



National Assembly for **Wales**
Cynulliad Cenedlaethol **Cymru**

In Figures: Child Poverty

This paper provides a statistical portrait of the incidence and nature of child poverty across Wales, including a special focus on education.

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In Figures: Child Poverty

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Executive Summary

Child poverty can be measured in a number of ways. These can include indicators based around income, such as estimates of the number of children living in low income households, or indicators based on other manifestations of poverty, such as child dental health.

The most widely used measure of child poverty is the proportion of children living in households with less than 60% average income. In 2006/07, 29% of children in Wales were in this group, compared to 30% of children across the UK.

In 2007, 17% of primary school pupils and 15% of secondary school pupils were entitled to free school meals. Local authorities with the highest proportions of free school meal entitlement tend to be located in the Valleys.

Between 2003 and 2007, the overall number of registered child care places in Wales increased.

Five year olds in Wales have, on average, 2.4 decayed, missing or filled teeth. Blaenau Gwent had the highest average number of decayed, missing or filled teeth.

Pupils' attainment at Key Stages 2 and 3 has fallen slightly over recent years, but attainment at Key Stage 4 has improved.

The number of 16-18 year olds in education, employment or training has improved each year since 2003.

The proportion of working age adults with qualifications at NVQ levels 2, 3 or 4+ has increased each year since 2001.

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In Figures: Child Poverty

1 Introduction

This paper is part of the *In Figures* series, which aims to provide a statistical portrait of a number of key social and economic issues. This particular issue focuses on statistics relating to child poverty.

The UK and Welsh Assembly Governments have committed to halving child poverty by 2010 and eradicating it by 2020. This target will be measured using the number of children living in households below average income, of which there is further discussion in this paper. However, poverty can manifest itself in a number of ways, as the then Minister for Social Justice and Regeneration, Edwina Hart, stated in the Assembly Government document *Eradicating Child Poverty in Wales – Measuring Success*¹:

[Poverty] manifests itself in underachievement and social exclusion; in poor health; and in limited opportunities for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. It is damaging to individual children, to families, to communities, and to society as a whole.

For this reason, in addition to overall measures of child poverty, this paper will present figures on other specific areas affected by child poverty.

Given that education is considered to be an important route out of poverty, this paper includes a special focus on the Assembly Government's progress towards meeting its child poverty education targets. This approach is consistent with that taken by the Assembly's Children and Young People Committee which has focused on education during its inquiry into child poverty.

¹ Welsh Assembly Government, [Eradicating Child Poverty in Wales – Measuring Success](#), October 2006

2 Households Below Average Income

The measure most widely used by the Assembly Government to measure child poverty is the number of children living in households with less than 60 per cent of the UK median household income. This measure comes from the Households Below Average Income (HBAI) data set, published by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Percentages of children living in households below 60 per cent average income are normally quoted before and after housing costs have been paid. Table 1 shows the percentage of children in Wales and the UK living in households with less than 60 per cent median income. The figures for Wales are presented in chart format in Figure 1.

Table 1. Children living in households with less than 60% median UK income, before and after housing costs (a)

Year	<i>Per cent</i>			
	Before Housing Costs		After Housing Costs	
	Wales	UK (b)	Wales	UK (b)
1996/97	29	25	36	33
1997/98	31	26	37	33
1998/99	30	27	36	34
1999/00	30	26	36	33
2000/01	29	25	35	33
2001/02	28	24	34	31
2002/03	28	23	34	30
2003/04	27	23	32	30
2004/05	26	22	31	29
2005/06	24	22	28	29
2006/07	25	22	29	30

Source: [DWP](#)

(a) Data are based on three year averages. For example, the figure for 2006/07 is based on data from 2004/05 – 2006/07.

