

# Building a New Life in Wales:

## Hong Kong BN(O) Visa Holders Welcome Survey Research Report

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# Contents

<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	
<b>List of Figures</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Background and Context</b> .....	<b>3</b>
2.1 The British Nationals (Overseas) status.....	3
2.2 Geo-distribution of settlement.....	5
2.3 Who are the BN(O)s in the UK? .....	5
2.4 Challenges experienced by new arrivals .....	6
<b>3. Methods and Data Collection</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>4. Survey Findings</b> .....	<b>12</b>
4.1 Motivations for Moving .....	12
4.2 Demographics .....	13
4.3 Marital/Partnership status and family structure.....	17
4.4 Housing and Accommodation .....	19
4.5 Education and Employment .....	23
4.6 Language Skills .....	29
4.7 English Classes.....	34
4.8 Health Status and Concerns.....	39
4.9 Settling In .....	41
<b>5. National Comparison</b> .....	<b>50</b>
5.1 Data Sources .....	50
5.2 Intended length of stay .....	51
5.3 Key Demographics.....	51
5.4 English Language Skills .....	56
<b>6. Policy Implications</b> .....	<b>58</b>
<b>7. Future Research</b> .....	<b>60</b>
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	<b>62</b>
<b>APPENDICES</b> .....	<b>64</b>

# List of Figures

Figure 4.1.1: Motivations for moving to Wales .....	12
Figure 4.2.1: Geo-distribution of respondents .....	13
Figure 4.2.2: Geo-distribution preferred destinations and where they moved .....	14
Figure 4.2.3: Gender distribution.....	15
Figure 4.2.4: Sexual orientation distribution.....	15
Figure 4.2.5: Religion breakdown.....	16
Figure 4.2.6: Age distribution.....	17
Figure 4.3.1: Partnership status .....	17
Figure 4.3.2: Parental Status .....	18
Figure 4.4.1: Dependent children and adult dependent residents in household .....	18
Figure 4.4.2: Housing Tenure .....	19
Figure 4.4.3: Number of residents per household.....	20
Figure 4.5.1: Qualification Levels .....	23
Figure 4.5.2: Economic activity .....	23
Figure 4.5.3: Types of Employment.....	26
Figure 4.5.4: Previous and current industrial sectors of employment .....	27
Figure 4.5.5: Word clouds for industrial sectors .....	28
Figure 4.5.6: Desired industrial sector amongst respondents .....	28
Figure 4.6.1: Preferred language.....	29
Figure 4.6.2: Self-reported English language abilities .....	30
Figure 4.6.3: Four aspects of English language abilities .....	30
Figure 4.6.4: Gender differences in English abilities.....	31
Figure 4.6.5: Age differences in English abilities.....	31
Figure 4.6.6: English ability index.....	32
Figure 4.6.7: Self-reported Welsh language abilities .....	33
Figure 4.6.8: Willingness to learn Welsh .....	33
Figure 4.7.1: Perceptions of ESOL classes.....	34
Figure 4.7.2: Gender differences for access to ESOL classes .....	35
Figure 4.7.3: Gender differences for whether ESOL classes meets needs.....	35
Figure 4.7.4: MDS correlation visualisation for ease of engagement dimensions.....	36
Figure 4.8.1: Prevalence of long-term health conditions .....	39
Figure 4.8.2: Health condition types.....	40
Figure 4.9.1: Institutional engagements .....	42
Figure 4.9.2: Ranks for institutional engagement mean scores.....	44
Figure 4.9.3: How long respondents plan to stay in Wales .....	47
Figure 4.9.4: Levels of happiness.....	48
Figure 4.9.5: Happiness index.....	48
Figure 5.2.1: Future plans of recent arrivals in UK and Wales .....	51
Figure 5.3.1: Genders of recent arrivals in UK and Wales.....	52
Figure 5.3.2: Ages of recent arrivals in UK and Wales.....	52
Figure 5.3.3: Partnership status of recent arrivals in UK and Wales .....	53
Figure 5.3.4: Parental status of recent arrivals in UK and Wales.....	54
Figure 5.3.5: Children per household in Wales and UK.....	54
Figure 5.3.6: Qualification status of recent arrivals in Wales and UK.....	55
Figure 5.4.1: English ability for migrants in Wales and Hong Kong citizens .....	56

# Executive Summary

## Introduction

Following the brutal crackdown of democratic protests and the imposition of National Security Law by the Chinese Government on Hong Kong in July 2020, hundreds of thousands of Hong Kong citizens were fleeing the territory. In January 2021, the British Government introduced a new immigration route and a bespoke visa scheme for the British National (Overseas) (BNO) passport holders in Hong Kong, giving them the right to come to the UK to live, work or study. By June 2022, there were 140,500 applications and approximately 258,000-322,400 Hong Kongers are expected to move to the UK in the next five years. It has been estimated that as many as 932,000 were considering applying. As part of the Hong Kong Welcome Programme, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) introduced a £43m support package to help BN(O) arrivals to settle in the UK. Funding was distributed to devolved nations and local authorities and 12 Welcome Hubs were set up across the UK with existing Strategic Migration Partnerships (SMPs), including the Wales SMP (WSMP) and the Hong Kong Welcome Hub in Wales.

## The Welcome Survey 2022

In order to find out who arrives in Wales and what integration support they need, the WSMP commissioned Data Crymu to conduct a Welcome Survey in late 2021, with data collection taking place in mid-May to mid-June 2022. The questionnaire was modelled after a survey by the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities. The online self-completion survey was available in three languages: Traditional Chinese, English and Welsh, and it was promoted on the Welcome Hub webpage and via various Hong Kong community groups. Questions were organised in seven broad areas: key demographics, motivation for moving to Wales, accommodation and housing, education and employment, language skills, health status and concerns, and ease of settling in new life. A total of 153 responses were returned with two-thirds of respondents answering in Traditional Chinese and one-third in English. The survey generated both quantitative and qualitative findings. Cardiff University School of Social Sciences was commissioned to conduct detailed data analysis and to produce a survey report. Findings from the survey analysis and recommendations are intended to inform policy and service planning in the areas that Hong Kongers deemed important to them, especially in targeting service delivery for the second year of the Hong Kong BN(O) Visa Scheme project in Wales.

## Findings

Housing (96%) and job opportunities (78%) are the two main motivations for Moving to Wales, followed by Welsh culture (69%). The majority settled in Cardiff (74%), with the remaining scattered in Swansea (6%), Rhondda Cynon Taf (5%), Vale of Glamorgan (4%), Caerphilly (3%) and Newport (2%). Just under half (46%) said they intended to stay permanently in Wales with a further 37% saying they will stay for five or more years.

## Key demographics

Nine out of ten respondents were BN (O) visa holders. A higher proportion of respondents were females (57%) and the majority (86%) identified themselves as heterosexual. Half (49%) identified as Christians and 43% said they had no religion. The majority were of working age: 22-44 (51%) and 45-64 (46%). Eight in ten were married or living with a partner (82%) and 44% were parents with school-age children in the household.

## Housing and Accommodation

While just under half (43%) were renting, a further 22% said they 'intend to own', indicating that they were likely to be also renting. Only 26% of respondents were own-occupiers. This is significantly lower compared with findings from national surveys. This may suggest that those who moved to Wales have lower levels of assets. Many

respondents (54%) especially those who were renting (64%) faced persistent barriers in finding appropriate housing. Landlords demanding up to 12 months' rent up front was common due to the lack of British credit and rental history, and a billing address.

## Education and Employment

Consistent with national patterns, the majority of Hong Kong recent arrivals (61%) were highly qualified with a university degree. Only 60% were employed, significantly lower than the national average of 74% in Wales. Barriers to employment were identified to be lacking language skills, ageism and discrimination. Living costs is a constant worry among Hong Kongers, with 70% saying it is a current concern. Among those in work, four in ten were working part-time. Many could not find work in the sector previously worked in while in Hong Kong. There is a high concentration of recent arrivals (37%) in Retail, Tourism and Hospitality and a much lower proportion in professional sectors such as IT, Law, Health, Social care and government. It is possible that many went for temporary fill-in jobs while looking for something more permanent. It is also likely that some were overqualified and underemployed.

## Language Skills

Despite 60% of respondents had a university degree, six out of ten were concerned about their English language skills, with the preferred language of

73% is Cantonese. Only 47% said they can understand spoken English and 50% can speak good English. The proportion of 'very good' English skills is rather low from 7.3% (reading) to 1% (speaking). There is a small gender difference in English language abilities, but older Hong Kongers have significantly lower language skills. Findings from the English Ability Index show that the unemployed, those with illness and lower qualification had the lowest English ability scores. This indicates an urgent need for targeted support and enhanced access to ESOL classes for these groups.

Nearly half of the respondents (46%) said local ESOL classes were not available and 37% said ESOL classes did not meet their needs. Analysis shows that lack of access to ESOL classes is highly correlated with barriers to accessing other institutions such as employment and support services. These findings once again suggest that Hong Kongers face persistent barriers in getting the support they need in integrating into life in Wales. Online classes were mentioned to be an alternative to improve provision particularly for those with childcare and work commitments.

While most respondents have little Welsh language abilities but over half (56%) said they would like to learn citing improved job opportunities, supporting children at school and integration into local culture as reasons.

## Health Status and Concerns

Among the 12% who reported having a health concern, 32% of them were mental health issues. This is hardly surprising and likely to be under-reported given the stigma involved and the trauma many had endured as a result of violent crackdown of the democratic movements in Hong Kong. Equally concerning is that 40% of respondents experienced difficulties in [accessing the health services](#), despite having paid for the Immigration Health Surcharge. Post-covid telephone consultation at GP surgeries present further barriers as many struggled to describe illness and symptoms in English.

## Barriers to Integration

Among the 'settling-in' dimensions, most respondents found adjusting to life in Wales easy but faced most barriers in accessing housing, employment, health services and English classes. Others also reported difficulties in finding a school for their children due to the lack of timely information and knowing where to get help. Repeated report of concerns over discrimination, inequalities and hate crimes is also evidence for urgent policy intervention. On a positive note, social media has proved to be an important gateway to digital integration as many Hong Kongers found help and support online as well as valuable information relating to local culture and services.

## Happiness in Wales

An overwhelming majority (86%) said they were very happy or happy after moving to Wales. Those who were long-term illness or unemployed had the lowest 'happiness' score.

### Policy Implications

There is clear evidence that new Hong Kongers need additional support in building a new life in Wales. While WSMP and the Hong Kong Visa Scheme Project has provided a platform for multi-agency and cross-sector joint working, more needs to be done. Hong Kongers do not have access to services available to asylum seekers or refugees. No Recourse to Public Fund places those on low-income at risk of destitution. Compelling evidence from the survey findings suggest these areas are in need of urgent policy attention:

- **Schooling and Education** - prioritise provision of post-18 education and access to funding for younger Hong Kongers, many of whom are university students but had not finished their degrees. Enhance support for children needing to re-take a year in school.
- **Housing** - better information for landlords and letting agents to support Hong Kongers with no rental/credit history. Enforce the

new Renting Homes Act which increases landlords' responsibilities and renters' rights.

- **Employment** – careers services and better information for vacancies is urgently needed to help Hong Kongers transition into sustainable employment commensurate with their qualifications.
- **Language classes** – increase childcare support and flexibility, diversify the mode of provision of ESOL classes to include online sessions. Wider provision of Welsh language classes is also desirable.
- **Healthcare services** – interpretation services for telephone consultation and better information on finding a NHS dentist.
- **Integration and Social Network** – work with communities such as Hong Kongers' informal support groups, faith groups, as well as Welsh local organisations to enhance opportunities for multi-cultural integration.
- **Social Media /Digital Integration** – improve information sharing of support groups via social media, gateway to digital integration to the wider Welsh society.

# 1. Introduction

In January 2021, the UK government launched a new visa scheme for the British National (Overseas) passport holders in Hong Kong, following the imposition of the National Security Law by the Chinese government on the former British colony. Under this new visa scheme, Hong Kong citizens born before 1 July 1997 and their direct family members can move to the UK to live, study and work. This visa scheme is seen as the UK government's commitment to residents who selected to retain British affiliation by becoming a British National (Overseas) after the sovereignty of Hong Kong was transferred to China in 1997. Among the 5.2 million Hong Kong people (2.9 million BN(O) status holders and 2.3 million dependants) who are eligible to move to the UK, Home Office estimated that between 123,000 and 153,700 BN(O)s and their dependants will move to the UK in the first year and a further 258,000 – 322,400 will arrive in the next five years ([Home Office News Team 2022](#)).

Statistics show that within the first year (January 2021- March 2022) 113,742 visas were granted with a 92% success rate. By the end of June 2022, 140,500 applications were received (Home Office 2022). Research by the [Migration Observatory](#) (2021) has estimated that as many as 932,000 Hong Kong BN(O)s were considering applying.<sup>1</sup> While the majority of recent Hong Kong arrivals are BN(O) visa holders, a small number, especially political activists, have entered the UK seeking asylum and some 7,000 were granted 'Leave Outside the Rules' to BN(O)s between July 2020 and January 2021 before the visa scheme came into effect (Home Office News Team, 2022). It is noteworthy that the timing of these arrivals coincided with the beginning of the post-Brexit immigration era which marks the end of free movement and the sharp decline of EU migrants in the UK. Economic forecasts estimate that the net benefit of the arrivals will be between £2.4 billion and £2.9 billion over the next five years (Home Office News Team, 2022). These initial estimates alone indicate that the

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<sup>1</sup> See the Migration Observatory briefing on migration intentions of British National (Overseas) status holders in Hong Kong (Kan et al. 2021).

BN(O) visa scheme will give a significant boost to the UK post-Brexit and post-Covid economy.

As part of the Hong Kong UK Welcome Programme, the [Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities \(DLUHC\)](#) introduced a £43m support package to help BN(O) arrivals to settle in the UK. Funding was distributed to devolved nations and local authorities and 12 Welcome Hubs were set up across the UK with the existing Strategic Migration Partnerships (SMPs), including the Wales Strategic Migration Partnership ([WSMP](#)) and the [Hong Kong Welcome Hub in Wales](#).

A number of studies have been undertaken to better understand these recent Hong Kong arrivals in terms of key demographics, motivations for moving, and ease of settlement. Most research was conducted at regional levels including the Welcome Survey in Wales. This report represents the first systematic examination of the Hong Kong arrivals in Wales in the following aspects:

1. Key demographics
2. Motivations for moving to Wales
3. Accommodation and housing
4. Education and Employment
5. Languages proficiency
6. Health status and concerns
7. Ease of settling in new life

In addition to providing an accurate socio-demographic profile of recent Hong Kong migrants in Wales, this study also aims to identify the needs of these newcomers when settling in their new life in Wales, and where data permits, the extent to which they differ from those settling in other parts of the UK. This report concludes with a number of policy implications. Prior to presenting the findings of the Welcome Survey a brief overview of the BN(O) nationality status highlighting the context leading to the new immigration legislation is necessary.

## 2. Background and Context

### 2.1 The British Nationals (Overseas) status

British Nationals (Overseas) status, introduced in 1986, is one of many types of British nationality in the hierarchy of British citizenship 'created for Hong Kong people so that they could retain a form of British nationality and connections to the UK after the handover to China in 1997' in line with the Sino-British Joint Declaration in 1984 (Home Office, 2020). The BN(O) status, the latest reconfiguration of Hong Kong people's nationality, is widely regarded as a generous exception of the UK government's otherwise hostile and restrictive immigration regime. Historically, the nationality status of Hong Kong people had undergone several changes subsequent to a series of British nationality and immigration legislations. Like all other people across the British Empire, Hong Kong citizens were once British subjects until the 1948 British Nationality Act made them Citizens of the UK and Colonies (CUKC). Their right of abode in the UK as CUKC was stripped by the Commonwealth Immigration Act 1962. They then became British Dependent Territories Citizens (BDTC) since the 1981 British Nationality Act. BDTCs were eligible to apply for an BN(O) since 1986. Applications for BN(O)s were open until 30 June 1997 and the status cannot be passed on to family members. Crucially, unlike their counterparts in other former British colonies and overseas territories, Hong Kong people were never granted the status of British Overseas Citizens (BOC) and have always been subject to immigration controls.<sup>2</sup> Fast forwarding to 2021, the bespoke BN(O) visa scheme, generous though it may seem compared to other immigration routes, does not afford its holders the benefits British citizens enjoy. While there is no income threshold to apply, No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) means BN(O)s are not entitled social housing, state benefits, home student fees at university, ESOL classes<sup>3</sup>, and they must pay to access the National Health Service. However, those who can prove that they are on low-income can apply for funding to help meet their essential living costs including rent and child well-being.

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<sup>2</sup> See Benson (2021) for a full and insightful analysis of Hong Kongers and the coloniality of British citizenship.

<sup>3</sup> Provision is made for people with NRPF and ESOL by the UK government in England but not in Wales.

## Who can apply for an BN(O) visa and how?

The BN(O) visa enables holders and their eligible family members to move to the UK to live, study and work. Applicants can either apply for thirty months and later extend for an additional thirty months or apply for the full five years at once. Alongside providing an opportunity to live in the UK for up to five years, the scheme is also a pathway to citizenship. After the initial five years of continuous residence in the UK, BN(O) visa holders and their families can apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) and become eligible for full UK citizenship after 12 months of ILR status.<sup>4</sup> Visa fees vary according to the length of initial stay. A five-year visas costs £250 per person and a thirty-month visa costs £180. To be successful, applicants must further demonstrate financial means by providing evidence that they can accommodate and support themselves and their dependants over the first six months of arrival, in addition to paying the Immigration Health Surcharge. Any BN(O)s can apply to come to the UK with their immediate family, including co-resident family members who are dependent on the main applicant for their care. The visa scheme is to be extended in Autumn 2022 to allow young people born after 1 July 1997 who are not BN(O) visa holders to apply in their own right as long as they have at least one BN(O) parent.

Applications can be made digitally using the 'UK Immigration: ID Check App'. This can be accessed in the UK or abroad including Hong Kong to any applicant with a BN(O), EEA biometric passport and (post 2019) HK SAR biometric passports. For non-digital applications, applicants must visit either a Visa Application Centre or UK Visa and Citizenship Application Services (UKVCAS). In both offline and digital applications, evidence must be provided on (i) a BN(O) visa holder status or (ii) the relationship to a BN(O) holder. Applicants must also provide a valid tuberculosis test certificate from a Home Office endorsed clinic.

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<sup>4</sup> The 'Hong Kong BN(O) Visa Route Media Factsheet' (2022), published by the Home Office news team provides detailed information of the scheme such as visa fees, eligibility, application processes, and entitlements.

## 2.2 Geo-distribution of settlement

Results from the [Hong Kongers in Britain survey \(2021\)](#) found that vast majority of recent arrivals preferred England as their destination of settlement in the UK. The top preference within the UK was London accounting for 42% of the respondents. The second most preferred destination was Manchester (12%), followed by Birmingham and Bristol. Respondent quotes suggest that these location preferences may be based on 'loose familiarity' of 'name' and 'reputation' (HKB, 2021). Nonetheless a key implication of such findings is that Hong Kongers are more likely to settle in urban rather than rural areas. To date, the 'Where Will Hongkongers stay in Britain Report' (HKB, 2021) is the only source on where Hong Kongers wish to settle. Figures show only a small proportion (1.5%) of arrivals said they would like to come to Wales (HKB, 2021). The report found that Cardiff ranks at 24<sup>th</sup> of preferred local council to settle in (HKB, 2021). A breakdown of local authority in relation to settlement intention is given later in the key demographic section.

## 2.3 Who are the BN(O)s in the UK?

In 2021, the Home Office commissioned [IFF](#) Research to conduct a more systematic study: *Survey of Hong Kong British National (Overseas) visa holders*. The aim of the study was to provide initial insights into key socio-demographics of the BN(O) visa holders, their spouse, and children.<sup>5</sup> The published report in 2022 summarises the key findings of the socio-demographics of recent Hong Kong BN(O) arrivals. A more detailed comparison of these results with those of the Welcome Survey in Wales is presented in the national comparison section.

