

Chapter 2: The Labour Market In Wales

Overview of Welsh Economy

2.1 The performance of the Welsh economy has been poor relative to other UK regions on most objective indicators. Wales has fewer people employed and its skewed economic and occupational structure means that average productivity is lower than in other regions. Wales is still overly dependent on declining or low value-adding industries. Certain skills are in short supply and relatively high proportions of people are effectively excluded from the workforce. Economic disadvantage tends to be heavily concentrated in particular communities.

2.2 Whilst the performance of Wales in attracting inward investment has been very good, and the eastern part of Wales has economic output levels not dissimilar to the UK, Wales has a small economic base with too few large home-grown companies. This limits the ability to generate growth from within. The Welsh business supplier and customer networks do not support economic stability, growth and diversification to the extent that they do in the more prosperous areas of Europe. It is vital, therefore, that Wales adopts an international and outward looking approach to business. Although its position on the western side of the UK has sometimes been a disadvantage, the breathtaking rise in e-commerce will make the location of Wales far less of an issue in the future. However, too few companies in Wales (large and small) make the most of the opportunities available to exploit world class technologies, including ICT and e-commerce.

2.3 Although the service sector in Wales, including financial services, is growing rapidly, it is small and continues to rely too heavily on the low value-added end of manufacturing. The small and medium enterprise sector is relatively under-developed and relatively few of Wales' small businesses make the crucial transition to larger, dynamic enterprises. Fewer still gain stock market status. The rate of new business start-ups is lower than that in England and Scotland.

2.4 Wales has a long standing tradition of self-employment, but the innovation and entrepreneur culture required to create a truly dynamic small and medium enterprise sector is not as strong as it could be. Wales is also under-represented in significant high added-value growth sectors such as ICT, pharmaceuticals and other science and knowledge-based activities. Within the company structure, there are too few decision-making departments, units and occupations in finance, R&D, marketing and product design.

2.5 Output per head in Wales remains well below the EU average – 18% below during the period 1994-1996. Furthermore, prosperity is spread unevenly across Wales. In the west of

Wales and the Valleys, output per head is nearly 30% below the EU average, although in East Wales it is actually slightly higher.

2.6 At the same time, nearly one third of our employers in Wales are experiencing skill shortages. The stock of available skills is lower than that in most competitor countries. There are big challenges in overcoming weaknesses in school performance; barriers to training and learning post-16 and in lifting the research base of the higher education sector.

Table 1: The economy of Wales – a profile					
	Period	West Wales & Valleys (OBJ 1)	East Wales (OBJ 3)	Wales	UK <i>UK=100</i>
GDP per head# (1)	1996	73	100	84	100
GDP per workforce job# (2)	1996	89	101	94	100
Household disposable income per head (3)	1998	N/A	N/A	85	100
Average hourly earnings** (4)	1999	86	90	88	100
					<i>rate</i>
Economic inactivity (working age) (5)	1999/2000	28%	20%	25%	21%
Employment rate (6) (working age)	1999/2000	67%	74%	69%	74%

Claimant unemployment rate (7)	Oct 2000	5.1%	3.3%	4.3%	3.5%
Change in workforce jobs (FTEs) ~ (8)	1981 – 1995	-6%	+12%	+3%	N/A
Working age population with no qualifications (9)	Spring 2000	22%	16%	20%	16%
Business density^ (10)	1999	230	277	247	318

1. Sources

(1), (2) and (3) ONS Regional accounts and National Assembly calculations. (4) New Earnings Survey (5), (6) Labour Force Survey (LFS) (7) Benefits Agency administrative system (8) Annual Employment Survey, Agricultural Census and National Assembly calculations (9) LFS (10) DTI and National Assembly calculations.

2. Notes

Most recent available figures for the sub-Wales areas. [See also note 1 on page 1?].

*Average hourly earnings for all full-time employees. GB = 100.

~Results on the basis of the NUTS boundaries are not available. Figures given are for "best-match" old counties.

