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# Scottish Social Attitudes 2016: Attitudes to government and political engagement

An Official Statistics publication for Scotland

PUBLIC SERVICES AND GOVERNMENT

# Scottish Social Attitudes 2016

## Attitudes to government and the Scottish Parliament

- In 2016, 65% trusted the Scottish Government to [work in Scotland's best interests](#) and 40% to [make fair decisions](#), down from 73% and 49% respectively in 2015. Consistent with previous years, trust in the UK Government remained lower, at 25% and 18% respectively.
- For the first year in the time series, more people thought that the Scottish Government had most [influence over the way Scotland is run](#) (42%) than thought the UK Government had most influence (41%).
- Three quarters (75%) of people said that the Scottish Government [should have most influence](#) over the way Scotland is run. 14% said the UK Government should have the most influence.
- In 2016, the highest proportion over the time series said that the Scottish Parliament gave Scotland a [stronger voice in the UK](#) (71%). Similar to 2015, 59% said it gave [ordinary people more say](#) in how Scotland is governed.

## Views on the economy and the standard of living in Scotland

- Helping the economy to grow faster was the most commonly chosen [priority for Scottish Government](#) action (28%).
- More than half of respondents (54%) said the [economy](#) had weakened over the past year, compared with 34% in 2015. 35% of those respondents attributed this to UK Government policy, 18% to Scottish Government policy and 37% to "some other reason"
- In 2016 36% said that the [general standard of living](#) in Scotland had fallen over the past year , compared with 42% saying this in 2015. 19% said the standard had increased. Of those who had perceived a fall in living standards, 50% attributed the fallen standard to UK Government policy; 15% attributed this to Scottish Government policy, and 19% attributed this to 'some other reason'.

## Political Engagement

- Over two thirds (69%) of people said they had [talked](#) about the 2014 Scottish Independence Referendum 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot'; 65% said the same of the EU Referendum. A lower proportion (34%) said the same of the 2016 Scottish Parliament elections.
- 54% of respondents said they talked more about politics as a result of the Independence Referendum. 40% said it made no difference; 6% said it made them talk less about politics.
- Two thirds (66%) of people had [engaged](#) in at least one of a range of political activities in the last few years as a means of registering what they personally thought about an issue, a similar proportion to 2015.
- 91% of respondents said that [voting](#) in Scottish Parliament elections was very or fairly important. 87% said this of local elections and 84% of UK general elections.

## Views on the National Health Service in Scotland

- The majority of respondents were satisfied with [the way the NHS was being run](#) in 2016 (60%), similar to 2013 and 2015.
- More than a third (37%) said that [standards in the health service](#) had fallen over the past year. Of those, 40% attributed this to UK Government policy, 25% attributed this to Scottish Government policy, and 18% attributed this to "some other reason".
- 13% said that standards in the NHS had improved. Of those, 54% attributed this improvement to Scottish Government policy, 16% to UK Government policy and 24% to 'some other reason'.

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## Introduction

The Scottish Social Attitudes (SSA) survey has been conducted by the independent research organisation ScotCen annually each year since the advent of devolution in 1999 (with the exception of 2008). It is based on interviews of between 1,200 to 1,700 people in Scotland drawn using probability sampling. The Survey provides an important source of data on attitudes to government and to the Scottish Parliament over this period.

The SSA interviews in 2016 took place between 11<sup>th</sup> July and 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2016, after the referendum on the European Union (23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016).

This report presents the findings of the Scottish Government funded questions in the SSA 2016, covering:

- trust in government
- perceptions of government influence over how Scotland is run
- views on the effects of the Scottish Parliament
- political engagement
- attitudes to the economy, living standards and the National Health Service

We explored whether attitudes and experiences varied by social group. Details of the statistical tests conducted and the full list of variables tested are presented in Annex A. Findings from the 2015 survey are available online.<sup>1</sup>

Prior to 2016, SSA interviewed adults aged 18 and over. In 2016 those aged 16 or 17 were also interviewed for the first time. Details of the survey methodology are provided in the Technical Annex published alongside this report.<sup>2</sup>

This report was produced by professionally independent statisticians in the Office of the Chief Statistician and Strategic Analysis, in line with the UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice for Official Statistics.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ScotCen, 2016: Scottish Social Attitudes 2015: Attitudes to Government, the National Health Service, the Economy and Standard of Living.

<http://natcen.ac.uk/media/1123186/ssa-15-attitudes-to-government-nhs-economy-and-standard-of-living.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> All material relating to this survey are available from the SSA 2016 website:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Research/by-topic/public-services-and-gvt/SocialAttitudesinScotland/SocialAttitudesReports/SSA2016>

<sup>3</sup> UK Statistics Authority: <https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/>

# 1. Trust in government

The Scottish Social Attitudes (SSA) Survey 2016 asked participants questions about trust in government:

- Trust in government (UK and Scottish) to work in Scotland's best interests
- Trust in government (UK, Scottish and local) to make fair decisions
- How good government (UK, Scottish and local) is at listening before taking decisions

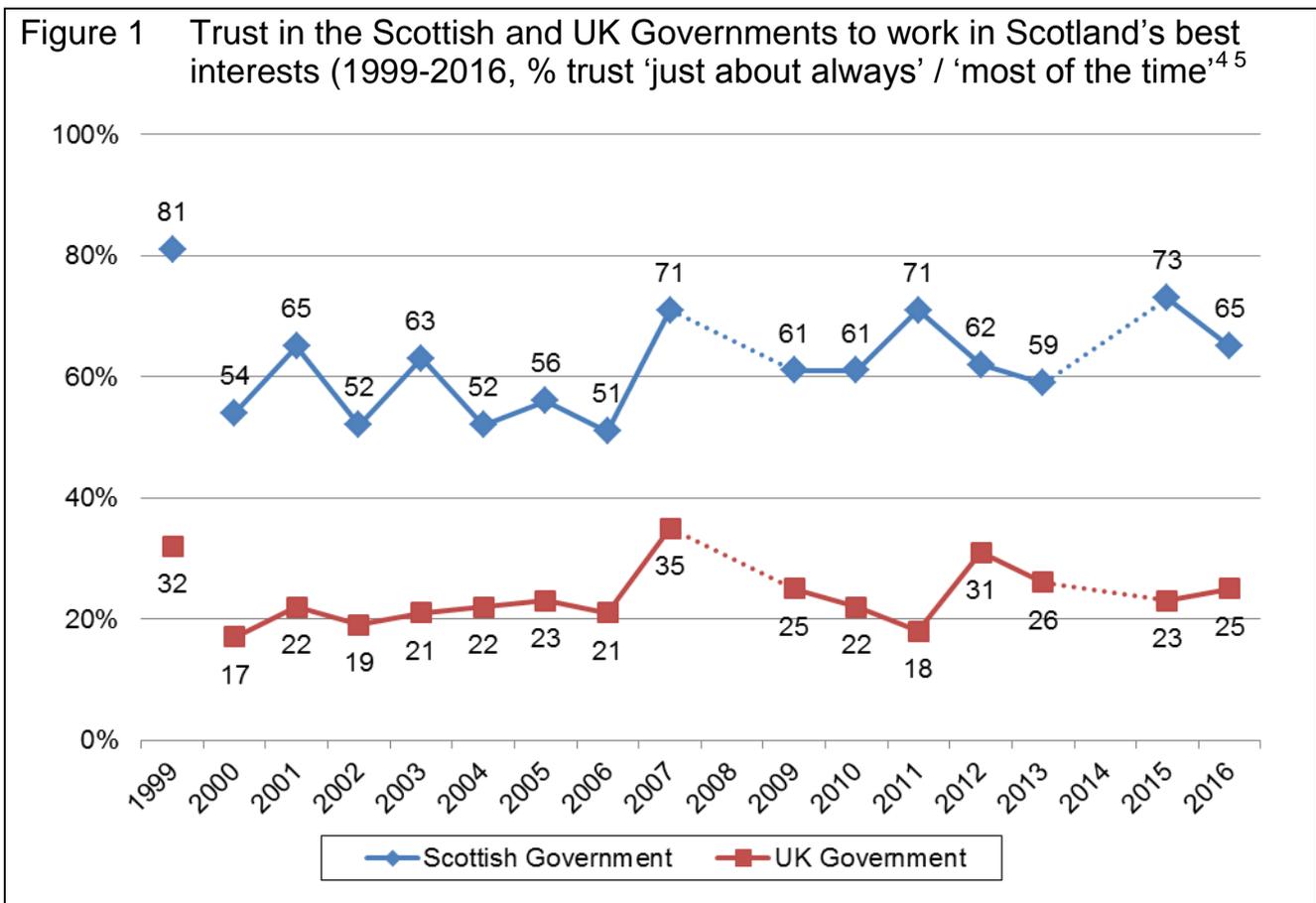
In this chapter we present headline findings at a glance, and list subgroups who gave varying answers, based on statistical significance.

## Trust in government to work in Scotland's best interests

Almost two thirds (65%) of people in 2016 said they trusted the Scottish Government 'just about always' or 'most of the time' to work in Scotland's best interests. This figure had fallen from its record high figure of 73% in 2015.

This compared with a quarter of people (25%) in 2016 saying that they trusted the UK Government 'just about always' or 'most of the time' to work in Scotland's best interests. This figure had remained at a similar level to 2015, when 23% said they trusted the UK Government.

Since these questions were first asked in the Scottish Social Attitudes Survey, levels of trust in the Scottish Government to work in Scotland's best interests have been consistently higher than those in the UK Government. In 2016, there was a 40 percentage point gap between the proportion of people trusting the Scottish Government and the proportion trusting the UK Government to work in Scotland's best interests. This gap is, however, ten percentage points smaller than in 2015.



<sup>4</sup> In 1999, the question was asked prospectively: 'How much would you trust a Scottish Parliament to work in Scotland's best interests?'

<sup>5</sup> A dotted line indicates a gap in the time series.

## Variations in attitudes between subgroups

Levels of trust in the Scottish and UK Governments to work in Scotland's best interests varied between a number of social groups, based on statistical significance, and are listed here. Variables with no statistically significant differences are listed in Annex A.

65% trusted the Scottish Government to work in Scotland's best interests 'just about always' or 'most of the time'. In subgroups, this varied as follows:<sup>6</sup>

- **Political affiliation** – 84% of SNP supporters trusted the Scottish Government to work in Scotland's best interests compared to 55% of non-SNP supporters.
- **Age** – 82% of 16-24 year olds trusted the Scottish Government to work in Scotland's best interests compared to 53% of those aged 65 and over.
- **Interest in politics** – 69% of those with any interest in politics trusted the Scottish Government to work in Scotland's best interests compared to 41% of those with 'no interest at all' in politics.
- **Living comfortably** – 68% of those living comfortably on their present income trusted the Scottish Government to work in Scotland's best interests compared with 50% of those struggling on their present income.

25% trusted the UK Government to work in Scotland's best interests 'just about always' or 'most of the time'. In subgroups, this varied as follows:<sup>7</sup>

- **Political spectrum** – 58% of those on the right of the political spectrum trusted the UK Government to work in Scotland's best interests, compared to 17% of those on the left of the political spectrum.
- **National identity** – 37% of those who identify as more British than Scottish and 37% of those who identified as equally Scottish and British trusted the UK Government to work in Scotland's best interests, compared to 16% of those who identified as more Scottish than British.
- **Living comfortably** – 31% of those who were living comfortably on their present income trusted the UK Government to work in Scotland's best interests compared to 17% of those who were struggling on their present income.

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<sup>6</sup> Further statistically significant subgroups with varying trust in the Scottish Government were: **Educational qualifications** – 70% of those with a degree or equivalent trusted the Scottish Government to work in Scotland's best interests compared to 52% of those with no formal qualifications. **Urban-rural areas** – 67% of those who lived in urban areas trusted the Scottish Government to work in Scotland's best interests compared to 59% of those who lived in rural areas.

<sup>7</sup> Further statistically significant subgroups with varying trust in UK Government were: **Political affiliation** – 33% of non-SNP supporters trusted the UK Government to work in Scotland's best interests compared 11% of SNP supporters. **Religious identity** – 31% of those who identified as religious trusted the UK Government to work in Scotland's best interests compared to 21% of those who did not see themselves as religious. **Political activities** – 33% of those who hadn't engaged in any political activities in the last few years as a means of registering what they personally thought about an issue trusted the UK Government to work in Scotland's best interests compared to 21% of those who participated in at least one political activity. **Urban-rural classification** – 32% of those who lived in rural locations trusted the UK Government to work in Scotland's best interests compared to 24% of those who lived in urban locations.

