

Migration Policy Scotland – Topline Results

February 2024

Question 1

Do you think the number of immigrants coming to Scotland nowadays should be increased a lot, increased a little, remain the same as it is, reduced a little, or reduced a lot?

	Increased a lot	Increased a little	Net: Increased	Remain the same as it is	Reduced a little	Reduced a lot	Net: Reduced
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Feb 2024 (2,297)	10	21	31	26	17	25	42
Jan 2023 (1,162)	12	26	39	34	12	16	28

Question 2

Please remember to think about immigrants as people born outside the UK who have moved to Scotland to work, study, join family, or because they need protection.

In your opinion, what percentage of the total Scotland population are immigrants? You can answer any number between 0 and 100. (2024)¹

	0-2	3-5	6-10	11-20	21-50	51+
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Feb 2024 (2,256)	6	13	28	26	25	2
Jan 2023 (1,147)	6	17	21	22	29	6

¹(2023) In your opinion, what percentage of the total Scotland population are immigrants? You can answer any number between 0 and 100.

Question 3

On a scale of 0 to 10, has migration had a positive or negative impact on...? (2024, 2023)

		Scotland	Your local area
		%	%
Feb 24 (2,295)	Negative: 0-3	18	16
	Neutral: 4-6	27	31
	Positive: 7-10	43	31
	DK	12	22
	Mean	5.87	5.54
Jan 23 (1,157)	Negative: 0-3	8	15
	Neutral: 4-6	35	45
	Positive: 7-10	52	40
	Mean	6.31	5.82

Question 4

There are different views regarding the impact of immigration in Scotland. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Overall immigration (2024)/immigrants (2023):

		Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Net: Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Net: Disagree	Don't know
		%	%		%	%	%		%
Has a positive impact on the Scottish economy	Feb 24 (2,296)	17	31	47	21	16	11	26	5
	Jan 23 (1,158)	21	35	56	23	11	7	18	3
Is a burden on our welfare system	Feb 24 (2,298)	20	26	46	17	19	14	34	3
	Jan 23 (1,161)	11	19	30	19	24	23	47	4
Takes jobs away from workers in Scotland	Feb 24 (2,298)	9	15	24	20	32	23	54	1
	Jan 23 (1,157)	5	10	14	20	31	34	65	1
Helps to fill jobs for which it's hard to find workers in Scotland	Feb 24 (2,303)	27	42	69	14	10	5	15	2
	Jan 23 (1,158)	30	45	76	13	5	4	10	2
Brings new ideas and/or boosts innovation in Scotland	Feb 24 (2,298)	16	32	48	27	13	9	22	3
	Jan 23 (1,162)	16	36	52	26	11	7	18	3

Enriches Scottish cultural life (art, music, food etc.)	Feb 24 (2,303)	23	32	55	21	12	9	22	2
	Jan 23 (1,158)	25	34	60	20	11	6	17	3
Worsens crime problems in Scotland	Feb 24 (2,302)	12	20	32	27	22	14	36	5
	Jan 23 (1,159)	7	16	23	30	22	19	41	6
Brings new people to areas of Scotland which need them	Feb 24 (2,298)	17	34	51	21	16	10	26	3
	Jan 23 (1,159)	20	39	58	21	11	6	17	4
Leads to social conflict	Feb 24 (2,299)	12	34	46	27	17	7	24	3
Increases the risk of terrorism	Feb 24 (2,299)	12	16	28	21	23	25	48	3

Question 5

Now please think about immigration to the area where you live. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
Overall immigration (2024)²

		Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Net: Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Net: Disagree	Don't know
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Has a positive impact on the local economy	Feb 24 (2,295)	15	27	41	26	15	10	25	8
	Jan 23 (1,158)	16	38	54	24	11	6	18	5
Is a burden on local resources	Feb 24 (2,300)	16	20	36	20	21	18	39	5
	Jan 23 (1,156)	7	18	25	22	26	22	48	4
Takes jobs away from local workers	Feb 24 (2,294)	9	13	22	19	29	24	54	5
	Jan 23	4	10	14	20	32	31	63	3

² (2023) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements. Overall immigrants in my local area ...

