



# Monthly Labour Market Report

## Welcome

The Monthly Labour Market Report from the Learning and Skills Observatory Wales (LSO) aims to provide the main headlines on the Welsh labour market and is based on the latest data available.

This month's issue puts the spotlight on **Economic Inactivity in Wales**.

This report was produced by the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion (known as *Inclusion*), commissioned by Welsh Government to blend Wales's available labour market information (LMI) (from the various sources) and produce a monthly analysis. Whilst the report is owned by Welsh Government it is not validated in terms of its specific content or interpretation.

*Inclusion* has an unrivalled understanding of the labour market based on over 28 years of experience of working with the range of stakeholders involved in delivering employment and skills services. We collect and analyse both national and local labour market data through our well developed Local Labour Market Information System, conduct research on employment and skills issues at the local level, run events that bring together policymakers and providers in the skills and employment sector, and produce weekly e-briefings that summarise what is new in employment and skills for our subscribers.

We currently supply monthly employment and skills data to the Greater London Authority, as well as providing labour market tools and analysis for Greater Manchester.

Any enquiries regarding this document/publication should be sent to:

Lovedeep Vaid

*Inclusion*

3rd floor, 89 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TP

Direct Line: 020 7840 8348

Email: [lovedeep.vaid@cesi.org.uk](mailto:lovedeep.vaid@cesi.org.uk)

## Latest labour market trends

### Employment

Employment data from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) – estimates obtained from a large sample quarterly rolling survey of households – show that Wales performed broadly on a par with the other UK nations in the rolling quarter November 2013-January 2014 but performed better than some of the English regions. Note that Workforce Jobs (WJ) data that were due to be released this month will now be available in April.

The (seasonally adjusted) Labour Force Survey estimate of the number of people aged 16 and over in employment in Wales increased by 1,000 (0.0%) compared to the previous quarter (August-October 2013) to a total of 1.390 million. The quarterly net increase in employment in Wales is comprised solely of an increase in the number of men in employment. Male employment increased by 1,000 (+0.1%) to 732,000 while female employment fell by 0.1 per cent to stand at 657,000.

The total quarterly increase in employment in Wales compares to a corresponding increase in total UK employment of 105,000 (+0.3%). In addition to the increase in Wales, employment increased by 86,000 (+0.3%) in England, by 15,000 (+0.6%) in Scotland and by 4,000 (+0.5%) in Northern Ireland. The net increase in England comprised an increase in employment in the North East (14,000, +1.2%), Yorkshire and Humberside (4,000, +0.1%), London (28,000, +0.7%), the South East (42,000, +1.0%) and the South West (31,000, +1.2%) and a fall in employment in the North West (-4,000, -0.1%), the East Midlands (-6,000, -0.3%), the West Midlands (-3,000, -0.1%), and the East of England (-20,000, -0.7%).

The working age employment rate for Wales (i.e. the proportion of the population aged 16-64 in employment) increased in the quarter by 0.3 percentage points to 71.0%. This compares with an increase of 0.2 percentage points in England, 0.3 percentage points in Scotland and 0.6 percentage points in Northern Ireland. The employment rate in Wales is 1.2 percentage points lower than the UK average (72.3%) and lower than the employment rate in both England (72.4%) and Scotland (72.9%) but higher than the rate in Northern Ireland (67.6%).

### Unemployment and economic inactivity

The number of people in Wales who are unemployed on the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Labour Force Survey definition fell by 12,000 to 100,000 between the quarters August-October 2013 and November 2013-January 2014. Total unemployment fell by 45,000 in England and by 6,000 in Scotland but increased by 0.6% in Northern Ireland.

The quarterly fall in unemployment in Wales was much larger than the corresponding 1,000 increase in the number of people in employment because of an offsetting decrease in the number of people active in the labour market. The number of unemployed men decreased by 6,000 (-9.4%) to 57,000 while the number of unemployed women also decreased by 6,000 (-12.2%) to 43,000.

The ILO unemployment rate in Wales fell by 0.7 percentage points to 6.7% in the quarter. The UK average rate of ILO unemployment fell by 0.2 percentage points to 7.2%. The unemployment rate in Wales was lower than in England (7.2%), Scotland (6.9%) and Northern Ireland (7.5%). Within England, the North East (9.5%), the North West (8.1%), Yorkshire and Humberside (8.7%), the East Midlands (7.0%), the West Midlands (8.2%) and London (8.2%) had a higher unemployment rate than Wales. South East England (5.2%), the East of England (5.8%) and South West England (5.9%) had the lowest unemployment rates.

The administrative count of people unemployed and claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) is somewhat lower (62,800 in Wales in February 2014, a JSA claimant count rate of 4.3%) than ILO unemployment because non-JSA claimant jobseekers are excluded. The number of JSA claimants in Wales decreased by 1,400 between January and February 2014. However care should be taken in interpreting change in the claimant count since this can be influenced by changes to the benefit system as well as underlying change in the labour market.

The number of economically inactive people of working age in Wales fell by 5,000 between August-October 2013 and November 2013-January 2014. As the LMI scorecard shows the working age rate of economic inactivity in Wales (23.7%) is 1.7 percentage points higher than the UK average (22.1%).

