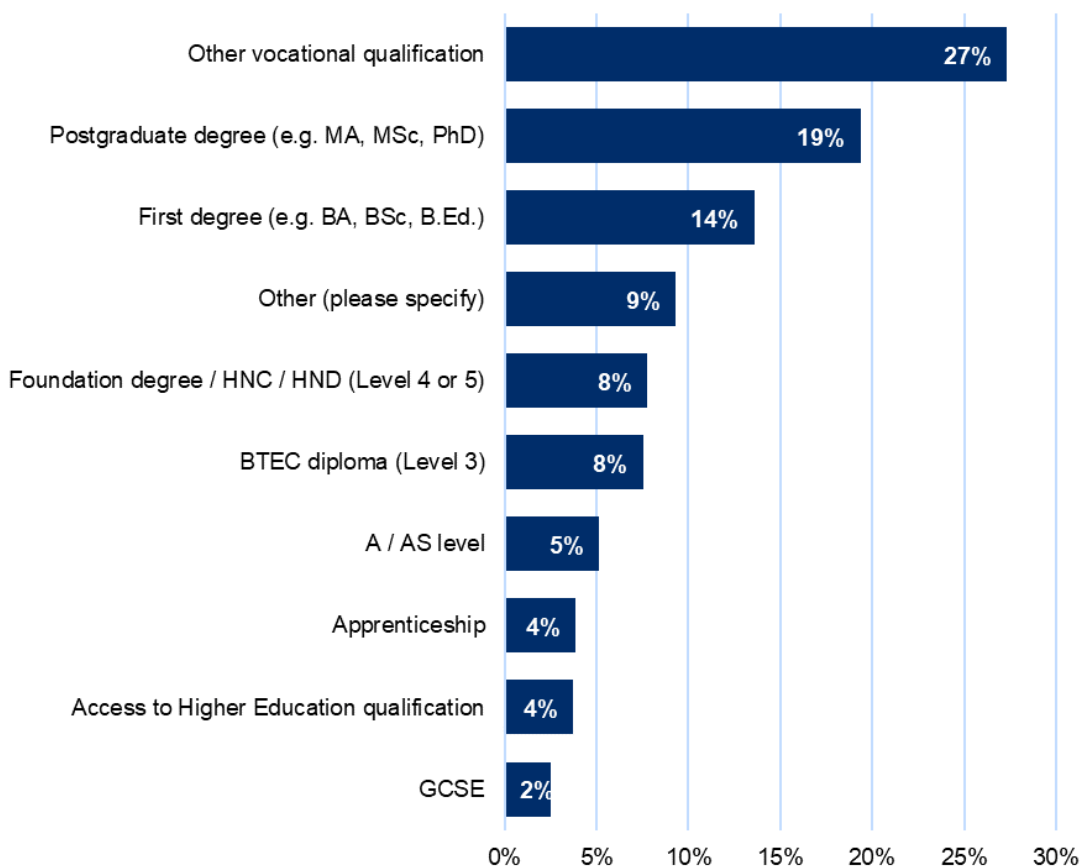
to 4% of people aged 65 and over. Equal proportions of men and women had plans to starting new learning within the next three years.

As with those who currently or recently were in education or training the proportion who had plans to start was higher within ethnic groups not self-identifying as white Welsh / British / Scottish / Northern Irish.

People living in household deprivation or in deprived areas were as likely to have training plans as people not living in household / area deprivation. There was also no difference between people living in urban or rural areas.

84% of people who have plans to start an education or training course at some point in the future say that the course will lead to a qualification at the end. Chart 2 shows the type and level of qualification aimed for.

Chart 2: Planned future courses – qualification aim



27% of people planned to study for a vocational qualification other than an apprenticeship or BTEC which were explicitly listed. 9% of people were aiming for some other type of qualification. “Other” types of qualification covered many areas, for example Welsh language courses, NVQs, First Aid, Project management and the HGV licence test.