According to the [Home Office survey](#), the majority (61%) of BN(O) visa main applicants are of working age between 35 to 54, with slightly more females (52%) than male. Almost all were either married (72%) or living with a partner (27%), and

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<sup>5</sup> The survey consists of a random sample of 500 BN(O) visa holders living in the UK. Data collection took place in two phases in April to May 2021 and August to September 2021, each reaching 250 participants. The results were weighted by age, gender and whether it was an in-country/out of country application, to reflect the overall visa holder BN(O) population. Only the main applicants who had been granted BN (O) visas at time of research were included in the sample.

90% are currently living with their spouses in the UK. About two thirds of the BN(O)s have dependent children, and 93% of these are co-resident children in the UK. Interestingly, 23% of the respondents also reported having children aged 18 or above living with them. Most BN(O)s are highly qualified professionals with 69% having a degree or higher degree, 50% in management or professional occupations, with a further 26% as associate professionals. Almost all but 2% planned to stay longer than the duration of their visa.

## 2.4 Challenges experienced by new arrivals

Like all immigrants who are building a new life in a strange place, it is not difficult to imagine the multiple challenges experienced by these recent arrivals. The most commonly reported issues are related to access to affordable housing, employment, health services and language training.

### Housing and Accommodation

Finding a place to live is by far the number one priority on arrival for most immigrants. Recent Hong Kong BN(O)s are no exceptions. However, those who do not have sufficient funds to buy a property on arrival rely heavily on private rentals because they are not entitled to local authority housing as part of the No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) condition on their visa. Three quarters of respondents of a survey conducted by Hong Kongers in Britain said that finding accommodation was their top difficulty on arrival (HKB, 2021). A major barrier to access rental housing was the lack of a UK credit history, employers', and landlord reference. The extremely over-heated rental market further exacerbates these difficulties. Many unscrupulous landlords and estate agents had been reported to charge 12 months' rent upfront. Given the fact that most Hong Kongers had already paid a significant sum on their visa fees and Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS), this creates a further significant financial barrier for them to find quality and affordable housing. A [UKHK settlement survey](#) (2021) has found that two-thirds of Hong Kongers they interviewed intended to buy a property within the next two years. Paying 12 months' rent upfront greatly inhibits their

flexibility to buy and takes away the much-needed fund for a deposit and associated cost on a property.

## Employment

The Hongkongers in Britain [employment survey](#) helps provide initial information on the labour market integration of the recent arrivals. The survey indicates that Hong Kong migrants are extremely qualified, with just over two thirds (69.2%) of respondents having a university education or higher (HKB, 2021). This is consistent with the findings of the Home Office national survey in 2021 as well as other studies<sup>6</sup>. Despite being highly qualified, only 30.8% of recent arrivals were reported to have successfully found a job, with the vast majority (94.4%) having left their previous post in Hong Kong (HKB, 2021). A critical reason for recent arrivals not yet securing employment is the waiting time for national insurance numbers (NINOs). This is compounded by other barriers such as low English language proficiency, lack of relevant qualifications or skills and problems with proving the right to work (HKB, 2021) for not being able to gain employment. Another common issue is to do with the lack of transferability of their Hong Kong qualifications in some occupations such as teaching and trades (plumbers, electricians or decorators) ([Rolfe and Chan, 2022](#)).

## Access to Healthcare Services

Access to the National Health Service used to be free for all foreign visitors including international students and people on temporary work visas. This was removed by the Conservative government in 2015 who introduced the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) for all visitors staying more than six months in the UK, based on the belief that it would deter 'healthcare tourism'. The IHS is a condition attached to the BN(O) Visa Scheme. Applicants must pay the application visa fee as well as the associated IHS for each member in the family at the point of application. The annual cost of the surcharge is £623 for adults and £470 for those under the age of 18. This is an upfront cost and cannot be paid by instalment. The amount payable depends on the length of

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<sup>6</sup> See for example the surveys conducted by UKHK (Welcome Churches) in 2021 and 2022, <https://ukhk.org/survey>

the visa applied. For instance, a coupled family with two school-age children applying for a five-year visa would be paying £10,940 just to access NHS services.<sup>7</sup> Since a large number of Hong Kongers had experienced a unprecedented level of trauma as a result of the crackdown on democratic protests in 2019 and in some cases police brutality, access to quality healthcare, especially mental health services is essential for the Hong Kongers in the UK.

### English Language Skills and Access to ESOL Classes

A lack of language proficiency is a major barrier for immigrant and refugee integration in their settled country. (Cheung and Heath, 2007, Phillimore, 2011, Cheung and Phillimore, 2014). Access to English language classes is essential for Hong Kongers to transition into employment and their daily life. The Learning and Work Institute identified three 'learning routes' for Hong Kong migrants arriving in Britain: English and Additional Language (EAL) support in schools; language support for students in higher education; and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) classes. The first two routes are important for the children of visa holders whereas ESOL classes are far more important for adults. Reasons for needing additional English classes include finding work suited to their skills level, educational progression, helping children with school, accessing health and social services, daily tasks such as shopping, and general integration into local communities (Rolfe and Stevenson, 2021).

Funding and provision for ESOL classes across the UK is at best inconsistent since it is devolved to different nations and local authorities. Unlike most refugees<sup>8</sup>, HK BN(O)s have no Recourse to Public Fund (NRPF) and therefore are not eligible for free ESOL classes. Funds for ESOL classes in England is £850 per person but funding level is different in devolved nations, where funds are made available to support ESOL or other provisions such as Flash Academy. ESOL classes are not specifically designed for Hong Kong migrants. Many Afghans, Ukrainians and refugees from other countries also take them. As such, the needs of ESOL participants can vary significantly. Many

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<sup>7</sup> However, registering with a doctor (GP) is not dependent on nationality or immigration status and does not require proof of address.

<sup>8</sup> Some refugees have NRPF as a condition of their leave.

Hong Kong BN(O)s are already proficient in English and therefore their need for intermediate and advanced ESOL or professional English classes may be higher. For those who cannot gain access to an ESOL class, private sector provision is common across the country. Accessibility has been bolstered by most private classes being delivered online. It has been found that online courses were effective for developing reading and writing skills, many respondents felt that they were restrictive for speaking and listening skills (Rolfe and Stevenson, 2021). Many of these challenges are similarly experienced by Hong Kong BN(O)s who arrived in Wales since 2021. The next section will present the main findings of the Welcome Survey in Wales.

### 3. Methods and Data Collection

In order to better understand the needs of recent migrants from Hong Kong, the Wales Strategic Migration Partnership (WSMP) commissioned a Welcome Survey in 2022. In addition to collecting basic socio-demographic information of the Hong Kongers, the aim of the survey was also to identify their reasons for moving to Wales, ease or difficulty in adapting life in Wales and to accessing services, as well as the kind of integration support they need.

The questionnaire design was modelled after a survey produced by the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, (COSLA). The demographic questions were aligned with standard equality monitoring questions and 2021 Census questions to allow for comparison with other surveys. The survey collected both quantitative and qualitative data. The draft questionnaire was sent to key stakeholders for comments<sup>9</sup> and revised following feedback. Once the questionnaire was finalised, [Data Cymru](#) was commissioned to carry out the survey online and to collate the survey responses and results into a basic report. The survey opened on the 24/5/22 and closed on the 21/6/22 and was available in Traditional Chinese, English and Welsh. The survey was promoted on the WSMP Hong Kong BN(O) Scheme Welcome Hub webpage and to community groups and key individuals.<sup>10</sup>

The survey obtained 153 responses in total with 145 complete and 8 partially complete questionnaires. Two-thirds of respondents answered in Traditional Chinese and one-third in English. No questionnaire was completed in Welsh.



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<sup>9</sup> These are mainly Hong Konger community groups in Wales, Data Cymru and members of the WSMP Multi-agency BN(O) Scheme Working Group.

<sup>10</sup> Data were collected using a convenience; non-random sample so no statistical inferences can be made. The sample (N=153) was also too small to conduct multivariate analyses.

**3/10** respondents answered in **English**, with 70% in **Traditional Chinese**.

Some questions in the survey invited participants to give open responses. The responses in Traditional Chinese were translated into English for the purpose of this report. It is important to note that although many respondents have come under the BN(O) visa scheme, some have not:



**9/10** respondents are **BN(O) visa holders**, with 7% not holding a BN(O) visa

and the remaining preferring not to say. It is possible that some of these non BN(O)s have already obtained British citizenship granted to certain key workers when Hong Kong's sovereignty was returned to China in 1997.<sup>11</sup> Many of these British passport holders chose not to leave Hong Kong until the imposition of the National Security Law in 2020.

Cardiff University School of Social Sciences was commissioned to conduct a more detailed data analysis and to produce a survey report. The findings from the survey analysis and recommendations are intended to inform policy and service planning in the areas that Hong Kongers deemed important to them, especially in targeting service delivery for the second year of the Hong Kong BN(O) Visa Scheme project in Wales.

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<sup>11</sup> The Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989 saw an exodus of highly qualified upper middle-class Hong Kongers emigrating to Australia, Canada and New Zealand, which was seen to be a serious threat to the economy. To provide a 'safety exit' (or "passport to stay") for the elites in Hong Kong, the British National (Hong Kong) Act (1990) offered full citizenship, on a points-based system, with right of abode in Britain to 50,000 Hong Kong key workers deemed essential to the colony's continuing economic success until 1997.

# 4. Survey Findings

## 4.1 Motivations for Moving

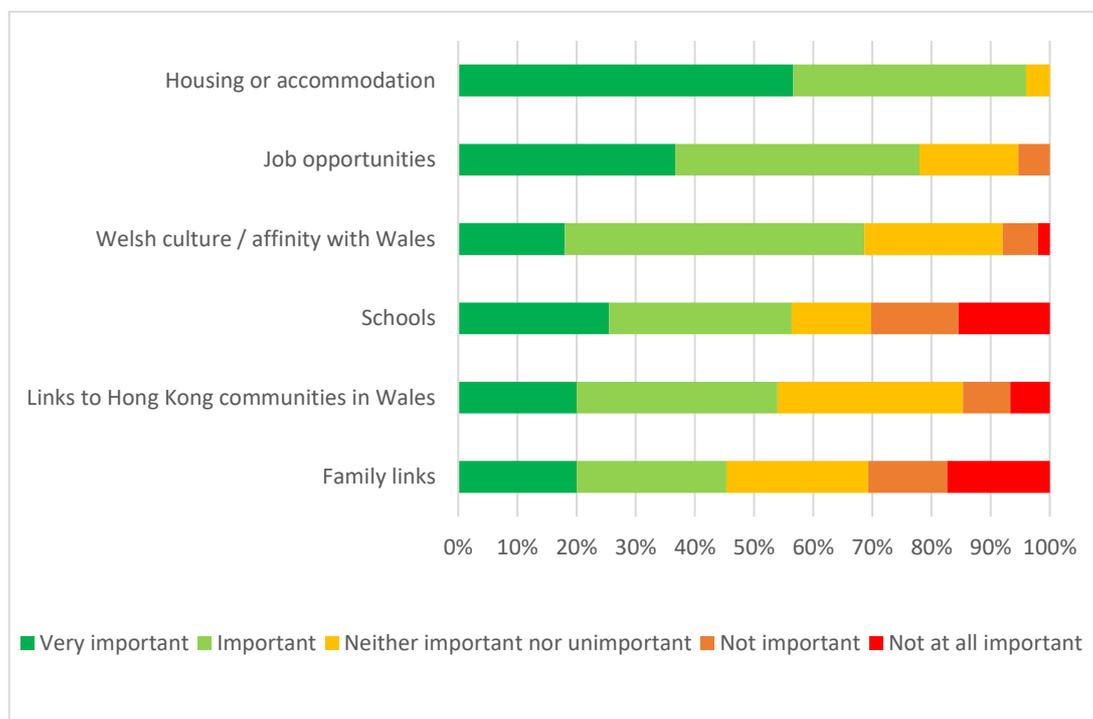


Figure 4.1.1: Motivations for moving to Wales

Figure 4.1.1<sup>12</sup> provides the first evidence of motivational factors for moving to Wales amongst recent Hong Kong migrants. Six options were provided for motivational factors: Welsh culture, links to Hong Kong communities in Wales, family links, housing and accommodation, job opportunities and schools. The two most salient motivations for moving to Wales amongst respondents were housing (96% of respondents) and job opportunities (78% of respondents). As can be seen in Figure 4.1.1 five out of the six factors are deemed important by over half of the respondents. The only exception to this is family links, which was important to 45% of respondents. The third most important motivation for moving to Wales was Welsh culture/ affinity of Wales which 69% of respondents deemed important. Over half of respondents (56.4%) considered schooling an important motivational factor for moving to Wales. Not surprisingly, this figure is higher amongst parents, reaching 85% when compared to all respondents. Additionally, respondents also mentioned under “other reasons” that the environment

<sup>12</sup> All data presented in this section draw from the Wales Welcome Survey unless otherwise stated.

was a key reason for moving to Wales: “better coastal weather”, “easy access to the sea”, “warmer in the south” and “lots of mountains”. The cost of living and “multi-racial/cultural” integration were both mentioned a couple of times.

## 4.2 Demographics

In this section key demographic features of recent Hong Kong migrants in Wales are described. These range from geo-distribution of migrants, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and marital/relationship status and family structure. Many key demographics are compared to the wider nationwide (UK) picture in Section 5 in this report.

### Geo-Distribution

Wales consists of 22 local authorities operating in four different police regions: South Wales, North Wales, Gwent and Dyfed-Powys. Respondents’ geo-distributions are presented based on these local authorities rather than specific villages, towns, and cities.

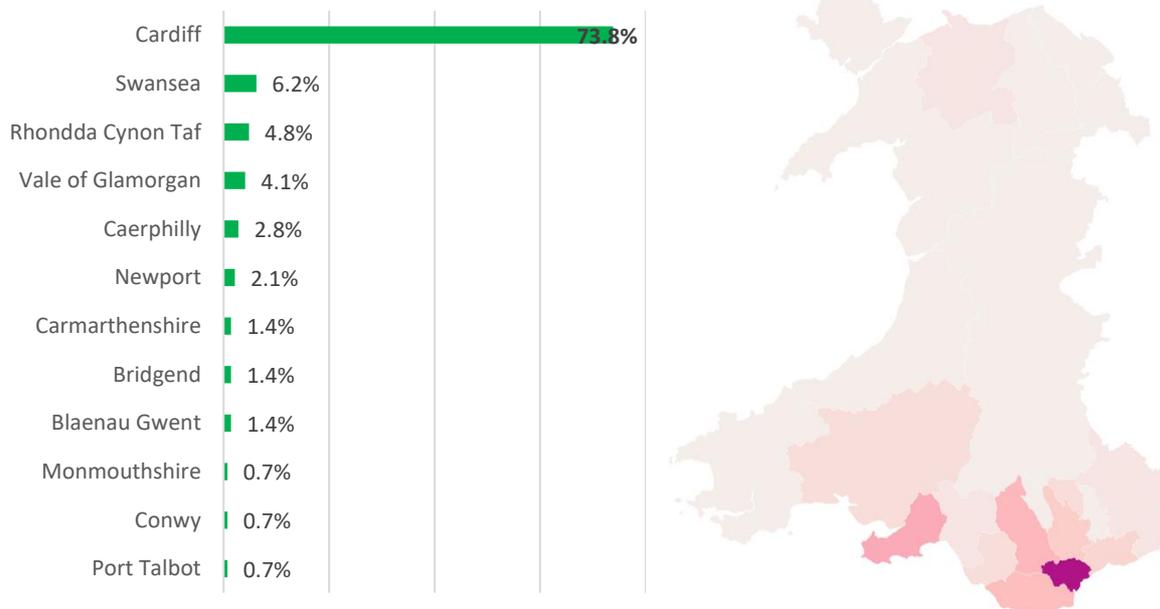


Figure 4.2.1: Geo-distribution of respondents

As can be seen from Figure 4.2.1, an overwhelming majority of respondents settled in Cardiff (73.8%). Conversely, no survey respondents reported living in the more rural local authorities: Isle of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Denbighshire, Flintshire, Wrexham, Powys, Ceredigion, Pembrokeshire, Merthyr Tydfil and Torfaen. Each of the remaining local authorities contain less than 10% of respondents, with slightly higher proportions seen in Swansea (6.2%), Rhondda Cynon Taf (4.8%), Vale of Glamorgan (4.1%), Caerphilly (2.8%) and Newport (2.1%). Significantly all these local authorities, along with Cardiff, are located in South Wales. Lower prevalence was found in Bridgend, Carmarthenshire Blaenau Gwent (all accounting for 1.4%); and 0.7% in Conwy, Port Talbot and Monmouthshire. Discrepancies are evident between where recent arrivals actually settled compared with their preferred destination. Figure 4.2.2 compares this report's findings with where arrivals were forecasted to settle by Hongkongers in Britain (2021).

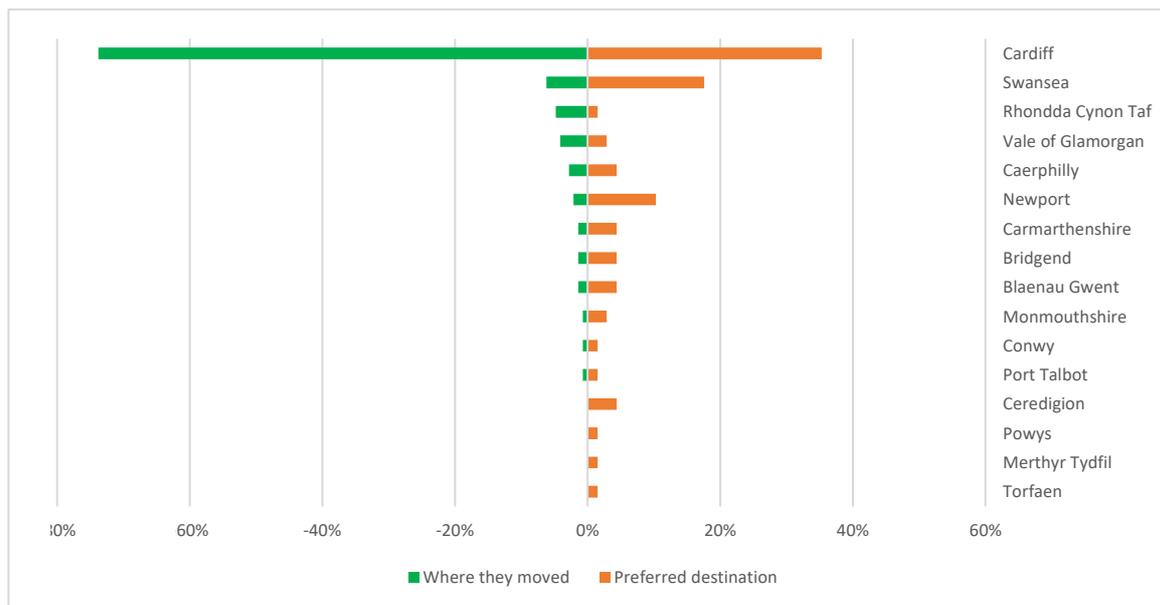


Figure 4.2.2: Geo-distribution preferred destinations and where they moved

Although the preferred destination<sup>13</sup> for the majority of arrivals was Cardiff (35.3%), findings in this report indicate that the extent is far greater than HKB had estimated (73.8%). Similar mismatches were evident in Swansea, with this report's figures (6.2%) being 11.4% lower than the HKB estimates (17.6%). The final significant

<sup>13</sup> Source: Where Will Hongkongers Stay in Britain? Survey Report on Hong Kong BN(O) Arrivals' Preferred Destinations (HKB, 2021)

mismatch is seen in Newport, where HKB overestimated the number of arrivals by 8.2%. To summarise, respondents initial preferred destinations reported by HKB (2021) envisages a more even distribution of settlement across Wales, with other urban areas such as Newport and Swansea having higher prevalence of arrivals. In addition, the preferred destination also estimated higher numbers of arrivals in more rural local authorities such as Monmouthshire. Instead, results from the Wales Welcome survey indicate that arrivals have moved to Cardiff in higher volumes (nearly 74%) than previous studies had estimated.

