DATGANIAD NEWYDDION / NEWS RELEASE

9fed Ebrill 2024

(see below for English)

DYFODOL I'R IAITH – POLISI LLYWODRAETH CYMRU YN TANSEILIO DYFODOL PRIFYSGOLION AC ECONOMI CYMRU

Mae'r amser wedi dod i Lywodraeth Cymru sylweddoli nad yw ei pholisi presennol o roi yr un gefnogaeth i fyfyrwyr fynd i astudio y tu allan i Gymru ag y mae'n ei rhoi i fyfyrwyr sy'n dewis aros yng Nghymru bellach yn gynaliadwy. Daw yr alwad hon yn sgil y newyddion fod Prifysgolion Cymru yn wynebu heriau ariannol gyda diswyddiadau ar y gorwel mewn sawl sefydliad.

Arwydd amlwg o'r diffyg cefnogaeth i Brifysgolion Cymru yw bod Llywodraeth Cymru wedi rhoi dros hanner biliwn o bunnau i addysg uwch ac economi Lloegr y llynedd.

Mae'r Llywodraeth wedi cadarnhau yn ystod blwyddyn ariannol 2023-24 y gwariodd dros hanner biliwn o bunnau trethdalwyr (£553,473,000) ar gostau byw a ffioedd dysgu myfyrwyr o Gymru sy'n dewis addysg uwch y tu allan i Gymru (yn Lloegr yn bennaf). Mae'r gyllideb hon wedi cynyddu 60% dros 5 mlynedd ac yn cynnwys £221,593,000 ar gostau cymorth ffioedd dysgu israddedig. Arian y gallai fod wedi ei roi i Brifysgolion Cymru pe bai'n dileu'r polisi presennol.

Swm a wariwyd ar gymorth i fyfyrwyr (grantiau a benthyciadau) ar gyfer myfyrwyr o Gymru sy'n astudio y tu allan i Gymru					
Blwyddyn Ariannol					
	2018-19	***2019-20***	***2020-21***	***2021-22***	***2022-23***
Cefnogaeth cynhaliaeth israddedig (costau byw)	*£189,384,000*	*£215,273,000*	*£250,726,000*	*£286,017,000*	*£302,256,000*
Cymorth ffioedd dysgu israddedig	*£114,965,000*	*£151,956,000*	*£190,112,000*	*£213,831,000*	*£221,593,000*
Cymorth ôl-raddedig (yn cynnwys ffioedd a chynhaliaeth)	*£15,841,000*	*£20,936,000*	*£29,188,000*	*£33,420,000*	*£29,624,000*
Cyfanswm	***£320,190,000***	***£388,165,000***	***£470,027,000***	***£533,268,000***	***£553,473,000***

Ffynhonnell: Gohebiaeth gan Jeremy Miles at Dyfodol I'r Iaith, dyddiedig 27ain Chwefror 2024

Mae Cynllun Seren [Seren - Hwb (gov.wales)] a noddir gan y Llywodraeth yn annog myfyrwyr i astudio ym Mhrifysgolion grŵp Russell, 24 i gyd gydag un yr un yng Nghymru, Gogledd Iwerddon a'r Alban a 21 yn Lloegr. Nid yw'n hysbys eto beth yw cost y cynllun hwn sydd yn ychwanegol i'r hanner biliwn uchod.

Meddai Dylan Bryn Roberts, Prif Weithredwr Dyfodol:

“Mae’r cynlluniau cynyddol gostus yma yn gwbl anghynaladwy yn wyneb toriadau digynsail ar draws y sector cyhoeddus a’r sector amaeth lle mae oddeutu 50% o’r gweithlu yn siarad Cymraeg. Mae’n amddifadu economi Cymru a’n sefydliadau addysg uwch. Mae’n tanseilio strategaeth miliwn o siaradwyr Cymraeg (Cymraeg 2050) trwy gynyddu patrwm allfudo gydag ond 61% o fyfyrwyr o Gymru erbyn hyn yn derbyn addysg uwch yng Nghymru o’i gymharu â dros 90% yn Yr Alban a Lloegr.

“Mae’r Alban yn talu holl ffioedd myfyrwyr sy’n astudio yn yr Alban, ac mae 96% o’u myfyrwyr yn astudio yn eu mamwlad. Mae Gogledd Iwerddon yn talu hanner ffioedd myfyrwyr sy’n astudio yno, ac mae 75% o’u myfyrwyr yn astudio yno. Mae’r wers i Gymru’n amlwg.

“Mae’r Llywodraeth yn barod iawn i edliw nad yw’r setliad ariannol mae’n ei dderbyn gan Lywodraeth Prydain yn ddigonol ond eto i gyd mae’n barod i drosglwyddo dros hanner biliwn o bunnau y flwyddyn yn ôl i economi Lloegr. Nid yw Llywodraeth Cymru hyd yn oed yn ymwybodol o faint o fyfyrwyr sydd yn dychwelyd i Gymru ar ôl cwblhau eu hastudiaethau.”

