

Annex 1

Welsh language

In the 2001 Census, for the first time people were asked if they could understand spoken Welsh as well as if they could speak, read or write Welsh. While in Wales as a whole 28.4 per cent say they have one or more skills in the Welsh language, in north west and west Wales it is much higher - 76 per cent in Gwynedd, 70 per cent in the Isle of Anglesey, 64 per cent in Carmarthenshire and 61 per cent in Ceredigion. 16.3 per cent of Wales as a whole can speak, read and write Welsh.

Even in the local authority with the lowest proportion, Monmouthshire, nearly 13 per cent of people say they have one or more skills in the Welsh language.

582,368 (20.8%) could speak Welsh in 2001 compared to 508,098 (18.7%) in 1991.

Cardiff had the biggest increase in the number of Welsh speakers with 14,415 more able to speak Welsh in 2001 than in 1991. Torfaen had the biggest percentage increase, up from 2.5% in 1991 to 11.1% in 2001 – an increase of 8.7 percentage points.

For the third time in succession, census results showed an increase in the number of young people speaking Welsh. 26% of people under 35 could speak Welsh – an increase of 9 percentage point on 1991 figures.

There was a decrease of 5,025 in the number who could speak Welsh in Carmarthenshire, and a decrease of 7.1 percentage points who could speak Welsh in Ceredigion – down from 59.1% in 1991 to 52.0% in 2001. There was, however, an increase of 1891 in the actual number that could speak Welsh in Ceredigion.

There was also a decrease in the number of electoral divisions with over 80% of the population able to speak Welsh. There were 32 such wards in 1991 compared to 18 electoral divisions in 2001.

	Welsh speaking		Able to speak Welsh		Change	
	1991		2001			
Local authority	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percentage points
Isle of Anglesey	41,239	62.0	38,893	60.1	-2,346	-1.9

Gwynedd	78,732	72.1	77,846	69.0	-886	-3.1
Conwy	31,444	30.6	31,298	29.4	-146	-1.2
Denbighshire	23,293	26.7	23,760	26.4	467	-0.3
Flintshire	18,405	13.5	20,599	14.4	2,194	0.8
Wrexham	15,985	13.7	18,105	14.6	2,120	0.9
Powys	23,589	20.5	25,814	21.1	2,225	0.5
Ceredigion	36,027	59.1	37,918	52.0	1,891	-7.1
Pembrokeshire	19,754	18.3	23,967	21.8	4,213	3.4
Carmarthenshire	89,221	54.9	84,196	50.3	-5,025	-4.5
Swansea	28,549	13.3	28,938	13.4	389	0.1
Neath Port Talbot	23,710	17.8	23,404	18.0	-306	0.2
Bridgend	10,161	8.3	13,397	10.8	3,236	2.5
Vale of Glamorgan	7,752	6.9	12,994	11.3	5,242	4.4
Rhondda; Cynon; Taff	20,038	9.0	27,946	12.5	7,908	3.5
Merthyr Tydfil	4,238	7.5	5,532	10.2	1,294	2.7
Caerphilly	9,710	6.0	18,237	11.2	8,527	5.2
Blaenau Gwent	1,522	2.2	6,417	9.5	4,895	7.3
Tor-faen	2,126	2.5	9,780	11.1	7,654	8.7
Monmouthshire	1,634	2.1	7,688	9.3	6,054	7.2
Newport	2,878	2.3	13,135	10.0	10,257	7.7
Cardiff	18,089	6.6	32,504	11.0	14,415	4.4
Wales	508,098	18.7	582,368	20.8	74,270	2.1