Widening Participation in Education and Training

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Content

- background information
- some facts
- context in Wales – various reports
- Colleges key role in widening participation
- impact of economic situation
- what needs to be done

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- representative body for all FE colleges/institutions in Wales

- services include

  - raising profile of colleges
  - developing and responding to policy
  - pay negotiations
  - networks, seminars and conferences
  - consultancy
  - quality & standards

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Colleges in Wales: Broad distinction between the course offer of different types of colleges

College type	Course offer and age of Students
19 general further education and tertiary colleges	Offer a wide range of vocational, academic and professional courses for full time and part time students of all ages (includes Merthyr Tydfil College, Univ of Glamorgan)
One sixth form college	Offer mainly full-time courses for students aged 16-19 although increasingly offering a wider variety of vocational courses.
Two land-based colleges	Offer full and part time courses for 16-19s and adults in these specialist vocational areas.
One specialist FE designated institution	Makes provision for part-time adults; some full-time residential.
Two specialist FE institutions	Make provision for adults, often part-time

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Uniqueness of FE Colleges

- students 14-90+
- full-time and part-time
- academic, vocational and work-based
- entry level up to post-graduate level
- leisure courses
- courses tailored to needs of industry
- second chance

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Widening participation and increasing access has always been central to the mission of FE colleges in Wales

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College W

- a wide variety of education and training to people and organisations
- aimed at school leavers or people who want to learn new trades, pursue employment opportunities or increase career and job prospects
- others may be looking to return to education after a break or to develop new practical skills, pastimes or hobbies

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College X

- aims to be a truly inclusive college with courses that appeal to people of all ages and interests

- “We believe that these courses will be attractive to all learners, whether you are a 16-year-old school leaver seeking initial qualifications or you are already employed but want to improve your career prospects”

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College Y

- “whatever your background, interests or ability, Coleg Z has something to offer you… Each campus offers successful routes to higher education or employment”
- “we offer a wide range of academic and vocational courses in a variety of subjects. If you're undecided we have experienced staff of high quality that will help you make the right choice”
- “whatever your educational and training needs we can point you in the right direction”

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College Z

- “the College will continue the policy of offering a comprehensive curriculum that incorporates both start-up learning chances and opportunities for the development of higher, technical and professional skills”
- “we believe that we have a critical contribution to make to the process of economic and social development in the local area. We make that general contribution by helping individuals achieve their goals”

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Social inclusion

- research conducted a few years ago showed that 37% of students lived in areas considered economically and socially deprived
- Association of Colleges in England showed that 26.1% of 16-19 year olds and 26.1% of 19+ learners drawn from 15% of most deprived wards
- Colleges work hard to attract learners with no formal qualifications

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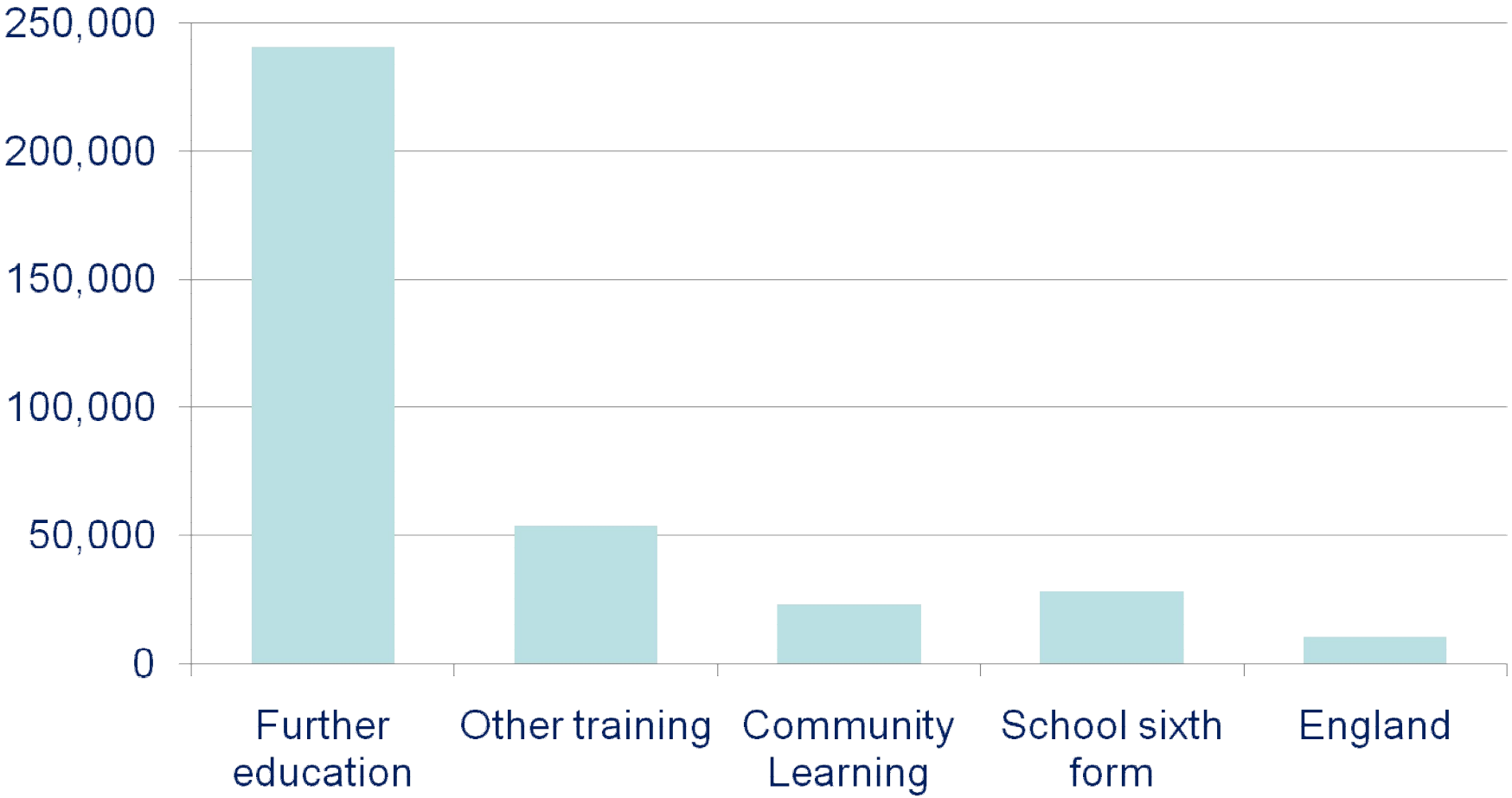
Number of post-16 learners (outside higher education) in Wales – where they attend 2006/07



