

YouGov / Electoral Commission Survey Results

Sample Size: 1089 Adults (16+) in Scotland
Fieldwork: 6th - 10th November 2020

	Gender		Age				Social Grade		Scottish Region								
	Total	Male	Female	16-24	25-49	50-64	65+	ABC1	C2DE	North East Scotland	Highlands & Islands	South Scotland	West Scotland	Central	Mid-Scotland & Fife	Lothians	Glasgow
Weighted Sample	1089	524	565	142	430	271	246	566	523	150	98	156	138	122	129	161	135
Unweighted Sample	1089	472	617	123	402	268	296	618	471	147	105	154	129	121	128	169	136
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%

The next election to the Scottish Parliament is due to take place in May 2021. In Scotland you can currently vote in person at a polling place, by post, or by proxy (getting someone else to vote for you). Some changes may need to be made because of coronavirus (Covid-19), to make sure everyone can vote safely. The following questions ask about your views on different ways of voting.

3-7 Aug 6-10 Nov

Which of these statements best describes your attitude towards voting at Scottish Parliament Elections?

I always vote at Scottish Parliament elections	68	69	69	68	41	61	81	83	73	64	62	59	69	70	69	70	74	73
I sometimes vote at Scottish Parliament elections	12	14	12	15	2	20	10	12	10	18	19	14	15	17	11	9	11	12
I never vote at Scottish Parliament elections	8	5	6	4	6	8	4	1	3	8	3	7	7	3	5	9	7	2
I've not been eligible in the past to vote at a Scottish Parliament election	6	6	7	6	36	3	2	1	8	5	10	12	5	5	7	5	4	6
Don't know	5	6	5	7	14	8	3	2	7	6	6	9	5	5	8	7	3	8

How do you generally cast your vote at elections in Scotland?

In person at a polling place	64	66	66	67	45	73	69	64	66	67	64	58	64	72	74	64	69	65
By post	23	21	20	21	12	13	25	33	21	20	22	20	24	15	14	23	19	26
By proxy	0	1	1	1	3	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	2	2	1
Not applicable - I have never voted at elections in Scotland	12	8	9	8	28	9	4	1	8	9	7	17	7	8	10	8	7	5
Don't know	2	4	4	3	11	4	2	1	4	3	6	5	5	4	1	2	3	4

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Do you think you would or would not vote if an election took place now?

Would definitely vote	71	73	75	70	67	66	78	81	78	67	67	68	69	74	77	77	78	72
Would probably vote	12	11	8	14	14	13	9	9	9	13	12	11	15	12	8	8	7	17
TOTAL WOULD VOTE	83	84	83	84	81	79	87	90	87	80	79	79	84	86	85	85	85	89
Would probably not vote	4	5	5	4	8	4	4	4	4	5	6	1	5	7	2	4	7	3
Would definitely not vote	7	5	6	5	1	9	5	2	3	8	10	8	6	2	5	6	5	2
TOTAL WOULD NOT VOTE	11	10	11	9	9	13	9	6	7	13	16	9	11	9	7	10	12	5
Don't know	5	6	6	6	11	8	4	3	5	7	6	11	6	5	9	5	3	6

If an election took place now, how safe or unsafe would you personally feel going to vote in person at a polling place with appropriate hygiene measures and physical distancing in place?

Very safe	30	35	37	34	29	31	45	36	33	38	40	45	29	37	30	31	34	39
Fairly safe	47	42	44	40	42	45	39	40	46	38	36	29	52	42	49	44	41	40
TOTAL SAFE	77	77	81	74	71	76	84	76	79	76	76	74	81	79	79	75	75	79
Fairly unsafe	12	12	8	14	16	11	8	15	11	12	14	11	8	10	9	11	18	10
Very unsafe	5	4	4	4	3	2	5	5	3	4	5	4	5	2	3	7	2	2
TOTAL UNSAFE	17	16	12	18	19	13	13	20	14	16	19	15	13	12	12	18	20	12
Don't know	6	7	7	8	10	11	4	4	7	8	5	11	7	9	8	7	4	9

If an election took place now, how do you think you would prefer to cast your vote?

[Not asked to those who say they definitely would not vote; n=1050]

in person at a polling place with appropriate hygiene measures and physical distancing	54	53	57	50	51	56	53	50	51	55	54	53	46	54	60	53	52	57
By post	38	38	32	44	29	32	44	46	38	39	39	34	47	38	32	40	35	37
By proxy	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	1	1	1	2	1	1	0	0	1	2	1
Another way [see Tab 1]	3	2	2	1	0	2	1	1	2	1	2	3	1	2	1	1	2	1
Don't know	4	6	8	4	18	7	2	1	8	4	4	8	6	6	7	4	8	5

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Encouraging more people to vote by post is one way of reducing the risk of queues and crowding at polling places. Anyone who is registered to vote can apply to vote by post by filling in a paper form with their name and address, and their date of birth and signature to prevent fraud. If you vote by proxy, you can ask your proxy to apply to vote by post on your behalf. If everyone was encouraged to apply for a postal vote for the Scottish Parliament election, which of the following statements is closest to your own view?

