



Appendix 3

TITLE **Gwynedd and the Welsh Language Economic Strategy**

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1. THE PURPOSE OF THE REPORT?

1.1. In this report, the consideration given to the Welsh language in Gwynedd's new Economic Strategy is outlined. It identifies the main features of the relationship between the Welsh language and the economy in Gwynedd, and at the end of the report in Figure 1, shows how the Strategy responds to these characteristics in order to strengthen the Welsh language.

2. THE WELSH LANGUAGE AND THE ECONOMY IN GWYNEDD

2.1. On Census day 2021, 73,560 people (aged 3 and over) were able to speak Welsh in Gwynedd, or 64.4% of the total population. It represents a decrease of one percentage point compared to the 2011 Census, when 65.4% of the population were able to speak Welsh.¹

2.2. The National Language Use Survey, 2012-22, covers the frequency with which Welsh is spoken among people who are able to do so in Gwynedd. It should be noted that the Occupancy Survey is only a survey, with a specific and limited sample of people, and that the Census, in contrast, includes the entire population. Nevertheless, it appears that a significant percentage of the population who can speak Welsh in Gwynedd do not use it on a daily basis. The proportion of Welsh speakers in Gwynedd who reported speaking more than a few words of Welsh on a daily basis was 61% in 2019-20 and 60% for 2021-22.² The workplace is an important space for increasing the use of the Welsh language – and particularly important for those who do not use Welsh at home or in everyday social networks.

2.3. The Welsh Communities Commission looked at socio-economic influences that have an impact on the viability and vitality of the Welsh language in those areas with a high density of Welsh speakers, including Gwynedd. The Commission's report highlights the following links between the economy and the Welsh language in Gwynedd:

2.3.1. The structural importance of those industries in Gwynedd in which high percentages of Welsh speakers are active, namely agriculture, public administration, education and health, and the construction industry, is emphasised.

- **Agriculture:** 84% are Welsh speakers.

¹ Gwynedd Council, *Gwynedd Language Strategy* (2023), p. 4. [Online]:
<https://www.gwynedd.llyw.cymru/en/Council/Documents---Council/Strategies-and-policies/Language-Standards-and-Policy/Appendix-2-Welsh-Language-Strategy-2023-2033-Word.pdf>

² *Ibid.*

- **Public administration, education and health:** 74% are Welsh speakers.
- **The construction industry:** 74% are Welsh speakers.³

2.3.2. It also shows that Welsh speakers in Gwynedd are under-represented in the most privileged NS-SEC (S. National Statistics Socio-economic Classification) categories of L1, L2 and L3 – higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations. Welsh speakers represent 55% of all people in these privileged categories in Gwynedd – around 10 percentage points lower than the proportion of Welsh speakers across the entire population in the county. According to the Commission, it reflects some "structural disadvantage in certain circumstances".⁴

2.3.3. At the least privileged pole, L14.1 and L14.2, individuals who have never worked and have been long-term unemployed, Welsh speakers appear to be under-represented by around 10 percentage points. In the Commission's report, "the lower density of Welsh speakers in these socio-economic categories is a product of, *and also produces*, less favourable circumstances for the use of Welsh".⁵ It underlines how important it is to expand this cohort's access to quality work - not only when tackling poverty, but to build confidence and increase the cohort's use of the language in workplaces that already use Welsh, or have the potential to use it more widely with support.

2.3.4. This is supported by data on language transmission in the family. In households in the least privileged socio-economic categories with one or more adults who can speak Welsh, there are twice as many children who do not speak Welsh in Gwynedd compared to households in the most privileged categories⁶. In the Commission's view, it "testifies to the socio-economic impact on the ability of the language group to reproduce itself effectively over time"⁷, and to this end, how important it is to reduce relative disadvantage in Gwynedd in order to increase the likelihood of language transfer.

2.3.5. The Commission recognises emigration in the young population as "a structural economic and linguistic challenge for Welsh-speaking communities".⁸ The size of the workforce will shrink, especially among the highest skilled, and economic performance and productivity will suffer as a result. Furthermore, recruitment challenges will intensify, and communities will lose individuals who can speak Welsh. The reasons that motivate emigration and return migration are complex, highly personal decisions, and involve economic, social, and ideological factors that intersect with each other. As a result, in a report on the mobility of young people by the Centre for Welsh Politics and Society, Aberystwyth University, the topic

³ Welsh Communities Commission, *Final Report: Empowering Communities, Strengthening the Welsh Language* (2024), Part 2.5., pp. 22-3 [Online]: <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2024-08/empowering-communities-strengthening-the-welsh-language.pdf>

⁴ *Ibid.*, Part 2.7., pp. 23-4.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Part 2.8., pp. 23-5.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 24