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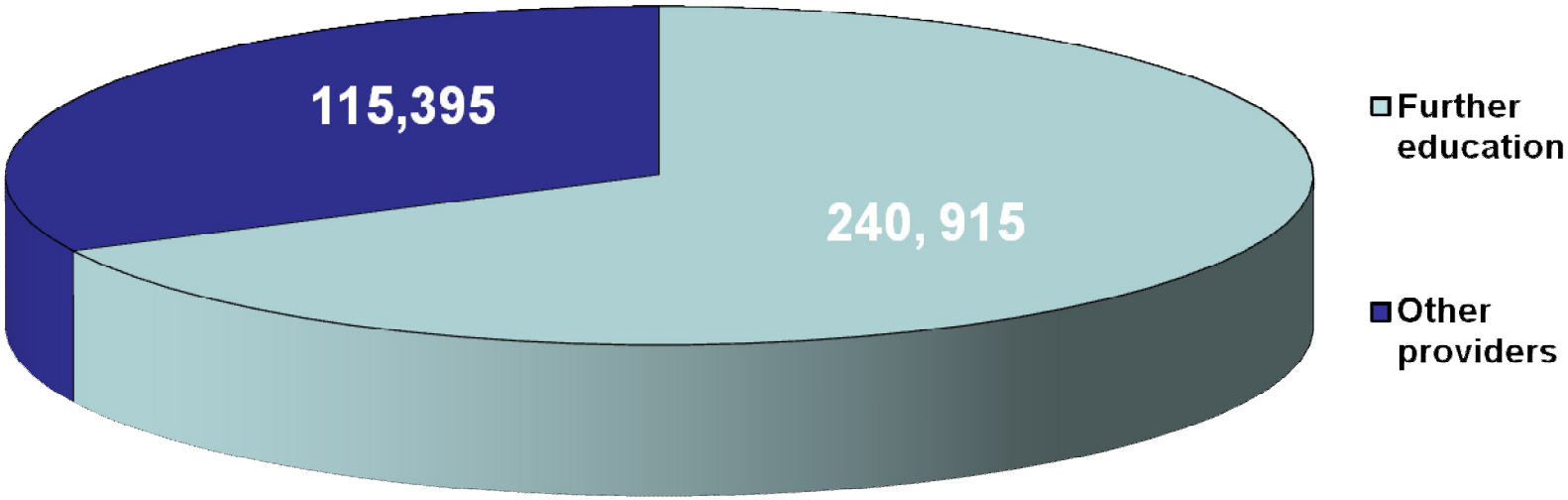
Number of post-16 learners in Wales 2006/07