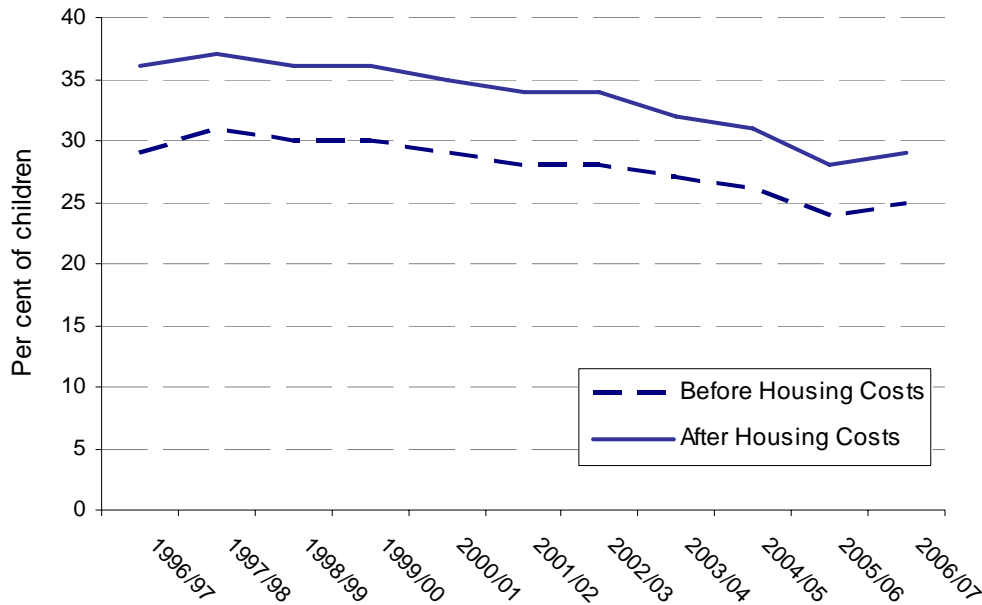
(b) Data are for Great Britain up to and including 1999/00 and the United Kingdom from 2000/01 onwards.

The percentage of children living in Household Below Average Income in Wales increased slightly in 1997/98 then fell for the following years, up to 2006/07 where it increased slightly. The UK has followed a similar trend, although the decrease has been at a slightly slower rate.

In 2005/06, the percentage of children living in Households Below Average Income was lower in Wales than across the UK as a whole, when using figures net of housing costs. This trend was maintained in 2006/07.

The risk of living in a household with below 60% of the average UK income is greatly affected by the type of household the child lives in. Approximately 30% of all children across the UK live in Households Below Average Income (after housing costs), however the figure for lone parent families is 52%.

Figure 1. Children living in households with less than 60% median UK income in Wales, before and after housing costs



Source: [DWP](#)

In addition to the work on households below average income, the Labour Force Survey estimated that in June 2007, across Wales 93,000 children (almost 16 per cent) lived in households where no working-age adult worked².

Both these sets of figures are *estimates* compiled from surveys which have sampled households across the UK. It is not possible to reliably produce estimates for either of these measures below the Wales level as the sample of households used is too small. However, a number of other statistics are available below the all-Wales level. These are discussed in the following sections.

² Office for National Statistics, [Work and Worklessness Among Households](#), August 2007

3 Pupils Entitled to Free School Meals

Figures from the 2007 Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) show that 16.8 per cent of primary school pupils and 14.6 per cent of secondary school pupils in Wales are entitled to free school meals.

The highest concentrations of pupils entitled to free school meals are in the Valleys authorities, with Merthyr Tydfil, Rhondda Cynon Taff and Blaenau Gwent having the highest percentages for both primary and secondary schools. The eastern authorities of Monmouthshire, Powys and Flintshire, along with Ceredigion, have the lowest percentages of pupils entitled to free school meals.