### Gender

Results indicate that there are slightly more female migrants (57%) from Hong Kong in Wales than male (41.6%). Subsequent survey questions explored whether respondents identify as transgender, or a different gender to which they were assigned at birth. Almost all the respondents (99%) identify as the same gender as assigned at birth, with the remaining respondents preferring not to say (1%)<sup>14</sup>.

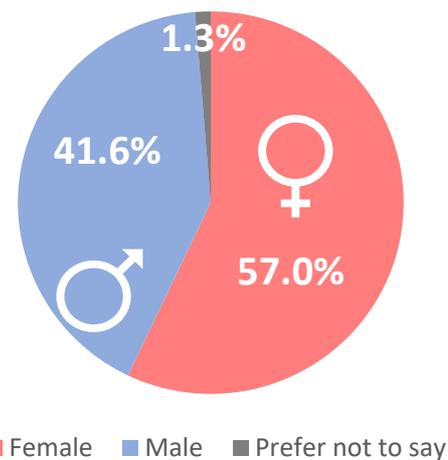


Figure 3.2.3: Gender distribution

### Sexual Orientation

The majority of respondents self-identified as heterosexual (86.2%), with 4.2% bisexual respondents, 1.4% gay respondents and 0.7% lesbian respondents. Some respondents also identified as having 'other' (1.4%) sexual orientation. A small proportion of respondents (6.2%) preferred not to disclose their sexual orientation.

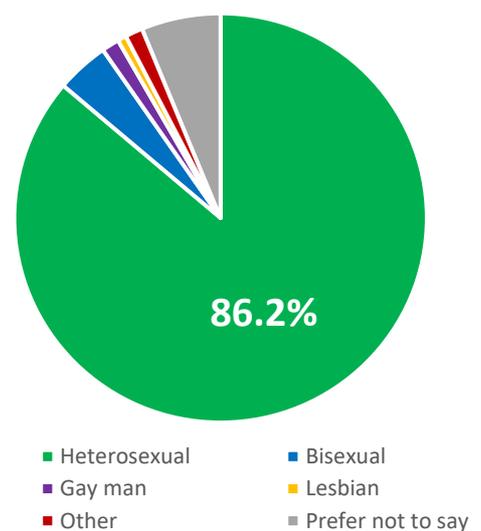


Figure 4.2.4: Sexual orientation distribution

<sup>14</sup> Not all percentages add up to 100, due to rounding up, this is consistent throughout the report

## Religion

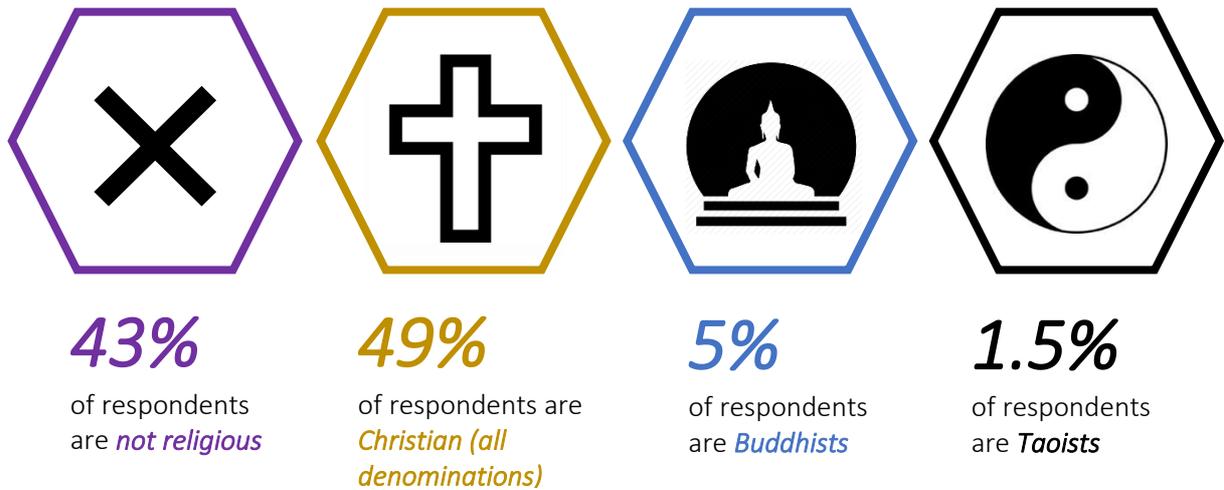


Figure 4.2.5: Religious Identity

Almost half of the respondents (49%) identified themselves as Christian (all denominations), with a small proportion reporting having other religions- Buddhist (5%) and Taoists (1.5%). Approximately four in ten respondents (43%) reported as non-religious or atheist. The extremely high prevalence of Christianity has some implications when considering how migrants have settled in. For example, many respondents indicated that church attendance is a beneficial tool in developing English language skills and general integration into local culture:

“ I work with the locals and join the local communities such as church, volunteering groups and sports clubs ”

“ (in order to improve English, I), watch English TV, return to the English church (and) communicate with British people ”

These sentiments were further explored in subsequent analyses that compared Christianity with English language skills and adjustment to Welsh life. The results indicate that 6% more Christians self-reported having good English language skills compared to non-Christians. However, no significant difference was found between Christians and non-Christians in overall happiness or adjustment to life in Wales.

## Age

The most prevalent age group is 25-44 (50.7%), followed closely by 45-64 (46%) indicating that the majority of respondents are within the working-age. Those in the age groups 16-24 or 65+ constitute only 1.4% of the sample, with a small proportion (0.7%) preferred not to say.

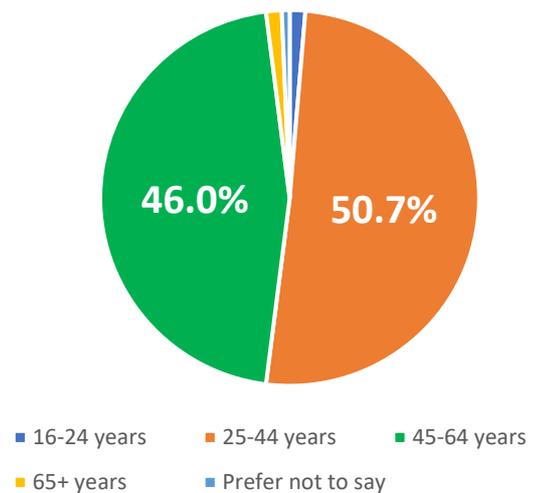


Figure 4.2.6: Age distribution

## 4.3 Marital/Partnership status and family structure

### Partnership Status

For marital/partnership status and family structure of recent Hong Kong migrants in Wales, three dimensions are explored: (1) partnership status, (2) parental status and (3) children and adult dependent residents in household

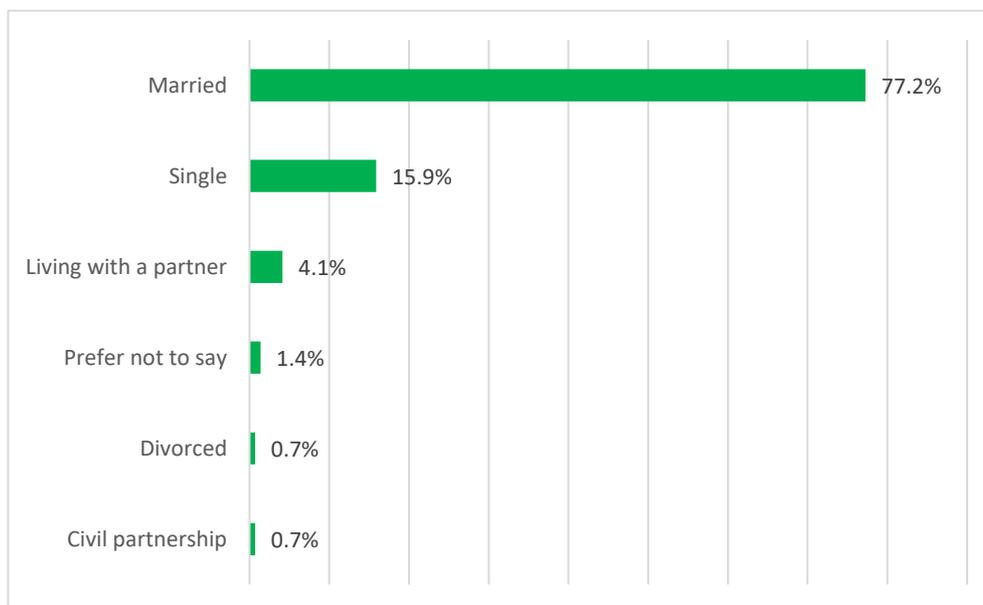


Figure 4.3.1: Partnership status

As can be seen in Figure 4.3.1 the majority of respondents are married (77.2%). Just under 16% of all respondents identified as being single. Around 52% of single respondents are female with 43% male. The economic breakdown of single

respondents is 43% employed, 30% unemployed, 17% student (all of which were male) and 4% retired. Respondents living with a partner (4.1%) or civil partnership (0.7%) accounted for about 5% of all respondents. Taken together, 82% of the respondents were either married or in a couple relationship. No respondents were separated or widowed, with a small proportion being divorced (0.7%). The remaining respondents preferring not to answer (1.4%).

**Parental Status:**

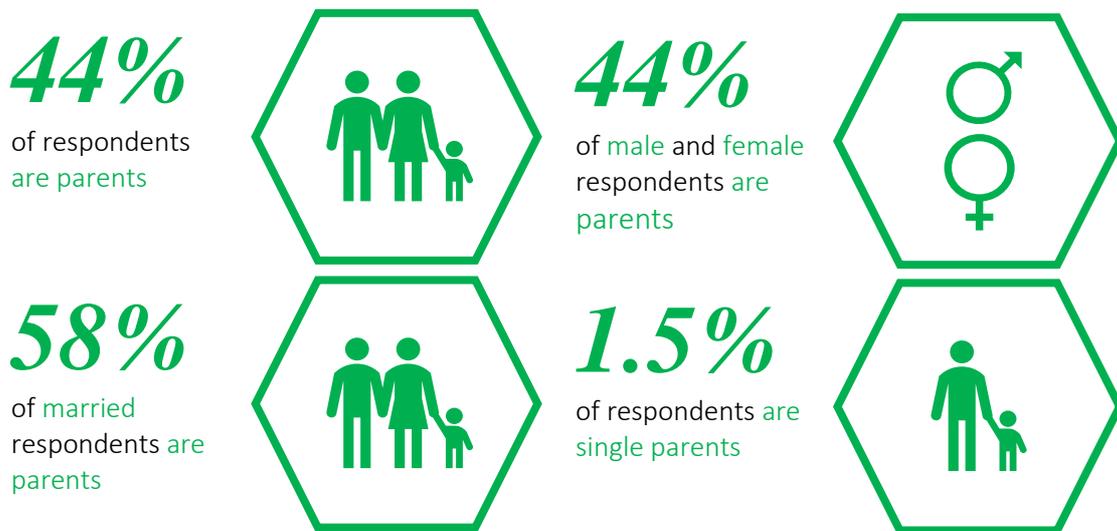


Figure 4.3.2: Parental Status

Just under half of all respondents are parents (44%) and this was consistent between genders (Figure 4.3.2). A high proportion of all married respondents were married (58%) with an extremely low prevalence of single never married parents (1.5%).

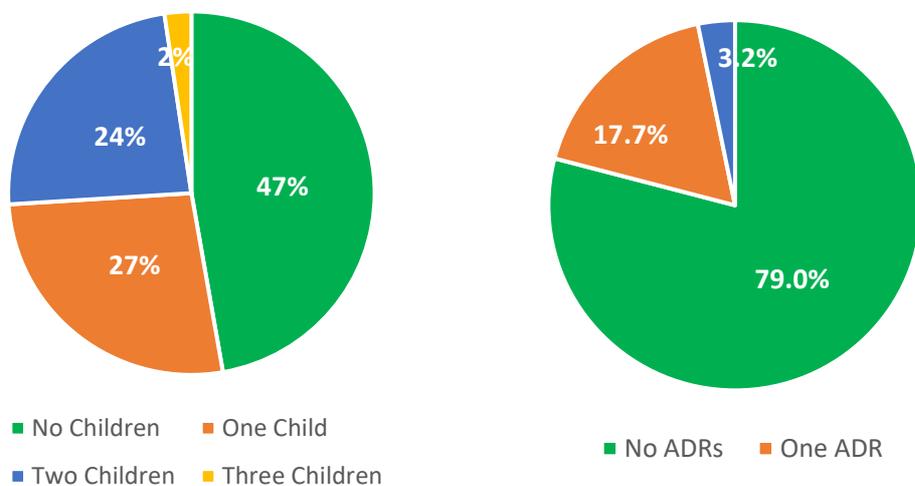


Figure 4.4.1: Dependent children and adult dependent residents in household

The pie charts in Figure 4.4.1 show prevalence of children (below the age of 18) and adult dependent residents (ADR) (18+) living with the survey respondents. The most prevalent number of children per household is one (27%) followed by two (24%). A small proportion of respondents have three or more children living with them (2%). Most respondents have no ADRs living with them (80%). Those that do have co-resident ADRs tend to only have one (17.7%) with a very small proportion having two (3.2%).

#### 4.4 Housing and Accommodation

As reported in other surveys<sup>15</sup>, finding a home to live is the top priority among Hong Kongers upon arrival but many experienced difficulties. Three dimensions are explored here: housing tenure, resident per household, concerns, and barriers to affordable housing.

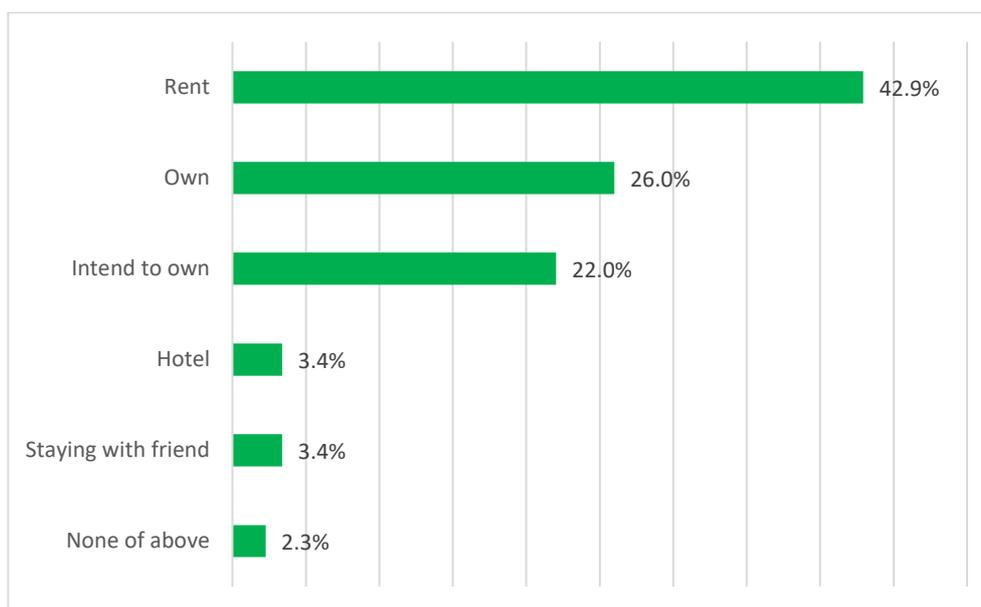


Figure 4.4.2: Housing Tenure

Figure 4.4.2 shows that the most prevalent tenure is renting (42.9%), followed by owner-occupation (26%) and intending to own (22%). It is worth noting that the majority of those who are intending to own are most likely to be currently renting.

<sup>15</sup> See for example UKHK and HKB surveys in 2021 and 2022.

This means the overall prevalence of current renters is likely to be over half of all respondents. A smaller number of respondents reported staying in hotels (3.4%) or with friends (3.4%). Nationally, the UKHK survey (2021) found that two thirds of their respondents intended to buy within two years of arrival, a significantly higher proportion than those in the Wales Survey. The assets and wealth of Hong Kongers vary considerably and the *Settling in* study found that those with a more limited budget choose more affordable locations such as South Wales (Rolfe and Chan, 2022)



Figure 4.4.3: Number of residents per household

The most prevalent number of residents per household is four (29%) followed closely by three (28%) and two (26%). Only 11% of respondents live on their own. Large households with five or more residents are rare (7%). Moreover, around 69% of single respondents live on their own, with the remaining 31% living with one or more other residents. Further analysis of single households showed that slightly more single households are female (53%) than male (46%) and are predominately respondents aged 25-44 (60%) and 45-64 (40%). The economic status breakdown of single households were students (13%), employed (46%), unemployed (33%) and retired (0%). Interestingly, an equal distribution was found for married and single respondents living in single households (46%). It is possible that one of the partners of some married respondents decided to move to the UK first with the rest of the family joining later. No parents in the survey live alone.

### Difficulties in Accessing Affordable Housing

When asked about the ease of accessing services, over half (54%) of respondents said it was either difficult or very difficult to find appropriate housing (Figure 4.9.1). A smaller proportion found it easy (27%) with the remaining respondents finding it

neither easy nor difficult. This distribution indicates that housing has been the most difficult institutional barrier faced by recent Hong Kong arrivals in Wales. This is deeply concerning, considering housing is one of the strongest motivations for migration to Wales (Figure 4.1.1). Further analysis revealed that the recent arrivals who had most difficulties accessing appropriate housing were those who rent (64%). The most frequently cited reasons for the disproportionate difficulty experienced by renters are consistent with nationwide (UK) findings:

“ *Many landlords need us to show evidence of previous history in UK. It is impossible for us.* ”

“ *Landlords need us to show the references from previous rent history in UK. Otherwise. We must pay 6-12 months rental. It doesn't make sense* ”

Due to a lack of British credit and rental history, some respondents were asked to pay one year's rent up front by their landlords. Unlike in Scotland where rental policies restrict up-front rent to a maximum of six months, recent Hong Kong arrivals in Wales in private rental accommodation are significantly worse off compared to their peers in Scotland. Respondents further indicated that paying up to a year's rent in advance is near-impossible, particularly when considering factors such as difficulties in finding employment and the cost-of-living crisis.

“ *Bank request is to provide address while we need bank to transfer money to landlord. It's not make sense as well.* ”

“ *Price of housing is much higher than expected. It is so difficult to find a rental house at first even we are willing to pay 12months rent in advance as we don't have jobs here.* ”

The extract above provides further evidence of how the current system exacerbates the difficulties in renting. The respondent explained that in order to transfer the yearly

rent to their landlord, their bank requested a billing address. However, because they were yet to move into a home, they were unable to provide it. This demonstrates the multiple barriers the private rental and banking sectors are presenting for new arrivals in the country. Much of these red tapes are counterintuitive and, in some cases, impossible to operate within. At present, such policies can be regarded as inherently discriminatory, and preventing not only Hong Kongers, but also many migrants from other countries of origin from finding appropriate housing.

Some open text answers in the survey also suggest discrimination may be at large:

“ *.... not sure if demand was that high or property agencies were screening us out for viewing. I was viewing the property websites constantly and contacted them straightaway once seeing available rental houses, but they will always reply already rented or viewing appointments full* ”

“ *...landlord asked for 1-Yr rent upfront (on my 2-Yr contract renewal), even after I have paid that amount in the first year* ”

On a positive note, the new [Rental Homes Act in Wales](#) came into force on 1 December 2022 giving tenants more rights and protection and landlord more responsibilities may help improve the situations Hong Kongers are in finding quality and affordable accommodation.

## 4.5 Education and Employment

Turning to education and employment of the respondents, five key dimensions are considered: educational qualification, economic activity, employment rate, employment concerns and industrial sectors.

### Educational Qualifications

Figure 4.5.1 shows that the majority of respondents (61%) have received a university education or above, 37% of respondents have received secondary (GCSE or similar) or higher secondary (A-level or post-secondary) qualifications. A further 2% preferred not to answer.