Mewn gohebiaeth â Dyfodol, cadarnhaodd y Gweinidog dros y Gymraeg ac Addysg ar y pryd, Jeremy Miles, nad oes ganddynt ddata hirdymor sy’n tracio myfyrwyr sydd wedi mynd trwy Academi Seren er mwyn gallu dweud faint o’r rhai sy’n dewis astudio y tu hwnt i Gymru sy’n dychwelyd i Gymru.

“Rydym yn wynebu argyfwng ym myd addysg a diswyddiadau athrawon ysgolion uwchradd heb sôn am Lywodraeth Leol a ddiffyg meddygon, nyrsys a deintyddion. O ganlyniad mae gwasanaethau cyhoeddus ac economi Cymru yn dirywio tra rydym yn trosglwyddo dros hanner biliwn o bunnau i economi a sefydliadau AU Lloegr. Mae’r symiau aruthrol yma yn cynyddu bob blwyddyn heb reolaeth. Onid yw’n gamddefnydd o arian cyhoeddus mewn cyfnod o ddirwasgiad difrifol? Digon yw digon ac rydym yn galw ar bawb yng Nghymru i gefnogi’r alwad hon cyn i’r hwch fynd drwy’r siop yn llwyr.

“Oni bai am y 39,770 o fyfyrwyr o Loegr sy’n dod i Brifysgolion Cymru byddai sefyllfa economaidd pob sefydliad yn waeth o lawer. Er enghraifft, gwelir bod 60% o holl fyfyrwyr Prifysgol Aberystwyth yn enedigol o Loegr o’i gymharu a 40% o Gymru. Mae’n hwyr glas mabwysiadu polisi sy’n rhoi Cymru yn gyntaf. Dylai hefyd gefnogi gallu myfyrwyr i ystyried addysg uwch y tu hwnt i’r wlad ond heb yr un gefnogaeth ariannol â phe baent yn astudio yng Nghymru. Dyma beth mae’r Alban a Gogledd Iwerddon wedi ei wneud.

Mae Dyfodol i’r Iaith yn cefnogi hawl pob unigolyn i ddewis astudio ym mhle bynnag ac ym mha wlad bynnag y dymunant. Ond pan mae graddfa’r allfudiad o Gymru yn cyrraedd pwynt critigol ac ar gost gynyddol enfawr, mae angen mabwysiadu polisi sy’n adlewyrchu’r hinsawdd ariannol presennol. Nid oes cymhellion ariannol digonol i annog ein pobl ifanc i astudio yng Nghymru a chyfrannu’n adeiladol a brwdfrydig i’w dyfodol.

Mae’r drefn bresennol, yn fwriadol ai peidio, yn hwyluso ecsodus gormodol cynyddol o’n pobl ifanc academaidd o Gymru. O ganlyniad, mae’n gwanhau seiliau busnes Prifysgolion Cymru, tanseilio nodau ac amcanion y Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol ac yn gwanhau ymdrechion i greu Cymru gryfach a mwy economaidd flaengar.

Rydym felly yn galw ar Lywodraeth Cymru i ddileu y polisi hunan-ddistrywiol hwn er lles Cymru - dyfodol y Gymraeg, ein sefydliadau addysg uwch a’n heconomi sy’n erfyn am chwistrelliad o gefnogaeth gyhoeddus. Byddai hanner biliwn o bunnau bob blwyddyn yn gyfraniad sylweddol at hynny.”

- DIWEDD -

Am fanylion pellach cysylltwch â Dylan Bryn Roberts, Prif Weithredwr Dyfodol i'r Iaith ar 07989393445 neu dylanbryn@dyfodol.net neu Heini Gruffudd, Cadeirydd, 01792 455410, 07983 506805, heini@gruffudd.org

Dyfodol i'r Iaith

- Mae Dyfodol i'r Iaith yn fudiad amhleidiol sy'n gweithredu er lles y Gymraeg
- Ei nod yw dylanwadu drwy ddulliau cyfansoddiadol ar sylwedd a chynnwys polisïau cyhoeddus a deddfwriaeth er mwyn hybu twf a ffyniant y Gymraeg.

DATGANIAD NEWYDDION / NEWS RELEASE

9th April 2024

DYFODOL I'R IAITH – WELSH GOVERNMENT POLICY UNDERMINES THE FUTURE OF WELSH UNIVERSITIES AND ECONOMY

The time has come for the Welsh Government to realise that its current policy of giving students the same support to go and study outside Wales as it gives to students who choose to stay in Wales is no longer sustainable. This call follows news that Welsh Universities are facing financial challenges with redundancies looming at several institutions.