⁸ *Ibid.*, Part 4.3., 4.16., pp. 57-8, 69-70.

should be approached holistically and avoid "focusing on one or two key factors".⁹ In particular, the following points are made:

- As important as economic incentives such as jobs, careers and salary are, migration is influenced by wider considerations of social life and ideological pressure – i.e., the belief that one must leave "in order to succeed".¹⁰
- That return migration is a consideration that becomes increasingly prominent at certain times in life, and that the early 30s should be treated as a particularly significant period as people think about family and "settling down".¹¹
- "Examiners" should not be taken for granted or forgotten when dealing with mobility.¹²

3. LANGUAGE PLANNING POLICY IN GWYNEDD AND WALES

3.1. The main aim of the *Gwynedd Language Strategy 2023-33* is to "increas[e] opportunities for everyone of Gwynedd's residents to see and use the Welsh language in different contexts. ". It acts on this change through five areas of action:

- **1. Early years language:** To give families and children the best start in language use, and strengthen language transmission in the family.
- **2. Language of Learning:** To ensure opportunities for people of all ages to take courses through the medium of Welsh and to learn Welsh.
- **3. Work and Service Language:** Increase the use and visibility of the language with employers, in the workplace, and with customers.
- **4. Community Language:** To encourage the use of language in different social contexts.
- **5. Research and technology:** Increase the use and visibility of the Welsh language on digital forums.

3.2. *Cymraeg 2050* is the Welsh Government's strategy to increase the number of Welsh speakers to one million by 2050. The strategy is based on three themes:

- **Theme 1: Increasing the number of speakers** – Through Welsh education, language transfer in the family and opportunities to learn the language.
- **Theme 2: Increasing the use of the Welsh language** – By creating and maintaining opportunities for its use, including economically and in the workplace.
- **Theme 3: Creating favourable conditions** – Ensuring policies that support the language.

The strategy emphasizes collaboration between communities, organizations and individuals, including employers.

⁹ Lewis, H., & Cunnington Wynn, L. (2024). *ARFOR, emigration and the Welsh language: Lessons from contemporary research in the field of emigration to support the work of the ARFOR II programme*. p. 3. [Online]: <https://pure.aber.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/86522827/Adroddiad.pdf>

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 3., 10-11, 14-15.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp 4., 12-13.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 4., 14-15.

FIGURE 1. GWYNEDD AND WELSH LANGUAGE ECONOMIC STRATEGY

THE WELSH LANGUAGE AND THE ECONOMY	THE STRATEGY'S RESPONSE	RELATED PRIORITIES
<p>2.2. A significant percentage of the population who can speak Welsh in Gwynedd do not use it on a daily basis.</p>	<p>This challenge requires that we take action to increase spaces that use Welsh in the economic context, among employers, in the workplace and in customer engagement. Strengthening the use of the Welsh language in this context is important for several reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The status of the Welsh language: Increasing the status of Welsh as a business language gives it added value as a skill in the workplace, encourages more people to practise and use it, and strengthens parents' motivation to pass on the language to their children in due course. ▪ Language progression: The continuation of the use and development of language skills as you move from one stage of life to the next, especially from school, college or university to the world of work. ▪ Everyday use of Welsh: Creating Welsh spaces in the workplace is particularly important for those who do not use Welsh at home or in everyday social networks, but are able to do so in the world of work. <p>Therefore, action is taken to increase the use and visibility of the Welsh language in the economy through the following interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Influencing language use through business funding programmes administered by the Council: The Council will ask enterprises to identify a series of language commitments that they are expected to implement when receiving grant funding. The scope, high application and likely impact of these commitments will be scored as one aspect of the original application – and, if funding is earmarked, progress against the identified commitments over the grant period will be monitored. Evidence of already strong language use and visibility will <p>Cynnig Cymraeg</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ : We would also encourage enterprises to apply for the Cynnig Cymraeg which is the Welsh Language Commissioner's language accreditation. It attests to the 	<p>Priority 1, 2, 4, 5 & 6.</p>

