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1922 - 2022

Overview of Urdd Gobaith Cymru's international engagement and priorities in response to the one-day inquiry on international relations by the Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee.

Urdd Gobaith Cymru is Wales' longest serving National Youth Organisation providing Sport, Cultural, Humanitarian and Residential opportunities for children and young people that enable them to make a positive contribution to the community.

Established in 1922, the Urdd has nurtured generations of young people to be proud of their country, open to others and living embodiments of our language and culture, along with the universal values which we cherish in Wales.

Our aim stands the same as it was in 1922, to create globally aware young people, proud of their language and heritage and open to the world.

Our international projects are delivered with our partners to amplify the story of Wales as a successful, confident, vibrant, and open nation and to give our members transformational opportunities, changes in aspirations and self-confidence,

Over the past 3 years the Urdd has reignited international collaborations for its members with projects in Kenya, Alabama, Patagonia, Hungary, Brussels, Australia, and Japan and worldwide through its annual peace message.

Our international ambition engagement Welsh Government's International Work

We currently receive match funding from Welsh Government's International department, £100,000 during 2021-2022, to develop and coordinate our international projects.

The programmes support the Welsh government international ambition as follows

- The Urdd can link between the success of culture and sport by working with our partners to amplify Wales' voice overseas.
- We raise the profile of Wales by using our experience of promoting the Welsh language to collaborate with other countries.
- Through the Peace & Goodwill message we highlight Wales's established reputation as a Nation of Sanctuary, committed to human rights and the promotion of peace.
- Our mission as an organisation is to empower young people to be proud of their language and heritage but open to the world and through promoting global citizenship, we will be ensuring that the young people of Wales live for these values.
- We share our success with other countries and organisations in the world in the successful promotion of minority language.

In addition, our international work supports and deliver against the following policies and strategies.

- The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (Wales)
- Curriculum for Wales 2022
- Cymraeg2050:
- Rights of Children and Young Person (Wales) Measure 2011

Urdd's International work

Working in partnership with other organisation that work internationally such as the Football Association of Wales, Welsh Rugby Union, Wales Arts International, The British Council we are able to create meaningful and successful projects to benefit young people.

Our international work is incorporated into each Urdd department through cultural exchange programmes with the Eisteddfod and the arts to international elements within our sports competitions and a partnership with Team Wales of the Commonwealth Games.

Core to our international work is the Peace and Goodwill Message from the young people of Wales to the young people of the world.

As we commence on our centenary year, a number of international projects which we successfully modified into digital projects due to covid, will now be delivered in person, with exchanges planned with TG Lurgan in Ireland and University of Birmingham, Alabama, USA.

The key highlights of our current international work is provided in Annex A

Our priorities for the next 3 years

Access the Welsh Government International Learning Exchange programme (ILEP) to increase the international opportunities for more young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. We wish to commend Welsh Government for establishing the £65million programme, following the exclusion of Wales from the Erasmus+ programme because of Brexit. We see the ILEP as springboard for more young people, from diverse backgrounds to benefit from international experiences and exchanges. Spending time on international programmes abroad broadens horizons, expands key skills, and brings benefits to communities and organisations here in Wales.

Develop a community of international good practice in language promotion. Increase the Urdd's international partnerships, and share our learning and success with the promotion of Welsh with other countries and organisations who are developing strategies and practice in promoting the use of a minority language

Continue to share and develop the Peace and Goodwill Message from the young people of Wales to the world. The message unites children and young people to reduce prejudice and ignorance emphasizing what is common to all the young people of the world. As a core element of our international work, its educational value is far reaching, inspiring humanitarian action and an enabler, amplifying the voice of future generations to share their concerns to those in authority.

Continue to develop partnerships in Wales and worldwide to provide new and varied international opportunities for young people.

Priorities for the Committee's work on international relations during the Sixth Senedd:

We request that the committee consider the following points, which are evident in our priorities

- Maximise the potential of the International Learning Programmes for more young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to gain the benefit of international experiences.
- Embed Welsh language and culture in all international work to empower young people to be proud of their language and heritage but open to the world, and promote Wales to the world
- Harness the power of young people as international ambassadors and active on international humanitarian projects which demonstrated the importance of Wales as a Country of Sanctuary

Annex A – The key highlights of our current international work

The Peace & Goodwill Message of the Urdd to the world.

One of the main international projects of the Urdd is the annual message of peace and goodwill.

Through the Urdd, the young people of Wales have sent a Message the world. First shared in 1922, the message is unique and a worldwide first. It's the only message of its kind that has been sent by young people to the world continuously every year without fail for a century.

It's built bridges, crossed boundaries, and empowered generations to be consistent, confident, and determined ambassadors of the aspirations of humankind.

The 2021 Message was the most successful to date. It reached over 84 million people throughout the world, translated into 65 languages, and reached 59 countries. Notable and distinguished individuals and organisations across the world shared the message to include Hilary Clinton, UN Women, HRH Prince Charles, Michael Sheen and Geraint Thomas alongside hundreds of thousands of individuals, organisations, and supporters in every continent.

The financial support from WG has allowed us to expand on the reach of the message in recent years and would wish for this to continue as we explore future themes and opportunities for young people.

[Neges Heddwch ac Ewyllys Da yr Urdd 2021 // Urdd Peace and Goodwill Message 2021 - YouTube](#)

The Urdd & TG Lurgan – Ireland

In March 2020, the Urdd formed a partnership with Irish Youth Organisation TG Lurgan. TG Lurgan's mission is to promote Irish language learning through contemporary songs with its YouTube channel attracting millions of viewers and leaders in promoting a minority language on social media.

The aim of the partnership is bringing young people from Wales and Ireland together to work on exciting and dynamic bilingual collaborations with a global appeal and to learn and share good practise on the success of promoting minority languages amongst young people.

Due to covid and travel restrictions visits to Ireland and back to Wales have not been possible however both organisations have successfully worked digitally on very successful remote collaborations. Both video collaborations have been a tremendous success in terms of reach across over 600,000 social media accounts, content watched in 13 different countries and wide media response to include The Independent, The Sun and Joe.ie.

The partnership continues to grow with planned exchange programmes to Connemara and return to Wales in 2022.

We are keen to explore and grow this partnership (which received funding from Welsh Government in its launch year) to allow us to continue to work together on the successful promotion of minority languages amongst young people.

[Urdd Gobaith Cymru x TG Lurgan – Blinding Lights yn Gymraeg/as Gaeilge - YouTube](#)

The Urdd & University of Birmingham Alabama

Welsh ties with the African American community in Birmingham, Alabama were formed in the immediate aftermath of the vicious bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church in 1963 by the Klu Klux Klan the people of Wales donated a stained-glass window to the church in solidarity.

More than half a century later the Urdd reached in the name of the Urdd Peace Message, to create a partnership between Alabama and our young people.

Côr yr Urdd (the Urdd Choir) is a newly formed choir of Urdd members who will travel to Birmingham, Alabama in Easter 2022. The choir will give young people (18 to 25 years old) from Wales a special opportunity to perform in Alabama alongside UAB's Gospel Choir with the aim of learning more about the gospel tradition, civil rights movement and to share Welsh culture.

Following the Urdd Choir's visit to Alabama, the UAB Gospel Choir will then travel to Wales in June 2022 staying at the Urdd's three residential centres, travelling the country, performing in various venues. Their visit will finish at the Urdd Eisteddfod in Denbighshire.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zz3q35e7h1E>