Within the UK regions and nations Northern Ireland (26.8%), the North East (24.4%), the North West (24.8%) and the West Midlands (24.4%) have higher inactivity rates than Wales. The lowest inactivity rates are in the South East (19.3%) and the East of England (19.5%).

## LMI scorecard

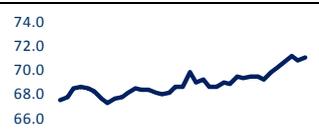
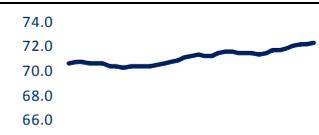
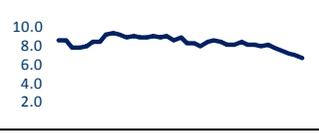
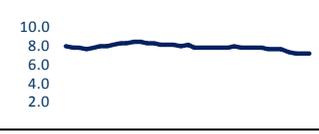
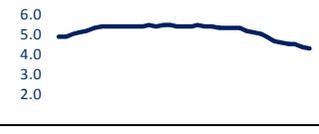
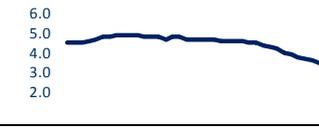
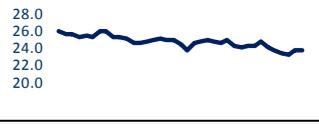
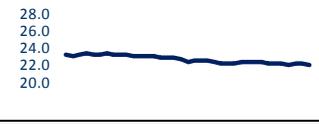
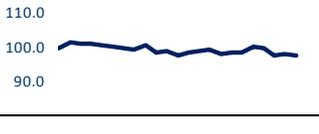
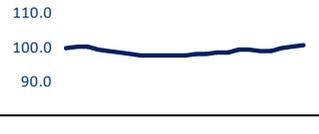
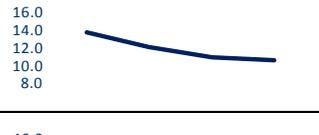
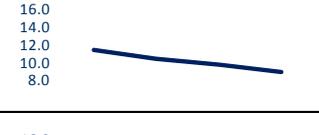
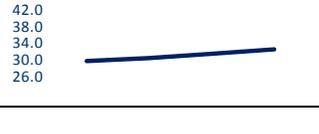
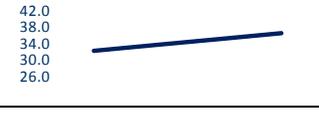
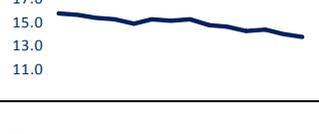
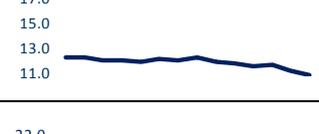
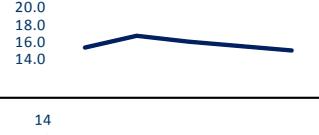
The scorecard presents recent trends and figures for a number of core labour market indicators, using a variety of different sources:

	Source
Working age employment rate	1
Working age male employment rate	1
Working age female employment rate	1
ILO unemployment rate 16+	1
Claimant count as a proportion of the working age population	2
Working age economic inactivity	1
Index of workforce jobs	3
Proportion of the working age population with no qualifications	4
Proportion of the working age population qualified to NQF4+	4
Proportion of the working age population who claim out of work benefits	5
Children living in workless households	6
Proportion of 16–18 year olds who are not in employment, education or training	7

- 1 LFS, ONS: subject to sampling variability and should be used with caution
- 2 Claimant count seasonally adjusted, NOMIS: trends can be affected by changes to benefit rules
- 3 Employer surveys, household surveys and administrative sources, ONS
- 4 Annual Population Survey/Annual Local LFS, ONS. Data is subject to sampling variability and should be used with caution.
- 5 Department for Work and Pensions, NOMIS
- 6 Household LFS, ONS: subject to sampling variability and should be used with caution
- 7 Source: ONS, Higher Education Statistics Agency, Welsh Government Lifelong Learning Wales Record, Pupil Level Annual School Census, Annual Population Survey.

# LMI Scorecard

March 2014

		Wales		Difference between Wales and National (latest figures): Better Worse	NATIONAL (UK or GB depending on indicator)	
		Trend (Three to four years)	Latest result & trend		Latest result & trend	Trend (Three to four years)
Supply of Labour	Working age employment rate (%)		71.0% ↑	-1.2 Charts cover: Nov-Jan 11 to Nov-Jan 14	72.3% ↑	
	Working age male employment rate (%)		74.8% ↑	-2.5 Charts cover: Nov-Jan 11 to Nov-Jan 14	77.3% ↑	
	Working age female employment rate (%)		67.3% ↑	0.1 Charts cover: Nov-Jan 11 to Nov-Jan 14	67.2% ↑	
	ILO Unemployment rate 16+ (%)		6.7% ↓	-0.5 Charts cover: Nov-Jan 11 to Nov-Jan 14	7.2% ↓	
	Claimant Count as a proportion of the working age population, seasonally adjusted (%)		4.3% ↓	0.8 Charts cover: Feb 11 to Feb 14	3.5% ↓	
	Working age economic inactivity (%)		23.7% ↓	1.7 Charts cover: Nov-Jan 11 to Nov-Jan 14	22.1% ↓	
Demand	Index of workforce jobs. 2008 Q1=100		97.7% →	-3.1 Charts cover: 2008 Q1 to 2013 Q3	100.8% →	
Skill gaps	Proportion of the working age population with no qualifications (%)		10.6% ↓	1.6 Charts cover: Year to Dec 09 to year to Dec 12	9.0% ↓	
	Proportion of the working age population qualified to NQF4+ (%)		32.6% ↑	-4.1 Charts cover: Year to Dec 09 to year to Dec 12	36.7% ↑	
Worklessness & NEETS	Proportion of the working age population who claim out of work benefits		13.7% ↓	2.8 Charts cover: May 10 to Aug 13	10.9% ↓	
	Children living in workless households (%)		19.1% ↑	4.1 Charts cover: Apr-Jun 2008 to 2012	15.0% ↓	
	Proportion of 16-18 year olds who are NEET (%)		10% ↓	1 Charts cover: 2008 to 2012	10% England →	