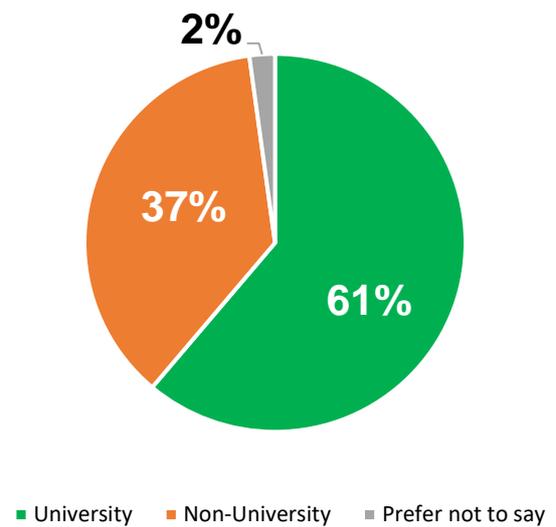


Figure 4.5.1: Qualification Levels

### Economic Activity

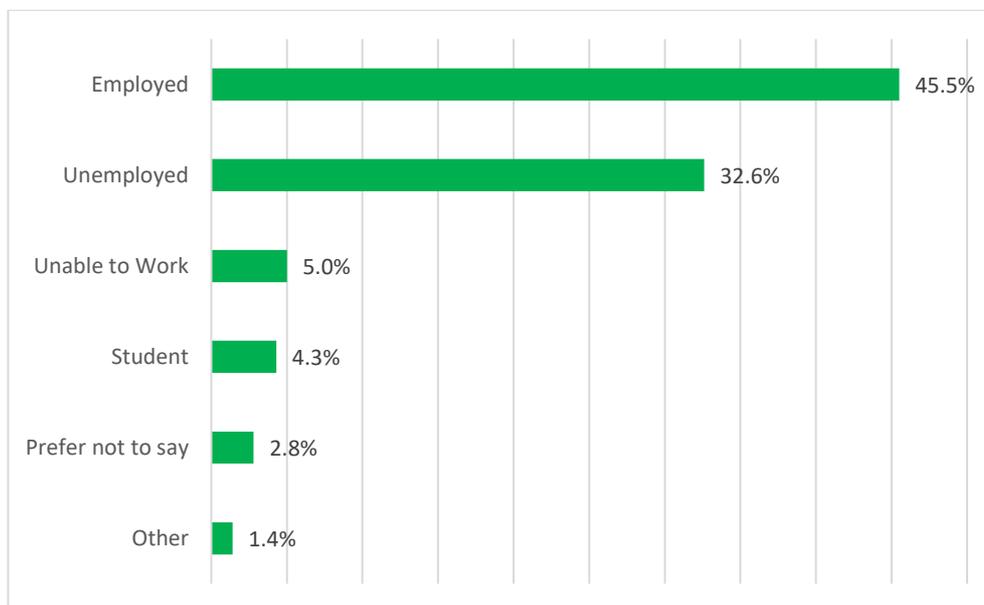
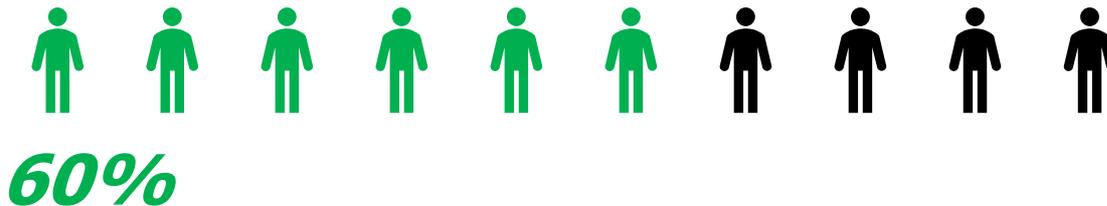


Figure 4.5.2: Economic activity

Under half of all respondents were employed (45.5%) at the time of the survey. It is important to note that this is not the official definition of employment or unemployment rate, because not all respondents were economically active. This

includes individuals who are students (4.3%), retirees (8.5%) of those who were unable to work (5%). Reasons for not being able to work include childcare responsibilities, mental or physical conditions and under the working age. A small proportion of respondents selected the other category (1.4%) or preferred not to say (2.8%). The employment rate of 60% amongst recent Hong Kong arrivals is 14% lower than the average in Wales (74%)<sup>16</sup> :



Among the unemployed, the vast majority (82%) are regularly looking for work. An extremely concerning finding is that only 23.1% find it very 'easy' or 'somewhat easy' to find a job (Figure 4.9.1). This presents an obvious mismatch with the finding on motivations for moving to Wales, where almost 80% of respondents indicating that job opportunities were an important factor for moving. These findings are corroborated by evidence collected in the concern items:



In the open questions, respondents provided some insights into why they were concerned about gaining employment, along with their perceived reasons for not yet being successful.

**“** *I have been to a lot of job fairs, and I have left my info, but I have not received any response. Maybe I am an older person, and I am being discriminated against. Feeling frustrated.* **”**

<sup>16</sup> Consistent with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition, we calculate employment rate as per the guidance of the Office for National Statistics by dividing the number of persons aged 16 or above in employment (employee or self-employed) by the economically active population (employed and unemployed) (ONS, 2020)

This extract indicates that some levels of ageism may exist amongst employers when hiring. This also perhaps reflects one of the ways in which recent arrivals believe they face inequalities (2/10 respondents) and discrimination (3/10). Although many cases may be related to ethnicity or immigrant status, this extract indicates that discrimination can be extended to other protected characteristics such as age. English language skills were also given as a reason for being unsuccessful in finding employment:



*Because my English is not good... many companies do not hire me.*



This view supports the earlier findings on language ability. Difficulties in finding employment is highly correlated with a difficulty of access to English classes. Moreover, this lends further support to the argument that bolstering the current provision of English language classes is essential, not only to aid recent migrants to integrate into local culture, but also to gain employment. Another dimension to consider when examining unemployment among recent arrivals is long-term health conditions. Bivariate analysis revealed that the unemployment rate for those with a long term physical or mental health condition is 5% higher than those without these conditions. The disproportionately higher levels of unemployment amongst recent Hong Kong arrivals compared to 3% in Wales<sup>17</sup> are alarming especially when considering the current cost-of-living crisis. Results from the survey found that:



**7/10** or respondents are concerned about *living costs and paying bills*

Living costs and paying bills is the top concern among a long list of issues, with 70% of respondents indicating it is a current concern. Evidence in this report points to persistent barriers to employment with the most notable one being English language skills. Furthermore, the cost-of-living crisis coupled with a disproportionately lower

<sup>17</sup> Figures come from the first quarter of 2022 (Jan-March) report: <https://gov.wales/labour-market-overview-may-2022>.

employment rate (compared to the average Welsh citizen) could potentially plunge them into destitution, a dire situation that requires urgent policy attention. Access to stable and desirable employment that is commensurate with their level of qualification is essential for labour market integration for newcomers (Cheung and Phillimore 2014) and is clearly an area for urgent policy attention in Wales. Although priorities should be getting the unemployed into work, an understanding of those in work is also required.

### Types of Employment and Industrial Sector

For those who were in employment, four types of employment can be identified: full time employed, part time employed, full time self-employed and part time self-employed. Full time employment is defined as any job that involves thirty hours or more a week, with part time work being any work below thirty hours a week. The distribution of employment type (amongst all those employed) is given in Figure 4.5.3:

The 'in-employment' breakdown reveals that the majority of respondents (60.9%) are in full time employment, most of whom were employees (50%) and a smaller fraction being self-employed (10.9%) on a full-time basis. Approximately four in ten reported being in part-time employment (39.1%), with 31.3% being part-time employees, and 7.8% being part-time self-employed. Self-employment (18.7%) is far less prevalent than employed work (81.3%).

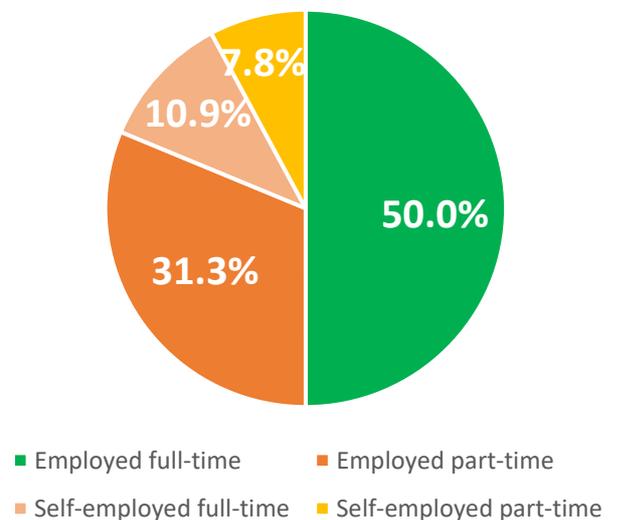


Figure 5.3: Types of Employment

With regards to industrial sectors of employment, respondents were asked about their:

1. Previous sector in Hong Kong
2. Current industrial sector

### 3. Desired sector to work in

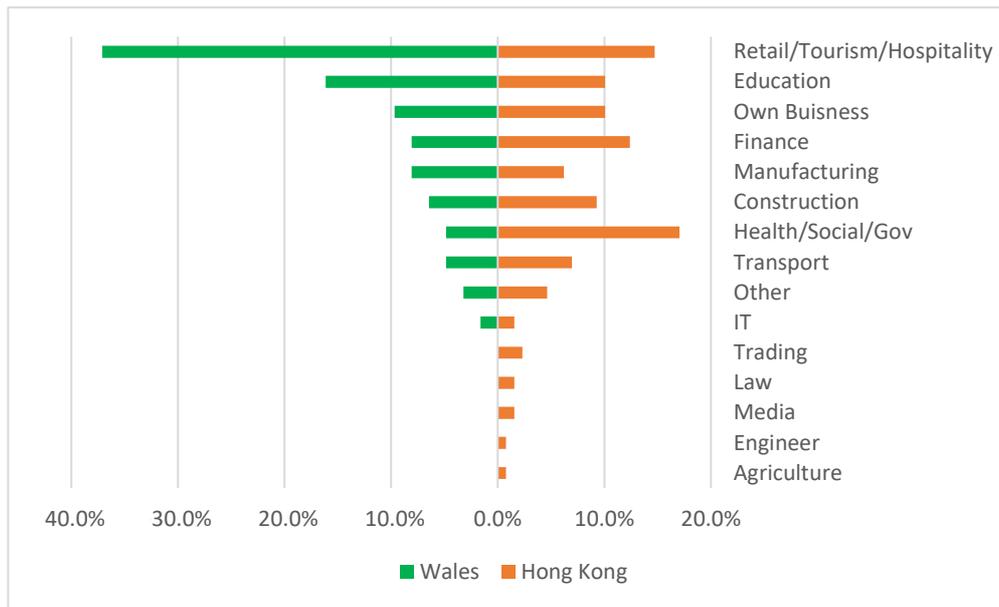


Figure 4.5.4: Previous and current industrial sectors of employment

Figure 4.5.4 shows the prevalence of industrial sectors worked in while respondents were living in Hong Kong, compared to those now worked in Wales. Most notably, a far higher proportion of respondents now work in retail, tourism, or hospitality (37.1%) than previously when living in Hong Kong (14.7%). Another notable sector change is education which has increased in proportion by 6% from Hong Kong to Wales. In contrast, a much higher proportion who previously worked in health and social care, and local government did not find work in the same sectors in Wales. A much lower proportion who previously worked in finance and construction were able to find work in the same sectors. Those who previously worked in law, trading, engineering, media, and agriculture in Hong Kong were completely absent in these sectors in Wales. It is likely that they have gone for lower-level jobs in retail and hospitality. This is also highly indicative that many Hong Kongers may have experienced downward social mobility, at least initially until they found employment that is commensurate with their qualification.<sup>18</sup> Hong Kongers are bringing an enormous amount of human capital to Wales. Overqualification and underemployment is a source of economic inefficiency that must be tackled urgently by the government.

<sup>18</sup> It is not uncommon for new immigrants to take up any 'fill-in' job to 'tie them over' while looking for something more permanent and appropriate to their qualification level, but time will tell if Hong Kongers are stuck in these jobs. Future research should also look into the contract type and length of employment.



sectors to work in are manufacturing (13.5%) and transport (10.1%). Interestingly, only 6.7% of respondents desired to own their own business, a sector high in prevalence both previously in Hong Kong and currently in Wales. It could be that any potential business owners have already established their businesses and therefore did not select the item in the survey. The two least desired sectors were agriculture (3.5%) and construction (1.1%).

## 4.6 Language Skills

English language skills are essential in integrating into the Welsh and British society. The survey results find that:



**6/10** respondents were concerned about *their English language skills*

With over half of all respondents worried about their English language skills and abilities to communicate with locals, it is pivotal to better understand their language abilities and ways of improving them. Five language dimensions are explored: first (Preferred) language; self-reported English language skills; access to 'English for Speakers of Other Languages' (ESOL) classes; Welsh language skills and willingness (and Reasons) to learn Welsh.

The preferred language amongst respondents is overwhelmingly Cantonese (73.1%), with about a quarter preferred the use of English (24.8%). Extremely low proportions of respondents were bilingual (Cantonese and English) (0.7%) or prefer to speak in Hong Kong English (0.7%). Although most respondents preferred to speak Cantonese, as their primary language, many still have good English language abilities:

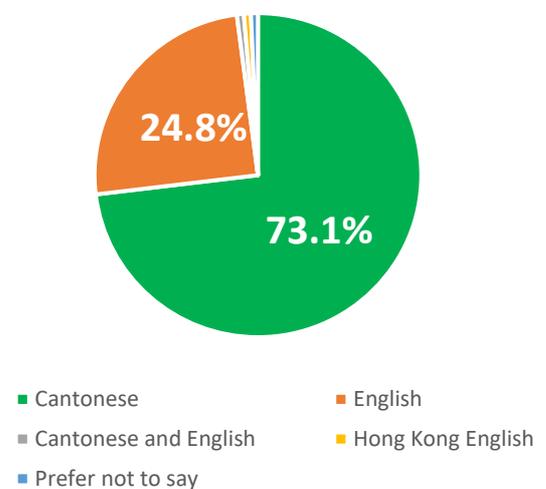


Figure 4.6.1: Preferred language

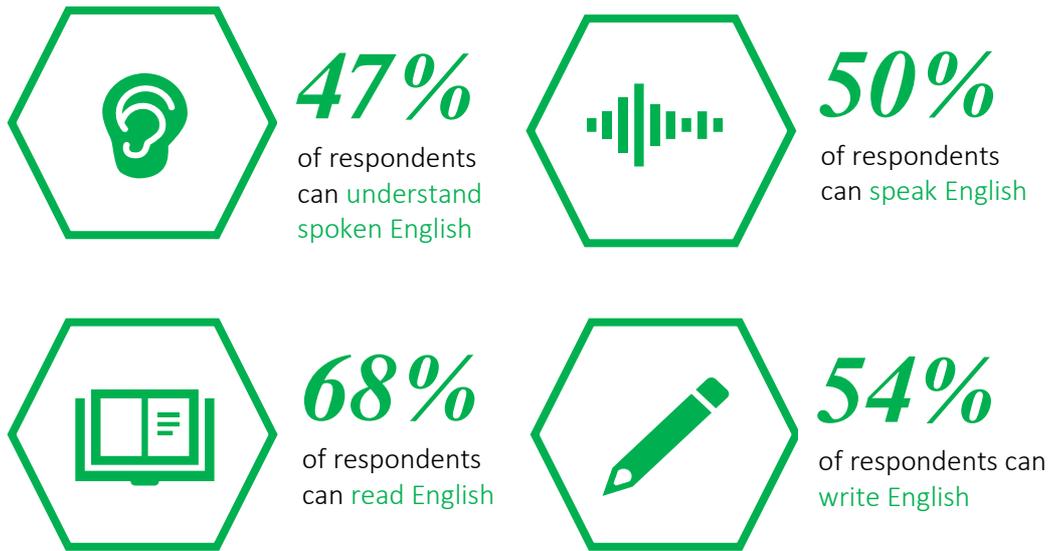


Figure 4.6.2: Self-reported English language abilities

A higher proportion of respondents found it easier to read English (68%) to a 'good' or 'very good' standard than to speak (50%), write (54%) or understand (spoken English) (47%) it. It is worth noting that from those who can read, write, speak, and understand English, a much smaller proportion indicated 'very good' levels as opposed to just 'good':

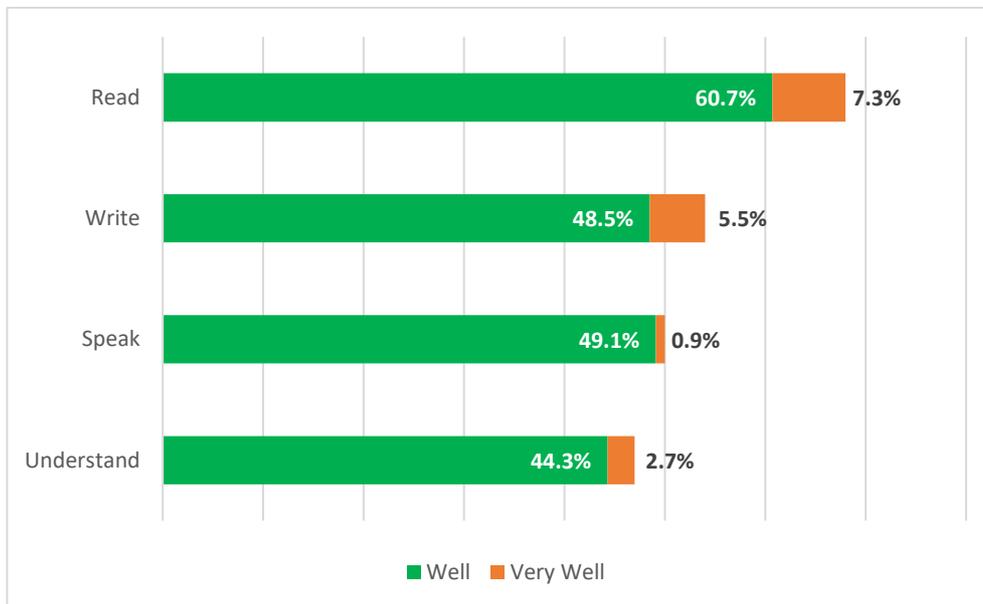


Figure 4.6.3: Four aspects of English language abilities

Figure 4.6.3 demonstrates that very low proportions of respondents reported very good levels of English abilities: reading (7.3%), writing (5.5%), speaking (0.9%) and understanding (2.7%).

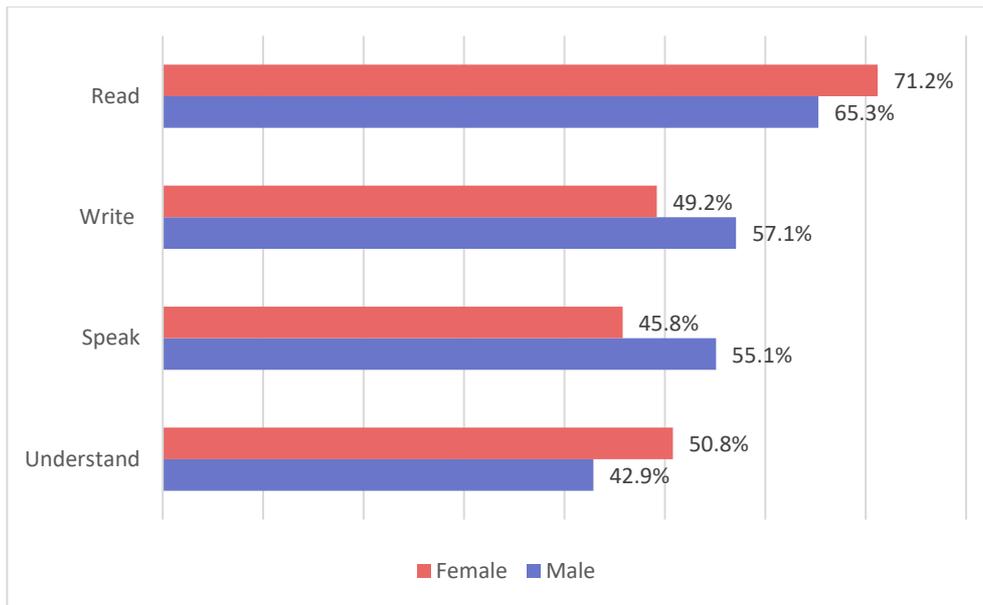


Figure 4.6.4: Gender differences in English abilities

Figure 4.6.4 shows the gender difference in language abilities. Women were more likely to report they can read (+5.9%) and understand English (+7.9%) than men. Conversely, more men reported they can speak (+9.3%) and write (+7.9%) English women. It is not possible to formally test if these differences are statistically significant due to the small sample size. English abilities, however, vary much more by age group.