I would definitely apply for a postal vote	26	27	21	33	21	28	30	27	29	26	21	17	30	32	29	31	26	30
I would probably apply for a postal vote	24	24	22	26	38	27	18	18	28	20	21	28	23	24	26	21	31	20
TOTAL WOULD APPLY	50	51	43	59	59	55	48	45	57	46	42	45	53	56	55	52	57	50
I would probably not apply for a postal vote	14	14	19	10	25	13	11	13	12	16	19	12	11	16	15	11	15	14
I would definitely not apply for a postal vote	11	11	15	8	2	11	17	10	8	14	13	16	13	7	10	12	10	10
TOTAL WOULD NOT APPLY	25	25	34	18	27	24	28	23	20	30	32	28	24	23	25	23	25	24
I am already registered to vote by post	17	15	14	16	5	8	19	30	14	16	17	14	15	12	11	19	15	16
Don't know	8	8	9	7	9	12	6	3	8	8	8	13	8	9	9	6	3	10

Why do you say that you think you probably/definitely wouldn't apply for a postal vote? (Please select up to three reasons)

[Asked to those who say they probably/definitely wouldn't apply for a postal vote; n=246]

I would prefer to vote in person at a polling place	61	68	67	71	52	68	70	79	74	65	65	73	63	78	62	69	56	86
I am concerned that fraud is a problem with postal voting	39	36	43	25	26	38	39	38	31	41	40	43	46	34	27	23	37	37
I am concerned that postal voting is not private or secure enough	31	30	31	28	23	24	38	33	29	30	29	9	36	31	35	28	28	38
I never vote	11	8	5	11	12	9	6	2	1	12	13	0	10	7	11	9	5	1
I think it would be too much hassle to apply for a postal vote	11	11	11	11	23	9	11	8	10	12	11	11	4	20	7	13	17	5
I don't know enough about how postal voting works	7	4	2	7	17	2	0	3	6	2	0	6	6	3	10	5	3	0
I would be worried about infection from receiving a ballot paper by post	3	2	2	1	4	4	0	0	3	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	12	0
I don't know how to apply for a postal vote	1	2	1	2	2	0	1	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	7	3	1	3
I would prefer to use a proxy to vote	1	3	3	1	2	3	5	0	1	4	2	0	4	5	0	9	1	0
Another reason [see Tab 2]	5	4	4	5	3	7	2	3	5	4	2	12	2	3	5	5	4	6
Don't know	2	2	2	1	11	1	0	0	4	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	11	0

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In Scotland you can currently vote in person at a polling place, by post, or by proxy (getting someone else to vote for you). Voting at polling places is usually only available on one day between the hours of 7am and 10pm. The following two questions ask your views on how the Scottish Parliament election should be run, imagining it was taking place now.

If an election was due to take place now, which of the following options would you prefer:

The election to be held with the same methods of voting as usual but with additional hygiene and physical distancing measures for voting in polling places	46	46	50	42	37	41	48	55	46	45	46	42	45	52	48	48	37	49
The election to be held with the same methods of voting as usual, but for polling places to be open for more than one day with additional hygiene and physical distancing measures in place to reduce the risk of queues or crowds	26	29	28	29	45	30	27	18	32	25	28	32	27	24	24	27	41	25
The election to be held but only by postal vote	14	9	6	13	5	8	10	14	8	11	8	10	11	9	11	13	8	6
The election to be postponed for a short period (not more than 6 months)	4	5	6	5	0	5	6	9	4	7	7	3	4	6	6	6	5	6
Other	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	0	1	1	1	2	1	1	0	2	2	3
Don't know	9	10	8	11	12	14	7	3	8	11	10	12	13	9	10	7	7	11

Arrangements for the counting of votes would also need to be adapted if special hygiene measures and physical distancing are required. This is likely to mean that counting votes takes longer than usual. In this scenario, how important, if at all, do you think it is for the election results to be known the day immediately after polling day?

Very important	17	20	24	15	21	15	27	19	14	26	25	20	19	18	15	18	18	25
Fairly important	31	30	28	31	29	30	29	30	33	25	30	26	30	38	32	26	26	29
TOTAL IMPORTANT	48	50	52	46	50	45	56	49	47	51	55	46	49	56	47	44	44	54
Not very important	35	33	30	36	27	32	34	38	35	32	25	34	34	31	38	34	42	29
Not at all important	10	9	10	7	6	11	6	9	10	8	9	11	10	4	7	14	8	8
TOTAL NOT IMPORTANT	45	42	40	43	33	43	40	47	45	40	34	45	44	35	45	48	50	37
Don't know	7	9	7	10	18	11	4	4	8	9	12	9	9	10	8	8	5	9

*Any percentages calculated on bases fewer than 50 respondents do not represent a wide enough cross-section of the target population to be considered statistically reliable. These figures will be italicised.