



Eich cyf/Your ref
Ein cyf/Our ref SF/LA/3082/12

Nick Ramsey AM
Chair, Enterprise and Business Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

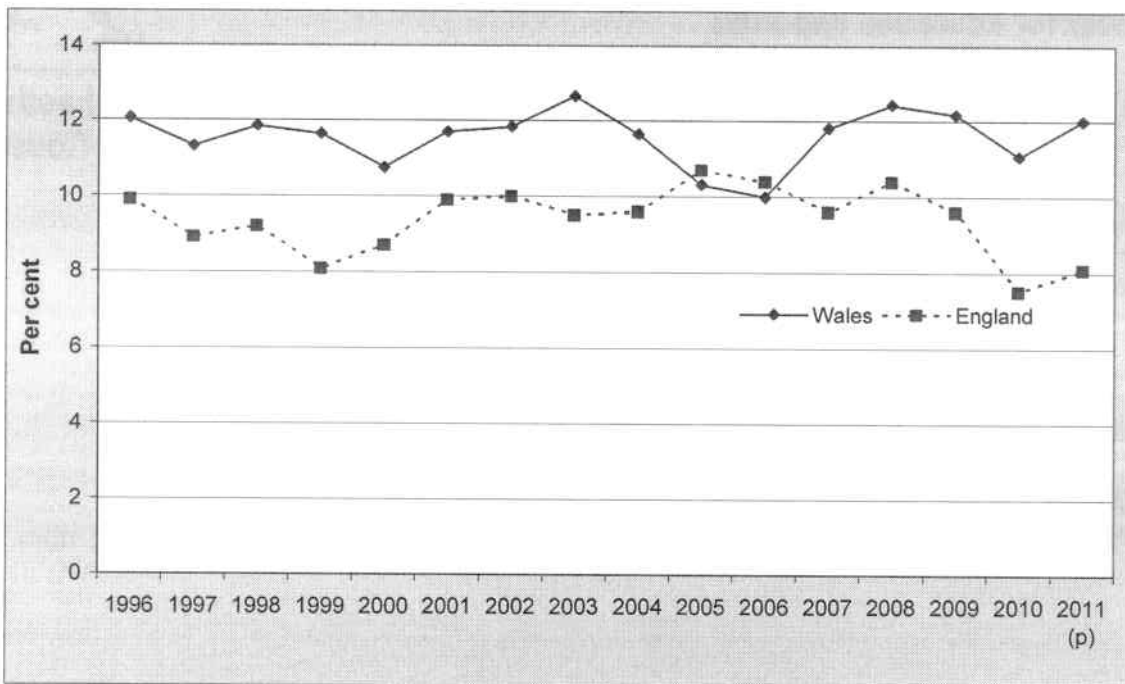
14 November 2012

Dear Nick,

In the budget scrutiny by the Enterprise and Business Committee on the 17 October the Committee raised a number of questions where the Deputy Minister or I said we would provide further information. This letter sets out that additional information.

The latest figures on the number of people who are not in education, employment or training, and also compare them with the figures in English Regions

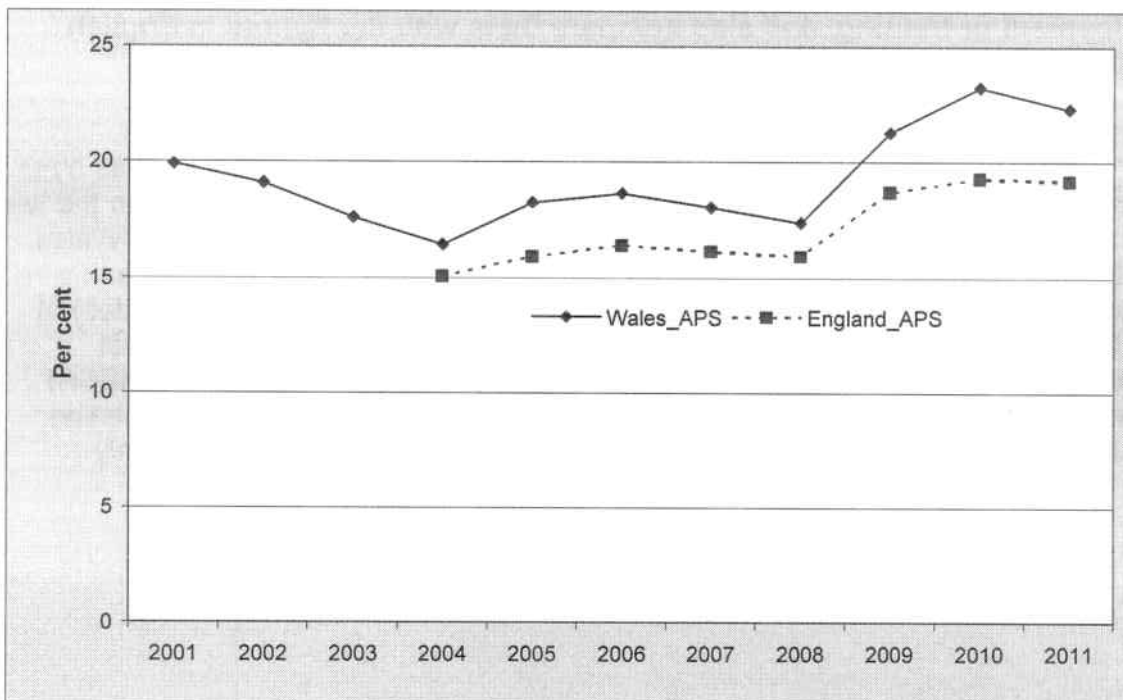
Chart 1 below shows the **percentage of 16 – 18 year olds** not in education, employment or training (NEET), year end 1996 to 2011. Since 2007 there has been a similar trend in the series for both Wales and England, but the gap between the two countries has widened, although narrows again between 2010 - 2011. Both Wales and England estimates are produced using a similar methodology, drawing a snapshot of participation of the cohort (based on mid-year population estimates) at year end, from counts taken from administrative datasets of learners at school (PLASC), FE and work-based learning (LLWR/ILR) and Higher Education (HESA) and economic activity estimates from the Labour Force Survey/Annual Population Survey. For England these estimates are produced for 16 to 18 year olds only.



