



REPORT

Immigration and Independence: Public Opinion on Immigration in Scotland in the Context of the Referendum Debate

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Executive summary

Generating a clearer understanding of Scotland's attitudes to immigration is important to the independence debate.

At a UK level immigration has, for some time, been one of the most salient issues in policy debates. The issue looms large over all political parties, often dominating media debates and stimulating impassioned exchanges in venues ranging from local pubs to Westminster. And numerous polls and surveys have documented Britain's views of immigration as well.

Management of immigration and international borders is one of the key powers that a "yes" vote on independence would grant to the Scottish Government. Yet comparatively little is known about how members of the Scottish public view immigration. Surveys have consistently suggested that public opinion in Scotland differs, at least slightly, from other parts of the UK, and that the Scottish public appears to exhibit lower levels of concern about the issue (McCollum et al. 2013, Migration Observatory 2011a.), but these findings are based on few questions, small numbers of respondents, and usually based on questions about immigration to Britain rather than specifically to Scotland.

But the basic facts about immigration are quite different in Scotland, and it is important to see what people think about immigration in that context. Scotland saw, proportionally, a greater increase in its migrant population than any of the other nations of the UK between 2001 and 2011, but its migrant population remains relatively small and its population density low in comparison with many other parts of the UK (Migration Observatory 2013).

This report is the first major systematic analysis focusing specifically on Scottish public opinion about immigration to Scotland. It is the result of a survey of a representative sample of more than 2000 people in Scotland and a further 2000 people in England and Wales, who provided comparative data. The survey was undertaken online by the respected polling company YouGov in October 2013.

The report has three primary sets of findings. First, overall attitudes to immigration in Scotland are less negative than in the rest of Britain, although falling short of majority support for increasing or even keeping the the same level of immigration. Second, in Scotland as in the rest of Britain, public opinion differentiates between types of immigrants, with markedly different attitudes toward various sub-groups and categories. Third, there is a complex if not quite contradictory relationship between immigration attitudes and constitutional issues. Each of these sets of results is outlined further below.

Key data points are as follows:

Overall attitudes to immigration

- A majority in Scotland (58%) support reduced immigration to Scotland, but more people in Scotland think immigration is good for Scotland (41%) than say it is bad for Scotland (31%).
- Compared with the rest of Britain, there is less opposition to immigration (in England and Wales 75% support reduced immigration) and it ranks lower on the public's list of priorities (fourth in Scotland, compared to second in England and Wales).

Perceptions and attitudes toward specific migrant groups

- People in Scotland, like the rest of the Britain, are most likely to think of asylum seekers (70%) and labour migrants (62%) when thinking about immigration. Less than one in four say they are thinking about students (24%).
- Majorities in Scotland think of immigrants as coming from outside the EU or from the EU outside of Britain, but one in ten include British people coming from England.
- Scotland shows widespread opposition to illegal immigration: even among those who do not wish to see immigration to Scotland reduced overall, a large majority (74%) still prefer less illegal immigration.
- In both Scotland and England, perceptions of illegal immigration center on overstayers and failed asylum seekers more than clandestine entrants.

- In Scotland, support for reductions is strongest for low-skilled immigration, with more than half of respondents supporting reductions to this group – though this is lower than England and Wales. Only a minority wish to reduce immigration of highly-skilled workers (23%) and university students (22%), areas of emphasis in the immigration policy outlined in the Scottish government's White Paper.

Relationship to constitutional Issues

- Immigration attitudes are strongly associated with voting intentions on the referendum. Among respondents in Scotland who said they would prefer to see immigration reduced, a large majority plan to vote 'no' (58% vs 28%, with 14% undecided). The margin is much closer among those who do not support reductions to immigration (45% intend to vote 'no', 40% 'yes').
- Immigration and asylum ranked joint fifth (with pensions) among the top issues that respondents said would influence their vote on independence, well behind the most chosen issue, which was the economy.
- A majority of Scottish respondents would prefer to see the most important decisions about immigration made by the Scottish government, not the UK government.
- Support for Scottish Government control of immigration does not, however, seem to result from a belief among people in Scotland that policies will reflect their views: For example, 45% think that an independent Scotland should have a less open set of policies toward immigration than the rest of the UK, but only 22% think that an independent Scotland will have less open set of policies.
- Some have argued that in the event of Scottish independence a hard border, with passport controls, may need to be introduced; however, most people both in Scotland and in the rest of Britain believe that if Scotland becomes independent, passport checks on the Scotland/England border are unlikely.
- Attitudes toward passport checks are polarised: in Scotland, 29% would not be bothered by this at all, while a similar proportion would be bothered greatly. In England and Wales, the pattern was similar but with a smaller proportion saying they would be bothered greatly.

These, then, are nuanced results:

The overall picture in Scotland is still one of broad support for reductions to immigration. However, the issue is of less concern in Scotland than England and Wales, and Scotland shows relatively low levels of support for reducing immigration among highly-skilled workers, students, and immediate family members of citizens.

In relation to independence, opposition to immigration is noticeably lower among those intending to vote 'yes' for independence, than for those who plan to vote 'no'. And 22% choose immigration among the top three issues (from a list of thirteen) influencing their planned referendum vote. These findings show some relationship between attitudes toward independence and toward immigration, although in both cases other issues, notably the economy, are much more strongly linked to referendum voting plans.

Regardless of voting intentions, Scotland shows a strong preference for Holyrood over Westminster as the key decision-maker on immigration and asylum. There is also some sympathy for the Scottish government's stance of encouraging international students and highly-skilled workers; relatively few support reducing levels of these types of immigration to Scotland, although more would prefer the status quo rather than an increase.

On the other hand, there is a considerable gap in preferences compared to expectations for immigration and asylum policy in an independent Scotland: many people expect that an independent Scotland would have more a open set of policies than the rest of the UK, but a smaller proportion actually would prefer to see more open policies enacted. By this indication, it seems that the preference for Holyrood as key decision-maker may be in spite of, rather than because of, the immigration policies that people expect a Scottish government to enact.

So, while the data do not present a simple picture of Scotland's preferences for handling the issue of immigration to Scotland, they do show a complex series of attitudes and concerns that are specific to the needs and issues that Scotland faces.

1. Introduction

For many decades large majorities of the British public have favoured reductions to immigration. Meanwhile, in the past decade, immigration has become one of the most important issues facing Britain in the eyes of large segments of the public. Recent policy-making at the national level has focused on bringing down the number of immigrants (or more precisely, “net migration,” the difference between immigration and emigration), with public opinion among the key state rationales.

Yet in Scotland, public and political discussion of immigration has been rather different, whether under Labour–Liberal Democrat governments or currently under the SNP. In the context of the independence debate, the Scottish Government has argued that Scotland has different needs and preferences for its immigration policy (as expressed in the Scottish Government’s recently-published White Paper on independence). Although economic issues have most often taken centre stage in the independence debate, migration is nonetheless one of the issues where advocates of independence have made a case for a break from Westminster. In its White Paper on independence, the Scottish Government argues that Scotland has different demographic and economic needs, and therefore would benefit from making its own immigration policy that is more friendly toward highly-skilled migrants and students in particular.

But what does public opinion in Scotland have to say about all of this? And is it really different from opinion in the rest of Britain? Surprisingly little is known about the attitudes, beliefs and preferences of members of the Scottish public on immigration and the related issue of asylum. Some research suggests that attitudes in Scotland are more favourable toward immigration, but these results are based on a few questions and small groups of respondents in Scotland within national-level surveys of Britain (e.g. McCollum et al. 2013, Migration Observatory 2011). Even more importantly, surveys have focused on attitudes about immigration to Britain as a whole, rather than immigration to Scotland, with only the occasional exception (Ormston et al. 2011). As a result, it is unclear how Scotland residents feel about immigration to Scotland itself, rather than to the whole of Britain. But, of course, in a scenario of independence (or even of devolved or region-specific migration policy – see our policy primer “Sub-National Immigration Policy: Can it Work in the UK?”), the relevant attitudes are those concerning immigration to Scotland, not Britain as a whole. The Migration Observatory’s Scotland Immigration Survey is the first to take a comprehensive look at of Scotland’s attitudes toward immigration to Scotland.

This report examines several aspects of these attitudes to immigration in Scotland. It begins with a general overview of public opinion and mood, showing how members of the Scottish public assess immigration to Scotland and how important it is relative to other issues. The next section probes perceptions of and attitudes toward different groups of migrants. Respondents in Scotland express views on who they normally have in mind when thinking about immigrants, and whether they wish to see increases or reductions in particular types of migrants coming to Scotland for work, family, study or asylum. This section also examines understandings of, and attitudes toward, illegal or irregular immigrants. Throughout the first two sections, the report shows the differences between Scotland and the rest of the Britain. There are often significant differences between Scotland and the rest of Britain, and these differences consistently run in the direction of Scotland being less negative toward immigration. However, it is important not to overstate these differences, as attitudes in Scotland are not always welcoming to immigrants and asylum seekers either.

Finally, the report addresses attitudes toward immigration in the context of independence, examining how many people in Scotland wish to see the Scottish government in charge of immigration policy, and what they think should and would happen if that change of control came to pass. It also highlights the relationship between immigration attitudes and planned vote on the independence referendum.

The data reported below were gathered in an on-line survey conducted by YouGov, and administered to a representative sample of the populations of Scotland and England plus Wales, respectively. Each sample contained

over 2000 people, with 2235 respondents in Scotland and 2027 in England and Wales. Fieldwork was conducted from 16–28 October 2013, with the majority of responses gathered on the 17th and 18th. See Appendix B to this report for further methodological details.

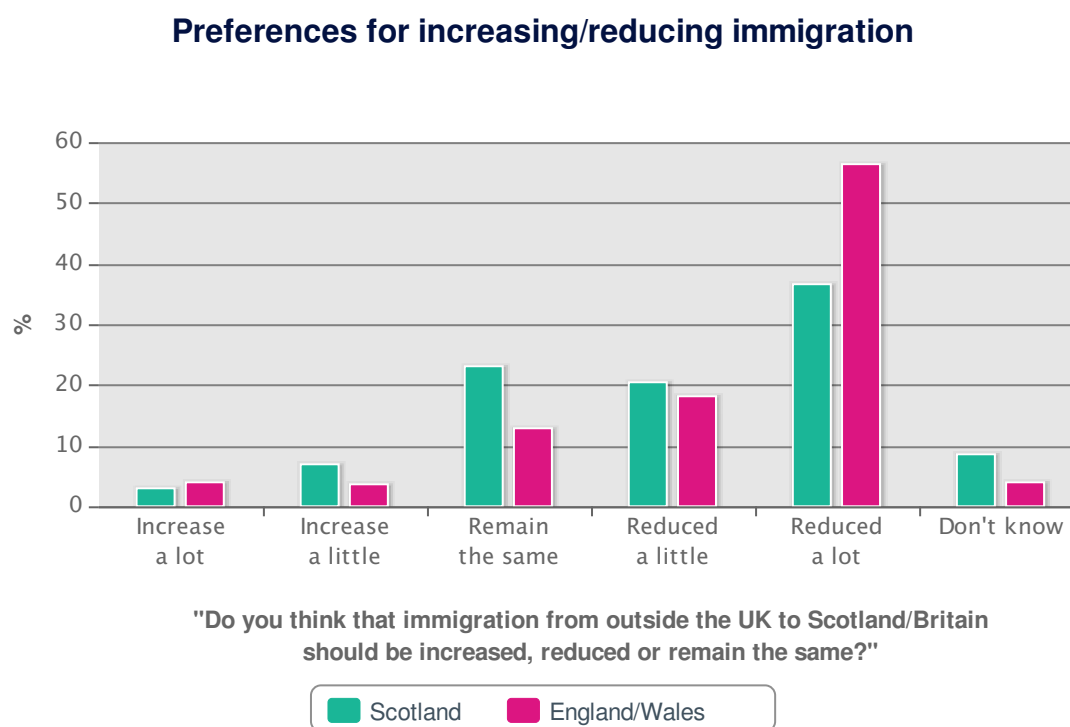
Although this report is the second major piece of research conducted by the Migration Observatory on public opinion toward immigration, following “Thinking Behind the Numbers” in 2011, it is the first to include a full-scale sample of Scotland to analyse attitudes of its public and compare with attitudes in the rest of Britain.