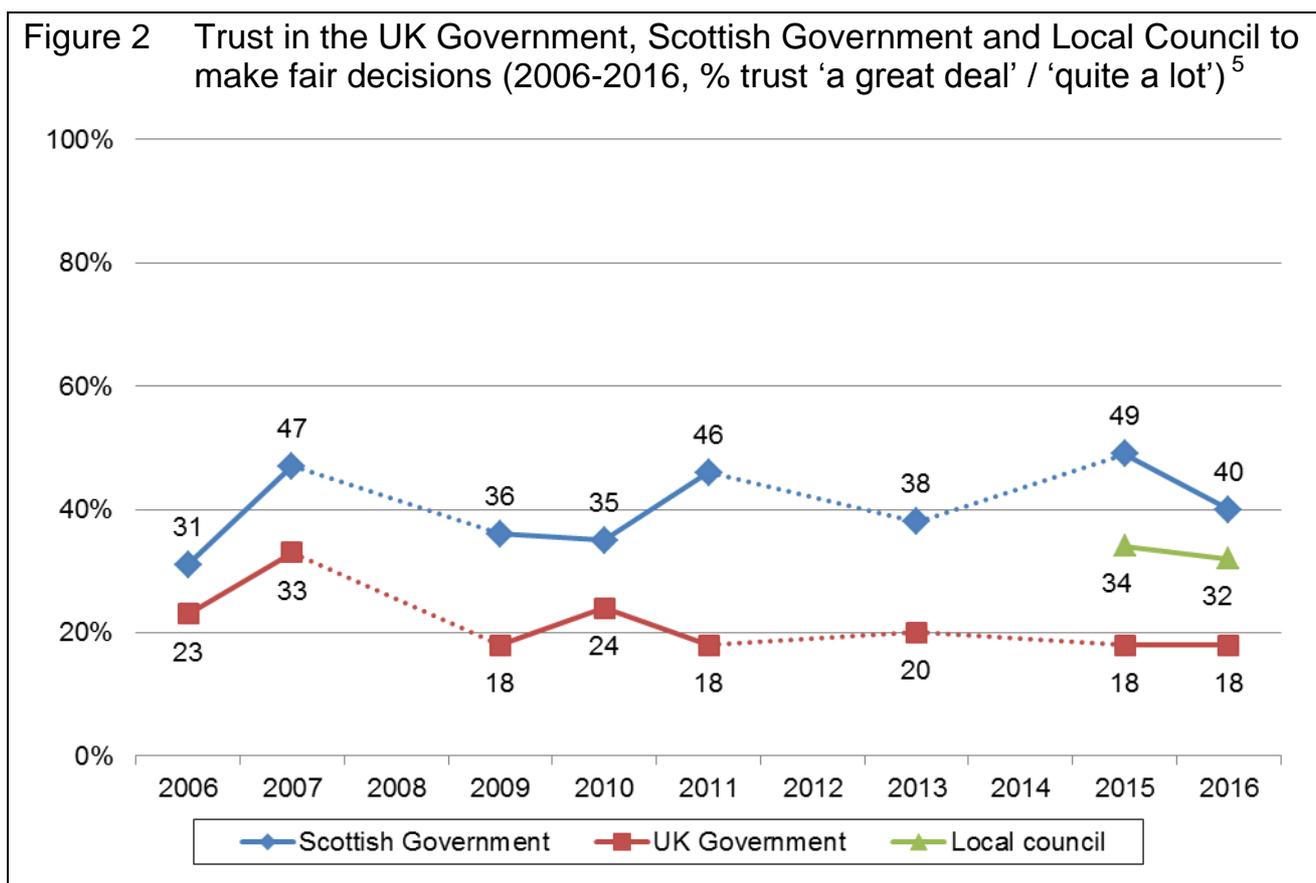
## Trust in government to make fair decisions<sup>8</sup>

In 2016, 40% of people trusted the Scottish Government ‘a great deal’ or ‘quite a lot’ to make fair decisions. This figure had decreased by 9 percentage points since 2015.

The proportion of people who trusted the UK Government ‘a great deal’ or ‘quite a lot’ to make fair decisions was 18%, the same as in 2015, and has remained relatively stable since 2011.

Just under a third of people (32%) trusted their local council to make fair decisions in 2016. This question was asked for the first time about local councils in the 2015 survey, when a similar proportion of people (34%) said this.

People were more than twice as likely to trust the Scottish Government to make fair decisions compared to the UK Government. Trust in the Scottish Government to make fair decisions has been consistently higher than trust in the UK Government since this question was first asked in 2006.



<sup>8</sup> The questions on ‘Trust in government to make fair decisions’ and ‘Trust in government to act in Scotland’s best interests’ are not directly comparable due to the use of different answer scales.

## Variations in attitudes between subgroups

Levels of trust in the Scottish and UK Governments to make fair decisions varied between a number of social groups, based on statistical significance, and are listed here. Variables with no statistically significant differences are listed in Annex A.

40% trusted the Scottish Government to make fair decisions 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot'. In subgroups, this varied as follows:<sup>9</sup>

- **Political affiliation** – 58% of SNP supporters trusted the Scottish Government to make fair decisions compared to 30% of non-SNP supporters.
- **Age** – 50% of 16-24 year olds trusted the Scottish Government to make fair decisions compared to 32% of those aged 65 and over.
- **Interest in politics** – 42% of those with any interest in politics trusted the Scottish Government to make fair decisions compared to 27% of those with 'no interest at all' in politics.
- **National identity** – 47% of those who identified as more Scottish than British trusted the Scottish Government to make fair decisions compared to 23% of those who identified as more British than Scottish.

18% trusted the UK Government to make fair decisions 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot'. In subgroups, this varied as follows:<sup>10</sup>

- **Political spectrum** – 40% of those on the right of the political spectrum trusted the UK Government to make fair decisions compared to 12% of those on the left.
- **Living comfortably** – 22% of those who were living comfortably on their present income trusted the UK Government to make fair decisions compared to 8% of those who were struggling to live on their present income.
- **Political affiliation** – 22% of non-SNP supporters trusted the UK Government to make fair decisions compared to 10% of SNP supporters.
- **Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation** – 20% of those in the least deprived quintile (20% of areas) trusted the UK Government to make fair decisions compared to 11% of those in the most deprived quintile.

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<sup>9</sup> Further statistically significant subgroups with varying trust in the Scottish Government were: **Tenure** – 49% of private renters trusted the Scottish Government to make fair decisions compared to 38% of home owners. **News source** – 42% of those who read neither a newspaper or an internet news source 40% of those who read either a newspaper or an internet news source.

<sup>10</sup> Further statistically significant subgroups with varying trust in the UK Government were: **National identity** – Just over a quarter (26%) of those who identified as equally Scottish and British trusted the UK Government to make fair decisions compared to 13% of those who identified as more Scottish than British. **Political activities** – 22% of those who hadn't engaged in any political activities in the last few years as a means of registering what they personally thought about an issue trusted the UK Government to make fair decisions compared to 16% of those who had engaged in at least one political activity. **Interest in politics** – 19% of those with any interest in politics trusted the UK Government to make fair decisions compared to 10% of those with 'no interest at all' in politics.

## How good is government at listening before taking decisions?

The majority (54%) of people said the Scottish Government was 'very good' or 'quite good' at listening to people's views before taking decisions in 2016. This was down slightly from the 2015 figure of 59%.

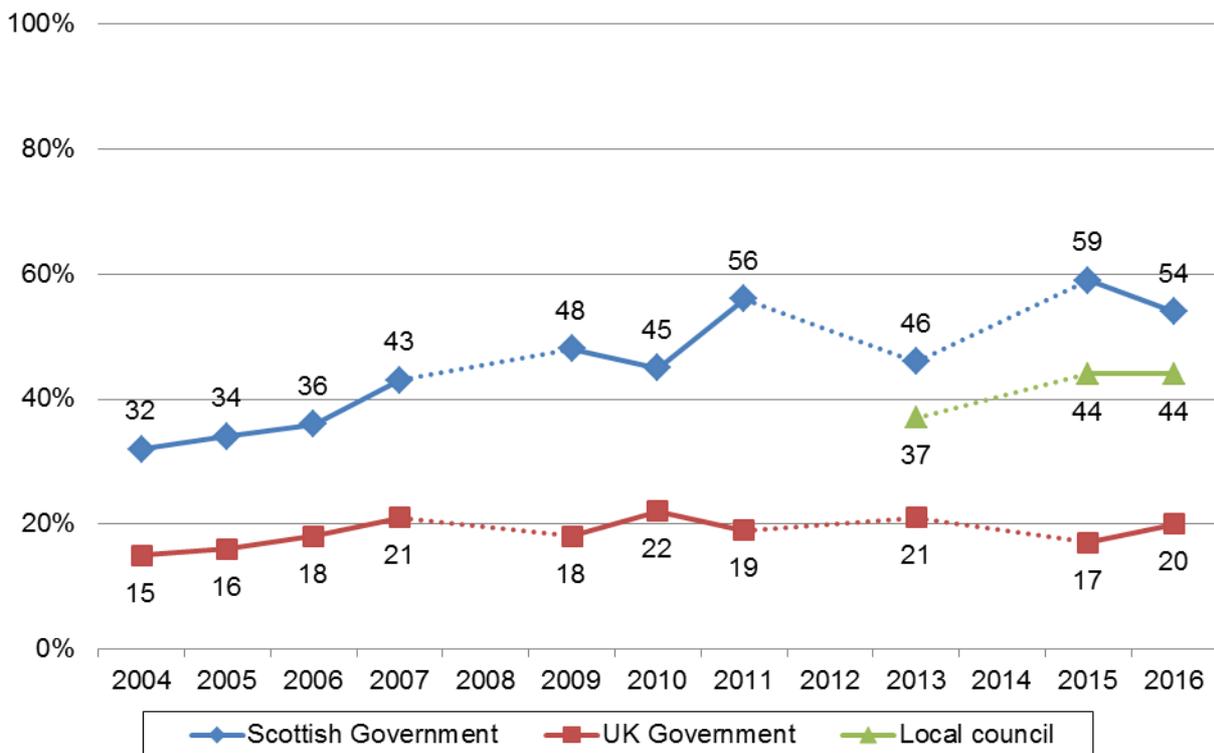
The percentage of people who said the UK Government was good at listening to people's views before making decisions was 20% in 2016. This was up from 17% in 2015.

In 2016, 44% of people said their local council was good at listening to people's views before taking decisions, unchanged from 2015.

Attitudes to how good the Scottish Government is at listening to people's views before making decisions have been improving since 2004, when this question was introduced. 32% of people said the Scottish Government was good at listening to people's views before making decisions in 2004, 22 percentage points lower than in 2016.

Attitudes to how good the UK Government is at listening to people's views before taking decisions have remained stable over time. Between 15% and 22% of people have considered the UK Government to be good at listening since 2004.

Figure 3 How good are the Scottish Government, UK Government and own Local Council at listening to people's views before taking decisions? (2004-2016, % 'very good' / 'quite good')<sup>5</sup>



## Variations in attitudes between subgroups

Views on whether the Scottish and UK Governments were good at listening before taking decisions varied between a number of social groups, based on statistical significance. These are listed here. Variables with no statistically significant differences are listed in Annex A.

54% said the Scottish Government was 'very' or 'quite' good at listening to people's views before taking decisions. In subgroups, this varied as follows:<sup>11</sup>

- **Political affiliation** – 75% of SNP supporters said the Scottish Government was good at listening compared to 42% of non-SNP supporters.
- **Age** – 68% of 16-24 year olds said the Scottish Government was good at listening compared to 37% of those aged 65 and over.
- **Employment status** – 59% of those in work said the Scottish Government was good at listening compared to 38% of those who were retired.
- **Interest in politics** – 57% of those with any interest in politics said the Scottish Government was good at listening compared to 27% of those with 'no interest at all' in politics.
- **National identity** – 58% of those who identified as more Scottish than British thought the Scottish Government was good at listening compared to 40% of those who identified as more British than Scottish.

20% said the UK Government was 'very' or 'quite' good at listening to people's views before taking decisions. In subgroups, this varied as follows:<sup>12</sup>

- **Political spectrum** – 33% of those on the right of the political spectrum said the UK Government was good at listening compared to 16% of those on the left of the spectrum.
- **Religious identity** – 25% of those who identified as religious said the UK Government was good at listening compared to 17% of those who did not identify as religious.
- **Living comfortably** – 24% of those who were living comfortably on their present income said the UK Government was good at listening compared to 16% of those who were struggling to live on their present income.
- **Political affiliation** – 23% of non-SNP supporters said the UK Government was good at listening compared to 15% of SNP supporters.
- **National Identity** – 27% of those who identified as more British than Scottish thought the UK Government was good at listening compared to 18% of those who identified as more Scottish than British.

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<sup>11</sup> Further statistically significant subgroups with varying views on how good the Scottish Government was at listening to people's views before taking decisions were: **Urban-rural area** – 56% of those who lived in urban areas said the Scottish Government was good at listening compared to 44% of those who lived in rural areas.

<sup>12</sup> Further statistically significant subgroups with varying views on how good the UK Government was at listening to people's views before taking decisions were: **Age** – 16-24 year olds (27%) and over-65 year olds (24%) were more likely to say the UK Government was good at listening compared to 25-39 and 40-64 year olds (both 18%). **Political activities** – 23% of those who hadn't engaged in any political activities in the last few years as a means of registering what they personally thought about an issue said the UK Government was good at listening compared to 19% of those who had engaged in at least one political activity.

## 2. Influence over how Scotland is run

The Scottish Social Attitudes (SSA) Survey 2016 asked participants questions about who has and who should have most influence over how Scotland is run:

- Which of the following do you think has most influence over the way Scotland is run: the Scottish Government, the UK Government, local councils in Scotland, or the European Union?
- And which do you think ought to have most influence over the way Scotland is run, the Scottish Government, the UK Government, local councils in Scotland, or the European Union?

