

3. Tackling Poverty and Improving Economic Opportunity

Monitoring progress

Within the Plan for Wales a number of strategies have been developed to tackle the problem of poor basic skills in literacy and numeracy, and low academic achievement among young people and adults. A selection of key indicators showing progress are presented in the Appendix together with associated Welsh Assembly Government targets.

Since 1999,

- the number of 15 year olds leaving full-time education without a recognised qualification has fallen to 1,313 in 2002, a fall of 16%
- the number of adults of working-age without a qualification has increased slightly to 21% in 2002
- the number of young people in modern apprenticeship schemes has increased to a little over 10,000 in 2002
- there have been increases in net employment¹ overall and for the over 50s, ethnic minorities, and for the disabled:
 - in 2002, there was a net increase in employment of 41,000 compared with 1999 and
 - a net increase of 40,000 for the over 50s
 - a net increase of 7,000 for ethnic minorities
 - a net increase of 8,000 for the disabled
- the number of new VAT registered businesses, as a percentage of the UK, has risen slightly to 77% in 2001.

1. Employees and the self-employed

4. Improving Health, Reducing Inequalities and Supporting Vulnerable People

Monitoring progress

Well Being in Wales is another significant step forward in the Welsh Assembly Government's efforts to improve health and to reduce the inequalities in health that exist between communities through an integrated approach to policies and programmes. *Well being in Wales* sets out a range of action across all the Assembly Government's policy areas. A selection of key indicators showing progress in this area are presented in the Appendix together with associated Welsh Assembly Government targets.

Since 1999,

- life expectancy has remained unchanged. Life expectancy at birth in Wales was 74.8 years for males and 79.7 years for females in 1998-2000 (the latest period for which estimates are available).
- deaths from coronary heart disease have fallen among older people. In 2000, the rate was 612.4 per 100,000 of the population aged 65 to 74 (the latest year for which figures are available).
- lung cancer deaths have fallen slightly. In 2000, the rates were:
 - for men, 39.6 per 100,000 of the population aged under 75 and
 - for women, 21.6 per 100,000 of the population aged under 75

(the latest year for which figures are available).

- limiting long-term illness has remained unchanged. In mid-2001, it was estimated that 3 out of 10 people of working-age had a limiting long-term illness.

5. Children and Young People

Monitoring progress

The Welsh Assembly Government has established of a Cabinet Sub-committee on Children and Young People to give a lead to children and young people's issues at the highest executive level in Wales. The Assembly Government has also established a strategic planning framework for all services for children and young people a key element of which is to provide opportunities for their participation in policy development and programme implementation. A selection of key indicators showing progress in this area are presented in the Appendix together with associated Welsh Assembly Government targets.

Since 1999,

- levels of attainment by 11 year olds have steadily increased with
- 79% reaching the National Curriculum standard in 2002 for English and
- 73% reaching the standard for Maths
- average non-attendance at secondary schools has remained unchanged
- the first results from local authorities for 2001 show that :
- 33% of children leaving care aged 16 or over had at least 1 GCSE/GNVQ

- 8% of children looked after had 3 or more placements in the previous 12 months.

6. Where We Live

Monitoring progress

This Chapter covers a number of policy areas and programmes that relate to the areas in which we live including housing, transport services, access to culture and leisure services and rural issues. Housing is of major importance and *'Better Homes for People in Wales'*, the Welsh Assembly Government's national housing strategy for Wales, sets out a clear vision for housing in Wales, embracing the Assembly's key themes of equality of opportunity, sustainable development and social inclusion. A selection of key indicators showing progress in this area are presented in the Appendix together with associated Welsh Assembly Government targets.

Since 1999,

- a new question on homelessness has been introduced into one of the regular survey forms completed by local authorities. Provisional results for 2002 show:
- 8% of the 370 families that left temporary accommodation between April and June 2002 were resident for between 6 months and 1 year and
- 5% were resident for over 1 year
- the number killed or seriously injured on the roads has fallen. In 2001, the rates were:
- 59 per 100,000 of the population overall and
- 35 per 100,000 for children
- there has been an increase in the number of libraries on-line. In 2002, around 62% had internet access.

