

16 May 2013

Welsh language data - third release

Key points

- In 2011, 23.3 per cent of the population aged 3 and over born in Wales were able to speak Welsh. This compares with 24.7 in 2001.
- Of those not born in Wales, 8.0 per cent were able to speak Welsh. This compares with 9.0 in 2001.

Across local authorities, of those born in Wales, the proportion able to speak Welsh varied considerably from the overall proportion able to speak Welsh. The differences were greatest for the most Welsh speaking areas.

- In Ceredigion, 74.6 per cent of the population born in Wales were able to speak Welsh (compared with 47.3 per cent of the overall population).
- In Gwynedd, 88.7 per cent of the population born in Wales were able to speak Welsh (compared with 65.4 per cent of the overall population).
- In the Isle of Anglesey, 78.2 per cent of the population born in Wales were able to speak Welsh (compared with 57.2 per cent of the overall population).
- In Carmarthenshire, 54.0 per cent of the population born in Wales were able to speak Welsh (compared to 43.9 per cent of the overall population)

Note that students are counted at their term-time address, and are likely to account for a significant number of people born outside Wales.

- The gap between the proportion of people born in Wales able to speak Welsh and the proportion of people born outside Wales able to speak Welsh varied considerably with age, with the gap at its narrowest (3 percentage points) for children aged 3 to 15. The gap is largest for the 16-24 year age group and the older age groups (for 16-24 year olds this is likely to be due to students).
- 88.2 per cent of Welsh speakers were born in Wales, a slight decrease from 89.1 per cent in 2001.
- A national identity was asked on the Census for the first time in 2011. Of those able to speak Welsh, 76.5 regarded themselves as having Welsh national identity only (compared with 52.8 per cent for non Welsh speakers).

Previous statistical bulletins highlighted the potential reasons for the overall decrease in the number and proportion of Welsh speakers, including demographic changes and migration. These also need to be borne in mind when comparing with 2001, by country of birth and other characteristics.

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