In this chapter we present headline findings at a glance, and list subgroups who gave varying answers, based on statistical significance.

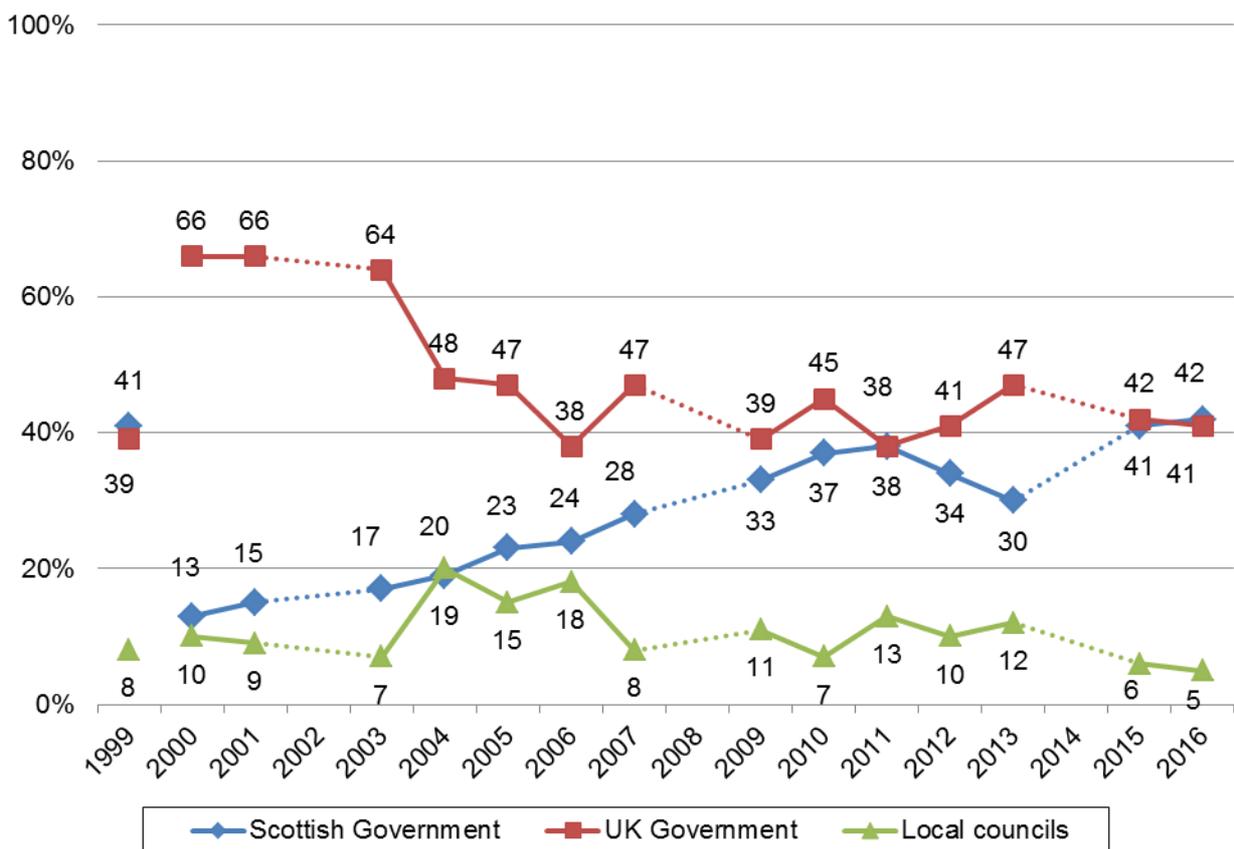
## Who has most influence?

When asked who had the most influence over the way Scotland is run, 42% of people said the Scottish Government, 41% said the UK Government, 5% said local councils and 8% said the European Union in 2016. These figures have remained stable since 2015.

For the first decade of devolution people were considerably more likely to say that the UK Government had most influence. The gap has narrowed over time and 2016 was the first year in the time series that people said the Scottish Government had more influence than the UK Government.

2016 is also the first year that the perceived influence of the Scottish Government exceeded the expectations set in 1999, when 41% of people said the Scottish Government would have the most influence.

Figure 4 Who has most influence over the way Scotland is run? (1999-2016, %)<sup>4,5</sup>



## Who ought to have most influence?

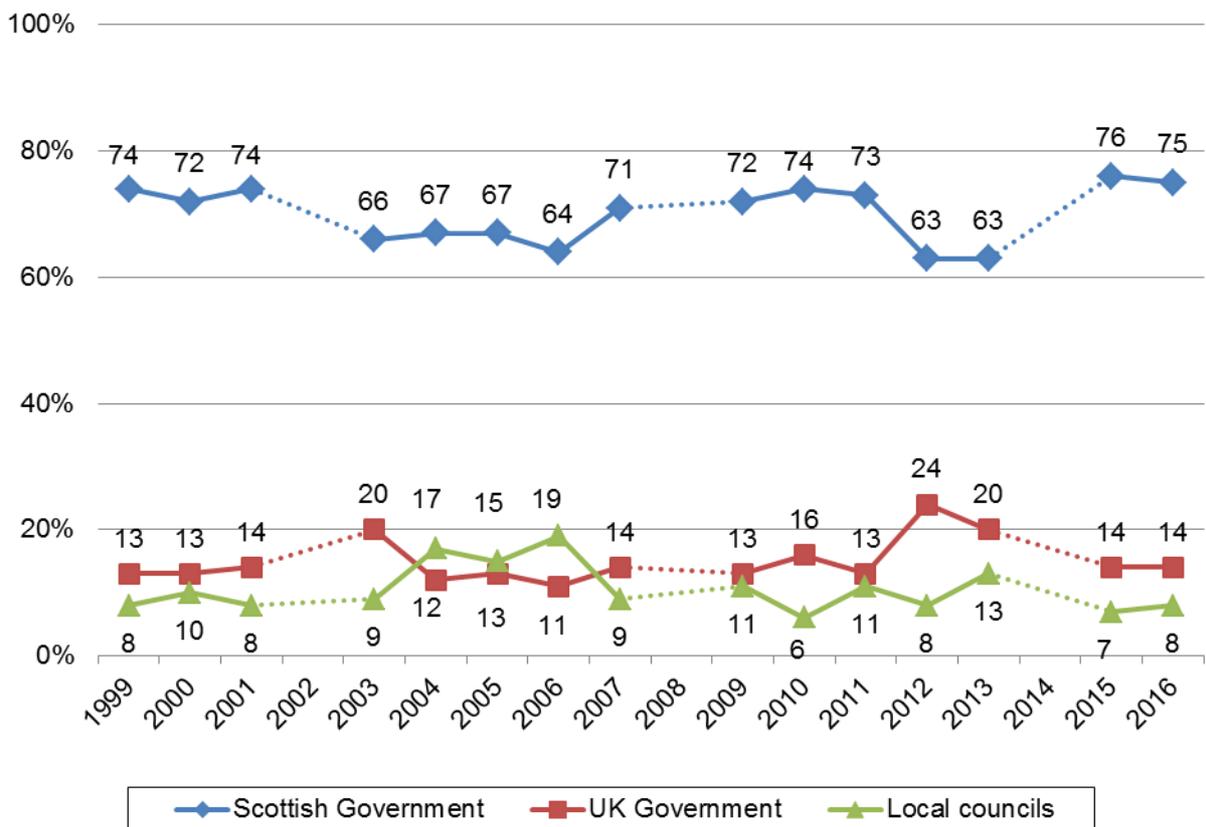
When asked who ought to have most influence over the way Scotland is run, three-quarters (75%) of people said that the Scottish Government should have most influence. This figure has remained stable since last year when it stood at 76%.

The percentage who said the UK Government should have most influence over the way Scotland is run was 14% in 2016, the same as in 2015.

8% of people said local councils should have most influence over the way Scotland is run while 1% said the European Union

In 2016, people were over five times more likely to say the Scottish Government should have most influence than to say the UK Government should. The proportion of people saying the Scottish Government should have most influence over the way Scotland is run has not dropped below 63% since this question was first asked in 1999.

Figure 5 Who ought to have most influence over the way Scotland is run? (1999-2016, %)<sup>5</sup>



## Variations in attitudes between subgroups

Views on which government has, and ought to have, the most influence over the way Scotland is run varied between a number of social groups, based on statistical significance. These are listed here. Variables with no statistically significant differences are listed in Annex A.

42% said the Scottish Government had most influence over the way Scotland is run. In subgroups, this varied as follows:

- **Age** – 45% of those aged 65 and over said the Scottish Government had most influence over the way Scotland is run compared to 33% of 16-24 year olds.
- **Economic activity** – 46% of those in work said the Scottish Government had the most influence over the way Scotland is run compared to 23% of those who were unemployed.
- **Interest in politics** – 45% of those with any interest in politics said the Scottish Government had most influence over the way Scotland is run compared to 22% of those with ‘no interest at all’ in politics.
- **Political activities** – 45% of those who had engaged in at least one political activity in the last few years as a means of registering what they personally thought about an issue said the Scottish Government had most influence over the way Scotland is run compared to 37% of those who had engaged in no political activities.

75% said the Scottish Government should have most influence over the way Scotland is run. In subgroups, this varied as follows:

- **Political affiliation** – 89% of SNP supporters said the Scottish Government should have most influence over the way Scotland is run compared to 67% of non-SNP supporters.
- **National identity** – 84% of those who identified as more Scottish than British thought the Scottish Government should have most influence over the way Scotland is run compared to 55% of those who identified as more British than Scottish.
- **Religious identity** – 80% of those who weren’t religious said the Scottish Government should have most influence over the way Scotland is run compared to 68% of those who identified as religious.
- **Political spectrum** – 79% of those on the left of the political spectrum compared to 59% of those on the right of the political spectrum said the Scottish Government should have most influence over the way Scotland is run.
- **Interest in politics** – 77% of those with any interest in politics said the Scottish Government ought to have the most influence over the way Scotland is run compared to 61% of those with ‘no interest at all’ in politics.

### 3. The Scottish Parliament

The Scottish Social Attitudes (SSA) Survey 2016 asked participants questions about the Scottish Parliament:

- Does having a Scottish Parliament give Scotland a stronger voice in the UK?
- Does having a Scottish Parliament give ordinary people more say in how Scotland is governed?

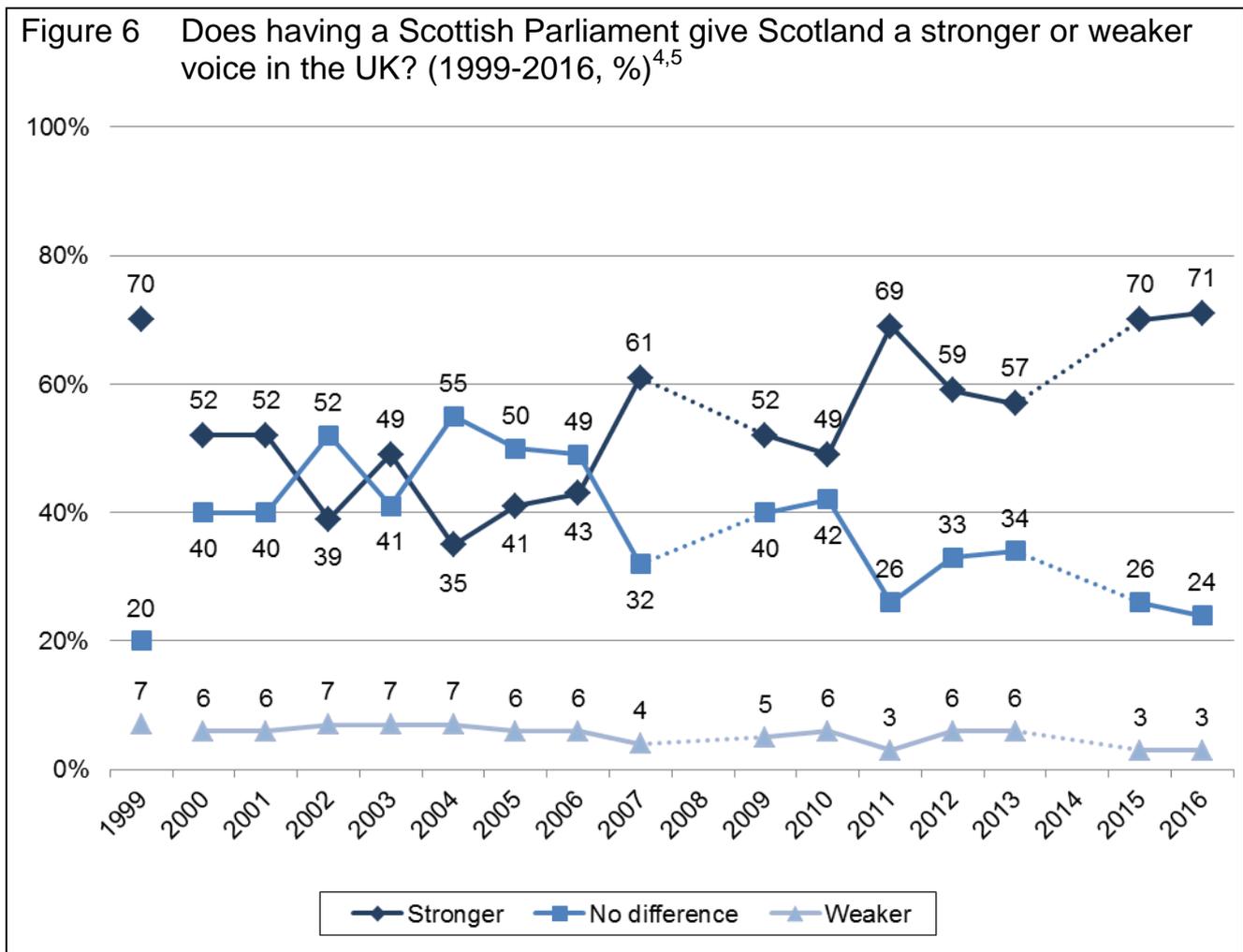
In this chapter we present headline findings at a glance, and list subgroups who gave varying answers, based on statistical significance.