^Businesses registered for VAT per 10,000 adult population, excluding agriculture.

"West Wales" comprises the unitary authorities of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy, Denbighshire, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire. "The Valleys" comprises the authorities of Swansea, Neath Port Talbot, Bridgend, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Merthyr, Caerphilly, Blaenau Gwent and Torfaen. Together, "West Wales and the Valleys" makes up the Objective 1 area. "East Wales" comprises all the remaining unitary authorities in Wales.

- In recent times between one-third and one-half of the overall discrepancy in GDP per head has been a consequence of lower activity rates in Wales. Much the largest part of this discrepancy is accounted for by differences in activity of the working age population, with differences in the proportion of pensioners making

only a small contribution. Inactivity amongst the working age population is concentrated in particular groups. Compared with the UK as a whole, Wales has high rates of inactivity for both men and women. However, over a long period, activity rates have been rising for women. The Labour Force Survey (LFS) shows that high Welsh inactivity is largely attributable to high reported levels of long-term sickness, typically amongst the middle aged (45 plus) with few qualifications and from manual backgrounds. This problem is concentrated geographically, particularly in the ex-mining communities in the Valleys.

8. The variation in economic performance within Wales is significant. Two-thirds of the population of Wales lies within the Objective One region, "West Wales and the Valleys", with an average GDP per capita just 73% of the UK average. In the Valleys area, activity rates, output per head, and average wage levels are all low compared both to Wales and the UK as a whole. In more rural parts of West Wales, activity and employment levels are generally higher than in Wales as whole (except in some of the coastal resort towns), but output per head and average wages remain low. Even within the more prosperous parts of Wales such as Cardiff and Newport, there are substantial concentrations of, low incomes, low economic activity and social exclusion.

Overview of the Labour Market in Wales

2.9 Overall, there are important problems in the labour market in Wales, which inhibit the prospects for economic development and employment growth. However, these problems are particularly concentrated in West Wales and the Valleys, and in the more deprived parts of the urban areas in East Wales. Headline figures are shown in Table 1.

2.10 Inactivity is high compared to the UK as a whole and is concentrated in West Wales and the Valleys.. Inactivity in the Valleys area is particularly high relative to the UK amongst females of working age, and amongst men aged 50-64. In West Wales, inactivity is particularly high amongst females aged 50-59.

2.11 Unemployment is higher in most of Wales than in the UK. Long term unemployment forms a broadly similar proportion of total unemployment as in the UK , but this may reflect people removing themselves from the register in the face of poor employment prospects. Short-term unemployment rates (i.e. less than 6 months) remain above the GB levels for under 25s. This appears to be a particular problem in West Wales due to seasonal employment factors. Some localities in West Wales and the Valleys are suffering depopulation.

2.12 Although there is a base of traditional skills, skill levels in the population generally tend to be low and there is underachievement in terms of qualifications. In some areas, this underachievement starts at school level, with very poor performance in some localities –

particularly the Valleys and inner urban areas in east Wales. A significant proportion of the workforce has poor basic skills. Table 2 provides a summary of current qualification levels in the context of the National Education and Training Targets for Wales.

Table 2		
LIFELONG LEARNING MEASURE	CURRENT POSITION IN WALES (AUTUMN 1999) (a)	TARGET TO BE ACHIEVED BY 2004
1. 16-18 year olds without qualifications (b)	18%	To be reduced to 5%
2. 19-21 year olds without NVQ Level 2 or equivalent qualification (b)	23%	Below 20%
3. Adults (19+) without qualifications	20%	Below 12.5%
4. Adults (19+) with NVQ Level 2 or equivalent qualification	60%	Above 70%
5. Adults (19+) with NVQ Level 3 or equivalent qualification	39%	Above 50%
6. Adults (19+) with NVQ Level 4 or equivalent qualification	22%	Approaching 30%
7. Adults (19+) with functional basic skills in literacy	84% (1996)	Above 90%
8. Adults (19+) with functional basic skills in numeracy	56% (1996)	Above 60%
a. Estimates, particularly for the young age groups, should be treated with caution because the small sample size of the survey can lead to large sampling variability.		