Table 2. Pupils entitled to free school meals, January 2007, by local authority

Unitary authority	Primary		Secondary	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Isle of Anglesey	874	16.1	581	13.0
Gwynedd	1,248	12.5	819	10.3
Conwy	1,171	13.1	1,008	13.3
Denbighshire	1,140	13.7	845	10.8
Flintshire	1,446	10.6	1,036	9.7
Wrexham	1,486	12.8	966	13.6
Powys	1,061	9.7	759	8.2
Ceredigion	611	11.9	482	9.4
Pembrokeshire	1,469	13.9	1,015	11.9
Carmarthenshire	2,471	16.5	1,650	13.4
Swansea	3,929	18.9	2,518	17.1
Neath Port Talbot	2,363	19.2	1,673	18.3
Bridgend	2,339	18.7	1,324	13.8
The Vale of Glamorgan	1,373	17.0	975	12.1
Cardiff	5,363	19.5	3,859	18.0
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	5,205	24.1	3,587	19.3
Merthyr Tydfil	1,321	25.1	955	22.4
Caerphilly	3,262	19.2	2,202	17.2
Blaenau Gwent	1,400	22.2	1,006	20.9
Torfaen	1,496	12.6	1,131	11.6
Monmouthshire	637	9.1	497	8.9
Newport	2,449	18.3	1,767	16.3
Wales	44,114	16.8	30,655	14.6

Source: [Pupil Level Annual School Census 2007, Welsh Assembly Government](#)

4 Child Care

The Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales' annual report on care services³ gives the number of day care places available for under eight year olds in registered child care settings across Wales. Table 3 shows the number of places available since 2003, while Table 4 breaks down the data for the two most recent years by the type of day care setting.

Table 3. Number of day care places for under 8s in Wales.

Year	Places
2003	69,710
2004	71,383
2005	72,856
2006	72,894
2007	70,681

Table 4. Number of day care places for under 8s in Wales, by day care setting

Setting	2006	2007	Change
Childminders	11,592	11,958	366
Full day care	18,083	19,323	1,240
Sessional day care	17,408	17,116	-292
Out of school care	19,242	18,100	-1,142
Creches	1,386	1,197	-189
Open access	5,183	2,987	-2,196

The number of registered day care places in Wales has risen since 2003, but fell by over 2,000 places in 2007. Table 4 shows that most of this fall was in the open access and out of school care sectors. However, the number of registered full day care places increased by over a thousand.

In 2004, the Wales Rural Observatory (WRO) carried out a survey of Town and Community Councils in rural Wales, with child care being one of the areas covered by the survey⁴. The survey included publicly and privately funded nurseries; play groups and out-of-school child care facilities. They summarised their findings on child care as follows:

The provision of accessible childcare services in rural areas is of key importance given its role in allowing members of the family unit to gain employment. In terms of nursery and playgroup provision 74% of responding Town and Community Councils did not have a publicly run nursery and 78% are without a privately run nursery, however, only 38% did not have a playgroup.

The WRO conducted some analysis on child care facilities by the size of the community's population. The likelihood of having child care facilities available in the community decreased as community sizes got smaller.

³ Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales, [Care Services in Wales Annual report 2006-2007](#), January 2008

⁴ Wales Rural Observatory, [Rural Services in Wales](#), March 2005

5 Child Dental Health

The British Association for the Study of Community Dentistry carries out an annual survey of child dental health across the UK. The latest survey, covering 2005/06, focused on the dental health of five year olds⁵. Table 5 includes figures on the average number of five year olds with decayed, missing or filled teeth for each local authority in Wales.

Table 5: Average number of decayed, missing or filled teeth in five year olds, 2005/06, by local authority

Local Authority	Decayed, missing or filled teeth
Isle of Anglesey	1.8
Gwynedd	2.3
Conwy	1.6
Denbighshire	1.8
Flintshire	1.8
Wrexham	2.0
Powys	2.1
Ceredigion	1.7
Pembrokeshire	2.3
Carmarthenshire	2.2
Swansea	2.6
Neath Port Talbot	3.0
Bridgend	1.8
The Vale of Glamorgan	2.3
Cardiff	2.1
Rhondda, Cynon, Taff	2.6
Merthyr Tydfil	3.9
Caerphilly	2.7
Blaenau Gwent	4.0
Torfaen	3.4
Monmouthshire	1.9
Newport	2.2
Wales	2.4

Source: British Association for the Study of Community Dentistry

The highest numbers of decayed, missing or filled teeth were in the Valleys authorities of Blaenau Gwent, Merthyr Tydfil and Torfaen. Conwy had the lowest number of decayed, missing or filled teeth with an average of 1.6. Ceredigion had the second lowest figure.