## Does having a Scottish Parliament give Scotland a stronger voice in the UK?

In 2016, the proportion of people who said that having a Scottish Parliament was giving Scotland a stronger voice in the UK was 71%. This figure is the highest recorded since the question was first asked in 2000. 3% of people said having a Scottish Parliament was giving Scotland a weaker voice in the UK while just under a quarter (24%) said it was making no difference

The proportion of people saying that having a Scottish Parliament was giving Scotland a stronger voice in the UK has varied over time but has been increasing in recent years. At its lowest in 2004, only 35% of people said having a Scottish Parliament was giving Scotland a stronger voice in the UK.

The proportion of people saying that having a Scottish Parliament makes no difference in giving Scotland a stronger voice in the UK has been broadly declining since 2004.

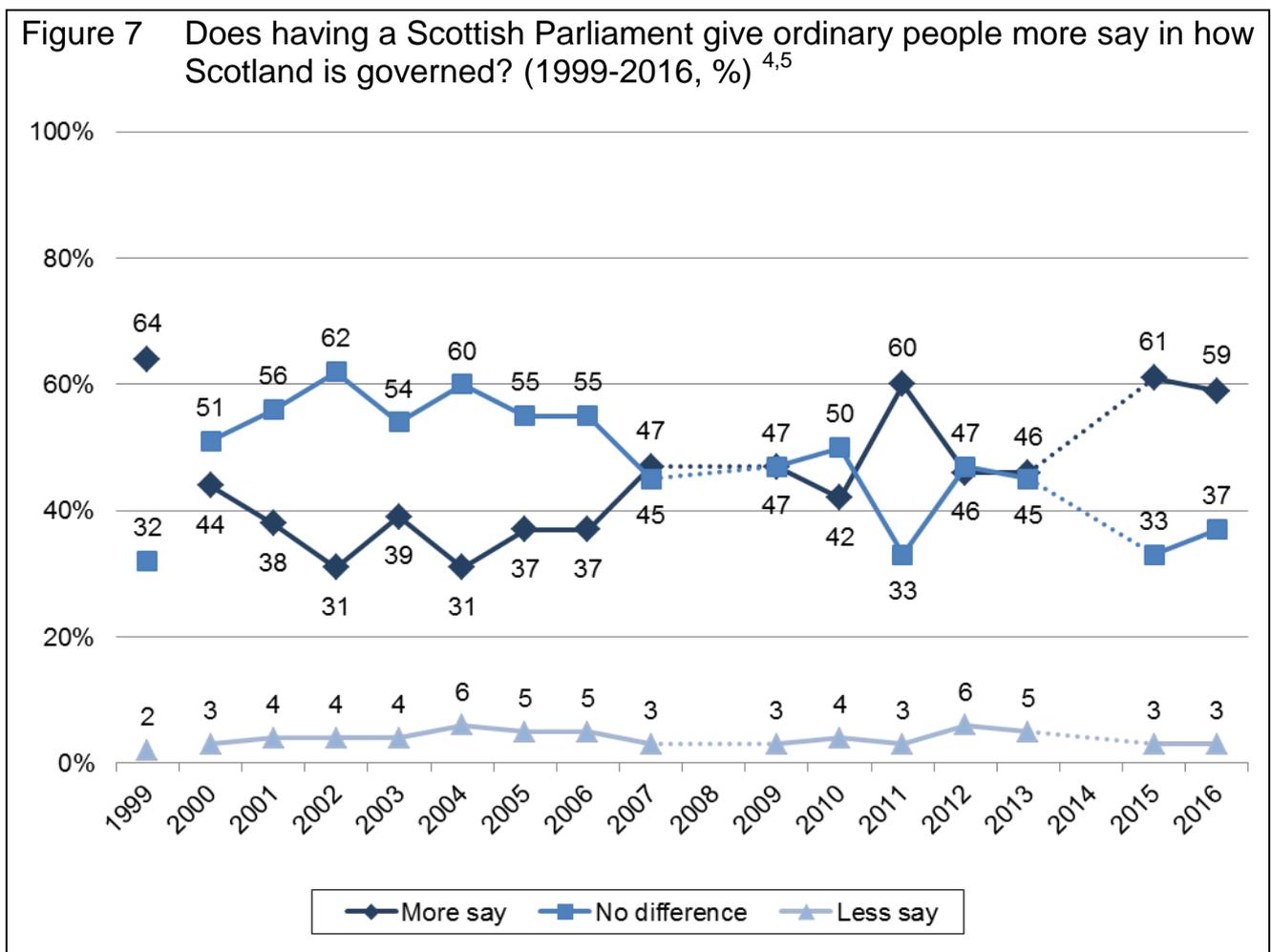


## Does having a Scottish Parliament give ordinary people more say in how Scotland is governed?

The proportion of people who said the Scottish Parliament is giving ordinary people more say in how Scotland is governed was 59% in 2016. This percentage had remained relatively stable since the previous year's figure of 61%. 37% said it made no difference and 3% said it gave Scotland less say.

Between 2000 and 2006, more people said the Scottish Parliament was making no difference in giving ordinary people a say in how Scotland was governed. For two consecutive years in 2015 and 2016, the majority of people said the Scottish Parliament was giving ordinary people more of a say in how Scotland is governed.

In 1999, when the question was asked prospectively, 64% expected the Scottish Parliament to give ordinary people more say in how Scotland is governed. While the broad trend is increasing (by 28 percentage points since 2004), the level anticipated in 1999 has not yet been reached.



## Variations in attitudes between subgroups

Views on whether having a Scottish Parliament is giving Scotland a stronger voice in the UK, and giving ordinary people more say in how Scotland is governed, varied between a number of social groups, based on statistical significance. These are listed here. Variables with no statistically significant differences are listed in Annex A.

71% said having a Scottish Parliament was giving Scotland a stronger voice in the UK. In subgroups, this varied as follows:

- **Political affiliation** – 83% of SNP supporters said having a Scottish Parliament was giving Scotland a stronger voice in the UK compared to 65% of non-SNP supporters.
- **Interest in politics** – 74% of those with any interest in politics said having a Scottish Parliament was giving Scotland a stronger voice compared to 49% of those with ‘no interest at all’.
- **Tenure** – 82% of private tenants said having a Scottish Parliament was giving Scotland a stronger voice compared to 72% of home owners.
- **Educational qualifications** – 78% of those with a degree or equivalent said having a Scottish Parliament was giving Scotland a stronger voice compared to 54% of those with no formal qualifications.
- **National identity** – 75% of those who identified as more Scottish than British thought the Scottish Parliament was giving Scotland a stronger voice compared to 65% of those who identified as equally Scottish and British.
- **Urban-rural area** – 72% of those living in urban areas thought the Scottish Parliament was giving Scotland a stronger voice compared to 66% of those living in rural areas.

59% said having a Scottish Parliament was giving ordinary people more say in how Scotland is governed. In subgroups, this varied as follows:

- **Political affiliation** – 75% of SNP supporters said having a Scottish Parliament was giving ordinary people more say in how Scotland is governed compared to 50% of non-SNP supporters.
- **Interest in politics** – 62% of those with any interest in politics said having a Scottish Parliament was giving ordinary people more say in how Scotland is governed compared to 34% of those with ‘no interest at all’
- **Urban-rural area** – 61% of those living in urban areas said having a Scottish Parliament was giving ordinary people more say in how Scotland is governed compared to 51% of those living in rural areas.
- **National identity** – 65% of those who identified as more Scottish than British thought the Scottish Parliament was giving ordinary people more of a say compared to a half (50%) of those who identified as more British than Scottish and just under a half (49%) of those who identified as equally Scottish and British.

## 4. Political engagement

The Scottish Social Attitudes (SSA) Survey 2016 asked participants questions about engagement with the politics of Scotland, including a new set of questions designed to explore the degree of political engagement<sup>13</sup> as a result of key political events.

Participants were asked how often they spoke with friends, family or colleagues about particular political events: the 2014 Scottish Independence Referendum, the 2016 Scottish Parliament elections and the 2016 European Union (EU) Referendum.

Additionally, people were asked whether the amount they now talk about politics had changed as a result of the 2014 Independence Referendum.

Further, existing questions on political engagement were also asked:

- if, and how, they had registered what they personally thought about an issue in the last few years according to a list of political activities
- their opinion on the importance of voting in UK, Scotland and local elections

In this chapter we present headline findings at a glance, and list subgroups who gave varying answers, based on statistical significance.

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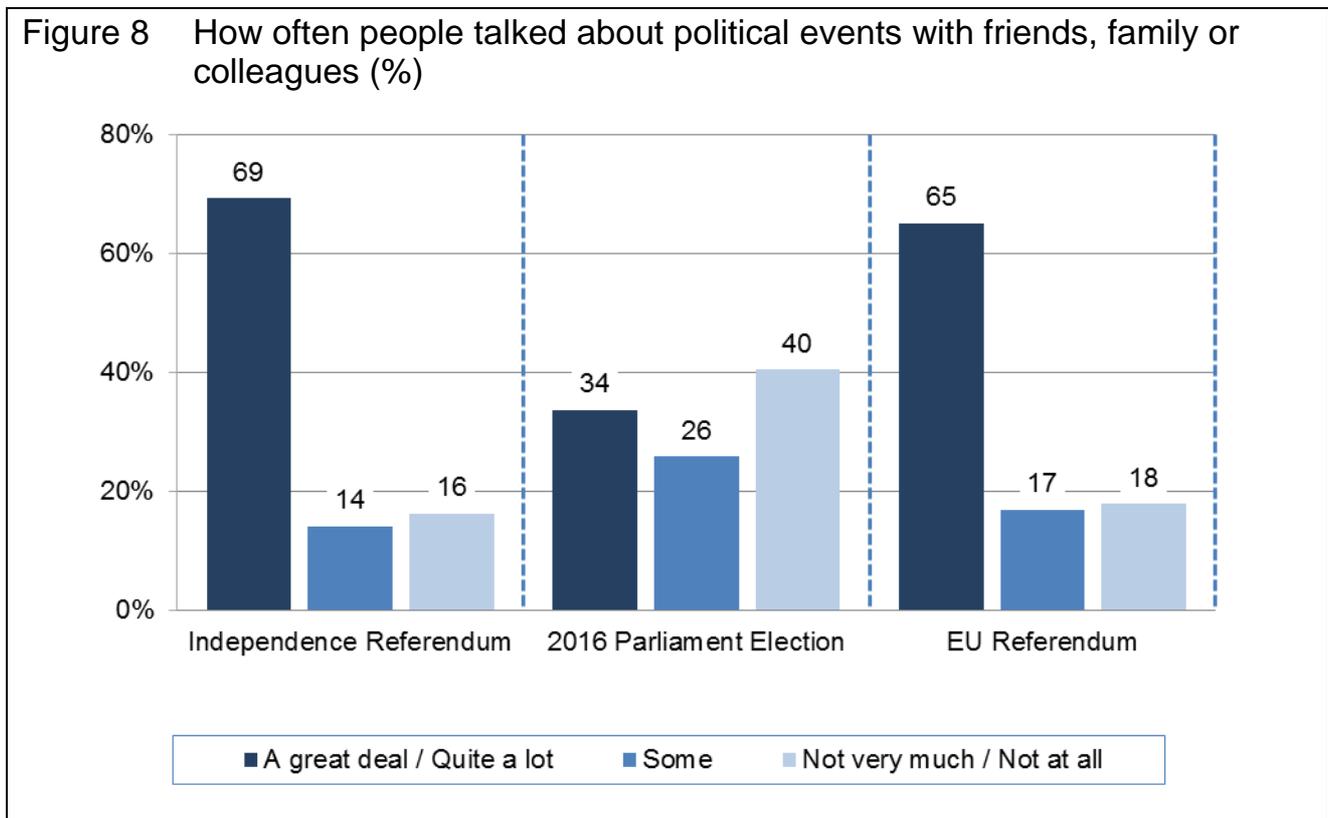
<sup>13</sup> For the purposes of this report, we have used the term 'political engagement' to refer to a range of activities respondents were asked about, ranging from ways of registering what they thought about an issue, to how important they felt voting is. These are not the same 'civic engagement' activities reported in the 2015 SSA report 'Scottish Social Attitudes 2015: Attitudes to Government, the National Health Service, the Economy and Standard of Living'.

