

Public Attitudes to R&D in Wales 2026

This briefing summarises attitudes to R&D in Wales. It is based on evidence from a nationally representative survey of 1,626 adults (16+) in Wales in January 2026. Full results can be found on [CaSE's Public Opinion Research pages](#).

Opinions are divided on how well Wales is doing and on immigration

- The top three priorities in Wales are improving the NHS, reducing the cost of living and growing the economy. However, reducing immigration is in the top three for a number of demographic groups.
- More people think that Wales is generally a country in decline (42%) than think it is a country moving forward (22%).
- A majority (54%) think it should be made easier for high skilled workers to come to the UK, but attitudes vary towards ease of entry for low skilled workers and asylum seekers.

Public awareness of, and connection with, Welsh R&D's benefits is low

- Less than half (43%) said they had heard of the term "R&D" and know what it means, rising to 77% when "research and development" is spelled out in full.
- Some 91% feel they don't know much or anything about the R&D being done in Wales.
- Less than four in ten (37%) could immediately think of at least some ways Welsh R&D benefits Wales, falling to around a quarter (27%) when asked about personal benefits.
- Awareness of R&D's contribution to the Welsh economy is low – around half of people said they don't know if it contributes or not (46%).

Most people value public R&D investment, would be proud of local R&D and want to see their Member of Senedd (MS) taking action to support it

- Around three quarters (72%) think it is important for the Welsh Government to invest in R&D in their nation, and this majority support extends across all voter groups.
- Some 59% would feel proud if their area were to become well known as an important hub for R&D in Wales and 49% would support a new R&D laboratory in their local area.
- A majority think that it should be a priority for the Welsh government to support R&D in universities, research organisations and businesses in a range of ways.
- There is broad support for MSs to campaign for a range of R&D-related activities with levels of opposition very low across all examples tested – typically between just 2-6%.