⁵ British Association for the Study of Community Dentistry, [BASCD Survey Report 2005/06](#), March 2007

6 Education

Educational attainment is considered to be an important route out of poverty for children. This section provides figures on the educational outcomes of learners in Wales and gives an update on the Welsh Assembly Government's progress towards achieving the national education targets set out in *Eradicating Child Poverty in Wales – Measuring Success*. Each target has:

- a baseline date (between 2003 and 2006),
- a milestone date (2010 or 2015), and
- a target date (2020).

Milestones and targets are given in a grey box and the baseline year is marked in each table and chart by (b). Where possible, figures have been provided for years earlier than the baseline date in order to provide a fuller picture of the trends for each target over time.

6.1 Attainment in Primary Schools

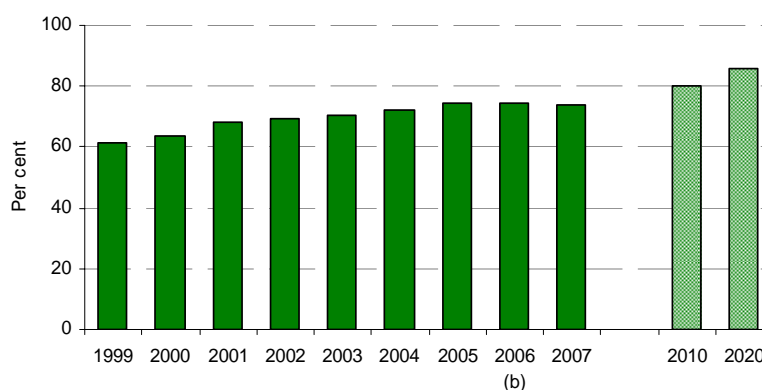
Milestone: 80 per cent of pupils in Key Stage 2 to achieve the core subject indicator by 2010

Target: 86 per cent of pupils in Key Stage 2 to achieve the core subject indicator by 2020

To achieve the core subject indicator, pupils must reach the expected level in teacher assessments in the three core subjects: English or Welsh first language, Science and Maths. The expected level at Key Stage 2 is level 4.

Pupils achieving the Core Subject Indicator (CSI) at Key Stage 2

Year	% achieving the CSI
1999	61.1
2000	63.8
2001	68.1
2002	69.6
2003	70.6
2004	71.9
2005	74.3
2006 (b)	74.2
2007	74.1
2010 milestone	80.0
2020 target	86.0



Source: StatsWales table [003298](#)

Eradicating Child Poverty in Wales – Measuring Success gives a baseline figure of 74% of pupils achieving the CSI. Only one year of data is available since the baseline year. In 2007, the percentage of pupils achieving the core subject indicator at Key Stage 2 fell slightly.

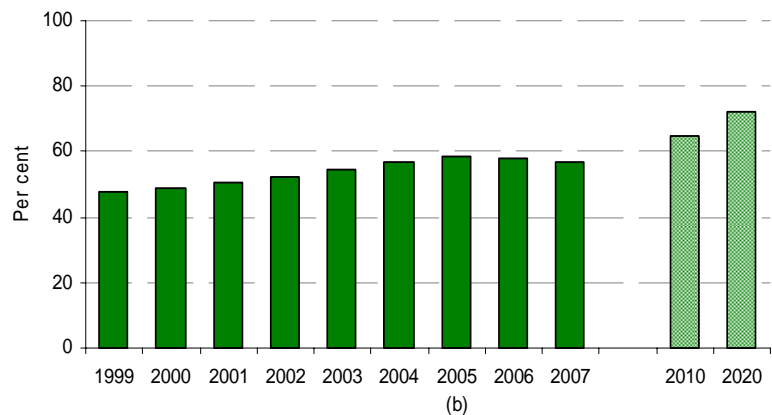
6.2 Attainment in Secondary Schools

Milestone: 65 per cent of pupils in Key Stage 3 to achieve the core subject indicator by 2010.

Target: 72 per cent of pupils in Key Stage 3 to achieve the core subject indicator by 2020.

