

# The Welsh Workforce – Employment in Wales

November 2013

## Employment levels and rates in Wales and the UK

Table 1 shows the latest figures for the number of people aged 16 and over in employment in Wales and the other UK nations, along with changes over time. It can be seen that:

- In Wales 11,000 more people are in employment in June – August 2013 than were in employment in March – May 2013. The UK, Scotland and England saw an increase in employment since the previous quarter while Northern Ireland saw a decrease.
- Over the past year, the number of people aged 16 and over in employment has risen in the UK, and all nations except Wales, where 3,000 fewer people are in employment.
- In the UK, and all four UK nations, the number of people in employment is higher in June – August 2013 than it was in June – August 2008.

Due to the increasing number of people aged 65 and over who are in employment, all people aged 16 and over who are in employment have been included in table 1.

Table 1: Number of people aged 16 and over in employment in UK nations (a)

UK Nation	Number of people in employment in Jun - Aug 2013	Change since previous quarter, March - May 2013	Change since Jun - Aug 2012	Change since Jun - Aug 2008
Wales	1,374,000	↑ Increase of 11,000	↓ Decrease of 3,000	↑ Increase of 26,000
Scotland	2,548,000	↑ Increase of 37,000	↑ Increase of 58,000	↑ Increase of 11,000
Northern Ireland	799,000	↓ Decrease of 1,000	↑ Increase of 4,000	↑ Increase of 10,000
England	25,149,000	↑ Increase of 108,000	↑ Increase of 220,000	↑ Increase of 405,000
UK	29,869,000	↑ Increase of 155,000	↑ Increase of 279,000	↑ Increase of 451,000

Sources: Research Service calculations from Office for National Statistics, [Regional Labour Market Statistics October 2013 – Headline LFS indicators for all regions](#) (select the tab for the relevant devolved nation) and [Labour Market Statistics October 2013 – Summary of Labour Market Statistics](#) (table 1) for UK figures.

Note:

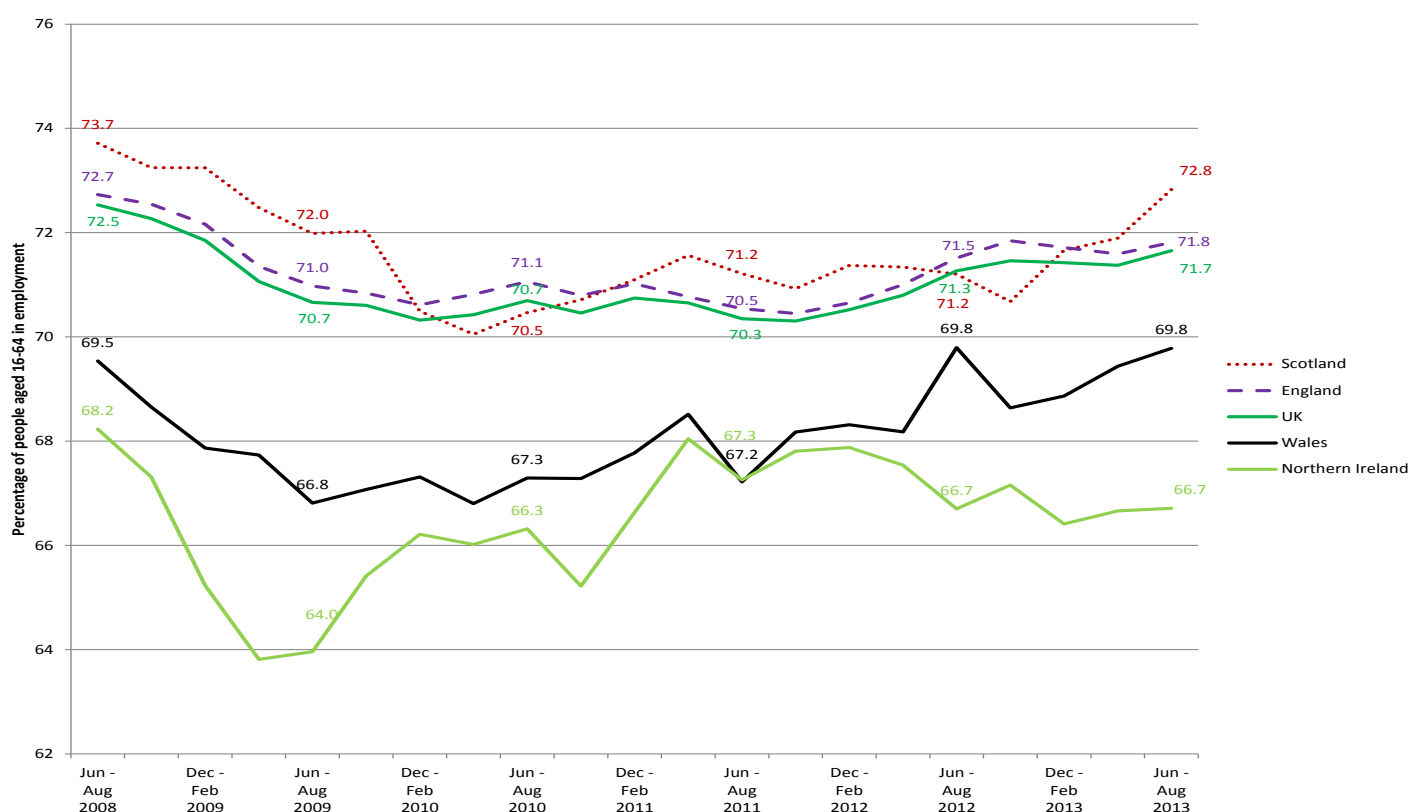
- (a) To access the figures for June – August 2008 for all tables, you will need to select everything in the relevant tab in the Excel spreadsheet and press Control, Shift and 9. This allows you to see all of the hidden rows in the spreadsheets for historic data. **Please contact the Research Service if you would like any assistance with this.**