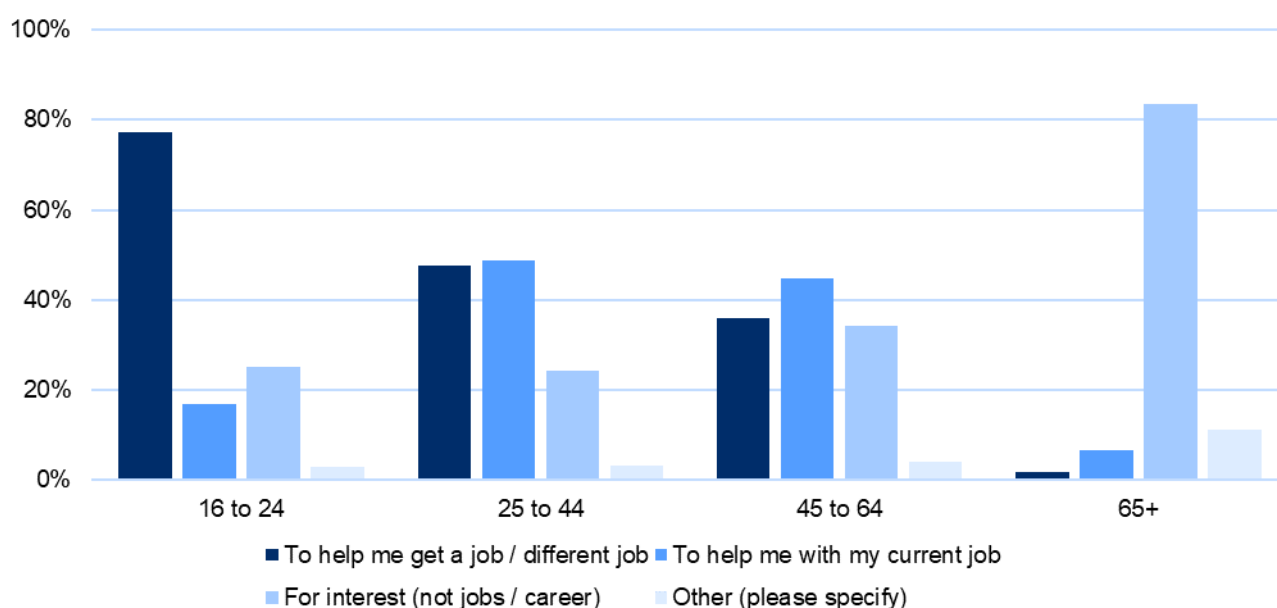
When looked at by age, the youngest age group (16 to 24) were unsurprisingly more likely to be planning to take an academic course (20% a first degree and a further 20% a postgraduate degree). 40% of those aged 45 to 64 who were planning to study for a qualification were aiming for a vocational award.

Reasons for further education and training

People who said they had plans to start an education or training course leading to a qualification were asked the reasons for wanting to do this. Overall, 54% wanted to do it to get a job or get another job, 37% to help them in their current job, and 28% wanted to do the course out of interest. 3% said there was some other reason.

Chart 3 shows that the proportions of people giving these different reasons varied with age. The youngest age group (aged 16 to 24) predominantly planned to start some new education or training in order to help them get a job or to get a different job. 77% gave this reason, which is unsurprising since many in this group will be pursuing full-time further and higher education study.

Chart 3: Reasons for further study by age group



Career progression and development in their existing job (49%) or to help secure a new job (48%) were equally important reasons given by people aged 25 to 44. In the 45 to 64 year old group 'help in their current job' was most frequently selected and 'for interest' had a higher proportion than in the younger age groups. Among people aged 65 and over, 83% of people who were planning on starting a course wanted to do it out of interest.

Further analysis – people planning to study in order to get a job / different job

Cross-analysis indicates that various factors may be associated with the types of people who plan further learning in order to get a job or to change job. However, these factors are often linked to each other (for example, younger people are more likely to be in full-time education). To get a clearer understanding of the effect of each individual factor we have used statistical methods² to separate out the individual effect of each factor. These methods allow us to look at the effect of one factor while keeping other factors constant – sometimes called “controlling for other factors”.³

² This analysis is known as logistic regression. Information about the method can be found in [Regression analysis](#)

³ The factors we controlled for were: age, sex, whether there is a child in household, respondent qualifications, Welsh speaking ability, tenure, employment status, material deprivation, area deprivation, urban/rural areas, satisfaction with life, taking part in sporting activity, general health, ethnicity, sexual orientation, internet use and bills & credit commitments.