## Economic Inactivity in Wales

### Introduction

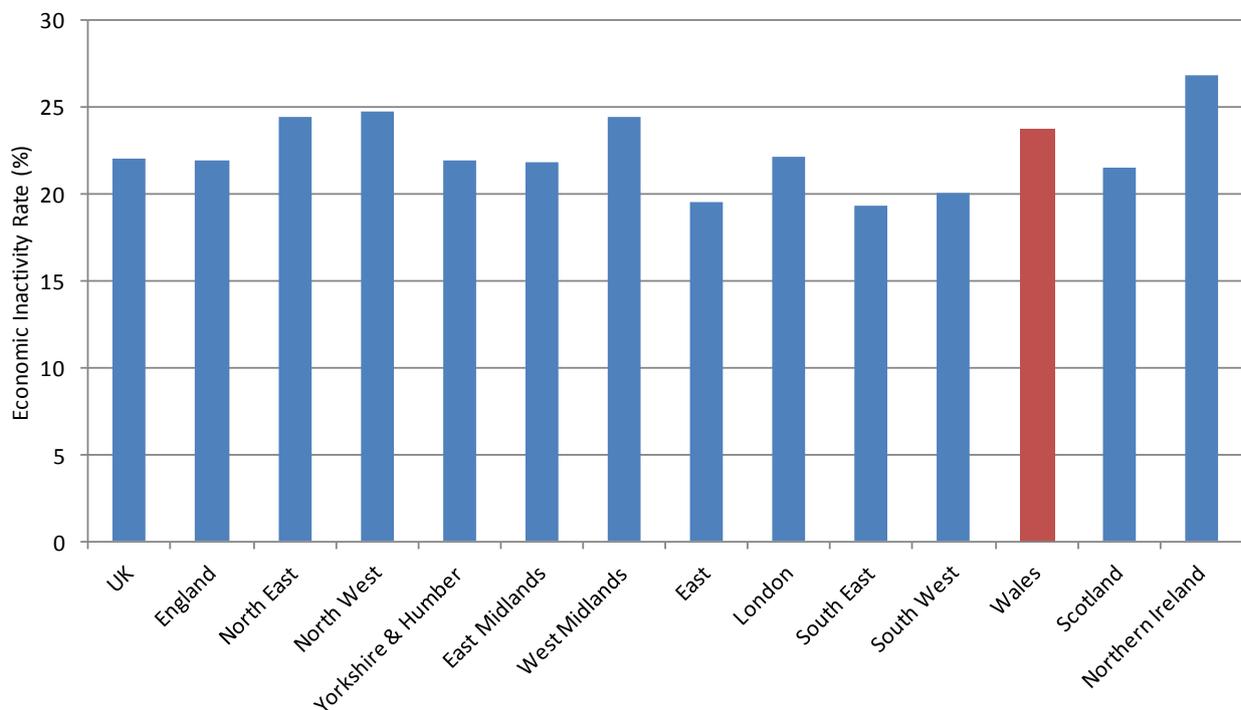
Economically inactive people are those who are neither in employment nor unemployed. People may be economically inactive for a range of reasons, including looking after a home, being carers, retired, or students, or being long term sick. Levels of economic inactivity have been historically high in many areas of Wales, particularly in more peripheral areas, and in the South Wales Valleys. These areas suffered particularly from the loss of well paid jobs following the decline in the coal and steel industries, jobs that have proved to be very difficult to replace. This has resulted in persistently lower than average levels of employment, income and economic activity.

This month's report focuses on recent trends in economic activity in Wales as the country recovers from the recent recession, and discusses the impacts of programmes aimed at addressing the barriers that people in many areas of Wales face regarding becoming economically active.

### Recent Trends

Latest statistics show that the economic activity rate in Wales was 23.7% of the population aged 16-64 in the quarter from November 2013 to January 2014. This was a total inactive population across Wales of around 448,000. As Figure 1 shows, Wales still has a higher inactivity rate than the UK as a whole (22.1%), but is lower than that of Northern Ireland some regions of England.

