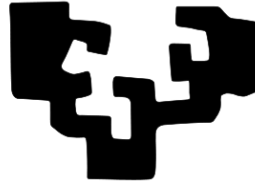


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# Welsh Nationalism: An Approach

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Grado: Traducción e interpretación

Curso: 2017/2018

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## Abstract

Combining both published and unpublished sources, in this work the nationalist movement in Wales is revisited. Welsh nationalism has showed a weak support in spite of having a culture and language of its own. We will try to understand its low impact through the analysis of certain aspects. First, we will establish the difference between Welsh nationalism and Welsh identity in order to prove that a sentiment of belonging to a certain place or culture does not always translate itself into a political one. We will continue with an analysis of the voting results of the General Elections and the Elections to the National Assembly for Wales. This data will show that in political terms nationalism fails to obtain more voters due to a duality of understanding Welsh identity. Later on, we will show Welsh economic situation and how the nationalist movement has created a discourse around it in the hope of reaching a certain kind of voter, one that feels neglected by the UK. Then we will explain the relationship between Wales and the rest of the UK and how it has pushed the rising of the nationalist movement. Finally, we will talk about language and culture, the key elements. Wales has been ensuring the continuity of them throughout the centuries. However, nowadays there are different ways of perceiving the Welsh language. Because of this the nationalist cause has not been able to reach all the people of this nation. We have seen that these aspects are resulting in a support focused on Welsh-speaking rural areas, isolated from the rest of the UK, where the feeling of abandon by Westminster is deeply rooted. Thus, creating an “ethnic” (cultural) nationalism that is unable to connect with all the regions of Wales due to a diversity of understanding what being Welsh means and how being part of the UK affects them.

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## 1. General introduction

In this project, we are going to research Welsh nationalism. The main reason why we have selected it is that Wales seems to have all the elements required to develop a strong nationalism and yet, when we look closely, it has not. In the following pages, we will try to do an analysis about it, in such depth as this project allows us. We will talk about Welsh history in order to establish the roots of this country, the formation of Welsh identity and the rise of the nationalist movement. Later on, we will focus on certain aspects that we think are key to understand the weakness of the nationalist cause.

We shall try to explain why Welsh nationalism is so weak, compared to Scottish nationalism, for example. In order to understand this, we have offered a background of Welsh history, their identity and their nationalism. We have used different sources (mainly books, thesis and online resources, as well as emails from Plaid Cymru and Cardiff University) in order to prove this and find those elements that play against the nationalist cause. That is why we have focused on political, economic, social and cultural aspects. After analysing all these elements, we have drawn a conclusion on the matter at hand. But first, we will start by giving certain details of nationalism throughout history.

We have to take into account that nationalism is, essentially, a contemporary phenomenon. Although the national trait is a cause for debate (Zabaltza, 2006, pp. 22-25), it is generally accepted that nationalism originates in a Europe full of revolutionary movements that seeks the construction of a liberal system. For instance, Gellner says that nationalism is a contemporary phenomenon, a consequence of 19<sup>th</sup> century liberalism (Gellner, 1997, pp. 175-182). Nationalism defines nation in very differential facts, in various manners and with different intensity, which are strategic and not essential. That is why we come across nationalisms that are based on language, ethnicity, territory, religion... If we think of Scottish nationalism, we see that Scotland has almost completely lost its original language and yet their claims are based on matters such as economy or citizens will. On the contrary, Welsh nationalism preserves its language, but its claims do not reach the levels that one might assume such a kind of nationalism should.

Our project is not a mere review of Welsh nationalism from an economic or political point of view. We want to focus on the linguistic matter, usually forgotten by historians

in spite of its importance (Zabaltza, 2006, pp. 11-12). In this way, it should be stressed that it is very difficult to correspond each language (there are at least 4,794 languages in the world) with a state. Moreover, most of these languages will end up disappearing before obtaining their own nation states (Zabaltza, 2006, pp. 63-64). Similarly, it has proven to be illusory the idea to unite in the same nation all territories that speak a certain language (Zabaltza, 2006, pp. 69-72). It is true that the possession of a language of their own favours the construction of a differential tradition. However, we know that nationalism does not always develop itself around language. There are authors that say that up until the revolutions of 1848, or even later, languages were not a central matter to nationalism. It is during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the 20<sup>th</sup> century when language becomes a political matter (Zabaltza, 2006, pp. 189-208).

We want to avoid certain simplistic interpretations of nationalism. We want to leave aside the cliché of a confrontation between a “civic nationalism” (originated in France) that is democratic, revolutionary, tolerant, and a nationalism that is intolerant, based on “ethnicity” (originated in Germany). The investigation of Herder’s thinking as well as the nation building of Germany and France prove that French nationalization was not as voluntary as it was believed, and German nationalism was not so based on ethnicity as expected. This is a deceiving division that sometimes has originated due to political interests (Zabaltza, 2006, pp. 189-208).

We will talk first about the history of Wales and the rising of Welsh identity. In the following section, we will explain more in depth (always taking into account the limits of this project) Welsh nationalism and its main political party, Plaid Cymru. To continue, we will explain certain aspects of Welsh nationalism: political, economic, cultural and social aspects.

Before going any further into this matter, I want to express my gratitude to Professor Xabier Zabaltza Pérez-Nievas, who has mentored this project. He has been essential to its development providing me with the bibliography required, being at my disposal at any moment and discussing certain matters in order to improve the final result. I also want to thank Luke Nicholas, Manager of Wales Governance Centre at Cardiff University, and Plaid Cymru, whose help providing me with more information about certain matters of Welsh nationalism has been crucial.

## 2. Historical introduction to Welsh identity

As we all know, Wales (*Cymru*, “the land of comrades”) is a country that is part of both the United Kingdom and Great Britain. Its language, Welsh (*Cymraeg*), belongs to the Brittonic branch of the Celtic languages, together with Breton and Cornish. Nowadays, around 600,000 people speak Welsh in Wales, that is to say, about 19% of its population. Welsh is also spoken by Welsh emigrants in England, Argentina, Canada and the USA. The Welsh capital city is Cardiff (*Caerdydd*).

Welsh history begins with the Roman conquest. This took place in AD 48. Before the arrival of the Romans, Wales was divided into tribes. During the conquest, there was some resistance but eventually the tribes accepted the authority of Rome (*The Story of Wales*, 2018).

During Roman times, Latin did not impose itself over Welsh but it had an impact on it, as new words were incorporated to the language. However, the presence of the Roman Empire did not always mean a constant contact with it and its culture. In much of the country, Romans had quite a small influence on people. This contributed to the preservation of both their language and their traditions. As the years passed, religion did also change with the arrival of Christianity. We do not have an exact date on when the Christianisation of Wales began but it was not until the fall of the Empire when Wales was fully Christianised. Although Pagan Romans did not have quite an impact on the Welsh people, Christianity did. Traditionally, Welsh identity used to be strongly linked with religion.

In AD 650 and 750, we see the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons in the Welsh mountains. By the time they arrived, their forces were spent. Taking advantage of that, Offa built a wall, which is known as Offa’s Dyke (*Clawdd Offa*), and that defined for a time the territory of Wales. This is the first time we see the definition of the Welsh territory. This would cause long-term Welsh political unification, that was not achieved until 1057 (*The Story of Wales*, 2018).

After the invasion of the Vikings in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the Anglo-Saxon Wessex dynasty tried to bring the whole island under their rule. The Welsh rulers opposed to it, although ultimately they accepted it. In 1205, Llywelyn ap Gruffudd was recognised as the overlord of the Welsh people. After his death, Henry III (King of England) tried to diminish the power obtained by Llywelyn ap.