2. Attitudes and level of concern in Scotland compared to England and Wales

One of the most-asked survey questions about immigration is simply whether one prefers the current level of immigration to increase, decrease, or remain the same. This, and similar questions, have been used to show the large appetite for immigration restrictions among the British public. But are views the same in Scotland, particularly with reference to immigration to Scotland? After all, Scotland has had less immigration over the years than England, and its government has argued that it needs more rather than less. On the other hand, views of immigration are not always tied to the actual level of immigration: British attitudes have supported reductions to migration even when net migration has been small or negative (see our briefing “UK Public Opinion toward Immigration: Overall Attitudes and Level of Concern”), and London is the area of England most supportive of immigration even though it receives by far the largest share of international migrants (see our briefing “UK Public Opinion toward Migration: Determinants of Attitudes”).

As it turns out, a majority of the Scottish public does indeed favour reductions to immigration. As shown in Figure 1 below, 58% of respondents to the Migration Observatory/YouGov survey support reductions to immigration to Scotland, while only 10% favour an increase. Another 23% prefer the status quo, while 9% say that they don’t know. Furthermore, large reductions are more popular than small reductions to immigration, with 37% choosing “reduced a lot” compared with 21% who chose “reduced a little.”

Figure 1

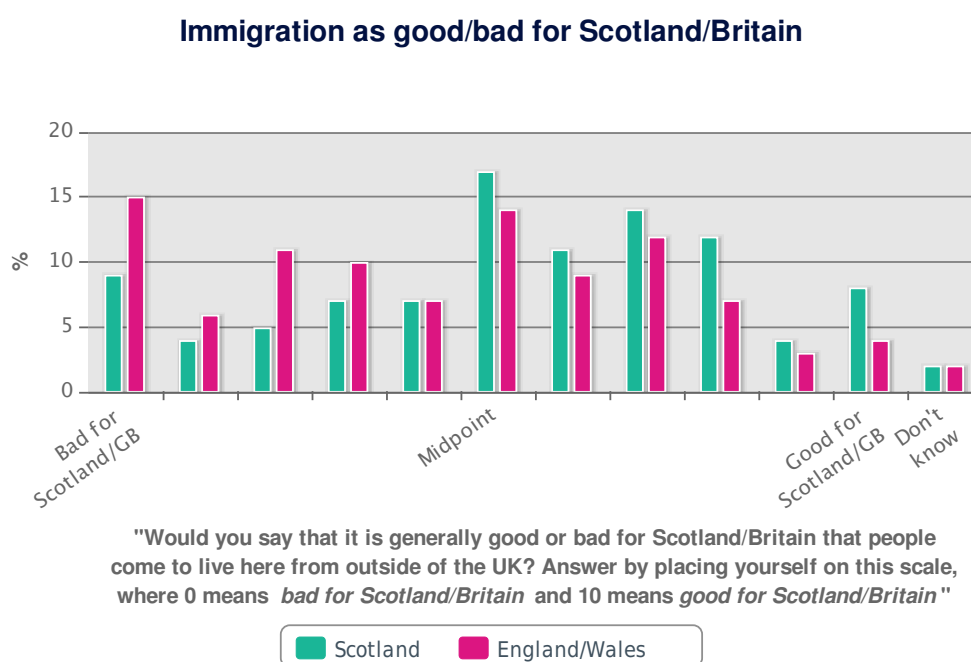


Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16–27 Oct 2013

In comparison with the rest of Britain, Scotland does look less opposed to additional immigration as many have claimed (McCollum et al. 2013). In England and Wales, 75% favour reduced immigration. Of course, immigration levels and population density are higher in England, which might contribute to the different responses to this question. Reducing levels of immigration to Britain involves change from a very different status quo than reductions to levels of immigration to Scotland. On the other hand, prior work has shown that the relationship between immigration levels and attitudes is not a simple one (see our commentary “The variations enigma: Regional differences in support for reducing immigration to the UK” and briefing “UK Public Opinion toward Migration: Determinants of Attitudes”, not clearly connected to size of immigration flows either over time or across locations. Differences between Scotland and England here are not easily explained away as the result of differently sized immigration flows.

Another basic question about immigration is simply whether it is a good or bad for the immigrant-receiving country. On this measure, attitudes are relatively positive toward immigration in Scotland, and certainly more so than in the rest of Britain. Respondents were asked to respond on a scale from 0 to 10 to the question “Would you say that it is generally good or bad for Scotland that people come to live here from outside the UK?” In England and Wales, respondents were asked the same question but with reference to Britain. In Scotland, among those willing to express an opinion, more people placed themselves on the “good for the country” side of the scale than the “bad for the country” side by 49% to 32% (with 17% placing themselves at the mid-point and 2% saying ‘don’t know’).

Figure 2



Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16–27 Oct 2013

These results indicate more positive attitudes than might appear from the question about increasing or reducing migration to Scotland. This indicates that belief in the benefits of immigration can coexist with a desire to reduce its scale, as Scotland shows majority support for less immigration but only about a third who rate immigration on the ‘bad for Scotland’ side of the scale. The phrasing of the question, referring to ‘people [who] come to live here from outside the UK’ rather than using the word ‘immigration’ or ‘immigrants,’ might also help explain the more positive response.

The findings also show a significant difference between Scotland and the rest of Britain. In England and Wales, the ‘bad for the country’ side of the scale outperformed the ‘good for the country’ side by 49% to 35%. Notably, the most common single response in England and Wales was the extreme end of the scale on the ‘bad’ side, chosen by 16% of respondents, while only 4% chose the extreme end on the ‘good’ side. In Scotland, only 9% placed themselves at the negative extreme of the scale, while 8.5% chose the positive extreme.

2.1 Salience

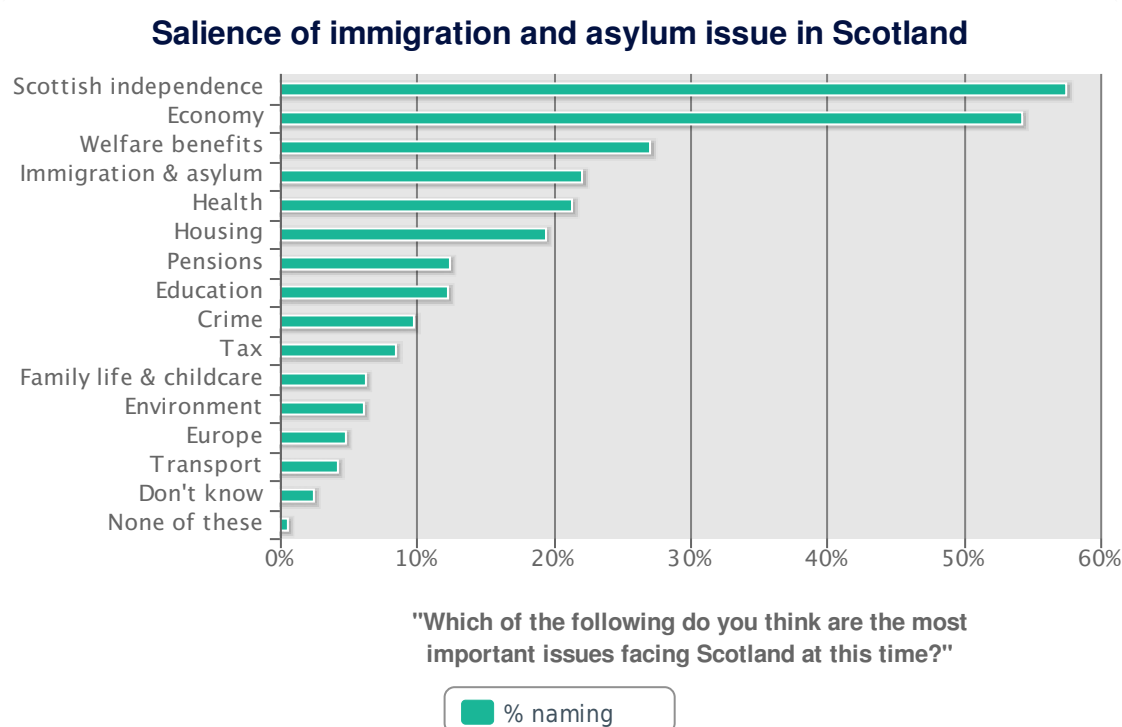
In Britain as a whole, public opinion has long favoured a reduction in immigration numbers, but only in the last ten to fifteen years has immigration become a consistently salient issue for the British public (see our briefing “UK Public Opinion toward Immigration: Overall Attitudes and Level of Concern”). In public opinion research, salience usually is measured by asking respondents to name the top three issues that they think are most important to the country, or by having them choose three issues from a list. The Migration Observatory survey used the list method. Scotland respondents were given an additional item to choose from in addition to the standard set provided to YouGov respondents. This item was Scottish independence, which turned out to be the most frequently chosen issue.

Immigration and asylum ranked as the fourth most important issue among the fourteen issues that Scotland respondents had to choose from. Independence and the economy were the most popular choices by far, both selected by over half of the sample. Immigration and asylum came in at 22%, between welfare benefits (27%) and health (21%).

In England and Wales, immigration and asylum ranked higher on the public’s list. This issue was chosen by 54% of respondents, ranking second and trailing the economy (57%) by only three percentage points. These percentages are not precisely comparable to the Scotland figures, since the Scotland survey included independence while the England and Wales version did not. Nonetheless, these responses provide suggestive evidence that immigration is less salient for the public in Scotland than in England and Wales. Immigration and asylum easily outpolled both welfare benefits (32%) and health (23%) of these issues in England and Wales, whereas in Scotland these three were grouped more closely, and more people chose welfare benefits as an important issue than chose immigration and asylum.

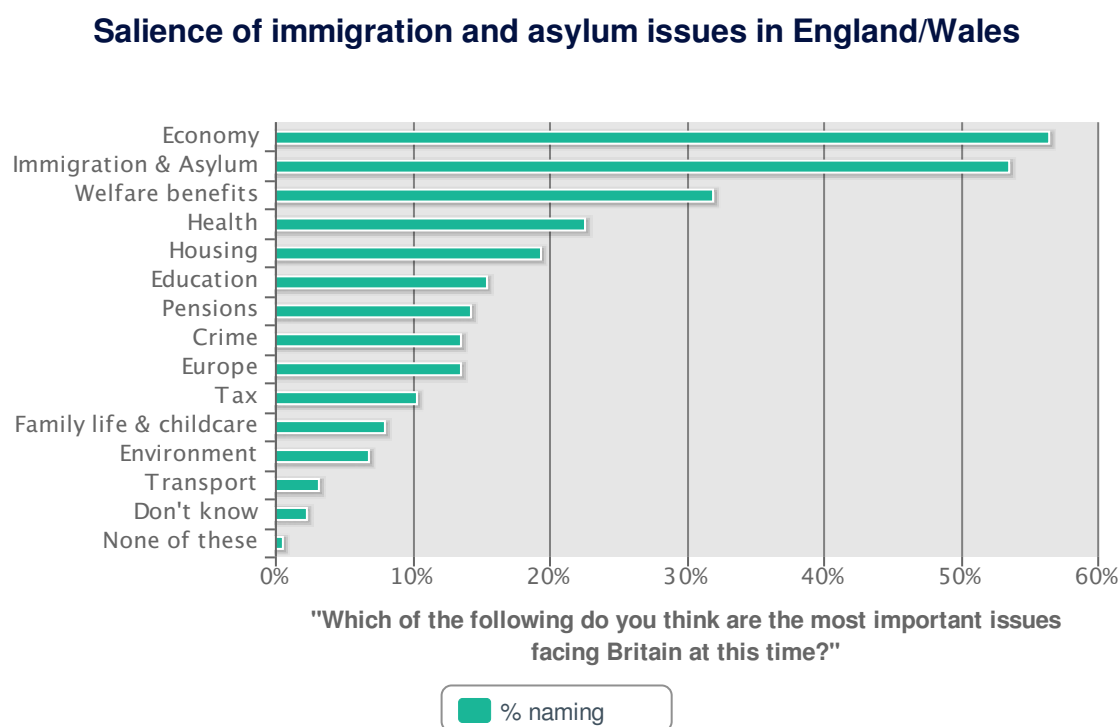
Note that the survey began with this question, in both Scotland and the rest of Britain; otherwise, answering other questions about immigration could have artificially encouraged people to choose immigration over other topics not covered in this survey.