When looking at the percentage of people in employment, the headline measure used by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) is for people aged 16-64 (also known as the working age employment rate).<sup>1</sup>

Figure 1 shows the percentage of people aged 16-64 that are in employment in each of the UK nations for each quarter from June – August 2008 to June – August 2013. Figure 1 shows that:

- All of the UK nations except Wales have a lower working age employment rate in June – August 2013 than in June – August 2008
- Over the past five years, the percentage of people aged 16-64 that are in employment in Wales has consistently been lower than in Scotland, England and the UK, but higher than in Northern Ireland in all except one quarter.

Figure 1: Percentage of people aged 16-64 in employment in UK nations, June – August 2008 to June – August 2013 (a)



Sources: Office for National Statistics, [Regional Labour Market Statistics October 2013 – Headline LFS indicators for all regions](#) (select the tab for the relevant devolved nation) and [Labour Market Statistics October 2013 – Summary of Labour Market Statistics](#) (table 1) for UK figures.

Note:

- To access the figures for June – August 2008 to March – May 2011 for all tables, you will need to select everything in the relevant tab of the Excel spreadsheet and press Control, Shift and 9. This allows you to see all of the hidden rows in the spreadsheets for historic data. **Please contact the Research Service if you would like any assistance with this.**

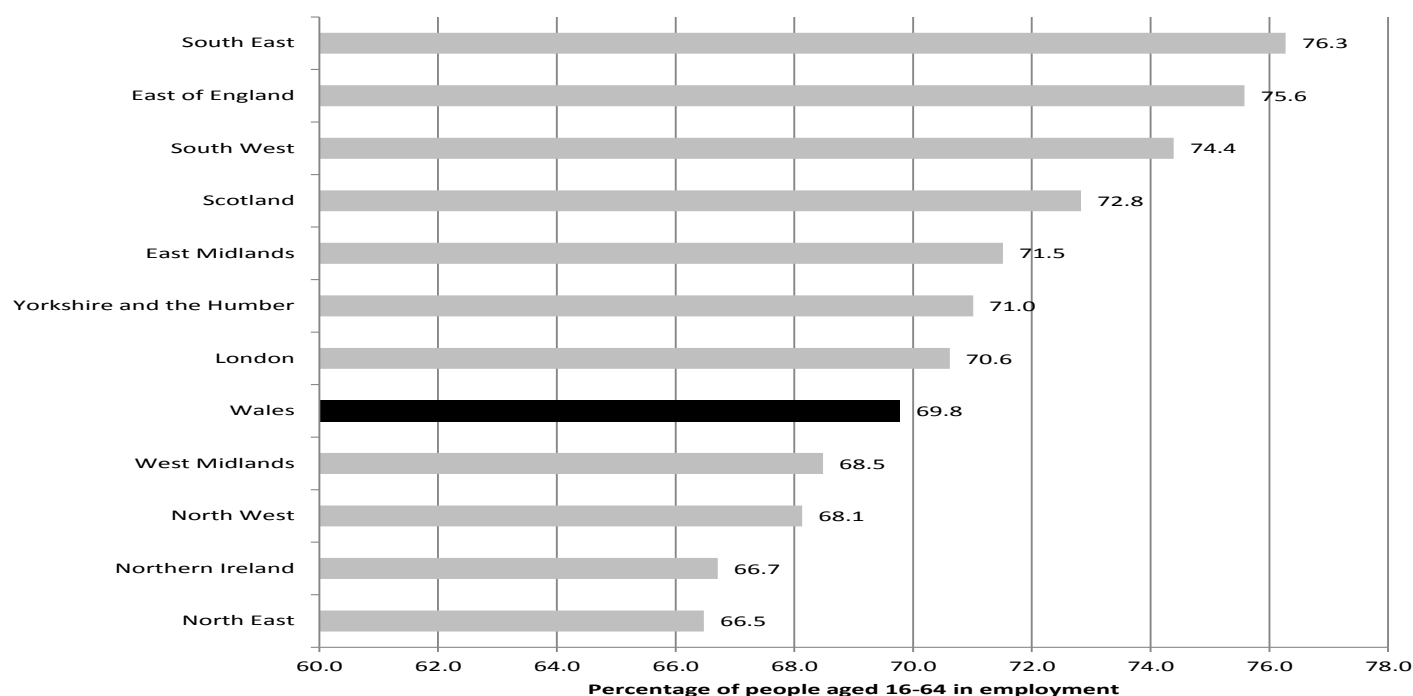
<sup>1</sup> Office for National Statistics, [Topic Guide to Employment](#) [accessed 24 October 2013]

Figure 2 shows the percentage of people aged 16-64 in employment in the devolved nations and English regions in June – August 2013. This data allows for comparisons to be made between Wales and individual English regions, rather than simply looking at the overall English figure which is substantially increased by the high working age employment rates seen in the South East, South West and East of England.

In June – August 2013, it can be seen that:

- **Wales had a higher working age employment rate than the West Midlands, North East and North West of England, and Northern Ireland, but lower than all other English regions and Scotland.**
