
DWLP

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol | Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee

Datblygu'r ddarpariaeth Gymraeg ôl-16 | Development of post-16 Welsh language provision

Ymateb gan Dyfodol i'r Iaith | Evidence from Dyfodol i'r Iaith

**TO DO
DYFO**

Llais i'r Iaith

5 April 2024

Official response from Dyfodol i'r Iaith

We oppose the re-prioritisation of funding for the reasons outlined below.

The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol

Based on the last two Censuses, the number of people in the 16-24 age cohort who can speak Welsh has decreased from 80,909 to 73,724. Increasing further education provision is an essential part of addressing this linguistic loss.

In terms of post-16 education, approximately 2 per cent of courses are available through the medium of Welsh. Significant investment is needed to increase provision and use. The current budget (before we discuss the loss of £840,000 for the 2024-2025 financial year) is nowhere near adequate in terms of trying to achieve the target of a million Welsh speakers, given that the strategy is so dependent on the education system.

The loss of £840,000 will result in a loss of momentum, as it will entail the omission of some specific schemes with further education colleges, even though they have provided positive feedback to linguistic developments in the health, care and childcare sectors. These are the sectors that have the largest number of

apprenticeships. What impact will this have on work opportunities for Welsh speakers and the Mudiad Meithrin?

£3.5 million is designated for the development of post-statutory Welsh language education. In the past financial year, £553,473,000 was spent on the living costs of Welsh students who choose to pursue higher education outside Wales (mainly in England). This budget has increased 60 per cent over a period of five years, and includes £221,593,000 spent on undergraduate tuition fee support costs. Is this also being reviewed? What about the cost of the Seren Scheme, which contributes to educational migration? Is the Seren Scheme also under review? This scheme undermines Cymraeg 2050 and increases migration patterns, with only 61 per cent of students from Wales receiving their higher education here (compared to 93 per cent in Scotland and England).

There has been no increase in the budget of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol since 2016.

The National Centre for Learning Welsh

The Centre's own figures show that more than 16,900 people started learning in 2022-23. There was a 9 per cent increase in the number of people aged 16-24 who started learning Welsh in 2022-23. This is the main cohort of students pursuing further education. The number of learners has increased each year since 2017, with the number of people learning Welsh having increased by 11 percent compared to the previous year.

Withholding £1.5 million from the Centre will disrupt this pattern in a context where the percentage of those who can speak Welsh has fallen from 21 per cent in 2011 to 17.8 per cent in 2021. There is a further challenge for Cymraeg 2050.

This all comes on top of a financial squeeze (and a crisis in the bilingual teacher workforce) in the statutory education sector, and significant budget cuts for the Books Council, the Arts Council of Wales, Amgueddfa Cymru, the National Library and the agriculture sector. If the Welsh language budget is not protected, the biggest threat it faces is the current financial squeeze.

Sincerely,



Dylan Bryn Roberts

Chief Executive

Dyfodol i'r Iaith

www.dyfodol.net