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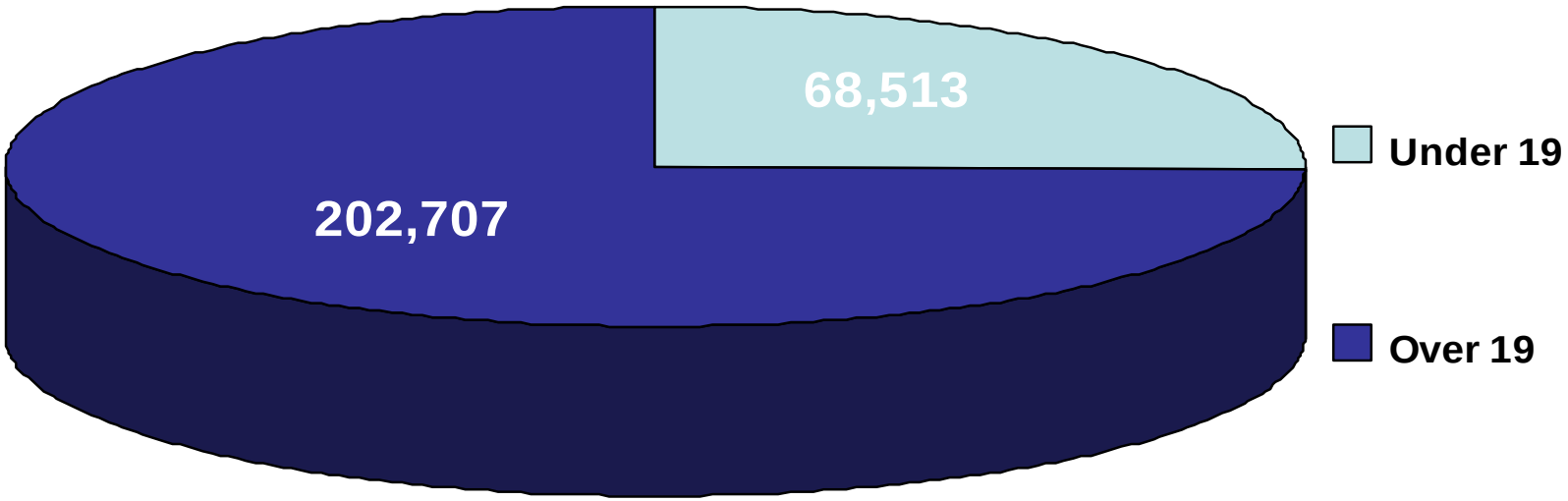
Proportion of Learners in FE by Age Group in 2005/06



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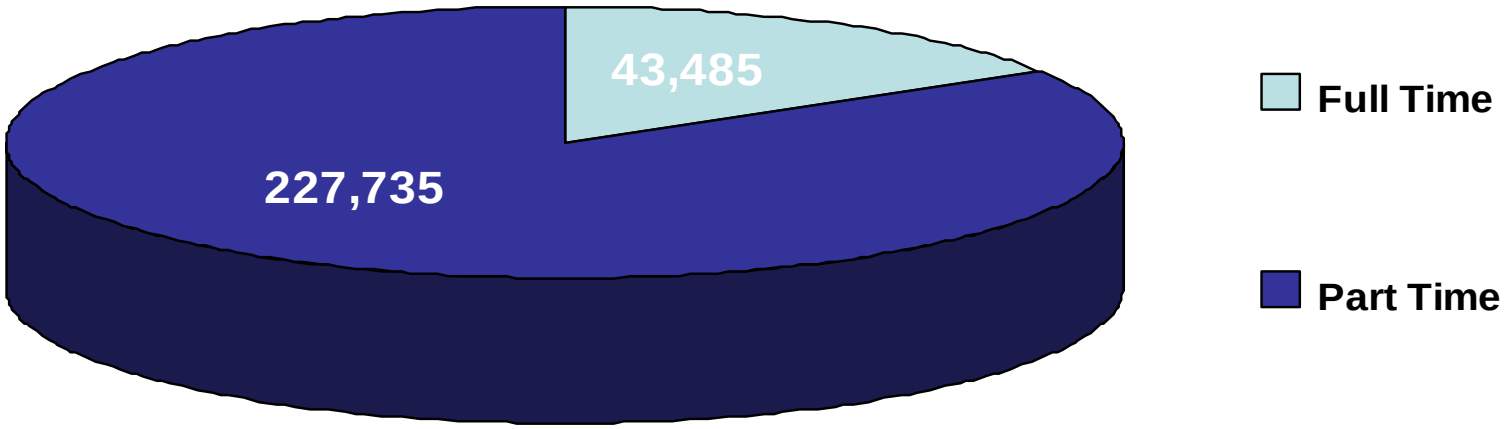
Proportion of Learners in FE in Full Time or Part Time Education in 2005/06



