

IOCD 10

Goblygiadau data y Cyfrifiad i'r fframwaith deddfwriaethol sy'n cefnogi'r Ddarpariaeth Addysg Cyfrwng Cymraeg Implications of the Census data for the legislative framework that supports Welsh-Medium Education Provision

Ymateb gan: Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru (UCAC)| Response from: Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru (UCAC)

What challenges are posed by the decline in the number of Welsh speakers for local authority provision in terms of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans?

UCAC cannot see that the decline in the number of Welsh speakers will raise further challenges currently in terms of local authorities' WESPs provision.

Obviously, the decline creates more of a headache in terms of the challenges that are already known.

The uncertainty of the data regarding numbers and parents' potential lack of awareness of their children's level of Welsh make planning more difficult. However, the likelihood of local authorities reaching their WESP targets when considering the numbers identified in the Census is lower.

It is therefore likely that a very robust progress monitoring system is needed in terms of the WESP so that it is possible to respond immediately if there is any problem. Indeed, maybe more intervention from the Government is required in this regard, and that the Government is required to expect more definitive action in terms of Welsh education, with enforcement where necessary.

Honesty is also needed about progress and ensure a specific standard, providing more intensive support if necessary. In order to do that, capacity will need to be ensured to offer more intensive support.

**• *What challenges lie ahead in designing and developing Welsh-medium education provision in light of Census data, and more specifically, the challenge of ensuring that pupils in the English-medium sector are fluent upon leaving school?***

Although UCAC acknowledges that WESP procedures have improved, the question remains regarding their overall effectiveness. Without them, we may have seen a greater decline in the data. However, it may be time for us to face the truth and try to respond seriously to the challenge and for the Government to set definitive expectations and monitoring.

We may also need to consider a system similar to the Gwynedd system in more counties.

It must be ensured that there are high expectations regarding the English-medium sector, demanding that education reflects the fact that Welsh lessons are provided from a very early age. Radical change is required here, and the Government would need to lead in this regard. All pupils must be immersed in the language and have every opportunity to practice Welsh from the very beginning.

More immersion centres must be provided, to ensure fluency.

**• *What funding considerations might be necessary in the future to fully support the development of the Welsh in Education Strategic Plans, given the decline in the number of Welsh speakers?***

- More resources, more teachers
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- More language centres

The Census must now be a catalyst for change – an impetus to act positively and to realise that we cannot rest on our laurels.

Need to ensure that learners are fully bilingual and confident to communicate in both languages equally in the world of work, culturally and socially.

I would be more than happy to provide further information.