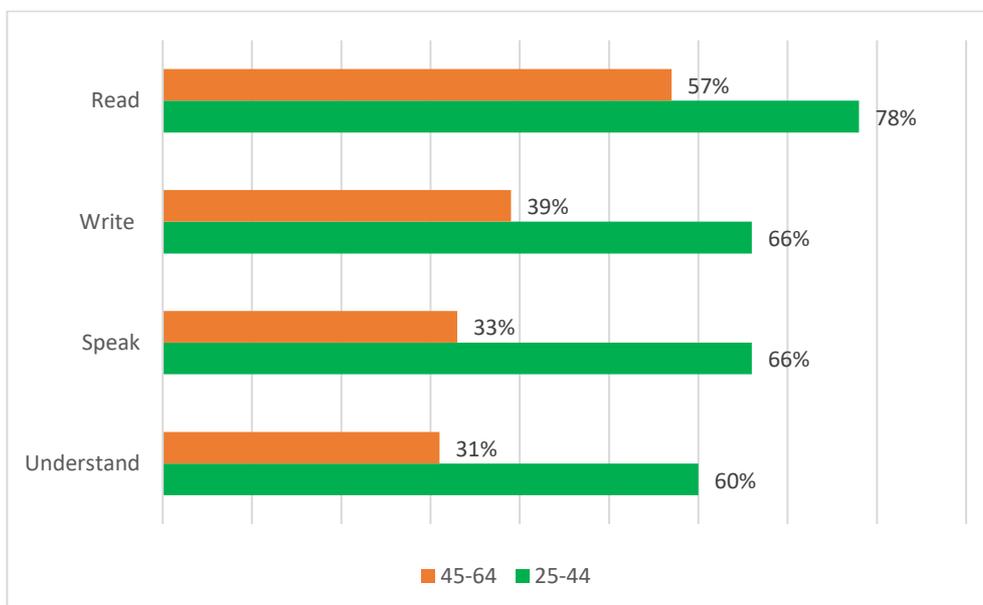


Figure 4.6.5: Age differences in English abilities

Age comparisons in language skills are only considered for the largest groups (25-44 and 45-64)<sup>19</sup>. Figure 4.6.5 shows that younger respondents aged between 25-44 have significantly better English language skills in all four aspects than those aged 45-64. The greatest gap is the ability to speak English (+33%), followed by understanding (+29%), writing (+27%) and reading (+21%). This is perhaps not surprising since 68.4% of the younger age group have a university or higher qualification compared with 45% of the older cohort. This is consistent with the English ability index finding where university graduates have the highest English average scores<sup>20</sup>, followed by those who were in employment and the younger cohort aged 18-44.

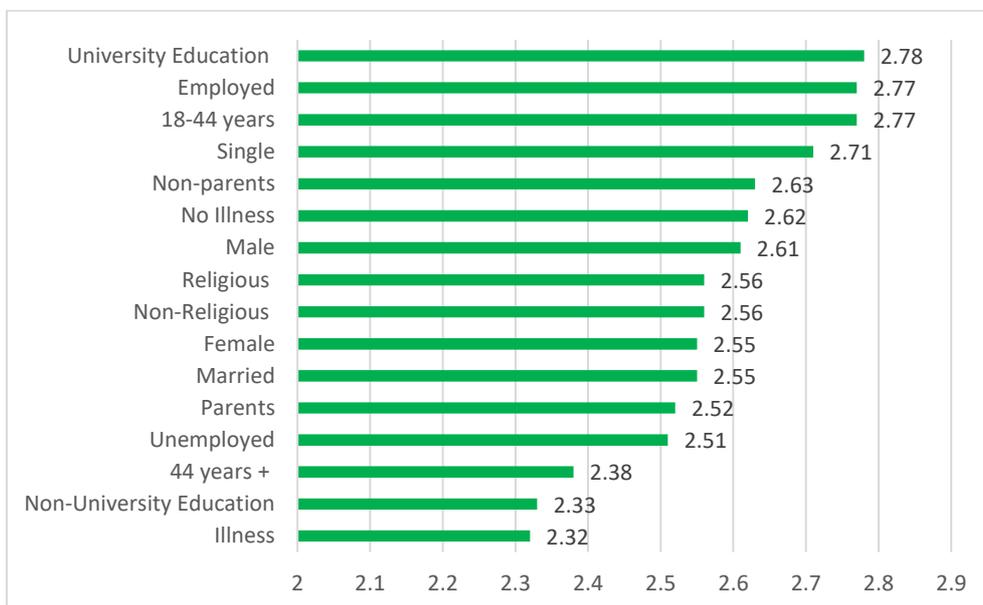


Figure 6.6.6: English ability index

Once again, there is compelling evidence that English proficiency is crucial in labour market integration. The age gaps in language abilities also suggest that ESOL classes should target the needs of the older cohorts.

### Welsh language abilities

The same language skill indicators used for the English questions were applied to Welsh language capabilities:

<sup>19</sup> The under 24 (n=2) and 65+ (n=2) age categories were removed because of extremely low counts

<sup>20</sup> These were calculated by taking an average of the English ability scores from 1 to 4 on each dimension.

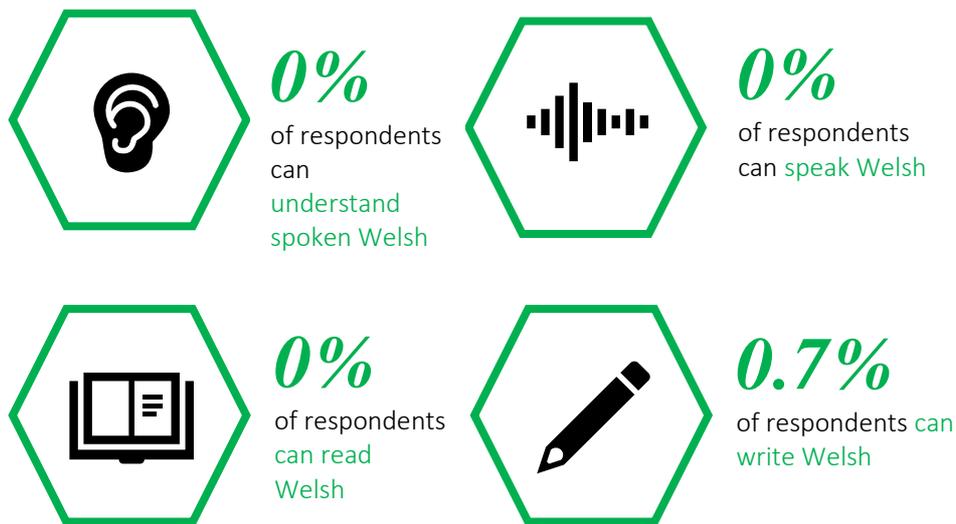


Figure 4.6.7: Self-reported Welsh language abilities

The findings show that respondents have little to no Welsh language abilities, with no respondents being able to understand (spoken), speak or read Welsh. A very small fraction of respondents reported being able to write Welsh to a good standard (0.7%). Despite current Welsh language skills being low, over half of the respondents (56%) would like to learn Welsh.



Figure 7.8: Willingness to learn Welsh

Three motivational factors were explored for learning Welsh:

1. To improve job opportunities
2. To support children at school
3. Integration into local culture

Among the economically active respondents (72%), 58.3% wanted to learn Welsh to improve employment opportunities. Respondents indicated that some workplaces are dominated by Welsh speakers:

“ I noticed that the local colleagues most of the time communicate in Welsh rather than English, even though they know English ”

“ So I think it’s not quite true to describe people in Wales “generally speak English”, especially for workplace- they speak Welsh. ”

These extracts suggest that additional challenges may exist in the workplace, where co-workers prefer to speak Welsh. While some felt that their colleagues could try to be more inclusive by speaking English around migrants, respondents indicated that they recognised the desire for Welsh speakers to uphold their culture.

“ I understand how the local want to preserve their local culture and language, just like how Hong Kong people want to. ”

## 4.7 English Classes

### Access to English classes

In theory, the DLUHC funded English classes for speakers of other languages (ESOL) are available to all Hong Kongers who need them. However, only 22.5% of respondents have found it very easy (4.8%) or easy (17.7%) to gain access to English classes. In contrast, almost one in four had difficulties gaining access (difficult= 18.4%, very difficult= 5.4%). Respondents’ view of the provision of ESOL was further explored:

1. Availability of localised ESOL classes for Hong Kongers
2. Whether the ESOL classes meet their needs

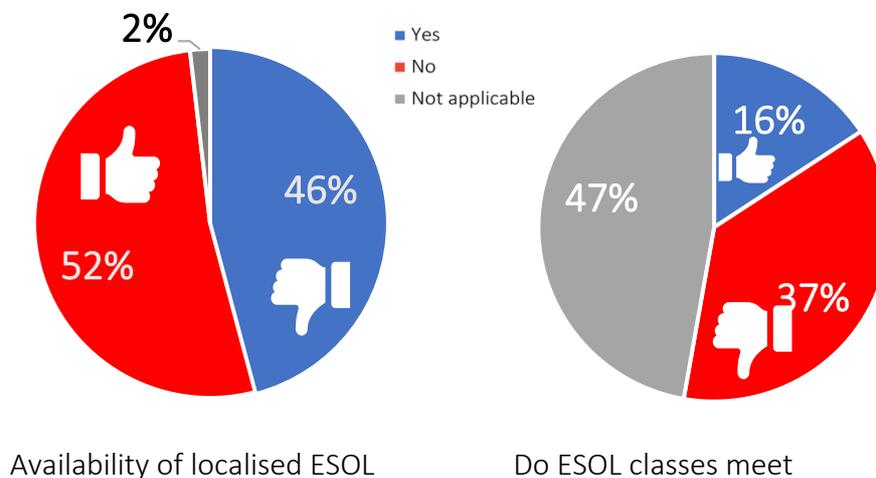


Figure 8.1: Perceptions of ESOL classes

These findings highlight a major barrier faced by recent Hong Kong migrants when trying to integrate into life in Wales. The primary system in place to help migrants learn English (ESOL classes) is (a) only available to just over half (52%) of the respondents locally and (b) only 16% of them reported their needs were met.

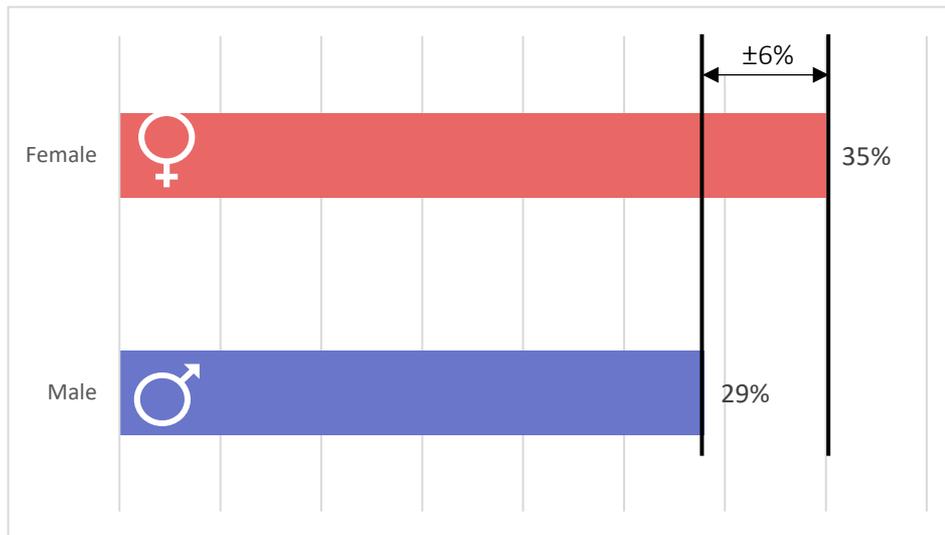


Figure 4.7.2: Gender differences for access to ESOL classes

When exploring gender difference, Figure 4.7.2 shows that a higher proportion of female respondents (35%) have access to localised ESOL classes than male (29%).

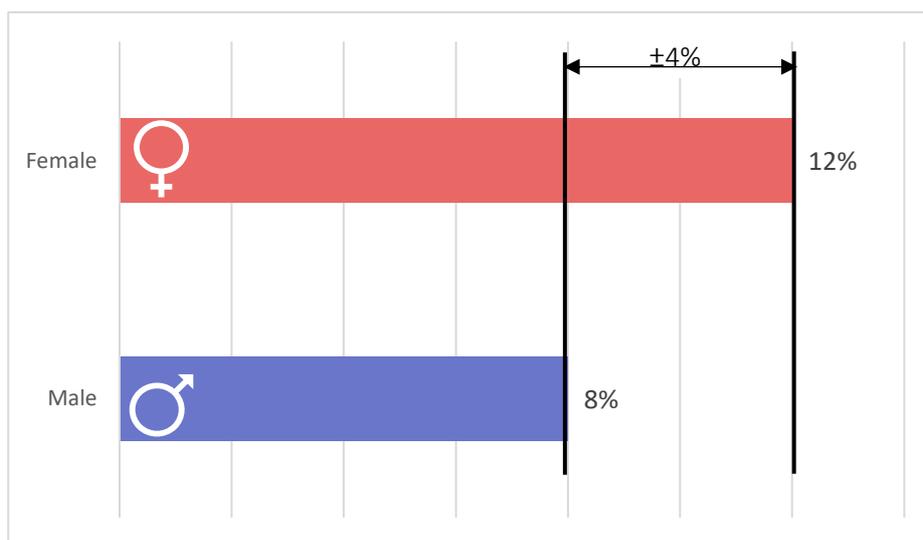


Figure 4.7.3: Gender differences for whether ESOL classes meet needs

Women were also more likely to report that ESOL classes met their needs compared to men (+8%). These results therefore indicate that men have had more difficulties with ESOL classes than women, both in terms of general access and having their needs met. Despite this, the reported levels of ESOL access for women were likewise very low. These findings are alarming and demonstrate a clear barrier to learning English for recent arrivals. To further understand the impact of such barriers, a correlation analysis between access to English classes and the remaining engagement dimensions (as shown in fig 21) was conducted. The correlations were visualised using multidimensional-scaling procedures (MDS):

Clusters on the plot reflect high levels of correlation between different dimensions of institutional engagement. The correlation analysis shows a dense cluster around English classes. This suggests that the ease of access for near-by dimensions on the plot are negatively affected by difficulties in securing English classes.

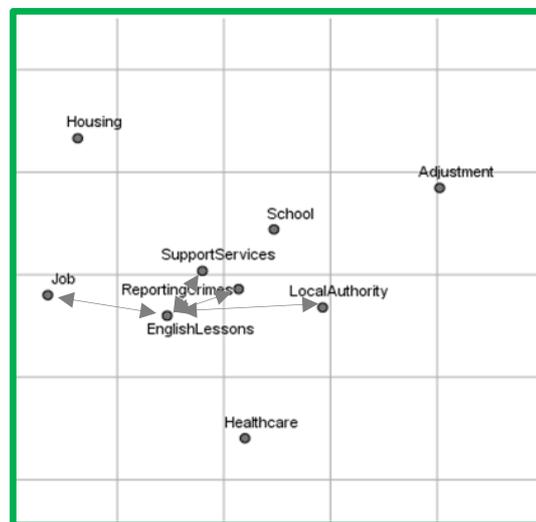


Figure 4.7.4: MDS correlation visualisation for ease of engagement dimensions

In other words, lack of access to English classes is highly correlated with barriers to accessing other institutions. In total, difficulty in access to four social and institutional engagements were positively correlated with English classes:

1. Access to support services
2. Access to reporting crimes
3. Access to employment
4. Access to local authorities

It is worth noting that correlations were still found with other engagement dimensions such as healthcare, schooling, and housing. However, the relatively distant proximities indicate that other significant factors may be at play in restricting access to these than

just availability of English classes. While these findings shed light on the significant issues in accessing ESOL classes, they do little to explain why. Open text answers provide further insights.

### Reasons for limited access to ESOL

One of the most common reasons given was conflicting commitments such as work and childcare:

“ *If some free online course can be provided, it would be great.  
As I must work and take care of kids, attending course* ”

“ *But if you have a job, you can't attend the class, so you just  
study more online.* ”

With work and childcare commitments presenting barriers to ESOL class attendance, many respondents expressed a preference for online classes due to their greater flexibility and accessibility. This finding raises important questions, because previous research suggests that online classes could have negative effects on the development of speaking and listening skills (Rolfe and Stevenson, 2021). While this may be true, the difficulties faced by Hong Kongers in Wales in getting to ESOL classes are real. Online classes and children provision should therefore be introduced or expanded to improve access. Another concern reported by respondents was the lack of intermediate or advanced level courses. Respondents alluded to the current provision resembling more of a 'one size fits all' approach:

“ *...I don't know, I actually have some social anxiety* ”

There was some report of social anxiety leading to personal reluctance to attend English language classes:

“ *Intermediate to advanced level oral classes (are more  
appropriate) for me while beginners' level will be good for my  
parents.* ”

Finally, respondents indicated that they have not yet been able to begin English language classes, because they are still in the process of settling in, with priorities such as finding suitable accommodation, employment, and schooling:

*I haven't started looking for English courses... I rely on listening and speaking more when I am at work, and I want to take English language course when I have time*

This can be regarded as a positive finding, as it indicates that some respondents may take up English classes once they have already settled in. Nevertheless, there is a clear need to improve both in the availability and variety of proficiency level of ESOL classes, in order to be more accommodating to suit the different needs of recent arrivals. These changes should consider a wider provision of online courses, childcare support, social support for those with social anxiety and a more stratified provision of classes according to ability. After the ESOL orientated questions, respondents were given an opportunity to detail other methods of English learning they have used since moving to Wales. While many reinforced the need for classes (particularly online), several other approaches were identified. For example, many respondents suggested that frequently watching the BBC and listening to the radio had proved beneficial.

*Watch the BBC (and) listen to the radio*

Other respondents preferred learning English by embedding themselves into local activities and culture. This includes engagements with a range of organisations such as churches, sports clubs, voluntary groups, as well as interacting with neighbours and colleagues:

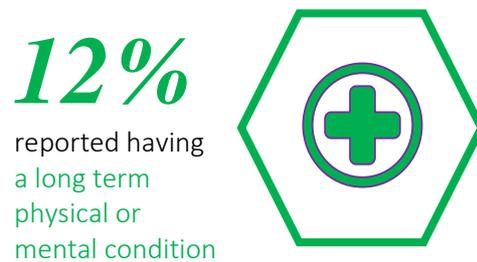
*Join the local communities such as church, volunteering groups, weekend parties and sports clubs*

Although engagement with locals and media appear to be effective ways of naturally developing English language skills, some respondents indicated that understanding different accents can impact how well they pick up conversations. These examples

show that some recent Hong Kong arrivals were able to extend their social networks while improving their English skills at the same time. However, the ability of building new social networks is not evenly distributed among all new arrivals, these approaches should not be seen as the exclusive means of learning English. Formal mechanisms and universal provision are still essential to support the different needs of newcomers integrating into the Welsh society.

#### 4.8 Health Status and Concerns

Health status is explored by the prevalence of long term physical and mental health conditions and the nature of these conditions.