In later years, Llywelyn, grandson of Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, was referred to as Prince of Wales due to the allegiances he was able to obtain between the lords of Wales. That is why Henry III himself also recognised him as Prince of Wales, as long as Llywelyn recognised him as his suzerain. The Principality of Wales was ruled by a Welsh dynasty and had all the elements needed to be statehood. However, that could not happen because the authority of Llywelyn was being questioned and some lords of Wales resented the power of the prince.

In the Middle Ages, relations between England and Wales were not pleasant. Some parts of Wales were under control of the king and English law decided major issues in Wales. This caused the last war of independence and by 1283 Wales was ruled by the English king's authority. The son of King Edward I was granted the title of Prince of Wales in 1301. Thus, the Principality of Wales survived but joined to England (*The Story of Wales*, 2018).

During the reign of Henry IV, in 1400, there was another revolt in Wales. The leader of the Welsh people was Owain Glyndŵr, who was proclaimed Prince of Wales by his supporters. Although this revolt devastated Wales and ended once again with the victory of the English, Glyndŵr became the greatest hero in Welsh history and his revolt was key to the formation of Welsh identity (*The Story of Wales*, 2018).

Later on, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Henry VIII enacted the Laws in Wales Act. His goal was to annex Wales into England, but that generated a lot of resistance and helped define Wales as a nation as well as create a Welsh government (Nebes et al., 2016, pp. 14-16). This act also helped to define the frontiers between Wales and England (with the formation of the Marches or *Y Mers*) and to form the Council of Wales (first administrative body) (*The Story of Wales*, 2018).

These episodes give us an idea about what the relationship between the Welsh and the English people has usually been like. We see that most times England has tried to maintain dominance over Welsh territory and they finally achieved it and it remains nowadays. However, Welsh people were able to maintain some form of government for themselves. As we have said before, the nationalist cause bases its claims on their identity and one of the main points of that identity is language (element that, to some extent, favours nationalism). Nevertheless, it has proven not to be enough and even to

be a load for nationalism. Moreover, Welsh interest is not so focused on a political independence as it is in the preservation of their culture and language.

Like the rest of Britain, Wales is a “soon comer” with regard to industrialization, which began already in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Industrialization was one the most decisive periods in the history of Wales. It was during this period when we see the formation of a new Welsh identity. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the southeast part of Wales experienced a growth in population. It was in constant renovation and was becoming partially English-speaking. Later on, the north-east started losing people due to the expansion of the south of Wales. By the end of the century, Wales had become an industrialized nation (Williams, 1985, pp. 173-176).

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the UK experienced a loss of population in spite of its industrialization, as many people emigrated to the United States of America and other places. Even though Wales experienced the same phenomenon, its rates were lower than those of the rest of Britain and they kept getting even lower. In fact, Wales became one of the few countries to experience a growth in population thanks to immigration. It is during these last decades when Wales starts to expand its industrial sector (Williams, 1985, pp. 176-178).

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, South Wales started to attract not only people from other parts of Wales but also from the rest of Britain and even from Spain or Italy. These people were so well assimilated that they even used to learn the Welsh language. Thanks to this process, Wales grew as a country, retained its people and even attracted people from outside. Linked to this industrialization came the creation of a new society. A society that was in constant change, modernising and that from a cultural point of view was becoming closer to the English one. That caused a reaction from the traditional Welsh society, which was non-conformist with regard to religion and Welsh-speaking with regard to language (Williams, 1985, pp. 179-180).

It is in that moment when we see the emergence of a nationalist movement (Williams 1985, pp. 180-181). People who were really tied to their roots (their culture, tradition, language...) reacted against the formation of a new mentality that was more prone to changes and modernisation. A sector of society that wanted to put the Welsh people and their nation in the right place, that wanted to preserve their language as a way to conduct their lives. However, the other sector of society that had appeared was not so



linked to those traditions and to the Welsh language. They knew them, but they did not find them so important. They were witnesses of all those changes, the modernisation of their nation, they were in constant contact with the English language, the way they saw fit to obtain a better future. It was a society that wanted to preserve their traditions and origins as a way to remember who they were but at the same time felt part of the British Empire.

In spite of all this, we see that Welsh identity is strong in both sectors of that society. A common ground for them is a Welsh tradition that started in the Middle Ages and it still remains nowadays: the *Eisteddfodau*, the Welsh Floral Games. They are one of the most important cultural events in Wales. Similar to the *Eisteddfodau* are the *Jocs Florals* in the Catalan-speaking territories and the *Koplarien Guduak* in the Basque Country. Having all of them the main objective, that is to say, to revitalize their language and culture, especially outdoors, at the public level, it has not been possible to prove any historical connection between them (Zabaltza, 2018, pp. 143-147).

The first known *Eisteddfod*, a competition of music and poetry repeated every year, took place in 1176. This tradition continued until the 16<sup>th</sup> century. But it was not until 1792 when the *Eisteddfodau* reappeared with a new strength, especially due to Iolo Morganwg's work (bardic name of Edward Williams, 1747-1826), who extended the idea that Welsh bards were the heirs of Druids and they used their rituals, religion and mythology. Morganwg introduced the *Gorsedd* (Meeting) of Bards of the Island of Britain in musical and literary competitions. From here on, the *Eisteddfodau* and the *Gorsedd* were united (Hobsbawn and Ranger, 1983, pp. 60-61).

During the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, John Roderick's grammar appeared, a book that could be used as a guide to properly write bardic compositions (poets tried to use the poetic rules used in the Middle Ages). However, this grammar did not have an important role until the end of the century thanks to the Welsh societies, which let *Eisteddfodau* become what they are now: big gatherings that take place for several days dedicated to culture and art with prizes and stalls to sell Welsh books (Hobsbawn and Ranger, 1983, pp. 59-60).

This tradition is one of the key elements of Welsh identity. We must bear in mind that Welsh identity and Welsh nationalism are two different things. Xabier Zabaltza's concept of "culturalism" (2018, p. 155) might be useful here. This term refers to the efforts made for the intelligentsia of a certain country for the preservation of its culture and language without any political claims. We refer to this term because, as we have seen, the *Eisteddfodau* were and still are festivals that try to preserve Welsh culture and language (goal they have achieved to some extent). However, the continuity between culturalism and political nationalism is more theoretical than real (Zabaltza, 2018). To sum up, the *Eisteddfodau* are crucial elements of Welsh identity, but this does not mean that they have been an impulse for the nationalist claims.

### 3. Welsh nationalism

Thanks to its mines and its metallurgical industry, Wales became a richer and more populated region. During this period, there was a distinct Welsh identity. There were persons who were proud of their language, culture and tradition. According to Delgado (2011, p. 334), that is what would make it possible to start the movement of the *Diwygiad* (Welsh National Revival) at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The main points of this revival, as it was expected, were culture, literature, Welsh language and a non-conformist Church. What they sought to achieve was the recognition of Wales as a nation. Until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were officially only three nations within the United Kingdom: England (which included Wales), (Northern) Ireland and Scotland. It is in this moment when we start to see the rise of a new mentality that defended the national identity of Wales.

Throughout the years, Wales tried to obtain some degree of self-government. But their achievements were more related to education and culture. The University of Wales was established in 1893, then in 1907 both the National Library and the National Museum received royal charters and so did the Welsh language in 1913 (Scaglia, 2012, p. 71). During the years of the revival, in 1925 the party *Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru* (which later on would become *Plaid Cymru*) was founded but its role would not be important until the 1950s (Scaglia, 2012, p. 74).

When *Plaid Cymru* appeared, their goals were ambiguous (Delgado, 2011, p. 337). One of its main points was, of course, the Welsh language. By the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, English was already very spread within Wales and the only way to secure the continuity of Welsh was through education. With that strategy they would promote Welsh as a key way to learn a second language. Many educators argued that the vernacular language would help to learn a second one and to achieve better results in education because it would secure a better assimilation of the given concepts (McLeod, 2015, pp. 95-97). In spite of this, the reality was different, as the number of Welsh speakers and its social importance were reducing. That is why *Plaid Cymru* sought a different path. They would promote the Welsh language enlarging the population of speakers and reducing the proportion of English speakers to create a *Welsh Wales* (Delgado, 2011, p. 337).