A stark sign of the lack of support for Welsh Universities is that the Welsh Government gave over half a billion pounds to higher education and the English economy last year.

The Government has confirmed that during the 2023-24 financial year, more than half a billion taxpayer pounds (£553,473,000) was spent on the living costs and tuition fees of Welsh students choosing higher education outside Wales (mainly in England). This budget has increased by 60% over 5 years and includes £221,593,000 on undergraduate tuition fee support costs. Money it could have given to the Universities of Wales if it scrapped the current policy.

Sums spent on assistance for students (grants and loans) for students from Wales studying outside Wales					
Financial year					
	2018-19	***2019-20***	***2020-21***	***2021-22***	***2022-23***
Undergraduate maintenance support (cost of living)	*£189,384,000*	*£215,273,000*	*£250,726,000*	*£286,017,000*	*£302,256,000*
Undergraduate tuition fee support	*£114,965,000*	*£151,956,000*	*£190,112,000*	*£213,831,000*	*£221,593,000*
Postgraduate support (including fees and subsistence)	*£15,841,000*	*£20,936,000*	*£29,188,000*	*£33,420,000*	*£29,624,000*
Total	***£320,190,000***	***£388,165,000***	***£470,027,000***	***£533,268,000***	***£553,473,000***

Source: Correspondence from Jeremy Miles to Future I Language, dated 27th February 2024

The Government-sponsored Seren Academy Seren - Hwb (gov.wales) encourages students to study at Russell Group Universities, 24 in total with one each in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland and 21 in England. It is not yet known what the cost of this scheme is in addition to the above half a billion pounds.

Dylan Bryn Roberts, Chief Executive Dyfodol i'r Iaith, said:

"These increasingly costly schemes are completely unsustainable in the face of unprecedented cuts across the public sector and the agriculture sector where around 50% of the workforce speaks Welsh. It deprives the Welsh economy and our higher education institutions. It undermines the strategy of one million Welsh speakers (Cymraeg 2050) by increasing the pattern of emigration with only 61% of Welsh students now receiving higher education in Wales compared with over 93% in England.

"Scotland pays all fees for students studying in Scotland, and 96% of their students' study in their home country. Northern Ireland pays half the fees of students who study there, and 75% of their students' study there. The lesson for Wales is obvious.

"The Government is very eager to highlight that the financial settlement it receives from the British Government is not sufficient, yet it is prepared to transfer over half a billion pounds a year back into the English economy. The Welsh Government is not even aware of how many students return to Wales after completing their studies."

In correspondence with Dyfodol, The Minister for the Welsh language and Education at the time, Jeremy Miles confirmed that they do not have long-term data tracking Seren Academy students who studied beyond Wales are returning to Wales.

"We are facing a crisis in the education sector and secondary school teacher redundancies not to mention Local Government and an increasing lack of doctors, nurses and dentists. As a result, public services and the Welsh economy is deteriorating whilst we transfer over half a billion pounds to the English economy and HE institutions. These huge amounts increase every year without control. Isn't it a misuse of public funds in times of severe recession? Enough is enough and we call on everyone in Wales to support this call before its too late.

"If it weren't for the 39,770 English students coming to Welsh Universities every institution's economic situation would be much worse. For example, 60% of all Aberystwyth University students were born in England compared to 40% from Wales. It's about time a policy is adopted which puts Wales first. It should also support students' ability to consider higher education beyond the country but with less financial support than if they studied in Wales. This is what Scotland and Northern Ireland have done.

Dyfodol i'r Iaith supports the right of every individual to choose to study wherever and in whatever country they wish. But when the scale of Welsh emigration reaches a critical point and at a huge increasing cost, policy needs to be adopted that reflects the current financial climate. There are no adequate financial incentives to encourage our young people to study in Wales and contribute constructively and enthusiastically to their future.

The current system, intentionally or not, facilitates an increasingly excessive exodus of our young academic people from Wales. A brain drain. As a result, it weakens the business bases of Welsh Universities, undermines the aims and objectives of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and weakens efforts to create a more strong and economically progressive Wales.

We therefore call on the Welsh Government to scrap this self-destructing policy for the good of Wales – the future of the Welsh language, our higher education institutions and our economy which is begging for an injection of public support. Half a billion pounds a year would be a significant contribution to that."

- ENDS -

For further information please contact Dylan Bryn Roberts, Chief Executive, Dyfodol i'r Iaith on 07989393445 or dylanbryn@dyfodol.net or Heini Gruffudd, Chair, 01792 455410, 07983 506805, heini@gruffudd.org

Dyfodol i'r Iaith

- Dyfodol i'r Iaith (A Future for the Language) is a non-political organisation that works for the promotion of the Welsh language.
- Its aim is to exert influence through constitutional means on the substance and content of public policies and legislation in order to promote and nurture the growth of the Welsh language.