- Ages at 31 August

2.13 Compared to the UK as a whole, the occupational structure shows an under-representation of more highly skilled jobs. Managerial jobs, in particular, are under-represented and there are probably shortages of managerial skills in the population, which may account in part for the low levels of business formation. On average across Wales, there are fewer hard to fill vacancies than in the UK, and people in work are more likely to lack the skills employers need. In some parts of West Wales and the Valleys prospects are very bleak with high unemployment, little new investment and poor skills development, with skills gaps being significant.

2.14 The structure of employment is changing. Part-time employment, in line with wider UK trends, is becoming increasingly prevalent, with almost one third of employees now in part-time occupations. The growth in part-time work has been concentrated in the service industries and especially in occupations traditionally dominated by women. Women comprise the greater majority of part-time workers.

2.15 The predominance of low-skilled sectors and occupations feeds through into levels of earnings, which is low compared to the GB figure, and very low in some rural localities, being less than 80% of the GB figure in the case of Gwynedd.

2.16 The patterns of economic adjustment and consequent employment growth are uneven. There are 'hotspots', particularly in east Wales, where filling vacancies appears to be a significant problem for some employers. The localised nature of labour markets, and to some degree a lack of geographical mobility, throughout the area continues to act as a serious constraint on the ability of some areas to benefit from economic growth and on business development.

2.17 From a more positive viewpoint, Wales benefits from a well-developed network of universities and further education colleges. However, there have been issues about the availability of facilities for more specialised training. In parts of Wales, the constraints of population sparsity and poor communications also affect access to training opportunities more generally.

Analysis by Pillar

2.18 The section below provides a brief analysis and assessment of the position of the groups

which will be specifically targeted under the EQUAL initiative, in the context of the four "pillars" of the European Employment Strategy. Statistical data is drawn from the Labour Force Survey unless otherwise indicated. Where statistical data is not available, reference is made to studies which help to indicate the relative disadvantage faced by these groups.

Employability

2.19 Although the current labour market conditions in the UK are favourable with strong employment growth and a corresponding fall in unemployment it appears that Wales is failing to benefit fully from these conditions. Added to that there are distinct groups within the labour market, which experience discrimination and inequality.

20. Activity rates for all the excluded groups tends to be below the GB average. 84% of part time employees in Wales are women who we know tend to receive less training and development opportunities. Statistics also show that Wales has a greater number of lone parents than in GB. Activity rates for disabled people at 57% are well below the rates for non-disabled people at 84% and there are particular problems for those disabled people aged over 50 where just 30% are working. ILO unemployment rates for disabled people at 12.5% are also significantly higher than those for non-disabled people at 6.6%. People from ethnic minorities also face particular problems where activity rates stand at 69%, compared to 75% for white people.

2.21 Wales also has an ageing workforce; population projections show that by 2005 approximately 50% of the working age population in Wales will be over the age of 40. Inactivity rates amongst older people are higher at 39% when compared to 31% for those under 50. Statistics also show that if older people lose their jobs they are much more likely to become long-term unemployed. Although Wales has a lower level of reported homosexual behaviour among men we know that attitudes are more censorious in Wales than elsewhere in GB and therefore this could be due to under-reporting. Religion does not appear to be a major labour market issue in Wales, although it is clear that there are issues surrounding discrimination based on race and ethnicity.

(a) Disability

- There are 404,000 disabled people in Wales accounting for nearly 23% of the working population (GB 18%). The level of disability increases with age. 9% of people aged 16-19 have a disability, compared with 36% of those aged over 50. The proportion of the working age population that are disabled does not show any variation between men and women in either Wales or GB.