We found that the following factors are those most closely linked to people whose education and training plans are focused on getting a job (or a different job):

- People with only low level⁴ or no qualifications;
- being aged under 45;
- being unemployed; and
- experiencing financial problems.

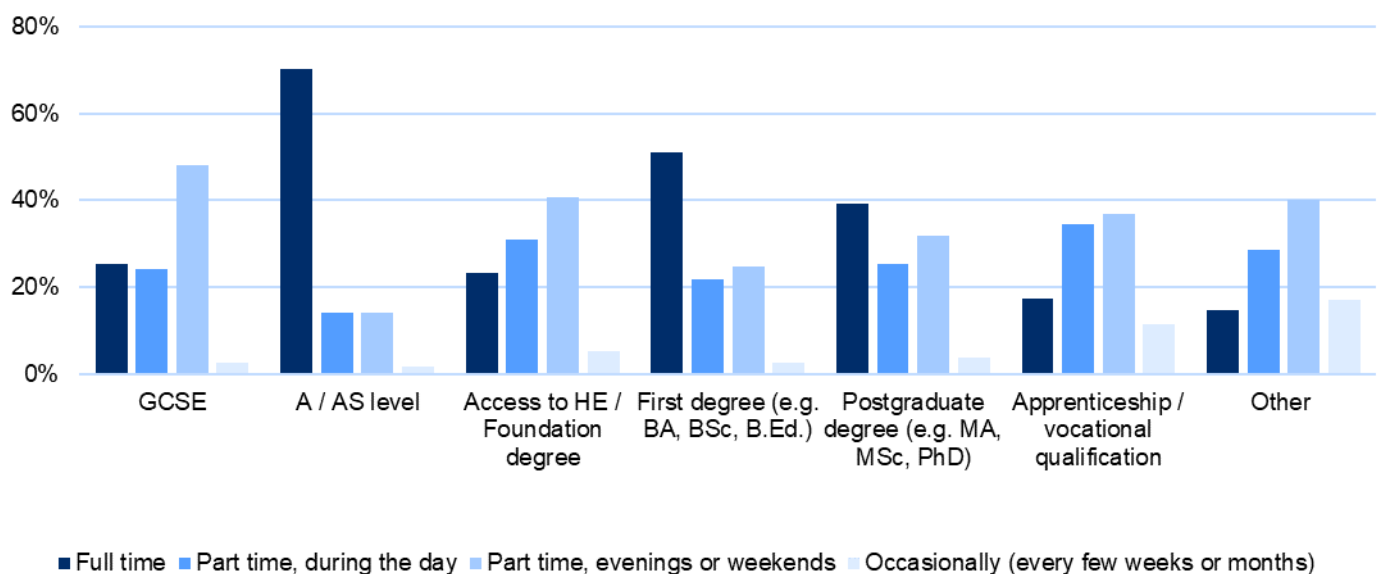
We also found an association with where a person lives but there was no clear pattern to this link. Factors such as sex and ethnicity were not found to be significantly linked. However, we might also expect there to be other explanatory factors, not available from the National Survey, which will be important but that we are unable to include in the analysis.

Mode and place of study

Everyone who had plans to start a new course of education or training was asked about their preferences for the pattern of study and the type of place they would choose to study at.

Overall, there was a nearly equal split between full time study, part time study during the day, and part time study at evenings or weekends (29%, 29%, and 34% respectively). 8% would prefer occasional study every few weeks or months. However, this pattern varied with age – 61% of 16 to 24 year olds said they would prefer full-time study compared with 16% of 25 to 44 year olds. This is likely explained by the fact that many of the younger group are still in full-time study and see themselves as continuing in this mode.