## Talking about political events

Over two thirds (69%) of people said they had talked about the Independence Referendum 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot'. 65% said this about the EU Referendum. A lower proportion (34%) said this about the 2016 Scottish Parliament elections.

30% said they talked 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot' about all three of these political events with friends, family or colleagues

16% said they had not talked about the Independence Referendum 'much' or 'at all', the lowest figure of the three – 18% said this about the EU referendum and 40% about the 2016 Scottish Parliament election.



The majority of people (54%) said they talked more about politics in 2016 as a result of the Independence Referendum, while 40% said it had made no difference to how much they talked about politics and 6% said it had resulted in them talking less about politics.

## Variations in attitudes between subgroups

How often people talked about all three political events varied with statistical significance between a number of social groups<sup>14</sup>:

- **Interest in politics** – 57% of those who were interested ‘a great deal’ in politics talked about all three events a great deal/quite a lot compared to 12% of those who had ‘no interest at all’ in politics.
- **Economic activity** – 41% of those currently in education talked about all three political events a great deal/quite a lot compared to 9% of those who were unemployed.
- **Support for a political party** – 38% of those who either supported or felt close to a political party talked a great deal/quite a lot about all of the events compared to 19% of those who didn’t feel close to a particular party.
- **Political activities** – 36% of those who had engaged in at least one political activity in the last few years as a means of registering what they personally thought about an issue talked a great deal/quite a lot about all three events compared to 20% of those who hadn’t engaged in any political activities.
- **News source** – 34% of those who read either a newspaper or the news online talked a great deal/quite a lot about all of the political events compared to 16% of those who read neither.

How often people talked about the EU referendum also varied according to:

- **National identity** – 81% of those who identified as more British than Scottish talked a great deal/quite a lot about the EU referendum compared to 61% of those who identified as more Scottish than British.
- **Age** – Over two-thirds (68%) of 16-24 year olds talked quite a lot or more about the EU referendum compared to 57% of those aged 65 and over.

How often people talked about the 2016 Scottish Parliament election also varied according to:

- **Political affiliation** – 42% of SNP supporters talked a lot about the Scottish Parliament election compared to 29% of non-SNP supporters.
- **Educational qualifications** – 36% of those with a degree or equivalent talked a lot about the Scottish Parliament election compared to 29% of those with no formal qualifications.

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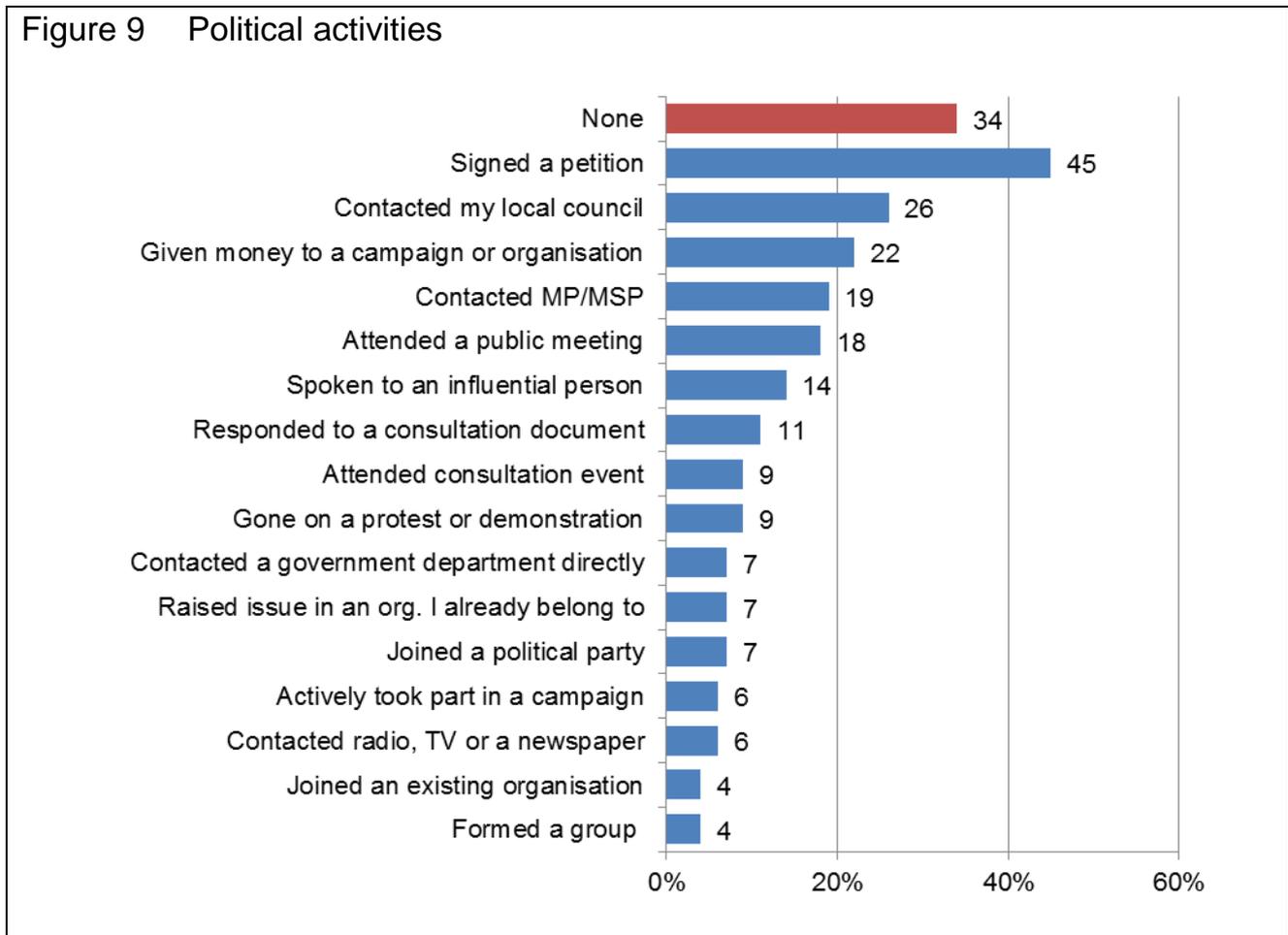
<sup>14</sup> Differences in responses by different groups were examined (see Annex A) and only findings with statistically significant differences between groups are presented in this report.

54% said they talked more about politics in 2016 as a result of the Independence Referendum. This varied among subgroups as follows:

- **Age** – 70% of 16-24 year olds talked more about politics in 2016 because of the independence referendum compared to 38% of those aged 65 and over.
- **Interest in politics** – 68% of those with a great deal of interest in politics talked about politics in 2016 more because of the independence referendum compared to 22% of those with ‘no interest at all’ in politics
- **Political affiliation** – Over two-thirds (68%) of SNP supporters talked more about politics in 2016 because of the independence referendum compared to 46% of non-SNP supporters.
- **Support for a political party** – 62% of those who either support or are close to a political party talked more about politics in 2016 because of the referendum compared to 41% of those who don’t feel support or feel close to a political party.
- **Educational qualifications** – 62% of those with a degree or equivalent talked more about politics in 2016 because of the independence referendum compared to 30% of those with no formal qualifications.
- **Political activities** – 61% of those who had engaged in at least one political activity in the last few years as a means of registering what they personally thought about an issue talked more about politics in 2016 because of the independence referendum compared to 40% of those who hadn’t participated in any political activity.
- **Economic activity** – 60% of those in work talked more about politics in 2016 because of the referendum compared to 40% of those who are retired.
- **Living comfortably** – 58% of those who are living comfortably on their present income talked more about politics in 2016 because of the independence referendum compared to 36% of those struggling to live on their present income.
- **Tenure** – 58% of home owners talked more about politics in 2016 because of the independence referendum compared to 37% of social renters.

## Political Activities

People were asked whether they had engaged in any political activities in the last few years as a means of registering what they personally thought of an issue. Two thirds (66%) of people participated in at least one of the political activities listed in the survey in 2016. The average number of different activities people had done was 2.1.



The most popular activities were:

- 45% had signed a petition.
- 26% had contacted their local council.
- 22% had given money to a campaign or organisation.
- 19% had contacted an MP or MSP.
- 18% had attended a public meeting.

Engagement in political activities had remained at a similar level to 2015. In 2015, 69% of people had engaged in at least one political activity and the average number of political activities people had engaged in was two<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> In 2015, 'Joined a political party' was not included on the list. The mean number of activities in 2016 when this activity is excluded was 2.07 and the percentage who had participated in at least one activity was still 66%

## Variations in attitudes between subgroups

The number of political activities people had engaged in the last few years as a means of registering what they personally thought an issue varied between a number of social groups as follows:<sup>16</sup>

- **Interest in politics** – The mean number of political activities people participated in according to their interest in politics ranged from 4.7 political activities for those with ‘a great deal of interest’ to 0.8 political activities for those with ‘none at all’.
- **Political spectrum** – The mean number of political activities people on the left of the political spectrum participated in was 2.4, compared to 2.5 on the right of the spectrum and 1.6 in the centre.
- **Educational qualifications** – 78% of those with a degree or equivalent participated in at least one political activity compared to 50% of those with no formal qualifications.
- **Age** – 74% of 16-24 year olds participated in at least one political activity compared to 58% of people aged 65 and over.

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<sup>16</sup> Differences in responses by different groups were examined (see Annex A) and only findings with statistically significant differences between groups are presented in this report.

## Importance of voting

91% of people said that voting in Scottish Parliament elections was 'very important' or 'fairly important'. For local council elections, this figure was 87% while for UK general elections it was 84%.

Over three-quarters (77%) of people said that voting was very or fairly important in all three elections while 5% of people said voting was not very or not at all important in all of the elections listed.

In 2005, 82% of people said that voting in Scottish Parliamentary elections was 'very important' or 'fairly important'. For local elections this figure was 82% while for UK general elections it was 85%.

In 2005, 74% of people said that voting was very or fairly important in all three elections while 9% of people said voting was not very or not at all important in all of the elections listed.

Since 2005, there has been a 9 percentage point increase in the proportion of people who thought voting in Scottish Parliament elections was important.

## Variations in attitudes between subgroups

Views on whether voting in elections was important varied between a number of social groups<sup>17</sup> as follows:

- **Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)** – 87% of those in the least deprived quintile (20% of areas) said voting was important compared to 62% of those in the most deprived quintile.
- **Support for a political party** – 84% of those who either supported or felt close to a particular political party said voting in all elections was important compared to 67% of those who neither supported nor felt close to a political party.
- **Interest in politics** – 81% of those with any interest in politics said voting in all three elections was important compared to 41% of those with 'no interest at all' in politics
- **Political activities** – 82% of those who had participated in at least one political activity in the last few years as a means of registering what they personally thought about an issue said voting in all three elections was important compared to 67% of those who had not engaged in any political activities.
- **Religious identity** – 82% of religious people said voting in all elections was important compared to 73% of non-religious people.
- **Sex** – 80% of women said voting in all three elections was important compared to 74% of men.

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<sup>17</sup> Differences in responses by different groups were examined (see Annex A) and only findings with statistically significant differences between groups are presented in this report.

## **5. The economy, general standard of living and the National Health Service**

The Scottish Social Attitudes (SSA) Survey 2016 asked participants about:

- what the highest priority of the Scottish Government should be
- perceived changes in the economy and in living standards over the previous year
- satisfaction with the National Health Service and perceived changes in its quality over the previous year

In this chapter we present headline findings at a glance, and list subgroups who gave varying answers, based on statistical significance.

## What should be the Scottish Government's priority?

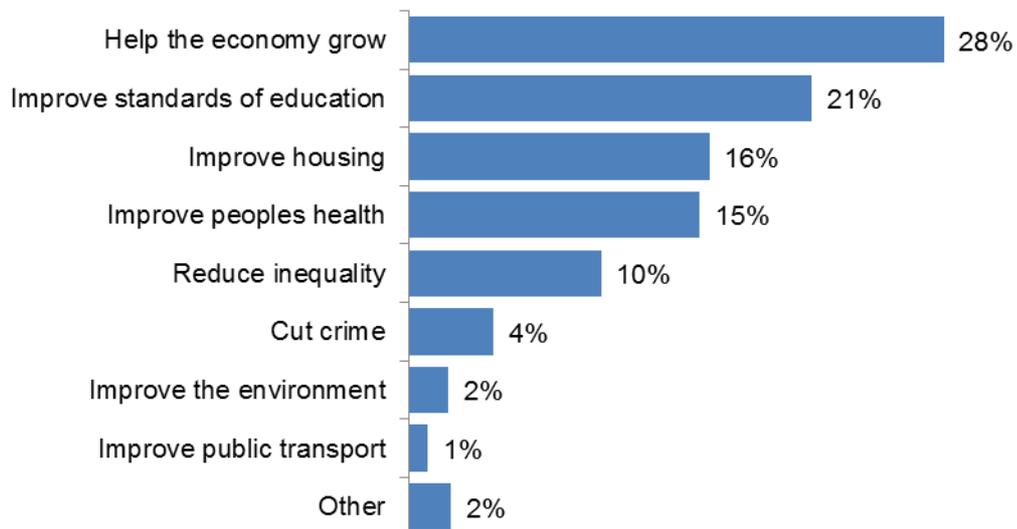
When asked to choose what the Scottish Government's highest priority should be from a list, the four priorities selected most often were:

- helping the economy grow faster (28%);
- improving standards of education (21%);
- improving housing (16%);
- improving people's health (15%).