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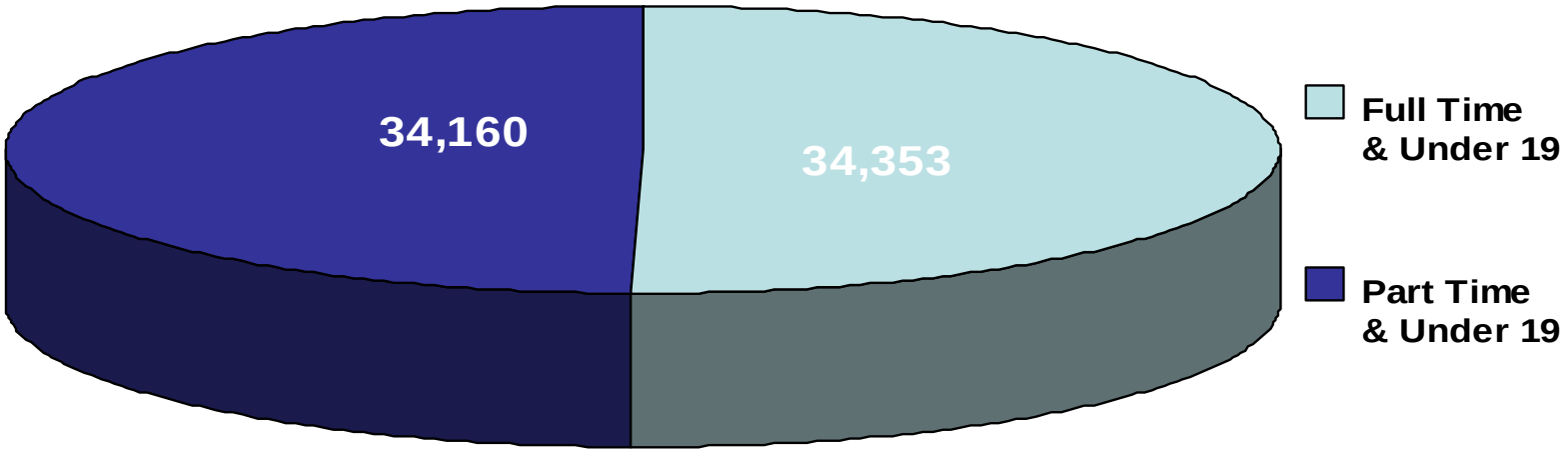
Proportion of 16-19 Learners in FE in Part Time and Full Time Courses in 2005/06



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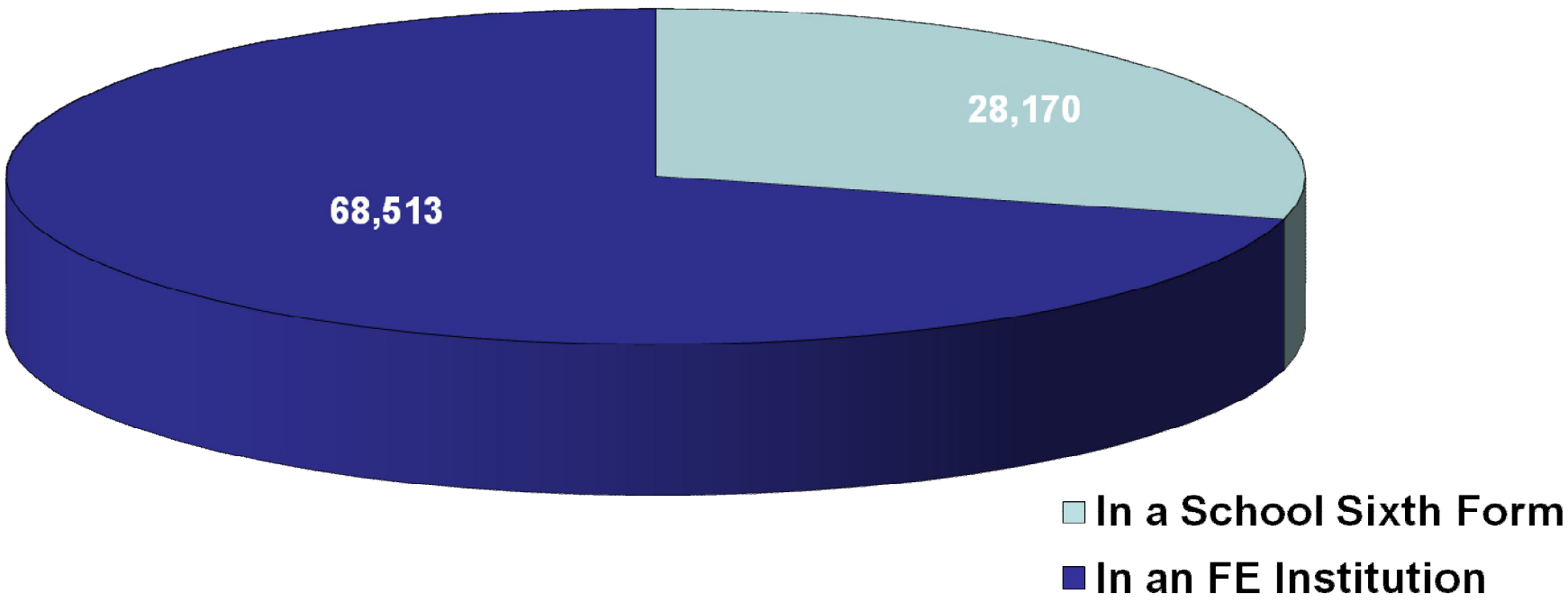
Number of 16-19 Learners in FE Institutions and Schools Sixth Forms (including secondary & independent schools) in 2005/06