- The South East, South West and East of England had a higher working age employment rates than all other English regions, almost 3 percentage points higher than any other English region. All other English regions have working employment rates of within 2 percentage points of Wales, with the exception of the North East, where the working age employment rate is over 3 percentage points lower than Wales.

**Figure 2: Percentage of people aged 16-64 in employment in devolved nations and English regions, June – August 2013**



Source: Office for National Statistics, [Regional Labour Market Statistics October 2013 – Summary of Headline Indicators](#) (table 1)

## Public and private sector employment

Table 2 shows the latest figures for the number and percentage of people aged 16 and over employed in the public and private sector in Wales and the UK nations, along with changes over time.

**This information is not comparable with the information in the first section of the paper as it is for a different time period.**

In England further education colleges and sixth form college corporations have been reclassified to the private sector since 1 April 2012.<sup>2</sup> **Due to this, the data for England will not be directly comparable to those for other nations as it has a different definition of the public and private sector.**

<sup>2</sup> Office for National Statistics, [Reclassification of Further Education Corporations and Sixth Form Colleges in England](#), May 2012 [accessed 24 October 2013]

The data for England used in this analysis treats further education colleges and sixth form college corporations as if they had been reclassified to the private sector throughout. **Comparisons have been made between quarter 4 of 2008 and quarter 2 of 2013. This is because Lloyds and Royal Bank of Scotland were reclassified from the private to the public sector in quarter 3 of 2008; therefore the first quarter that current data is comparable with is quarter 4 of 2008.** In respect of quarter 2 in 2013, it can be seen from table 2 that:

- **Of the UK nations, Wales had the second lowest percentage of people aged 16 and over employed in the private sector and the second highest employed in the public sector.**
- In Wales, public sector employment was the same as the previous quarter, but has decreased over the past year. In the private sector, employment in Wales has increased over the past quarter and also the past year.