Helping the economy grow faster has been people's highest priority for the Scottish Government since 2009.<sup>18</sup>

Emphasis on cutting crime has fallen dramatically from 27% in 2007 to 4% in 2016.

Figure 10 What should be the Scottish Government's priority (2016, %)

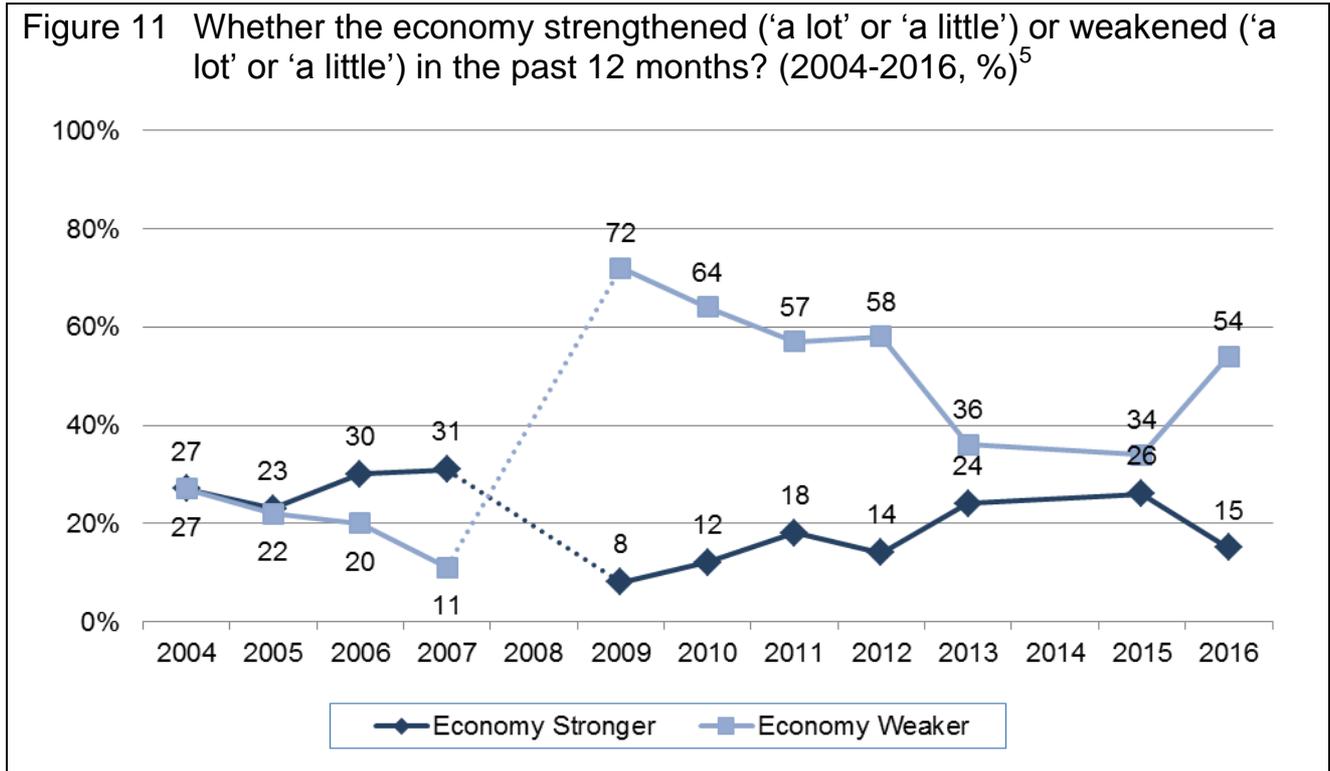


<sup>18</sup> The lists provided have varied over time. The table with top choices in previous years can be found in Annex B.

## Economy

The majority of people (54%) said that Scotland's economy had weakened 'a little' or 'a lot' in the past year. This represents an increase from 2015 where 34% of people said the economy had weakened.

In 2016, the proportion of people who said that Scotland's economy had become 'a little' or 'a lot stronger' in the previous year was 15%. This figure has decreased by 11 percentage points since 2015.



### Perceived responsibility for changes

Among those who said the economy had improved, 60% attributed this to Scottish Government policies, 14% to UK Government policies and 18% to 'some other reason'.

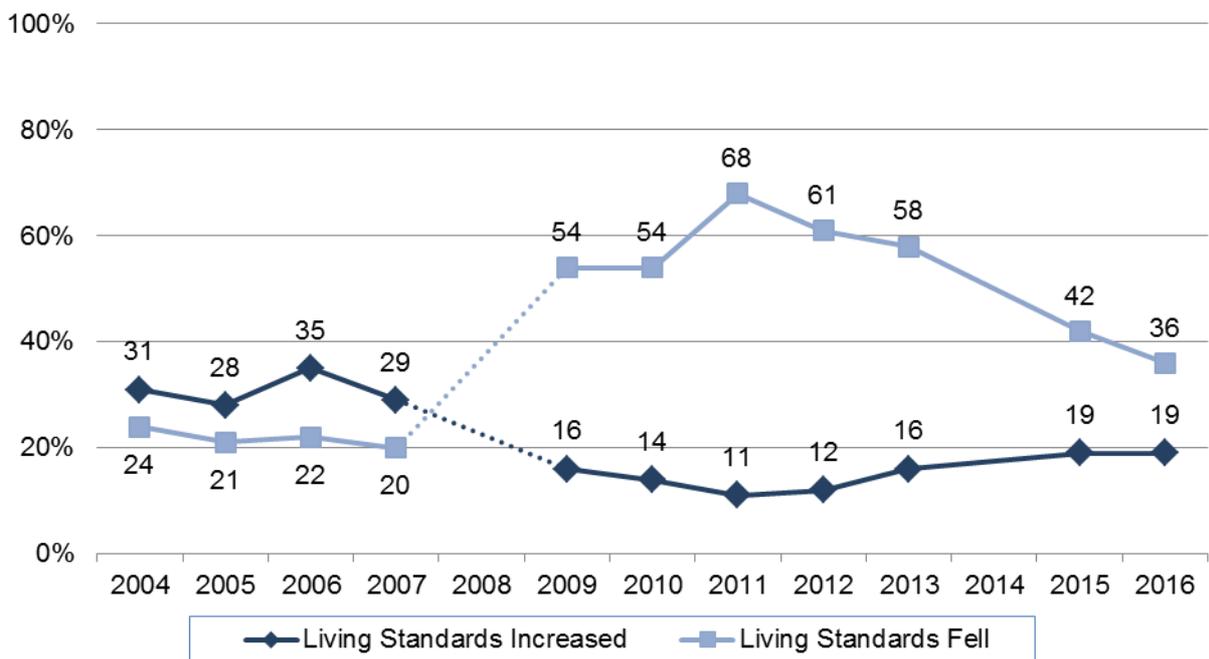
Among those who said the economy had weakened, 35% attributed this to UK Government policies, 18% attributed this to Scottish Government policies, and 37% to 'some other reason'.

## General standard of living

In 2016, 36% of people said the standard of living had fallen 'a lot' or 'a little', 38% said it had stayed the same, and 19% of people said they had increased 'a lot' or 'a little'.

There has been a consistent decline since 2011 in the proportion of people who say that the standard of living in Scotland has fallen. The proportion of people who said that the standard of living had increased in the past twelve months was the same as in 2015 (19%).

Figure 12 Whether general standards of living have increased ('a lot' or 'a little') or fallen ('a lot' or 'a little') in the past 12 months? (2004-2016, %)<sup>5</sup>



### Perceived responsibility for changes

Among those who said the standard of living had improved, 41% attributed this to Scottish Government policy, 28% to UK Government policy and 16% to 'some other reason'.

Among those who said the standard of living had worsened, 50% attributed this to UK Government policy, 15% attributed this to Scottish Government policy, and 19% to 'some other reason'.

## Variations in attitudes between subgroups: Economy & general standard of living

Views on changes to the economy, standards of living and standards in the health service had improved or declined varied between a number of social groups<sup>19</sup>.

Views on whether Scotland's economy had weakened varied as follows:

- **Educational qualifications** – 62% of those with a degree or equivalent said the economy had weakened compared to 47% of those with no formal qualifications.
- **Living comfortably** – 62% of those who were struggling on their present income said the economy had weakened compared to 56% of those who were living comfortably on their present income.
- **Economic activity** – 61% of those who were retired said the economy had weakened compared to 53% of those in work.
- **Political activities** – 59% of those who had engaged in at least one political activity in the last few years as a means of registering what they personally thought about an issue said the economy had weakened compared to 47% of those who had not engaged in any political activities.
- **National identity** – Just under two-thirds (65%) of those who identified as equally Scottish and British thought the economy had weakened compared to a half (50%) of those who identified as more Scottish than British.

Views on whether living standards in Scotland had fallen varied as follows:

- **Living comfortably** – 54% of those who were struggling to live off their current income thought living standards had fallen compared to just under a third (32%) of those who are living comfortably off their current income.
- **Political spectrum** – 42% of those on the left of the political spectrum said living standards had fallen, compared to 23% of those on right.
- **Political activities** – 40% of those who had engaged in at least one political activity in the last few years as a means of registering what they personally thought about an issue thought living standards had fallen compared to 28% of those who had engaged in none.
- **Sex** – 40% of women thought living standards had fallen compared to 32% of men.

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<sup>19</sup> Differences in responses by different groups were examined (see Annex A) and only findings with statistically significant differences between groups are presented in this report.

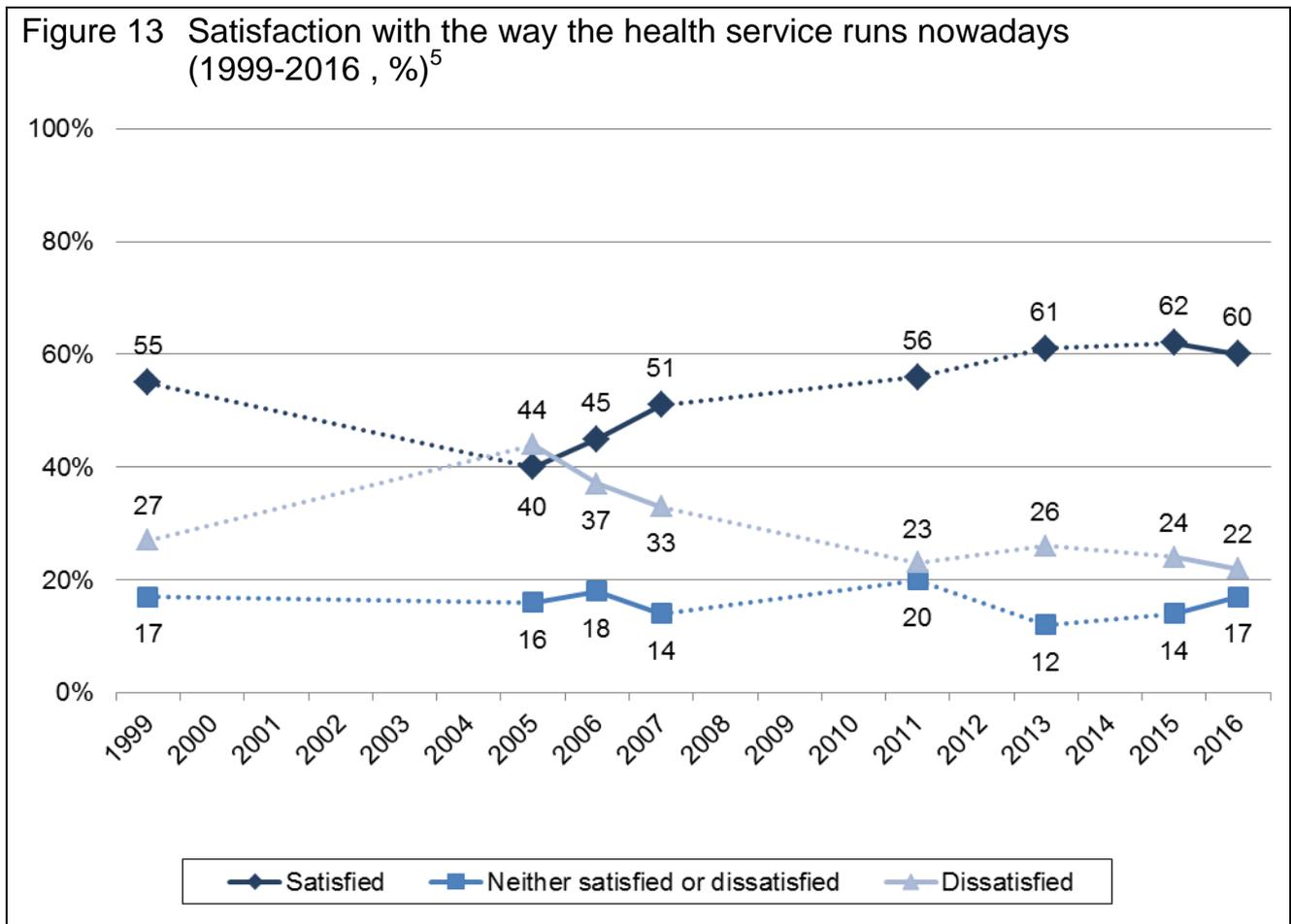
## National Health Service (NHS)

People were asked two key questions on the National Health Service in Scotland:

- How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the National Health Service runs nowadays?
- Has the standard of the health service in Scotland increased or fallen in the last 12 months?