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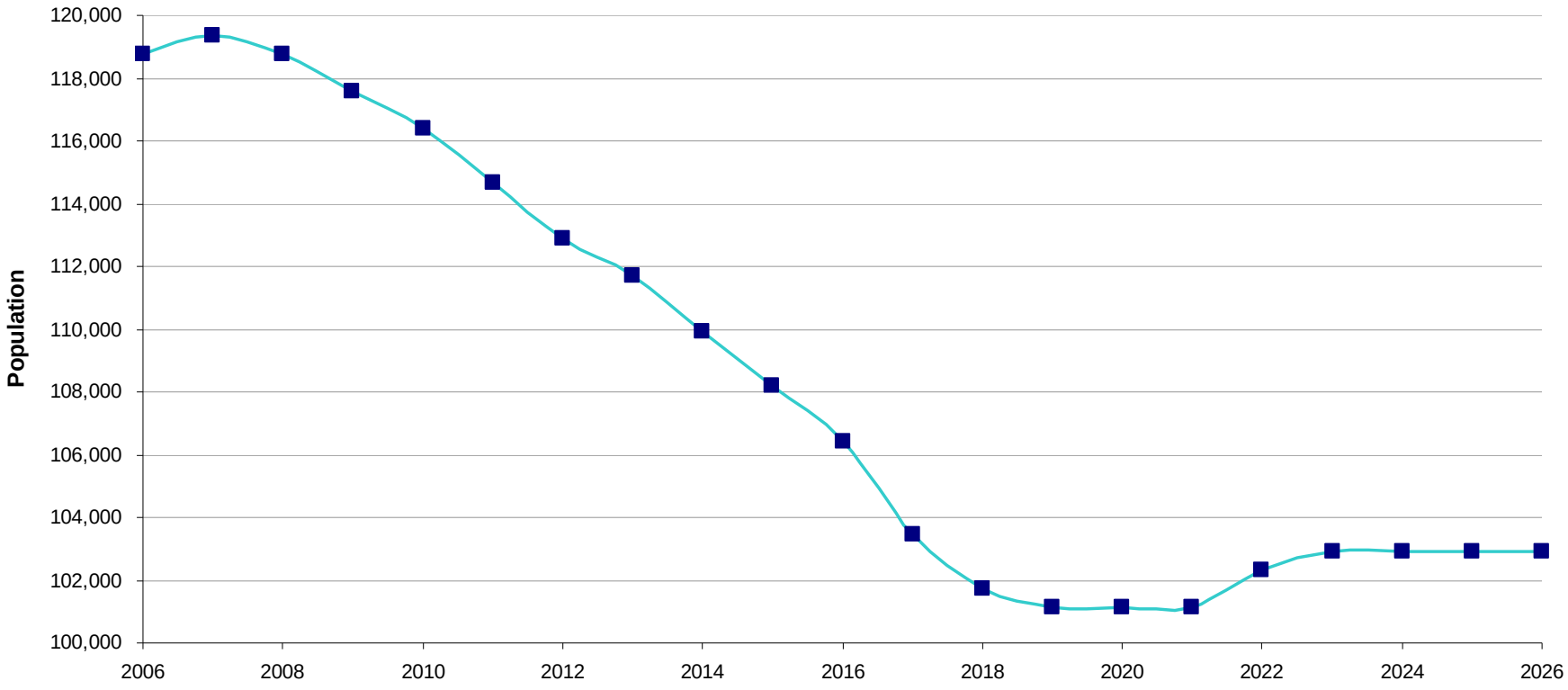
Projected 16-18 Population in Wales to 2026



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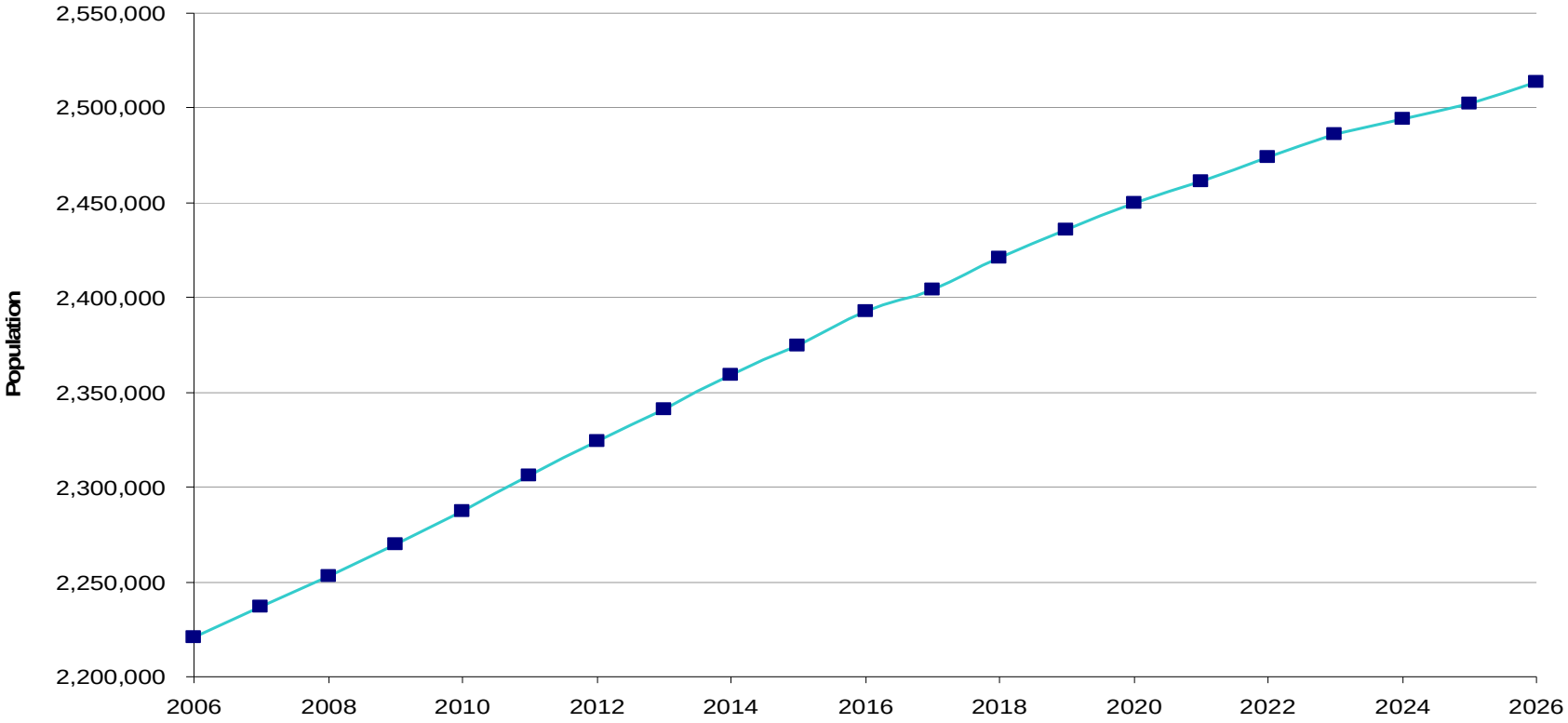
Projected 19+ Population in Wales to 2026