Figure 3a



Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16–27 Oct 2013

Figure 3b



Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16–27 Oct 2013

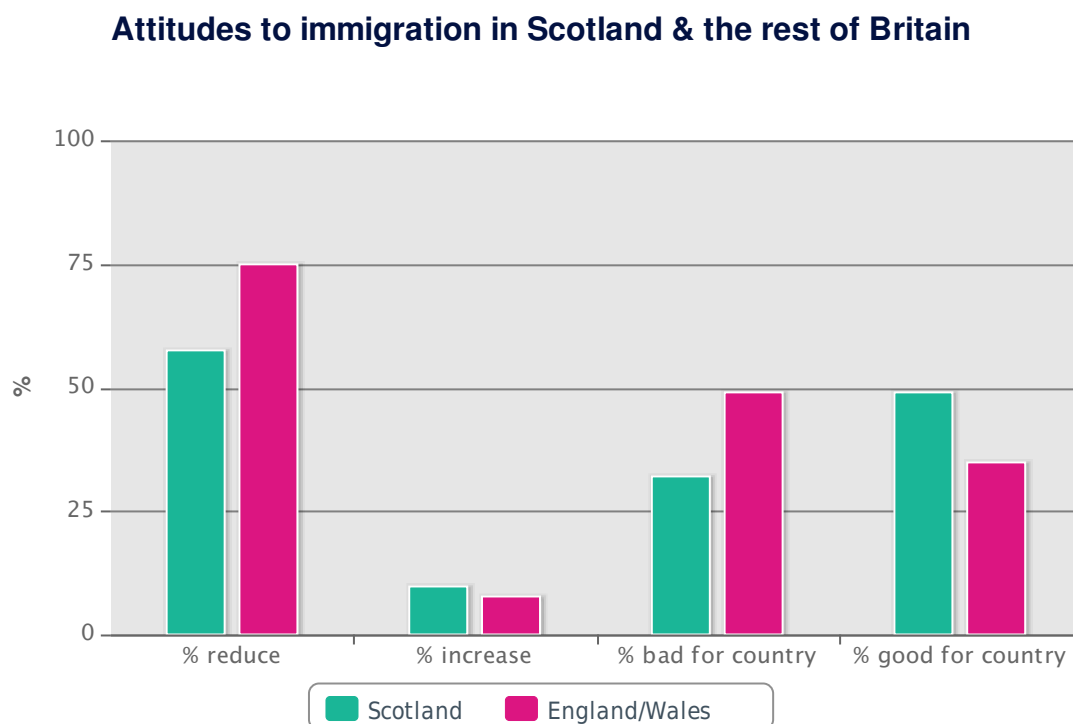
2.3 Scotland compared to the rest of Britain

Overall, then, people in Scotland are more likely to think immigration is good for Scotland, and less likely to favour reduced immigration to Scotland, compared with views in Britain on immigration to Britain. Figure 4 summarises much of the data on these questions. Note that Scotland's more positive views on immigration does not translate into broad support for increasing immigration, favoured by 10% in Scotland compared with 8% in England and Wales. But there is less support for reducing immigration and, along with that, more people who want to keep present levels of immigration the same and more who do not express a view on the question (see Figure 1).

It is important to emphasise that people in Scotland were asked about immigration to Scotland, while people in the rest of the UK were asked about immigration to Britain. Thus, Scotland's lower levels of immigration and smaller existing population of migrants may be a factor in these responses; however, as noted above, attitudes are not tied to immigrant numbers in a straightforward way.

Immigration also appears to be less salient in Scotland, as shown in above in Figures 3a and 3b. Respondents in Scotland had one additional issue to choose from, perhaps deflating the percentage choosing immigration. Nonetheless, it is telling that immigration ranks behind welfare benefits and just ahead of health in Scotland, while in England and Wales it far outranks both of those issues and is chosen nearly as often as the economy as a top issue.

Figure 4



Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16–27 Oct 2013

3. Components of immigration

Surveys on immigration usually assess people's views toward immigration as a single concept, and allow respondents to react to whatever notion of immigration comes to their minds. The Migration Observatory's prior research on public opinion took a different approach in two ways, investigating what sorts of immigrants came to people's minds when answering questions for a public opinion survey, and then asking for views on policies toward a number of different types of immigrant groups. The Migration Observatory's Scotland Immigration Survey repeated and expanded on that approach, for both Scotland and the rest of Britain, asking respondents to choose which types of immigrants they normally had in mind when thinking about immigrants. The exact wording of each of these questions, as well as the rest of the survey, are available from YouGov.

3.1 Perceptions of who immigrants are

First, perceptions of who immigrants are appeared broadly similar across Britain, and comparable to Migration Observatory findings from 2011. There were a number of statistically significant differences between responses in Scotland and England/Wales respondents, but the general patterns of responses were similar in across Britain.

3.1.1 Reason for migration

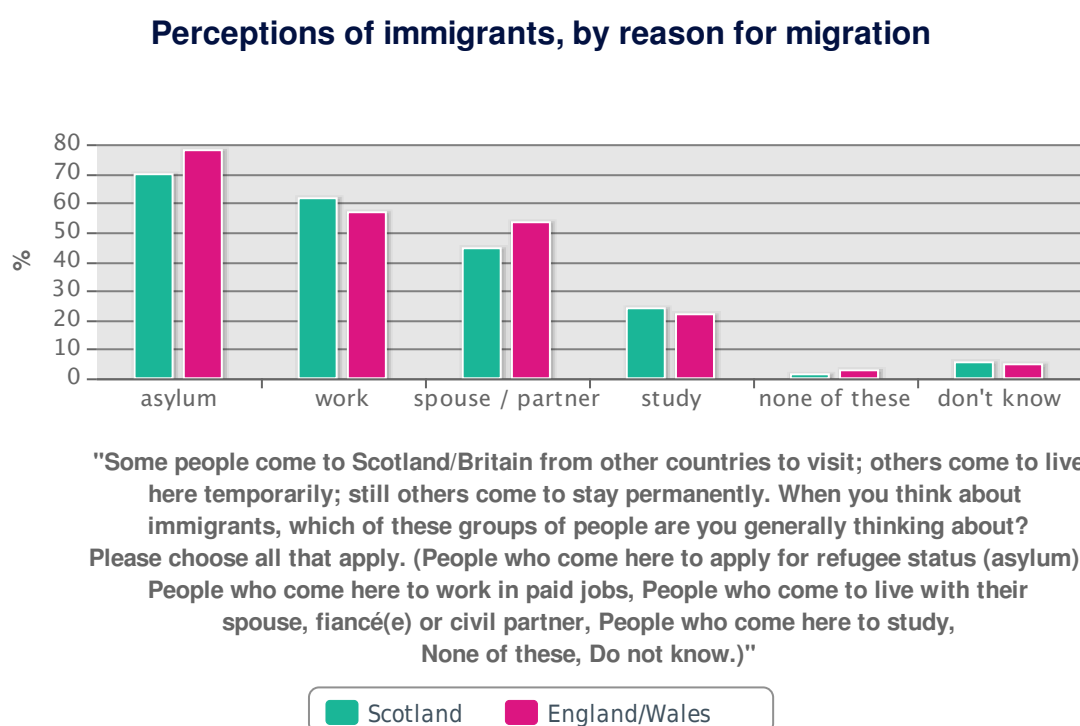
In official statistics, policy-making and some media discussions, immigrants to Britain are classified by their reason for migrating. The most common classification scheme groups migrants' reasons in four categories: migration for work, study, family, or asylum. The Migration Observatory survey asked respondents which of these groups they normally thought of when thinking about immigrants. Again, respondents could select as many of the four options as they liked, or opt out by selecting the "don't know" option.

Asylum was the most popular choice, selected by 70% in Scotland and 78% in England and Wales, as shown in Figure 5. Work came next, chosen by 62% in Scotland and 57% in England and Wales. Migration to be with a spouse or partner ranked next in both countries, but was chosen more often in England and Wales (54%) than in Scotland

(45%). Study was chosen the least frequently, by 24% in Scotland and 22% in England and Wales, suggesting that most people in Britain do not have students in mind when they are thinking about immigrants.

The finding about students is meaningful, not only because students comprise a large share of international immigration to Britain (see our briefing “Non-European Student Migration to the UK”), but also because in the last three years, immigration debates and policies have increasingly focused on students. Indeed, these figures in both Scotland and the rest of Britain are lower than the Migration Observatory found in 2011, whereas the figures are higher for the other categories. It is important to note that these differences could stem from the different methodologies used for the two surveys (and in part from the margins of error associated with any survey) rather than from actual change in public perceptions between 2011 and 2013. Still, these findings suggest that even after considerable public debate and media coverage of students as migrants and as targets of immigration policy change, the prevailing public image of immigrants still leaves students out.

Figure 5



Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16–27 Oct 2013

3.1.2 Citizenship

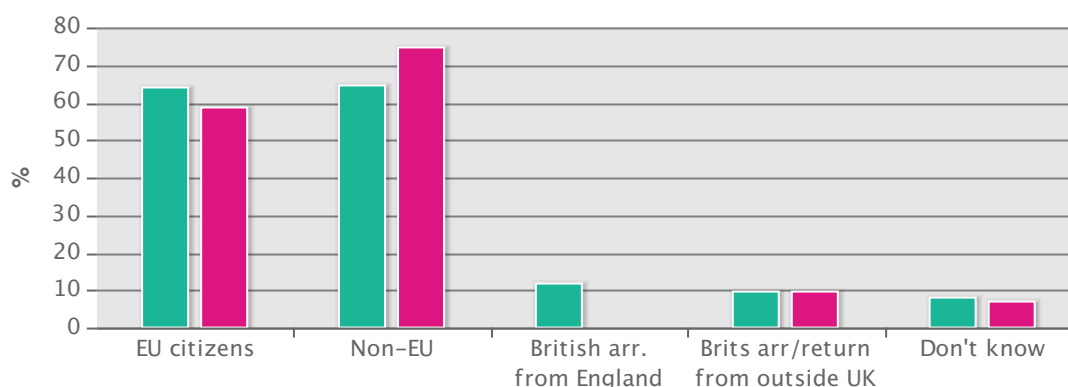
Not surprisingly, people in both Scotland and the rest of Britain most commonly think of foreign citizens when thinking of immigrants. In Scotland, as Figure 6 shows, similar numbers had EU and non-EU citizens in mind (64% and 65%, respectively) while respondents in England and Wales were more likely to report thinking of non-EU citizens (75%) rather than EU citizens (59%). This difference between Scotland and the rest of Britain is consistent with migration patterns, in that EU citizens make up a large share of the migrant population in Scotland than in Britain as a whole.

About 10% in both Scotland and the rest of Britain said that they thought about British citizens arriving or returning from abroad, when thinking about immigrants. Such citizens are considered immigrants in official statistics (if they were born abroad or lived abroad for at least a year), and make up roughly 15% of immigrants to Britain in recent years, according to ONS estimates (see our briefing “Long-Term International Migration Flows to and from the UK”).

Respondents in Scotland were also given the option to say that they normally thought of British citizens arriving from England when thinking about immigrants. Twelve per cent chose this option, suggesting that for most people in Scotland, the word 'immigration' indicates those coming from outside Britain. Still, it is notable that this option was selected by as many as 12%, and it will be interesting to see if this number changes in the future, particularly in the event of a 'Yes' vote on the independence referendum when migration from England to Scotland becomes international migration in an official sense.