*Figure 4.8.1: Prevalence of long-term health conditions*

The majority of respondents (88%) reported no issues with having a long term physical or mental health condition. Among the 12% who answered yes to this question, they were asked to specify what long-term physical or mental health condition in the following areas: hearing impairment, visual impairment, speech impairment, learning difficulties, mental health issues, and physical/mobility impairment.

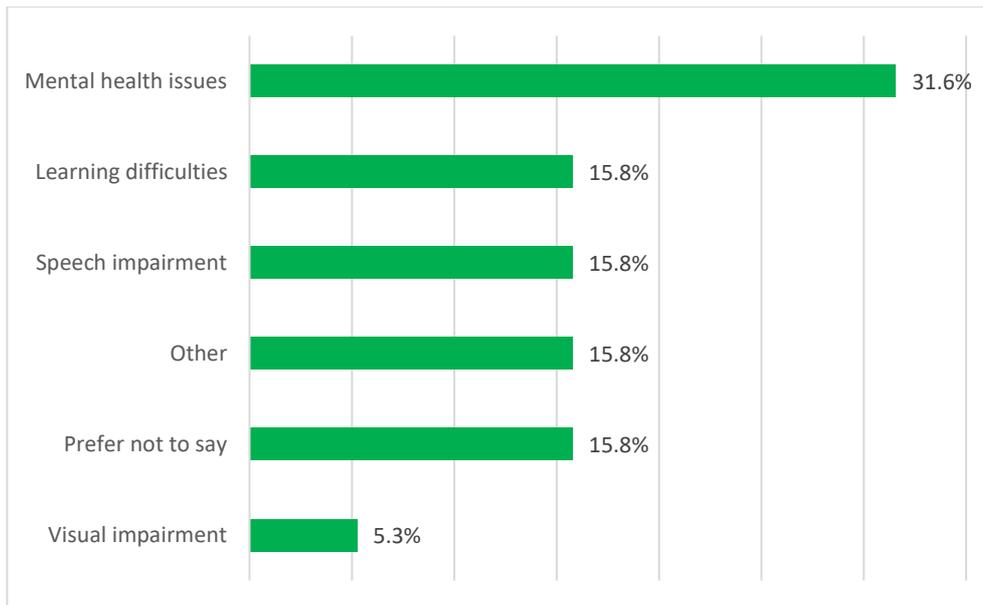


Figure 4.8.2: Health condition types

The most prevalent health condition amongst respondents was mental health (31.6%), followed by learning difficulties (15.8%), speech impairment (15.8%) and visual impairment (5.3%). The high level of reported mental health issues is a major policy concern. Many Hong Kongers suffer long-term trauma inflicted on them by the HKSAR government and its brutal crackdown of democratic protests. Some respondents preferred not to answer (15.8%). With entrenched stigma and reluctance in reporting mental health issues, as informed by several Hong Kongers, these figures are likely to be underestimates.

Participants were then given an opportunity to specify what “Other conditions” (15.8%) they had. Three other conditions were mentioned: intermittent joint pains, ADHD and diabetes. The survey also asked about the difficulty or ease in accessing healthcare services in Wales.



**4/10** Respondents found it difficult to access **healthcare services**

Despite the fact that all HK BN(O)s had paid the hefty Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) at the point of application and prior to moving to the UK, 40% of the

respondents still experienced difficulties in accessing the NHS. This finding is deeply troubling, but no qualitative data were available to explore this further.

### Other Support Services



**3/10** Respondents found it difficult to access **support services**.

Difficulty in accessing support services is highly correlated with English language skills. However there seems to be a much weaker association between language proficiency and access to healthcare services. Open text answers give further insights into difficulties accessing health and dental care services. Telephone consultation is a big problem since communicating health issues over the phone in English is immensely challenging for many Hong Kongers:

“ ..difficult to make an appointment with a GP...difficult to describe many symptoms or an illness in appropriate English to the GP...This is even less information on dentists,...(esp.) GP approved dental services ”

“ (we) have arrived...for 10 months. We still cannot register a NHS dentist. I have the form to join a NHS dentist centralised waiting list database but still no result now ”

### 4.9 Settling In

The Welcome Survey asks a number of questions on how recent Hong Kong arrivals are settling into life in Wales: institutional engagement; initial concerns and happiness since moving to Wales. The former two dimensions involved a rigorous examination of an array of different social and economic factors. Respondents were later given an opportunity to outline any further concern dimensions in open text fields that were not provided in the survey options.

## Institutional Engagement

The institutional engagement questions invited respondents to indicate how difficult or easy they found gaining access to a range of social, health, economical and communal institutions in Wales. In total, the ease (or difficulty) of accessing nine different items were measured:

1. Finding suitable housing
2. Finding a job
3. Finding a school for your children
4. Adjusting to life in Wales
5. Contacting your local authority
6. Registering for health care services, (vaccines, GP, dentist etc.)
7. Registering for English language classes
8. Understanding how to report a crime
9. Accessing advice and support services

These were all measured on a five-point Likert-scale, from (1) very easy to (5) very difficult. The results for each item are presented in Figure 4.9.1:

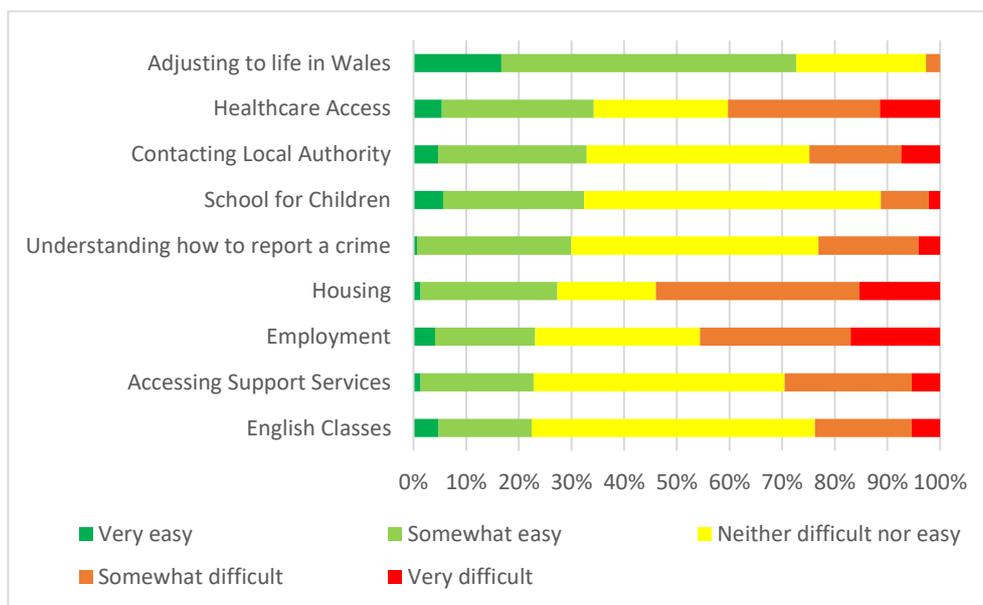


Figure 4.9.1: Institutional engagements

Figure 4.9.1 demonstrates the ease and difficulty of nine 'settling in' dimensions. As before, the results are presented by ranking the highest proportion of reports of 'very easy' in a descending order.

## Schooling

Although schooling for children appears to be one of the least reported institutional barriers when settling in Wales, Figure 4.9.1 shows that 16.4% of parents still experienced difficulty in enrolling their children in a school. This proportion remains concerning, particularly when considering how essential school enrolment is to children's educational attainment and integration into the Welsh culture. While no question was asked why such difficulties were experienced, some open text extracts provide further insights. One issue is the need for some children to retake school years, because their previous education was predominately delivered in a different language:

“ *I also asked for my daughter to repeat one year because her previous school in Hong Kong mainly taught in Chinese... I was concerned that she would not be able to catch up* ”

In some cases, parents found that applications for school year retakes must be filed with two separate departments. Because this information was not previously known to them, they missed the opportunity. Respondents indicated that they didn't understand the educational system, or who to ask for help

“ *I also don't know if there are any textbooks that can be used to study at home! Otherwise, my daughter will spend 4 months or more without access to learning* ”

“ *I don't know the educational structure of Wales. I don't know who to ask for help!* ”

These extracts have highlighted the difficulties of school enrolment experienced by some parents, predominately because of a lack of understanding of the educational system. These negative experiences have been exacerbated by the deficit of accessible and bespoke advice services.

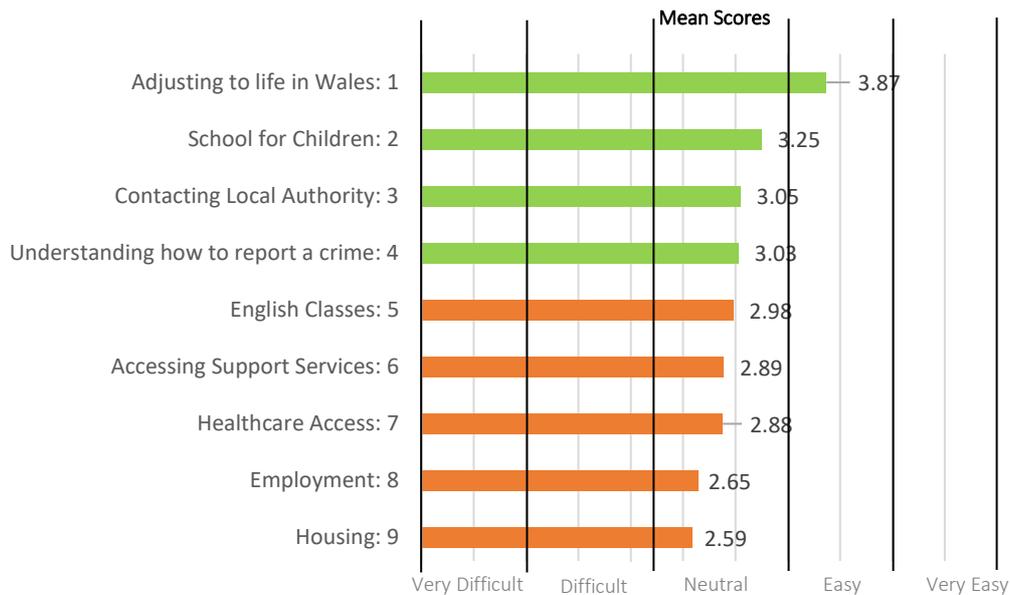


Figure 9.9.2: Ranks for institutional engagement mean scores

Mean scores were also calculated to help identify which engagements are overall the easiest and most difficult for recent Hong Kong migrants: A quick inspection of Figure 4.9.2 shows the two most difficult institutional engagements to access are employment (mean score: 2.65) and suitable housing (mean score 2.59). The modal category for both items, particularly for housing, is “somewhat difficult”. These are further examined in the housing and employment sections. Other low scoring engagements include access to healthcare, support service English classes. Despite this, the modal category for accessing healthcare was “somewhat difficult”, with the modal category for English classes and support services being “neither difficult nor easy”. Some said they needed advice on civic matters such as voting and tax but help was not easily available:

“ make a call to council requires a long waiting time and maybe difficult for non-native speakers to listen and talk over the phone. If more service could be applied online, it will be great ”



*I actually find Welsh people quite friendly and easy going*



On a positive note, adjustment to life in Wales is, by some distance, the easiest engagement of the nine dimensions, with over 70% of respondents finding adjustment either “very easy” or “somewhat easy”. Open question extracts indicate that the general friendliness of local Welsh people is a key factor in creating this feeling of being included:



*I’m so lucky all my neighbour was friendly and helpful*



Other than just making recent Hong Kong migrants feel welcome, engagement via employment additionally prove beneficial, by offering support and information provision:



*I didn’t know that the British government offered £500 support for those who were affected by Covid. But I learned about the support from my colleagues*



The sentiments of local friendliness were also reflected in the initial concerns section. All three-community cohesion-based questions (inequalities: 2 in 10 respondents, discrimination 2 in 10 respondents and hate crimes 3 in 10 respondents) received relatively low levels of concern. Despite these worry levels being the lowest compared to other more immediate concerns such as housing and employment, they still indicate certain degree of anxieties among recent Hong Kong migrants about being discriminated against, either economically or socially. Taken together, housing and employment have the highest number of reports of feeling discriminated. This is consistent with the 107 reasons cited for main worries: 26 on inequalities, 45 named discrimination and 36 on hate crimes. The remaining institutional engagements scores, such as housing, employment, healthcare, English classes, and reporting crimes along with initial concerns will be returned to later in this report.

## Settling in and social media

Although none of the survey questions was specifically related to social media, it was frequently identified in the open questions as an extremely useful tool for settling into life in Wales. Social media enables new migrants to access and interact with communities, at the same time as being a useful source of key information:

“ *We are glad to know that we can always ask questions, and people are willing to offer help or suggestion. Special thanks to WSMP and Cardiff Facebook group.* ”

“ *The hub/group in social media created by local residents are mostly useful, informative, and friendly, which highly facilitate the newcomers to fit in the neighbourhood.* ”

The extracts above provide interesting insights as to how “digital integration” with local culture /networks exists and could progress in the future. Without survey prompts, multiple respondents indicated that social media platforms have not only been a useful tool, but integral for embedding into communities and garnering valuable information relating to local culture and social services<sup>21</sup>.

Many respondents reported positive experience of moving to Wales. There is a strong desire to mix with local people in order to gain confidence in spoken English:

“ *more interaction with local people* ”

“ *I really want to go to some parties/gathering to meet local residents* ”

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<sup>21</sup> Unfortunately, there was no questions on social media in the survey, so further analysis on the degree to which it has assisted Hong Kong migrants in settling has not been possible. The open extracts therefore provide initial insights into this should be further investigated in future studies

### Intended Length of Stay

Figure 4.9.3 shows the length of time respondents plan to stay in Wales. Although the purpose was to gauge if respondents intended to stay in the UK, the results may be skewed due to ambiguity in the question. The question asked about plans to leave Wales, but not the UK.

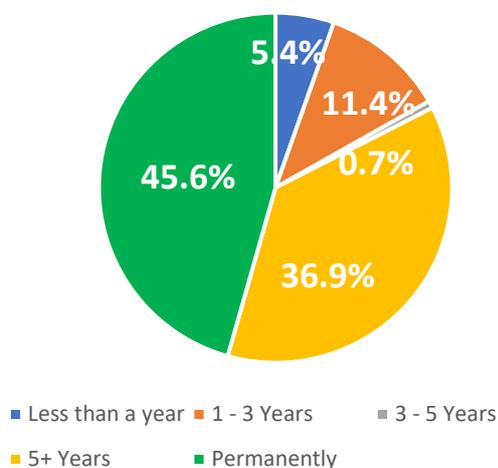


Figure 4.9.3: How long respondents plan to stay in Wales

In other words, some respondents may not say 'permanently' if they were planning to move elsewhere in the UK. Despite this, the finding gives important insights into how the Hong Kong population in Wales may change over the coming years. The distribution shows that a significant majority (83%) of respondents plan to stay in Wales permanently (45%) or over five years (37%). This finding is significant because any plans for staying longer than five years, which is the duration of the BN(O) visa represent an intention to settle. Subsequent questions revealed that



**5/10** respondents are concerned about *their visa status and citizenship*

Respondents who plan to stay within the visa duration limit were distributed as follows: less than a year (5%), one to three years (11%) and three to five years (<1%). In other words, 17% of all respondents adopt a 'wait and see' attitude.

### Happiness in Wales

Happiness since moving to Wales was measured on a five-point Likert scale, from (1) very unhappy to (5) very happy. Respondents were additionally given the option of 'prefer not to say'. The question asked respondents: "overall, how do you feel about your recent move to Wales?".

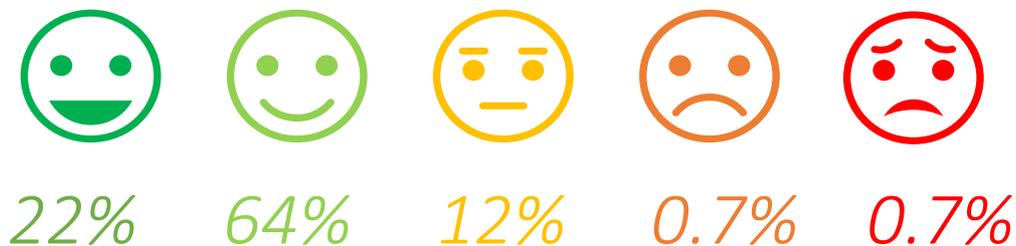


Figure 4.9.4: Levels of happiness

The results are overwhelmingly positive with 86% of respondents reporting either being very happy (22%), or happy (64%). A smaller yet still significant proportion of respondents reported being neither happy nor unhappy (12%). The 1.4% reporting unhappy (0.7%) or very unhappy (0.7%) feelings since moving to Wales merits further investigation by social demographic traits.

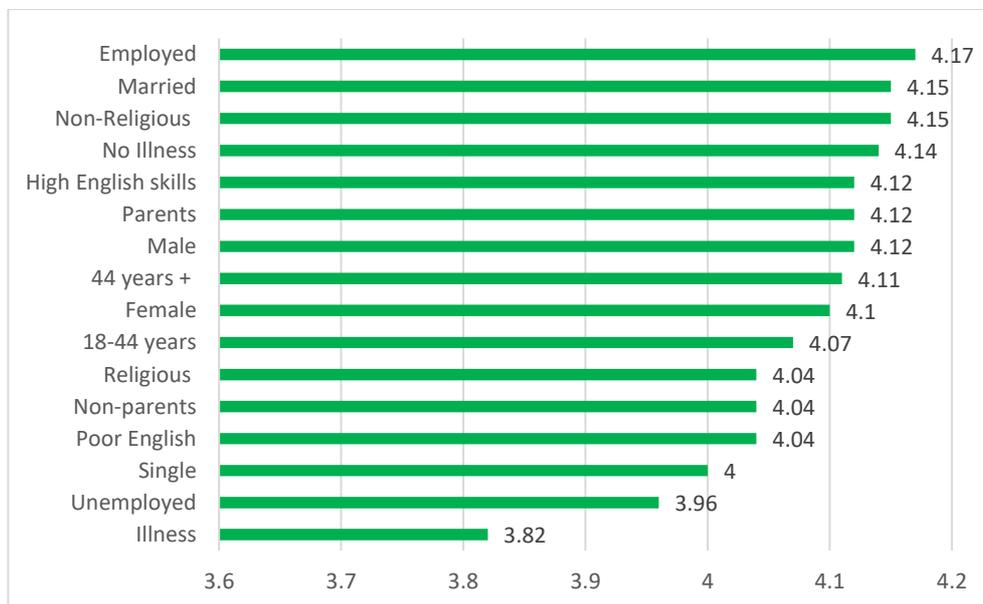


Figure 4.9.5: Happiness index

Figure 4.9.5 shows the happiness index (an average score from 1 to 5) of respondents by key demographic traits. Higher values represent greater levels of happiness. The chart shows that those in employment, married and non-religious top the 'happiness index'. This is closely followed by those with no long-term illnesses, high English skills

and parents. Conversely, those with opposite traits such as having a long-term health condition, unemployed, single, poor English skills and not being a parent reported lowest level of happiness. There is no discernible gender difference in happiness although research shows that married men are usually the happiest among all social groups. Interesting older respondents (44+) reported being slightly happier than younger respondents (18-44) despite being less qualified and with poorer English ability. Religious respondents also reported a lower-than-expected level of happiness compared to non-religious Hong Kongers given the level of network building and social support opportunities previously mentioned.

# 5. National Comparison

## 5.1 Data Sources

The data analysis in Section Four provides important evidence and insights into recent Hong Kong arrivals moving to Wales. Such insights are however difficult to interpret if not contextualised against the national picture. This section examines the findings in relation to a wider context. The main source of national data come from the Home Office Survey for Hong Kong British National (Overseas) visa holders (2021). The aim of this survey was to better understand key demographic traits of the UK of Hong Kong BN(O) holders in the UK. The survey was restricted to BN(O) holders only with a random sample of 500 participants. The data collection period spanned between April and September 2021.