**Table 2: Public and private sector employment of people aged 16 and over in UK nations (a), (b), (c)**

UK Nation	Public sector			Private sector		
	Number of people employed in the public sector, quarter 2, 2013	Change since previous quarter, quarter 1, 2013	Change since quarter 2, 2012	Number of people employed in the private sector, quarter 2, 2013	Change since previous quarter, quarter 1, 2013	Change since quarter 2, 2012
Wales	332,000 (25.2%)	⇒ No change	↓ Decrease of 2,000	983,000 (74.8%)	↑ Increase of 21,000	↑ Increase of 10,000
Scotland	579,000 (23.0%)	↓ Decrease of 2,000	↓ Decrease of 6,000	1,942,000 (77.0%)	↑ Increase of 18,000	↑ Increase of 62,000
Northern Ireland	218,000 (27.6%)	⇒ No change	⇒ No change	572,000 (72.4%)	↑ Increase of 13,000	↑ Increase of 21,000
England	4,502,000 (18.1%)	↓ Decrease of 55,000	↓ Decrease of 100,000	20,338,000 (81.9%)	↑ Increase of 183,000	↑ Increase of 283,000
UK	5,662,000 (19.0%)	↓ Decrease of 52,000	↓ Decrease of 105,000	24,183,000 (81.0%)	↑ Increase of 236,000	↑ Increase of 383,000

Source: Research Service calculations from Office for National Statistics, **Public Sector Employment, Q2 2013** (table 6a and 7a)

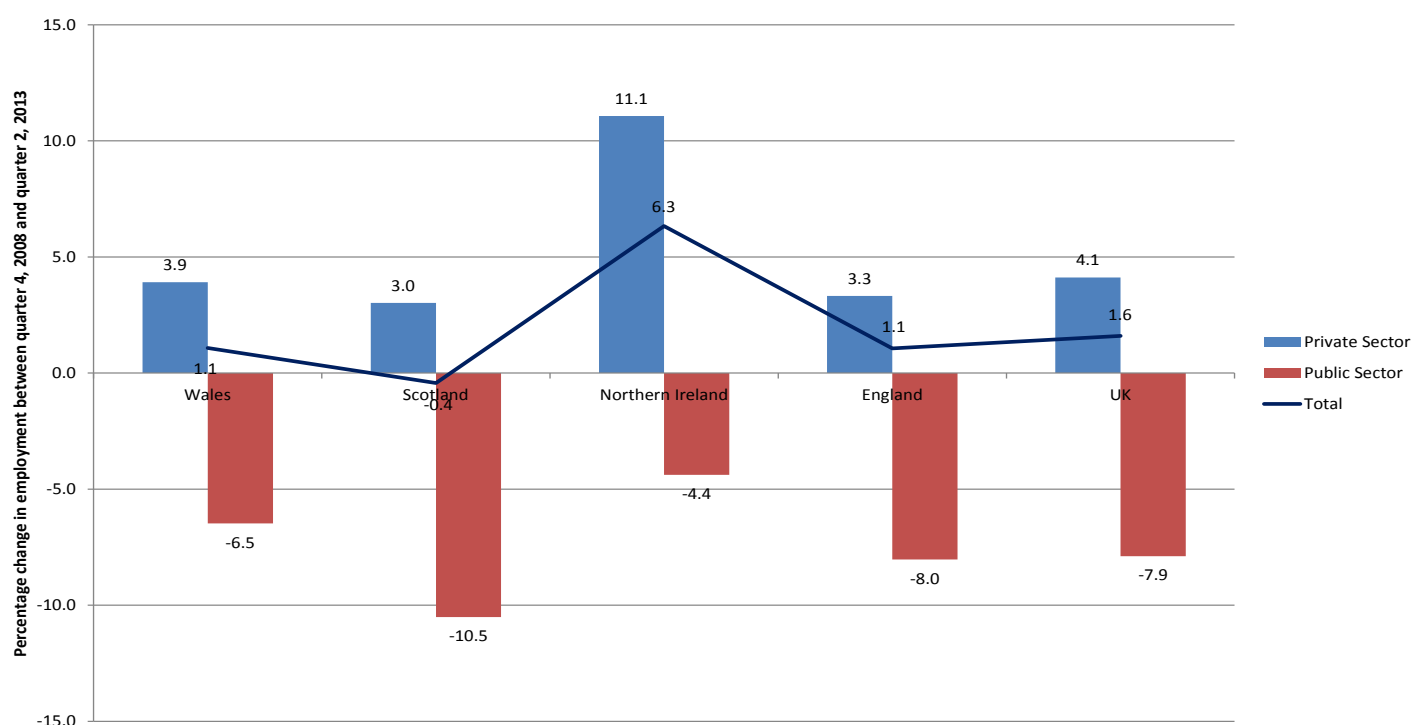
Notes:

- (a) Estimates are based on where people are employed.
- (b) Approximately 30,000 public sector employees that could not be assigned to a total are included in the UK total.
- (c) Figures are not seasonally adjusted

Figure 3 shows the percentage change in the number of people employed from quarter 2 of 2009 to quarter 2 of 2013. It can be seen from figure 3 that:

- **Total employment in Wales was 1.1% higher in quarter 2 of 2013 than in quarter 4 of 2008.** The percentage increase in private sector jobs was the second highest of all UK nations behind Northern Ireland. All nations saw a percentage increase in private sector employment over this period, and also a percentage decrease in public sector employment.
- While the percentage decrease in public sector employment in all UK nations except Northern Ireland was greater than the percentage increase in private sector employment over this period, **there was an increase in total employment due to the greater size of the private sector.**

**Figure 3: Percentage change in employment of people aged 16 and over in UK nations between quarter 4, 2008 and quarter 2, 2013, by sector (a), (b), (c)**



Source: Research Service calculations from Office for National Statistics, **Public Sector Employment, Q2 2013** (table 6a and 7a)  
The notes are the same as table 2.

## Workforce jobs by industry

Table 3 provides a breakdown of the latest workforce jobs figures for Wales and the UK, broken down by industrial classification. They include employment in both public and private sectors using the latest available data, from quarter 2 of 2013.

It can be seen that in quarter 2 of 2013:

- **While there is a spread across a number of categories, 15.6% of all workforce jobs in Wales were in human health and social work activities.** Other categories which provide over 10 per cent of workforce jobs in Wales include the wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles, manufacturing and education.

- At UK level, most people are employed in the wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles, although again there is quite a spread across industries. **In Wales a greater percentage of people are employed in human health and social activities and manufacturing than across the UK. A greater percentage of the UK workforce is employed in professional, scientific and technical activities than in the workforce in Wales.**

**Table 3: Workforce jobs in Wales and UK by industry, quarter 2 of 2013 (a)**

Industry	Wales		UK		Percentage point difference between percentage of workforce employed in Wales and UK
	Number of people employed	Percentage of all people employed	Number of people employed	Percentage of all people employed	
Human health and social work activities	214,000	15.6	4,145,000	12.8	2.8
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	211,000	15.3	4,911,000	15.1	0.2
Manufacturing	143,000	10.4	2,627,000	8.1	2.3
Education	141,000	10.2	2,802,000	8.6	1.6
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	94,000	6.8	1,563,000	4.9	1.9
Construction	85,000	6.2	2,006,000	6.2	0.0
Administrative and support service activities	84,000	6.1	2,673,000	8.2	-2.1
Accommodation and food service activities	79,000	5.7	2,080,000	6.4	-0.7
Professional, scientific and technical activities	58,000	4.2	2,594,000	8.0	-3.8
Transportation and storage	49,000	3.6	1,553,000	4.8	-1.2
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	45,000	3.3	884,000	2.7	0.6
Other Service Activities	39,000	2.8	800,000	2.5	0.3
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	33,000	2.4	372,000	1.1	1.3
Financial and Insurance Activities	31,000	2.3	1,127,000	3.5	-1.2
Information and Communication	27,000	2.0	1,334,000	4.1	-2.1
Other	43,000	3.1	1,015,000	3.1	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,376,000</b>		<b>32,486,000</b>		