Figure 6

Perceptions of immigrants, by citizenship & previous residence



"When you think about immigrants coming to and living in Scotland/Britain, which of the following groups, if any, do you normally think about? Please choose all that apply. (Non-EU citizens, EU citizens, British citizens arriving from England, British citizens arriving or returning from outside the UK, Do not know.)"

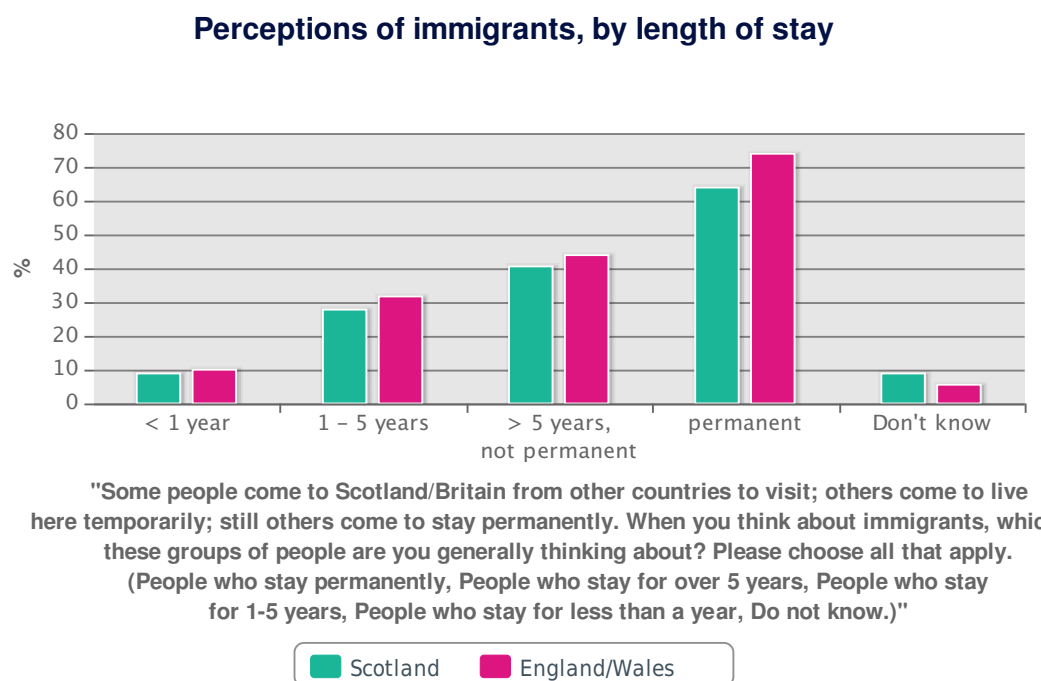
Scotland England/Wales

Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16–27 Oct 2013

3.1.4 Length of Stay

Consistent with previous findings, most people in both Scotland and the rest of Britain are most likely to think of people coming to Britain to settle permanently when thinking about immigrants. Figure 7 shows that a minority of respondents normally think of temporary UK residents when thinking about immigrants, whether this temporary stay is for less than a year (9% in Scotland, 10% in England/Wales), for one to five years (28%, 32%), or even more than five years (41%, 44%). According to the international definition used by the UK in official migration statistics, only a one-year stay in a new country is required to become a "long-term international migrant." England and Wales respondents were similar to Scotland respondents in that the responses followed the same order: the largest number said that they think of permanent resident, followed by progressively smaller numbers selecting each choice as the length of stay decreased. More people in Scotland chose "don't know" (9% vs 6%), while a higher proportion in England and Wales tended to choose the substantive categories, with statistically significant differences between Scotland and the rest of Britain on the 'less than one year' and 'permanent' choices.

Figure 7

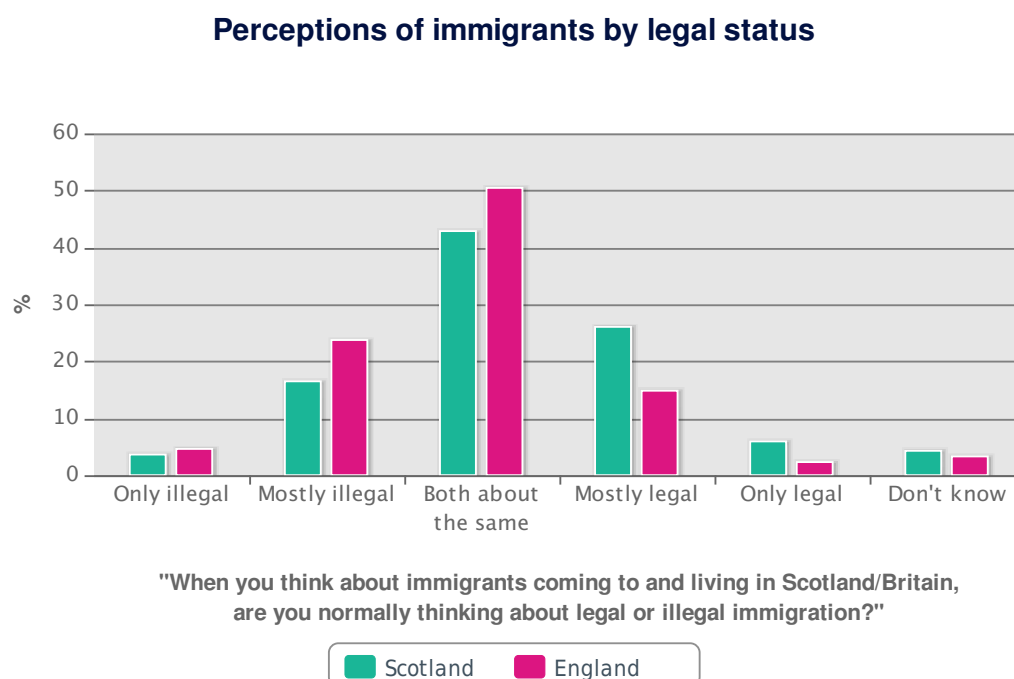


Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16-27 Oct 2013

3.1.4 Legal Status

In addition to the work, study, family and asylum categories that are familiar from official immigration statistics, illegal or irregular migrants comprise another category that may be critical for public attitudes. The illegal or irregular immigrant population might include people who came to the UK originally for any of the four major reasons discussed above, but illegal immigration has a distinct role in public opinion. Previous work (German Marshall Fund 2013, Migration Observatory 2011) has shown that illegal immigration is a focal point for negative attitudes in Britain and in other countries as well. Illegal immigration is also discussed extensively by British newspapers, as shown in the Migration Observatory's report "Migration in the News". But little is known about how members of the public in Scotland regard illegal immigration.

Figure 8



Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16-27 Oct 2013

Respondents in Scotland (and in England and Wales) were asked, when they think about immigration, do they normally have in mind legal or illegal immigrants? In Scotland as in England and Wales, the most popular choice was “both, about the same”, chosen by 43% in Scotland and 50% in England and Wales, as shown in Figure 8. In Scotland, however, the rest of the responses leaned more toward the legal than the illegal side. Whereas 32% chose mostly or only legal immigrants, only 20% said they thought mostly or only of legal immigrants. In England and Wales, by contrast, responses leaned more toward the illegal side, with 29% choosing mostly or only illegal immigrants compared with 17% who said that they mostly or only of legal immigrants.

Figure 9



Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16–27 Oct 2013

A further question sought to explore respondents' understandings of illegal immigration. There are many paths to residence in the UK without legal authorisation, and it is not known what members of the public think about how people come to this status. Thus, people were given a list of possible pathways to illegal or irregular status, and asked to choose the two options that are most common. Each pathway came with a short explanation for those who were not already familiar.

The two most frequently chosen responses were overstaying (55%) and rejected asylum applications (36% Scotland, 38% England and Wales), as Figure 9 shows. Overstaying involves arriving with a legal visa and staying in Britain after the visa expires, as was explained to respondents on the survey. The biggest difference between Scotland and the rest of Britain was in views of clandestine entry, chosen by 32% in England and Wales but only 20.5% in Scotland.

Other choices included ‘through parents’, which involves being born in or brought to Britain as the child of parents who lack legal permission to live in Britain. Trafficking involves being transported under threat of force for the purpose of exploitation. Breaching conditions of stay involves legal entry to Britain but violation of the conditions of stay, for example by leaving school and taking up full-time employment while in Britain on a student visa. ‘Crime’ in this case means, again, arriving in Britain with a legal visa, but then committing a crime that makes one eligible for deportation. Each of these categories was explained to respondents in the text of the question.

It is worth noting that the true answers to these questions are not known. Research suggests that overstaying and rejected asylum applications have been more common routes to illegal immigration status in Britain than clandestine entry, or crossing the border covertly without legal authorisation (see our briefing “Irregular Migration in the UK: Definitions, Pathways and Scale”).

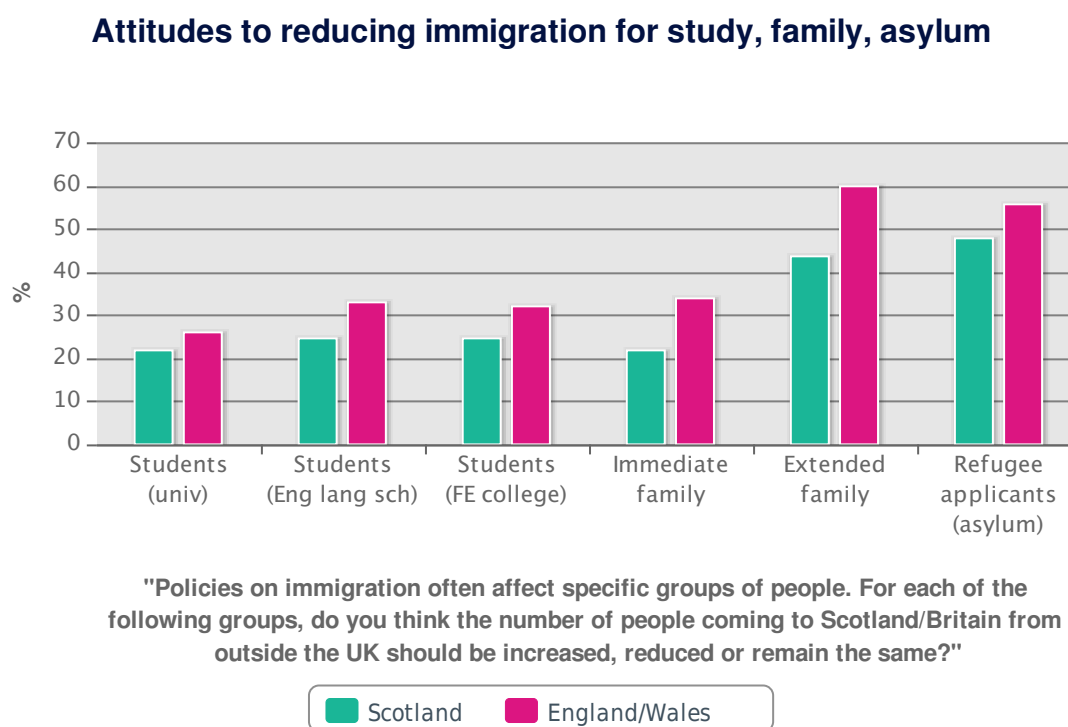
3.2 Preferences for reducing or increasing immigrant categories

Additional survey questions asked respondents whether they would like to see particular categories of immigration reduced, increased, or kept the same. As in previous work, the results show considerable differences in people's attitudes toward different categories of immigrants. Moreover, the proportion who prefer a reduction to immigration overall is higher than the proportion preferring reductions in nearly all of the sub-categories queried. Low-skilled migrants stand out as the exception to this rule.

3.2.1 Non-labour migration categories

Beginning with non-labour migration categories, results in Scotland show relatively little support (less than 30%) for reducing immigration among students or immediate family members. And reducing migration of extended family members and asylum seekers also garner minority support (although greater than 40%).