Where relevant, we also refer to other surveys such as those conducted by Hong Kongers in Britain “Where Will Hongkongers Stay in Britain? Survey Report on Hong Kong BN(O) Arrivals’ Preferred Destinations” (2021).<sup>22</sup> A further report “Settling in: Hong Kongers and their new lives in the UK” (2022) citing Hong Kong census data was also used. The comparison in this section draws on the findings from the Wales Welcome Survey 2022 and the Home Office Survey in 2021 for the UK. It is important to note that the UK figures could include recent arrivals living in Wales. However, since this only accounts for less than 2% of all BN(O) holders, it is unlikely to skew the distribution.

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<sup>22</sup> To ascertain the geographic locations where incoming arrivals planned to move to in the UK, HKB distributed an online survey using social media channels between May and June 2021 and obtained 720 responses.

## 5.2 Intended length of stay

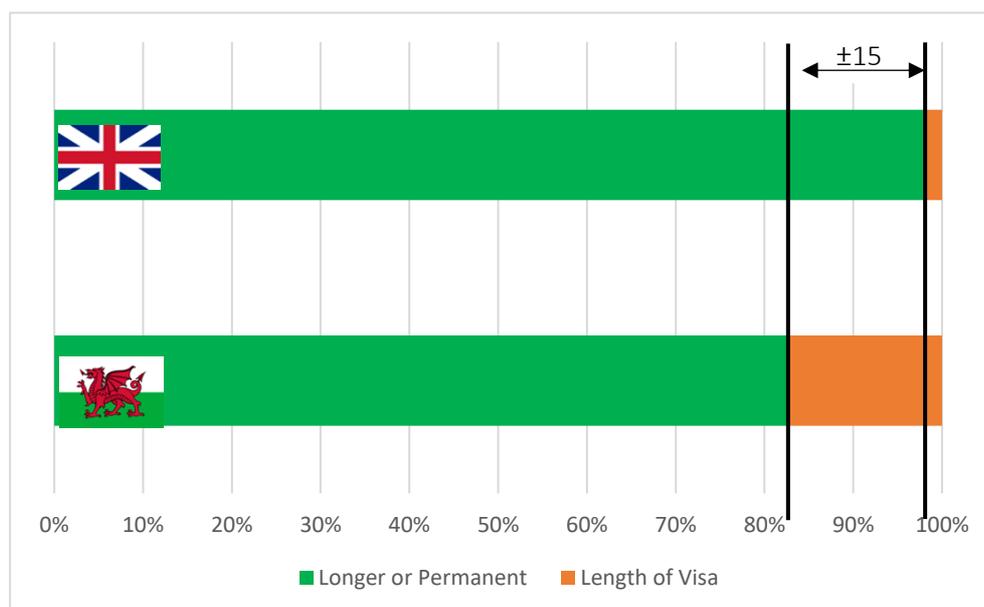


Figure 5.2.1: Future plans of recent arrivals in UK and Wales

Source: Home Office Survey for Hong Kong British National (Overseas) visa holders (2021)

Figure 5.2.1 shows the intended length of stay in the UK between recent arrivals in Wales and the UK. Earlier in the report, it was established that 10% of respondents were not in the UK under the BN(O) visa route. Thereafter, in order to standardise the results in Figure 5.2.1, non-BN(O) respondents were removed. Figure 5.2.1 shows that 15% more of UK respondents plan to stay longer than their visa or permanently than those based in Wales. While this difference seems sizeable, it is important to note that the majority of migrants living in both Wales (83%) and UK (98%) intent to stay beyond their visa or permanently. Furthermore, the question in the Wales survey asked 'intention to stay in Wales', this may not have captured those who planned to stay in the UK but moving away from Wales.

## 5.3 Key Demographics

The comparison focuses on recent arrivals from Hong Kong regardless of their visa status<sup>23</sup>. As they all face the same challenges settling in a new country, this comparison would be more informative for policy planning and service delivery.

<sup>23</sup> The Wales Welcome Survey contain 10% of non BN(O)s who also arrived in Wales in the last year. Keeping them also maximises the sample size in the analysis.

## Gender

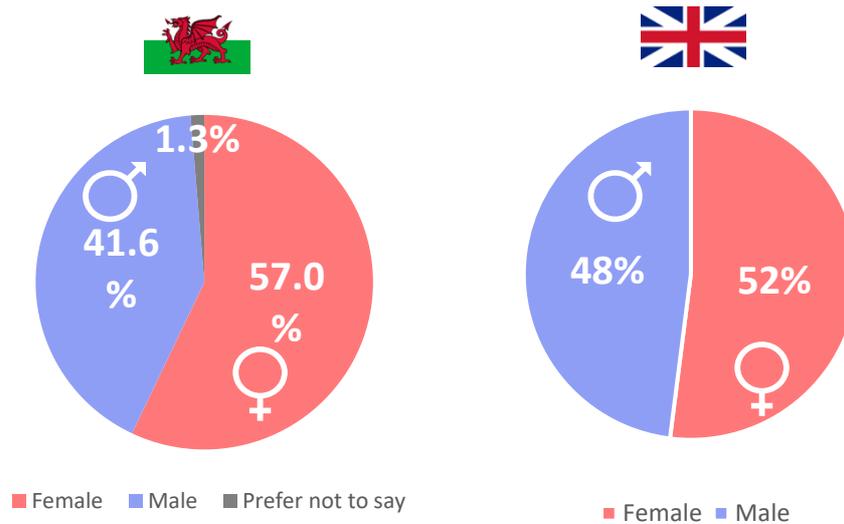


Figure 5.3.1: Genders of recent arrivals in UK and Wales

Source: Home Office Survey for Hong Kong British National (Overseas) visa holders (2021)

Figure 5.3.1 shows a slightly more gender balance of recent Hong Kong arrivals in the UK (+4%) than in Wales (+15%). In both cases, there were more females (main respondents) in the survey. These results provide initial evidence that a higher proportion of women migrants moving to Wales in comparison to the UK.

## Age

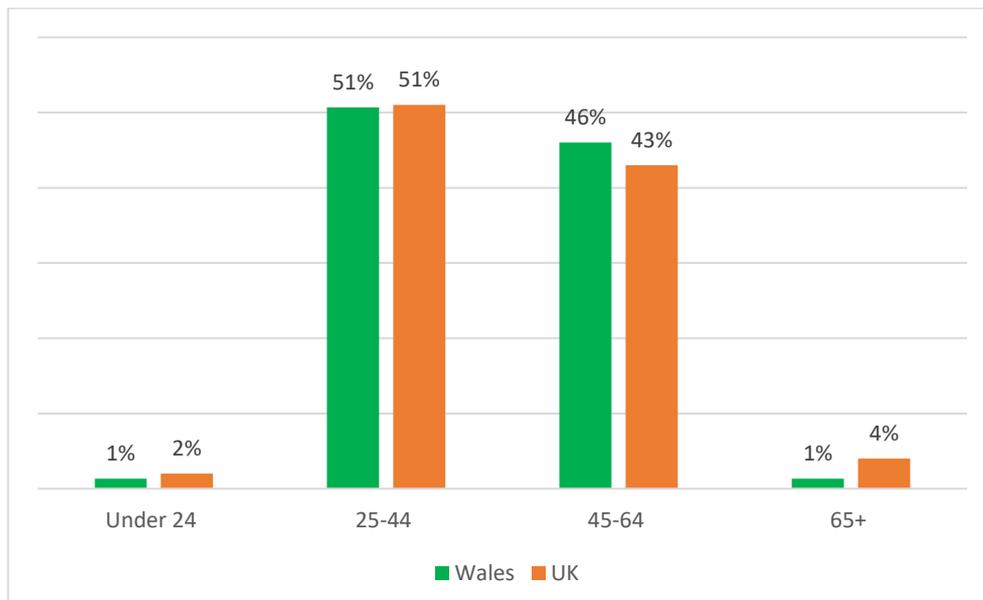


Figure 5.3.2: Ages of recent arrivals in UK and Wales

Source: Home Office Survey for Hong Kong British National (Overseas) visa holders (2021)

Figure 5.3.2 shows that the age distribution of recent arrivals in Wales is almost identical to those seen in the wider UK. In both cases, the largest group is 25-44, followed by 45-64. As mentioned in the *Settling in* report (2022), these brackets are expected to be dominant, as they are most likely to hold BN(O) citizenship, having been born during the population booms of the 60s and 80s (Rolfe and Chan, 2022). While a slightly higher proportion of pensionable age is found in the UK compared to Wales, these results once again show that the majority of recent Hong Kong arrivals are of working age and are ready to contribute to the economy.

### Relationship status

To compare Wales to the UK, the relationship statuses for Hong Kong migrants were recoded into three main categories: married, in a long-term relationship or civil partnership, and single. Respondents that were classified as single include those who are “divorced, widowed, and separated” due to small numbers in the latter group.

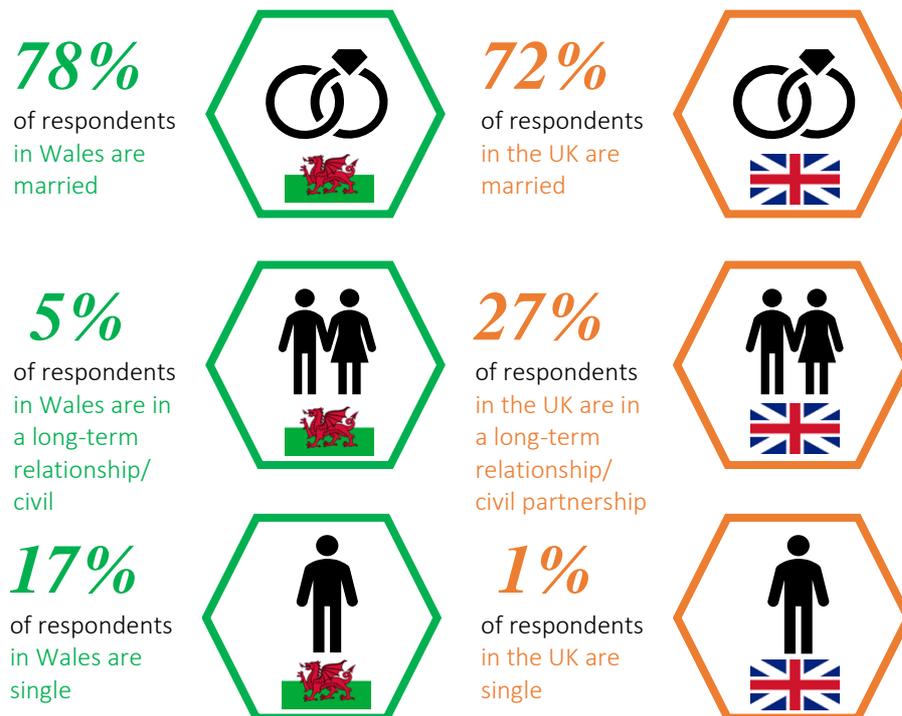


Figure 5.3.3: Partnership status of recent arrivals in UK and Wales

Source: Home Office Survey for Hong Kong British National (Overseas) visa holders (2021)

A highly similar pattern can be identified among the married respondents in Wales (78%) and in the UK (72%). However, significant differences are evident when

comparing the other groups. In the UK the second largest group consists of those in a long-term relationship or civil partnership (27%) with only 1% who were single. Conversely, in Wales only 5% were in long-term relationships or civil partnerships, with a much higher proportion being single (17%). While they are single never married, only 11% of them live alone (see Figure 4.4.3) It could be that single household occupants find moving to Wales is more affordable compared to other parts of the UK. Earlier analysis also shows that single parent families are rare (1.5%).

### Parental status

**53%**

of respondents in Wales have children



**59%**

of respondents in the UK have children



Figure 5.3.4: Parental status of recent arrivals in UK and Wales

Source: Home Office Survey for Hong Kong British National (Overseas) visa holders (2021)

When it comes to parental status, there were a higher proportion of parents (+6%) in the UK with dependent children than in Wales. It is not possible to establish if this difference is statistically significant due to different sampling strategies.

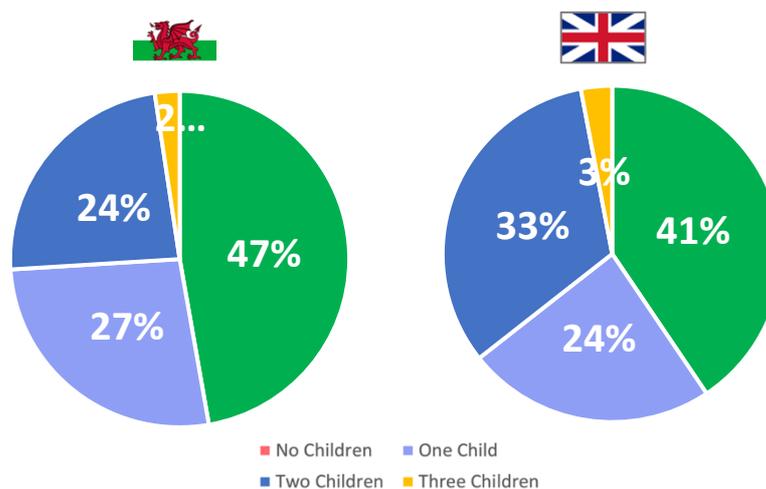


Figure 5.3.5: Children per household in Wales and UK

Source: Home Office Survey for Hong Kong British National (Overseas) visa holders (2021)

The distribution of children per household is very similar in both surveys. The modal category in both cases is no children, with the smallest group being three (or more)

children. One difference found is that the second most common number per household in the UK is two children, compared to one in Wales. These findings suggest that BN(O)s in the UK are more likely to have slightly larger families than those in Wales.

### Qualifications

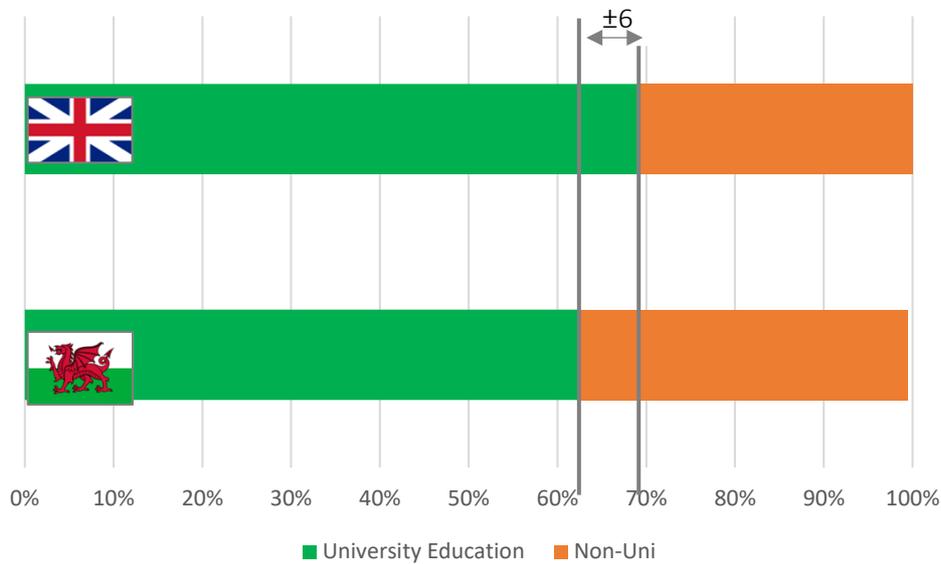


Figure 5.3.6: Qualification status of recent arrivals in Wales and UK

Source: Home Office Survey for Hong Kong British National (Overseas) visa holders (2021)

Figure 5.3.6 shows that a higher proportion of recent Hong Kong migrants (+6%) in the UK have a university degree of higher qualification than those in Wales. Again, it is not possible to ascertain if this difference is statistically significant due to different sampling strategies. Unfortunately, national comparison cannot be made for employment because the Welsh survey only asked questions on industrial sectors not occupation

## 5.4 English Language Skills

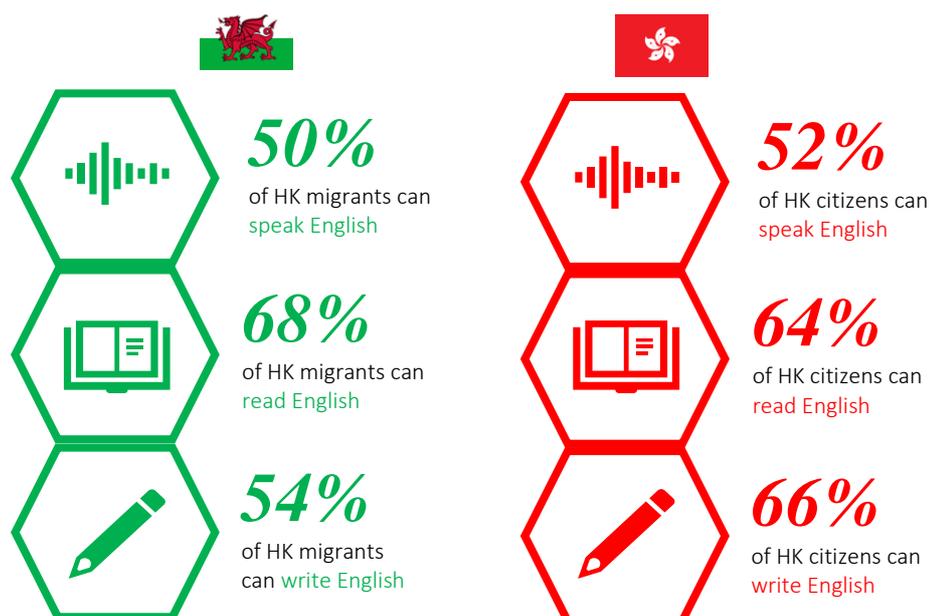


Figure 10.4.1: English ability for migrants in Wales and Hong Kong citizens

The UK survey did not cover topics on English language proficiency. Results are therefore compared figures reported in Rolfe and Chan (2022) based on the Hong Kong 2016 Census data. Only three dimensions of language abilities are compared: (1) speak English, (2) read English and (3) write English since there was no question on the ability to understand spoken English in the census. Interestingly, Hong Kong citizens have better English abilities in two of the three dimensions compared. For example, 52% of Hong Kong citizens reported being able to speak English, a slightly higher prevalence than those who migrated to Wales. The difference is even higher for English writing skills, with 66% of Hong Kong citizens being able to write English, in comparison to only 54% of recent Hong Kong migrants in Wales. Such discrepancies can potentially be explained by the demographic change since 2016 when the last Hong Kong By-Census was conducted. It is beyond the scope of this report to estimate how many highly educated people had left Hong Kong since 2016 and a significant number of them will have headed to other popular English-speaking destinations such as Australia, New Zealand, the USA and Canada. Another potential explanation is cohort effect. Young Hong Kongers have significantly better English language skills than the older age groups. Since the majority of the respondents in the Wales Survey

were in the middle age category, this could potentially explain their lower English language skills.

## 6. Policy Implications

While the majority of respondents reported a high level of happiness since arriving in Wales, evidence from this survey report has identified a significant number of Hong Kongers still experienced multiple challenges settling in their new homes. Despite the fact that they are not asylum seekers or refugees, many Hong Kongers fleeing their beloved city have reported high levels of mental health issues and acute emotional trauma, which are probably reported. The recent blatant assault of a Hong Kong protestor at the Chinese Embassy in Manchester has also deepened the sense of fear and mistrust among Hong Kongers in Britain across the country. Policy response and service planning needs to be acutely aware of and sensitive to the needs of Hong Kongers in these extraordinary times.

The survey findings suggest a coordinated approach and multi-agency collaboration is essential in supporting Hong Kongers integrating into life in Wales in the following areas:

### Schooling, Education and Training

Hong Kong BN(O)s do not have recourse to public funds, and also, children above the age of 18 are not entitled to 'home student' fees and student loans at universities. This is in stark contrast to almost all residents in other British Overseas Territories who are eligible since 2007. With the extension of the BN(O) visa scheme to Hong Kongers born after 1997 in October 2022, it is likely that the second wave of Hong Kong arrivals will be much younger, possibly many are still studying at university. 'Home fees' status will enable them to continue their education in the UK. Credit transfer should also be considered by all colleges and universities.