- 37% of disabled people are in employment compared with 79% of non-disabled people (GB figures 47% and 81% respectively). Disabled people make up 12% of all people in employment in Wales.
- 54% of men and women with a disability who are aged under 50 are in employment; but among those aged 50 to retirement age, fewer than 30% are working (GB figures 65% and 38% respectively)
- ILO unemployment rates for disabled people are significantly higher than those for non-disabled people, 12.5% compared to 6.6% (GB figures 10.5% and 5.4% respectively)
- 57% of disabled people are economically active compared with 84% of non-disabled people.
- GB research indicates that 16% of disabled people who are or have been economically inactive say that they have experienced discrimination or unfair treatment in a work related context [DFEE Research Report 69)

(b) Race/ethnicity

- Ethnic minorities make up 1.7% of the working age population of Wales (GB figures 6.7%)
- Those from the Indian sub-continent (India, Pakistan and Bangladesh) form the largest ethnic minority group, followed by Black ethnic groups and then Chinese and other Asians.
- 58% of people from ethnic minorities are in employment, compared to 69% of white people (GB figures 58% and 76% respectively).
- Economic activity rates are lower for ethnic minorities, 69% compared to 75% for whites (the gap is larger for GB with rates of 66% and 80% respectively).
- ILO unemployment rates for ethnic minority people in GB are significantly above the rates for white people, 12.9% compared with 5.5% (rates are for those economically active aged 16 and over. While figures for Wales are not statistically reliable there is no evidence (from activity rates and employment rates) to suggest the relative position is significantly different in Wales.
- For GB, the proportion of those who are economically inactive but wish to work is 9.2% for ethnic minorities and 6.2% for whites. The figures for ethnic minorities in Wales is not statistically reliable; the figure for whites in Wales is 7.8%.
- GB Research shows that unemployed ethnic minority claimants have a median length of unemployment of twice that for white claimants (8 months compared to 4 months). It also suggests that 19% of people from ethnic minorities believe that they have personally been refused a job for racial or religious reasons [Modood, T. et al. Policy Studies Institute, 1997].

(c) Gender

- 47% of the working age population in Wales are women, but only 45% of the employed are women; (GB figures 48% and 44% respectively)
- Economic activity levels are lower amongst women at 69% compared to 80% for men (GB figures 73% and 85% respectively).
- 93% of male employees work full-time compared with 56% of women (GB figures 92% and 57% respectively). 84% of part-time employees in Wales are women (GB 81%).
- ILO unemployment rate for women (over the age of 16) is 5.7% compare to 8.5% (GB figures 5.2% and 6.5% respectively).
- The proportion of women who are economically inactive but wish to work is 8.8% compared to 6.9% for men (GB figures 7.9% and 5.0% respectively).
- The LFS shows that 5.4% of the population aged 16 to 59 claim child benefit as a lone parent in Wales compared to 4.5% for GB.

(d) Older workers

- A quarter of the working age population in Wales are over the age of 50, (GB figures 24%). Population projections show that by 2005 approximately 50% Welsh working age population will be over the age of 40.
- The employment rate of older people in Wales (ie those aged between 50 and retirement age) is well below that of the working age population. 58% of those aged over 50 are in employment, compared to 69% for the working population as a whole. This gap in employment rates is wider in Wales than for GB (66% and 74% respectively)
- ILO unemployment rates for older people in Wales are lower than for younger people, 4% compared to 17% for those aged 16-24 (GB figures 4% and 13% respectively). However, economic inactivity levels are much higher amongst older people, 39% compared with 31% for younger people (GB figures 30% and 28%).
- If older people lose their jobs, they are much more likely to become long-term unemployed. Of those who are unemployed, the long-term unemployed (12 months plus) account for 42% for the over 50s compared with 34% for persons aged 25-49 and 13% for those aged 16-24 (GB figures 44%; 33% and 12% respectively)
- GB research indicates that 20% of employees aged over 50 feel that they have experienced age discrimination in relation to an actual or possible job [DFEE Research Brief RBX 6/00)