Figure 10



Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16–27 Oct 2013

Compared with England and Wales, opinions in Scotland are consistently more favourable to each type of migrant considered here: students at three different types of institutions (universities, language schools, and further education colleges), family members (immediate and extended), and applicants for refugee status or asylum seekers. Differences are particularly pronounced in the case of family migration. England and Wales respondents are more likely to support reductions in immediate family members' migration by 12 percentage points and in extended family migration by 16 percentage points. In the case of asylum, the difference between Scotland and the rest of Britain is not especially large relatively to the other categories, but it is enough to move from minority to majority support for reducing numbers coming into the country. All of these differences are statistically significant.

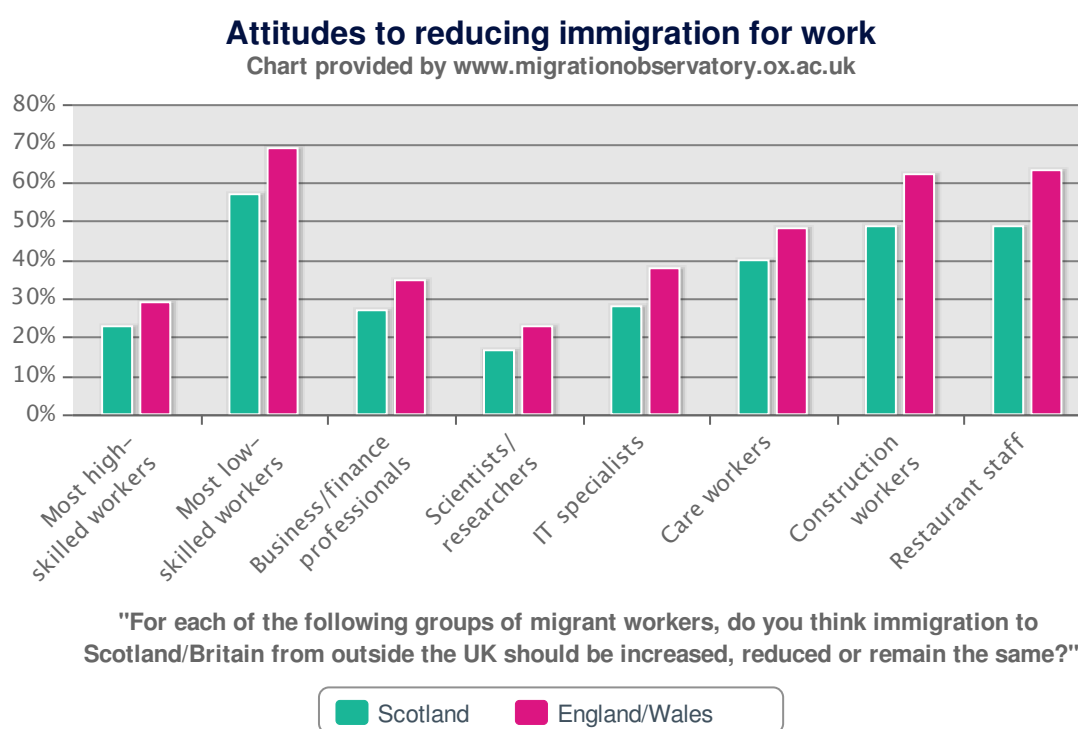
On the other hand, there are important similarities as well. The ranking of these categories are similar across the UK. In Scotland and in the rest of the UK, students and immediate family members are among the most popular or tolerated migrant groups. Attitudes are more negative toward immigration among extended family members and asylum seekers.

3.2.2 Labour migration: general and specific categories

Attitudes toward labour migration in Scotland show a typical division according to skill levels: there is little support for reducing high-skilled labour migration, but more support for reducing low-skilled labour migration. This is true both when considering high- and low-skilled workers in general, and when considering typical specific occupations of high- and low-skilled migrant workers. Business and finance professionals and, especially, scientists and researchers, are more widely accepted. In fact, more people in Scotland (as well as in England and Wales) favoured an increase in immigration of scientists and researchers than favoured a decrease. In Scotland, 33% favoured increasing immigration of 'most high-skilled workers' compared with 23% for a reduction and 34% for the status quo. (The rest chose 'don't know'.) For scientists and researchers, 38% supported an increase compared to 20% for a reduction (with 34% for the status quo and the rest choosing 'don't know'). An outright increase in these categories, then, is relatively popular but does not receive majority support.

Moving through additional occupations, support for migration decreases as skill levels decrease. IT specialists and care workers, examples of medium-skill occupations, are targeted for reduction by 28% and 40% of respondents in Scotland, respectively. Meanwhile, an estimated 49% preferred to reduce immigration among construction workers and restaurant staff, examples of low-skill occupations where migrants are often employed.

Figure 11



Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16–27 Oct 2013

The comparison of Scotland to England and Wales shows similar patterns in the case of labour migration as in the case of non-labour migration, as Figure 11 shows. Again, in the aggregate public attitudes show a similar ranking of migrant groups. And, again, Scotland shows less support for reductions in each category. (All differences are statistically significant here as well). The largest differences, in terms of percentage points, arise in the low-skilled migration categories, both in the general and in the specific cases of construction workers and restaurant staff. In

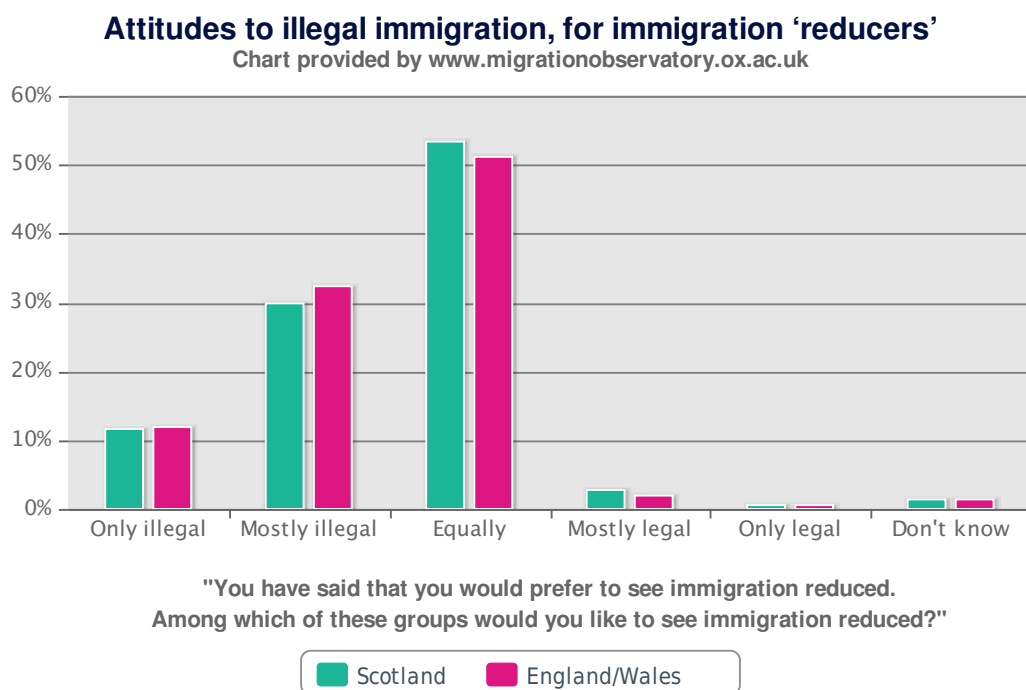
England and Wales, support for reducing each of these groups topped 60%, compared with 57% in Scotland wanting a reduction of 'most low-skilled workers' and 49% wanting less immigration of construction workers and restaurant staff.

3.2.3 Illegal immigration

Illegal or irregular immigrants have long been a focal point for public concern about immigration. To probe this concern further, the Scottish Immigration Survey divided respondent in both Scotland and the rest of Britain into two groups, the 'reducers' and 'non-reducers'. Reducers were those who responded on an earlier question that they would like to see immigration reduced, either a little bit or a lot, while the 'non-reducers' replied in other ways, either preferring the status quo, preferring increased immigration, or saying that they did not know what they preferred.

Each group was asked a different question designed to bring out their views of illegal immigration relative to legal immigration. Reducers were asked whether they wanted to see less immigration 'only' or 'mostly' among those with illegal status, 'only' or 'mostly' among those with legal status, or equally among both. In Scotland, as Figure 12 shows, 42% of reducers wished to see these reductions focused only or mostly on illegal immigration, while only 3% wanted to focus reduction only or mostly on legal immigrants. In England, the proportions (not shown) were similar (44.5% for illegal, 3% for legal). Thus, across Britain, illegal immigration is a focal point for almost all immigration 'reducers,' with more than 90% wishing to see action on illegal immigration at least as much or more than on legal immigration.

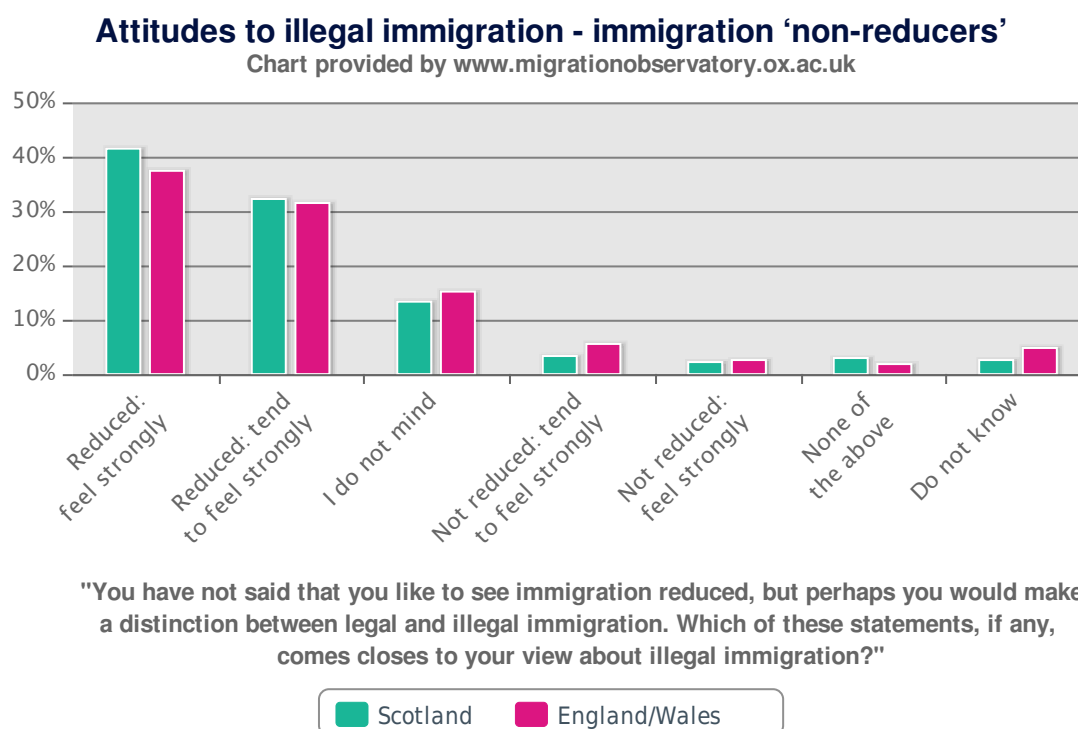
Figure 12



Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16–27 Oct 2013

On the other hand, some people do not wish to see immigration reduced generally, but might still have concerns about illegal immigration. 'Non-reducers' were asked if they preferred reductions specifically to illegal immigration. In Scotland, 74% of non-reducers said they would like to see less illegal immigration, including 42% who said they feel strongly about this, as Figure 13 shows. Responses in England and Wales showed a similar pattern but with a smaller percentage of 69% of non-reducers favouring less illegal immigration, and 38% feeling strongly about this. Note that the England and Wales respondents to this question comprise only about 25% of the total sample for those countries, while a broader section of Scotland falls into the 'non-reducer' camp, so the comparison is not quite 'like-for-like' in this case, and does not indicate more opposition to illegal immigration in Scotland than in England and Wales.