Support for families with school-age children is also crucial. Better information on the Welsh education system and how to go about re-taking an academic year needs to be much more widely disseminated.

### Housing and Accommodation

Support for renters by working with landlords, estate agents and the housing sector more generally, to address the issue around lack of credit and rental/property history in Hong Kong, would greatly enhance Hong Kongers' ability to rent. Strategies should be explored to help renters in temporary accommodation without an address to access their first home. It remains to be seen if the new [Renting Homes Act Amendment](#) (December, 2022) which promises tenants more protection and rights and more responsibilities for landlords will improve the situations of Hong Kongers.

### **Sustainable Employment**

Evidence suggests many recent arrivals suffer from downward occupational mobility. Support is urgently needed to help Hong Kongers find sustainable employment that is commensurate with their qualification and in the sectors desired to prevent them from 'being stuck' in a temporary and low-skilled jobs such as those in retail, hospitality and tourism.

It is likely that the second wave of Hong Kong BN(O) arrivals will be younger and

much less financially secure. For those who are not in full-time education, support in seeking employment is even more crucial. Bespoke job fairs and wider information dissemination of job opportunities via social media and Hong Kong networks including faith groups would be necessary.

### **Language Classes – English and Welsh**

Childcare support to attend ESOL is necessary, as is immersive and or online provision to increase flexibility and progress. The findings suggest Hong Kongers are highly motivated to learn Welsh to improve their employment opportunity. Wider provision of Welsh language classes is also necessary.

### **Access to Healthcare Services**

While GP services are accessible to all, many Hong Kongers still found it difficult to access healthcare services including finding a NHS dentist. This is after they have already paid the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS). Telephone GP consultation also presents major barriers for Hong Kongers due to language issues.

## **Integration and Social Support**

Many Hong Kongers expressed a strong desire to mix with local people, not just to improve their English but to understand the Welsh culture. Others reported that churches and faith groups had provided an important source of support. Policy and services should prioritise support to increase opportunities for contact between Hong Kongers and local Welsh communities, as well as faith groups.

Kongers. A more coordinated approach in facilitating the building and broadening of social networks would improve early integration into local communities. Evidence shows that faith groups play a crucial role in social networks building and their development, as well acting as a source of social support including opportunities for practising English. A more collaborative approach working with faith groups would be beneficial to speed up wider integration.

## **Social Media / Digital integration**

Social media is regarded as an effective means for integration by many Hong

# **7. Future Research**

The survey analysis and findings have identified many significant challenges experienced by the new Hong Kongers in Wales but they also left some questions unanswered. While the open text qualitative data provided important insights on the Hong Kongers' struggles in accessing employment, housing and healthcare services, the nature of these challenges and the reasons for difficulties could have been more fully explored. These qualitative data could inform future data collection including more tailored survey questions. To understand if life has become easier for Hong Kongers in Wales or indeed for future arrivals who may be younger, a follow-up survey is recommended. To enable more robust data capture and national comparison, future

surveys should consider including additional questions on pre- and post-migration occupation, month and year of arrival, the use of social media in connecting with different communities, as well as respondents' perception of integration priority and how things change over time.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1: Welcome Survey (English)

(The questionnaire was distributed using an online survey platform hence the question text below does not reflect the more user-friendly online format)

### Welcome Survey for Hong Kong BN(O) Visa Holders in Wales

The Wales Strategic Migration Partnership, (WSMP), hosts the Hong Kong British Nationals (Overseas), BN(O), Visa Scheme Project in Wales. The WSMP is part of the Welsh Local Government Association. Established in 2001, the Wales Strategic Migration Partnership (WSMP) is funded by the Home Office and works with stakeholders in the statutory, voluntary, private and community sectors to provide strategic leadership, advisory and coordination function on migration in Wales. There are also Migration Partnerships across the UK, forming a national infrastructure.

A new immigration route opened on 31 January 2021, providing BN(O) status holders and their eligible family members with the opportunity to come to the UK to live, study and work, on a pathway to citizenship. This new route reflects the UK's historic and moral commitment to those people of Hong Kong who chose to retain their ties to the UK by taking up BN(O) status at the point of Hong Kong's handover to China in 1997.

The WSMP wants to understand the needs and issues that affect people who move to Wales under the Hong Kong BN(O) Visa schemes. This will help us and also public services to be in an informed position to be able to target information, advice and support where it is most needed.

The survey is in two sections. All of the questions are optional and the survey is anonymous and confidential

First of all we want to find out about –

- What attracted you to move to Wales?
- How easy or difficult it has been for you to adapt to life in Wales and to access services.
- What kind of integration support you feel you need?

In the second part of the survey, we will ask you some questions about yourself and your household.

The survey is confidential. There is no way that we will be able to trace your responses back to you as an individual. Please click [here](#) to see our Privacy Policy.

1. Please indicate how important the following factors were when deciding to move to Wales.  
Schools  
Job Opportunities  
Housing or Accommodation  
Family Links  
Links to Hong Kong Community in Wales  
Welsh Culture / Affinity with Wales  
Any other, please state

Not At All Important

Not Important  
Neutral  
Important  
Very Important

2. Please indicate how easy or difficult you found (or are finding) the following. Please tick all the boxes that apply.

Finding suitable housing  
Finding a job  
Finding a school for your children  
Adjusting to life in Wales  
Contacting your Local Authority  
Registering for health care services, (vaccines, GP, dentist etc.).  
Registering for English language classes  
Understanding how to report a crime  
Accessing advice and support services  
Is there anything else you need support with?

Very Difficult  
Somewhat Difficult  
Neither Difficult nor Easy  
Somewhat Easy  
Very Easy

3. **Integration support.**

**Are you worried about any of the following, please tick all the boxes that apply?**

My visa status and route to citizenship  
My English language skills  
Living costs or paying bills  
Inequalities  
Discrimination  
Hate Crime  
Needing employment support  
None of the above  
Other, please state

4. Please tell us about any other experiences or comments that you may have on integration and moving to Wales.

Next, we would like to ask you some questions about yourself and your household. This is so that we can understand where services and support will be needed. The survey is confidential. There is no way that we will be able to trace your responses back to you as an individual.

5. How long do you plan to stay in Wales?

0-1 year  
1-2.5 years  
2.6-5 years  
Permanently

6. In which Welsh Local Authority are you currently living?

Please select your answer

7. Age: What is your age group?
  - Under 16
  - 16-24 years
  - 25-44 years
  - 45-64 years
  - 65+
  - Prefer not to say
  
8. Gender: What is your gender?
  - Female
  - Male
  - Other
  - Prefer not to say
  
9. Transgender: Is your gender the same now as when assigned at birth?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Prefer not to say
  
10. Sexual Orientation: Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself? (Note - this question should only be answered by people age over 16)
  - Heterosexual / Straight
  - Gay Man
  - Gay Woman / Lesbian
  - Bisexual
  - Prefer not to say
  - Other
  
11. Partnership: Which of the following options describes your partnership status?
  - Single
  - Married
  - Living with a partner
  - Divorced
  - Widowed
  - Civil Partnership
  - Separated
  - Prefer not to say
  - Other
  
12. Language: What is your preferred language?
  - Cantonese
  - Mandarin
  - English
  - Welsh
  - Prefer not to say
  - Other
  
13. How well can you understand, speak, read or write English?
  - Understand spoken English: very well, well, not very well, not at all
  - Speak English: very well, well, not very well, not at all
  - Read English: very well, well, not very well, not at all

Write English: very well, well, not very well, not at all  
Prefer not to say

14. Are you aware of ESOL, (English for Speakers of Other Languages), courses available locally? Yes, No, not applicable  
Have you been able to find ESOL classes that meet your needs? Yes, No, not applicable  
What would help you to gain confidence in spoken English? Yes, No, not applicable

15. Can you understand, speak, read or write Welsh?

Speak Welsh  
Read Welsh  
Write Welsh  
None of the above  
Prefer not to say  
Would you like to learn Welsh?

16. Would you like to learn Welsh? Yes, No, not applicable

Would you like to learn basic Welsh? Yes, No, not applicable  
Would you like to learn Welsh to improve your job opportunities? Yes, No, not applicable  
Would you like to learn Welsh to support your children at school? Yes, No, not applicable

17. Disability: Do you have a long-term physical or mental health condition or illness that reduces your ability to carry out day to day activities

Yes  
No  
Prefer not to say

18. If you answered 'yes' to Question 17, please indicate which applies to you:

Hearing Impairment  
Visual Impairment  
Speech Impairment  
Learning Difficulties  
Mental Health Issues  
Physical / Mobility Impairment  
Prefer not to say  
Other

19. Religion or Belief: What is your religion?

Christian  
Buddhist  
Hindu  
Muslim  
Sikh  
Jewish  
Atheist  
No religion  
Prefer not to say  
Other

20. Which of the following applies to you?

Please note you can tick more than one box.

I am currently living in private rented accommodation.

I am currently living in an Airbnb, hotel, or other short-term/temporary accommodation.

I have bought my own property since arriving in Wales.

I intend to buy my own property in Wales.

I am staying with friends

Are you intending to stay in Wales?

None of the above

Prefer not to say

21. What is the total size of your household? (including you)

1

2

3

4

5

6 or more

Prefer not to say

22. How many children under 18 are there in your household?

0

1

2

3

4

5 or more

What are their ages?

Prefer not to say

23. How many adult dependent relatives are there in your household?

An adult dependent relative is someone over the age of 18 who is dependent on you for their care because of either: long-term physical or mental ill-health/disability; or problems related to old age.

This could include you or your partner's parent or grandparent, brother or sister, or son or daughter.

0

1

2

3

4

5 or more

Prefer not to say

Are any of your family planning to join you in the UK at a later date?

Please state the number of adult dependents.

Please state the number of children.

24. Which of the following best describes you?

Employed full-time, (more than 30 hours per week).

Employed part-time, (30 hours or less per week).

Self-employed full-time, (more than 30 hours per week).

Self-employed part-time, (30 hours or less per week).

Unemployed

Unable to work  
Retired  
Studying  
Other  
Prefer not to say

25. If in employment, what sector do you work in?

Manufacturing  
Construction  
Hospitality  
Agriculture  
Tourism  
Transport  
Retail  
Health and Social Care  
Local Government  
Have my own business or company  
Other, please state  
Prefer not to say

26. Are you looking for employment?

27. If you answered 'yes' to Question 26, please indicate what sector would you like to work in?

Manufacturing  
Construction  
Hospitality  
Agriculture  
Tourism  
Transport  
Retail  
Health and Social Care  
Local Government  
Own business or self-employed  
Other, please state  
Prefer not to say

28. In what sector were you employed in Hong Kong?

Manufacturing  
Construction  
Hospitality  
Agriculture  
Tourism  
Transport  
Retail  
Health and Social Care  
Local Government  
Own business or self-employed  
Not in employment  
Other, please state  
Prefer not to say

29. Have you achieved a qualification at:

Junior secondary, (GCSE or similar)  
Higher secondary (A-level or post-secondary)  
University, (graduate or post graduate level)  
Prefer not to say

30. Are you a BN(O) Visa holder?

Yes  
No  
Prefer not to say

31. Overall, how would you say you feel about your recent move to Wales?

Very unhappy  
Unhappy  
Neutral  
Happy  
Very Happy  
Prefer not to say

**\*\*Thank you for completing the survey\*\***

## Appendix 2: Hong Kongers Welcome Survey (Traditional Chinese)

### 歡迎調查問卷

### 威爾斯境內香港英國國民（海外）簽證持有者問卷

### 威爾斯移民策略合作夥伴

威爾斯移民策略合作夥伴（WSMP）負責在威爾斯進行香港香港英國國民（海外），亦稱BNO，的簽證計劃項目。WSMP是威爾斯地方政府協會的一份子。威爾斯移民策略合作夥伴（WSMP）創立於2001年，由英國內政部資助。其與法定、自願、私人及社區領域的利益相關者緊密配合，為威爾斯的移民提供戰略領導、諮詢和協調功能。英國境內也有其他移民合作夥伴，形成一個全國性的基礎設施。

於2021年1月31日，一條新的移民途徑開通，為BNO身份持有者及其符合條件的家庭成員提供了獲得公民身份的途徑，為他們提供可以來英國生活、學習和工作的機會。這個新途徑反映了英國對那些在1997年香港回歸中國時選擇以BNO身份保持與英國聯繫的香港人民的歷史和道義承諾。

WSMP希望瞭解影響以香港BNO簽證計劃移居威爾斯的人們的需求和困難。這將幫助我們以及公共服務，讓我們處於知情立場，以便能夠在最需要的地方提供信息、建議和協助。

本調查問卷分為兩部份。所有提問均屬可選作答題（非強制性），而本調查問卷將以匿名及保密的方式進行。

首先我們希望能知道：

- 是什麼吸引您移居到威爾斯？
- 您適應威爾斯的生活和獲得服務的難易程度。
- 您感覺自己需要什麼類型的融入支援？

在調查問卷的第二部份，我們將向您提問一些關於您本人以及家庭的問題。

本調查是保密的。我們將不可能透過您的回應追溯到您本人。請點擊[這裏](#)查看我們的私隱條規。

32. 請說明當您決定移居來威爾斯時，以下因素有多重要。

- 學校
- 就業機會
- 房屋或住宿

親屬  
與威爾斯的香港社群的聯繫  
威爾斯文化 / 喜愛威爾斯  
其它，請說明

完全不重要  
不重要  
中立  
重要  
非常重要

33. 請說明您感覺以下有多容易或多困難。請勾選所有適用選項。

找到合適的房屋  
找到工作  
為子女找到學校  
適應這威爾斯的生活  
聯絡您的地方政府  
登記衛生護理服務（疫苗接種、家庭醫生、牙醫等）  
登記英語課程  
理解如何舉報罪案  
獲取建議及支援服務  
您是否在任何其他方面需要協助？

非常困難  
有點困難  
不難不易  
有點容易  
非常容易

34. 融入支援

**您是否擔心以下任何項目？請勾選所有適用選項。**

我的簽證情況及取得公民身份的途徑  
我的英語能力  
生活費或支付賬單  
不平等  
歧視  
仇恨犯罪  
需要就業支援  
以上全不適用  
其它，請說明

35. 請告訴我們，您對融入和移居到威爾斯的任何其他體驗或意見。

接下來，我們想向您提問一些關於您本人及家庭的問題。這是讓我們可以瞭解您們可能需要哪些服務與支援。本調查是保密的。我們將不可能透過您的回應追溯到您本人。

36. 您打算居住在威爾斯多久？

- 0 - 1 年
- 1 - 2 年半
- 超過 2 年半 - 5 年
- 永久

37. 您目前居住在哪一個威爾斯地方政府範圍內？

請選擇您的回答

38. 年齡：您屬於哪個年齡組別？

- 16 歲以下
- 16 - 24 歲
- 25 - 44 歲
- 45 - 64 歲
- 65 歲或以上
- 不願作答

39. 性別：請問您的性別？

- 女
- 男
- 其他
- 不願作答

40. 跨性別：您的性別與出生時的性別是否一樣？

- 是
- 否
- 不願作答

41. 性取向：以下哪一項最能描述您對自己的看法？（註：本題只應由超過 16 歲的人士作答）

- 異性戀者
- 男同性戀者
- 女同性戀者
- 雙性戀者
- 不願作答
- 其他

42. 伴侶：以下哪一項最可以描述您的伴侶狀況？

- 未婚
- 已婚
- 同居
- 離婚
- 喪偶
- 民事伴侶關係
- 已分居
- 不願作答
- 其他

43. 語言：您較傾向於使用什麼語言？

- 粵語
- 普通話
- 英語
- 威爾斯語
- 不願作答
- 其他

44. 您的英語能力如何（理解、口述、閱讀、書寫）？

- 理解口述英語：非常好，好，不太懂，完全不懂
- 口述英語：非常好，好，不太懂，完全不懂
- 閱讀英語：非常好，好，不太懂，完全不懂
- 書寫英語：非常好，好，不太懂，完全不懂
- 不願作答

45. 您可知當地有提供「英語非母語人士的英語課程」（ESOL）？知道，不知道，不適用

您能否找到合乎您所需的 ESOL 課程？能，不能，不適用

什麼可以幫助您增加說英語的自信？有，否，不適用

46. 您能否理解、口述、閱讀、書寫威爾斯語？

- 能說威爾斯語
- 能讀威爾斯文
- 能寫威爾斯文
- 以上全不適用
- 不願作答

您想學習威爾斯語嗎？

47. 您想學習威爾斯語嗎？想，不想，不適用

您想學習基礎威爾斯語嗎？想，不想，不適用

您想學習威爾斯語，以改善您的就業機會嗎？想，不想，不適用

您想學習威爾斯語，以協助您子女的學習嗎？想，不想，不適用

48. 殘障：您是否有長期的身體或精神健康問題或疾病，而這狀況可影響您進行日常活動的能力？

是

否

不願作答

49. 如果您對第17題的回答為「是」，請說明以下適用的選項：

聽力障礙

視力障礙

言語障礙

學習困難

精神健康問題

身體障礙 / 行動不便

不願作答

其他

50. 宗教或信仰：您信奉什麼宗教？

基督教徒

佛教徒

印度教徒

穆斯林

錫克教

猶太教

無神論者

沒有宗教

不願作答

其他

51. 以下哪些選項適用在您身上？

請注意，您可以勾選超過一項。

我目前住在私人租賃住宿。

我目前住在民宿、酒店，或其他短期/臨時住宿。

自從來到威爾斯，我已經購買自己的房產。

我打算在威爾斯購買自己的房產。

我與朋友一起住

您是否打算留在威爾斯？

以上全不適用

不願作答

52. 您有幾位家庭成員？（包括您本人）

1

2

- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6 或以上
- 不願作答

53. 您的家庭內有幾位 18 歲以下兒童？

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 或以上
- 請問他們的年齡？
- 不願作答

54. 您的家庭內有幾位成年受撫養家屬？

「成年受撫養家屬」是指超過 18 歲，但因為長期身體或精神健康/殘障，或因與老年有關的問題，而需要依靠您照料的人士。

這可能包括您或您伴侶的父母或祖父母、兄弟姐妹，或兒女。

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 或以上
- 不願作答

您可有任何家庭成員計劃在日後過來英國與您團聚？

請說明成年家眷人數。

請說明兒童人數。

55. 以下哪一項最可以描述您本人？

- 全職員工（每週超過 30 小時）
- 兼職員工（每週 30 小時或以下）
- 自僱全職（每週超過 30 小時）
- 自僱兼職（每週 30 小時或以下）
- 失業
- 無法工作
- 退休
- 就學中
- 其他
- 不願作答

56. 如果您在就業，您在什麼領域工作？

- 製造業
- 建築業
- 餐旅業
- 農業
- 旅遊業
- 交通業
- 零售業
- 醫護及社會護理
- 地方政府
- 擁有自己的生意或公司
- 其它，請說明
- 不願作答

57. 您是否在求職中？

58. 如果您對第 26 題的回答為「是」，請說明您希望在什麼領域就業？

- 製造業
- 建築業
- 餐旅業
- 農業
- 旅遊業
- 交通業
- 零售業
- 醫護及社會護理
- 地方政府
- 自己的生意或自僱
- 其它，請說明
- 不願作答

59. 您在香港的職業屬於什麼領域？

- 製造業
- 建築業
- 餐旅業
- 農業
- 旅遊業
- 交通業
- 零售業
- 醫護及社會護理
- 地方政府
- 自己的生意或自僱
- 沒有就業
- 其它，請說明

不願作答

60. 您擁有什麼學歷資格：

初中（GCSE, 相等於香港舊制中四至中五會考課程（HKCEE））

高中（A-level, 相等於香港舊制中六至中七）

大學（學士或研究生水平）

不願作答

61. 您是否持有 BNO 簽證？

是

否

不願作答

62. 整體來說，您對於近期移居來威爾斯有何感想？

非常不開心

不開心

中立

開心

非常開心

不願作答

非常感謝您完成本問卷調查。