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Current population in Wales – 30 June 2007

- 2,980,000 (increase of 14,100)
- 19% aged 0 – 15
- 21% of retirement age (60 for men, 65 for women)
- Dependency ratio [i.e. children up to 15 + those of retirement age divided by those of working age] = 657 dependents per 1,000 working pop. (609 for UK as a whole)]

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So what?

- working age population in Wales of 1,192,000
- 436,110 in education or training (incl higher educ)
- of these, about 35,000 are of retirement age
- thus 400,000 of working age in some form of publicly funded education and training
- approximately 33.5%
- in this context what does widening participation mean?

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Various recent reports

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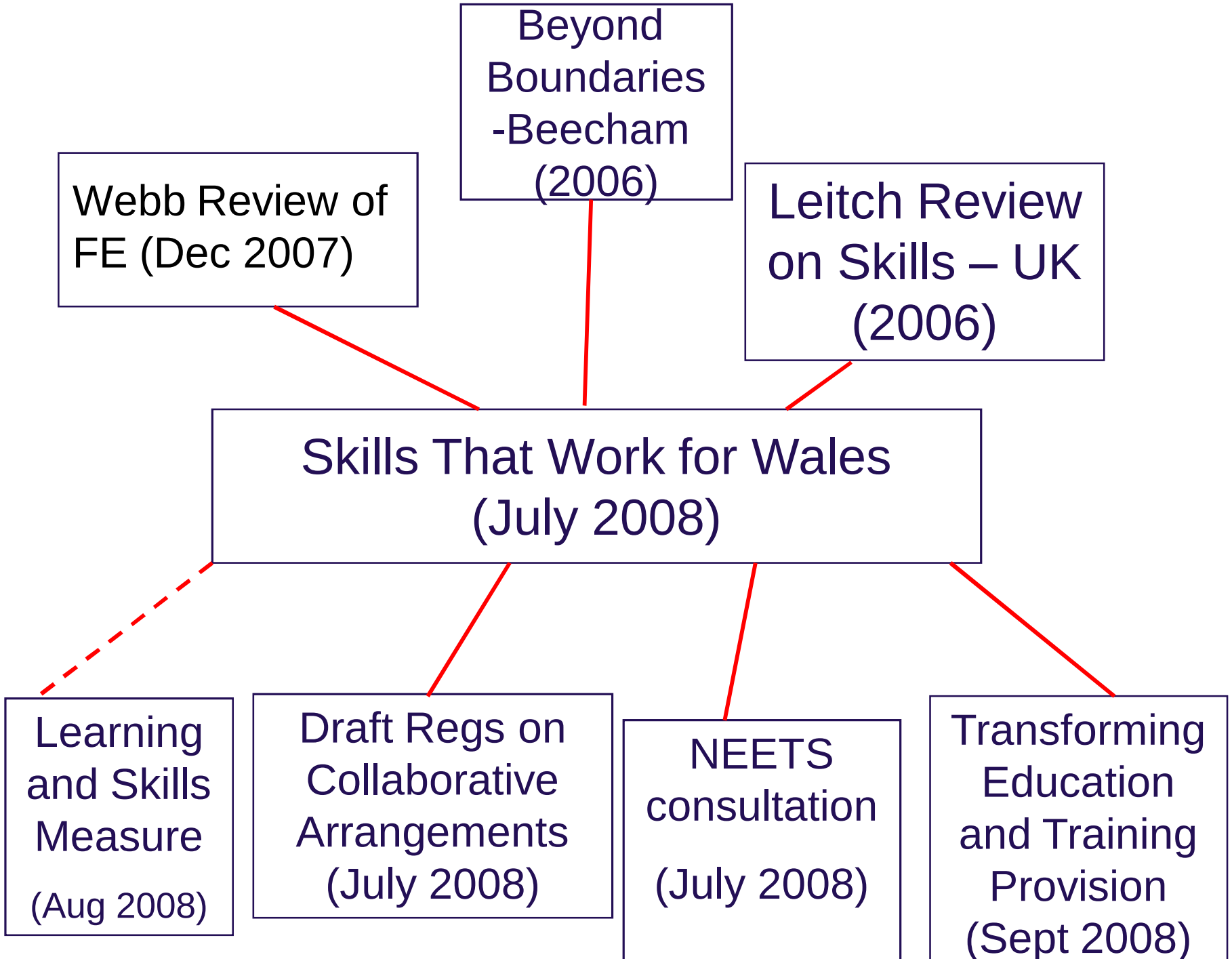
Beyond Boundaries -Beecham (2006)
Webb Review of FE (Dec 2007)
Leitch Review on Skills – UK (2006)
Skills That Work for Wales (July 2008)
Learning and Skills Measure (Aug 2008)
Draft Regs on Collaborative Arrangements (July 2008)
NEETS consultation (July 2008)
Transforming Education and Training Provision (Sept 2008)