	(1,154)								
Helps to fill jobs for which it's hard to find local workers	Feb 24 (2,302)	21	36	56	18	12	8	20	5
	Jan 23 (1,156)	24	43	66	18	8	4	12	4
Brings new ideas and/or boosts innovation in the local area	Feb 24 (2,299)	14	26	39	28	15	11	25	8
	Jan 23 (1,155)	13	32	45	30	13	7	20	5
Enriches local cultural life (art, music, food etc.)	Feb 24 (2,297)	18	30	48	24	15	8	23	5
	Jan 23 (1,152)	21	35	55	24	11	7	18	3
Worsens local crime problems	Feb 24 (2,299)	11	16	27	24	24	19	43	6
	Jan 23 (1,158)	6	13	19	28	23	23	46	7
Brings new people to an area that needs them	Feb 24 (2,296)	14	29	43	25	16	12	27	6
	Jan 23 (1,157)	15	34	48	24	16	6	22	5

Leads to social conflict	Feb 24 (2,297)	11	24	35	24	21	13	35	6
Increases the risks of terrorism	Feb 24 (2,300)	10	12	22	20	21	32	53	6

Question 6

Please tell us if you think each of the following types of immigration should be increased, kept the same, or reduced (2024).

	Increased a lot	Increased a little	Net: Increased	Remain the same	Reduced a little	Reduced a lot	Net: Reduced	DK
Base: ALL (2,298)	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
People who come to work in Scotland on a skilled worker visa	28	31	59	26	6	3	9	6
People who come to work in Scotland on a health and social care visa	23	25	48	25	9	9	18	10
People who come to Scotland to do seasonal or temporary work	19	29	48	29	10	8	17	6
People who come to Scotland to study	14	23	37	39	11	8	20	5
People who come to Scotland accompanying immediate family members who have a work visa	9	19	28	34	13	16	29	9
People who come to Scotland accompanying immediate family members who have a study visa	6	13	19	29	17	25	42	9
People who come to Scotland on specified humanitarian visas (e.g. from Ukraine)	19	26	45	31	9	9	18	6
People who come to Scotland seeking asylum	15	18	33	25	14	22	36	6

People who come to Scotland to join immediate family members who are British citizens	11	19	30	37	13	13	25	8
People who come to Scotland to join extended family members who are British citizens	8	15	24	34	15	20	34	8

Question 7

Please now think about migration to Scotland for work. Which of the following two statements comes closest to your preference? (2024, 2023)

	Feb 2024 (2,302)	Jan 2023 (1,158)
	%	%
Migrants should be allowed to come to Scotland for a short period of time only to work, then be required to return home	25	16
Migrants should be allowed to come to Scotland for a longer period of time to have the chance to settle and integrate	53	66
Neither	14	10
Don't know	9	8

Question 8

Currently international students are eligible to apply for a 2-year post-study visa which allows them to work in any job. Do you support or oppose this policy? (2024)

	Base: ALL (2,301)	%
Strongly support		24
Tend to support		36
Net: Support		60
Neither support nor oppose		19
Tend to oppose		12
Strongly oppose		6
Net: Oppose		18
DK		3

Question 9

How long should immigrants, excluding asylum seekers and refugees, work and pay tax in the UK before they are eligible for benefits and social housing? (2024)

	%
Base: ALL (2,301)	
12 months or less	15
1-2 years	23
3-5 years	24
6-10 years	7
Longer than 10 years	4
Only UK citizens should be eligible for benefits and social housing	20
DK	7

Question 10

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements (2024):