Pupils achieving the Core Subject Indicator (CSI) at Key Stage 3

Year	% achieving the CSI
1999	47.5
2000	49.1
2001	50.8
2002	52.5
2003	54.4
2004	56.9
2005 (b)	58.3
2006	58.2
2007	56.7
2010 milestone	65.0
2020 target	72.0



Source: StatsWales table [003300](#)

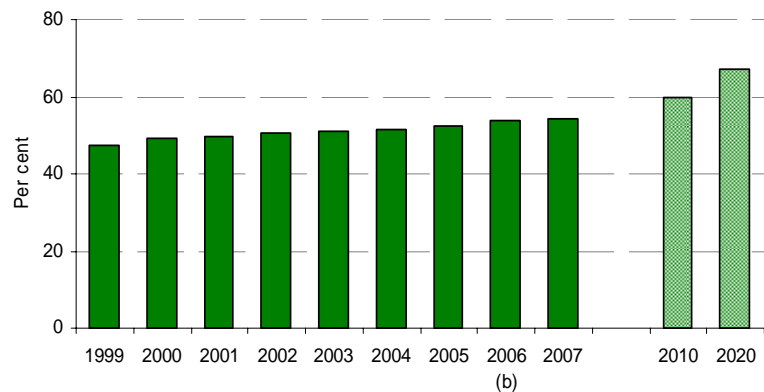
Since the 2005 baseline, the percentage of pupils achieving the CSI at Key Stage 3 has fallen each year.

Milestone: 60 per cent of 15 year olds to achieve 5 GCSEs at A*-C or vocational equivalent by 2010.

Target: 67 per cent of 15 year olds to achieve 5 GCSEs at A*-C or vocational equivalent by 2020.

15 year old pupils achieving 5 GCSEs at A*-C or vocational equivalent

Year	% achieving 5A*-C
1999	47.5
2000	49.1
2001	49.8
2002	50.5
2003	51.1
2004	51.4
2005	52.2
2006 (b)	53.8
2007	54.2
2010 milestone	60.0
2020 target	67.0



Source: StatsWales table [001897](#)

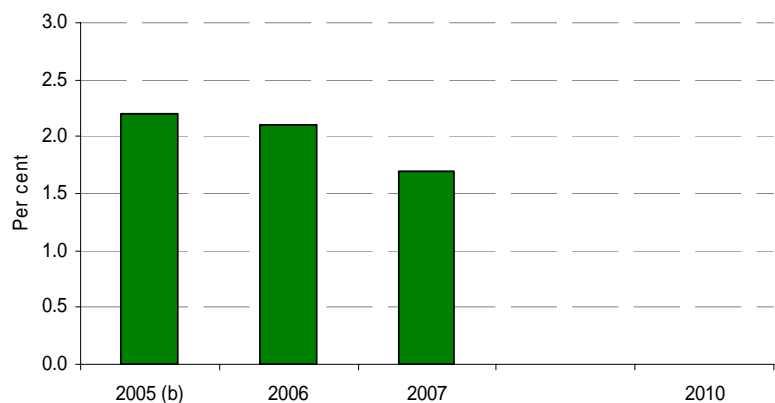
Eradicating Child Poverty in Wales – Measuring Success gives a baseline for 2006 of 53%. This was based on provisional data for that year and has since been revised to 53.8%. Data is only available for one year following the baseline, where the percentage of pupils achieving 5 GCSEs at A*-C increased to 54.2%.

Target: No pupil to leave full time education without an approved qualification by 2010.

15 year old pupils leaving education without a qualification

Year	% leaving with no qualifications
2005 (b)	2.2
2006	2.1
2007	1.7
2010	0.0

Source: [Welsh Assembly Government](#)



