

# Our national mission: a transformational curriculum – proposals for a new legislative framework

## Consultation response form

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Responses should be returned by **25 March 2019** to:

Curriculum Reform Legislation Team  
Curriculum and Assessment Division  
The Education Directorate  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ

or completed electronically and sent to:

e-mail: CurriculumReformLegislation@gov.Wales

## Our national mission: a transformational curriculum – proposals for a new legislative framework

You can find out how we will use the information you provide by reading the privacy notice in the consultation document.

As a key part of our education reforms, our proposals aim to reset our approach to the curriculum and put Wales at the forefront of what a modern, forward-looking curriculum should look like.

These proposals are about better enabling a forward-looking, pupil-centred and practitioner-led approach.

**Question 1** – Do you agree with our approach to legislating for the new curriculum structure?

<b>Yes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Don't know</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Please give your reasons and/or suggestions for improvement:

HEFCW is content for the Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) component of the curriculum to be re-named International Languages. However, we are concerned that International Languages will not be provided for specifically in primary legislation
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**Question 2** – Do you agree we should impose a duty on schools and funded nursery settings to provide a curriculum to help most learners to reach, or go beyond the Achievement Outcomes set by the school and to progress children along the continuum for the Progression Steps in accordance with their educational development?

<b>Yes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Don't know</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Please give your reasons and/or suggestions for improvement:

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**Question 3** – What actions should the headteacher and governing body take to satisfy this duty?

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**Question 4** – What support would be required to enable schools to take those actions?

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**Question 5** – Do you agree that age-appropriate careers education and work-related education should cover the age range 3–16, in line with the AoLEs?

<b>Yes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Don't know</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Please give your reasons:

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**Question 6** – Do you agree with making age and developmentally appropriate RSE compulsory for 3–16 years?

<b>Yes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Don't know</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Please give your reasons:

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**Question 7** – Do you agree with the proposed changes to the guidance-making power so that it is designed to secure that RSE is provided in a way that is age and developmentally appropriate to the children receiving it?

<b>Yes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Don't know</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Please give your reasons:

**Question 8** – Do you agree with our proposals to make RSE optional for learners in sixth forms?

**Question 9** – Do you agree with the proposed approach to RE?

<b>Yes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Don't know</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Please give your reasons:

**Question 10** – Do you agree with our proposals to make RE optional for learners in sixth forms?

<b>Yes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Don't know</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Please give your reasons:

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**Question 11** – Should the right to withdraw from RE and RSE be retained?

<b>Yes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Don't know</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Please give your reasons:

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**Question 12** – If the right to withdraw is to be retained, should it remain with the parent (parent includes those with parental responsibility or those who have care of the child)?

<b>Yes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Don't know</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If yes, please give your reasons. If no, please give you reasons and suggest alternative arrangements:

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**Question 13** – If the right to withdraw is removed, what alternative, if any, should be in its place?

What alternative arrangements, if any, would you put in place?

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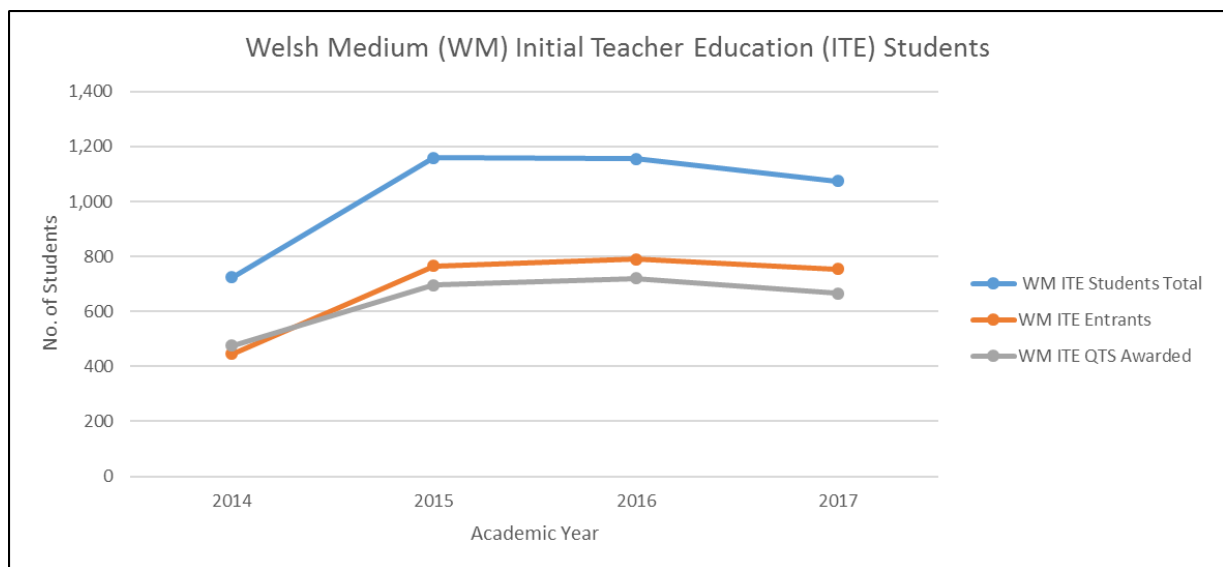
**Question 14** – What are your views on the proposed approach for ensuring that the learning and teaching of Welsh is an integral component of the curriculum for Wales?