	<p>comprehensive use of the language by employers, both in the workplace and in customer engagement, and represents a more formal and consistent language framework. It is particularly useful for those initiatives that already demonstrate strong use and visibility of the language and want to formally attest to this.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Procurement: The Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act 2023 puts a new emphasis on social benefits, including the Welsh language. The Council will work to ensure that using and promoting the Welsh Language is given due consideration in awarding commercial contracts. <p>In addition to the Council's direct funding forces, we will also encourage and support the use, visibility and confidence of the Welsh language by sharing useful language resources, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bilingual recruitment toolkit: Good practice that offers practical guidance to employers when trying to attract and recruit individuals with different levels of proficiency in Welsh. ▪ ARFer App: An easy and fun framework for groups of staff to use more Welsh in the workplace. ▪ Helo BLOD: A free Welsh language translation and support service offered by the Welsh Government to businesses, charities and not-for-profit organisations. 	
<p>2.3.1. The structural importance of those industries in Gwynedd in which high percentages of Welsh speakers are active</p>	<p>The significantly low productivity levels found in Gwynedd are a long-term challenge to the competitiveness and sustainability of the industries already found in Gwynedd, including those industries listed above that have high levels of Welsh speakers. Because of this, the first priority of the Strategy is to maximise the value of our current economy, i.e., unleash potential, raise value and strengthen the resilience of the businesses and enterprises already found in Gwynedd.</p> <p>We want to see the competitiveness and resilience of those industries that are structurally important to the Welsh language increase. E.g., in the agri-food industry, which is the industry with the highest proportion of Welsh speakers in Gwynedd (84%), it includes:</p>	<p>Priorities 1, 2 & 3.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ North Wales Growth Pact: Maximising local benefits from the North Wales Ambition agri-food programme, e.g., the Glynllifon Rural Economy Hub. ▪ Sustainable Farming Plan for Wales: Supporting farmers to maximise the benefits of the Welsh Government's new subsidies programme. ▪ Procurement: Increase the amount of food purchased locally by public bodies. ▪ Working together: Highlight wider support in the agricultural industry, e.g., Farming Connect services. 	
<p>2.3.2. Welsh speakers in Gwynedd are under-represented in the most privileged socio-economic categories – i.e., senior managerial, administrative and professional occupations.</p>	<p>The reasons for the under-representation of Welsh speakers in senior positions are unclear in the Welsh Communities Commission's report (2024, p. 24). However, with the UK Government's increasing emphasis on high value industries, particularly in the new Industrial Strategy, <i>Invest 2035</i>, it must be ensured that Welsh speakers in Gwynedd are not at a comparative disadvantage when applying for higher level jobs, whether in Gwynedd or in neighbouring counties.</p> <p>To this end, the Council will press for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local talent development schemes: Ensure that the largest employers and significant developers adopt talent attraction and development schemes— leadership, graduates and apprenticeships—that recognise local residents as core stakeholders, support them to reach the top jobs, and give the Welsh language a specific status as a skill. ▪ Return migration: Among those leaving Gwynedd, individuals with higher or specialist skills and qualifications are over-represented, with a significant percentage of them, of course being Welsh speakers. We will support and encourage them to return, so that recruitment at a higher level will include more individuals with specialist skills who can speak Welsh. 	<p>Priority 2, 5 & 6.</p>
<p>2.3.3. Less favourable circumstances to use the Welsh language among individuals in the least privileged socio-economic categories – i.e., individuals who have never worked and who have been</p>	<p>Individuals who are economically inactive are less likely to have access to spaces that use Welsh. It is particularly important for those who do not use Welsh at home or in the community, but would be able to do so in the world of work. The sixth priority of the Strategy addresses this cohort – supporting them to achieve quality work. In doing this, hand in hand with increasing business use of the Welsh language more</p>	<p>Priority 6.</p>

<p>long-term unemployed.</p>	<p>generally in the world of business, the cohort's access to Welsh spaces will increase.</p>	
<p>2.3.4. On households in the least privileged socio-economic categories with one or more adults proficient in Welsh, there are twice as many children as non-Welsh speakers in Gwynedd compared to households in the most privileged categories</p>	<p>In supporting the people of Gwynedd to reach their full potential, to access quality work, fair wages and opportunities locally, action is taken to reduce poverty and socio-economic disadvantage in the cohort. Individuals in less privileged conditions are known to be less likely to pass on the language to their children. Therefore, by increasing the socio-economic well-being of the cohort, the cohort's access to Welsh spaces and an understanding of its value, language transmission in the family is strengthened.</p>	<p>Priority 6.</p>
<p>2.3.5. The High level of emigration among young people is a structural economic and linguistic challenge for Gwynedd.</p>	<p>The Strategy recognises that the motivations of individuals who leave Gwynedd or who are contemplating doing, or who are also contemplating returning, are complex. It requires holistic interventions that cross economic, social and ideological factors.</p> <p>To this end, the fourth priority of the Strategy – A good place to live, work and do business – addresses all three things; that it is possible to live a fulfilling life and succeed in the world of work and business in Gwynedd. Across the Strategy, we are taking action for better jobs, careers and wages, but this priority looks specifically at the social incentives for staying or returning, including the strength of the Welsh language in the county.</p> <p>We are also paying attention to the "remainers" in this effort, ensuring that they have quality jobs so that they do not have to contemplate leaving. We will take action to convince them that Gwynedd is a good place to live and work, and celebrate them for "succeeding locally".</p>	<p>Priority 1, 2, 4, 5 & 6.</p>