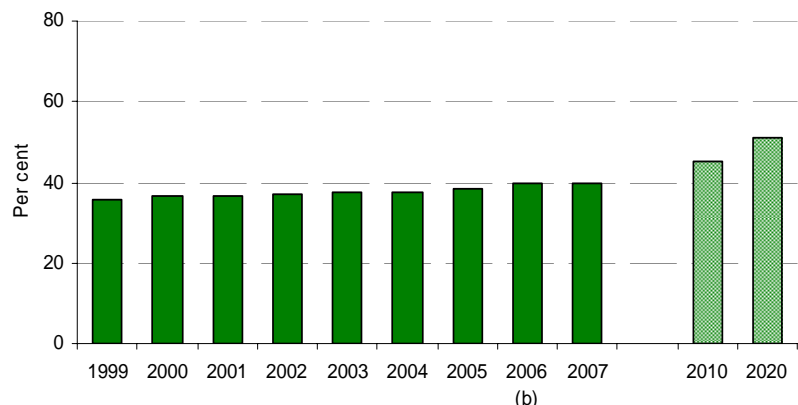
The percentage of 15 year old pupils leaving full time education without a qualification has fallen each year since the 2005 baseline. It now stands at 1.7%. Comparable figures are not available prior to 2005 as data were published using a different definition.

Milestone: 45 per cent of 15 year olds to achieve the core subject indicator by 2010.

Target: 51 per cent of 15 year olds to achieve the core subject indicator by 2020.

15 year old pupils achieving the Core Subject Indicator (CSI)

Year	% achieving the CSI
1999	35.5
2000	36.4
2001	36.5
2002	36.9
2003	37.5
2004	37.7
2005	38.4
2006 (b)	39.7
2007	40.0
2010 milestone	45.0
2020 target	51.0



Source: StatsWales table [001897](#)



Eradicating Child Poverty in Wales – Measuring Success gives a baseline for 2006 of 39%. This was based on provisional data for that year and has since been revised to 39.7%. Data is only available for one year following the baseline, where the percentage of pupils achieving the CSI increased to 40.0%.

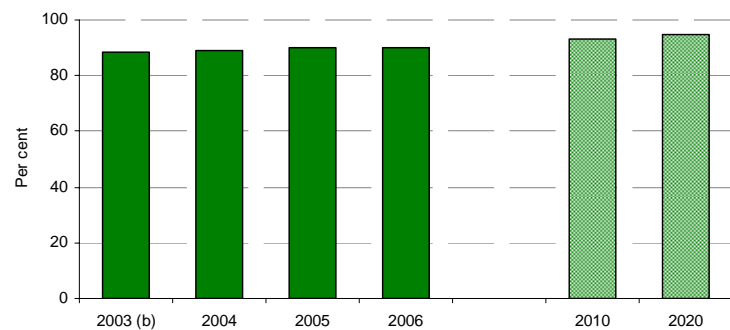
6.3 16-18 year olds in Education, Employment or Training (EET)

Milestone: 93 per cent of 16-18 year olds to be in education, employment or training by 2010.

Target: 95 per cent of 16-18 year olds to be in education, employment or training by 2020.

16-18 year olds in education, employment or training

Year	% in education, employment or training
2003 (b)	88.3
2004	88.8
2005	89.8
2006	90.2
2010 milestone	93.0
2020 target	95.0



Source: [SDR 108/2008](#)

Eradicating Child Poverty in Wales – Measuring Success gives a baseline figure of 89% of 16-18 year olds in education, employment or training. This has since been revised to 88% following updates to some of the data used in this calculation. Three years of data are available for this target since the baseline year. The most recent figures show that the number of 16-18 year olds in education, employment or training has increased each year and now stands at 90.2%.

Milestone: 95 per cent of young people, by the age of 25, to be ready for high skilled employment and/or further or higher education by 2015.

Target: 97 per cent of young people, by the age of 25, to be ready for high skilled employment and/or further or higher education by 2020.

No baseline data is provided for this indicator; therefore it is not possible to determine how the Welsh Assembly Government intends to monitor progress on this target. A definition needs to be provided on how to classify someone as being “ready for high skilled employment and/or further or higher education”.

6.4 Educational Attainment of Looked After Children

Eradicating Child Poverty in Wales – Measuring Success does not give any targets for the educational outcomes of looked after children. However, the Welsh Assembly Government and Local Government Data Unit produce annual statistics on children looked after by local authorities^{6,7}. These figures show that in 2006-07, 39% of children leaving care that year achieved at least two GCSEs or a GNVQ. 57% of children leaving care that year did not have any GCSEs or GNVQs.