At the beginning of the 1930s the main objective of Plaid Cymru changed once again. Following the works of Delgado (2011, pp. 338-339) we see that this goal was to obtain the status of Dominion within the Commonwealth because according to them Wales had all the cultural and linguistic elements to obtain that status. To justify their claim they compared their situation to that of the other Celtic nations (Ireland, Scotland...) and to that of other European nations. They wanted to prove the viability of other independent nations of their size in order to give meaning to their claim.

We have a good example of the ideological identity of Plaid Cymru during the 1930s with its posture on the Spanish Civil War. During this conflict, we see that its political profile is a conservative one near to Christian traditionalism. Their attitude with regard to the Spanish Civil War shows its concern for the reinforcement of Communism in Europe after the possible victory of the Republicans. This does not imply any kind of sympathy or support of Fascism or Nazism by Welsh nationalism, which condemned Marxism categorically and keeps itself equidistant from Fascism, both being considered as foreign ideologies in the European and Welsh traditions (Delgado, 2011, pp. 341-351).

Apart from this, Welsh nationalism did not show much interest for what was happening in the Spanish Civil War. They prioritised other matters that created consensus and avoided those that could generate internal divisions within the movement. We must not forget the fact that the ideological profile of this nationalist movement is not very strong and its social base is heterogeneous. Within Welsh nationalism, we could see praises for the Portuguese dictator Salazar, as well as some criticism of militarism, dictatorship and imperialism (Delgado, 2011, pp. 341-351).

The comparison with the PNV shows us many ideological coincidences with the Welsh nationalist movement: defence of the language and culture, religious nature, defence of the private property, reinforcement of the agriculture, etc.

Now that we have settled the ideological profile of the party and we have seen its evolution throughout the years, what we need to establish is what they are looking to achieve now. Nowadays, their main goals are not so different from those of the past years: to preserve the Welsh language and (until the Brexit) to obtain the status of nation within the European Union. With these objectives, they have been able to position themselves as the second or third political force (it varies from year to year) in

the elections to the National Assembly for Wales (*Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru*) established in 1998, which meant the definitive recognition of Wales as one of the four British nations.

After showing a brief evolution of the Welsh nationalist movement and its party the question that remains is: Why is not nationalism in Wales strong? We have seen how it appeared as a reaction to the arrival of a new sector of society that threatened the continuity of their tradition and how they linked this tradition to their language. The logic conclusion would be to assume that being the Welsh language such an important aspect to the Welsh people (nowadays 19% of the Welsh people speak it) nationalism would be powerful. But the truth proves otherwise. For example in Scotland nationalism is really strong (three years ago they made a referendum on whether they wanted to become independent) but the Gaelic language is rarely used. This is the reason why we find Welsh nationalism interesting, because we find a contradiction with the belief that having an own language and preserve it leads to a higher level of nationalism. In the next chapters we will try to answer this question.

#### 4. Aspects of Welsh nationalism

In the previous chapters we have established the strength of Welsh identity. After doing this, what remains is answering the question asked above: Why does not nationalism in Wales have the expected response in spite of having elements that would promote it? In order to do this we will use different aspects that we think are key to explain such a question. We will deal with these aspects in such depth as this project allows us. Those main aspects are political, economic, social and cultural. With regard to the political ones we will use a comparison of voting in both National and General elections to establish the support that nationalists obtain. In social aspects, we will talk about the relationship between English and Welsh and whether or not it could be an aspect that promotes nationalism. When talking about economic aspects we will establish the wealth of Wales in order to answer this question: Does the fact of being a wealthy region with a strong economy promote nationalism? (as it seems to be one of the factors of the Catalan conflict). Finally, with cultural aspects we will talk about their language and their link to education and about their traditions.

##### 4.1. Political aspects

In this section, we will offer some data in regards to the results obtained in the General Elections and the elections to the National Assembly for Wales (from here on we will refer to it as NAW) by both the Labour Party and Plaid Cymru. First, it is important to say that for years the Labour Party has been the most voted party in Wales. Therefore, if we take a look at political matters we see that Plaid Cymru has not been able to win any elections – in spite of having a loyal electorate –, but it still remains as the second (or third) force in Wales. On a state level the electoral system plays against Plaid Cymru, which is unable to sign pacts with the ruling parties of the UK. We can say that Plaid Cymru shows certain weakness (it does not rule in the NAW and it is not a strong force within the UK Parliament). But the question still remains: why? We will focus on voting that took place since the formation of the NAW (from 1998) until now.

We must bear in mind that the Labour Party has an unquestionable influence within Wales. It is important to stress that during the post-war period, the Labour Party obtained more support in Wales than in other places of Britain. For instance, we see proof of that in the General Elections of 1945, where the Labour Party obtained 10% more votes in Wales than in the rest of Britain. Nowadays, this dominance is usually

seen in the General Elections. In those years, Plaid Cymru had less support than it has now.

However, in the first elections to the NAW in 1999, the Labour Party was unable to obtain a majority of seats due to the strong performance of Plaid Cymru. During the second elections to the NAW in 2003, the Labour Party improved its situation but Plaid Cymru remained as the second force. In spite of the results obtained by Plaid Cymru during the elections to NAW, the Labour Party still had more power in the General Elections, which suggest a pattern of differential voting (Orriols and Richards, 2005, pp. 2-3).

One of the reasons why the Labour Party is so strong within Wales is not only the support of the working class to the party, but also the deep Welsh feeling that sees the Labour Party as their means to express their values (Orriols and Richards, 2005, pp. 12-14). If we observe the voters that support the Labour Party we see that in spite of having a strong Welsh identity they do not usually speak the Welsh language, as the main areas of influence of the Labour Party is South-East Wales. As we know, Plaid Cymru sees Welsh as one of the main reasons to claim nationhood and its main areas of influence are rural. That is why Plaid Cymru has obtained less support than the Labour Party. Voters that do not speak Welsh tend to vote the Labour Party because they perceive it as a better way to express their Welsh identity. We could go as far as to say that the Welsh language has acted as a barrier to the progress of nationalism in Wales. This affirmation is related to the notion of “ethnic” or cultural nationalism. As we have mentioned in a previous chapter this kind of nationalism is linked to language. Thus, we see that the “ethnic” element is very important in Welsh nationalism and because of that is incapable of connecting with certain voters that do not feel identified with the Welsh language.

Once again in the works of Orriols and Richards (2011, p. 14), we see that in order to change this situation, by the elections to the NAW in 1999, Plaid Cymru dropped its claim of independence and opted for a national status within Europe because independence is not at all a burning issue for the Welsh electorate. They also adopted a social-democratic economic agenda for Wales in order to weaken the Labour Party. That is why, in 1999, they were able to obtain seats in the Labour Party’s territory, South-East Wales.

An interesting idea that Orriols and Richards (2011, pp. 14-18) suggest is that regional elections have a stronger link with nationalism and that is why in the elections of 1999 and 2003 Plaid Cymru was able to obtain more votes and pressure the Labour Party. The reason why this link is stronger is because in the elections to the NAW, voters are more concerned with Welsh issues and what is going on in Wales rather than with what is happening in the rest of Britain. With this Plaid Cymru obtained more votes because its agenda was focused on Welsh matters and that made the Labour Party supporters change their vote in benefit of Plaid Cymru.

In order to understand this we need to look at the change of mind the Welsh voters had in the matter of the NAW. Before its creation, Welsh people showed no interest in forming an assembly. We see proof of that in the referendum of 1979 where this proposal was rejected. Later on, when the NAW was created in 1998, people's attitude towards this elections changed and now, a large part of the population see this institution as a way to improve Wales's situations and they seek to grant it more power (Orriols and Richards, 2011, p. 18).