Figure 13



Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16–27 Oct 2013

4 Immigration and independence

Another key point of interest is how the issue of immigration relates to the politics of the debate and eventual referendum on Scottish independence. Issues such as the economy, currency, welfare state and national identities have dominated much of the independence debate thus far, but immigration policy would certainly be affected by a 'Yes' vote. A vote for independence would lead to the implementation of an independent set of immigration policies formulated by the Scottish government. At present, immigration policy is reserved for Westminster, and the SNP's White Paper argues that current British policies are not well suited for Scotland's needs. In particular, the White Paper suggests that an independent Scotland would pursue a policy that is more open to immigration, particularly toward highly-skilled workers. It also promises an improved asylum policy that will be both "robust and humane." This raises several questions for Scotland's public. First, there is the question of whether people prefer Holyrood to Westminster as the location for decision-making on immigration and asylum policy. Further, in an independence scenario, what do people believe immigration policy would look like? And what should it look like? Would it differ from the rest of the UK, and if so how?

4.1 Level of decision-making

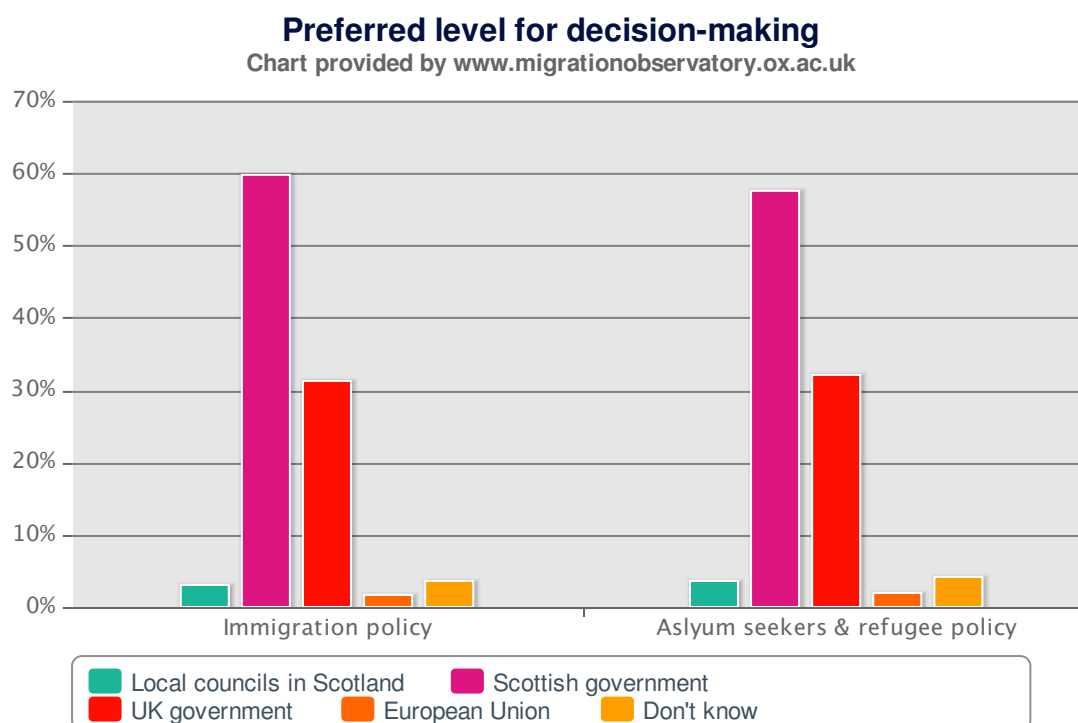
One basic question relating to independence—or indeed to devolution—is at what level of government people think decisions should be taken, in various areas of policy. Prior studies have shown that majorities, often over 60%, of people in Scotland think that the Scottish Parliament rather than UK Parliament should make decisions in many areas of domestic policy: health, schools, welfare benefits, taxation, economic policy, energy policy, environmental policy, sport and culture policy, and employment law (Curtice and Ormston 2012). But on international issues, such as defence, foreign affairs, and international development, majorities prefer Westminster control.

Where does immigration fit in? Despite its international dimensions, these survey results show that a majority of the Scottish public would prefer decision-making on immigration to take place at Holyrood rather than Westminster, as

shown in Figure 14. Similar proportions favour Scottish rather than UK decision-making on policies toward refugees and asylum seekers. (Note that these questions were asked only in Scotland, not in the rest of Britain.)

When offered a choice of local councils in Scotland, the Scottish Government, the UK Government, and the EU (and 'don't know'), 60% said that the Scottish Government should make the most important decisions about immigration policy, and 58% said the same regarding asylum and refugees. The UK government was the choice for less than a third, while less than 5% chose either local councils or the EU. Notably, this contrasts somewhat with recent polling that found an even split on the question of whether immigration should be 'run by the Scottish government' or 'run by the UK government' (YouGov/Times 2013). These results may be an artifact of asking the question in a different way from the British Social Attitudes survey wording (which the Migration Observatory survey was based upon), or it may indicate significant uncertainty in public attitudes on this question, or both. Nonetheless, the findings in the Observatory survey showed the Scottish Government as the clear cut choice of a majority of people in Scotland.

Figure 14



Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16–27 Oct 2013

4.2 Expectations and preferences for an independent Scotland's policies

So a large majority would prefer for the Scottish government to make the important decisions on immigration and asylum. But what do people expect would happen in that case? And what would they like to see happen?

On immigration policy, respondents were asked if they thought an independent Scotland should have different policies from the rest of the UK on immigration and on asylum, and if so whether these different policies would be more or less open to immigration and welcoming to asylum seekers and refugees. Next, they were asked the same question about what will happen in an independent Scotland, as opposed to what should happen. The answers to these sets of questions are particularly curious in light of the widespread preference for Scottish control of immigration policy shown in Figure 14 above.

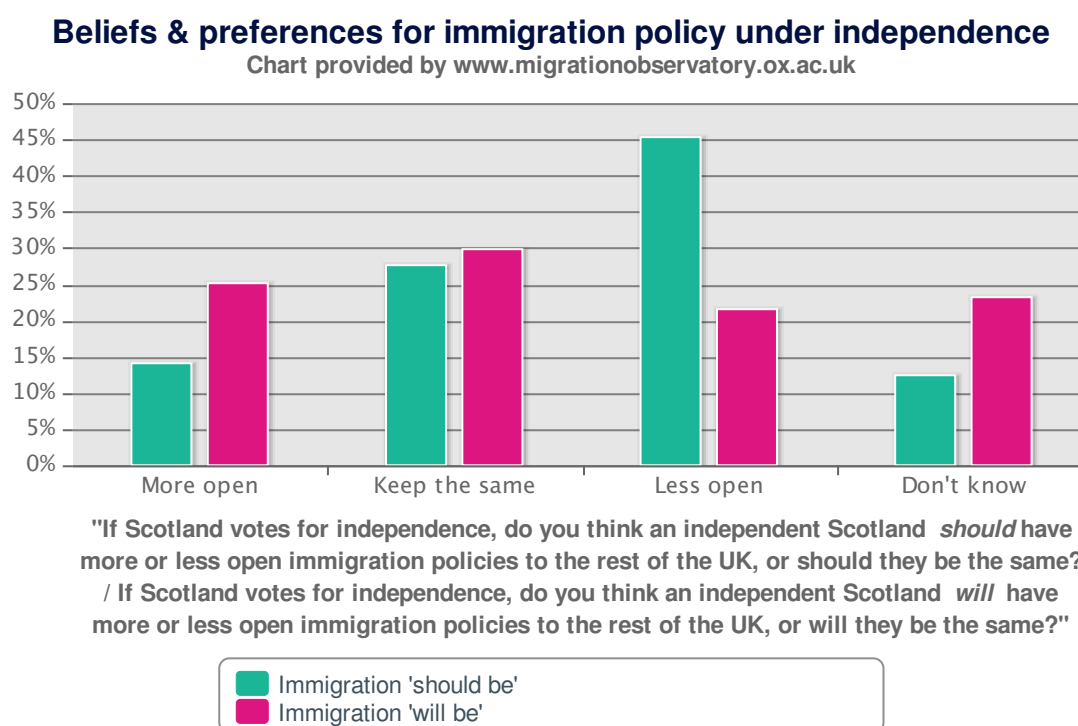
On what should happen—in other words, respondents' preferences—the most frequent choice (45%) was that immigration policy should be less open than the rest of the UK, while 28% preferred the same as UK policy, 14%

said it should become more open, and 13% (higher than for most questions on the survey) said they did not know, as Figure 15 shows. So, there is relatively little support for a more open policy for Scotland than the UK, at least when thinking about immigration in general. On the other hand, there is not a majority preferring a less open policy compared to the rest of the UK, when the 45% preferring a less open policy to the 42% who think Scotland should have the same policy as the rest of the UK or a more open policy.

It is important to note that these questions about openness relative to the rest of the UK were not asked about high-skilled immigration in particular, where support for more immigration is strongest. The position staked out in the White Paper emphasises encouraging migration on the basis of skills. As seen in Figure 11 above, there is some support for increasing immigration to Scotland among high-skilled workers. However, even this support (32%) is outweighed by those who prefer either the status quo (34%) or reduced immigration (23%) in this group. (This can be seen in the YouGove summary of responses.)

Meanwhile, when asked what will happen in an independent Scotland as opposed to what they think should happen, the most frequent response was that immigration policy will be the same as UK policy. However, despite being most frequent this response was chosen by just 30%. Another 25% chose 'more open', while 22% chose 'less open,' and a comparatively high figure of 23% said that they did not know.

Figure 15



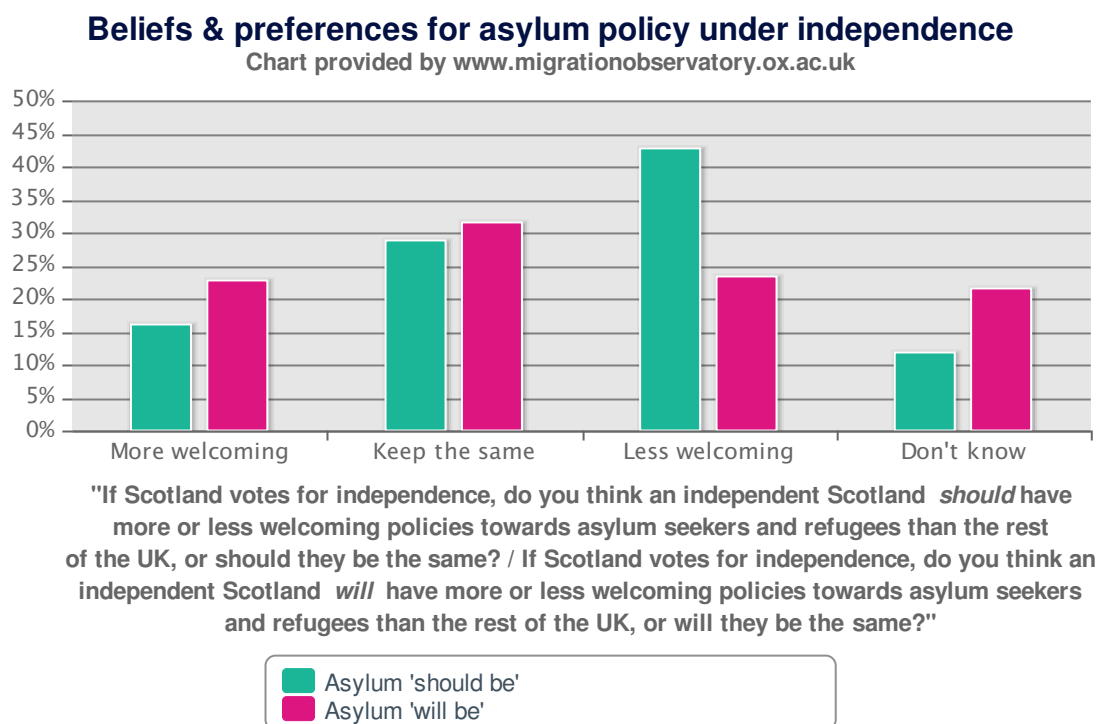
Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16–27 Oct 2013

Since the independence debate has focused on other issues such as fiscal and economic prospects, it is not surprising to find a high level of uncertainty about what an independent Scotland's immigration policy would look like. Further, this survey was undertaken before the release of the Scottish government's White Paper on independence, which provided a general outline of the SNP's plans on immigration in the case of independence, so information was less readily available to the public on this point at the time of the survey compared with the present.