(e) Religion or belief

[DN: SD to provide population data]

(f) Sexual Orientation

- The level of reported homosexual behaviour among men in Wales is one of the lowest in GB (3.3%). As data also shows that attitudes towards homosexuality are more censorious in Wales than elsewhere in GB, there is a possibility of under-reporting. In contrast, levels of reported recent lesbian activity are relatively high in Wales compared to other regions in GB (second highest to Scotland, outside London). (Health Promotion Wales:Technical Report 15)
- Women living in rural areas of Wales are nearly three times as likely as those in urban areas to report having had a female sexual partner (3.9% compared with 1.4%). For men, the reverse is true: those living in towns and cities are more than three times as likely as those in the country to report having had a homosexual partner. (Health Promotion Wales:Technical Report 15)
- Violence against gay men in Wales is amongst the highest in the UK. 67% of gay men report severe verbal abuse and 28% have been victims of violence. A further 29% report being harassed. (fpa Cymru research survey; 2000)

Entrepreneurship

2.22 Wales needs to increase the level of entrepreneurial activity, measured by the birth rate of new businesses and the net loss or gain of existing businesses. Wales is currently losing businesses at a faster rate than the UK. The net loss in Wales between 1994 and 1998 was 4,700 businesses compared to a UK gain of 51,100 during the same period. The birth rate of new businesses in Wales compared to the existing stock of businesses is at least 30% below the UK average. Wales has the second lowest business start-up rate of any region of the UK.

2.23 The proportion of the working age population in self employment is 7.4% for Wales compared to 8.3% for GB.

2.24 Certain groups, such as Welsh speakers, women, young people, ethnic minorities and older workers are underrepresented in enterprise creation

(a) Disability

- 15% of self-employed people in Wales have a long-term disability (GB 14%). Of those with a disability, 5% are self-employed compared to 8% of the non-disabled (GB figures 6% and 9% respectively)

(b) Race/ethnicity

- For GB the rate of self employment is lower for ethnic minorities, 7.2% of those of working age compared to 8.4% for whites. The biggest difference is for women, ethnic minority women have a rate of 3.0% compared to 4.5% for white women and the figures are 11.3% and 11.8% respectively for men. Self employment figures for Wales are not disclosable.

(c) Gender

- Women account for 22% of the self-employed in Wales (the figure is 26% for GB).
- X%?? of new small businesses in Wales are set up by women (UK figure 30%) *[DN – SD liaising with DfEE on this re: regional breakdown]*
- 5% of all economically active women are self-employed, compared with 14% of economically active men (GB figures 6% and 14% respectively)
- There is evidence of gender segregation amongst the self-employed. 25% of self-employed women in the UK work in public administration, education and health, compared to 5% of men. Conversely 25% of self-employed men work in construction compared with 2% women (Women and Men in the UK; facts and figures 2000: Cabinet Office, Women's Unit)
- GB research indicates that women face more problems than men do when setting up in business. (Barclays Review, Women in Business, Dec 1996)

(d) Older workers

- Older people are more likely to be self-employed than younger people. 11% of persons aged 50 to retirement age in Wales are self-employed, compared with 8% of those aged 25 to 49 and 1% of those aged people 16 to 24 (GB figures 11%, 9% and 2% respectively).
- Excluding agriculture, the gap in self employment rates between Wales and GB widens. 9% of persons aged 50 to retirement age, 7% of those aged 25 to 49 and 1% of those aged 16 to 24 are self-employed. GB figures are 10%, 9% and 1% respectively.

Adaptability

2.25 Wales lags behind the rest of the UK in qualification levels. Only 37% of people of working age have level 3 qualifications, compared with 41% for GB. Wales also has a greater proportion of adults with no qualifications – 20% compared to 16% for the UK – and 24% of adults have low literacy or numeracy skills.