If we look at recent elections (both General Elections and elections to the NAW that took place since 2005) we see some similarities with the mentioned pattern. Plaid Cymru remains as the main party of the opposition (with the exception of the elections of 2011 where the Conservative Party performed better). In General Elections their results tend to be more modest. They fail to be the most voted force in some areas where they usually obtain high support (rural areas located in the centre and north of Wales) in the elections to the NAW. However, they did obtain that support in the last General Elections that took place in 2017.

What can be extracted from this data is that when it comes to politics the nationalist cause does not have a strong impact. The reason why this happens is that we find two different ways of understanding Welsh identity. As we have seen above there are people that find the Labour Party more suitable to represent their identity and values, and those that prefer Plaid Cymru.

On one hand, supporters of the Labour Party, as we have seen, usually are those that do not speak the Welsh language. This is an important aspect because as we know the main point of Plaid Cymru's claim of nationhood is language. Therefore, it is obvious that those who do not know this language have no bond with this party. Moreover, Labour



Party voters are usually located in those areas that have more contact with England. This means that this people have a strong Welsh identity but it does not interfere with their British identity. They feel comfortable being part of the United Kingdom as long as they can maintain their roots.

On the other hand, we have those who support Plaid Cymru. As we have mentioned before Plaid Cymru's voters are those that locate in the Welsh-speaking rural areas. The domain in rural areas is a constant element in this kind of movements. These areas are those that have less contact with England and where the Welsh language is stronger (we will talk about this in another chapter). This people are not so pleased with being part of the United Kingdom and find that they have the necessary elements (language, culture, own church...) to become independent.

With this duality of understanding their identity, it makes sense that the nationalist cause does not have the expected impact. It is true that when the elections to the NAW take place, Plaid Cymru performs better than in the General Elections. However, that is not related with the claim of nationhood but with its concern with Welsh matters. Once we have understood this, we see that this aspect is one of the causes why nationalism does not have the expected success in Wales.

#### 4.2. Economic aspects

In this section, we will make a quick review of the economy of Wales. As we know, the more industrialized part of Wales is the South, therefore we will focus on that area. Our main goal with this review will be to determine the influence that the economic factor has on the nationalist cause.

During the 15<sup>th</sup> century Welsh economy had its base in cattle driving and trade for the ports. When the industrialization began, Welsh economy consisted of the extraction of natural resources. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Wales was the main producer of mineral and its mines helped the nation become more industrialized with the creation of canals and rails. By the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Wales witnessed the closure of the mines and the replacement of the heavy industries by lighter ones. With the closure of the mines came the strikes and that shook Welsh economy (Nguyen et al., 2015, pp. 2-4).

After the closure of the mines and the rundown of the fishing industry and the agriculture, the main worry was unemployment (Merrill et al., 2017, pp. 18-20). Therefore, all the efforts were focused on creating an agency that guaranteed solutions to such matter. This agency came to live in 1974 thanks to the Labour Party. The Welsh Development Agency supported long-term businesses that generated employment. This Agency also concentrated its efforts in reclaiming land in order to adapt it for infrastructures and factories. Although the Welsh Development Agency did some good to certain areas it was not able to improve the situations of those with higher unemployment rates. The reason why the matter of unemployment was so poorly handled is because at that moment as many as eight different bodies tried to solve it. Where the Agency succeeded was in securing inward investment. However, in the 90s the Welsh Development Agency closed due to some financial irregularities. After that, the Welsh Government (*Llywodraeth Cymru*) was not able to replicate the success of this agency and now it is concentrated in supporting local areas.

During the 80s of the past century, the main point of Welsh economy was the service sector thanks to foreign investment. During this recession, Wales' economy came off worse than the other nations of the UK. This situation did not change until the 90s, but even now, Wales' economy is still behind that of the rest of the UK (Nguyen et al., 2015, pp. 2-4).

As we know, there are some funds that can be got from the European Union by any member. In Wales these funds were obtained and new jobs were created, new business were strengthened, but it did not maximize the creation of employment and it did not encourage the economic activity (Merrill et al., 2017, pp. 20-21).

With this short review, we see that Welsh economy is not a strong one and for years it has fallen behind the economy of the rest of the UK. As we have mentioned before, Wales is still dependant on the Parliament of the UK, so it is up to them to take some decisions. Taking all of this into account, we can see how the nationalist cause takes advantage of this situation and creates a specific discourse.

We have found a leaflet of Plaid Cymru (Edwards, s.d.) in which there is a certain section dedicated to economics. Here we see how Plaid Cymru explains that the reason for their economic problems lies in the decisions made by the English. They argue that the local community should have power over their economic decisions and being deprived of them is what is causing the economic instability. Moreover, they say that when the English express their intention to do certain things that would be in benefit of the nation they do not refer to Wales, as the concept of nation most English have includes only England. They also refer to the wealth of their land and how it has been reduced by the decisions of the English.

It is true that this leaflet may be outdated, however, if we take a look at a website referred to us (annexed document) by Plaid Cymru, we find articles that follow this discourse. In these articles they blame the English, most precisely the decisions made by the UK Parliament, for the non-existent growth of their economy. They still argue that not having full power over certain matters of their economy is stopping their development (*Top 5 ways*, 2017 and *Wales needs control of taxes*, 2017).

Considering all this, we see that the economic instability of Wales is often used by the nationalist cause in order to support their claims (practice often used by other nationalist or regionalist causes). However, as we have seen in the section of political aspects, Plaid Cymru does not obtain quite the expected support with this discourse. They are able to connect with a determinate section of the population but fail to achieve full support. Even though they follow this speech they must be aware of the weakness of their economy and so is their electorate, reason why they do not believe that independence and obtaining full powers will change this situation. The main reason for

it is that there is a division of perspectives from the electorate. There are those that feel neglected by the decisions made by Westminster and there are those that perceive their integration in the UK as a way to improve their situation. This last perspective has an effect on the interest shown to learn the Welsh language (we will talk about this later). These two perspectives correspond with two different economic realities of Wales. Those that feel abandoned are usually located in rural areas (where Plaid Cymru performs better) with weak contact with England and the rest of the UK. Those that see it as a way of improvement are located in more industrialized areas that are in constant contact with the rest of the UK. Therefore, we see that nationalism has to cope with these two aspects, which are intertwined and play against it. Plaid Cymru is able to connect with an electorate that sees their integration in the UK as a harmful relationship for Wales. On the other hand, the more industrialized parts of Wales feel their relationship as a beneficial one. With this, nationalism is unable to obtain full support from an electorate that has such distinctive visions of what it means to be part of the UK.

### 4.3. Social aspects

The relation between Wales and the rest of Britain is sometimes tense because of the intervention of Westminster in Welsh affairs. Throughout the years, British decisions over the economy in Wales led to a critic situation. Now we shall mention again an element that worsened Welsh economy so much: the decision to close its mines (Nguyen et al., 2015, p. 9). This is quite important because the mining industry in Wales was strong during the Industrial Revolution and it ended up being part of Welsh identity. Ever since the closure of the mines, the idea of separating themselves from the rest of Britain became stronger in Wales. In addition to this, people from the North started to go to the South and that left the North open for English people to buy the land. That created a tension between Welsh people who were trying to buy the land to have a home and English people who came to buy it only to have a vacation home (Nguyen et al., 2015, p. 8).

There is another element referred to in the works of Nguyen et al. (2015, pp. 12-13) that make British-Welsh relationships complicated sometimes: stereotypes and the feeling of superiority from the rest of Britain and the need to prove otherwise from the Welsh. English people used to perceive Wales as an inferior country with a language that it is uneducated.