Chart 4: Level of study by preferred mode of study

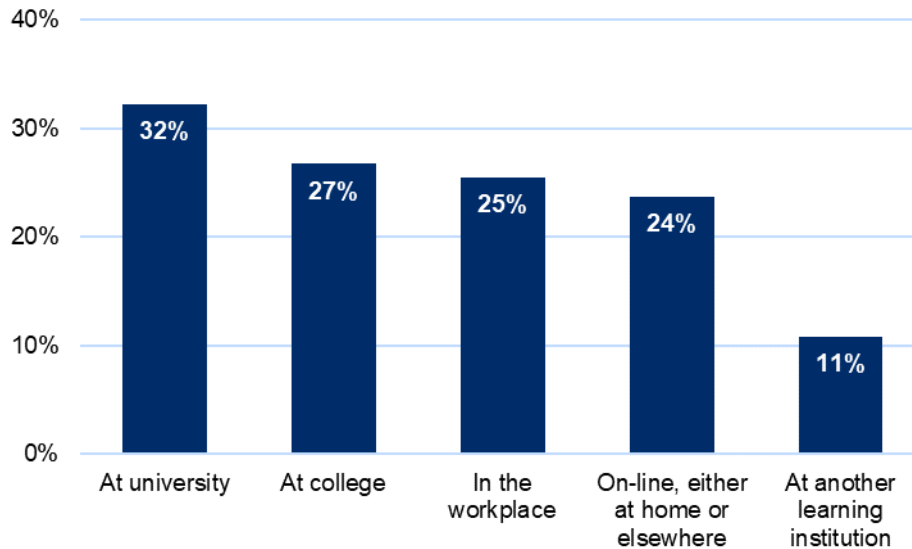


⁴ Educational qualifications – see [Terms and definitions](#)

Chart 4 shows that 70% of those with plans to study for 'A' levels would prefer to do it on a full-time basis. For all other levels of study the preferred mode of study was more evenly split between different part-time patterns. Occasional learning was the least popular option.

This group of people were also asked where they would ideally like to study. Chart 5 shows the distribution of preferences: the total sums to over 100% because people were able to select more than one preferred place to study.

Chart 5: Preferred place of study



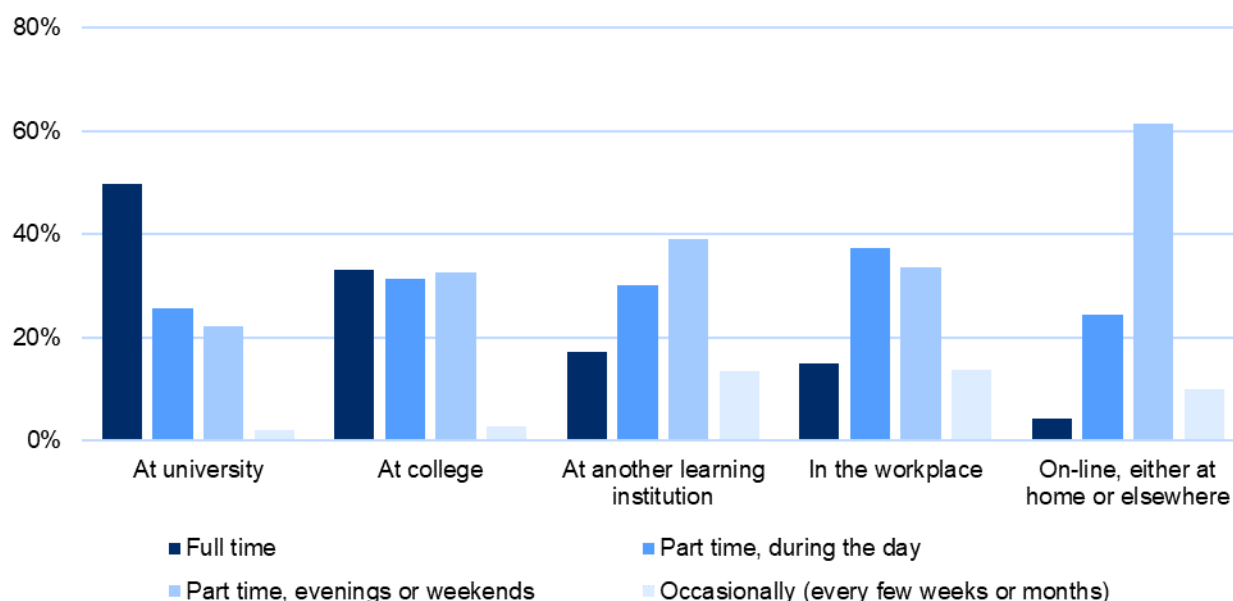
Overall, 32% of those planning a new course would prefer to study at university. Again, this figure is strongly linked to age: with 46% of 16 to 24 year olds choosing university compared with 20% of 45 to 64 year olds. Unsurprisingly, learning in the workplace is more commonly selected by 25 to 64 year olds than by those aged under 25. People of 65 and over were most likely to cite 'at another learning institution' as the place they would like to learn.