2.26 The 1998 Future Skills Wales (FSW) survey revealed that 30% of employers had experienced hard to fill vacancies and just under 18% had reported skills gaps. Nearly one in five of all employers reported a gap between current workers' skills and the skills needed by their organisations. Core skills in information technology, 'soft skills' (ability to learn, communication, team working) and business focused skills (understanding customer needs, product knowledge) were identified by employers as being amongst the most important. Cost and staff time were identified by employers as the most significant barriers to training, whilst individuals identified childcare and family commitments as the main barriers.

2.27 The FSW survey also identified generally positive attitudes to training amongst employers, with half of those surveyed having funded off the job training in the past 12 months. However, certain occupations receive more training than others, for example managers and administrators are most likely to receive training, followed by professionals, clerical/secretarial staff, and craft workers. Plant and machine operatives and largely unskilled workers are least likely to receive training.

(a) Disability

- Disabled people are less likely to have an NVQ level 3 or above than non-disabled people (26% compared to 40% in Wales, 30% compared to 43% in GB), and are more than twice as likely to have no formal qualifications, 36% compared with 16%. (GB figures 30% and 13% respectively)
- Disabled people are generally underrepresented in higher level jobs. 29% of disabled people in employment are either managers or administrators or in professional or technical occupations, compared to 33% of non-disabled (GB 33% and 38% respectively).
- The average gross weekly earnings for disabled persons is £227, 84% of the earnings of non-disabled people (£270). Disabled persons earn, on average, less than their counterparts in GB (£268).

(b) Race/ethnicity

- In Wales, the proportion with highest qualification at NVQ level 3 or above is roughly the same for ethnic minorities and whites (38% and 37% respectively); the proportion with level 2 or below is higher for ethnic minorities (51% compared to 42%) and thus the proportion with no qualifications is lower (the position in GB is different; there is a lower proportion of level 3 or above for ethnic minorities, 37% compared to 41%, an equal proportion having level 2 or below, 42%, with ethnic minorities having a higher proportion with no qualifications, 21% compared to 16%).
- There are gender variations in the level of qualification; men have a higher proportion with level 3 or above with women having a higher proportion of level 2 or below. Within GB the gap between the sexes at these levels is much less for ethnic minorities while in Wales the gap between the sexes is much wider for ethnic minorities.

(c) Gender

- There are generally less women with higher qualifications and more with no qualifications. In Wales, 31% of women have NVQ level 3 or higher (42% of men), 46% have NVQ level 2 or lower (39% of men) and 23% of women have no qualifications (19% for men). The pattern in GB is similar with 35% and 47% respectively for NVQ level 3 or above, 46% and 39% respectively for NVQ level 2 or lower and 19% and 14% with no qualifications respectively.
- Of those in employment, 14.6% of women undertook some sort of job related training compared to 12% for men (GB figures 15.9% and 12.9% respectively). The difference is mainly due to a higher take up of training away from the job among women.
- Women are underrepresented in higher level jobs. In 1999, 10% of women in employment were managers and administrators compared to 15% for men (GB figures 12% and 19% respectively). Women are also underrepresented in all ICT sectors, particularly software and computer engineering jobs.

(d) Older workers

- Older people less likely to have qualifications than younger people. 32% of those aged over 50 have no formal qualifications, compared with 16% of those aged 25 to 49 and those aged 16 to 24 (GB figures 28%, 13% and 12% respectively).
- Older workers are more likely to be managers or administrators (16%) or work in craft or related occupations (14%). Only 5% of older people work in sales occupations, compared to almost one in five of workers aged 16 to 24.
- Turnover amongst older workers tends to be lower than amongst younger ones. However, some organisations still use age as the criterion for selecting people for redundancy.[DN – how to measure this?]