Skills That Work for Wales Action Plan

‘Widening participation is at the heart of social and economic regeneration’ (8.40)

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Employees by occupational group

Increasing

- managers and senior officials
- professional occupations
- associate professional and technical
- personal services

Decreasing

- administrative and secretarial
- skilled trades
- process plant and machine operatives

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Survey of basic skills; highest level reached
(*Words Talk, Numbers Count*)

	Literacy	**Numeracy**
Entry level 1	4%	7%
Entry level 2	3%	20%
Entry level 3	18%	26%
Level 1	37%	25%
Level 2 and above	38%	22%

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Basic skills

- 440,000 (25% of 16-65 year olds) do not have level 1 literacy skills
- 990,000 (53%) do not have level 1 numeracy skills
- prime target - the 316,800 (18%) with entry level 3 skills

NB Wales several percentage points worse off than England

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Targets

By 2010,

- **80%** of working age to have reached at least level 1 literacy skills
- **55%** of working age to have reached at least level 1 numeracy skills
- support *Words Talk, Numbers Count* with £40m over three years

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General/vocational qualifications: linked to increase in wages

	General		Vocational	
	♂	♀	♂	♀
Level 5	10-28%	21-26%	6 – 9%	1- 5%
Level 4	10-28%	21-26%	6 – 9%	1- 5%
Level 3	15-18%	18-23%	6 – 9%	1- 5%
Level 2	12-21%	10-19%	0	0
Level 1	-	-	0	0
Entry	-	-		

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Research in Northern Ireland by Harmon and Walker (2000) showed that in Great Britain an extra year in education beyond the age of 16 adds 8% to male and 10% to female earnings

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Leitch – wider impact of skills

- important links between skills and wider social outcomes such as health, crime and social cohesion
- offender less likely to have qualifications – more than 50% of offenders have no qualifications compared with 15 % of population

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Skills That Work for Wales

- access to training is unequal…managers more likely to receive off-the-job training than workers in skilled trades or transport or machine operatives
- older workers less likely to be trained than older workers (70% of work force already of working age)
- want to ensure that employees of all levels, of all ages and in every sector can benefit from learning opportunities (Para 7.02)

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Skills That Work for Wales: Some key points

- responsibility for improving skills shared between Government, employers, individuals and learning providers
- new Sector Priorities Fund to deliver strategic learning priorities identified by employers
- increase number of modern apprentices
- encourage FE and HE to work with employers
- focus on basic skills
- work closely with employers in development and delivery of 14-19 pathways

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Some key points

- strengthens voice of employers at heart of Government through new UK Commission for Employment and Skills Commissioner for Wales representing Welsh interests
- Commissioner will chair Wales Employment and Skills Board – which replaces Joint Skills Advisory Panel and Wales Employment Advisory Panel
- gives employers clear role through SSCs to ensure needs of business inform new vocational qualifications

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Key Point

Ministers in their foreword state that ‘further education institutions must be key drivers of skills’.

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Sector Priorities Fund

- introduced in phases

- ‘we will test our approach from autumn 2008 onwards, initially with FE institutions who want to work with us on a voluntary basis’ (Para 7.27)

- Fund rises to £20m in 2010 and £40m by 2011 - but where will this funding come from – presumably from FE budgets?