Men and women showed no significant differences in their selection of preferred places to study.

In the group planning to start new education and training, 50% of black and minority ethnic people, would prefer to study at a university, compared with 30% of people who self-identified as being of white ethnicity (Welsh, English, British, Scottish, Northern Irish).

When mode and place of study are considered together Chart 6 indicates that 50% of people who want to study at university would like to do so on a full-time basis whilst nearly the same proportion (48%) who would like to attend university would prefer to study part-time in some form. 61% of people who would like to pursue a new course using on-line learning would prefer this to be part-time, in the evenings or at weekends.

Chart 6: Preferred place of study by preferred mode of study



Likelihood of starting new course in next three years

Everyone who planned or wanted to start a new course (leading to a qualification) in the future was asked how likely they thought it was that they would start it within the next three years. 58% thought it was 'very likely' and 32% thought it was 'fairly likely', 9% thought it was unlikely. 98% of people with non-white ethnicity thought it was likely that they would start a new course within the next three years, with only 2% thinking it was unlikely.

The relatively small group who thought it was unlikely they would actually start the training were then asked the reasons for this. 36% said this was due to work commitments and 26% because of childcare issues. 18% said that they wouldn't be able to afford the course they wanted to do.

Other relevant reading

Further charts and tables on these topics are available in the [National Survey Results Viewer](#).

In addition to the National Survey results, there are a number of statistical reports produced by the Cross-cutting education and skills team in Welsh Government. The following reports provide some background to the different post-16 education sectors.

[Apprenticeship learning programmes started \(provisional\)](#)

[Welsh Government learning grants for further education, 2018-19](#)

[Participation of young people in the education and labour market, 2017-18](#)

[Highest qualifications held by working age adults, 2018](#)

[Further education, work-based learning and community learning, 2018-2019](#)

Terms and definitions

Area deprivation - Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation

The Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD) is used as the official measure of area deprivation in Wales. Deprivation is a wider concept than poverty. Deprivation refers to wider problems caused by a lack of resources and opportunities. The WIMD is constructed from eight different types of deprivation. These are: income, housing, employment, access to services, education, health, community safety and physical environment. Wales is divided into, 1,909 Lower-Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) each having about 1,600 people. Deprivation ranks have been worked out for each of these areas: the most deprived LSOA is ranked 1, and the least deprived 1,909. For this bulletin, we have grouped the people living in the 20% of LSOAs that are most deprived based on WIMD score and compared them against the 20% of the LSOAs that are least deprived. – see also Material Deprivation below.

Urban / rural

“Urban” includes settlements with a population of 10,000 or more and small towns and their fringes, where the wider area is less sparsely populated. “Rural” includes all other areas.

Material deprivation

Material deprivation is a measure which is designed to capture the consequences of long-term poverty on households, rather than short-term financial strain.

Non-pensioner adults were asked whether they had things like ‘a holiday away from home for at least a week a year’, ‘enough money to keep their home in a decent state of decoration’, or could ‘make regular savings of £10 a month or more’. The questions for adults focussed on whether they could afford these items. These items are really for their ‘household’ as opposed to them personally which is why they were previously called ‘household material deprivation’.