Equal Opportunities (gender)

2.28 The number of women participating in the labour market in Wales has increased significantly in recent years and the female employment rate is now at its highest ever. The female proportion of the workforce has risen from X% in 1971 to Y% today. (GB figures 36% and 50%). *[DN – information for Wales to follow]*. However barriers continue to exist to women entering and progressing in the labour market. The Welsh labour market is characterised by vertical, horizontal and contractual segregation and women are concentrated in a narrow band of occupational sectors and in mainly low paid, low status work. It is also noticeable that the situation is compounded for ethnic minority women, disabled women and older women. These groups are severely disadvantaged in terms of their ability to access training and education, and to gain quality employment. The lack of good quality, affordable and accessible childcare is a major barrier to labour market participation (particularly for women) and childcare provision in Wales is amongst the lowest in the UK.

2.29 There is a gender pay gap in Wales which is in part explained by the differing employment pattern of women and men, and in part by women earning less in similar jobs. Economic research into the latter area has suggested that only part of this differential can be explained by the varying characteristics of male and female employees (such as the reduced time that women have, on average, spent in the labour market). A significant part of the differential remains after allowing for these factors, and has been attributed by researchers to discrimination. Such discrimination may in turn, provide a contribution to an explanation of the differing employment pattern, and "job segregation".

a. Disability

- Disabled women are marginally less likely to be in employment. 37% of disabled women of working age are in employment compared to 38% of men. Employment rates for men and women are lower than the comparable rates in GB (49% men and 45% women).
- 45% of disabled men are economically active, compared to 41% of women.
- ILO unemployment rates are higher for men than for women (15% compared to 9%). GB figures are 12% and 9% respectively.
- Although disabled women are more likely to be economically inactive (59% compared to 55%), inactive men are more likely to want work. 19% of such disabled men would like to work, compared to 16% of women.

(b) Race/ethnicity

- Employment rates vary by gender. For ethnic minority women the figure is 50%, 17 percentage points lower than for men, while for white women the figure is 65%, 8 percentage points lower than for men (rates for ethnic minorities are comparable in GB and, although rates for whites are higher for GB, the gender gap for whites remains similar at 10%).
- The gap in economic activity rates between ethnic minorities and whites is larger in the case of women, 59% for ethnic minority women compared to 69% for whites whereas the figures for men are 80% in both cases (for GB the figures are 56% and 74% respectively for women and 77% and 85% respectively for men).
- ILO unemployment rates are generally lower for women but only marginally so in the case of ethnic minorities in GB, 12.7% compared with 4.8% for white women while the figures for GB men are 13.1% and 6.1% respectively.

(c) Gender

- The labour market in Wales is characterised by gender segregation. Women account for 72% of clerical and secretarial occupations; 70% of personal and protective occupations and 71% of sales occupations. In contrast, women account for only 6% of craft and related occupations and 17% of plant and machine operatives.
- 46% of Modern Apprenticeship starts in Wales in 1999-2000 were young women (DFEE Trainee Database).
- Current data from the New Earnings Survey (April 2000) shows that women's average gross weekly earnings, for full-time employees, was 78% of men's (74% for GB).
- The lack of good quality, affordable and accessible childcare is a major barrier to labour market participation (particularly for women). Provision of childcare in Wales is amongst the lowest in the UK.
- Women continue to dominate part-time work which makes up 44% of female employment but just 7% of male employment. 93% of male employees work full-time compared with 56% of women (GB figures 92% and 57% respectively). 84% of part-time employees in Wales are women (GB 81%)
- The employment rate for women in a relationship with dependant children 0-4 years is X % (GB 59%), whereas only Y% of lone mothers (with dependant children) are in employment (GB 47%) *[DN – SD to provide figures]*

(d) Older Workers

- Economic activity rates are higher amongst men over the age of 50 than for women over 50, 64% compared with 57%. These rates are well below the equivalent for GB, with the rate for males 72% and for females 65%.
- The ILO unemployment rate for men aged over 50 is over twice that for women, 5.6%

compared to 2.2%.

- Males are more likely to be economically inactive but still seeking or wanting to work (10% for males compared to 8% for females). These rates are higher than the equivalent for GB (8% and 7% respectively).