**Figure 1: Economic Inactivity Rates (seasonally adjusted), UK Regions, Nov 2013 - Jan 2014**



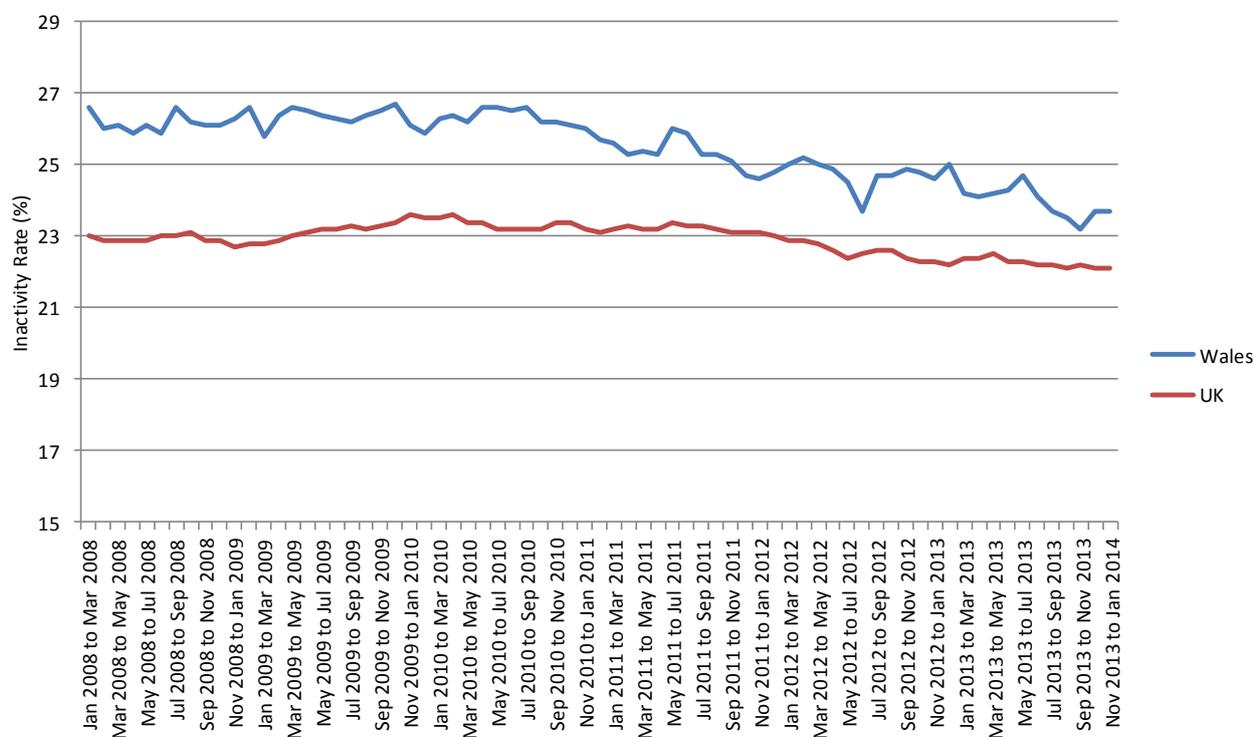
Source: StatsWales

<https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/People-and-Work/Economic-Inactivity/EconomicInactivityRates-by-UKCountryEnglishRegion-Quarter>

Figure 2 shows that the recent trend in Wales is one of falling levels of inactivity, from 26.6% at the start of 2008 to its current level of 23.7%. Inactivity in Wales has fallen faster than the UK as a whole, which has

seen the gap between Wales and the UK average close from 3.6 percentage points at the start of 2008 to just 1.6 at the start of 2014.

**Figure 2: Economic Inactivity Rates (seasonally adjusted), UK Regions, January 2008 - January 2014**



Source: StatsWales

<https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/People-and-Work/Economic-Inactivity/EconomicInactivityRates-by-UKCountryEnglishRegion-Quarter>

### Local Trends in Inactivity (excluding students)

At a local level, Table 1 shows that there is a fairly clear divide between areas of East Wales and West Wales and the Valleys. With the exception of Newport, all areas of East Wales have lower inactivity rates than the UK average or are within one percentage point of it. By contrast, most areas of West Wales and the Valleys are higher than the Wales average, with particularly high rates in the following areas:

- Merthyr Tydfil                    26.7%
- Blaenau Gwent                    25.5%
- Ceredigion                        24.7%

The broad trend since the end of 2007 has been some generally very positive, with a decline in inactivity rates across all areas except Newport. In most local authorities, the rate of decline has been greater than the UK average, with particularly large falls in:

- Neath Port Talbot                -8.2 percentage points
- Caerphilly                        -5.9
- Torfaen                            -5.5
- Isle of Anglesey                 -5.4
- Denbighshire                    -4.8
- Blaenau Gwent                   -4.3

**Table 1: Economic Activity Rates (excluding students) by local authority area, 2007 - 2013**

	Year ending 31 Dec 2007	Year ending 31 Dec 2013	Change 2007 - 2013	
<b>United Kingdom</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>18.8</b>	<b>-1.7</b>	
<b>Wales</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>-3.0</b>	
<b>West Wales and the Valleys</b>	Isle of Anglesey	26.3	21.0	-5.4
	Gwynedd	22.1	21.2	-0.9
	Conwy	21.8	20.5	-1.3
	Denbighshire	25.8	21.1	-4.8
	Ceredigion	27.9	24.7	-3.2
	Pembrokeshire	24.0	21.8	-2.2
	Carmarthenshire	26.2	23.9	-2.3
	Swansea	24.0	22.6	-1.4
	Neath Port Talbot	31.4	23.2	-8.2
	Bridgend	24.5	20.9	-3.7
	Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	25.4	21.7	-3.7
	Merthyr Tydfil	29.2	26.7	-2.6
	Caerphilly	27.7	21.8	-5.9
	Blaenau Gwent	29.8	25.5	-4.3
	Torfaen	27.1	21.6	-5.5
<b>East Wales</b>	Flintshire	20.9	19.5	-1.5
	Wrexham	19.6	17.6	-2.0
	Powys	21.0	19.1	-1.8
	The Vale of Glamorgan	19.3	19.0	-0.3
	Cardiff	21.2	17.9	-3.4
	Monmouthshire	20.0	16.3	-3.7
	Newport	22.0	23.2	1.2

Source: StatsWales

<https://statswales.wales.gov.uk/Catalogue/Business-Economy-and-Labour-Market/People-and-Work/Economic-Inactivity/EconomicInactivityRatesExcludingStudents-by-WelshLocalArea-Year>

Note: These figures are based on the Annual Population Survey, and are not directly comparable with the headline figures shown in Figures 1 and 2 above.

## Impact of Interventions to address inactivity

The statistical evidence shows a clear fall in inactivity levels across almost all of Wales, and that this fall has been faster than the UK as a whole. This raises the question as to what is happening in Wales to facilitate this relatively rapid increase in activity. There have been publicly funded interventions specific to Wales that have aimed to reach inactive people and address the barriers that prevent them participating in the labour market.

Two of these projects (Want to Work and South West Workways) were evaluated by Inclusion in 2013, and the following commentary examines the impact of these projects and what has worked well in terms of supporting inactive people.

## Want to Work

Want to Work is a programme aimed at engaging increased numbers of economically inactive individuals, particularly those who traditionally do not engage with mainstream employment support programmes, with the primary aim of supporting more people back to work. It operates in deprived wards across Wales and aims to identify and plug gaps in mainstream employment programmes, creating additional labour market support in community locations.

Want to Work has a significant emphasis on community outreach, and operates in partnership with other local organisations within the communities it serves. It operated as a pilot scheme between September 2004 and March 2008, and the current project is due to finish in 2015. Want to Work is supported by the Welsh Government and Jobcentre Plus and is funded through a mix of Priority 2 Objective 1 of the European Social Fund (ESF) Convergence Programme in West Wales and the Valleys, Priority 1 of the Regional Competitiveness and Employment Programme in East Wales, and match funding.

Inclusion's evaluation was based primarily on analysis of management information and a survey of customers who first received support in 2009, and four case study visits to different delivery locations conducted in 2011 and 2012. Overall, the evaluation found that:

- 49% of Want to Work customers who received support in 2009 entered work of at least one hour either whilst receiving support, or within six months of finishing receiving support (approximately 1,430 people);
- Want to Work had a very strong impact on whether customers entered work;
- Want to Work customers who entered work were more likely to sustain work than similar people in a control group; and
- In addition to employment outcomes, customers reported a wide range of softer outcomes, such as improved skills and confidence.

Whilst Want to Work is able to support all economically inactive people, three particular types of customers were apparent.

- The first, and largest of these were those with disabilities or work-limiting health conditions. In total, 43% of customers had one or both of these. The most common health problems were problems with the back or neck (28%), depression, bad nerves or anxiety (27%) and problems with the legs or feet (24%). Nearly three in ten suffered from more than one health problem. Customers with health conditions were more likely than those without to be men, and have been out of work for longer periods than those without health conditions.
- In addition, 22% of customers were lone parents. These customers were more likely to be women than men, and had also been out of work for longer periods of time compared to non-lone parents.
- Finally, 30% of customers were not claiming benefits. In the qualitative research it was noted that these customers were often the partners of JSA claimants or of working people. A higher proportion of these customers compared to all Want to Work customers were not White British or White Welsh (22% compared to 11%). Moreover, these customers were likely to have been out of work for shorter periods of time compared to other customers.

A number of barriers customers faced to engaging with Want to Work were identified. These included:

- Suspicion of government programmes,
- Fears of coming off stable and guaranteed benefits, and
- Concerns about not being better off in work.

Want to Work provides support to customers directly, through Personal Advisers, and indirectly, through contracting services from other providers (such as training providers).

Customer opinions about personal advisers were extremely positive. Qualitative research strongly emphasized the high quality of services offered by Personal Advisers, with customers noting that the trusting relationship with their Personal Adviser helped them more openly discuss their barriers to work. Customers considered that PAs made them realise that they could look for work in professions that they had not previously considered, and helped them look for work in jobs that they wanted rather than looking for any type of work. They felt that PAs had found the right balance in pushing them to make progress in their search for work, whilst also not pushing them too fast.

As well as support received directly from their Personal Adviser whilst looking for work, customers had received a range of other support. A third (34%) had started training. Opinions on the training that customers had undertaken were extremely positive, with high proportions agreeing that the training: was in a subject they were interested in (97%); took place at a convenient time (95%) and in a convenient location (88%); was relevant to employment they wanted (93%) and was good quality (93%). In addition, 18% of customers had accessed other government services, such as Pathways to Work or Access to Work, through Want to Work, 15% had started volunteering or a work placement, and 14% had attended group sessions, for example, to boost confidence. In total, just over a third of customers (37%) only received support from their Personal Adviser.