(p) Provisional

Source: Participation of young people in education and the labour market, Welsh Government; Participation in education, training and employment by 16 to 18 year olds in England, Department for Education

Chart 2 shows the **percentage of 19 – 24 year olds** not in education, employment or training (NEET), 1996 to 2011



Source: Annual Population Survey, Office for National Statistics, statistics produced by Knowledge and Analytical Services, Welsh Government

There has been a similar trend in the series for both countries, but the gap between Wales and England has widened in recent years, although the absolute number has fallen in this age group between 2010 and 2011. Estimates produced to the same methodology as the 16 to 18 series are available for Wales only – this is the series included within the Programme for Government Indicator set. An alternative source, the Annual Population Survey (APS), can be used to provide a comparison of the position in Wales and England. As they are based on sample data the APS series are less robust than the headline series, but the two series for Wales do track each other closely.

The APS series are published quarterly, the quarters shown here equate to the period of the headline series; two more recent quarters from the APS have been published which also show a fall for Wales compared with the previous year, but still at a high level compared with the longer term trend. Note that the Department for Education themselves publish data from the quarterly Labour Force Survey, rather than the APS (the sample size of the LFS is not large enough for Wales for these detailed age groups), so these differ slightly than the published series for England.

The Welsh Government do not routinely publish data on English regions for NEETS. This is partly due to the slight differences in the basis that the Department for Education publish NEETS as noted above. This will need further consideration and I will include it in the response to your letter of the 22 October.

The resources and outcomes for Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, including the number of students who are studying with Y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol

The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, which was established in September 2011, provides an overview of all Welsh medium provision and provides unity of purpose, cohesion and leadership through a national strategy. The Coleg is not a single geographical entity or a degree awarding body, but works with and through existing HE institutions.

In 2012/13 HEFCW expects to allocate a budget of over £6.9m to support the development and delivery of Welsh medium higher education, of which £5.53m has been allocated to supporting the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, including £230,000 to support the Welsh Medium Scholarship scheme.

In 2010/11 there were 4,925 students at Welsh higher education institutions with some teaching through the medium of Welsh. To date, 55 lecturers have been appointed via the Coleg's Academic Staffing Scheme. Posts funded from the Academic Staffing Scheme are located at the successful Higher Education Institutions and each post is funded for up to five years. Post holders are responsible for teaching and developing Welsh medium provision in their specific subject fields.

The Coleg awarded 10 new Research Scholarships in 2012. These scholarships are awarded on the condition that the institution commits to creating a full-time academic post, for which the scholarship holder may apply, to start at the end of funding period. The Coleg has committed to provide 150 Undergraduate Scholarships and 10 Masters Level Scholarships in 2012/13.

In 2012/13 the Coleg will provide £739,839 via its Strategic Development and Projects Fund to support and stimulate strategic developments that will have a substantial effect on Welsh medium higher education provision and the numbers studying through the medium of Welsh in specific fields.

Current pilot schemes that are trialling the model of support whereby a “named person” is available for children who are at risk of becoming “not in education, employment or training”, including children that have been excluded from school

Officials have recently commenced a series of trials with eight Local Authorities looking at the engagement and progression of young people across Wales (the relevant statistical measure is young people who are NEET). These trials seek to explore best practice and, through collaborative approaches, establish more effective and co-ordinated arrangements for the support and progression of young people.

