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## Sustainable Development Indicators, 2008

The first edition of an 'In Your Pocket' booklet on Sustainable Development Indicators for Wales is published today, providing measures of everyday concerns including health, housing, jobs, crime, education and our environment. This statistical release presents a summary table from the booklet, followed by some background information on the framework of indicators.

The booklet is similar to the [UK Sustainable Development Indicators](#) booklet published in July 2008. The Welsh version presents comparisons with the UK indicators, where available.

The indicators are first and foremost intended to communicate and highlight progress in key issues for sustainable development and for the priority areas, and along with other evidence help to identify where action is required. There are plans to continue to update the 'In Your Pocket' booklet annually and it is hoped that over time the data will help to monitor progress towards sustainable development in Wales.

To accompany the booklet, an online version including some extra information, such as Local Authority breakdowns where available, will be published on the Statistics website in early autumn 2008.




































The summary table of indicators shown on the following two pages indicate progress since a reference year for Wales and for a comparable region, usually the UK. Notes and explanations for the table are provided in the 'Notes' and 'Key Quality Information' sections.







































In summary, the table shows that:

- 15 of 39 indicator assessments show a clear improvement;
- 12 of 39 indicator assessments show little or no change;
- 6 of 39 indicator assessments show clear deterioration;
- 6 of 39 indicator assessments have insufficient or no comparable data.

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Indicator		UK Framework Indicator	Progress since reference year	Traffic light for comparable region
1. Economic output		✓	 2000	 UK
2. Social justice		✓	 1999/02	 N/A
3. Biodiversity conservation	Priority species status		 2002	 UK
	Priority habitat status		 2002	
4. Ecological footprint			 N/A	 N/A
5. Employment		✓	 2000	 UK
6. Resource efficiency			 N/A	 N/A
7. Resource use		✓	 N/A	 UK
8. Electricity from renewable sources			 2000	 UK
9. Housing			 1998	 N/A
10. Accessibility			 N/A	 England
11. Crime	Vehicles and burglary	✓	 2001-02	 E & W
	Robbery	✓	 2001-02	
12. Childhood poverty		✓	 1999/02	 GB
13. Pensioner poverty		✓	 1999/02	 GB
14. Workless households		✓	 2000	 UK
15. Active community participation		✓	 2001	 E & W
16. Bird populations	Short term changes	✓	 2000	 UK
	Long term changes	✓	 N/A	

Indicator		UK Framework Indicator	Progress since reference year	Traffic light for comparable region
17. Ecological impacts of air pollution	Acidity	✓	 1999-01	 UK
	Nutrient nitrogen	✓	 1999-01	 UK
18. Air Quality	Urban		 1999	 UK
	Rural		 1999	 UK
19. River quality		✓	 2000	 E & W
20. Soil quality			 N/A	 N/A
21. Waste	Waste arisings by sector	✓	 1998-99	 N/A
	Waste arisings by disposal	✓	 1998-99	 UK
22. Household waste	Waste arisings		 1999-00	 UK
	Recycled or composted		 1999-00	 UK
23. Sustainable water resources management			 2001-02	 N/A
24. Mobility	Walking/cycling	✓	 1998/00	 GB
	Public transport use	✓	 1998/00	 GB
25. Greenhouse gas emissions		✓	 2000	 UK
26. Welsh language			 2000	 N/A
27. Education	Level 2	✓	 2000	 N/A
	Level 4	✓	 2000	 N/A
28. Health inequality	Infant mortality	✓	 2000	 N/A
	Life expectancy	✓	 1999-01	 GB
29. Benefit dependency			 2000	 N/A

## Notes

The numbers below refer to indicator numbers.