Pensioners were asked slightly different questions such as whether their ‘home was kept adequately warm’, whether they had ‘access to a car or taxi, when needed’ or whether they had their hair done or cut regularly’. These also asked whether they could afford them, but also focussed on not being able to have these items for other reasons, such as poor health, or no one to help them etc. these questions were less based on the household and more about the individual.

Those who did not have these items were given a score, such that if they didn’t have any item on the list, they would have a score of 100, and if they had all items, they had a score of 0. Non-pensioners with a score of 25 or more were classed as deprived and pensioners with a score of 20 or more were classed as deprived.

Parents of children were also asked a set of questions about what they could afford for their children.

In this bulletin the non-pensioner and pensioner measures of deprivation are combined to provide an ‘adult’ deprivation variable. The terms ‘adult’ and ‘household’ deprivation may be used interchangeably depending on context.

Qualifications

Respondents' highest qualifications have been grouped according to the National Qualification Framework (NQF) levels, where level 1 is the lowest level of qualifications and level 8 is doctoral degree or equivalent. For the National Survey, respondents have been grouped into 5 groups, those with no qualifications are in the lowest category and respondents with qualifications at levels 4 to 8 have been grouped together in the highest qualification category.

To provide more meaningful descriptions of the qualifications, these short descriptions have been used in this bulletin.

National Qualification Framework levels

NQF levels 4-8

NQF level 3

NQF level 2

Below NQF level 2

No qualifications

Description used in bulletin

Higher education (Level 4+)

'A' level and equivalent (Level 3)

GCSE grades A to C and equivalent (Level 2)

GCSE below grade C (below Level 2)

No qualifications

Key quality information

Background

The National Survey for Wales is carried out by The Office for National Statistics on behalf of the Welsh Government. The results reported in this bulletin are based on interviews completed in 2018-19 (1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019).

The sample was drawn from the Royal Mail Small Users Postcode Address File (PAF), whereby all residential addresses and types of dwellings were included in the sample selection process as long as they were listed as individual addresses. If included as individual addresses on the PAF, residential park homes and other dwellings were included in the sampling frame but community establishments such as care homes and army barracks are not on the PAF and therefore were not included.

The National Survey sample in 2018-19 comprised 24,762 addresses chosen randomly from the PAF. Interviewers visited each address, randomly selected one adult (aged 16+) in the household, and carried out a 44-minute face-to-face interview with them, which asked for their opinions on a wide range of issues affecting them and their local area. A total of 11,922 interviews were achieved.

Interpreting the results

Percentages quoted in this bulletin are based on only those respondents who provided an answer to the relevant question. Some topics in the survey were only asked of a sub-sample of respondents and other questions were not asked where the question is not applicable to the

respondent. Missing answers can also occur for several reasons, including refusal or an inability to answer a particular question.

Where a relationship has been found between two factors, this does not mean it is a causal relationship. More detailed analysis is required to find whether a factor causes change in another.

The results are weighted to ensure that the results reflect the age and sex distribution of the Welsh population.

Quality report

A summary [Quality Report](#) is available, containing more detailed information on the quality of the survey as well as a summary of the methods used to compile the results.

Sampling variability

Estimates from the National Survey are subject to a margin of uncertainty. Part of the uncertainty comes from the fact that any randomly-selected sample of the population will give slightly different results from the results that would be obtained if the whole population was surveyed. This is known as sampling error. Confidence intervals can be used as a guide to the size of the sampling error. These intervals are calculated around a survey estimate and give a range within which the true value is likely to fall.

In 95% of survey samples, the 95% confidence interval will contain the 'true' figure for the whole population (that is, the figure we would get if the survey covered the entire population). In general, the smaller the sample size the wider the confidence interval. Confidence intervals are included in tables of survey results published on StatsWales.

As with any survey, the National Survey is also subject to a range of other sources of error: for example, due to non-response; because respondents may not interpret the questions as intended or may not answer accurately; and because errors may be introduced as the survey data is processed. These kinds of error are known as non-sampling error, and are discussed further in the quality report for the survey.