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STWFW

- DCELLS will consult on a fees policy in 2009. Who should pay for what? (Para 3.13)
- what is appropriate balance - employer, individual, WAG?
- relaunch Skillbuild as programme explicitly focused on employment as a key outcome (Para 5.32)
- coherent system of financial support for learners on WBL programmes by Spring 2009 (6.11)

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Transforming Education and Training Provision in Wales

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Model 1: Consideration of 16-19 provision

- close but informal collaboration of school, FE institutions and WBL providers
- clusters of schools working collaboratively by joint governance
- governing bodies of FE institutions and schools establishing voluntary collaborations
- removal or transfer of a school sixth form to a suitable alternative or to a general FE institution or to a FE institution to create a tertiary college

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Model 2: Work-Based Learning (WBL) – Future Provision Development

WAG intends to increase the availability of WBL involving FE institutions, training providers and employers for the next tendering exercise in 2010-2013 but reduce the number of contracts.

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Model 3: FE Institution and Higher Education Institution Models

WAG expects FE and HE institutions to consider their missions and their strategic contribution. Possible arrangements might include:

- informal collaborative arrangements between colleges, between universities, or between colleges and universities to provide post-16 learners with an entitlement to range of options '*above and beyond provision provided by a single institution'* eg skill specialisms and skills centres of excellence and development of sectoral specialist progression route

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Model 3: FE Institution and Higher Education Institution Models

- formalised learning partnerships of FE institutions using the collaboration regulations to allow for the expansion of programme range and better links with industry
- FE mergers to improve efficiency and effectiveness of FE provision within an area
- mergers of FE and HE institutions to improve learner benefits. Such mergers must not compromise the core mission of each partner.

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Timetable

- may be some funding to support proposals.

  Two stages

- Strategic Outline Programme for transformation to be submitted by **15 January 2009**

- after consultation with WAG officials, Strategic Outline Case should be submitted by the **end of June 2009** or, in exceptional cases, by the **end of September 2009**

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Model 4: Adult Community Learning Delivery

Under this model, nine ACL Partnerships will be established for planning and funding WAG funded provision

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Reconfiguration of ACL

- create Adult Community Partnerships for the delivery of provision, building on examples of good practice
- phased introduction over two years beginning autumn 2009
- funding of activities through new arrangements will be introduced more widely from autumn 2011
- model will be reviewed within context of any wider reconfiguration of education and training arising from Transformation

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Economic downturn: Implications?

- will WAG have to change its key strategies on skills?
- if unemployment increases, will there be more demand for training?
- how equipped will we be to respond quickly?
- what is the key role of sector skills councils?
- should colleges and other providers be better funded to meet this demand?

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Implications for training

- many organisations when facing economic uncertainty limit amount of spending
- particularly true of HR and training spend
- this can actually be more costly to organisation as by stopping /reducing level of investment in employees can create problems, which include:
  - lowered confidence and motivation by employees towards organisation, potentially leading to higher staff turnover
  - act as warning sign to employees about stability of organisation regarding future of organisation and employee
  - potential skills that could aid the organisation through challenging periods not used due to the lack of investment

(personnel Today, July 2008)

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Advice on making yourself recession-proof

- check that your own qualifications are up to scratch - could you benefit from a refresher course?
- ensure that you are aligning your training to the clients' needs to ensure they are getting the maximum return on investment
- demonstrate the impact of training on efficiency and effectiveness, and help employers monitor that impact
- short courses can offer opportunities for individuals to build credit towards qualification, building confidence in capability of provider and making offer more attractive to participants
- training needed to build or maintain technical capacity, support specific organisational developments or address identified areas of weakness most likely to take preference over long-term solutions or peripheral training

Verity Gough

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‘Don’t worry about the people you train who leave, worry about those you don't train who stay’

David Pardey, ILM

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Impact on FE colleges

- will credit crunch will have same impact on FE colleges as previous economic downturn?
- early 1990s recession saw boom in further education, as unemployed and those concerned about losing jobs turned to local colleges to up-skill, reskill or take leisure courses
- Return to Learn and Access to Higher Education courses led to massive expansion in adult learning
- with unemployment again climbing, with government focus on the 14-to-19 cohort and on "demand-led" skills training, will colleges be able to take advantage if rising unemployment leads to rise in demand for learning?

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What colleges need to do: views from some principals

- need to be ‘light on their feet to cope with changing demand in a fast-moving 12 months’
- perceived wisdom that recession leads to people being interested in returning to education and gaining higher level of qualifications to stay competitive in jobs market
- need to ramp up the offer to make sure options provide people with training for different jobs

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“Areas that might get hit are apprenticeship programmes where employers don't want to release people for training,…We have to look at the industries that have been affected by the downturn and look at putting on more provision in those areas."

Joe Clancy, Guardian, Sept 2008

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To conclude

- widening participation will continue to be central to vision of FE colleges
- need to keep up-to-date with rapid changing economic context
- possession of available skills will continue to be important
- importance of close cooperation between colleges and other providers, employers, SSCs and WAG
- transformation agenda is central

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Change

Staying put is the highest risk strategy of all'

John Harvey-Jones

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Change contd

Some people change when they see the light; others when they feel the heat

Caroline Schroeder

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