Moreover, if we go back to the years of the industrialization, we see that there was an exodus of people from the North to the South. Those areas were left for English people to buy the land and that altered their way of life. At the same time, the English language was introduced in more isolated regions. All these elements combined with the feeling of superiority by the English, made their relationship a tense one, which has as a consequence the creation of a social unrest that can be the base of the good performance of Plaid Cymru in the elections to the NAW in comparison to the General Elections.

#### 4.4. Cultural aspects

Wales' culture has always been quite linked to its Celtic language. In fact, Wales has always tried to preserve it and Welsh has a better government recognition and support than the rest of the Celtic languages of the UK (Ellis, 1993, p. 42). Nowadays in spite of its nationalism being less strong than those of Scotland, for instance, its language is still talked by a 19% of the population, whereas in Scotland only 1% speaks Gaelic.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, during the reign of Henry VIII, the Act of Union was passed and Wales began to be part of England. Previously to this phenomenon, England broke their bond with the Roman Church. This break up with Rome made English the language of worship replacing Latin. However, the people of Wales had little knowledge of English and therefore the reformed religion had some obstacles. After the death of Henry VIII, some procedures began to allow the people of Wales to worship in their own language within the Church of England. It is in this moment when we start to see the important role that religion played in the preservation of the Welsh language (Price, 1985, pp. 97-99).

From this moment onwards, religion has acted as a safeguard of the Welsh language. During the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Puritan Movement used Welsh in their services as well as in their teaching. In addition, in this century, we have the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge whose main goal was to teach English in England and Wales. However, in some areas of Wales, Welsh schools were created. Later on in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Wales formed their own church, The Church of Wales (Price, 1985, pp. 102-103).

When it comes to teaching, there was another initiative that took place in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The idea was to teach Welsh through circulating schools (Price, 1985, pp. 102-103). This idea continued during the 19<sup>th</sup> century but by the end of the century, it started to disappear due to the education system sponsored by the British Empire (we will talk about this new system later on in this chapter).

During the 18<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries it was argued that the use of English in Wales was vital in order to achieve progress and social participation (McLeod, 2015, pp. 95-97). Moreover, during this period Welsh was perceived as an inferior language in comparison to English. This is because language was used to establish social classes and those with higher incomes would prefer the use of English and those with more modest incomes would tend to use Welsh.

During this period, we also have the Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales. This reports criticized aspects of the Welsh way of life as well as their language. They said that anyone who spoke Welsh was “[...] under the hatches, being one of which he can neither acquire nor communicate the necessary information [...]” (*Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales*, Part I, 4, 1848). This reports recommended the use of Welsh as a means to an end: to learn English. By the end of the century, Welsh was implemented as a subject and bilingual books were published. It was only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when Welsh began to be taught as well as in the rural areas in the anglicized areas. During this century, Welsh was used as a medium of instruction, however its use could vary (Price, 1985, pp. 103-105).

It was also believed that because of their language, Welsh people were inferior as a community and should be absorbed by a greater political unit because that would help them in the path of modernisation and development. However, some of the leading voices of the Welsh community supported this tendency of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These leaders saw that thanks to this linguistic assimilation, their country would thrive economically and the Welsh language would continue to live on in distinct spaces. That is why by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century language activists tried to secure a place for the Welsh language in the school curriculum. They thought that bilingualism would be a good strategy for the minority language communities (McLeod, 2015, pp. 96-97).

Welsh has also achieved some successes not only in the field of education but also in law issues (Price, 1985, pp. 106-108). Although Welsh had no official status, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century – when, by means of the Laws in Wales Act of 1535 and 1542, English was introduced to the administration - it continued to be used in such matters. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, English was more spread within Wales and therefore Welsh was only used when there was no alternative. At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century we start to see an official recognition of the Welsh language (Welsh could be used at any time in court, forms would be written in both Welsh and English...).

Moreover, during the 19<sup>th</sup> century Welsh was marginalised, as the Laws in Wales Act continued being in force, and by the next century its situation did not improve because of the economic struggles the nation was suffering at that time (Nguyen et al., 2015, p. 5). That is why Plaid Cymru tried to keep the issue of the Welsh language relevant.

This party spread the concerns over the situation of the Welsh language in the rural areas in an attempt to make the people aware of the importance of Welsh identity. In 1993 they acquired legal equality between the English and the Welsh languages thanks to the abolishment of the Laws in Wales Act.

Another field mentioned by Price (1985, p. 109) where the Welsh language has been able to change its situation: the media. Thanks to the foundation of *Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg* (Welsh Language Society) in 1962 the recognition of the Welsh language in Radio and Television has improved. Moreover, during the 1960s, a campaign promoted by this society forced a Royal Commission on the Welsh Language to recommend the equal validity of Welsh throughout the nation (Ellis, 1993, p. 42).

However, when we take a look at the situation of the Welsh language nowadays, we see that the proportion of Welsh speakers continues to decline year after year. This has led to the situation that we see now: only a fifth part of the population speaks it. This decline has made that those areas where the majority spoke English and Welsh, they now speak either both languages or only English; and those who were part of the population who spoke both languages and another who spoke just English, now speak only the later (Price, 1985, p. 111).

This situation began with industrialization, that is to say, by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, but it has continued so far. The arrival of people from outside of Wales deteriorated the Welsh language and supported the Anglicization of the country (Price, 1985, pp. 116-117). Moreover, the arrival of English people to areas where Welsh was spoken in order to buy second homes or just to visit them as a tourist also supported this process.

Here we should mention *Meibion Glyndŵr*. A violent nationalist movement that perpetrated the damaging of properties bought by English people in Welsh-speaking areas (they were active for 12 years since 1979). They targeted at first second homes acquired by the English but later they went on to attack tourist businesses (Brooke, 2018, p. 60). Prior to this movement, *Mudiad Amddiffyn Cymru* (also known as MAC) and *Byddin Rhyddid Cymru* (also known as Free Wales Army, FWA) could be mentioned too. These movements were also violent and the main targets of their attacks were constructions, government offices, locations that were related to Royal visits and the Investiture (Brooke, 2018, p. 53). However, these groups had no political influence.



In fact Plaid Cymru blame the actions of FWA and MAC for their failure in 1970 (Ellis, 1993, p. 91). These groups appeared and acted as a reaction of the influence that the English language was having in the land as well as of the decisions made by Westminster (Ellis, 1993, pp. 87-94).

Mixed parents are other element that also deteriorates the situation of the Welsh language. When it comes to parenting, the parent that speaks English will have no difficulty in teaching that language to his child but if the parent speaks Welsh it would take a lot of effort on his behalf in order to have his child learn the language. Moreover, television and radio do not help improve this situation. As we have seen, it was not until recently that several Welsh radios and television channels were created and still English is the predominant broadcasting language that reaches to the deepest parts of Wales (Price, 1985, pp. 119-120).

What we see in today's society is a variety of opinions when it comes to the Welsh language. We have those that perceive it as an obsolete thing that only obstacles progress and it would be better to get rid of it. Others think that it must be preserved and that its loss would be regretted. Finally those that are indifferent: they do not care whether the language survives or not. Welsh is trying to survive in a situation of constant competition with English and that is proving to be harmful to its continuity (Price, 1985, pp. 121-126). What the Welsh people need to accept is that English will always be present but that does not mean that the Welsh language will disappear. They will have to find a way for both languages to coexist and secure the survival of the Welsh language.

Nowadays, Welsh is taught at school but its education and the level of importance given to it varies from area to area. This happens because the policy of the school can vary as they are organised according to each Local Education Authority. Generally those areas where the Welsh language is stronger (usually the north), schools have Welsh as the first language and English as a second language and teach some subjects in this language. However, in other areas, Welsh is not so strong and instead most of the scholars use English as a way to learn Welsh. The strategy used by some schools is to divide students based on their knowledge of a language or another. If a student uses Welsh as a first language, they are put on a Welsh-speaking class and the same goes for a student accustomed to use English. But this is not always the case, sometimes students

with different levels of knowledge in a language are put together (Sharp, 1973, pp. 18-28).