1. The UK Sustainable Development 'In Your Pocket' 2008 measures Gross Domestic Product.
2. The UK Sustainable Development 'In Your Pocket' 2008 report on pensioners and children, in low income households.
3. Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats is categorised as amber for Wales because both the number of habitats 'stable or improving' and the number of habitats 'declining' have increased from 2002 to 2005. The UK Sustainable Development 'In Your Pocket' 2008 assesses priority species status and habitat status together rather than separately.
9. The UK Sustainable Development 'In Your Pocket' 2008 measures houses below the decent homes standard.
10. The UK Sustainable Development 'In Your Pocket' 2008 measures perceived difficulty in access to key services.
11. The UK Sustainable Development 'In Your Pocket' 2008 makes assessments for the total number of crimes
16. The UK Sustainable Development 'In Your Pocket' 2008 makes assessments for different categories of birds (farmland, woodland, and seabird), all assessed as amber.
18. UK Sustainable Development 'In Your Pocket' 2008 assessments are shown for urban and rural ozone concentrations.
23. The UK Sustainable Development 'In Your Pocket' 2008 measures assessment of water availability in England and Wales.
27. The UK Sustainable Development 'In Your Pocket' 2008 measures 19 year-olds with level 2 qualifications and above.
28. The UK Sustainable Development 'In Your Pocket' 2008 measures infant mortality differences between socio economic groups.

## Key Quality Information

1. To highlight whether or not things are moving in the right or wrong direction, a set of 'traffic lights' is used:



= Clear improvement



= Little or no change



= Clear deterioration



= Insufficient or no comparable data

2. A tick in the second column indicates that this is an indicator within the UK's shared framework for sustainable development, "One future - different paths".
3. The text in the 'Progress since reference year' column indicates the reference year. N/A indicates that there is no comparison.

4. The text in the 'Traffic light for comparable region' column indicates the comparable region.
5. The first traffic light, for Wales, is determined by comparing the measure in the latest year available with its position in an earlier base year of 2000, or the nearest year to 2000 where data is available. Between these two years the measure may have deteriorated and then improved or vice versa. However, the traffic light only reflects the overall change in the measure from the base year to its latest position and does not reflect fluctuations during the intervening years.
6. The second traffic light shows progress against the indicator status for a wider region, normally the UK. This is taken from the UK Sustainable Development 'In Your Pocket' 2008 published by DEFRA where possible. The traffic light for the comparable region has been calculated using 1999, or the nearest year to 1999 where data is available, as the base year. This allows the user to identify how well Wales is doing individually and against progress in the UK (or occasionally progress at a GB level or an England and Wales level).
7. As a basic rule of thumb where an indicator measure has changed by less than 3 per cent, the traffic light has been set at amber, indicating little or no change. The choice of 3 per cent as the threshold is arbitrary but has proven to be helpful in deciding on the most appropriate traffic light. There are a few exceptions to this rule, where for example the indicator measure has been historically stable and/or almost at the level it can be expected to achieve. In such cases a smaller amount of change may be regarded as indicating an improvement or deterioration. In one or two cases the level of change may be greater than 3 per cent but the traffic light is nevertheless amber. This will apply where the limits of data collection imply that a larger percentage change is necessary for it to be regarded as showing a clear change. These rules are also adopted by DEFRA in the UK Sustainable Development 'In Your Pocket' and therefore allow the ease of comparisons.
8. Most of the data used to compile the indicators come from Government sources and are National Statistics. The 'In Your Pocket' booklet contains details of sources and notes for data relating to each indicator.

## **Background**

The UK Government and the Devolved Administrations in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland published in 2005 "One future - different paths" setting out the UK's shared framework for sustainable development. This confirmed that "the goal for sustainable development is to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life without compromising the quality of life of future generations".

The UK shared framework for sustainable development contains 20 'UK Framework indicators' of sustainable development, building on previous indicator sets used at a UK level. For the UK Government these are part of a wider set of 68 indicators, contained in their accompanying strategy document 'Securing the Future'.

Welsh Ministers have a duty under section 79 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 to make a scheme setting out how they propose to promote sustainable development in the exercise of their functions. The previous administration adopted in 2004 a Scheme for Sustainable Development as its overarching strategic framework. Amongst other things this committed the Welsh Assembly Government to "identify a small suite of high-level summary indicators to use as headline measures of progress towards sustainable development", and to "use a full indicator set, reflecting cultural, social, economic and environmental issues, to gauge progress towards sustainable development". The booklet therefore distinguishes between a small number of headline indicators of sustainable development, and the full suite of indicators that measure more specific issues related to sustainable development. The headline indicators, when considered collectively, are intended to give a high level view of progress towards sustainable development.