Regarding asylum policy, results were similar. Again, as Figure 16 shows, the most frequent choice was that policy should be less welcoming to refugees and asylum seekers (43%) than in the UK, while 29% preferred to stay the

same as the UK and 16% would choose a more welcoming set of policies. As in the case of immigration policy, a relatively high percentage (12%) said they did not know rather than express a preference for asylum policy. And on the question of what asylum policy would in fact look like in an independent Scotland, again the status quo was the most common choice, but reflected less than a third of respondents. Here, 'more welcoming' and 'less welcoming' were virtually identical at 23%, while again a large percentage (22%) said they did not know.

Figure 16



Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16–27 Oct 2013

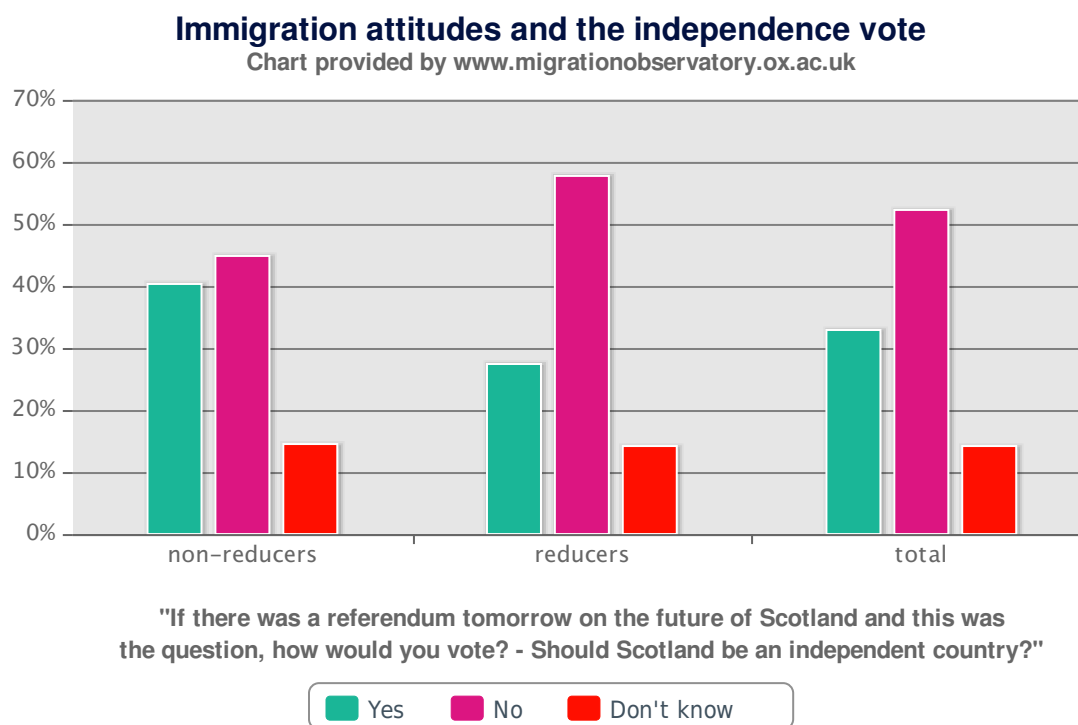
Overall, then, there remains a high level of uncertainty around preferences and especially expectations for immigration and asylum policy in an independent Scotland. However, these results show a gap between expectations and preferences for an independent Scotland, in both immigration policy and asylum policy. In each case, the proportion who prefer a less open policy than the rest of the UK exceeds the proportion who expect this will happen. Likewise, the proportion who expect a more open or welcoming policy outnumber exceeds the proportion who would prefer a more open or welcoming policy in an independent Scotland than in the rest of the UK.

4.3 The independence vote and immigration attitudes

Do expectations and preferences on immigration policy have anything to do with the way people are planning to vote on the independence referendum? As noted above, most discussion of the independence referendum has focused on issues other than immigration. Therefore, it may seem unlikely that immigration attitudes will have any impact on the referendum. And considerable uncertainty remains about what immigration and asylum policy would look like in an independent Scotland. Nonetheless, there is a clear statistical relationship between immigration attitudes and planned vote on the referendum, in which negative views of immigration occur more often among 'No' voters than 'Yes' voters. This finding does not show that immigration attitudes are contributing to people's decision on the referendum, but they do show that Yes voters and No voters hold different views on immigration.

Simply put, people in Scotland who would like to see immigration reduced are more likely to say they will vote 'No' on the referendum, compared with those who would prefer to increase immigration or keep it the same, or those who don't express a preference on immigration policy.

Figure 17



Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16–27 Oct 2013

Figure 17 summarises this information. It shows that among 'non-reducers', the 'No' side leads by only 45% to 40% (with 15% unsure). By contrast, among 'reducers' (those who want less immigration to Scotland), 58% said they would vote 'No' against only 27.5% for 'Yes' (with 14.5% undecided). Again, this is not evidence that immigration attitudes have an impact on how people will vote; it simply shows that people who want less immigration to Scotland are disproportionately found in the 'No' camp. (On a technical note, for this chart, people who said 'don't know' on the question of increasing or reducing immigration to Scotland are included with the non-reducers, just as in Figure 13 above. An alternative version that excludes these respondents shows the same basic pattern, with the percentages shifting to show an even closer race between 'Yes' and 'No' among the non-reducers.)

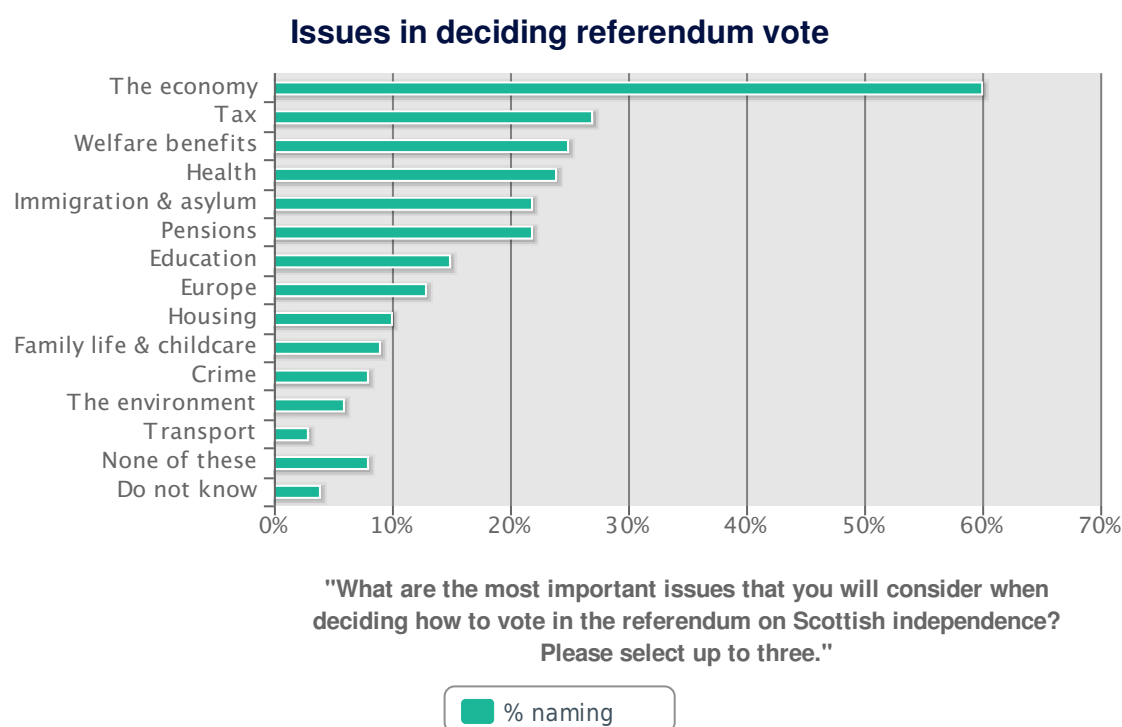
But how important is the issue of immigration in shaping the referendum vote? The most we can conclude from the data is an affinity or association between immigration views and referendum voting plans. The debate has generally focused on other issues, and other studies have shown stronger correlations between other issues and referendum voting plans. In particular, beliefs about the economy under independence are the most potent predictor of voting plans, and that beliefs about how benefits in Scotland should be funded are also a strong dividing line between Yes and No voters. For example, people who believe that independence will make the economy better in Scotland are very likely to say they will vote 'Yes' (67% for those expecting the economy to be 'a little better' in an independent Scotland; 86% for those expecting 'a lot better'). Those expecting the economy to be worse under independence, however, are very unlikely to vote 'Yes' (5% for those expecting 'a little worse,' 2% for 'a lot worse'). Relative to these divisions, the relationship between immigration preferences and independence vote seems much smaller.

However, it is notable that other potentially divisive issues do not actually divide the Yes and No camps, such as views on EU membership for Scotland and Britain (Curtice 2014b). Moreover, Curtice also finds that although 47% of No supporters agree that the arrival of more migrants from Eastern Europe could pose a threat to Scotland's identity, so also do 48% of Yes supporters. Yet, in contrast with attitudes to Europe or to Eastern Europeans in particular, attitudes to immigration policy cannot be easily dismissed as statistically unrelated to referendum voting plans. These data confirm that views on immigration and asylum policy, taken together, bear some relationship to view on the referendum, but (like other issues) pale in comparison to the economy.

Some additional evidence comes from a further question on the Migration Observatory/YouGov survey, asking respondents in Scotland to choose the three most important issues in considering how to vote in the independence referendum. (This question was the second question asked to our respondents, immediately following the question about the most important issues facing Scotland, so that again respondents were able to approach this question before being prompted specifically to think about immigration.)

On this measure, immigration and asylum ranks joint fifth place (with pensions) among the list of issues considered important to the referendum vote. These issues were chosen among the top three by 22% of respondents in Scotland, as shown in Figure 18. The economy, chosen by 60%, was the only issue to be named by a majority of respondents. Tax, welfare benefits, and health also were rated above immigration and asylum, while education, Europe, housing, family life and childcare, crime, the environment, and transport all were rated lower.

Figure 18



Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16–27 Oct 2013

It is worth noting the overall results on the referendum question in this survey were broadly consistent with concurrent polling, with 52.5% saying 'No', 33% saying 'Yes', and 14.5% choosing 'don't know'. Polling on the referendum has shown considerable short-term fluctuation even as long-term trends have not shifted much; these results are close to results obtained in September 2013. Between September and December 2013, 'No' responses ranged between 41% and 59%.

4.4 England-Scotland migration? Borders and immigration controls

One result of a 'Yes' vote on the independence referendum would be questions about the new international border between Scotland and England. This report has already shown that a small but detectable percentage of Scotland residents already think of British people coming from England to Scotland when they think about immigrants. Independence might make this a more common perception.

In addition, as discussed in our policy primer 'Citizenship, Border and Migration in and Independent Scotland', independence might create a need for a system of immigration controls at the border between Scotland and

England. This issue has been debated and is addressed in the White Paper, but to what extent do people in Scotland worry about the possibility of border checks? And what do they expect will happen at the borders?

It turns out that people in Scotland do not expect that there will be passport checks at the England/Scotland border in the event of a 'Yes' vote, as shown in Figure 19. Rating the likelihood of passport checks on a 0 to 10 scale, with 0 meaning no chance and 10 meaning a certainty, people in Scotland were easily more likely to choose 0 (no chance) than any other option. Almost a third (31%) said that there was no chance of passport controls, while 64% placed themselves below the midpoint of the scale, suggesting that they believe that the more likely outcome of Scottish independence will be a border without passport checks. In England and Wales, the corresponding figures are 26% (no chance of passport controls) and 60% (more unlikely than likely). So, despite some discussion from with the UK Government of the possible need for border controls, most of the public on either side of that potential border do not see it as likely to occur.

