

LORD ASHCROFT KCMG PC SCOTLAND POLL – FEBRUARY 2023

2,105 adults in Scotland aged 16 or over were interviewed online between 26 January and 3 February 2023. Data have been weighted to be representative of all adults in Scotland. Full data tables are available at LordAshcroftPolls.com

1. If there were to be a general election tomorrow, how likely do you think you would be to vote for each of the following parties – where 0 means you will definitely not vote for that party and 100 means you definitely will vote for that party.

Mean likelihood /100	ALL	2019 GE vote				2014 independence ref	
		Con	Lab	Lib Dem	SNP	Yes	No
SNP	31	1	13	6	65	55	12
Scottish Labour	25	20	61	30	16	16	34
Scottish Conservatives	16	58	6	17	3	5	27
Scottish Lib Dems	12	10	11	46	6	6	17
Scottish Greens	13	2	14	7	18	16	7
Reform UK	5	9	1	5	3	5	4
Alba	3	1	1	1	6	6	1

Among those putting their likelihood of voting for a party at 51/100 or above, implied vote shares were:

SNP	40%	Scottish Greens	5%
Scottish Labour	25%	Reform UK	3%
Scottish Conservatives	18%	Alba	2%
Scottish Lib Dems	6%		

2. What do you think are the three most important issues facing Scotland at the moment?

% naming in top 3	ALL	2019 GE vote				2014 indy ref	
		Con	Lab	Lib Dem	SNP	Yes	No
Health and the NHS	62	63	69	78	64	63	69
The cost of living	57	43	62	55	60	60	54
The economy and jobs	27	37	26	26	26	24	31
Poverty and inequality	20	12	23	14	25	25	16
Keeping Scotland in the UK	16	47	17	26	3	5	29
Education	15	21	16	25	10	12	18
Getting Scottish independence	14	1	4	1	33	29	3
Climate change and the environment	14	5	21	8	16	14	12
Social care	11	11	14	25	10	10	14
Welfare benefits and pensions	9	7	5	3	10	11	7
Brexit	8	2	7	5	12	11	5
Housing	8	3	9	10	8	8	6
Immigration	7	11	5	3	3	7	6
Crime	5	8	4	3	3	5	6
Transport and infrastructure	5	7	4	6	4	4	5
Gender recognition and trans rights	3	4	3	3	3	3	3
Defence and national security	2	6	1	3	1	1	3
Farming and fishing	2	3	1	4	1	1	2
Covid	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Another issue	1	1	1	0	1	1	1

3. And what three issues do you think Nicola Sturgeon and the SNP government in Edinburgh are treating as their main priorities at the moment?

% naming in top 3	ALL	2019 GE vote				2014 independence ref	
		Con	Lab	Lib Dems	SNP	Yes	No
Getting Scottish independence	65	87	72	87	58	58	78
Gender recognition and trans rights	46	71	48	64	37	39	58
Health and the NHS	22	8	20	14	38	32	16
The cost of living	18	5	14	11	29	26	11
Climate change and the environment	14	23	16	17	12	13	17
The economy and jobs	10	1	7	5	16	14	6
Brexit	9	18	11	11	5	6	13
Poverty and inequality	8	3	8	4	14	13	6
Another issue	6	9	7	10	3	4	8
Covid	4	3	4	1	5	4	3
Education	4	1	4	3	6	5	2
Immigration	3	4	5	2	2	3	3
Social care	3	1	2	2	4	4	2
Welfare benefits and pensions	3	2	2	3	5	5	2
Transport and infrastructure	2	1	1	5	1	2	1
Housing	2	1	0	2	1	2	1
Keeping Scotland in the UK	2	2	3	0	2	2	2
Crime	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Defence and national security	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
Farming and fishing	0	1	1	0	0	0	1

4. If there were another independence referendum in Scotland held tomorrow, how would you vote on the following question: 'Should Scotland be an independent country?'