Want to Work customers had achieved a variety of soft outcomes as a result of engaging with the programme. Between 65% and 70% of customers agreed that:

- Their motivation to find work increased;
- They had a better idea of their career aims;
- Their confidence they can find work had increased;
- Their confidence they can do a good job in the workplace had increased; and
- Their self-esteem had increased.

The most common soft outcomes customers reported were that the support had made them feel better about themselves generally (75%) and feeling that they had more opportunities (78%). In addition, customers reported developing a range of skills, with nearly six in ten (58%) reporting better job search skills and 55% reporting better communication skills. The skills that had improved the least were literacy, IT and numeracy skills (with between 24% and 29% of customers reporting skills increases in these areas).

Certain groups were more likely than others to have achieved soft outcomes:

- Women were more likely than men to have achieved soft outcomes;
- Carers and lone parents were more likely than non-carers and non-lone parents;
- Those without a work limiting health condition (WLHC) or disability were more likely than those with one;
- Those with lower level qualifications were more likely than those with higher level qualifications; and
- Those who had entered work were more likely than those who had not.

Most customers with health conditions (77%) reported that the support they received through Want to Work had not affected their health condition. Those with mental health problems, however, were more likely than other customers to report improvements in their health as a result of Want to Work. Similarly,

those with mental health problems (28%) were more likely than those with other health conditions (18%) to report that they were better able to manage their health as a result of Want to Work.

In total, 49% of Want to Work customers who received support in 2009 entered work of at least one hour either whilst receiving support, or within six months of finishing receiving support (including seven percent who entered self-employment). Examination of a control group of Labour Force Survey respondents who were economically inactive but seeking work (selected using 'propensity score matching') found that Want to Work had a very strong impact on whether customers entered work. Certain types of customers were more likely to enter work than others:

- Those without health conditions;
- Those with higher level qualifications;
- Those not claiming any benefits; and
- Those who had been out of work for shorter periods of time.

The work that Want to Work customers found tended to be low skilled and low paid. In total, 25% were working in elementary occupations, with 17% in personal service occupations and 16% in sales and customer service roles. 59% of customers were earning less than £10,000 a year. As well as being related to the low-skilled work being undertaken, this is linked to the fact that nearly half (49%) were working in mini-jobs or part time.

In total, 41% of customers who had entered work could be said to have progressed in work. This includes 18% who got a pay rise at their first employer, 16% who entered new work with higher pay, seven percent who reported receiving a promotion and 19% who considered their latest job better than the first they got after starting with Want to Work. Four in five Want to Work customers who entered work sustained it for ten months out of the next year.

### South West Workways

The South West Workways project aims to provide targeted support to economically inactive and unemployed people across four Local Authorities in South West Wales. Led by Neath Port Talbot Council (NPT) in collaboration with Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Swansea Councils, the project is funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) through the Welsh Government.

The project is intended to support participants to make the transition into employment by supporting them to overcome their barriers to work, by working with employers, and where appropriate by providing access to Temporary Job Opportunities (TJOs).

The project has four primary aims:

- To reduce the number of individuals in South West Wales who are economically inactive or long-term unemployed by working in a joined up, client-centred way.
- To develop a regional client engagement and assessment Gateway, utilising links that already existed as well as proposed new provision, alongside innovative outreach work that reflects the requirements of each Local Authority area.
- To provide TJOs for those participants who require the extra support needed to move from receiving benefits to sustainable employment.
- To continue to develop collaborative working practices across South West Wales for the benefit of participants, employers and the region as a whole.

The Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion was commissioned to evaluate the delivery of the South West Workways project. The evaluation included several pieces of work, providing:

- an assessment of the project's performance against objectives based on project management information;
- findings from interviews with regional staff overseeing the project;
- findings from a comparative focus group with one mentor and one ELO from each local authority;
- findings from a telephone survey of 721 participants (see annex 3 for details); and
- findings from in-depth case studies in each of the four local authorities delivering the project – which involved focus groups with participants as well as interviews with project teams, employers and other stakeholders.

By the end of June 2012, there had been 6,903 project participants, around 90% of its target level. Participants were more likely to be unemployed and less likely to be economically inactive than was anticipated when targets were set. In total, 41% of participants (2,840) were inactive, against a profile of 60%. Most of the difference is explained by higher than anticipated participation by the long-term unemployed – with 37% of starters' long-term unemployed against a profile of 23%. This reflects both changed priorities in response to the recession (a large increase in unemployment) and different referral patterns from Jobcentre Plus (JCP), who account for the majority of referrals to the project.

Looking at the proportion of project completers achieving outcomes, performance has been higher than the profiles set for the project. Management information suggests that 40% of project completers had entered employment, which is 5 percentage points higher than the target proportion of 35%. Other project outcomes are set out in Table 2.

**Table 2 – Achievement of outcomes against targets<sup>1</sup>**

Outcome	Number of participants achieving outcome	Proportion achieving outcome	Target proportion achieving outcome	Variance
Entered voluntary work, completed short job-focussed course or attended job interview	2,387	35%	32%	+3%
Gained qualifications	357	5%	5%	0%
Entered Further Learning	48	1%	1%	0%

Source: [Inclusion, 2013](#)

The participant survey found that a number of groups were more likely to have entered work whilst on Workways or within six months:

- Participants aged 25-34 were most likely to have entered work (52% were employed at the time of survey), with those aged 44-54 (37%) and over 55 (36%) significantly less likely to be employed.
- Participants without a disability were more likely than those with a disability to have found work (47% compared to 36%).