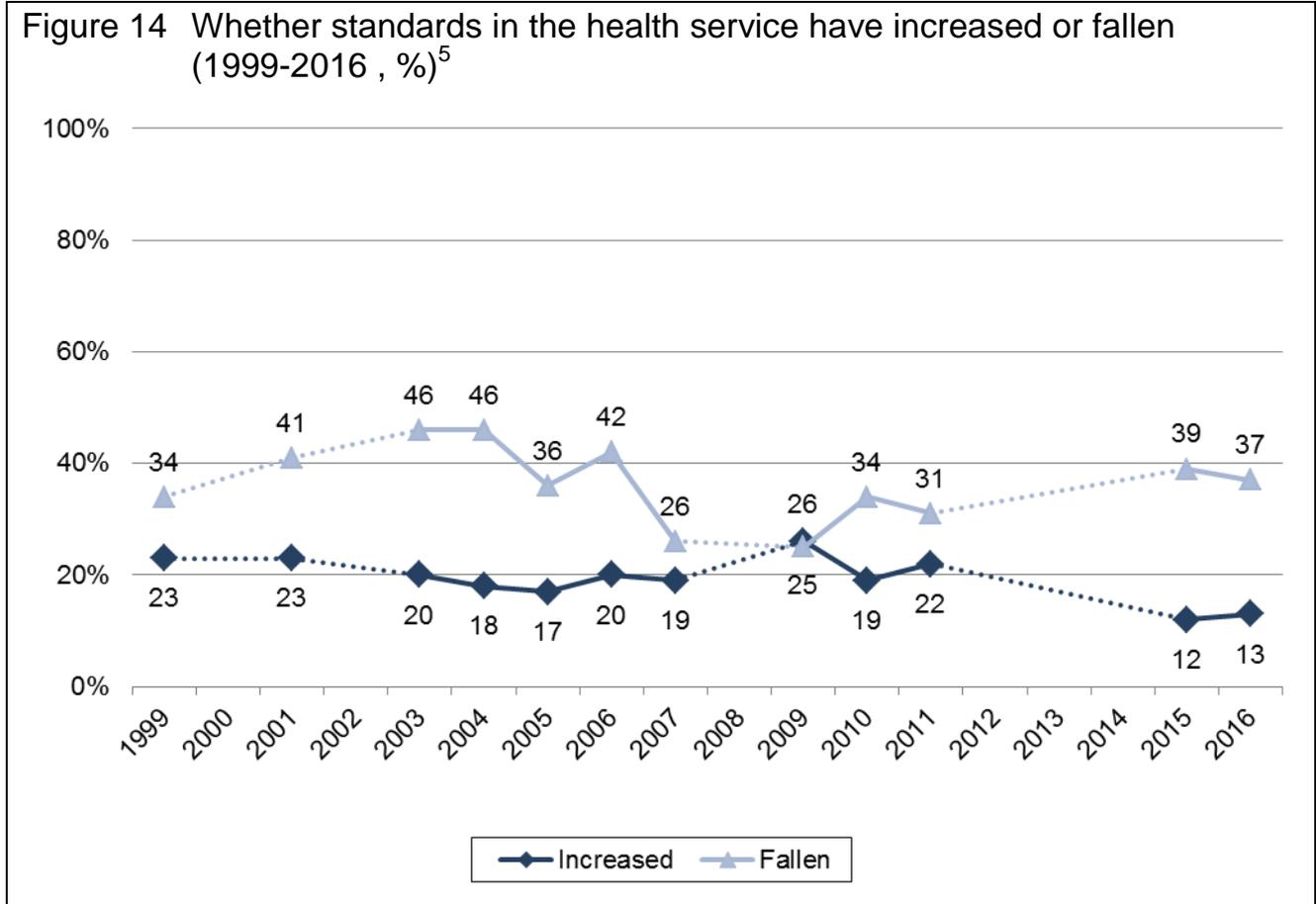
### Satisfaction with the NHS

In 2016, 60% of people reported that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the way the NHS runs nowadays. This figure has remained stable the last three times this question has been asked, varying between 60 and 62% since 2013. Satisfaction with the way the NHS runs nowadays had risen steadily since 2005 when more people were dissatisfied than satisfied with the way the NHS was run.



## Whether the standard of the health service in Scotland has increased or fallen

Continuing a general trend since 2010, more people said the standard of the health service in Scotland had fallen 'a little' or 'a lot' (37%) than increased 'a little' or 'a lot' (13%). 40% of people said standards had stayed the same.



### Perceived responsibility for changes

Among those who said standards in the NHS had improved, 54% attributed this to Scottish Government policy, 16% to UK Government policy and 24% to 'some other reason'.

Among those who said the standards in the NHS had fallen, 40% attributed this to UK Government policy, 25% attributed it to Scottish Government policy, and 18% to 'some other reason'.

## Variations in attitudes between subgroups: NHS

Views on satisfaction with and changes to standards in the health service had improved or declined varied between a number of social groups<sup>20</sup>.

Satisfaction with the way the health service runs nowadays varied as follows:

- **Living comfortably** – 65% of those who were living comfortably on their present income were satisfied compared with 52% of those struggling to live on their present income.
- **Self-reported health** – 64% of those with good health were satisfied compared with 41% of those with poor health.
- **Sex** – 62% of men were satisfied with the NHS compared to 59% of women.

Views on whether the standards in the health service have fallen varied by:

- **Self-reported health** – 54% of those with poor health said standards had fallen compared to a third (33%) of those with good health
- **Age** – 47% of those aged 65 and over said standards had fallen compared to 24% of 16-24 year olds.
- **Educational qualifications** – 47% of those with no formal qualifications said standards had fallen compared to third (33%) of those with a degree or equivalent
- **Living comfortably** – 44% of those struggling to live on their current income said standards had fallen compared to 38% of those living comfortably on their current income.
- **Sex** – 41% of women said standards had fallen compared to 32% of men.
- **Children in the household** – 40% of those with no children in the house said standards had fallen compared to 30% of those with children in the house.

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<sup>20</sup> Differences in responses by different groups were examined (see Annex A) and only findings with statistically significant differences between groups are presented in this report.

## Annex A. Statistical Testing

This Annex contains details of tests conducted to determine significant relationships between questions on government, priorities, political engagement, the economy, living standards and the NHS and background, and a set of dependent variables from the wider SSA collection.

Cross-tabulations were run and those variables which were statistically significant according to a chi-squared test were input into either an ordinal or logistic regression.

The independent variables that were statistically significant at the 95% level for both the chi-squared and regression analysis are presented in this report.

In the table below:

- ✓ indicates that a statistically significant relationship is found
- × indicates that no statistically significant relationship is found

Dependent Variables ↓		Independent Variables →																			
		Age	Sex	Children in household	Working hours	Economic activity	News source	Support or feel close to a party	Political affiliation	Political spectrum	Interest in politics	National identity	Tenure	Main income source	Living comfortably	Religious identity	Highest qualifications	SIMD	Urban/Rural	Political activities	Self-reported health
Trust to work in Scotland's best interests	Scottish Government	✓	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	×	✓	×	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	×	
	UK Government	×	×	×	×	✓	×	×	✓	✓	×	✓	×	✓	✓	×	×	✓	✓	✓	
Trust to make fair decisions	Scottish Government	✓	×	×	×	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	×	×	×	×	
	UK Government	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	×	✓	×	×	✓	×	✓	
Listening to people's views before taking decisions	Scottish Government	✓	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	×	✓	✓	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	×	
	UK Government	✓	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	✓	×	✓	×	×	✓	✓	×	×	×	✓	
Influence over the way Scotland is run	Who has the most?	✓	×	×	×	✓	×	×	×	×	✓	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	
	Who ought to have the most?	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	×	×	✓	×	×	×	×	
Is Scottish Parliament giving...	Scotland a stronger voice in the UK?	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	×	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	
	Ordinary people more of a say?	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	×	✓	✓	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	×	
How much people talked about political events	All three events	×	×	×	×	✓	✓	✓	×	×	✓	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	
	Independence Referendum	×	×	×	×	✓	✓	✓	×	×	✓	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	
	2016 Scottish Parliament Election	✓	×	×	×	✓	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	×	×	×	×	×	✓	×	×	✓	
	EU Referendum	✓	×	×	×	✓	×	✓	×	×	✓	✓	×	×	×	×	✓	×	×	✓	
Talk more about politics now because of IndyRef	✓	×	×	×	✓	×	✓	✓	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	
Political engagement	✓	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	✓	×	×	×	×	✓	×	×	×	×	
Importance of Voting	×	✓	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	×	×	×	✓	×	✓	×	✓	×	
Change in the economy	×	×	×	×	✓	×	×	×	×	×	✓	×	×	✓	×	✓	×	×	✓	×	
Change in living standards	×	✓	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	×	×	×	✓	×	×	×	×	✓	×	
NHS Satisfaction	×	✓	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	×	×	×	×	×	✓	
Change in NHS standards	✓	✓	✓	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	✓	×	✓	×	×	×	✓	

# Annex B. Time series Tables

This Annex contains back series tables and the latest results for all questions in the core module.

Table 1 How much do you trust the UK Government to work in Scotland's best long-term interest? (1999-2016, column %)

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2010	2011	2012	2013	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Just about always	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	3	4	3	2	3
Most of the time	29	16	20	17	19	20	21	19	32	23	19	15	28	23	21	22
Only some of the time	52	54	55	51	58	50	53	52	44	48	51	49	45	45	44	43
Almost never	14	26	22	26	20	26	21	24	18	24	23	31	22	27	31	30
(Don't know)	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	1
(Not answered)	-	-	-	-	-	*	*	-	*	-	-	-	-	-	-	*
Sample size	1482	1663	1605	1665	1508	1637	1549	1594	1508	1482	1495	1197	1229	1497	1288	1237

Table 2 How much do you trust the Scottish Government/Executive /Parliament to work in Scotland's best interests? (1999-2016, column %)

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2010	2011	2012	2013	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Just about always	26	9	13	9	10	9	10	8	14	14	13	20	16	16	22	17
Most of the time	55	45	52	43	52	43	46	43	57	47	47	51	46	43	50	49
Only some of the time	14	34	29	34	31	37	33	37	22	31	31	23	28	31	21	25
Almost never	2	9	5	11	4	10	7	8	4	5	6	5	9	8	5	8
(Don't know)	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	3	4	3	2	1	2	2	1	1
(Not answered)	-	-	-	-	-	*	*	-	*	*	*	-	-	*	-	*
Sample size	1482	1663	1605	1665	1508	1637	1549	1594	1508	1482	1495	1197	1229	1497	1288	1237

Table 3 How much do you trust the UK Government to make fair decisions? (2006-2016, column %)

	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2013	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A great deal	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	2
Quite a lot	21	30	17	21	15	17	16	15
Some	46	43	48	44	42	39	37	39
Not very much	23	17	24	23	27	28	28	29
Not at all	6	4	7	7	11	11	14	13
(Don't know)	3	3	2	2	1	2	2	2
(Not answered)	-	*	*	-	-	-	-	*
<i>Sample size</i>	1594	1508	1482	1495	1197	1497	1288	1237

Table 4 How much do you trust the Scottish Government to make fair decisions? (2006-2016, column %)

	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2013	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A great deal	3	4	4	4	8	5	8	8
Quite a lot	29	42	32	32	38	33	41	33
Some	46	39	46	46	39	42	38	41
Not very much	15	8	13	13	11	14	9	13
Not at all	5	2	3	3	3	4	3	4
(Don't know)	3	4	3	2	1	2	1	1
(Not answered)	*	*	*	-	-	-	-	*
<i>Sample size</i>	1594	1508	1482	1495	1197	1497	1288	1237

Table 5 How much do you trust your local council to make fair decisions? (2006-2016, column %)

	2015	2016
	%	%
A great deal	4	4
Quite a lot	30	28
Some	37	33
Not very much	16	18
Not at all	6	8
(Don't know)	7	9
(Not answered)	-	*
<i>Sample size</i>	1288	1237

Table 6 In general how good would you say the Scottish Executive/ Government is at listening to people's views before it takes decisions? (2004-2016, column %)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2013	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very good	1	3	2	2	4	3	6	4	8	7
Quite good	31	32	34	41	44	41	50	42	51	47
Not very good	41	38	39	35	33	37	26	33	25	28
Not at all good	17	16	14	9	8	11	8	12	9	12
(Don't know)	10	12	11	13	11	8	9	9	7	5
(Not answered)	*	*	-	*	-	-	-	-	*	*
<i>Sample size</i>	1637	1549	1594	1508	1482	1495	1197	1497	1288	1237

Table 7 In general how good would you say the UK Government is at listening to people's views before it takes decisions?  
(2004-2016, column %)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2013	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very good	1	1	1	*	1	1	1	1	1	1
Quite good	14	15	17	21	17	21	18	20	16	20
Not very good	50	52	49	50	51	51	48	49	49	51
Not at all good	30	25	27	21	23	20	27	24	28	24
(Don't know)	6	7	7	8	7	7	6	6	6	5
(Not answered)	*	*	*	*	-	-	-	-	-	*
<i>Sample size</i>	<i>1637</i>	<i>1549</i>	<i>1594</i>	<i>1508</i>	<i>1482</i>	<i>1495</i>	<i>1197</i>	<i>1497</i>	<i>1288</i>	<i>1237</i>

Table 8 In general how good would you say your local council is at listening to people's views before it takes decisions?  
(2010-2016, column %)

	2010	2015	2016
	%	%	%
Very good	3	6	7
Quite good	34	38	38
Not very good	38	28	26
Not at all good	17	14	14
(Don't know)	8	14	15
(Not answered)	-	*	*
<i>Sample size</i>	<i>1495</i>	<i>1288</i>	<i>1237</i>

Table 9 From what you have seen and heard so far do you think that having a Scottish Parliament is giving ordinary people...(1999-2016, column %)

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
...more say in how Scotland is governed	64	44	38	31	39	31	37	37	47	47	42	60	46	46	61	59
...less say	2	3	4	4	4	6	5	5	3	3	4	3	6	5	3	3
...or, is it making no difference?	32	51	56	62	54	60	55	55	45	47	50	33	47	45	33	37
(Don't know)	-	-	-	-	-	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	1	3	3	2
(Not answered)	-	-	-	-	-	*	*	-	*	*	-	-	-	-	-	*
Sample size	1482	1663	1605	1665	1508	1637	1549	1594	1508	1482	1495	1197	1229	1497	1288	1237

Table 10 From what you have seen and heard so far do you think that having a Scottish Parliament is giving Scotland...(1999-2016, column %)

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
...a stronger voice in the United Kingdom	70	52	52	39	49	35	41	43	61	52	49	69	59	57	70	71
...a weaker voice in the United Kingdom	7	6	6	7	7	7	6	6	4	5	6	3	6	6	3	3
...or, is it making no difference?	20	40	40	52	41	55	50	49	32	40	42	26	33	34	26	24
(Don't know)	-	-	-	-	-	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	1	1
(Not answered)	-	-	-	-	-	*	*	-	-	*	*	-	-	-	-	*
Sample size	1482	1663	1605	1665	1508	1637	1549	1594	1508	1482	1495	1197	1229	1497	1288	1237

Table 11 Which of the following do you think has the most influence over the way Scotland is run? (1999-2016, column %)

	1999	2000	2001	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
The Scottish Government	41	13	15	17	19	23	24	28	33	37	38	34	30	41	42
The UK Government at Westminster	39	66	66	64	48	47	38	47	39	45	38	41	47	42	41
Local Councils in Scotland	8	10	9	7	20	15	18	8	11	7	13	10	12	6	5
The European Union	5	4	7	5	6	8	11	9	10	7	7	9	7	5	8
(Don't know)	8	8	-	6	7	7	9	7	7	5	4	6	4	6	4
(Not answered)	-	-	-	-	*	*	*	*	-	-	-	-	-	-	*
Sample size	1482	1663	1605	1508	1637	1549	1594	1508	1482	1495	1197	1229	1497	1288	1237

Table 12 Which of the following do you think ought to have the most influence over the way Scotland is run? (1999-2016, column %)

	1999	2000	2001	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
The Scottish Government	74	72	74	66	67	67	64	71	72	74	73	63	63	76	75
The UK Government at Westminster	13	13	14	20	12	13	11	14	13	16	13	24	20	14	14
Local Councils in Scotland	8	10	8	9	17	15	19	9	11	6	11	8	13	7	8
The European Union	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	*	1	1	1	1	1	1
(Don't know)	-	5	-	-	3	4	4	4	3	3	2	4	3	2	2
(Not answered)	-	-	-	-	*	*	*	*	-	-	-	*	*	*	*
Sample size	1482	1663	1605	1508	1637	1549	1594	1508	1482	1495	1197	1229	1497	1288	1237

Table 13 What should be the Scottish Government's highest priority? (2004-2016, column %)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2013	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Help the economy grow faster	16	18	14	16	33	37	36	35	32	28
Cut crime	22	23	24	27	17	18	17	10	4	4
Improve people's health	27	26	24	17	13	15	16	18	17	15
Improve standards of education	17	15	16	12	15	12	15	18	22	21
Improve housing	12	10	12	16	13	9	11	13	15	16
Improve the environment	4	4	6	5	3	3	2	1	2	2
Improve public transport	1	1	2	1	1	1	*	1	1	1
Reduce inequality	n/a	4	10							
Sample size	1637	1549	1594	1508	1482	1495	1197	1497	1288	1237

Table 14 All in all, how satisfied or dissatisfied would you say you are with the way in which the National Health Service runs nowadays? (1999-2016, column %)

	1999	2005	2006	2007	2011	2013	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very satisfied	9	7	6	10	12	13	16	14
Quite satisfied	46	33	39	41	44	49	46	46
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	17	16	18	14	20	12	14	17
Quite dissatisfied	19	27	29	22	17	19	17	14
Very dissatisfied	7	16	8	11	6	6	7	8
(Don't know)	1	*	1	1	1	1	1	1
(Not answered)	*	-	*	*	-	-	-	-
Sample size	1482	1549	1594	1508	1197	1497	1288	1237

Table 15 Whether the standard of the health service in Scotland has increased or fallen. (1999-2016, column %)

	1999	2001	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Increased a lot	2	2	2	3	2	4	2	4	3	4	2	2
Increased a little	21	21	18	15	15	16	17	22	16	18	9	11
Stayed the same	35	29	25	31	38	31	45	41	35	39	41	40
Fallen a little	20	26	26	23	24	23	20	17	21	19	26	23
Fallen a lot	14	15	20	24	12	18	6	8	14	12	14	14
(Don't know)	8	7	8	5	10	8	10	8	11	9	8	11
(Not answered)	-	-	-	-	*	-	-	*	-	-	-	-
<i>Sample size</i>	1482	1605	1508	1637	1549	1594	1508	1482	1495	1197	1288	1237

Table 16 Who is 'credited' for an increase in the standard of the health service in Scotland. (2006-2016, column %)

	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Scottish Government policies	41	50	55	49	58	57	54
UK Government policies	24	34	18	30	15	13	16
Some other reason	17	9	13	16	20	16	24
Both Westminster and SG	7	1	6	2	1	4	2
(Don't know)	11	6	8	4	7	10	4
<i>Unweighted sample size</i>	313	279	387	286	236	148	140

Table 17 Who is 'blamed' for a fall in the standard of the health service in Scotland. (2006-2016, column %)

	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Scottish Government policies	20	14	12	18	12	19	25
UK Government policies	44	45	41	49	54	48	40
Some other reason	20	25	30	21	21	21	18
Both Westminster and SG	8	3	11	8	8	8	12
(Don't know)	7	13	6	5	5	4	4
<i>Unweighted sample size</i>	<i>696</i>	<i>422</i>	<i>383</i>	<i>524</i>	<i>388</i>	<i>510</i>	<i>486</i>

Table 18 What about Scotland's economy? Has it got stronger or weaker since (month of interview) previous year? (2004-2016, column %)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A lot stronger	3	2	2	2	1	*	2	1	1	1	2
A little stronger	25	21	28	28	7	11	16	13	23	25	14
Stayed the same	29	34	28	36	11	15	16	20	31	28	21
A little weaker	22	19	18	10	43	41	39	41	28	28	39
A lot weaker	5	3	2	1	29	23	18	17	8	6	15
(Don't know)	17	22	21	22	8	9	9	9	9	11	9
<i>Sample size</i>	<i>1637</i>	<i>1549</i>	<i>1594</i>	<i>1508</i>	<i>1482</i>	<i>1495</i>	<i>1197</i>	<i>1229</i>	<i>1497</i>	<i>1288</i>	<i>1237</i>

Table 19 What about the general standard of living in Scotland? Has it increased or fallen since (month of interview) previous year? (1999-2016, column %)

	1999	2001	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Increased a lot	2	3	4	4	3	4	2	3	2	2	2	5	1	1
Increased a little	27	27	30	27	25	30	27	13	11	9	10	10	18	18
Stayed the same	43	45	36	40	45	37	41	25	28	19	23	25	33	38
Fallen a little	18	15	17	18	17	17	16	38	38	39	39	38	29	27
Fallen a lot	6	4	7	6	4	5	4	16	16	29	22	20	13	9
(Don't know)	5	6	7	5	7	6	9	4	4	2	4	2	5	7
<i>Sample size</i>	<i>1482</i>	<i>1605</i>	<i>1508</i>	<i>1637</i>	<i>1549</i>	<i>1594</i>	<i>1508</i>	<i>1482</i>	<i>1495</i>	<i>1197</i>	<i>1229</i>	<i>1497</i>	<i>1288</i>	<i>1237</i>

Table 20 Who is 'credited' for a stronger economy in Scotland. (2006-2016, column %)

	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Scottish Government policies	47	56	66	39	69	61	47	54	60
UK Government policies	19	21	14	21	15	18	16	16	14
Some other reason	20	15	12	32	10	14	26	21	18
Both Westminster and SG	8	2	2	2	2	4	8	7	4
(Don't know)	6	5	6	6	4	3	4	3	4
<i>Unweighted sample size</i>	<i>454</i>	<i>441</i>	<i>120</i>	<i>177</i>	<i>193</i>	<i>164</i>	<i>373</i>	<i>335</i>	<i>175</i>

Table 21 Who is 'blamed' for a weaker economy in Scotland. (2006-2016, column %)

	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Scottish Government policies	26	17	7	14	11	14	15	14	18
UK Government policies	42	44	38	44	54	47	45	38	35
Some other reason	16	25	44	35	26	31	29	37	37
Both Westminster and SG	13	7	9	6	8	8	9	10	9
(Don't know)	3	8	2	1	1	1	3	1	2
<i>Unweighted sample size</i>	330	187	1037	941	683	700	533	447	679

Table 22 Who is 'credited' for an increase in the standard of living. (2006-2016, column %)

	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Scottish Government policies	30	32	22	37	44	46	23	37	41
UK Government policies	28	36	24	33	31	27	42	28	28
Some other reason	26	23	30	22	12	17	18	26	16
Both Westminster and SG	6	3	9	4	10	5	5	4	9
(Don't know)	10	7	12	4	3	5	12	4	5
<i>Unweighted sample size</i>	548	432	400	211	121	137	240	261	212

Table 23 Who is 'blamed' for a fall in the standard of living. (2006-2016, column %)

	2006	2007	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Scottish Government policies	18	10	6	8	6	7	6	7	15
UK Government policies	51	56	39	49	58	53	55	62	50
Some other reason	18	26	44	36	27	30	29	17	19
Both Westminster and SG	10	4	8	4	7	7	8	10	13
(Don't know)	3	4	3	3	2	2	2	3	3
<i>Unweighted sample size</i>	349	311	783	798	803	780	875	532	468

Table 24 How much did you talk about the following political events with friends, family colleagues? (2016, column %)

	Independence Referendum	2016 Scottish Parliament election	EU Referendum
	%	%	%
A great deal	38	11	31
Quite a lot	31	22	34
Some	14	26	17
Not very much	10	27	11
Not at all	7	14	7
(Not answered)	*	-	-
<i>Sample size</i>	1237	1237	1237

Table 25 As a result of the Independence Referendum, how much do you talk about politics? (2016, column %)

	<b>2016</b>
	<b>%</b>
A lot more	28
A little more	25
It has made no difference	40
A little less	3
A lot less	3
(Don't know)	*
<i>Sample size</i>	<i>1237</i>

Table 26 How important do you think voting in the following elections is? (2016, column %)

	<b>Scottish Parliament elections</b>	<b>UK general elections</b>	<b>Local council elections</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Very important	68	58	57
Fairly important	23	25	30
Not very important	6	11	10
Not important at all	3	5	3
(Don't know)	*	*	*
(Not answered)	*	*	*
<i>Sample size</i>	<i>1212</i>	<i>1212</i>	<i>1212</i>

Table 27 In the last few years, have you ever done any of the things on this card as a way of registering what you personally thought about an issue? (2016, column %)

	2016
	%
None	34
Signed a petition	45
Contacted my local council	26
Given money to a campaign or organisation	22
Contacted MP/MSP	19
Attended a public meeting	18
Spoken to an influential person	14
Responded to a consultation document	11
Attended consultation event	9
Gone on a protest or demonstration	9
Contacted a government department directly	7
Raised issue in an organisation I already belong to	7
Joined a political party	7
Actively took part in a campaign	6
Contacted radio, TV or a newspaper	6
Joined an existing organisation	4
Formed a group	4
<i>Sample size</i>	1237

## REVISIONS TABLE

	Date	Changes
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