Significant differences

Where the text of this release notes a difference between two National Survey results (in the same year), we have checked to ensure that the confidence intervals for the two results do not overlap. This suggests that the difference is statistically significant (but as noted above, is not as rigorous as carrying out a formal statistical test), i.e. that there is less than a 5% (1 in 20) chance of obtaining these results if there is no difference between the same two groups in the wider population.

Checking to see whether two confidence intervals overlap is less likely than a formal statistical test to lead to conclusions that there are real differences between groups. That is, it is more likely to lead to "false negatives": incorrect conclusions that there is no real difference when in fact there is. It is also less likely to lead to "false positives": incorrect conclusions that there is a difference when there is in fact none. Carrying out many comparisons increases the chance of finding false

positives. Therefore, when many comparisons are made the conservative nature of the test is an advantage because it reduces (but does not eliminate) this chance.

Where National Survey results are compared with results from other sources, we have not checked that confidence intervals do not overlap.

Equalities data

Availability of data for equality dimensions:

Equality dimension	Collected	Included in release	Available in Results Viewer	Available on request
Race/Ethnicity	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Age groups	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sex	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Impairments and disability	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sexual orientation	Yes	No	No	Yes
Religion or belief	Yes	No	No	Yes
Marriage and civil partnership	Yes	No	No	Yes
Pregnancy and maternity	Yes	No	No	Yes

The National Survey for Wales captures data during the interview based around the Equality Act 2010 which uses the medical definition of disability (“any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last for 12 months or more”).

Questions are also included in the other equalities dimensions, however in many cases the sample sizes and quality of the data were not sufficient to provide a breakdown by these groups. Please note that whilst these breakdowns are available on request some results may be suppressed.

Regression analysis

Where further analysis has been carried out selection of the initial variables used in the regression was based on; the results from cross-analysis, policy direction, and the practicality of using the variable. The results for some factors were only available for a sub-sample of respondents, or there were a large number of ‘missing’ results which resulted in a substantial drop in the sample size on which the regression model could be tested. For this reason some variables/factors were omitted from the investigation. The final models consisted of those factors that remained significant even after holding the other factors constant. These significant factors are those that have been discussed in this bulletin and the use of regression analysis is indicated by the statement that we

have ‘controlled for other factors’. It is worth noting that had a different range of factors been available to consider from the survey, then some conclusions about which factors were significant may have been different.

More details on the methodology used in the regression analysis in this report are available in the [Technical Report: Approach to regression analysis and models produced](#).

Technical report

More detailed information on the survey methodology is set out in the [technical report](#) for the survey.

National Statistics status

National Statistics status means that our statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.

The continued designation of these statistics as National Statistics was confirmed in 2017 following a compliance check by the Office for Statistics Regulation [[letter of confirmation](#)]. These statistics last underwent a full assessment [[full report](#)] against the Code of Practice in 2013.

Since the latest review by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

- provided more detailed breakdowns in the [Results viewer](#) and made it easier for users to compare results across years;
- updated the survey topics annually to ensure we continue to meet changing policy need; and
- made regression analysis a standard part of our outputs to help users understand the contribution of particular factors to outcomes of interest.

Well-being of Future Generations Act (WFG)

The Well-being of Future Generations Act 2015 is about improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Act puts in place seven well-being goals for Wales. These are for a more equal, prosperous, resilient, healthier and globally responsible Wales, with cohesive communities and a vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. Under section (10)(1) of the Act, the Welsh Ministers must (a) publish indicators (“national indicators”) that must be applied for the purpose of measuring progress towards the achievement of the Well-being goals, and (b) lay a copy of the national indicators before the National Assembly. The 46 national indicators were laid in March 2016.

Information on the indicators, along with narratives for each of the well-being 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 well-being assessments and local well-being plans.

Further details

This document is available at: <https://gov.wales/post-compulsory-education-and-training-national-survey-wales-april-2018-march-2019>

Next update

Not a regular output

We want your feedback

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

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