% naming in top 3	ALL	2019 GE vote				2014 independence ref	
		Con	Lab	Lib Dem	SNP	Yes	No
Yes to independence	37	1	21	6	74	69	12
No to independence	48	97	62	83	15	21	77
Would not vote	3	1	1	0	0	1	1
Don't know	12	1	16	11	11	10	9

Excluding those saying Don't Know or Would not vote:

	%
Yes to independence	44
No to independence	56

5. If an independence referendum were held tomorrow, what do you think the result would be?

% naming in top 3	ALL	2019 GE vote				2014 independence ref	
		Con	Lab	Lib Dem	SNP	Yes	No
Scotland would vote Yes to independence	33	4	24	17	53	48	17
Scotland would vote No to independence	42	82	51	53	23	28	61
Don't know	25	14	26	30	24	24	22

6. If an independence referendum were held in 5 years' time, what do you think the result would be?

	%	ALL	2019 GE vote				2014 independence ref	
			Con	Lab	Lib Dem	SNP	Yes	No
Scotland would vote Yes to independence	36	3	24	17	61	55	18	
Scotland would vote No to independence	31	70	38	41	9	15	48	
<i>Don't know</i>	33	27	38	43	30	30	34	

7. Have you ever changed your mind on the issue of Scottish independence?

	%	ALL	2019 GE vote				2014 independence ref	
			Con	Lab	Lib Dem	SNP	Yes	No
Yes – once	16	10	16	10	22	21	13	
Yes – more than once	13	3	14	10	16	14	10	
No	67	87	64	75	60	63	75	
<i>Don't know</i>	5	0	5	4	3	2	3	

8. Some argue that if Scotland voted to become independent, it should then join the EU immediately. Others argue that this should only happen after another referendum. Do you think:

	%	ALL	2019 GE vote				2014 independence ref	
			Con	Lab	Lib Dem	SNP	Yes	No
An independent Scotland should join the EU without a further referendum	36	6	38	34	58	48	26	
An independent Scotland should have a referendum on whether or not to join the EU	32	29	33	37	31	33	32	
An independent Scotland should not join the EU	16	49	13	12	4	11	25	
<i>Don't know</i>	16	15	16	17	7	8	18	

9. Some argue that the next general election should be considered a 'de facto referendum', and that every vote for pro-independence parties like SNP and the Greens should be taken as a vote for Scottish independence. Others argue that elections cover a wide range of issues and Scottish independence is a separate decision. Do you think:

	%	ALL	2019 GE vote				2014 independence ref	
			Con	Lab	Lib Dem	SNP	Yes	No
Every vote for the SNP or the Greens should be taken as a vote for Scottish independence, so the next general election should be taken as a de facto independence referendum	21	2	9	3	44	41	7	
People vote at elections for lots of different reasons – we cannot assume that every vote for the SNP or the Greens is a vote for Scottish independence	67	93	83	91	48	49	86	
<i>Don't know</i>	12	5	7	7	9	10	7	

10. Which of the following is closest to your own view?

	%	ALL	2019 GE vote				2014 independence ref	
			Con	Lab	Lib Dem	SNP	Yes	No
The performance of the Scottish government on things like schools, hospitals, public services and the economy make me <u>more</u> confident in voting for an independent Scotland	28	2	17	7	53	48	10	
The performance of the Scottish government on things like schools, hospitals, public services and the economy make me <u>less</u> confident in voting for an independent Scotland	42	82	55	67	18	24	64	
Neither of the above	20	13	21	22	21	21	19	
Don't know	10	4	7	5	8	7	7	

11. If you had to choose, which would you rather have?

	%	ALL	2019 GE vote				2014 independence ref	
			Con	Lab	Lib Dem	SNP	Yes	No
A law made in Scotland that I disagreed with	28	3	14	10	57	51	12	
A law made in Westminster that I agreed with	50	88	63	75	24	29	71	
Don't know	22	9	23	15	20	20	17	

12. As you may know, the Scottish Parliament recently passed the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill. This changes the process for people to change their legal gender so they no longer need a doctor's diagnosis, and reduces the time they need to have lived in their adopted gender from 2 years to 6 months. It also reduces the age limit for changing legal gender from 18 to 16. The UK government announced that it would block the Bill, saying it would significantly affect equalities law throughout the UK. Which of the following statements comes closest to your own view?

	%	ALL	2019 GE vote				2014 independence ref	
			Con	Lab	Lib Dem	SNP	Yes	No
I support the Gender Recognition Reform Bill, and the UK government is wrong to block it	22	1	23	10	36	32	11	
I support the Gender Recognition Reform Bill, but the UK government is within its rights to block it	7	5	11	11	6	4	9	
I oppose the Gender Recognition Reform Bill, and the UK government is right to block it	43	85	42	66	24	30	62	
I oppose the Gender Recognition Reform Bill, but the UK government is wrong to block it	11	3	9	6	18	18	7	
Don't know	17	5	15	7	17	16	12	

Overall, 29% said they supported the Bill; 54% said they opposed it.

50% said the UK government was right or within its rights to block the Bill; 33% said it was wrong to do so.

13. Please say how positive or negative you feel about each of the following, where 0 means very negative indeed and 100 means very positive indeed.