But how much would passport checks affect people in Scotland and England? In Scotland, results show an unusual level of extreme responses. About 29% place themselves at either extreme end of the scale, either saying they will be bothered a great deal or that they will not be bothered at all by passport checks. On balance, the public in Scotland divides fairly evenly: 48% place themselves closer to the 'bothered a great deal' end of the scale, with 44% toward the other side and 8% in the middle. In England and Wales, on the other hand, there is less concern about the personal impact of passport checks: only 18% say they would be bothered a great deal, while 33% are not bothered at all and 54% rate themselves closer to the 'not bothered' end of the scale.

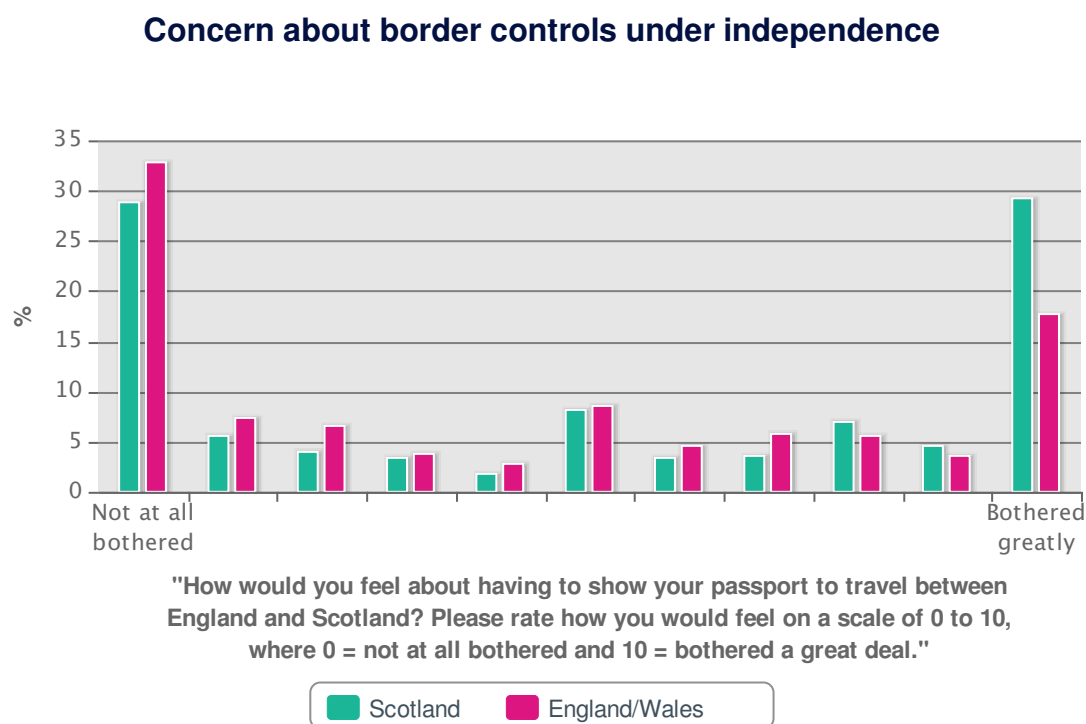
Figure 19a

Perception of likelihood of new border controls under independence



Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16–27 Oct 2013

Figure 19b



Source : Migration Observatory/YouGov, 16–27 Oct 2013

5 Implications for immigration policy and the independence debate

This report has provided the first in-depth look at Scotland residents' attitudes toward immigration to Scotland. A few points are critical to understanding Scotland's public opinion, especially in relation to England and Wales and in relation to the referendum vote.

5.1 Different from England and Wales, but majority in Scotland also want Less immigration

Consistent with prior research, public opinion in Scotland is indeed less negative toward immigration than opinion the rest of Britain. In Scotland compared with the rest of Britain, people are less likely to want immigration reduced, more likely to see it as good for their country, and less likely to see it as one of the most important issues facing the country. It is important, however, not to exaggerate these differences. A majority in Scotland still support reduced immigration, and the issue ranks high on the public agenda even if not as high as in Britain. And there is little support for a policy that is more open to immigration than the rest of the UK, at least when respondents are asked about immigration as a whole.

5.2 Little opposition to highly skilled workers, students, immediate family members

The Scotland Immigration Survey also provides new evidence on perceptions of and attitudes toward particular types of immigration to Scotland. In Scotland, as in the rest of Britain, people are most likely to think of immigrants as asylum seekers or labour migrants, and less likely to think of family members and particularly students.

Furthermore, in Scotland we again see less opposition and in some cases even some support for increased immigration. Highly-skilled migrants, especially scientists and researchers, are particularly welcome. This point might have as much or more policy relevance as the general preference for less immigration. Scottish government proposals thus far have spoken of a more open policy toward immigration, but one that particularly targets highly-skilled migrants. Still, even for the highly-skilled, only a third of the public support an increase while another third support the status quo. People immigrating as students and as immediate family members of citizens are in a similar

position: little support for reducing their numbers, but more support for the status quo than for an increase in levels. Here, Scotland is in some ways similar to the rest of Britain, and in some ways at least moderately different. Across Britain, immigrant groups are “ranked” in about the same order. Members of the public in both Scotland and the rest of Britain are most favourable toward immigration among high-skilled workers, especially scientists and researchers, and among students and immediate family members. There is more opposition to immigration of extended family members, asylum seekers, and low-skilled workers, both in general and in specific examples such as construction workers and restaurant staff. However, attitudes in Scotland are consistently less opposed to immigration of each sub-group than attitudes in Britain. These differences are enough to mean that more people in Scotland prefer to increase than reduce immigration among high-skilled workers in general (32% vs. 23%), although the largest proportion prefer the status quo (34%).

This point might have as much policy relevance as the general preference for less immigration. Scottish government proposals thus far have spoken of a more open policy toward immigration, but one that particularly targets students and highly-skilled migrants, as well as migrants with particular skills that are needed in particular geographical areas of Scotland.

5.3 Immigration policy in the context of the referendum

In relation to the independence debate, the above findings show an interesting mixture of responses. First, there is evidence of a relationship between a pro-independence vote and openness to immigration. Among people who do not wish to reduce immigration to Scotland, their planned referendum votes were close to evenly split, whereas ‘No’ held a solid lead among those who do wish to see immigration reduced. This relationship is significant, but not as strong as it is for other issues, such as the economy (Curtice 2014a). In addition, 22% chose immigration and asylum policy as one of the top three issues influencing their thinking on the independence referendum. Again, the economy looms as far more important, while immigration and policy ranks joint fifth with pensions as an influence on thinking about the referendum, from a list of thirteen issues offered to respondents to consider.

Second, an intriguing pattern emerged from results on questions about immigration and asylum policy, on where policy decisions should be taken and what sorts of policies might result. A clear majority preference emerged for the Scotland Government as the primary decision-maker on both immigration and asylum issues. Despite this, there was a considerable gap between expectations and preferences for what an independent Scotland Government would do, relative to the rest of the UK. Many people preferred to see the Scotland Government take up policies that are less open to immigration (45%) and less welcoming to asylum seekers (43%) than the UK Government. However, far fewer expected that this actually is what would happen, with only 22% (for immigration) and 23% (for asylum) believing that an independent Scotland would have less open policies than the UK.

In short, the pattern of responses does not yield a completely clear picture of how Scotland’s views on immigration will inform the independence debate and referendum vote. On the one hand, many more prefer to see immigration policy made by the Scottish Government rather than by the UK Government, which is where it sits under current constitutional arrangements. On the other hand, this does not seem to stem from a strong drive for a different, more open set of immigration and asylum policies, even though this is what many expect an independent Scottish Government would deliver.

A key point to pursue in future questioning is the issue of immigration involving highly-skilled workers and international students. The Scottish Government’s White Paper focuses on these groups in particular. Survey results show little support for reducing immigration among these groups, nor among immediate family members of citizens and settled migrants. If there is to be convergence between public attitudes and a new policy approach to immigration in an independent Scotland, it seems most likely to centre around these categories of immigration which are subject to the lowest levels of opposition in the Scottish (and British) public.

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Related Material

- Migration Observatory commentary – The variations enigma: Regional differences in support for reducing immigration to the UK <http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/commentary/variations-enigma-regional-differences-support-reducing-immigration-uk>
- Migration Observatory policy primer – Sub-National Immigration Policy: Can it Work in the UK? – <http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/policy-primers/sub-national-immigration-policy-can-it-work-uk>
- Migration Observatory briefing – UK Public Opinion toward Immigration: Overall Attitudes and Level of Concern <http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/briefings/uk-public-opinion-toward-immigration-overall-attitudes-and-level-concern>
- Migration Observatory briefing – UK Public Opinion toward Migration: Determinants of Attitudes <http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/briefings/uk-public-opinion-toward-migration-determinants-attitudes>
- YouGov/The Times Scotland Survey 2013 –Full results Scotland poll Referendum Independence http://d25d2506sfb94s.cloudfront.net/cumulus_uploads/document/yo2tn77guq/YouGov_Times_FINAL_16-Sep-2013.pdf
- Migration Observatory briefing – Non-European Student Migration to the UK <http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/briefings/non-european-student-migration-uk>
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- Migration Observatory report – Migration in the News <http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/reports/migration-news>
- Migration Observatory briefing – Irregular Migration in the UK: Definitions, Pathways and Scale <http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/briefings/irregular-migration-uk-definitions-pathways-and-scale>
- What Scotland Thinks – Release of initial findings from the Scottish Social Attitudes survey <http://blog.whatscotlandthinks.org/2014/01/release-of-initial-findings-from-the-scottish-social-attitudes-survey/>
- What Scotland Thinks – Should Scotland be an independent country <http://whatscotlandthinks.org/questions/should-scotland-be-an-independent-country-1#line>
- Migration Observatory policy primer – Citizenship, Borders and Migration in an Independent Scotland <http://www.migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/policy-primers/citizenship-borders-and-migration-independent-scotland>

Appendix A: Full top-line results

Full top-line results are available at: http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus_uploads/document/5vbhf8v5ik/YG-Archive-131127-Migration-Observatory-EngWales-Scot.pdf

Appendix B: Methodology

Fieldwork. The fieldwork was conducted by YouGov. Data were gathered through an on-line survey of a representative sample of the populations of Scotland and of England and Wales. YouGov's sampling procedures involve the creation of a group of voluntary participants in its surveys, which is large enough to provide demographically representative samples for many individual surveys. For each independent survey, YouGov invites a sub-set of panellists to participate, and continues to recruit until it has reached a sample (of the specified number of respondents) that matches the UK population as closely as possible on key demographic variables such as age, gender, region, and social grade.

For the present survey respondents were recruited from YouGov's voluntary panel, with separate samples drawn from Scotland and from England and Wales.

For more details, please see YouGov's technical report on its methodology – <http://yougov.co.uk/publicopinion/methodology/>

Weighting. While the sample was designed to be representative of the adult population of Scotland and of England and Wales, further steps are taken prior to analysis to ensure representativeness. To further improve the representativeness of the sample, YouGov provides weights to use in any analysis of data. These weights adjust the sample on the dimensions of age, gender, social grade, party identification, and newspaper readership. Using weights compensates for any slightly overrepresented or underrepresentation of a particular group in the realised sample.



The Migration Observatory

Based at the Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) at the University of Oxford, the Migration Observatory provides independent, authoritative, evidence-based analysis of data on migration and migrants in the UK, to inform media, public and policy debates, and to generate high quality research on international migration and public policy issues. The Observatory's analysis involves experts from a wide range of disciplines and departments at the University of Oxford.



COMPAS

The Migration Observatory is based at the ESRC Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS) at the University of Oxford. The mission of COMPAS is to conduct high quality research in order to develop theory and knowledge, inform policy-making and public debate, and engage users of research within the field of migration.

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