The positive impact on Welsh Government's long-term aim of <i>Cymraeg 2050: A million Welsh speakers</i> is strongly evidenced in these proposals which focus on the Welsh language.
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We welcome the compulsory Welsh language element of the new curriculum for 3 to 16 year olds as proposed in *Successful Futures*. There is widespread evidence that engaging with different languages at a young age normalises the ability to become bilingual and to learn other languages. This change to legislation should also increase the number of students who are capable of either completing part of their HE course through the medium of Welsh, or completing Welsh language Initial Teacher Education (ITE). Both of these are essential to enable Wales to meet the 2050 target for Welsh speakers.

The replacement of the Welsh first and second language programmes of study with a continuum of learning should progressively increase the number of individuals who identify as Welsh speakers. Due to the low number of speakers who consider Welsh as a second language and do not identify as Welsh speakers as identified in the *2013 Welsh second language review*, a change in policy to meet *Cymraeg 2050* is appropriate. We agree with the proposal to establish a clear definition of skill levels and make these clear to learners, parents and employers. This should capture the Welsh language journey taken by all pupils and encourage continual development into the workplace as an employability skill. These two proposals should increase the numbers of students who are able to undertake at least part of their studies through the medium of Welsh in higher education.

HEFCW considers that ensuring the appropriate number of Welsh language teachers will be a challenge under current recruiting levels. Incoming teachers will need to be properly supported throughout their ITE courses at higher education institutions and in the workplace to meet the Welsh language requirements. As demonstrated below, the number of students awarded qualifying teacher status in Welsh medium has declined since 2016. It will be important to reverse this trend in the context of *Cymraeg 2050*.



Initiatives such as the Welsh Language Competency certificate for teachers coordinated by the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol provide an opportunity for students completing their PGCE through the medium of Welsh to demonstrate their ability in the context of learning and teaching and encourage progression within the profession.

**Question 15** – What are your views on the legislative proposals to enable the new assessment arrangements?

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**Question 16** – Do you agree with the proposed approach outlined for evaluating the effectiveness of curriculum and assessment arrangements?

<b>Yes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Don't know</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Please give your reasons:

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**Question 17** – What are your views on the proposed approach to the publication of learner assessment data and any risks you foresee?

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**Question 18** – Do you agree with our approach for the RIA?

<b>Yes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Don't know</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Please give your reasons and whether there is anything else you think we should take account of:

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**Question 19** – Do you agree with our approach for the impact assessments? We would particularly value your view on the proposed impacts on groups with protected characteristics.

<b>Yes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Don't know</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Please give your reasons:

**Question 20** – We would like to know your views on the effects that the proposals would have on the Welsh language, specifically on:

- i) opportunities for people to use Welsh
- ii) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

Supporting comments

HEFCW's view is that the proposals will have primarily positive effects on increasing opportunities for people to use the Welsh language throughout the curriculum. We welcome the alignment of this approach with the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2017 for a prosperous Wales. Through these proposals, we expect that the Welsh language will become embedded in the curriculum and that teachers and pupils will have the opportunity to interchangeably teach and learn bilingually.

**Question 21** – Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy could be formulated or changed so as to have:

- i) positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language
- ii) no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Supporting comments

The expectation for institutions to self-evaluate progress their progress with new accountability will be a challenge in the development phase of the new curriculum. Additional support for English-medium schools to identify the correct levels of Welsh medium application and to meet the Welsh language requirements should be reviewed and look at whether partnerships between schools could facilitate initial gaps.



