



More in
Common

Can the SNP hold its coalition together?



Thursday 15 October



17:00 to 18:00



Meeting Room 1, First Floor,
Secure Zone



Andrew McDonald
(Chair)

Politico



Luke Tryl

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Jenny Gilruth MSP

Deputy First
Minister of Scotland



Fergus Mutch

Former SNP Head of
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Seamus Logan MP

Shadow SNP
Spokesperson for
Environment, Food and
Rural Affairs, and Health
and Social Care



Councillor Richard Bell

Leader of Glasgow
City Council

The 'meh' mandate

In 2026, the SNP managed something few incumbent governments can achieve: it was re-elected for the fourth time. But that election was defined by a lack of enthusiasm, and a widespread sense that Scotland needs change but has no clear change candidate. This leaves the SNP with a broad but shallow coalition, and a challenging mandate.

- **The SNP's focus on independence is central to its offer, but some worry it comes at the expense of delivery.** Scots say that, at its best, the SNP fights for independence and champions Scotland's interests, and it is this mission that holds together a broad and diverse coalition of voters. Yet beyond current SNP supporters, Scots cite this as a barrier to voting SNP, because they feel it comes at the expense of other priorities.
- **John Swinney passes the Respect Test, but doesn't inspire many voters.** Swinney is seen as a decent man who respects the people of Scotland, but some doubt whether he has the 'fire in his belly' of Scotland's past leaders. Andy Burnham's net approval rating is higher than Swinney's, although many doubt that Burnham cares for or respects Scotland.
- **Energy and Europe are key drivers of the independence vote.** Pro-independence Scots cite taking control of Scotland's energy and rejoining Europe as key reasons to leave the UK. But the SNP's voters are torn on oil and gas: most back both new North Sea drilling and Net Zero, and while a majority would prioritise energy independence, a third would put net zero first. And Burnham's announcements on Europe have played well with SNP voters.

Introducing the Seven Segments

The background is a dark navy blue. On the right side, there are two large, overlapping circles. The top circle is mostly dark navy blue, with a small segment in the top right corner colored a medium blue. The bottom circle is also mostly dark navy blue, with a segment in the bottom right corner colored a vibrant green. The circles overlap in the center-right area.

Introducing the Seven Segments

The British Seven Segments were developed to move beyond traditional left-right or party-based analysis by exploring the deeper psychological, cultural and value-driven foundations that shape public opinion. This approach helps explain why political loyalties have fractured and offers a more nuanced understanding of what drives attitudes on issues like immigration, climate, and the economy – enabling more effective engagement with the public across a fragmented political and social landscape.



Progressive Activists



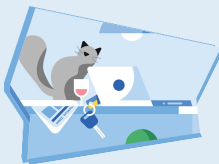
...an outspoken group that is politically engaged and globally minded, championing social justice but feeling alienated from mainstream politics

Incrementalist Left



...a group that leans left and trusts institutions, often stepping back from the news and avoiding politically fraught debates

Established Liberals



... a prosperous group that is confident in institutions, values expertise, and believes the system broadly works

Sceptical Scrollers



...a disengaged group that has lost trust in mainstream institutions and increasingly looks online for sources of truth

Rooted Patriots



...a patriotic group that feels overlooked by elites and wants leaders with common sense to protect local identity

Traditional Conservatives



... a nostalgic group that respects tradition, authority and personal responsibility, while remaining sceptical of rapid change

Dissenting Disruptors

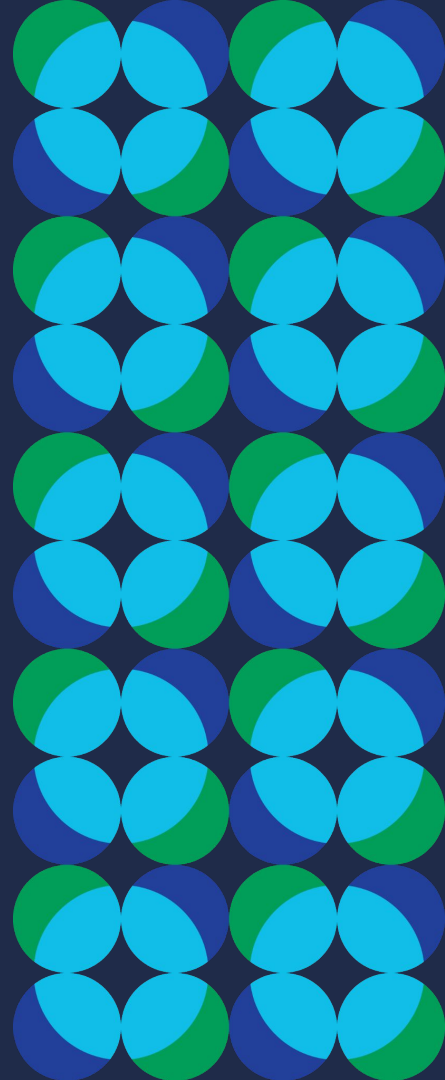


... a frustrated group that craves radical change and backs strong leaders who promise to shake up a broken system



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2026: A reluctant re-election?



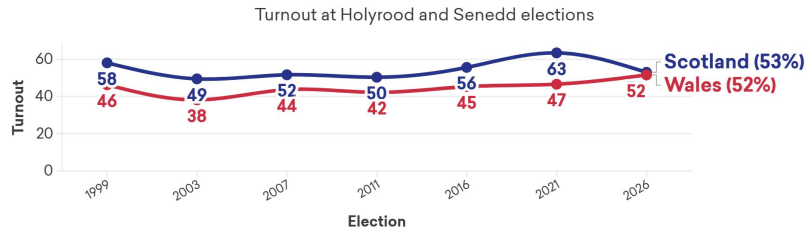
The 'meh' election

The 2026 Scottish Parliament election was defined by a sense of anti-incumbency with nowhere to turn.

Scotland was in an unusual position because – while the public was impatient for change, there wasn't a clear 'change' candidate – nor even a single incumbent: many Scots describe a desire for something new after nearly two decades of the SNP, yet they are also often deeply disillusioned with the Labour Government in Westminster.

One of the clearest consequences of this was low turnout: on 53 per cent, it was ten points lower than 2021, and on par with Wales for the first time ever.

2026 saw turnout in Wales reach parity with Scotland for the first time



It's a choice between the devil and the deep blue sea. This is the first election where I'm really struggling, I've always voted SNP. This time I'm really not sure. My mum and dad, all their days, they voted Labour (...) even my dad, he's disgusted with them. It's very, very difficult.

Lorraine, Glasgow

Even in seats it won, the SNP lost an average of 5,500 votes

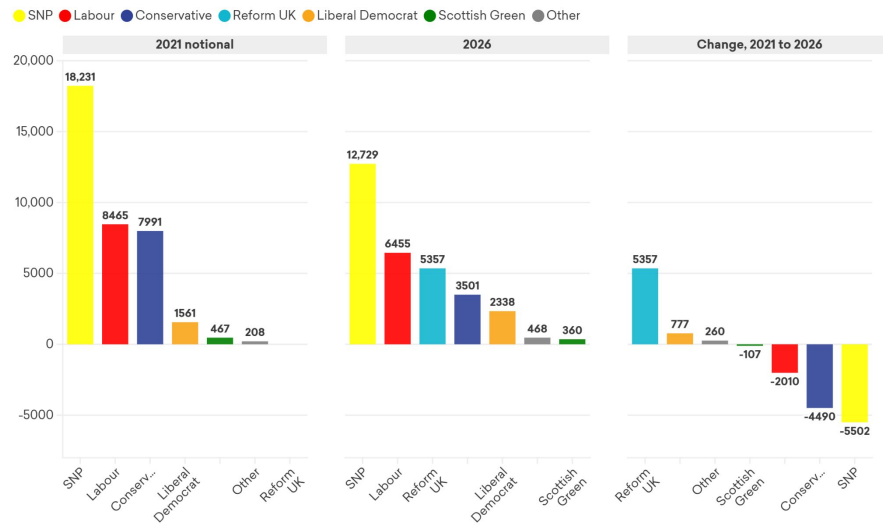
Reform UK's rise split the unionist vote, letting the SNP hold seats on far fewer votes.

Average SNP votes per seat in seats they held fell from 18,231 to 12,729, while Reform gained 5,357 and the Conservatives lost 4,490.

The SNP benefited greatly from fragmentation of the unionist vote. However, a continuation of this trend could become unsustainable, especially if a viable nationalist challenger emerges on a constituency level.

Even in seats the SNP held in 2026, they lost an average of 5,500 votes per seat

Average votes per seat on the constituency ballot, in the 57 seats the SNP won in 2026. 2021 notional results on the 2026 boundaries



The SNP is battling Labour and the Greens in urban areas

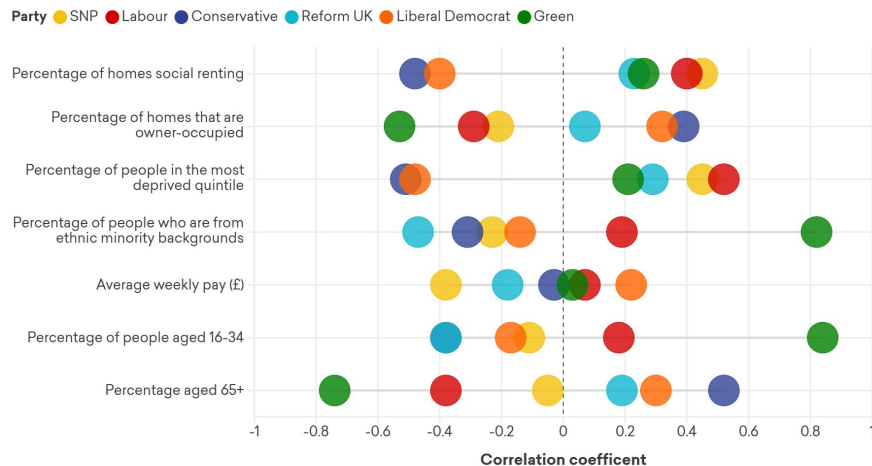
The SNP still does best in areas with lower pay, lower home ownership, and areas of higher deprivation than other parties. It also has, by contrast to other parties, a fairly even age profile.

But the Greens have been challenging the SNP on its progressive flank. Green support is heavily correlated with areas that have a high proportion of 16–34 year olds and high ethnic minority populations.

This underscores that the Green surge may be indicative of a broader generational challenge to dominance of the nationalist vote with a new, and more diverse, generation.

The SNP still do best in the most deprived areas of Scotland, but are struggling with the Green challenge in areas with high young and ethnic minority populations

Correlation of each party's 2026 list vote share with seven seat characteristics, across 73 seats. Each dot is a party



The SNP vote is a broad coalition

The SNP's core vote is progressive, but because the independence question cuts across left and right, its coalition is broad.

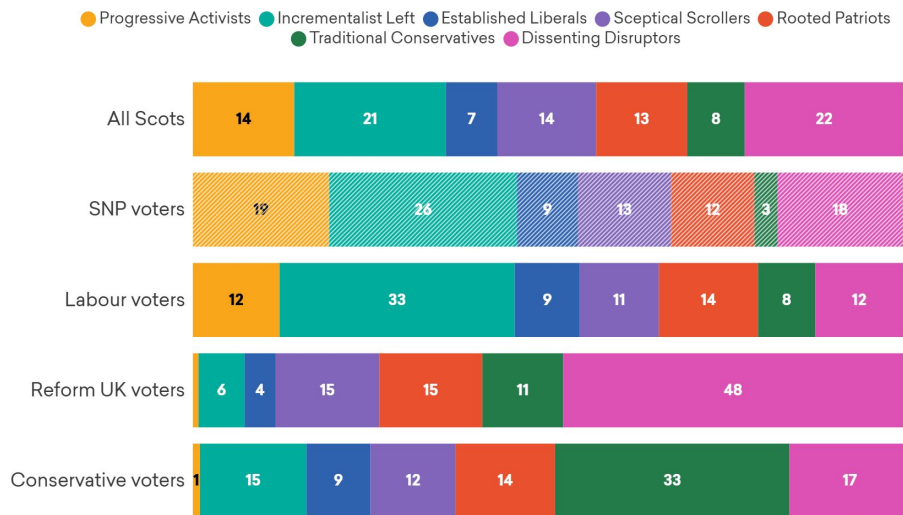
Almost half of its 2026 voters are Progressive Activists or Incrementalist Left (46 per cent), but nearly one in five are Dissenting Disruptors (18 per cent). This segment is socially conservative, hungry for radical change and sceptical of multiculturalism, and makes up almost half of Reform UK's voters.

The unionist parties each rely on one dominant segment, which makes up at least a third of their vote:

Incrementalist Left for Labour, Dissenting Disruptors for Reform UK and Traditional Conservatives for the Conservatives. SNP voters are held together by independence rather than shared values, so no single segment dominates.

SNP voters span progressive and anti-system Scotland

British Seven Segments, by Holyrood 2026 constituency vote



Most Scots think things are getting worse, and half say that the SNP feels like 'more of the same'

The SNP governs a country that is feeling pessimistic about its future: three in five Scots (62 per cent) say that things are getting worse in Scotland; just eight per cent think the country is getting better.

Even among the SNP's own voters, a plurality think things are getting worse (44 per cent).

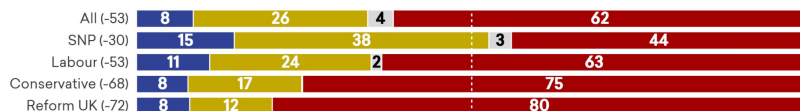
And at a time when many want change, 53 per cent say the SNP feels like 'more of the same' – although less so than Labour, the Conservatives or Liberal Democrats.

Scots generally think the country is getting worse

Thinking about Scotland today, would you say...?

● Things are getting better ● Things are staying about the same ● Don't know ● Things are getting worse

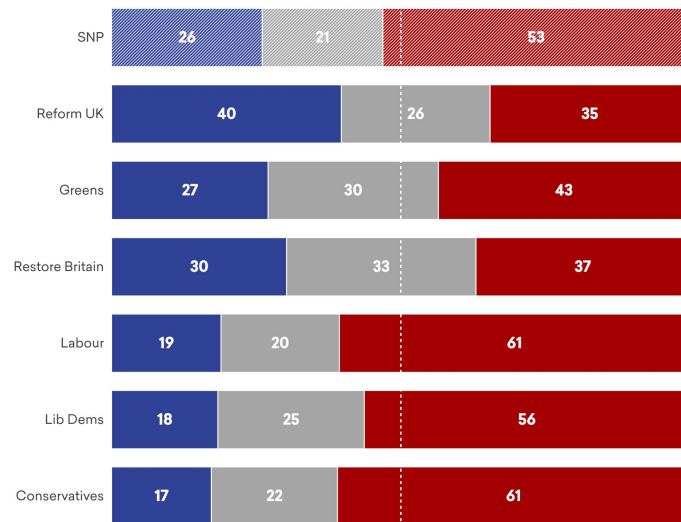
Westminster voting intention



Twice as many Scots see the SNP as 'more of the same' as see it as change

Thinking about the following political parties, would you say they represent change, or represent more of the same?

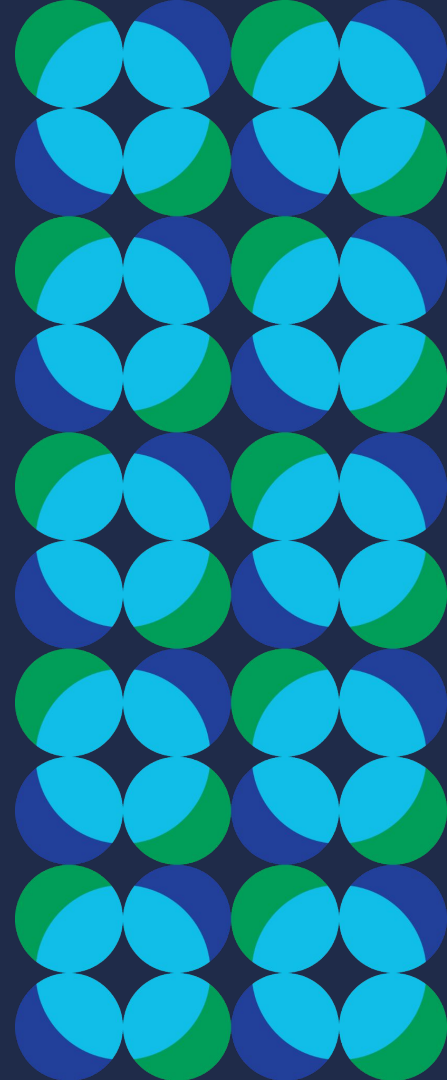
● Represent change ● Don't know ● Represent more of the same





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The state of the party



The SNP maintains their lead in Holyrood and taken the lead in Westminster polling

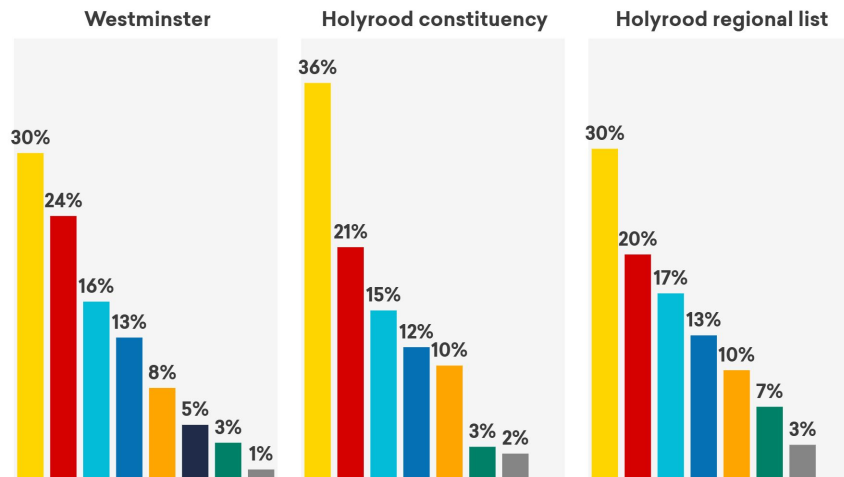
The SNP lead at both Westminster and Holyrood: they are on 30 per cent for Westminster, six points ahead of Labour, and 36 per cent on the Holyrood constituency vote, little changed since their win in May.

Labour has fallen 11 points at Westminster since 2024, while Reform UK is up nine to 16 per cent and Restore Britain is on 5 per cent. The 'Burnham bounce' is muted in Scotland: Scottish Labour is up just two to four points since May, against seven across Britain. The Greens' list vote has halved, from 14 per cent to 7 per cent.

The SNP leads at Westminster and Holyrood, on both the constituency and list vote

Voting intention for Westminster and for the Scottish Parliament constituency and regional list votes

● SNP ● Scottish Labour ● Reform UK ● Scottish Conservatives ● Scottish Lib Dems
● Scottish Greens ● Restore Britain ● Other



The SNP is bolstered by unionist fragmentation – but it cannot rely on a united nationalist vote

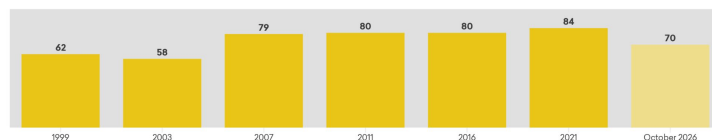
The SNP's lead depends on fragmentation in the unionist vote.

In Westminster voting intention, the Unionist vote is split between Labour (29 per cent), Reform UK (24 per cent) and the Conservatives (22 per cent), while the SNP leads with 56 per cent among nationalist voters.

However, this cannot be taken for granted: in 2024, Labour won voters who crossed the independence divide. And the SNP's hold on pro-independence Scots in Holyrood slipped to its lowest since 2003. Reversing some of the consolidation which has allowed the SNP to dominate Scottish politics.

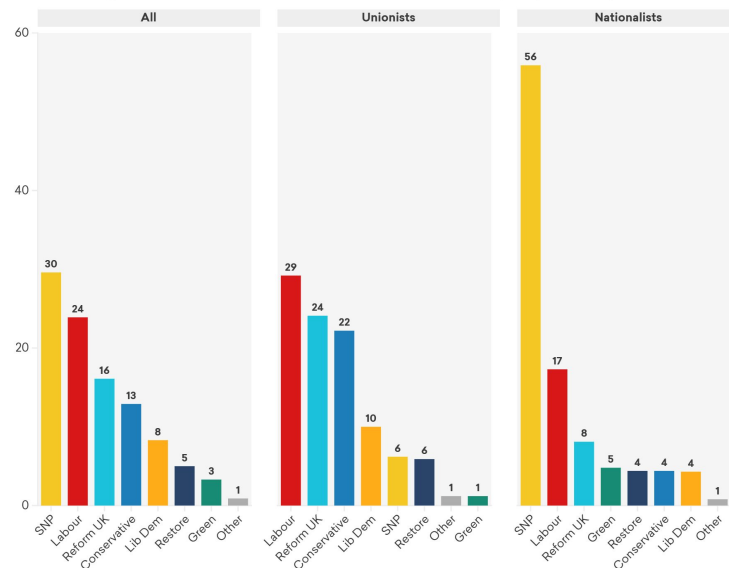
The SNP's support among pro-independence Scots seems to be at its lowest since 2003

SNP constituency vote share among Scottish voters who support independence



The SNP leads among pro-independence voters, but the Unionists vote remains deeply split

And, if a general election was called tomorrow, which party would you vote for?



The 'Burnham Bounce' has been less dramatic in Scotland than the rest of the UK

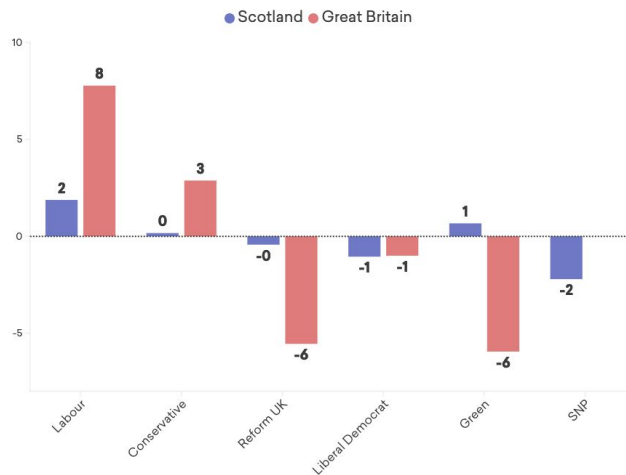
In Great Britain as a whole, the 'Burnham bounce', and, to a smaller extent, the 'Badenoch bounce' has transformed the political landscape since earlier this year. Labour have risen eight points in More in Common's voting intention since before May's local elections – regaining the lead – with Reform sinking by six points.

These changes are far less dramatic in Scotland.

Labour's constituency vote share is only up by two percentage points from May's Holyrood elections and despite a win in Aberdeen South, the Conservatives' vote share is level. The SNP's constituency share, has dropped two points.

Labour's bounce since May has been less pronounced in Scotland

Change in vote share, percentage points. Great Britain: Westminster voting intention in October compared with the pre-local election average, Scotland: Holyrood constituency voting intention in October compared with the May 2026 result



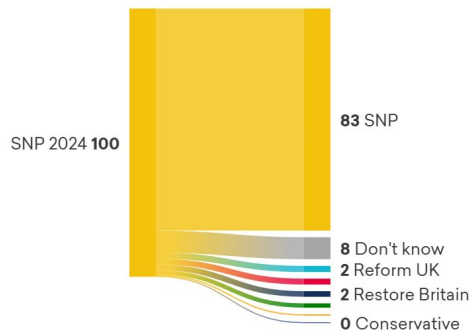
The SNP has stemmed the bleeding from 2024, as Labour has fragmented

The SNP is retaining 83 per cent of its voters who voted for the party in 2024. Just 1 in 50 have switched to Reform UK.

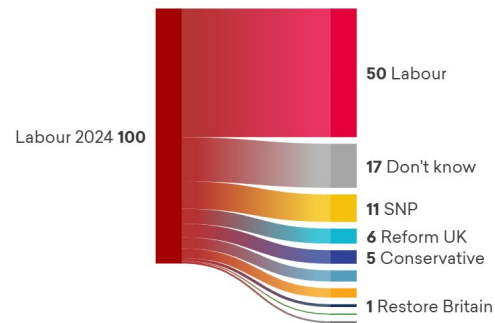
By contrast, Labour is retaining just over half (50 per cent) of its 2024 Scottish votes. A high portion (17 per cent) now are undecided, and one in ten have now flipped to the SNP. The party has also fragmented roughly evenly between unionist and nationalist parties, with 16 per cent intending to vote for a unionist party, and 11 per cent now intending to vote for a nationalist one.

The SNP has retained its 2024 voters, but Labour's 2024 coalition has fragmented

SNP 2024 voters



Labour 2024 voters



Burnham is the most popular UK party leader in Scotland

Andy Burnham is currently the most popular party leader in Scotland. 35 per cent think Burnham is doing a good job, compared to 31 per cent who think he is doing a bad job. This is slightly better than John Swinney, where 30 per cent think he is doing a good job.

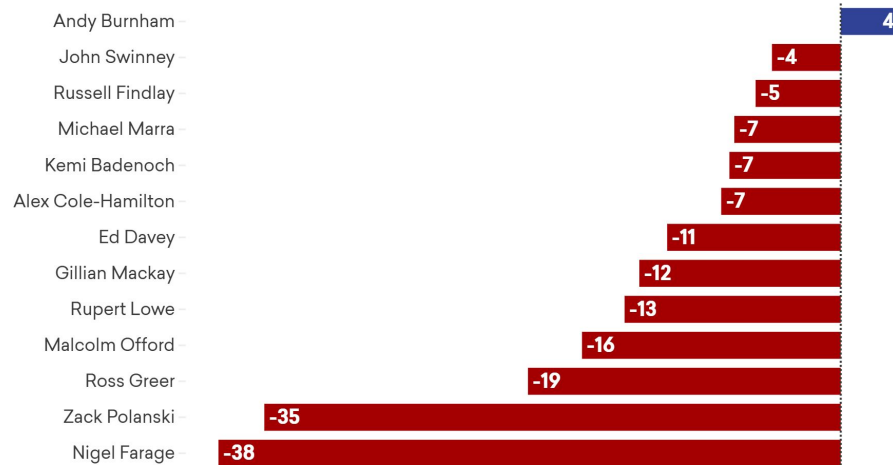
This is, however, notably lower than Burnham's ratings in England, where 40 per cent approve, and 29 per cent disapprove.

Nigel Farage is very unpopular with many Scots. 45 per cent say he is doing a very bad job – triple that of Andy Burnham.

Andy Burnham is the only party leader with a positive rating in Scotland

For each of the following, please indicate whether you think they are doing a good job or a bad job?

Net score (good job minus bad job)



But many are concerned that Burnham cares less, and has less respect, for Scotland

The Scottish public are not yet convinced Burnham cares about Scotland as much as other parts of the UK.

Just four per cent say he cares more about Scotland than other parts of the UK, 27 per cent think he cares for it about the same, and 46 per cent think he cares less about Scotland than the rest of the UK. This includes over 1 in 3 (36 per cent) of Labour's 2026 Scottish voters.

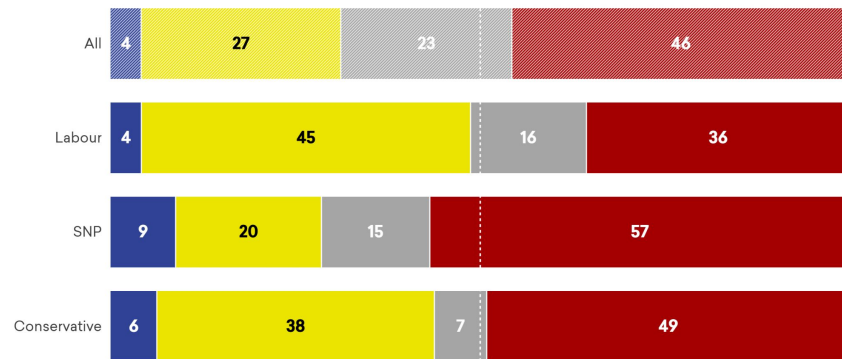
Similarly, 32 per cent feel Burnham has respect for the people of Scotland, compared to 46 per cent who do not.

46 per cent of Scots, and over 1 in 3 Scottish Labour voters in 2024, think Burnham cares less about Scotland than other parts of the UK

Which of the following comes closest to your view? Andy Burnham cares about Scotland...

By 2024 Vote

● More than other parts of the UK ● About the same as other parts of the UK ● Don't know ● Less than other parts of the UK



Burnham's policy announcements have cut through less in Scotland than the rest of the UK

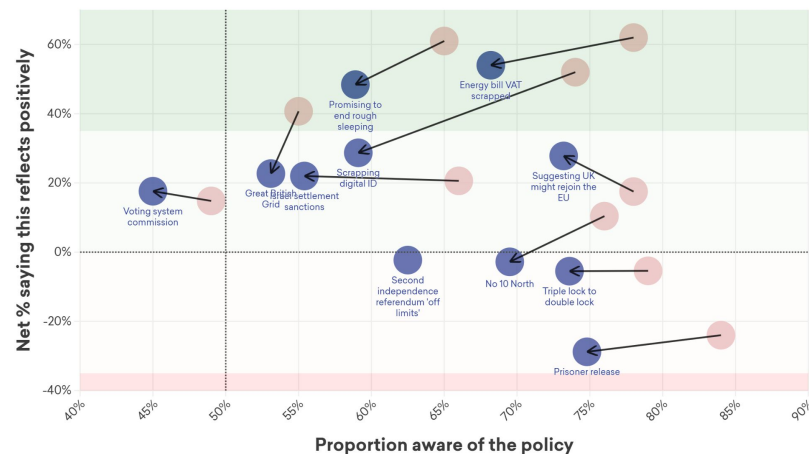
There is early evidence that Burnham's policy offering has not cut through in Scotland as much as the rest of the UK, both in awareness and popularity.

On average, awareness of policies tested was 7 points lower, and net popularity 7 points lower, than the UK as a whole. One notable gap is in perceptions of Number 10 North; the general public tends to suggest the measure reflects well on Burnham (+10), but Scots disagree (-3).

Two policies that Burnham announced are notably more popular in Scotland than the rest of the UK – floating rejoining the EU and a commission for exploring proportional representation. Floating rejoining the EU was 11 points more popular for Burnham in Scotland (+28), than in the rest of the UK (+17)

Scots are less positive than the UK as a whole about most of Burnham's policies, but more positive on rejoining the EU

Arrows run from the UK result to the Scotland result for each comparable policy



Most Scottish leaders, except Swinney, do not provoke strong public reactions

Other than John Swinney, the public currently have no firm opinions of other leaders in Holyrood.

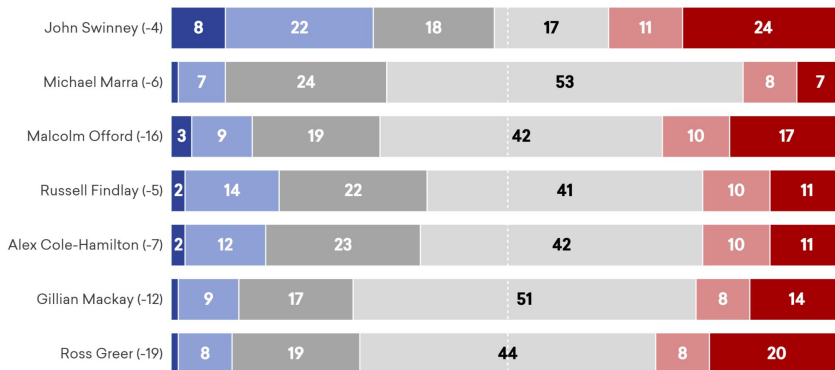
For all other leaders, over half either express no opinion either way or don't know. Even Malcolm Offord, the leader of Reform, has 61 per cent of Scots either not knowing or not expressing an opinion either way.

There is an interesting gap here between British leaders, where Scots have firmer opinion, and Scottish leaders. Taking Offord as an example, only 17 per cent of Scots think he is doing a very bad job, compared to 45 per cent who say the same of Farage.

Except for John Swinney, a majority of the public don't express an opinion either way or don't know enough about the other Scottish party leaders

For each of the following, please indicate whether you think they are doing a good job or a bad job?

● Very good job ● Somewhat good job ● Neither a good nor a bad job ● Don't know
 ● Somewhat bad job ● Very bad job



The SNP is seen to be performing badly on the most important issues

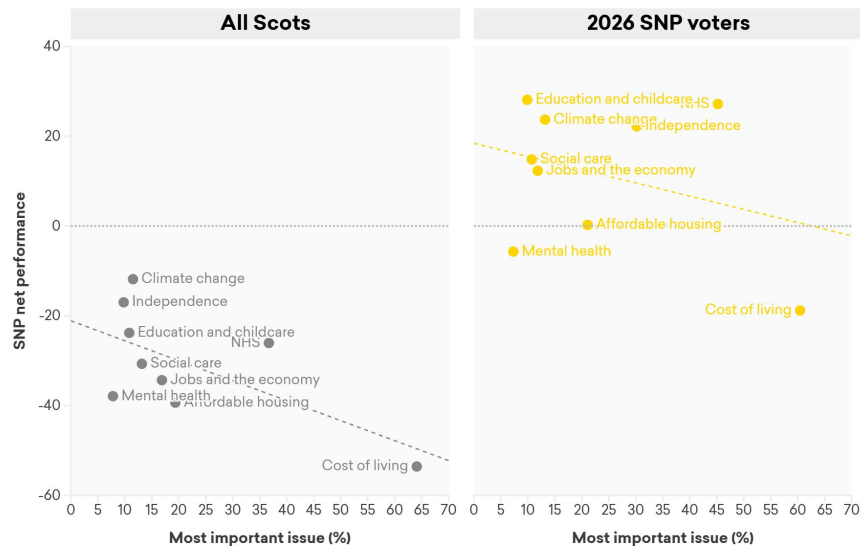
Public approval of the Scottish government's handling of key issues is also low.

Approval is particularly negative on how the Scottish government is handling the cost of living, with the government's approval rating at -54 with 36 per cent thinking the government is handling the issue very badly.

The government's strongest ratings come on climate change, but even that is negative, at -12.

The SNP is rated worst on the issue that matters most to voters

Share naming each issue as one of the most important facing Scotland (x) against the SNP Government's net rating on it, % well minus % badly (y)



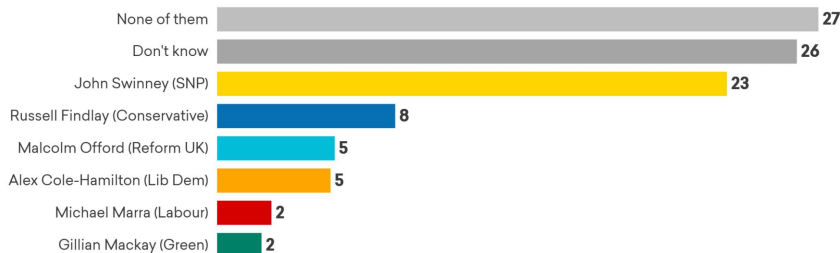
John Swinney is viewed relatively warmly, but few are enthused by him

Swinney is winning the 'respect test': of any Scottish or UK party leader, Scots are most likely to say that he respects the people of Scotland. And many use positive words like 'trying', 'honest', and 'trustworthy' to describe him.

Given a choice between Swinney and other potential party leaders, he is the top choice, but **ranks behind 'none of them' and 'don't know'.**

Swinney is the clear pick for First Minister, but more Scots choose 'none of them'

Which of the following, if any, do you think would be the better First Minister for Scotland?



In a word or two, how would you describe John Swinney?



More in Common

Scotland, 9 - 13 October 2026



He [Swinney] is a very nice man but he's useless.

Tom, Dundee

Many miss the “Big Beasts” of Scottish politics

Across Scottish politics, many voters lament a lack of powerful leaders. Interestingly, people’s sense of respect tends to extend even to those they disagree with on the constitutional question: staunch unionists often speak about Nicola Sturgeon and Alex Salmond with a sense of admiration. Meanwhile, SNP voters often say they miss figures they passionately disagreed with like Ruth Davidson.

John Swinney is seen by nationalists as a “decent man” but without the “fire in his belly” of previous Scottish leaders. By a margin of 28 per cent to 17 per cent, Scots say that Nicola Sturgeon was a better First Minister than John Swinney; her lead spans across every voter group – including SNP – and both supporters and opponents of independence.



I think (Swinney) is a decent guy, but I don't know that he's got the charisma to drive things on. I think that's the difference between... I wasn't a fan of Nicola Sturgeon, but she certainly put herself out there.

April, North Berwick



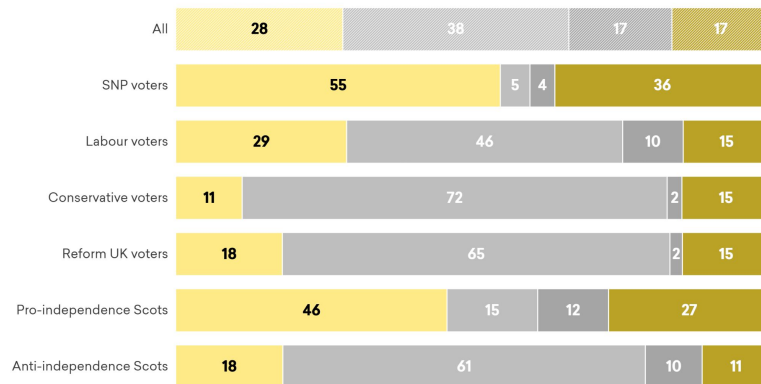
I preferred politics when it was Sturgeon, Ruth Davidson, Kezia Dugdale
Sam, Midlothian

Across voter groups, Scots tend to say Nicola Sturgeon was a better FM than John Swinney

Which of the following do you think has been the better First Minister of Scotland?

By voting intention

● Nicola Sturgeon ● Neither ● Don't know ● John Swinney



At its best, Scots see the SNP as Scotland's voice

Unlike other parties, very few associate the SNP with economic stability or good governance. Instead, voters tend to see the SNP as a voice for Scotland.

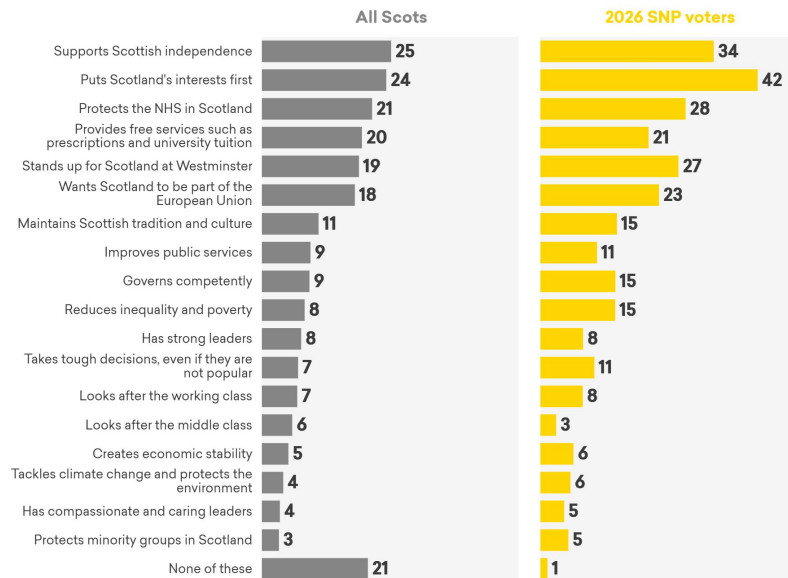
A quarter of Scots say the SNP at its best supports independence (25%) or puts Scotland's interests first (24%), and one in five say it stands up for Scotland at Westminster (19%).

Many cite protecting the NHS (21 per cent), free prescriptions and tuition (20 per cent). Just 9 per cent say that governing competently represents the SNP at its best, and only 5 per cent cite economic stability.

SNP voters themselves are even more likely to say 'putting Scotland's interests first' is the SNP's core role (42 per cent).

At its best, voters view the SNP as an independent voice for Scotland

Setting aside who you intend to vote for, when the Scottish National Party (SNP) is at its best, what does it represent? A party that...



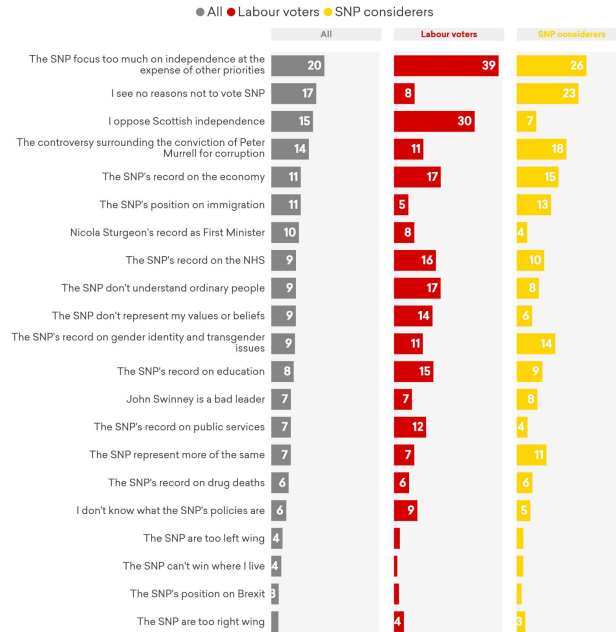
But for some voters, the SNP's focus on independence comes at the expense of delivery

SNP voters see the party's role as championing Scotland and pursuing independence.

But for some other voters, that focus is its biggest barrier. The most common reason Scots give for not voting SNP is that **it focuses too much on independence at the expense of other priorities (20 per cent)**. This rises to 39 per cent among Labour voters, and is also the biggest objection among those considering voting for the SNP.

Too much focus on independence is the top reason Scots give for not voting SNP

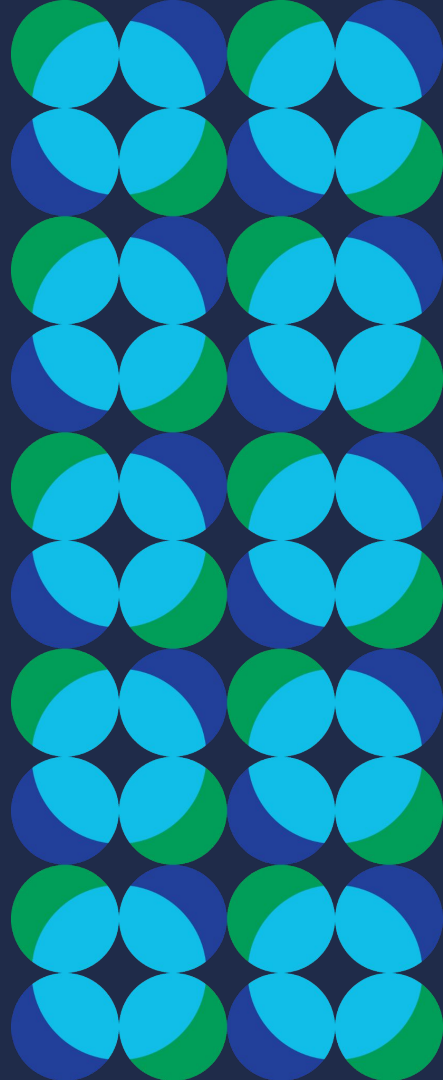
Which, if any, of the following are reasons why you would not vote for the Scottish National Party (SNP)? Select up to three.





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The SNP and the Yes vote



No to independence narrowly leads – but it is starkly divided by generation

As with the 2014 referendum, generational identities remain the key dividing line in support for Independence.

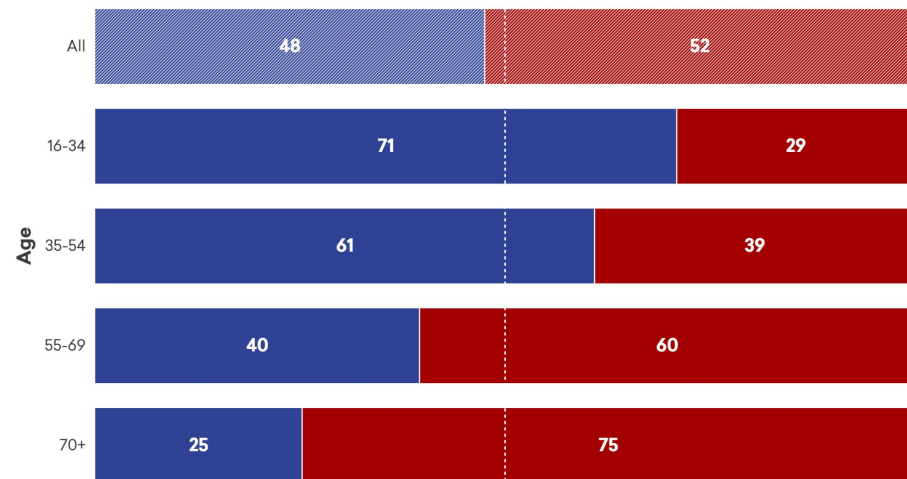
Overall, 48% would vote FOR Scottish Independence, and 52% would vote AGAINST – well within the margin of error. More than 7 in 10 of those aged 16 and 34 would vote for Scottish independence in a hypothetical ballot, compared to just 1 in 4 of those over the age of 70.

This is also driven by a shift on the way Scots are relating to British and Scottish identity. 44 per cent of Scots aged 18–34 say they feel ‘Scottish only’ – that is just 15 per cent with Scots over the age of 70.

Scots are sharply divided by generation on the question of independence

And if an independence referendum was held today, how would you vote?

● FOR Scottish independence ● AGAINST Scottish independence



Identity lies at the heart of the independence debate

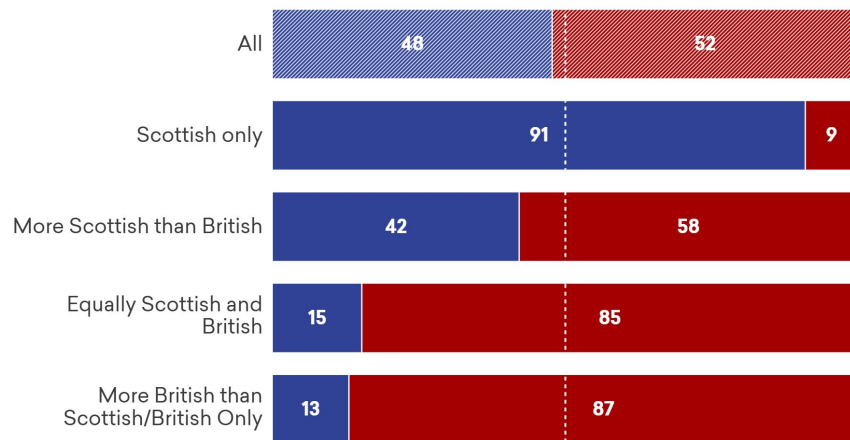
Questions of identity shape the independence debate. 91 per cent of those who say they feel 'Scottish only' would vote for independence, compared to just 15 per cent who say they feel 'equally Scottish and British'. 'More Scottish than British' is the battleground, with 58 per cent against independence and 42 per cent for it.

The SNP also wins nearly 6 in 10 voters (59 per cent) who identify as 'Scottish only' at a Westminster level. That falls to just 10 per cent with those who say they feel equally Scottish and British, where Labour leads Reform, 29 per cent to 24 per cent.

Views on independence remain deeply tied to questions of identity

And if an independence referendum was held today, how would you vote?
Which of the following would you say best applies to you?

● FOR Scottish independence ● AGAINST Scottish independence



Fears about the economy and distrust of the SNP drive opposition to independence

Distrust of how the SNP would run an independent Scotland is now almost as high as concerns about damage to the Scottish economy for those who oppose independence. 42 per cent describe their distrust of the SNP as one of their top three reasons for opposing Scottish independence, compared to 43 percent who cite a worry about the Scottish economy.

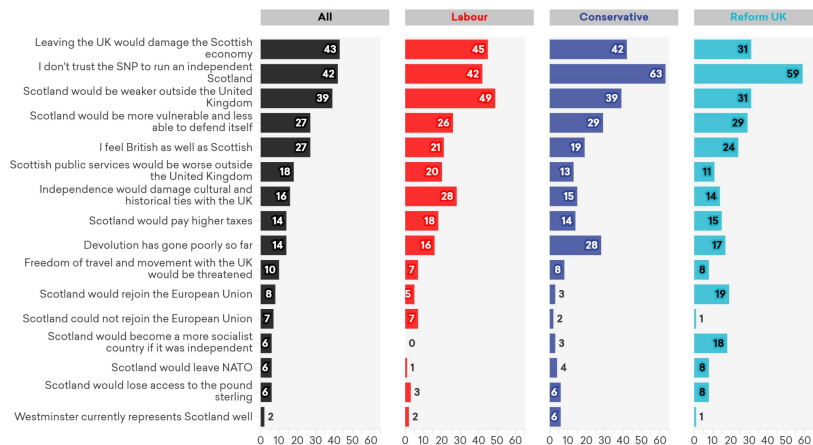
Distrust of the SNP is the highest factor for Conservative (63 per cent) and Reform (59 per cent) voters, and a sense Scotland would be weaker is the top factor for Labour voters (49 per cent).

The EU interestingly does not register much as a barrier – 8 per cent worry an independent Scotland could rejoin, and 7 per cent cite risks Scotland could be blocked from rejoining. This does, however, matter, to Reform voters, where 19 per cent cite potential EU membership as a key reason they oppose independence.

Distrust of SNP running an independent Scotland is now almost as large of a concern for those opposed to independence as damage to Scotland's economy

You said Scotland should not become an independent country. What are the main reasons why? Check up to three.

By Westminster Voting Intention



Independence ranks twelfth on Scots list of priorities

The number of Scots who rank independence as one of their top three issues is much lower than other issues.

The public are most likely to name the cost of living (64 per cent) as a top priority, followed by the NHS (37 per cent) and immigration (37 per cent). Just one in ten name independence, barely higher than Brexit (8 per cent). The cost of living is named more than six times as often.

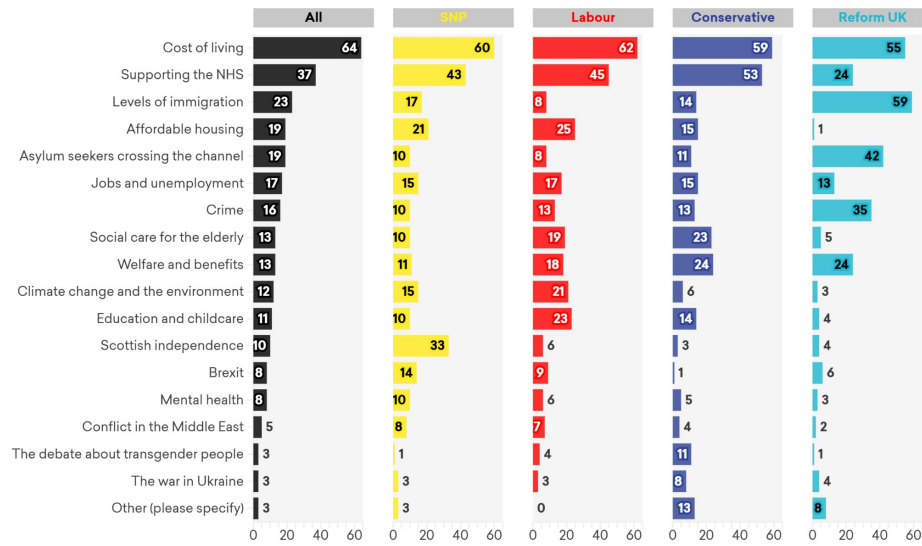
Among SNP voters, independence is only the third priority – 60 per cent name cost of living, 43 per cent name NHS, and just one in three (33 per cent) name independence.

To broaden its base of appeal, the SNP needs to appeal on the broader range of issues that matter most to the Scottish public.

Independence ranks twelfth on the list of priorities for Scots, and third among SNP supporters

In your opinion, which are the most important issues facing Scotland today? Please select up to three.

By Westminster Voting Intention



Rejoining the EU has become a key driver of support for independence

Support for joining the European Union is high. Asked how they would vote in a referendum held tomorrow, 72 per cent say they would vote to join and 28 per cent would stay out. This is well above the 62 per cent who voted Remain in 2016.

Desire for EU membership has also become a key driver of support for independence. **38 per cent name Scotland rejoining the EU as a top reason for wanting to leave the UK – higher than any other factor named.**

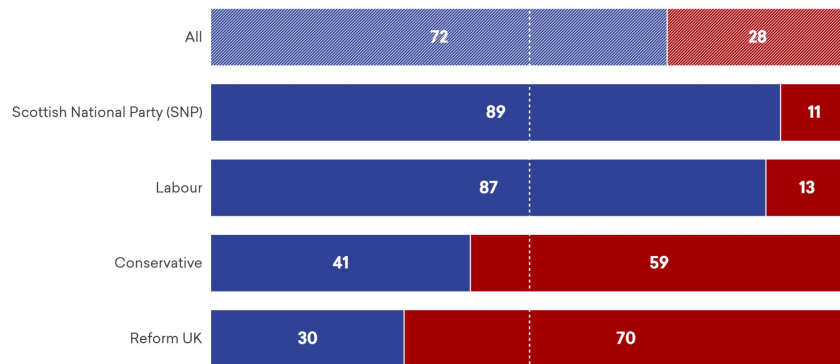
If Burnham does take steps to rejoin the European Union, that could be popular in Scotland and defang a crucial argument for independence.

72 per cent of Scots, including over 30 per cent of Reform voters, would vote to Rejoin the European Union in a second referendum

And how would you vote in this referendum, would it be for the UK to join or stay out of the European Union?

By Westminster Voting Intention

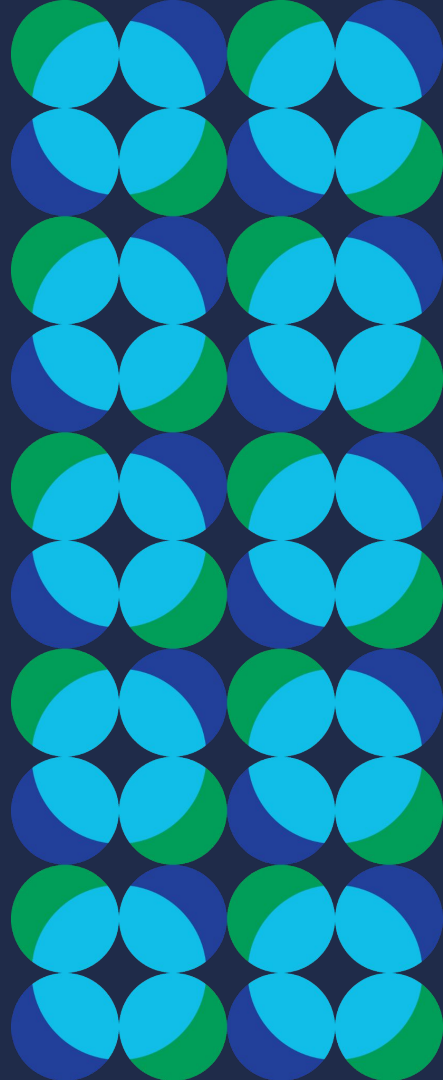
● Join the European Union ● Stay outside the European Union





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Tactical Voting in Scotland



Willingness to tactically vote is high overall

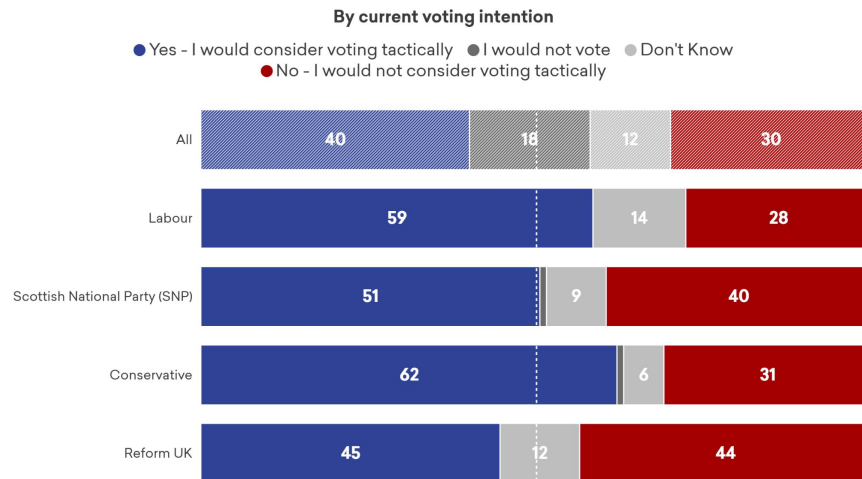
Four in ten Scots would consider voting tactically at Westminster. This is 8 points higher than the figure for the whole of the UK.

The biggest discrepancy between the rest of Great Britain and Scotland is in how willing Conservatives are to tactically vote. In the UK overall, 35 per cent of Conservatives said they were willing to tactically vote, with 55 per cent saying they would not. In Scotland, 62 per cent said they would, compared to 31 per cent who said they would.

Reform voters are the least likely of any bloc to tactically vote, but are still slightly more likely to consider it than not – 45 per cent to 44 per cent.

Conservative backers in Scotland are the most open to tactical voting; Reform UK supporters are the least

Would you consider voting tactically at the next election, or not? This means that you would vote for a party that was not your first preference, because you thought your first preference could not win in your constituency.



Reform UK is the party Scots most want to vote against

Reform UK has a clear lead on 'negative' vote intention among Scots. 28 per cent name Reform UK as the party they would most want to vote against. SNP voters are also very clear that their primary opponent is Reform (49 per cent), as well as Labour voters, who name Reform over the SNP (44 to 15 per cent).

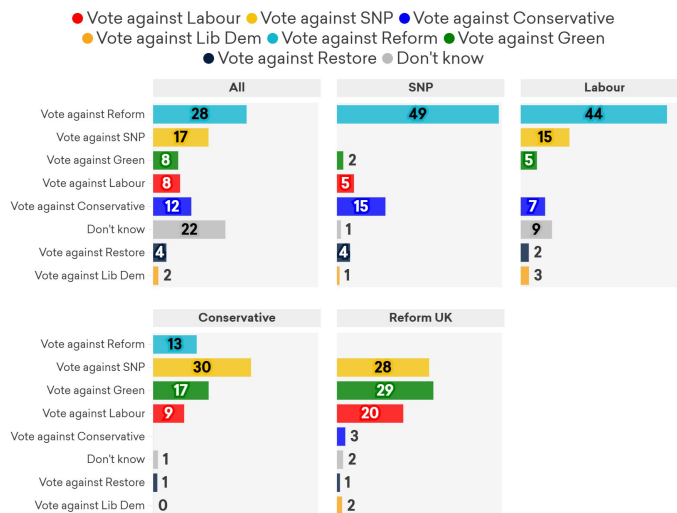
The upshot is that, as seen in by-elections in England, tactical voting can be expected in areas where Reform can be competitive, and unionist voters who lean left are extremely unlikely to vote for Reform to block the SNP.

However, Reform are currently third in Scotland, so it is unclear precisely how many contests will see Reform as a key contender at the next election.

SNP and Labour voters most want to vote against Reform; Conservative and Reform voters most want to vote against the SNP and the Greens

If you could vote against one party in a General Election for Westminster, who would you vote against?

By current voting intention



Tactical voting could be a mixed picture for the SNP

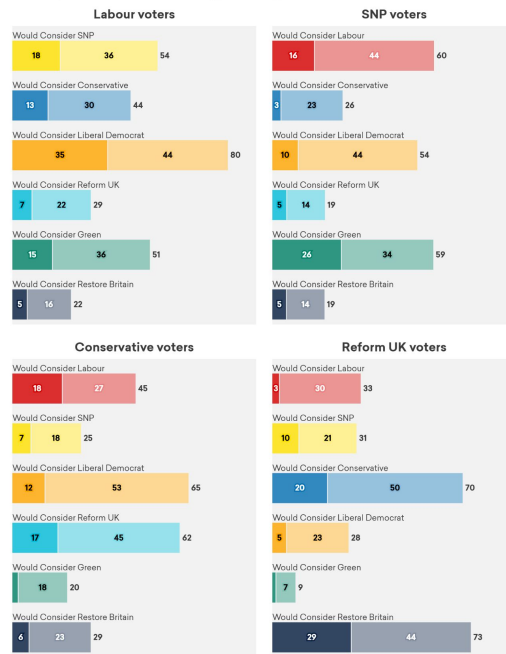
In some circumstances, tactical voting could work well for the SNP. A slim majority of Labour voters (54 per cent) and even notable portions of Reform voters (31 per cent) would consider, at least in some circumstances, voting tactically for the SNP.

But there is also a high degree of cross-unionist tactical voting, especially for the Liberal Democrats, which is the top tactical choice for both Labour and Conservative voters. The 45 per cent of Scottish Conservatives who would consider voting tactically for Scottish Labour, including 18 per cent strongly, could also prove problematic in close SNP–Labour contests in the central belt with low Conservative presence.

Liberal Democrats have the broadest range of voters willing to tactically vote for them

To what extent, if at all, would you consider voting tactically for each of the following parties if you thought your first preference party could not win in your constituency?

By current vote. Dark colour= strongly consider, light colour= consider in some circumstances



Unionist tactical voting looks stronger than nationalist tactical voting

Among those who are willing to tactically vote, unionist tactical voting appears stronger than nationalist tactical voting.

43 per cent of voters said they'd vote tactically to block a nationalist candidate, compared to 18 per cent who would vote tactically to block a unionist candidate. 28 per cent would say tactically voting would be unrelated to the debate about independence.

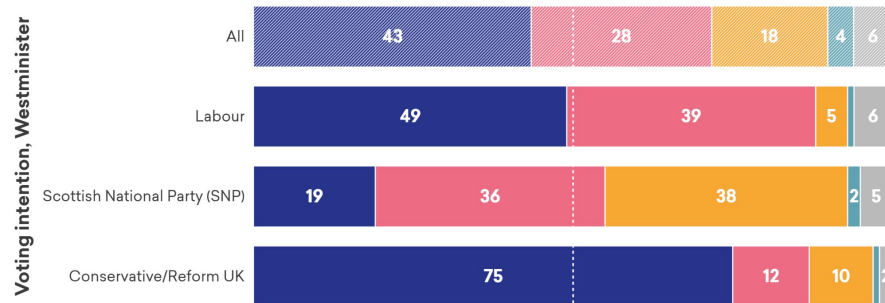
This is particularly stark for those who want to tactically vote on the right (Conservative/Reform UK). 75 per cent of these voters would vote for a pro-union candidate. This phenomenon was observed during the 2024 General Election to block the SNP, and, in combination with high Conservative willingness to tactically vote, could well repeat due to this asymmetry.

Right wing voters are more motivated to vote tactically to block pro-independence candidates

Which of the following comes closest to your view?

Only those who previously indicated they would vote tactically

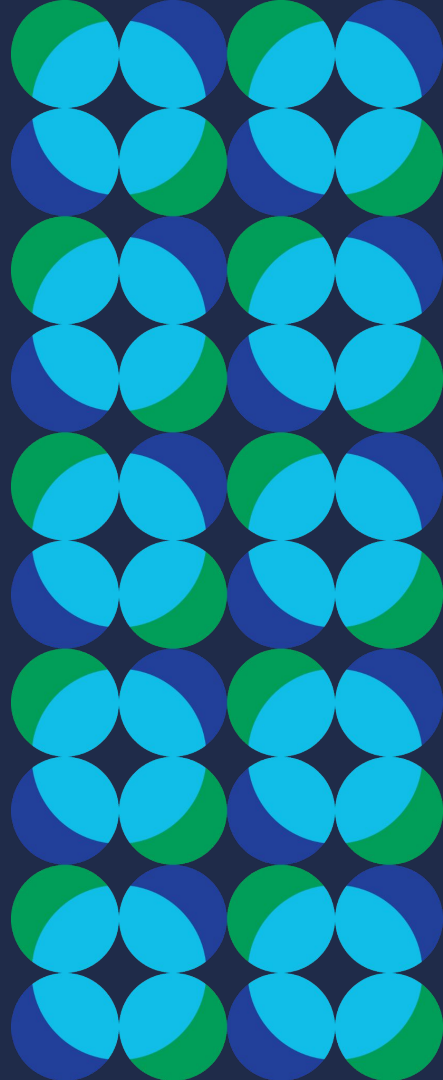
- I would vote tactically to stop a candidate who supported Scottish independence winning in my seat
- I would vote tactically, but it would not mainly be because a candidate supported or opposed Scotland's independence from the United Kingdom
- I would vote tactically to stop a candidate who supported Scotland remaining part of the United Kingdom from winning in my seat
- I would not vote tactically
- Don't Know





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Oil, gas and net zero



Control of energy and resources remains fundamental to SNP voters' conception of independence

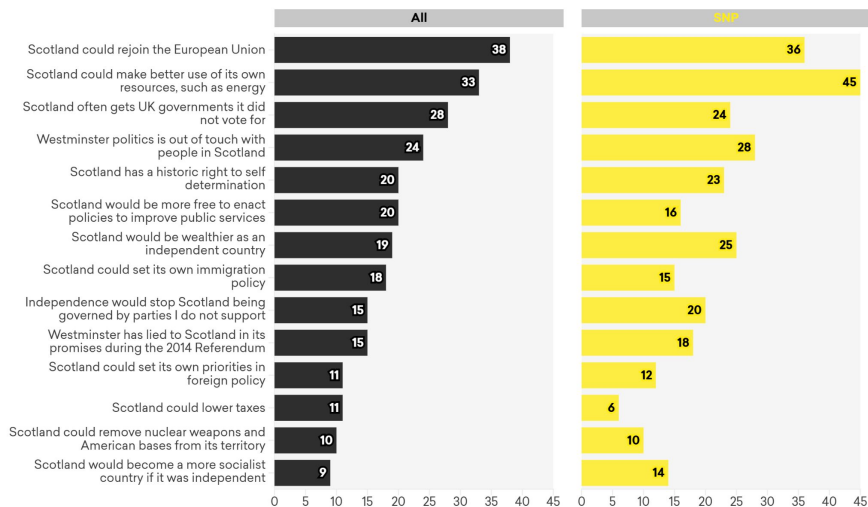
Control of Scotland's resources remain fundamental to how many SNP backers perceive the advantages of independence. It is the second top reason cited behind the EU for all supporters of independence (33 per cent) and the top reasons for SNP supporters of independence (45 per cent).

This does not necessarily mean that SNP supporters want that control to revolve around oil and gas, but it does suggest that continuing arguments about who owns Scotland's energy remains fundamental today, not just a feature of the party's origins.

Control of energy is the top reason SNP supporters of independence cite for wanting to leave the UK

You said Scotland should be an independent country. What are the main reasons why? Select up to three.

By Westminster Voting Intention



Scots back net zero, but also back Rosebank and Jackdaw

Despite Jackdaw and Rosebank, Scots have not abandoned support for net zero.

44 per cent support the net zero target by 2045, compared to 19 per cent who oppose. This extends to people who want to reopen Rosebank and Jackdaw, where 43 per cent still support net zero, and just 30 per cent oppose.

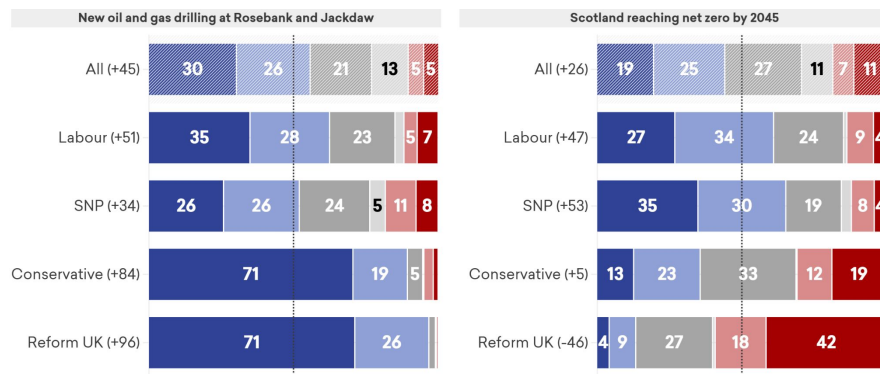
Support for Jackdaw and Rosebank drilling by SNP voters should not be confused with a general hostility to clean energy or net zero by SNP voters.

Many Scottish voters both back net zero and Rosebank and Jackdaw drilling

To what extent do you support or oppose each of the following?

By Westminster Voting Intention

● Strongly support ● Somewhat support ● Neither support nor oppose ● Don't know
● Somewhat oppose ● Strongly oppose



More in Common • October 2026. Questions: Net zero means ensuring the amount of greenhouse gases Scotland puts into the atmosphere are balanced by the amount Scotland removes from the atmosphere. Currently the Scottish government has a target of reaching net zero by 2045. To what extent do you support that target?
The UK Government is considering allowing new oil and gas drilling in the North Sea at the Rosebank and Jackdaw fields. Supporters suggest this could help stimulate economic growth, but opponents worry it would damage progress towards Net Zero. Would you support or oppose issuing new licences for drilling in the Rosebank and Jackdaw fields?

Scots favour energy independence to net zero

When forced to choose between net zero and energy independence, however, SNP voters – and the Scottish public – are clear that they support increasing their energy autonomy over reaching net zero.

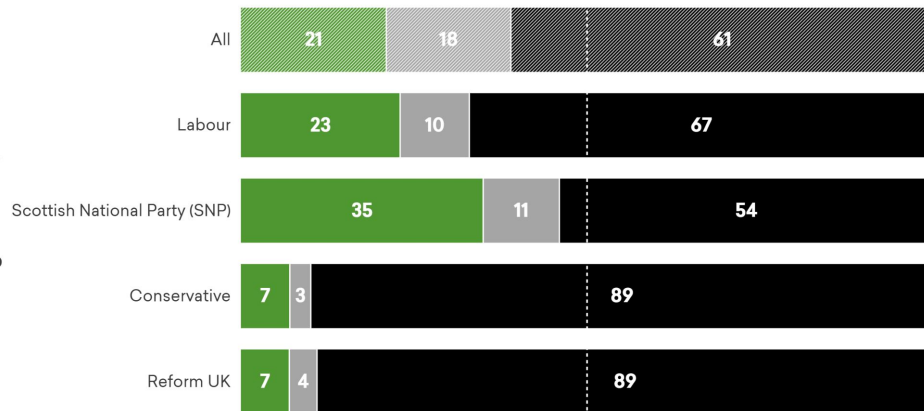
A majority of SNP voters also make this choice (54 per cent), but there is a notable minority who would prioritise meeting net zero (35 per cent). Given the threat from the Greens on the list, this portion may have electoral implications on the SNP's left flank.

In a forced trade off, Scottish voters prioritise oil and gas production over Net Zero

Which of the following comes closest to your view?

- It is important that Scotland achieves net zero by 2045, even if it means Scotland has less ability to produce and sell its own oil and gas
- It is important that Scotland has more ability to produce its own oil and gas, even if it makes achieving net zero by 2045 more difficult

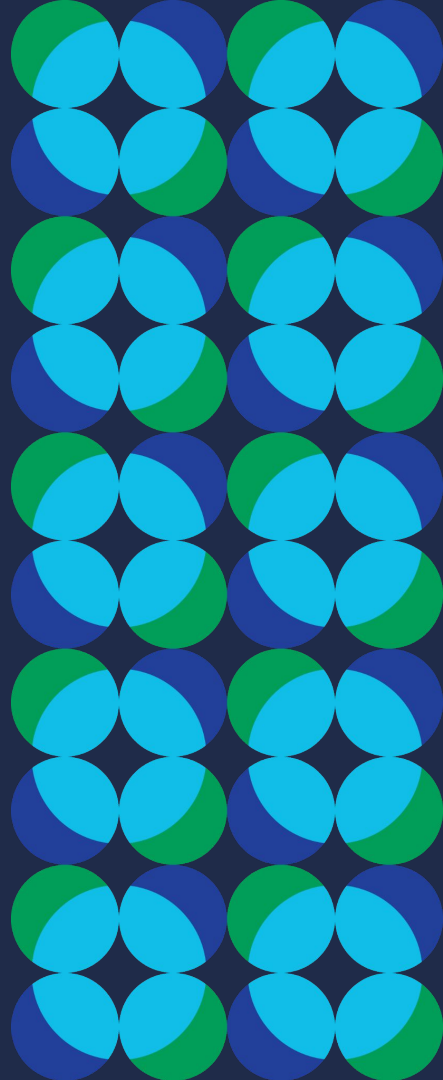
Current Voting Intention, Westminster





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The future of the SNP



Can the SNP get its spark back?

- **Voters want a focus on independence and delivery:** Independence is a glue that holds together the SNP's coalition, but some feel that the party focuses on it at the expense of delivering on more salient issues like the cost of living, education and health. What's more, **competent delivery enables a credible push for independence:** unionist voters cite distrust of the SNP as a barrier to supporting an independent Scotland – so proving that the party can deliver while in government may help to reassure sceptics.
- **Energy and Europe are underutilised issues:** Independence supporters cite greater control over Scotland's energy and relationship with Europe as top reasons for their support. Fleshing out a clear policy on these opportunities can help to appeal across the SNP's broad coalition.
- **The SNP's brand may need a refresh:** after four re-elections, a sense of anti-incumbency and 'SNP fatigue' has begun to set in. The party performs well on championing Scotland, and demonstrating respect for Scottish people, but few believe that the party has a clear vision for the future of the country.



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