The foundations of this work are based on six key building blocks:

- Identifying the young people who most need support. We will be testing the predictive power of different indicators, enabling us to target our resources more effectively at the young people who most need our help.
- Better brokerage and co-ordination of support. We will look to see where we can remove barriers to engagement by ensuring that services are designed and delivered around the needs of the young person. We will be considering whether a new brokerage function might help ensure that targeted support provided to young people - perhaps negotiated through a single point of contact - would more effectively meet the needs of young people.
- Strengthening the tracking of young people through the system. As well as working with Local Authorities we will be looking to work with schools to utilise the data they have available more regularly about the progress young people are making.
- Ensuring provision meets the needs of young people. We hope to maximise the progression and engagement of individuals by ensuring provision is designed around the needs of the young person, working with Local Authorities and consortia to strengthen the mapping of provision and using this to identify any potential gaps, unmet provision needs or duplication and overlaps.
- Strengthening employability skills and opportunities for employment. Welsh Government will continue to work with employers to increase job opportunities for young people as part of the new approach and we will evaluate the success of our existing labour market interventions - Jobs Growth Wales and Apprenticeships in this context - as well as developing new approaches to the delivery of work experience and employer engagement.
- We will look at ways of motivating more and more effective co-ordinated action, rather than competition or silo working, looking at how we might strengthen the post-16 tracking of young people.

The trials will run through to next summer, supporting the development of guidance and Welsh Government policy delivery priorities and approaches, including arrangements with other key stakeholders such as Careers Wales.

The Youth Engagement and Employment Division in DfES is engaging directly with Principal Youth Officers from across Wales (responsible for the Statutory Youth Service at Local Authority level) and the voluntary sector (via CWWYS - Council for Wales Voluntary Youth Services) as part of an integrated programme of work which includes the trials activity noted above.

We are not yet in a position to draw robust conclusions around brokerage models for young people, which might also involve a 'named person' providing support to those who are either disengaged or at risk of becoming disengaged, including children who have been excluded from school. However, early work does indicate that in some parts of Wales effective delivery models exist. By the end of November officials will have visited those areas and agreed the most effective trial designs for different models of brokering support to young people. The trials will enable us to work through the complex issues associated with different types of service brokerage, with Local Authorities, other partners and stakeholders, establishing a credible and viable set of proposals in the coming months. Creating effective brokerage services centred on young people will require the alignment of multiple partners and the coordination of action across education, the careers service, youth services and others.

It should be noted that both the statutory and voluntary Youth Services, as delivered by Local Authorities and third sector organisations respectively, provide a wide range of support opportunities for young people - some targeted specifically on those who are disengaged or at risk of disengaging from education, training or employment. In the case of the statutory service there are many instances where Youth Workers are working in close partnership with schools and other stakeholders to help keep young people engaged and on a positive track.

The £3.3million change in the Employment and Skills budget

The evidence paper provided to the committee contained a typing error that has led to some confusion, there has actually been an increase of £3.3m in the Employment and Skills budget. The budgets within the Skilled Workforce SPA have been realigned to Programme of Government priorities, bringing together all of the funding for youth engagement and employment in one Action and all of the other, non youth, employment and skills budgets in another Action. This has resulted in a number of transfers between Actions but no major decreases in funding for skills overall. The following movements have been made in the three Actions within the Skilled Workforce SPA.

	2013-14 Indicative Plans Final Budget November 2011	2013-14 Changes	2013-14 New Plans Draft Budget
Employment & Skills	28,356	3,301	31,657
Youth Engagement & Employment	18,683	1,063	19,746
Educational and careers choice	30,000	0	30,000
Total Skilled Workforce	77,039	4,364	81,403

Employment and Skills

- Annual saving of £0.4m following a review of activity.
- Transfer in of £3.701m from the Youth Engagement and Employment Action.

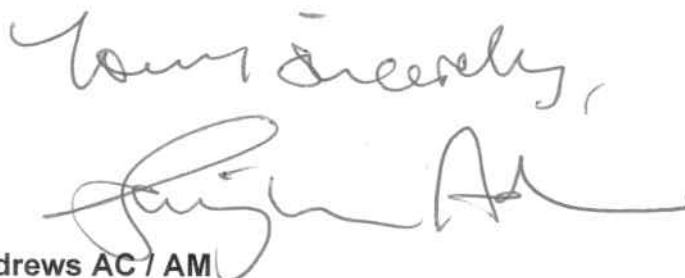
Youth Engagement and Employment

- A recurrent transfer out of £0.02m to the Delivery Support Action for International Education Programmes.
- An annual saving of £200k identified following a review of activity.
- Transfer out of £3.701m to the Employment and Skills Action.
- Transfer in of £4.984m from the Access Opportunities action to realign budgets with Programme for Government priorities.

The proportion of the Assembly Learning Grants budget allocated to part time support as opposed to full time.

In 2011/12 around 3% of the expenditure on the Assembly Learning Grant went to students on part time courses.

I trust that this response is sufficient to answer the action points raised. You sent a fuller letter on the 22 October raising a number of points and I will respond to that letter in due course.



Leighton Andrews AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Addysg a Sgiliau
Minister for Education and Skills