As Sharp says (1973, pp. 18-28), the majority of the students in Wales go to a school where English is their first language and at some point during their school years, they end up learning Welsh. However, whether they become fluent in Welsh is up to them and their interest in the language. In comparison, those students who attend a school where Welsh is their first language their situation is different. They learn English as a second language but the difference is that they do not have a choice: they learn English because it is useful for their future and sometimes it ends up supplanting their first language.

Although this situation harms the learning of both English and Welsh, it has a major impact on the latter. English is a strong language that has been able to expand itself not only across the United Kingdom reducing the usage of Welsh but also across the world. Taking this into consideration Welsh language is trying to find a way to survive and obtained more speakers and it is doing so through education. But the situation depicted above plays against it. Even though there are students who have contact with Welsh both inside and outside the schools (which benefits its continuity), there is a large proportion of students that do not use Welsh outside the class which also affects the situation of the Welsh language. Moreover, it is important to take into account that although Welsh students value their language they do not have a hostile attitude towards English, as they consider it as a useful asset for their education.

As we have seen, Welsh is not such a strong language inside the schools. That is why the Welsh Government has come up with another strategy that consists of bringing new life to the language and offer more opportunities to learn it. They want to insert Welsh in the electronic world and offer the people the possibility “[...] to conduct their lives electronically through the medium of Welsh, whether that be for cultural, informational, entertainment, leisure, retail, transactional, community, or social networking purposes.” (*New Welsh language strategy*, 2018).

Welsh is not strong enough to push the nationalist movement. The reason why this happens is because that even in those areas where Welsh is widely spoken, students feel that learning English is helpful for their future. We see a connexion between those areas where English is more used and those areas where the Labour Party performs better, that

is the Southeast. They do have a strong Welsh identity and they know the Welsh language (not in depth) but they do not see a conflict between being part of the UK and being Welsh. On the other hand, those areas where Plaid Cymru obtains more votes are those where Welsh is the usual language, the Northwest. These areas are more isolated from England. In spite of this, they do have a good knowledge of the English language and the tendency in these areas is to have a better knowledge of it (without forgetting the Welsh language).

Moreover, we see that Welsh has improved its situation in different aspects: being accepted as a language suitable for court and administrative matters, obtaining a Welsh TV channel and radio station... However, Anglicization has undermined the power of the Welsh language and now the nationalist cause must face a population that perceives the language in different ways. This is why Welsh nationalism is able to connect and unite a certain percentage of the population (those that hold it dear and want it to survive) but fails to reach all because other sectors of the population either want it gone or do not care about it at all. Here we see the limitations of having a Welsh nationalism whose base for their claims is their language. They must face that English is slowly becoming more and more important and people are starting to perceive that being part of the UK does not interfere with their identity.

## 5. Conclusions

First, we must bear in mind the complexity of nationalism and the limits of the simplistic contrast between an “ethnic” or cultural nationalism, where language is given a special consideration, and a “civic” or political nationalism, based on people’s will (see 1. General Introduction). Being aware that both kinds of elements are present in all nationalisms, we might conclude that ethno-linguistic and cultural matters have a great influence on Welsh nationalism. Just to compare, in Scottish nationalism the “civic” element is in fact the only important one. This might be, in our opinion, one of the causes of the (relative) success of Scottish nationalism and the (relative) failure of Welsh nationalism. Once established this, we see that Welsh nationalism, in spite of having a significant presence, is not a hegemonic feeling in the entire region. Its level of support is quite unstable: in the north and centre parts of Wales it has a stronger support and in the south a weaker one.

In political terms Welsh nationalism is represented by Plaid Cymru. As Nicholas has written to us (annexed document), this party defends the preservation of the Welsh language and the economic recovery of Wales (which has a peripheral situation within the UK). As we see, Plaid Cymru is a party that focuses on Welsh matters, which is why its electoral performance acts as a good example of the capacity that this movement has in terms of mobilization. Plaid Cymru is the main political force of the opposition in the National Assembly for Wales and its electoral support is uneven. In the rural areas of the centre-north regions it has a stronger electoral support, while in the big cities of the south it is overrun by the Labour Party (ruling force in Wales). This lack of political support it is due to the duality of understanding Welsh identity. We have those that understand that being part of the UK is beneficial to them and does not interfere with them being Welsh (usually people located in those areas more connected with England) and those that perceive that relationship as something that is weakening their Welshness (usually people from more isolated parts of Wales). Therefore, we are facing a nationalism with a modest political support, with a moderate ideology and lacking an important institutional tradition, as the National Assembly for Wales only dates from 1998.

Moreover, we have to take into account the role that the Welsh language and culture play in politics. Luke Nicholas, Manager of Wales Governance Centre at Cardiff University, has explained to us (annexed document) that Wales has a strong language

culture that is based on literature, television, education, music and poetry (we must also mention the annual National *Eisteddfod*). However, this is usually perceived on the north-west down toward the south-west part of Wales. This area is called *Y Fro Gymraeg* (Welsh-speaking Wales) and it is here where Welsh is the common language. On the other areas (*Cymru ddi-Gymraeg*), although Welsh is used in school and within the families, it is not spoken.

As we have seen, Plaid Cymru usually obtains more support in Welsh-speaking areas and in the rest of Wales the main party is the Labour Party. According to Nicholas (annexed document), Welsh language culture favours a political environment that it is shared by a certain part of Wales, *Y Fro Gymraeg*. However, the rest of Wales fails to share this environment due to its proximity to England (economically, culturally and socially).

In an economic level we see that there is a severe instability in Wales. The industrial development focuses mainly in the south of Wales, while the countryside of the centre-north part of Wales was negatively affected. Many people from the countryside migrated to the south. It is in these rural areas where nationalism is stronger. This movement understands that the subordination to the UK Parliament is the main cause of their economic struggle and the loss of their language. For them Wales is a peripheral region in a United Kingdom dominated by England. However, in the south the perception is different. For them, being part of the UK means that they are integrated in a whole that will be beneficial for all the parts involved. It is a relation that will help them overcome their current economic situation.

It is in the language where we find the key element of Welsh nationalism. As we have seen the number of Welsh speakers has been declining at least since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was with the arrival of industrialization when Wales began to be a more connected region with the rest of the UK. When this connection began, Welsh language was severely affected. We see proof of that with the establishment of English as the language to be used in court matters, with the arrival of an educational system promoted by the British government, the Anglicization of areas of Wales, etc. This caused Welsh nationalism and Plaid Cymru to focus all their attention on language. They generated a discourse in which they explained what was happening to their linguistic heritage. Although now Welsh has improved its situation in the media, court and administrative

matters, education and so on, it is still threatened by the English language. The defence of the Welsh language is the foundation of Welsh nationalism. However, we need to take into account that this linguistic matter is perceived in three different ways by the population. There are those who find it useless and want it gone, those that think it valuable and it should be preserved and those that do not care about it. This is why the nationalist cause is unable to obtain more support.

Welsh nationalism does not have the capacity to become the hegemonic movement of the region due to its institutional weakness and the indifference of part of the population to its ethno-linguistic discourse. It is true that the language issue is a strong foundation of this movement but it is also true that it coexists with the English language and it has been losing speakers since the industrialization. In those areas where Welsh is more spoken (rural areas of the centre-north part), Plaid Cymru obtains more support but in the most populated cities of the south (where Welsh is hardly spoken) is not that stronger. This is a problem for the nationalist cause, which is usually seen at a political level. To compare with Scotland again, it is difficult to imagine a Welsh nationalist who does not speak Welsh, whereas we find Scottish nationalists who do not know a single word of Gaelic (or Scots) everywhere. To sum up, Welsh nationalism is weak not only in spite of having a language of its own but precisely for having it. In a globalized world “ethnic” (cultural) nationalism is more demanding than “civic” (political) nationalism.

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## 7. Annexes

### Annex 1: Results of voting

#### 1. General Elections

- 2001 General Elections

Party	Seats	Gains	Losses	Net
Lab	413	2	8	-6
Con	166	9	8	+1
LibDem	52	8	2	+6
SNP	5	0	1	-1
PC	4	1	1	0
UUP	6	1	5	-4
DUP	5	3	0	+3
SDLP	3	0	0	0
SF	4	2	0	+2
Oth	1	1	2	-1

Table extracted from [BBC NEWS](#)

- 2005 General Elections

UK NATIONAL RESULTS: IN DETAIL							
Party	Seats	Gain	Loss	Net	Votes	%	+/-
Labour	356	0	47	-47	9,566,618	35.3	-5.4
Conservative	198	36	3	+33	8,785,941	32.3	+0.6
Lib Dem	62	16	5	+11	5,985,414	22.1	+3.8
DUP	9	4	0	+4	241,856	0.9	+0.2
SNP	6	2	0	+2	412,267	1.5	-0.3
Sinn Fein	5	1	0	+1	174,530	0.6	-0.1
Plaid Cymru	3	0	1	-1	174,838	0.6	-0.1
SDLP	3	1	1	0	125,626	0.5	-0.1
UUP	1	0	5	-5	127,414	0.5	-0.3
Respect	1	1	0	+1	68,094	0.3	+0.3
Ind Kid Hosp	1	0	0	0	18,739	0.1	0.0
UKIP	0	0	0	0	605,973	2.2	+0.7
Green	0	0	0	0	257,695	1.0	+0.4
BNP	0	0	0	0	192,746	0.7	+0.5
Scottish Soc	0	0	0	0	43,514	0.2	-0.1
Veritas	0	0	0	0	40,481	0.1	+0.1
Alliance	0	0	0	0	28,291	0.1	0.0
Scottish Grn	0	0	0	0	25,760	0.1	+0.1
Liberal	0	0	0	0	19,068	0.1	0.0
Others	1	1	0	+1	252,466	0.8	
Turnout					27,148,975	61.2	+1.8
After 646 of 646 seats declared							

Table extracted from [BBC NEWS](#)

- 2010 General Elections

FULL UK SCOREBOARD								
Party	Seats	Gain	Loss	Net	Votes	%	+/-%	
Conservative	307	100	3	+97	10,726,614	36.1	+3.8	
Labour	258	3	94	-91	8,609,527	29.0	-6.2	
Liberal Democrat	57	8	13	-5	6,836,824	23.0	+1.0	
Democratic Unionist Party	8	0	1	-1	168,216	0.6	-0.3	
Scottish National Party	6	0	0	0	491,386	1.7	+0.1	
Sinn Fein	5	0	0	0	171,942	0.6	-0.1	
Plaid Cymru	3	1	0	+1	165,394	0.6	-0.1	
Social Democratic & Labour Party	3	0	0	0	110,970	0.4	-0.1	
Green	1	1	0	+1	285,616	1.0	-0.1	
Alliance Party	1	1	0	+1	42,762	0.1	+0.0	
UK Independence Party	0	0	0	0	919,546	3.1	+0.9	
British National Party	0	0	0	0	564,331	1.9	+1.2	
Ulster Conservatives and Unionists - New Force	0	0	1	-1	102,361	0.3	-0.1	
English Democrats	0	0	0	0	64,826	0.2	+0.2	
Respect-Unity Coalition	0	0	1	-1	33,251	0.1	-0.1	
Traditional Unionist Voice	0	0	0	0	26,300	0.1		
Christian Party	0	0	0	0	18,623	0.1		
Independent Community and Health Concern	0	0	1	-1	16,150	0.1	+0.0	
Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition	0	0	0	0	12,275	0.0		
Scottish Socialist Party	0	0	0	0	3,157	0.0	-0.1	
Others	1	1	1	0	321,309	1.1	0.0	
					<b>Turnout</b>	29,691,380	65.1	4.0

After 650 of 650 seats declared.

















Table extracted from [BBC NEWS](#)

- 2015 General Elections

UK results after 650 of 650 seats							
	SEATS	GAIN	LOSS	+/-	VOTES	VOTE SHARE %	+/-%
Conservative	331	35	11	+24	11,334,226	36.9	+0.8
Labour	232	22	48	-26	9,347,273	30.4	+1.5
Scottish National Party	56	50	0	+50	1,454,436	4.7	+3.1
Liberal Democrat	8	0	49	-49	2,415,916	7.9	-15.2
Democratic Unionist Party	8	1	1	0	184,260	0.6	0.0
Sinn Fein	4	0	1	-1	176,232	0.6	0.0
Plaid Cymru	3	0	0	0	181,704	0.6	0.0
Social Democratic & Labour Party	3	0	0	0	99,809	0.3	0.0
Ulster Unionist Party	2	2	0	+2	114,935	0.4	0.0
UKIP	1	1	0	+1	3,881,099	12.6	+9.5
Green Party	1	0	0	0	1,157,630	3.8	+2.8
Alliance Party	0	0	1	-1	61,556	0.2	+0.1
TUSC	0	0	0	0	36,368	0.1	+0.1
National Health Action	0	0	0	0	20,210	0.1	0.0
Traditional Unionist Voice	0	0	0	0	16,538	0.1	0.0
Respect Party	0	0	0	0	9,989	0.0	-0.1
Cannabis Is Safer Than Alcohol	0	0	0	0	8,419	0.0	0.0
Yorkshire First	0	0	0	0	6,811	0.0	0.0
English Democrats	0	0	0	0	6,531	0.0	-0.2
Monster Raving Loony Party	0	0	0	0	3,898	0.0	0.0
Socialist Labour Party	0	0	0	0	3,481	0.0	0.0
Christian Peoples Alliance	0	0	0	0	3,260	0.0	0.0
Christian Party	0	0	0	0	3,205	0.0	-0.1
Workers Party	0	0	0	0	2,724	0.0	0.0
British National Party	0	0	0	0	1,657	0.0	-1.9
Class War	0	0	0	0	526	0.0	0.0
Others	1	0	0	0	164,822	0.5	-0.3

Table extracted from [BBC NEWS](#)

- 2017 General Elections

PARTY	SEATS	+/-	VOTES	VOTE SHARE	+/- %
 Conservative	297	-22	12,379,200	45.6	+4.6
 Labour	227	+21	11,390,099	41.9	+10.3
 Liberal Democrat	8	+2	2,121,810	7.8	-0.4
 Green Party	1	0	506,969	1.9	-2.3
 UKIP	0	-1	557,390	2.1	-12.1
 The Yorkshire Party	0	0	20,958	0.1	+0.1
 National Health Action	0	0	16,119	0.1	0.0
 Christian Peoples Alliance	0	0	5,869	0.0	0.0
 British National Party	0	0	4,642	0.0	0.0
 Monster Raving Loony Party	0	0	3,733	0.0	0.0
 Women's Equality Party	0	0	3,066	0.0	0.0
 English Democrats	0	0	1,913	0.0	0.0
 Pirate Party	0	0	1,875	0.0	0.0
 Workers Revolutionary Party	0	0	771	0.0	0.0
 Social Democratic Party	0	0	321	0.0	0.0
 Others	0	0	151,054	0.6	+0.4

After 533 of 533 seats  
Change compared with 2015

Table extracted from [BBC NEWS](#)

## 2. Elections to the National Assembly for Wales

- 1999 National Assembly for Wales Elections













Election results by party		
Party name	Seats won	% of votes
 Plaid Cymru	8	31%
 Welsh Conservative Party	8	16%
 Welsh Liberal Democrats	3	13%
 Welsh Labour	1	35%
 Welsh Green Party	0	3%
 Socialist Labour Party	0	1%
 Natural Law	0	< 1%
 The United Socialist Party	0	< 1%
 Independent	0	< 1%
 Peoples Representative	0	< 1%
 Rhuddlan Debt Protest Campaign	0	< 1%
 Welsh Communist Party	0	< 1%
Turnout:		n/a

Table extracted from [National Assembly for Wales](#)

- 2003 National Assembly for Wales Elections

<i>Election results by party</i>		
Party name	Seats won	% of votes
Welsh Labour	28	39%
Plaid Cymru	5	21%
Welsh Liberal Democrats	3	15%
Welsh Conservative Party	1	21%
John Marek Independent Party	1	1%
United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP)	0	2%
Independent	0	< 1%
Tinker against the Assembly	0	< 1%
Welsh Socialist Alliance Against the War	0	< 1%
Caerphilly Constituency Independents	0	< 1%
Socialist Alternative	0	< 1%
The United Socialist Party	0	< 1%
Socialist Labour Party	0	< 1%
Millenium Bean Party	0	< 1%
Pro life	0	< 1%
Turnout:		n/a

Table extracted from [National Assembly for Wales](#)

- 2007 National Assembly for Wales Elections

<i>Election results by party</i>		
Party name	Seats won	% of votes
Welsh Conservative Party	6	21%
Plaid Cymru	6	21%
Welsh Labour	2	30%
Welsh Liberal Democrats	2	12%
British National Party	0	4%
United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP)	0	4%
Welsh Green Party	0	3%
Socialist Labour Party	0	1%
Welsh Christian Party	0	< 1%
Independent	0	< 1%
Welsh Communist Party	0	< 1%
Christian Peoples Alliance	0	< 1%
Socialist Alternative	0	< 1%
Respect	0	< 1%
English Democrats	0	< 1%
Independent Conservative	0	< 1%
Veritas	0	< 1%
Socialist Equality	0	< 1%
Turnout:		43%

Table extracted from [National Assembly for Wales](#)

- 2011 National Assembly for Wales Elections

<b>Election results by party</b>		
Party name	Seats won	% of votes
Welsh Conservative Party	8	23%
Plaid Cymru	6	18%
Welsh Liberal Democrats	4	8%
Welsh Labour	2	37%
United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP)	0	5%
Welsh Green Party	0	3%
Socialist Labour Party	0	2%
British National Party	0	2%
Welsh Christian Party	0	< 1%
Welsh Communist Party	0	< 1%
English Democrats	0	< 1%
The Official Monster Raving Loony Party	0	< 1%
Independent	0	< 1%
Trade Unionists and Socialists Against Cuts	0	< 1%
Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition	0	< 1%
Turnout:		42%

Table extracted from [National Assembly for Wales](#)

- 2016 National Assembly for Wales Elections

<b>Election results by party</b>		
Party name	Seats won	% of votes
United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP)	7	13%
Plaid Cymru	6	21%
Welsh Conservative Party	5	19%
Welsh Labour	2	31%
Welsh Liberal Democrats	0	6%
Abolish the Welsh Assembly Party	0	4%
Welsh Green Party	0	3%
The Official Monster Raving Loony Party	0	< 1%
Association of Welsh Local Independents	0	< 1%
Women's Equality Party	0	< 1%
Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition	0	< 1%
Welsh Communist Party	0	< 1%
Independent	0	< 1%
People First	0	< 1%
Welsh Christian Party	0	< 1%
Communist Party of Britain	0	< 1%
Freedom to choose	0	< 1%
National Front	0	< 1%
Turnout:		n/a

Table extracted from [National Assembly for Wales](#)

## Annex 2: Emails and documents

1. Document received by Luke Nicholas in an E-mail on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April 2018

### **Luke Nicholas**

I am a former political advisor for Plaid Cymru – the Party of Wales, which is the largest political party espousing Welsh nationalism.

I am currently the Manager of Wales Governance Centre at Cardiff University, which is a research unit specialising in the study of Welsh politics, constitution and public finance. Please see our various pages online if you are interested in our activities.

Please contact me if I can be of any further help!

[Luke\\_nicholas@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Luke_nicholas@hotmail.co.uk)

### **Comments on Welsh nationalism, language and cultural identity**

The disassociation between the Welsh language and culture, and the weakness of its political nationalism is very stark, and is a central feature of Welsh politics.

Approximately 19% of people in Wales claim they can speak Welsh (562,000 people), according to the most recent census<sup>1</sup>. This is a lower percentage than say the Basque, Galician or Catalan languages, but the language is very visible in politics.

On the one hand, a very intense Welsh language culture exists in the country, with a vibrant and well-networked culture based on literature, Welsh-language television, Welsh-medium education, and very strong traditions in music and poetry. The annual National Eisteddfod, which celebrates the Welsh language, is one of the largest cultural festivals in Europe.

But territorially and politically, this cultural milieu only has “critical mass” in the western strip of Wales, stretching from the north-west down towards the south-west of the country. This area is called Y Fro Gymraeg, Welsh-speaking Wales. While

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<sup>1</sup>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/2011censuskeystatisticsforwales/2012-12-11>



Welsh is spoken outside of this area as well, and is popular in the education system, it is only in “Y Fro” that you will find communities and towns where Welsh is the normal language in the street. A simple google search will give you a visual picture of the extent of this area.

So outside of Y Fro Gymraeg, the language still has the same official status, is still taught in schools and used by families, but generally is a “networked language” rather than a community language.

In elections, Plaid Cymru usually wins most or all of the constituencies in Welsh-speaking Wales. Their political worldview, which is a Wales-centred politics, is (generally speaking) the natural ideology of those areas.

But, most of Wales is not Welsh-speaking, and in the majority of Wales politics is more dominated by the British, unionist political parties or their Welsh branches. In the majority of Wales, there is less of a desire for political nationalism than there is in Welsh-speaking areas, although it is of course still present to some extent.

The conclusion I would reach is that Welsh language culture generates its own political environment that is broadly not shared by the rest of the country. One of the biggest factors affecting the rest of Wales is its proximity to England, economically, culturally and socially. Outside of geographical areas where there is a critical mass of Welsh-speakers, political nationalism is less popular.

#### *Measures to maintain the language where it is still used*

From a Plaid Cymru perspective the argument would be that insufficient measures are in place, and that Welsh-speaking communities are facing gradual erosion due to emigration of younger people, and in-migration of people who do not speak Welsh. The solution would have to lie in public policy measures which ensure that younger people can either stay in or return to their “home” communities, and that sufficient cultural and community infrastructure exists for the language to then be used frequently.

Measures which might mitigate this situation would include greater provision of affordable housing for local people, measures within the planning system, and both the relocation of public sector jobs to Welsh-speaking areas, or creation of new jobs in those areas. For example, Plaid Cymru routinely says that the Welsh language

would benefit from having e.g a Medical School at Bangor, more Welsh Government offices in the north-west etc.

*Measures to revitalise the language where it is not as widely spoken*

The Welsh Government (led by the Labour party) has a policy to have one million people speaking Welsh by 2050. So far, the main proposals to achieve this seem to be in the field of education<sup>2</sup>.

It is unclear what will be done to ensure that pupils educated in Welsh then use it outside of the classroom, but an attractive Welsh language culture needs to exist, covering music, sports and so on. The state and authorities can't necessarily create this but should at least ensure similar support as is provided to cultural organisations and networks as is done by the government of the Basque Autonomous Community.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-politics-40555325>

2. Email received by Plaid Cymru on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2018

Hello Lia, that is a big question! There is no doubt a link between the Welsh Language and support for Plaid Cymru. A lot of research into this is in the Welsh Language but you may find [www.nation.cymru](http://www.nation.cymru) and <http://sites.cardiff.ac.uk/wgc/> useful. Pob lwc / Zorte on / Buena suerte