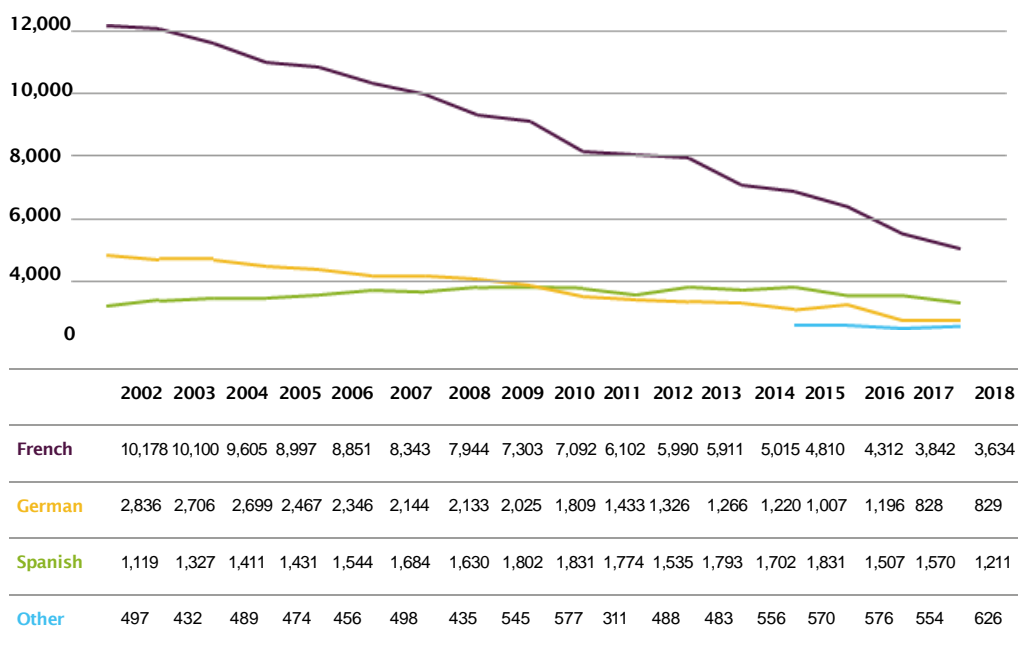
**Question 22** – We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.

HEFCW is content for the Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) component of the curriculum to be re-named International Languages. However, we are concerned that International Languages will not be provided for specifically in primary legislation. This means that inconsistencies and gaps in provision pan-Wales might emerge, as a result of schools being allowed to make decisions on whether to teach International languages, and the extent to which these will be taught.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-47285067>

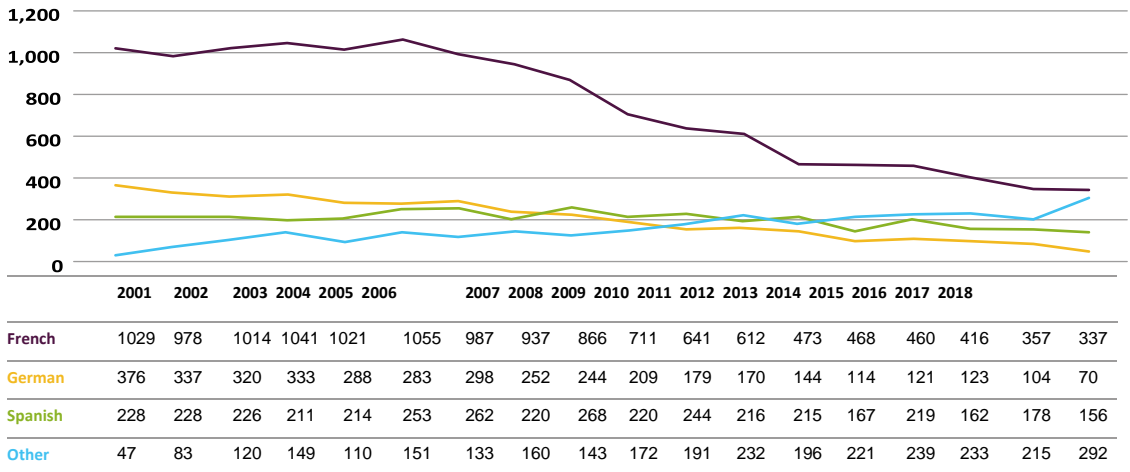
In doing so, this could increase the risk of decline in entry numbers to Modern Foreign Languages, adding to the 57% fall in GCSE language entries in Wales since 2002, as reported in [Language Trends Wales 2018](#). The report identifies that MFL is increasingly marginalised within the school curriculum in Wales.

