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Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Welsh Government
Consultation – summary of responses

International Strategy

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This document is also available in Welsh.

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1. Consultation Exercise

Background Information

In 2015 the Welsh Government published its international agenda: 'Wales in the World'. Since then, the international landscape has changed dramatically creating the need for a new refocused strategy that sets out an international vision for Wales.

As the UK moved towards the original scheduled date for exiting the European Union (March 2019), in December 2018, a new International Relations ministerial portfolio was created to recognise the importance of a coordinated cross-government approach and provide focus to Wales' international activity both inside government and for our partners and wider civic society. Following the creation of this portfolio, the Welsh Government engaged with stakeholders to develop and inform its thinking around the draft strategy, culminating in the publication of a formal public consultation document in July 2019.

The continuing uncertainty of Brexit, the lack of clarity on Wales' relationship with its nearest neighbours, and the protracted EU withdrawal negotiations added significant delay and difficulty to the drafting of the international strategy. The consultation sought views on the Welsh Government's proposed approach to internationalisation and, specifically, three key goals to deliver its new approach. It did not, however, set tangible delivery targets as this was deemed to be too difficult in a constantly shifting political and economic environment.

At the time of publication, the draft strategy acknowledged that the International Strategy would have to have a degree of flexibility built into it to respond to the UK's final deal with the European Union. It was thought that the final deal would be known at the time of publication, as the UK was scheduled to leave on 31 October 2019; however, at the time of writing this report, this date will now be 31 January 2020 or sooner. Therefore, the same criteria and flexibility will have to apply to the published version of the International Strategy.

Public Consultation

The twelve week public consultation on the International Strategy was launched on 31 July 2019 and closed on 23 October 2019. The consultation was published on the Welsh Government's website and publicised in newsletters and reminders issued via social media platforms.

The consultation sought views on three key goals and how they could deliver Wales' international ambitions.

Consultation Questions

Respondents were asked to consider the following questions:

Question 1

The three **goals** set out in the strategy are:

- to raise Wales' international profile
- increase our exports and encourage inward investment
- show the world what we are doing as a globally responsible nation

- a) Do you agree with these goals?
- b) Are there any other goals that should be considered?

Question 2

People – the strategy highlights the important role that our people and cultural organisations, in Wales and overseas, can play in raising Wales’ international profile.

- a) Do you agree with the ambitions set out in this chapter?
- b) Do you think they will deliver the key goal to raise Wales’ international profile?

Question 3

Products - Wales has a strong global commercial relationship both in terms of exports and attracting inward investment. The strategy sets out plans to showcase Wales’ expertise in cyber security, compound-semiconductors and film and television production to demonstrate that we have a modern and vibrant economy. This, in turn, will enhance our wider export and inward investment offer to the rest of the world.

- a) Do you agree that showcasing these areas will demonstrate that Wales has a modern, vibrant economy and skilled workforce?

Question 4

Place - Wales’ culture and language have contributed to international tourism and increased recognition as a visitor destination. In this strategy, we have identified the need to promote sustainable tourism as a priority. Wales has also demonstrated a commitment to global responsibility through its Wales for Africa programme and our Health Boards.

- a) Do you agree that the ambitions set out in the strategy will promote Wales as a globally responsible nation and showcase our commitment to sustainability?

2. Responses to the Consultation

There were 110 responses to the consultation.

Not all respondents gave their permission to publish their details but, where appropriate, a list of respondents is provided at Annex A.

The majority of the responses that specified a location said that they were from Wales or the UK. Of the six responses received from outside of the UK, two were from the USA and the remainder were from Australia, Belgium, Canada and France.

Question 1

The three **goals** set out in the strategy are:

- to raise Wales' international profile
- increase our exports and encourage inward investment
- show the world what we are doing as a globally responsible nation

a) Do you agree with these goals?

94% of respondents answered this question.

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		54.37%	56
2	Partly		41.75%	43
3	No		3.88%	4
			answered	103
			skipped	7

The majority of responses agreed with the goals either wholly or in part. Most respondents who partially agreed with the goals suggested rewording the goals or additional goals that could be developed.

b) Are there any other goals that should be considered?

82% of respondents answered this question. Of these, 67 respondents suggested either a new goal or rewording an existing goal.

Suggestions included:

- “While creativity and innovation is included in Goal 1, there could be a more explicit reference to international education and culture.”
- “Goals could be strengthened to reflect our broader values as a nation. The first goal could reference the fact that Wales has culture at its heart, and that we use culture to create connections.”
- “Global responsibility is about respect for the environment but also about social justice and human rights. Welcome the inclusion of human rights within this goal.”

- “Goal 3 – there is much that can be done here to profile the Welsh Government’s commitment to fair work and equality, and Wales’s history of a nation with strong industrial relations.”
- “Showcase Wales as a leading environmentally aware nation, a pioneer in plastic bag reduction, replacing fossil fuels etc.”
- “To pursue training and skills development for the young people of Wales in an international context through global partnerships - ‘to develop world-leading skills capacity’.”

A strong theme from multiple respondents was welcoming the inclusion of global responsibility, social responsibility and a values-based strategy. Many acknowledged the contribution and role that both the Education and Cultural sectors could play in delivering the strategy’s ambitions, especially with regards to supporting economic development, developing international links through students and Higher Education institutions, as well as the use of students, culture and diaspora to support our soft power agenda.

The two responses below summarise the thoughts of 23 respondents with regards to a greater emphasis on the role of Education and Culture in raising Wales’ international profile:

- “We are pleased to see that the strategy recognises the role of higher education in shaping and growing Wales’ international profile but believe this could be stronger throughout the strategy. Welsh universities provide an opportunity to strengthen and extend Wales’ international presence and impact as they are globally connected institutions, with research links stretching across the world, attracting students from abroad.”
- “Culture is one of Wales’ most significant soft power resources, and is a devolved competence. As well as promoting this internationally, government should redouble its efforts to develop this sense of distinctiveness internally amongst people in Wales, so that culture is not a mere marketing exercise, divorced from real Welsh experiences. There should be a more overt expression of the stories of Wales to communicate what sets the nation apart: its sense of values, community and cynefin, its reputation as a land of poetry and song, and its two languages.”

Question 2

People – the strategy highlights the important role that our people and cultural organisations, in Wales and overseas, can play in raising Wales’ international profile.

- a) Do you agree with the ambitions set out in this chapter?

89% of respondents answered this question.

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		35.71%	35
2	Partly		60.21%	59
3	No		4.08%	4
			answered	98
			skipped	12

96% of those who responded agreed either wholly or in part that the ambitions set out in the People chapter would help to deliver the three goals. 66 respondents offered views about how this could be achieved with a number of respondents citing diaspora – in Wales and overseas - as a key asset and that the use of diaspora, and alumni, could be strengthened in the final strategy.

- “The diversity of diaspora in Wales should be acknowledged and the excellent work undertaken in areas of International Development celebrated.”
- “The potential of the diaspora is also underplayed. The strategy should adequately recognise the role of diaspora and alumni and how can they support Wales in an ambassador role.”
- “We feel the definitions are too narrow, and seemingly not inclusive of philanthropic activity from the Welsh diaspora. We believe this is not intentional and would propose the language is reviewed to ensure that our strategy is welcoming to diaspora members wishing to give back or engage in philanthropic action in Wales. This could be done simply by widening the term 'cultural organisations' to 'cultural and community/third sector/charitable organisations'.”
- “There is a gap in the ‘people’ section relating to the diaspora in Wales. When the history of migration from Wales is emphasized, this is also the opportunity to explain the historical migration to Wales and its vibrant diaspora networks. There are 33 diaspora organisations in Wales representing over 20,000 people – many of these groups are Sub Saharan African diaspora. The Sub Saharan Advisory Panel estimate approximately 25,000-30,000 diaspora in Wales.”

There was also a positive response to the welcoming language used around Wales’ communities.

- “Pleased that the Welsh Government recognises that migrants make a positive contribution to Wales’ economy and to society more widely.”
- “It is welcomed that this section articulates its disapproval of tighter immigration control from the EU, which would be detrimental to Wales and its culture. Furthermore, the clear message that Wales positions itself as a welcoming and tolerant nation to immigrants, with the aspiration of becoming a nation of sanctuary, is to be applauded.”

b) Do you think they will deliver the key goal to raise Wales’ international profile?

80% of respondents answered this question with 77 respondents agreeing wholly or in part.

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		31.82%	28
2	Partly		55.68%	49
3	No		12.50%	11
			answered	88
			skipped	22

Question 3

Products - Wales has a strong global commercial relationship both in terms of exports and attracting inward investment. The strategy sets out plans to showcase Wales' expertise in cyber security, compound-semiconductors and film and television production to demonstrate that we have a modern and vibrant economy. This, in turn, will enhance our wider export and inward investment offer to the rest of the world.

- a) Do you agree that showcasing these areas will demonstrate that Wales has a modern, vibrant economy and skilled workforce?

84% of respondents answered this question.

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		25.00%	23
2	Partly		71.74%	66
3	No		3.26%	3
			answered	92
			skipped	18

Whilst the majority of respondents agreed wholly or in part with the choice of the three showcase centres of excellence, there was a strong agreement that more clarity was needed about why these sectors have been chosen. It was also stated by a number of respondents that this approach could be seen as restrictive in terms of attracting investment from other sectors and supporting research and development.

- “Excellent range of interests and ambitions are showcased through the three examples. There is much more to Wales, of course, and it would be important to ensure that these very well selected sectors are exemplars only, and that we also promote our strengths in such areas as including advanced manufacturing and life sciences.”
- “Whilst these are areas of expertise, they are a limited snapshot of what Wales has to offer. There are many other ways to demonstrate a modern, vibrant and skilled workforce that the International strategy does not currently include and whilst I recognise the need to focus, I believe the strategy should allow the option for areas other than cyber security, compound-semiconductors and film & TV to be utilised as a mean of delivering the strategic aims.”
- “We welcome the inclusion of some focus areas, including those listed, where Wales has already made an international mark. Assuming the strategy is to stand for a

number of years, it might be useful to be open to adapting and including other areas as our sectors grow and evolve and at a time of significant global shifts.”

- “We believe that the areas highlighted are crucial to the economy of Wales but they should not be at the expense of other key contributing sectors.”

In addition, a number of respondents called for greater emphasis on fair trade, fair work and environmental responsibility to support the activity being proposed in the strategy and ensure that Goals 2 and 3 complement rather than contradict each other.

Question 4

Place - Wales’ culture and language have contributed to international tourism and increased recognition as a visitor destination. In this strategy, we have identified the need to promote sustainable tourism as a priority. Wales has also demonstrated a commitment to global responsibility through its Wales for Africa programme and our Health Boards.

- a) Do you agree that the ambitions set out in the strategy will promote Wales as a globally responsible nation and showcase our commitment to sustainability?

90% of respondents answered this question.

			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes		39.39%	39
2	Partly		57.58%	57
3	No		3.03%	3
			answered	99
			skipped	11

Again, the overwhelming majority of respondents agreed either wholly or in part with this goal with some respondents stating that the ambitions didn’t go far enough to truly showcase Wales’ strengths in this area.

- “We strongly welcome the emphasis in this chapter on sustainable tourism and the continuation of existing international sustainable development activity through activities such as the ‘Wales for Africa’ programme. Generally, our view was that chapter could be strengthened further with respect to showcasing its commitment to sustainability.”
- “We believe a commitment to global responsibility should also include commitments to environmental sustainability, climate change mitigation and production of high-quality food and drink. The Welsh food and drink sector is already committed to these actions and on a progression path, and recognising the highlighting this on a global scale would benefit the image of Wales globally.”

There are two distinct areas covered by this question: international development and sustainable tourism. The responses to each area are summarised below.

International Development (Wales for Africa):

There was a call for additional activity from the Welsh Government with regards to its international development work, in particular the current Wales for Africa programme. Some respondents made comparisons with Scotland's International Development work which were not favourable.

Overall, the work undertaken by the Wales for Africa programme was welcomed, as was its proposed rebranding to 'Wales and Africa' to reflect a partnership approach. However, support for concentrating the programme's activity on Lesotho and Uganda was mixed with some respondents supporting this ambition, as it focusses the activity and produces a greater return; whereas other respondents stated that it provided a negative message for those countries not mentioned and the Welsh organisations working in these countries.

- "Happy with focus on Lesotho and Uganda. Focusing on a small country makes it easier for interventions to have more of a far reaching and national impact, even with limited resources."
- "In a vision for a globally responsible Wales, it would be disadvantageous for the Welsh Government to exclude African countries where Welsh organisations work. I strongly feel it would be strategically stronger for the Welsh Government to embrace, promote and shout all of the work that Welsh groups, organisations, universities, health boards are doing all over the continent of Africa than to exclude this work by focusing on 2 countries."
- "We also welcome the commitment to expanding the work of the Wales for Africa programme and to putting women's empowerment at the heart of that work."
- "It not just Wales for Africa and health boards that will showcase commitment as a globally responsible nation. Universities, diaspora groups in Wales, social enterprises and more promote Wales as a globally responsible nation committed to economic, environment health sustainability."
- "Welsh Government should set the standards and publish a charter that lays out the best practice in minimising the impact the international development and wider sector has on climate change."

Sustainable Tourism

Comments about the commitment to support sustainable tourism were largely positive. However, in line with the overarching theme of responses to this particular chapter, respondents felt that more could be done to develop this work further and promote the Welsh offer. In addition, the role of the Welsh language to promote Wales was identified as a key selling point, alongside the natural landscape and well known cultural events such as the Urdd and National Eisteddfod.

- "We are happy to see a commitment to sustainable tourism and Wales' UNESCO world heritage sites and agree Wales has much to offer as a beautiful and diverse nation. In the 'place' section, we would also like to see recognition of a commitment to protect Wales' biodiversity"
- Support a significant upscaling of international tourism (with emerging markets), we should be looking to increase our multilingual capacity to welcome diverse groupings of visitors.

Welsh Government Response and Next Steps

The Welsh Government would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who took the time to respond to the consultation and for their views on Wales' future international ambitions. The Welsh Government would also like to thank everyone who was involved in the discussions around the draft document prior to its publication.

The results have been analysed and the responses will be used to inform the final International Strategy document which will be published in due course.

Annex A

Responses were received from the following organisations:

Aerospace Wales Forum Ltd
Airbus
Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales
Brecon View Eco Village
British Council Wales
British Film Institute
Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol Hywel Dda University Health Board
Cardiff Metropolitan University
Cardiff University
Colegau Cymru - Colleges Wales
Comisiynydd y Gymraeg – Welsh Language Commissioner
Commonwealth Games Wales
Community Carbon Link
Community Foundation Wales
Cymru Masnach Deg - Fair Trade Wales
Dolen Cymru
Disasters Emergency Committee Cymru
Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Cymru
Elm Grove Country House
Elrha
Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)
Ffilm Cymru Wales
Film Hub Wales
Food Adventure Ltd
Games Wales
Glandŵr Cymru – The Canal and River Trust in Wales
Growing Mid Wales
Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW)
Grŵp Trawsbleidiol Cymru Rhyngwladol – Wales International Cross-Party Group
Hub Cymru Africa
Human Rights Stakeholder Group (HRSG)
Hybu Cig Cymru – Meat Promotion Wales (HCC)
i2LResearch
Industries Wales
Innovation Advisory Council for Wales
Learned Society of Wales
Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod
Llenyddiaeth Cymru - Literature Wales
Llyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru - National Library of Wales
Mercator Rhyngwladol - Mercator International (including Wales Literature Exchange and Literature Across Frontiers)
Nataim UK Ltd
National Dance Company Wales
NoFit State Circus

Oxfam Cymru
Peter Snowball Consultancy Ltd
Public Health Wales
Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama
S4C
Size of Wales
South & Mid Wales Chambers of Commerce
South People's Projects (SOPPRO)
Sport Wales
St David's College
Sub-Saharan Advisory Panel
Swansea University
Trydan cyf
TUC
United Purpose
Universities Wales
University of Wales Trinity Saint David and the University of Wales
Urdd
Wales Arts International / Arts Council of Wales
Wales Council for Voluntary Action
Wales for Africa Health Links Network
Wales France Business Forum
Wales Millennium Centre
Wales Overseas Agencies Group
Welsh Centre for International Affairs
Welsh Higher Education Brussels
Wrexham Glyndwr University

In addition, a further 42 responses were received from members of the public acting in an individual capacity and organisations that wished to remain anonymous.