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Net: Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Net: Disagree	DK
Base: ALL (2,295)	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Employers should be able to recruit workers from abroad to fill vacancies	22	39	61	17	14	6	20	2
Sectors with critical shortages (e.g. health and social care) should be able to recruit workers from abroad to fill vacancies	44	35	79	9	7	4	11	2
Sectors requiring temporary and seasonal workers (e.g. farming) should be able to recruit from abroad to fill vacancies	37	41	78	9	8	3	11	2
Employers should not be able to recruit workers from abroad, even if they can't find British staff	4	9	14	12	36	35	71	3
Employers that recruit workers from abroad should be obliged to pay into a training fund that is used to develop skills in UK workers	24	34	58	20	10	5	15	7
Wage regulations should be enforced better, so that workers from abroad do not undercut British workers	42	36	78	11	4	3	7	4

Question 11

Some countries have introduced programmes where people can become ‘welcomers’, meeting newly arrived migrants socially and helping them to settle and integrate. How strongly would you support or oppose the Scottish Government creating a welcoming programme linking British people with newly arrived migrants to help them settle and integrate in Scotland? (2024)

	Base: ALL (2,301)	%
Strongly support		21
Tend to support		34
Net: Support		55
Neither support nor oppose		23
Tend to oppose		7
Strongly oppose		11
Net: Oppose		18
DK		4

Question 12

And how likely, if at all, would you personally be to take part in a welcoming programme? (2024)

Base: Support/Neither support nor oppose at Q11 (1,777)	%
Very likely	6
Fairly likely	24
Net: Likely	30
Not very likely	34
Not at all likely	27
Net: Not likely	61
DK	9

Question 13

Please remember that for this survey we are defining immigrants as people born outside the UK who have come to Scotland to work, study, join family, or because they need protection.

Which of the following statements applies best to you? (2024)³

	Jan 2023 (1,162)	Feb 2024 (2,305)
	%	%
I am an immigrant living in Scotland	3	2
I have friends who are immigrants currently living in Scotland	20	17
I have family members who are immigrants currently living in Scotland	5	4
I regularly speak to people who are immigrants living in Scotland	32	30
None of the above	46	51
Don't know / Not Applicable	7	8

³ (2023) Which of the following statements applies best to you?

Question 14

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following? (2024, 2023)

		Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Net: Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Net: Disagree	Don't know
		%	%		%	%	%		%
Having a mix of different people in an area makes it a more enjoyable place to live	Feb 2024 (2,290)	20	32	52	29	11	6	17	2
	Jan 2023 (1,159)	26	35	60	25	9	4	12	2
I would rather live in an area where people are from the same ethnic background as me	Feb 2024 (2,289)	8	14	22	33	25	19	44	1
	Jan 2023 (1,159)	6	12	18	33	24	24	48	1
I believe that diversity is good for Scotland	Feb 2024 (2,294)	30	35	65	22	6	5	11	2
	Jan 2023 (1,159)	39	35	74	17	5	3	8	1

Question 15

At the 2019 UK General Election, which party did you vote for? (2024)

	Base: ALL (2,301)	%
Conservative		12
Labour		14
Liberal Democrats		4
Green Party		2
The Brexit Party		1
The Scottish National Party		44
A different party (Please specify)		1
Don't remember		6
Didn't vote		9
Prefer not to say		7

Technical details:

- 2024:
 - The survey was designed by Migration Policy Scotland and Diffley Partnership,
 - Invitations were issued online using the ScotPulse panel,
 - Results are based on a survey of 2,305 respondents,
 - Fieldwork was conducted between 1st – 5th February 2024,
 - Results are weighted to the Scottish population by age and gender.
- 2023:
 - The survey was designed by Migration Policy Scotland and Diffley Partnership,
 - Invitations were issued online using the ScotPulse panel,
 - Results are based on a survey of 1,162 respondents,
 - Fieldwork was conducted between 17th – 19th January 2023,
 - Results are weighted to the Scottish population by age and gender.