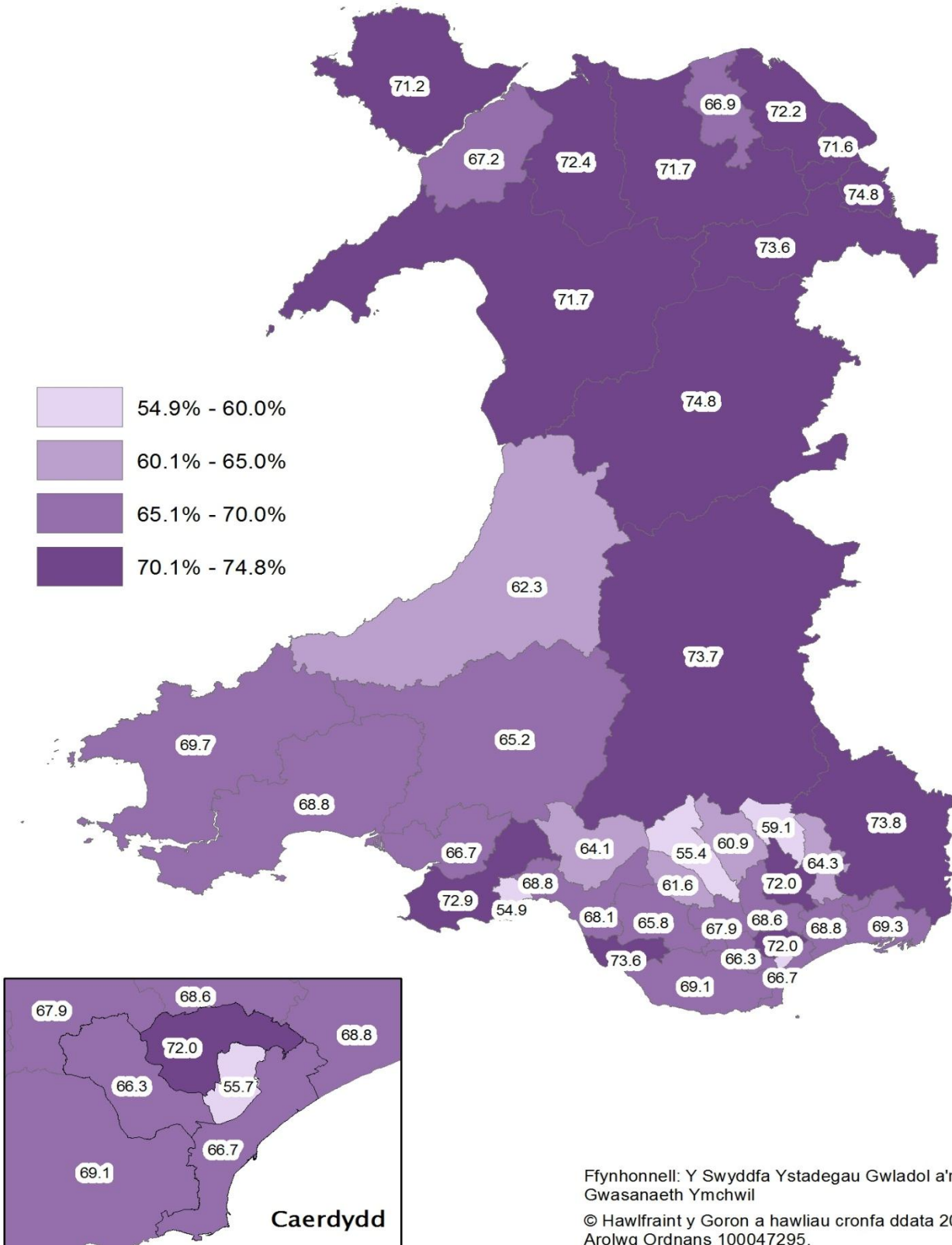
Source: NOMIS – Official Labour Market Statistics, [Labour Market Profile Wales](#)

Note:

- (a) Other includes all categories which comprise less than 2 per cent of workforce jobs in Wales, which are Mining and quarrying; Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply; Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities; Real estate activities and Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods-and services-producing activities of households for own use.

## Working age employment rate by Welsh Constituency

Figure 4: Working age employment rate by Welsh constituency, July 2012 – June 2013



Ffynhonnell: Y Swyddfa Ystadegau Gwladol a'r Gwasanaeth Ymchwil  
© Hawlfraint y Goron a hawliau cronfa ddata 2013.  
Arolwg Ordnans 100047295.



## Further information

For further information about employment and other aspects of the labour market, please contact **Gareth Thomas** ([GarethDavid.Thomas@Wales.gov.uk](mailto:GarethDavid.Thomas@Wales.gov.uk)), Research Service.

**See also:**

- Research Service, **Unemployment Briefing October 2013**
- Office for National Statistics, **Regional Labour Market Statistics, October 2013**
- **NOMIS – Official Labour Market Statistics**

View our **full range of publications** on the Assembly website: [assemblywales.org/research](http://assemblywales.org/research)

We welcome your comments. These should be sent to:  
**Research Service, National Assembly for Wales, Cardiff, CF99 1NA** or e-mailed to [Research.Service@wales.gov.uk](mailto:Research.Service@wales.gov.uk)  
**Enquiry Number: 13/2071**