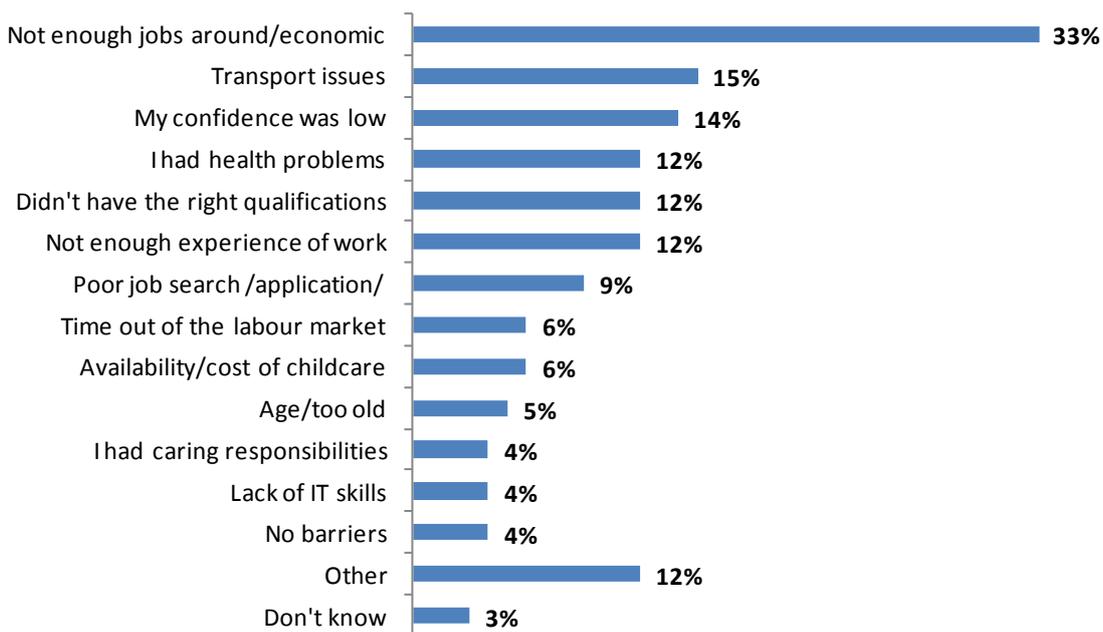
<sup>1</sup> Data taken from June 2012 WEFO return of participants.

- Those with higher qualifications (Level 2 and above) were more likely to have found work (52%) than those with no qualifications or qualifications below Level 2 (35%).
- Interestingly, the survey also found that those participants that had done a Temporary Job Opportunity were a lot more likely than those that had not done a TJO to have entered work (59% compared to 41%).

The project's engagement process appeared to be working well at the time of this evaluation. Delivery teams appeared to be well networked with local partners, and were increasingly undertaking outreach activities to engage hard to reach groups. However, it was apparent that in some areas innovative outreach methods could have been utilised earlier in the project, rather than relying on easier referral sources, including JCP and the Flexible New Deal (FND). This has likely contributed to the project reaching fewer economically inactive participants and women.

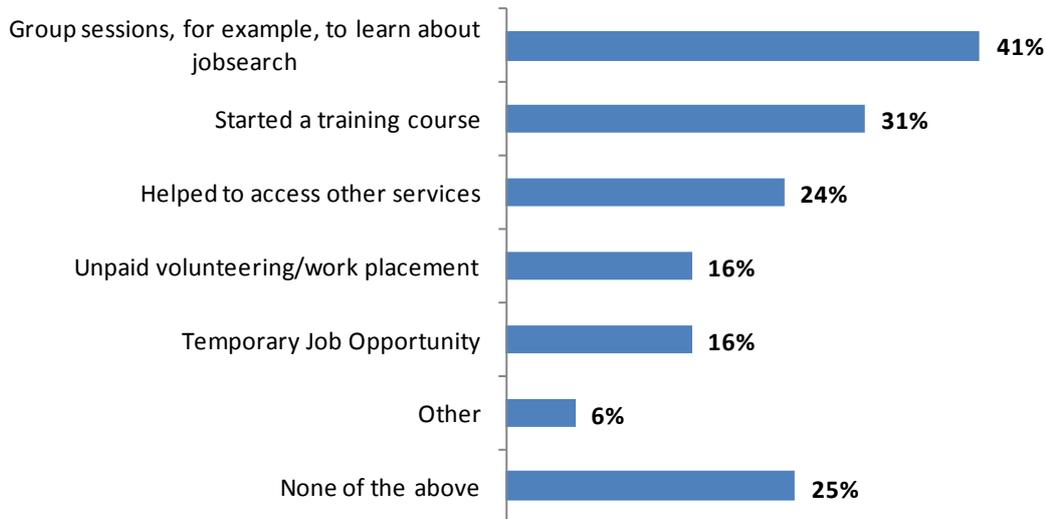
Survey respondents were asked about the barriers that they faced to entering employment. The most commonly mentioned reason was that there were not enough jobs in the local area (33% - see Figure 3), but a range of other barriers were mentioned, including transport (15%), confidence (14%) and health problems (12%).