**FIGURE 1: GCSE MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE ENTRIES FOR WALES, 2002-2018**



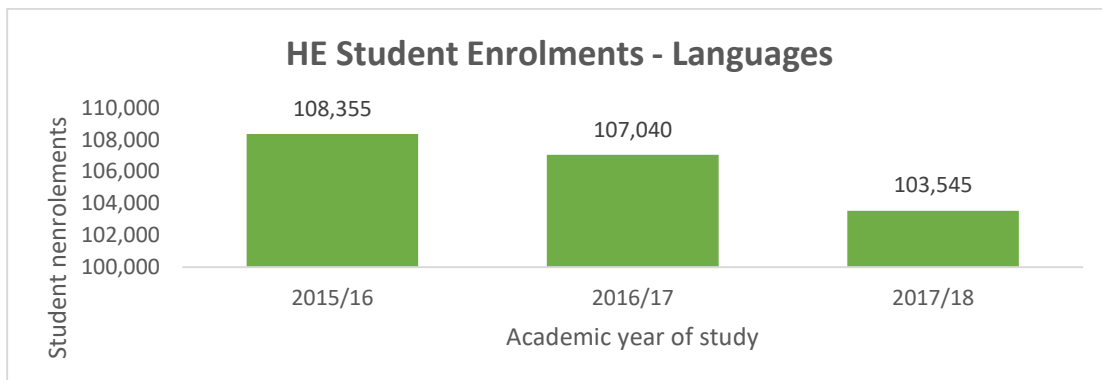
The table below, taken from [Language Trends Wales 2018](#), (p37), also shows a 50% decline in A level entries since 2001. This is attributed to, amongst other reasons, the low number of pupils progressing from MFL at GCSE level. The report highlights that MFL, as a subject choice at sixth form, reduced by 29% during 2018 compared to 20% in 2017, and that in over a third of schools there are no pupils taking MFL. This has a direct impact on the number of students progressing to higher education.

FIGURE 3: A LEVEL MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE ENTRIES WALES, 2001-2018



[https://wales.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/language\\_trends\\_wales\\_2018.pdf](https://wales.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/language_trends_wales_2018.pdf)

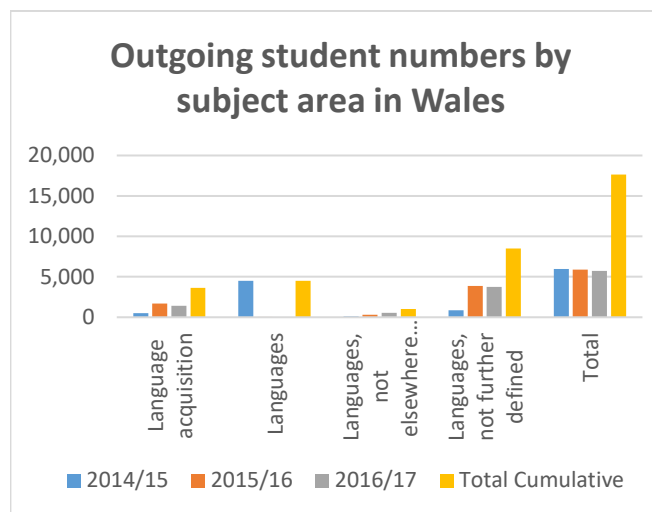
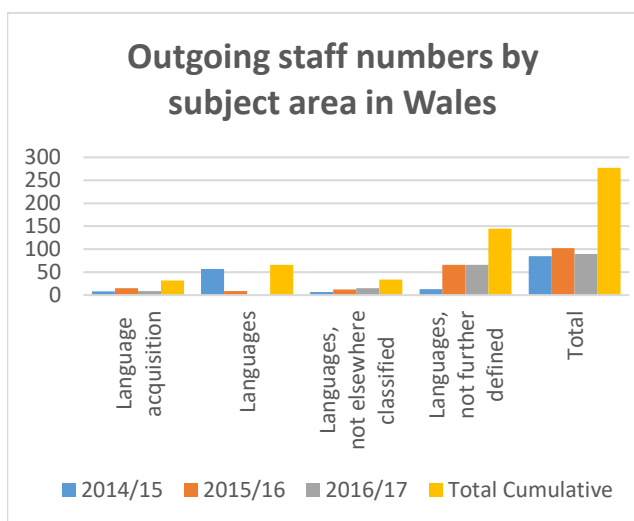
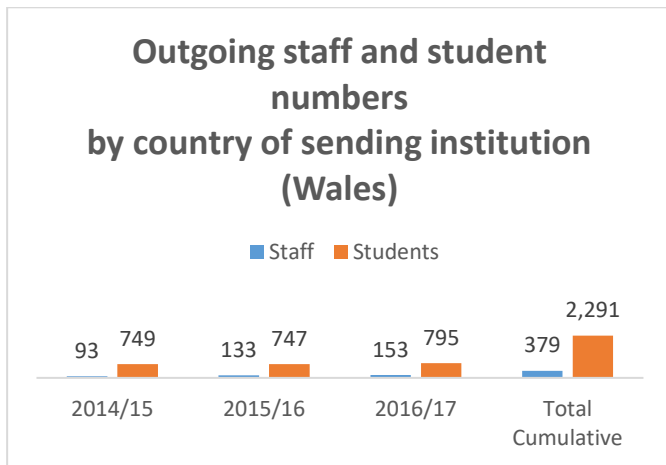
The trend continues for Higher Education (HE) Student Enrolments onto MFL, with The Higher Education Statistics Agency, (HESA), reporting a 4.5% decline between 2015/16 - 2017/18.