Mean score /100	ALL	2019 GE vote				2014 independence ref	
		Con	Lab	Lib Dem	SNP	Yes	No
Nicola Sturgeon	41	7	32	22	68	61	23
Gordon Brown	40	37	57	53	34	31	46
SNP	39	5	26	15	68	60	19
Keir Starmer	37	25	55	44	36	33	40
Anas Sarwar	36	37	49	43	31	29	41
SCOTTISH LABOUR	36	31	59	39	29	28	41
Ruth Davidson	35	63	33	54	19	19	49
SCOTTISH GREENS	32	7	30	21	48	43	20
Patrick Harvie	28	8	24	19	44	38	16
SCOTTISH LIB DEMS	27	23	32	52	22	20	31
Douglas Ross	26	52	22	38	11	13	36
Alex Cole-Hamilton	26	28	28	44	19	19	31
Lorna Slater	26	7	24	20	39	34	15
Rishi Sunak	24	43	18	33	15	15	32
SCOTTISH CONSERVATIVES	21	52	13	29	8	9	31
Boris Johnson	18	44	9	16	7	10	24
Alex Salmond	15	7	9	8	22	23	7
ALBA	12	4	8	6	19	20	6
REFORM UK	12	18	7	10	7	11	11

14. How do you think the economy will fare over the next year for:

% well/badly	ALL	2019 GE vote				2014 independence ref	
		Con	Lab	Lib Dem	SNP	Yes	No
the UK as a whole	13/77	32/58	7/82	10/84	6/85	6/87	17/73
Scotland	14/74	12/79	9/78	9/87	17/71	15/74	11/79
your local area	17/68	17/70	13/73	21/69	19/68	14/72	18/68
you and your family	28/55	34/52	24/58	30/59	28/57	24/63	31/53

15. If Scotland were to become an independent country, do you think the following things would increase, decrease, or stay about the same?

<i>% (change since April 2021)</i>	Increase	Decrease	Stay about the same
Your standard of living	20	40	26
Tax rates in Scotland	64	7	15
Equality in Scotland	34	21	30
Unemployment in Scotland	41	23	19
Public spending in Scotland	36	36	12
NHS waiting times	39	26	21
Investment in Scotland by UK-based businesses	15	48	16
Food prices in Scotland	57	12	19
Energy bills in Scotland	46	24	16
Scotland's ability to handle another financial crisis	20	47	16
Opportunities for young people in Scotland	32	36	16
Scotland's ability to handle another pandemic	25	38	25
Immigration into Scotland	53	11	20
Tourism to Scotland	34	17	39
Educational attainment in Scotland	23	33	26
Scotland's standing in the world	37	36	15
The amount of trade Scotland does with the rest of the world	38	31	16

16. If Scotland were to vote Yes to independence in a second referendum, how likely do you think each of the following would be?

<i>% likely/unlikely</i>	ALL	2019 GE vote				2014 independence ref	
		Con	Lab	Lib Dem	SNP	Yes	No
Scotland would spend years negotiating with the UK government over the detailed terms of independence	82/7	94/2	87/4	95/0	78/12	78/10	89/3
Scotland would keep the pound as its currency	49/31	32/53	48/34	50/29	62/18	59/23	42/38
Many businesses currently based in Scotland would move out, with the loss of many jobs	50/33	91/5	63/23	77/14	22/61	28/56	73/15
There would be a hard border between Scotland and England	39/45	66/23	39/45	49/43	26/62	28/57	51/36
Scotland would quickly rejoin the EU	50/32	25/63	48/35	33/54	74/12	69/16	36/47
The Scottish government would have to make painful cuts in public spending	62/19	92/3	73/11	92/4	40/38	43/35	82/8
Scots would lose access to public services like specialist healthcare in England	59/22	86/6	68/19	81/10	42/37	43/35	76/12
The King would still be Scotland's head of state	43/32	47/32	46/31	49/29	47/30	48/32	44/31

21% said they didn't know whether or not an independent Scotland would keep the pound.
25% said they didn't know whether or not the King would be Scotland's head of state.

17. Here are some things people have said about the political parties. Please tick all the descriptions you think apply to the

	Conservatives	Labour	SNP	Greens
Wants to help ordinary people get on in life	18	46	41	29
Willing to take tough decisions for the long term	27	28	37	22
Shares my values	17	29	32	25
Competent and capable	15	24	34	17
Has the right priorities for Scotland	15	22	36	23
Will do what they say	14	21	31	23
Clear about what they stand for	20	22	42	32
Is united	13	22	31	26
Stands up for Scotland	15	20	48	26