**Figure 3: Main barriers to employment, South West Workways Participants**



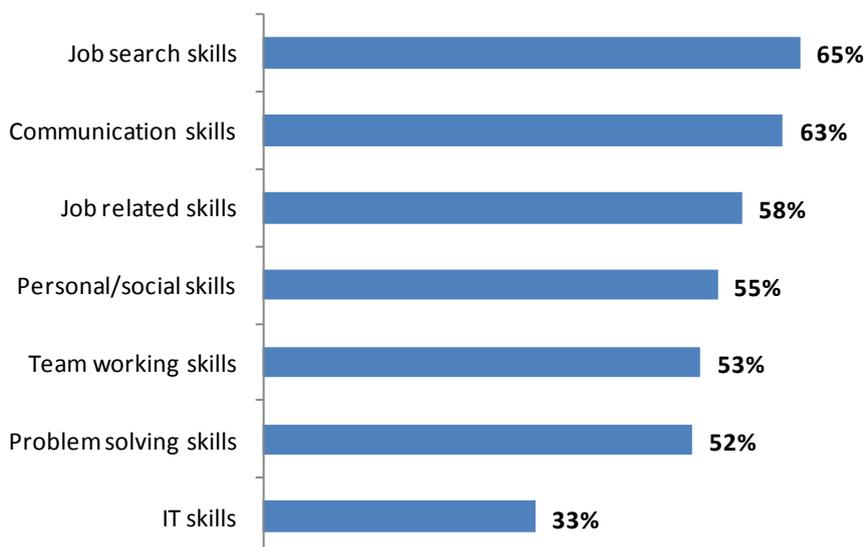
Source: Inclusion survey of participants. Base: all (721)

Survey respondents were asked what support they had received from Workways, in addition to one to one support from their mentor or ELO. The most common type of additional support was group sessions, which 41% of participants had done (see Figure 4), followed by going on a training course (31%) and helping gain access to other services (24%). A quarter of respondents had just had one-to-one contact with their mentor and ELO.

**Figure 4: Activities undertaken through Workways**

Source: Inclusion survey of participants. Base: all (721)

Respondents were also asked whether they had gained any skills whilst on Workways, including skills gained during temporary jobs or training. The most common skills respondents reported gaining were job search skills (65% - see Figure 5), communication skills (63%), or skills related to specific employment (58%). The least commonly mentioned skills were IT skills, which only a third of respondents gained.

**Figure 5: Skills gained through Workways participation**

Source: Inclusion survey of participants. Base: all (721)

Overall, Workways is performing well against its key outcome targets, with high levels of satisfaction from participants and employers, and an excellent employment-outcome rate. Inclusion's evaluation highlighted that the project was significantly below profile for starts from economically inactive people, particularly among women, and the project team were already taking steps reach those hardest to reach groups, including more outreach activities.

## Conclusion

There has been a clear improvement in Wales in recent years in getting people back into the labour market, with overall inactivity levels coming close to the UK average. Projects specifically aimed at reducing inactivity, based on close partnership working and support from personal advisors and mentors have had a real impact on the lives of inactive people, with high rates of returning to work, along with other softer outcomes around confidence, job searching, and improvements to work-related skills. However, the challenges of inactivity remain significant, with some parts of Wales still having well above average levels of economic activity, and increasing activity levels further should remain a high priority.

## References

Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion (2013) **South West Workways project evaluation- Final Report**, Tim Riley, Callum Miller, Rachael Owen, Ellie Roberts, Rowan Foster, Tony Wilson, July 2013  
<http://www.cesi.org.uk/publications/evaluation-southwest-workways>

Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion (2013) **Evaluation of Want to Work - Final Report**, Tim Riley, Pippa Lane, Tony Wilson, Win Hawkins, Paul Bivand, May 2013  
<http://www.cesi.org.uk/publications/evaluation-want-work-final-report>

© Crown copyright 2014. You may re-use this document/publication (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>; or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU; or email: <mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk>.

#### Disclaimer

The Learning and Skills Observatory is part of the Welsh Government.

The content of this report is for information only. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in this report is correct, the Welsh Government and the Learning and Skills Observatory do not warrant the accuracy or completeness of such information and do not accept liability for any errors, inaccuracies, omissions or misleading or defamatory statements included in this report. As such, the content should not be relied upon and professional advice should be taken in specific cases.

The material in this report is provided "as is", without any representations, conditions, warranties (express or implied) or other terms of any kind and to the extent permitted by law, the Welsh Government and the Learning and Skills Observatory do not accept or assume any liability, responsibility or duty of care for any consequences of you acting or not acting in reliance on the information contained in this report.

Please note that the information in this report may be out of date and the Welsh Government and the Learning and Skills Observatory make no commitment to update such material.

The Welsh Government and the Learning and Skills Observatory are not responsible for the content of external websites and no warranty is given or responsibility accepted as to the standing of, or in respect of, any advice provided by any individual, firm, company or other organisation whose details are listed in this report. All material in this brochure is provided for information purposes only and does not constitute a promotion or recommendation by the Welsh Government or the Learning and Skills Observatory of any person or organisation listed.



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government