<https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/17-01-2019/sb252-higher-education-student-statistics/subjects#>

The 2017 Language Trends survey found that there are just one or two full time (FT) teachers in 64% of secondary school MFL departments, and 36% have just one FT teacher.

The Higher Education statistics data tables 2014/15 to 2016/17 below, provides data for the Mobility of Individuals on the Erasmus Plus programme within Europe. This shows an increase in the total number of outgoing staff and students in Welsh Higher Education institutions, and language related projects, and suggests a growing demand in higher education.

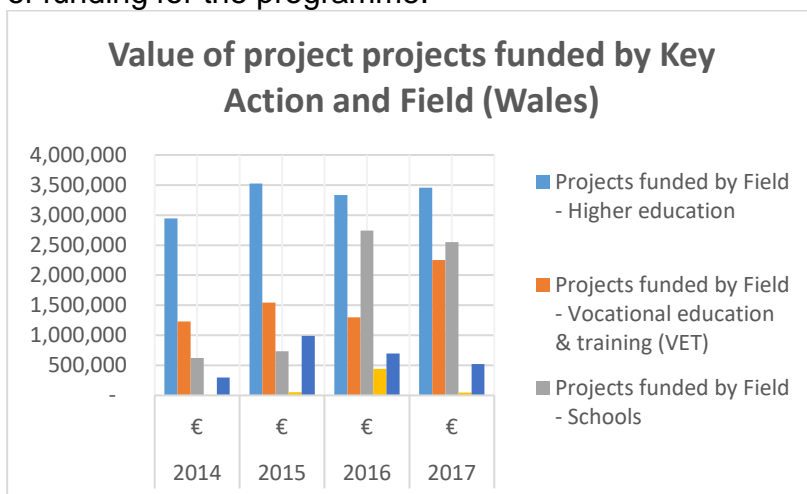


<https://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/statistics>

In the fact sheet, Wales, Erasmus plus reported that of the €27.6m mobility budget in Wales 2014-18, the Erasmus+ programme supported 52 mobility projects in higher education, at a cost of €15.9m.

<https://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/results-and-statistics#factsheets>

In comparison to other funded projects, Higher education receives the greatest allocation of funding for the programme.



<https://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/statistics>

There were nearly 25,000 incoming Erasmus students in 2017, compared to 15,600 outgoing Erasmus students in the same year to partner countries, (p28). This gap has decreased by 2% from the previous year and 8% from 2014, and reflects a growing trend.

<https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/4e5c3e1c-1f0b-11e9-8d04-01aa75ed71a1>

This has significant consequences for the higher education sector, which functions in a national and international environment. A drop in student numbers entering modern foreign languages may impact on graduate employability in a global market. A decline in the pipeline of students progressing in MFL might also influence the financial viability of MFL provision, and the sustainable supply of potential teaching staff at all levels, including HE.

Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here: