Administrative Data
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Data Brief 9: Welsh
Council for Voluntary
Action All Wales Database

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Available in Welsh on request

The Welsh Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) is the national membership organisation for the Third Sector in Wales. The WCVA holds data on registered Third Sector charities and organisations based in Wales as part of its 'All Wales Database'. The database includes information with regards to location, level or area of operation, and classifications of activity type or user base of WCVA registered charities and organisations. This data brief summarises the structure and data items within the WCVA All Wales Database that are potentially accessible through the Administrative Data Research Centre Wales (ADRC-W).

Cyngor Gweithredu Gwirfoddol Cymru yw'r sefydliad aelodaeth cenedlaethol ar gyfer y trydydd sector yng Nghymru. Mae gan y Cyngor ddata am elusennau a sefydliadau cofrestredig y trydydd sector yng Nghymru yn ei gronfa ddata Cymru gyfan. Mae'r gronfa ddata'n cynnwys gwybodaeth ar sail lleoliad, lefel neu faes gweithredu a chaiff yr wybodaeth ei dosbarthu fesul math o weithgarwch neu sylfaen defnyddwyr elusennau a sefydliadau sydd wedi'u cofrestru gyda'r Cyngor. Mae'r nodyn data hwn yn crynhoi strwythur cronfa ddata Cymru gyfan y Cyngor a'r eitemau data a allai fod ar gael drwy Ganolfan Ymchwil Data Gweinyddol Cymru.

Introduction

The Third Sector has been defined by Welsh Government[1] as a diverse range of organisations that are:

▶ independent, non-governmental bodies;

▶ established voluntarily by people who choose to organise themselves;

▶ 'value-driven' and motivated by social, cultural or environmental objectives, rather than simply to make a profit;

▶ committed to reinvesting their surpluses to further their social aims and for the benefit of people and communities in Wales.

The Welsh Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) is the national membership organisation for the Third Sector in Wales, and represents the interests of voluntary charities and organisations working on a wide range of issues, including: housing, community development, transport, the environment, health, and support. The WCVA routinely collect information on Third Sector organisations as part of the All Wales Database, providing a key source of information about Third Sector activity in Wales. This short data brief outlines the content of the WCVA All Wales Database, related resources on registered charities in the UK, and illustrates potential uses of WCVA data.

[1] Welsh Government (2014) Third Sector Scheme. Cardiff: Welsh Government

Structure and content of the WCVA All Wales Database

In 2016, the WCVA All Wales Database contained 32,555 contact points, which refer to addresses for individual charities[2]. Registered charities range from local community groups, to national and UK charities with income over £100 million. The All Wales Database contains the name of the charity, contact email, Local Authority for contact point, and address details, including postcode. However, WCVA data accessible through the ADRC-W have been anonymised, removing contact information, and replacing address level information with the corresponding Lower Super Output Area for the contact point.

Additional data items contained within the All Wales Database include the 'status' code for the charity, which gives a description of the type of organisation that the contact point relates to e.g. whether a national, regional, or local organisation (Table 1). Status codes can be used in conjunction with other location data to explore whether Third Sector organisations are only active in an area, or are based there, or both. The WCVA reports such analysis for Local Authorities in Wales[1].

Table 1: Charity status codes, description of organisation, and number of contact points within 2016 All Wales Database

Status code	Description	Count
A	**National** organisation covering all (or most of) the counties in Wales	1,700
B	**Regional** organisation covering more than one county	1,087
C	**Local** organisation covering one county or less	28,155
D	**Office** or **Branch** of an organisation	1,350
E	**Project** (can be part of an organisation or an organisation in its own right)	243
Overall		32,535

Notes: Overall count of organisations differs from total contact points due to missing data on description of organisation.

The All Wales Database also contains information relating to the general activity area for each contact point. Activity areas have been pre-categorised. However, for each contact point, there may be several activity areas, given that an organisation might perform different functions. Examples of activity types include, but are not limited to:

▶ Advice services
▶ Older people
▶ Benevolent-education
▶ Community development
▶ Education and training
▶ Environment
▶ Volunteering support
▶ Physical disabilities
▶ Housing
▶ Arts, culture, and heritage

[2] Welsh Council for Voluntary Action (2016) Third Sector statistical resource. Cardiff: WCVA

Table 2 gives an indication of the breakdown of Third Sector activity in Wales for 2016, by organisation status. As can be seen, sports and recreation activities, and those related to communities, accounted for the highest proportion of activities across Third Sector organisations in Wales; 22 and 20 percent of organisation engaging in these activities, respectively.

Table 2: Distribution of organisations (contact points) between broad activity areas; 2016[1]

Broad area of activity	Count	% of contact points
Advice & advocacy	1,099	3
Animal welfare	552	2
Arts, culture, heritage	3,233	10
Benevolent organisations	3,922	12
Children & Families	3,310	10
Community	6,433	20
Community justice	304	1
Disability	1,440	4
Education & training	1,173	4
Employment	230	1
Environment	1,794	6
Ethnic minorities	405	1
Gender	1,436	4
Health & social care	3,393	10
Housing	1,008	3
Intermediaries	152	0
International aid & relief	1,057	3
Religion	4,499	14
Sport & recreation	7,223	22
Volunteering	250	1
Youth	2,520	8
Other	806	2
Overall	32,555	

Notes: Percentage of contact points does not sum to 100 as a contact point may undertake more than one activity

Related sources of data in other UK Countries

Data relating to registered charities are available for all four UK Countries. For England and Wales, the Charity Commission (CC) represents the main regulatory body[3]. Data downloads of the charity register are available for free from the CC's website[4] in SQL format. Similarly, the Scottish Charity Regulator (SCR)[5] and The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland[6] hold their respective country's lists of registered charities. In the case of both Scotland and Northern Ireland, data are available free to download in Excel format. Across all four countries, data items available include but are not limited to: address details, geographical location, area of benefit, and the classification of charity.

When drawing on these different charity registers, consideration needs to be given to differences in their scope. For example the charity register of the Scottish Charity Regulator pertains to all charities and organisations in Scotland, regardless of income or size, whereas the CC register relates to charities of a particular size/income threshold - The Charities Act 2006 stipulates that all charities with an income of £5,000 or greater must register with the Charity Commission[3].

Uses of the WCVA data

The WCVA use the All Wales Database to produce an annual Third Sector statistical resource, highlighting Third Sector activity in Wales[1]. Statistics derived from the WCVA database are regularly cited when enumerating Third Sector operations in Wales[7]. However, to date, the research uses for the All Wales Database have been limited.

A potential use of the WCVA All Wales Database could be in exploring Third Sector activity in different geographic areas, using this as either a dependent/independent variable in analyses. For example, is Third Sector activity higher in areas of relative deprivation in Wales? Furthermore, linkage between surveys, such as the National Survey for Wales or the Welsh Health Survey, and the WCVA All Wales Database could be used to explore whether access to Third Sector services affects experiences of place. For example, do greater levels of Third Sector activity, and therefore a thriving 'civil society' in particular geographies improve wellbeing?

The Administrative Data Research Centre Wales (ADRC-W) is one of four UK centres that along with the Administrative Data Service make up the Administrative Data Research Network (ADRN). The ADRN provides a safe, secure and transparent data linkage service for accredited, approved research using de-identified UK administrative data.

ADRC-W does not hold datasets. It works closely with government departments to make them available to researchers but this is negotiated on a case by case basis.

This report may be cited as: ADRC-W (2017) Welsh Council for Voluntary Action All Wales Database. Administrative Data Research Centre Wales, Data Brief No. 9.

This report, along with other titles in this series is downloadable free from ADRN at https://adrn.ac.uk/about/network/wales/resources/ or by emailing ADRCWales@Swansea.ac.uk.

[3] http://www.adls.ac.uk/charity-commission/register-of-charities/?detail
[4] http://beta.charitycommission.gov.uk/
[5] http://www.oscr.org.uk/
[6] http://www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/
[7] Millett, A. (2008) The Funding of Voluntary Sector Organisations in Wales. Cardiff: National Assembly for Wales