These figures may not be calculated on the same basis as those quoted for 2004-05 in *Eradicating Child Poverty in Wales – Measuring Success*, as not enough information is provided on how these figures were defined.

6.5 Educational Attainment Amongst Adults

Milestone: 80 per cent of working age adults to have level 1 or above functional basic skills in literacy by 2010.

Target: 85 per cent of working age adults to have level 1 or above functional basic skills in literacy by 2020.

Milestone: 55 per cent of working age adults to have level 1 or above functional basic skills in numeracy by 2010.

Target: 63 per cent of working age adults to have level 1 or above functional basic skills in numeracy 2020.

The baseline data for these targets comes from a national survey carried out by the Basic Skills Agency in 2004⁸. They found that 75% of adults in Wales had literacy skills at level 1 or above and 47% had numeracy skills at the same level. No further surveys have been undertaken in order to update these figures.

⁶ Welsh Assembly Government, [Adoptions, Outcomes and Placements for Children Looked After by Local Authorities: year ending 31 March 2007](#), September 2007

⁷ Local Government Data Unit Dissemination Tool:
<http://dissemination.dataunitwales.gov.uk/webview/index.jsp?language=en>

⁸ Basic Skills Agency, [The National Survey of Adult Basic Skills in Wales](#), 2004

Milestone: 70 per cent of working age adults to have a qualification at NVQ level 2 or above by 2010.

Target: 74 per cent of working age adults to have a qualification at NVQ level 2 or above by 2020.

Milestone: 50 per cent of working age adults to have a qualification at NVQ level 3 or above by 2010.

Target: 55 per cent of working age adults to have a qualification at NVQ level 3 or above by 2020.

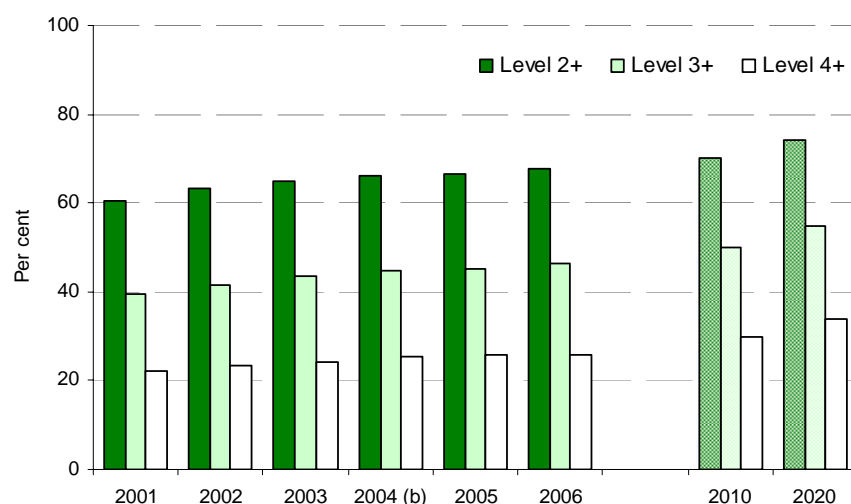
Milestone: 30 per cent of working age adults to have a qualification at NVQ level 4 or above by 2010.

Target: 34 per cent of working age adults to have a qualification at NVQ level 4 or above by 2020.

Qualification levels of working age adults

Year	<i>Per cent</i>		
	Level 2+	Level 3+	Level 4+
2001	60.4	39.6	22.2
2002	63.3	41.7	23.3
2003	64.9	43.4	24.2
2004 (b)	66.2	44.9	25.5
2005	66.4	45.0	25.7
2006	67.8	46.2	26.0
2010 milestone	70.0	50.0	30.0
2020 target	74.0	55.0	34.0

Source: StatsWales table [003357](#)





Progress has been made against each of the three targets above since the baseline year. The percentage of adults with level 2 qualifications has increased by 1.6 percentage points, followed by an increase of 1.3 percentage points for adults with a level 3 qualification and 0.5 percentage points for adults with level 4 qualifications.