

SCOTTISH SOCIAL ATTITUDES



From Indyref1 to Indyref2?

The State of Nationalism in Scotland

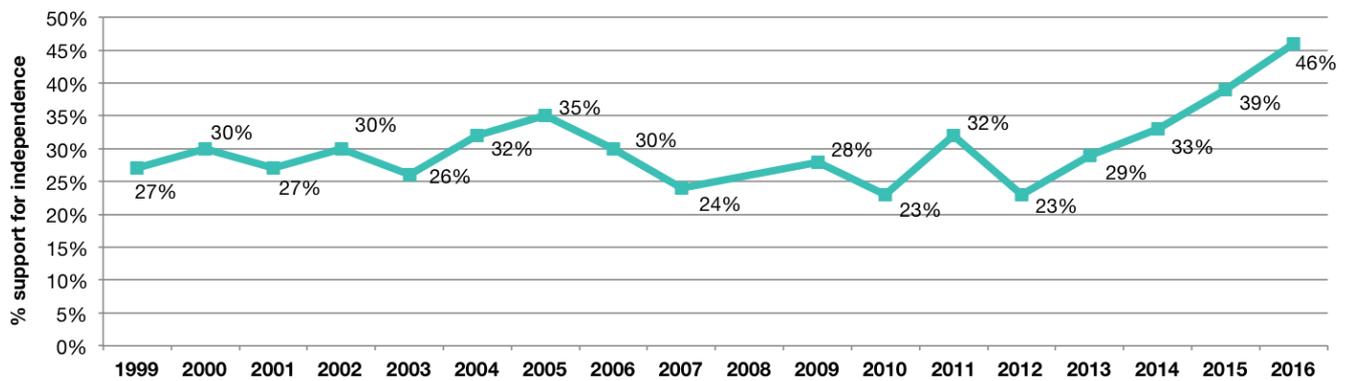
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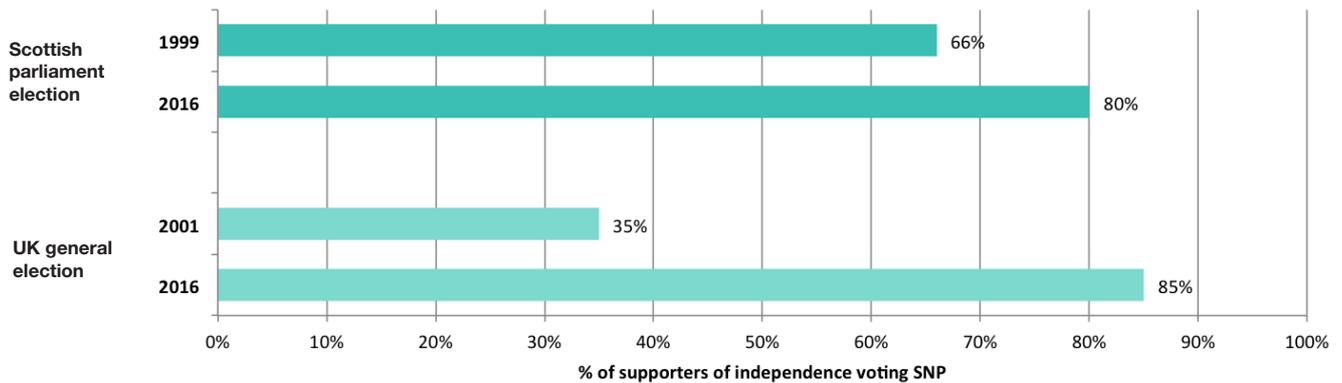
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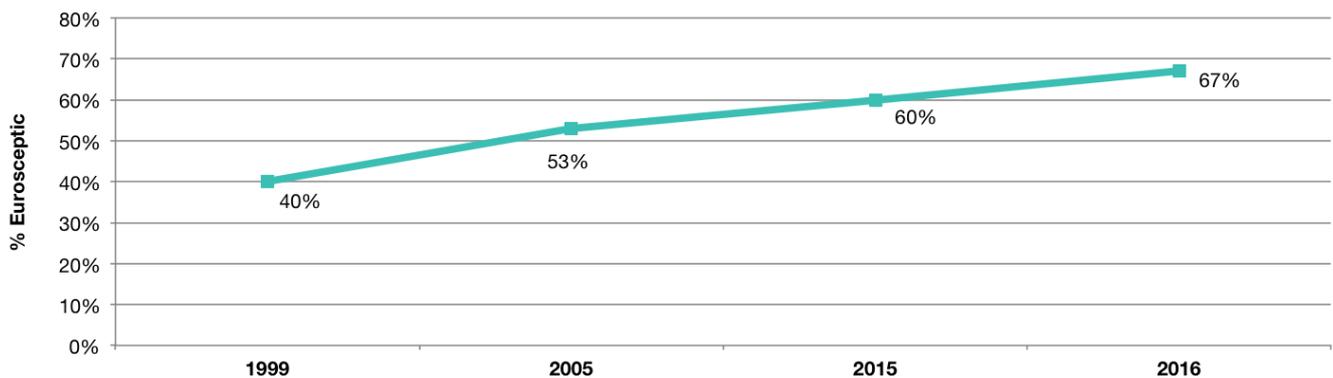
The 2014 independence referendum has left a legacy of record high levels of support for independence.



Those who back independence have become more inclined to vote SNP in elections.



Despite the 62% vote to Remain, Scotland has become more sceptical about the EU.



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Introduction

The referendum on Scottish independence held on 18 September 2014 was intended to be 'legal, fair and decisive'. Apart from some complaints about aspects of the media coverage, few question that the first two criteria were satisfied. But the referendum has not proven to be decisive. Although those who voted in favour of staying in the UK constituted a clear majority, at 45% the level of support for independence was much higher than many had initially anticipated and was high enough to open up the prospect that there might be majority support for independence in the not too distant future. Meanwhile, the vote was followed a few months later by a UK general election in which the SNP secured 50% of the nationwide vote and all but three of Scotland's 59 seats in the House of Commons. Far from being cowed and defeated, the nationalist movement in Scotland emerged from the independence referendum in better health than ever.

Meanwhile, in a referendum on the UK's membership of the EU held in June 2016 Scotland voted by 62% to 38% in favour of remaining while the UK as a whole voted narrowly to leave. For nationalists such an outcome meant that Scotland was being faced with the prospect of having to leave the EU 'against its will'. It prompted the First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, immediately to pronounce that the possibility of holding another referendum was now 'on the table'. Subsequently the Scottish Government has attempted to persuade the UK government that Scotland should be allowed to remain in the EU single market even if the rest of the UK does not, indicating that, in that event, it would not hold an independence referendum after all (Scottish Government, 2016). However, so far at least, the UK government has evinced little enthusiasm for the idea (HM Government, 2017), and now, after weeks of speculation the Scottish Government has announced that it is minded to hold a second ballot, either in autumn 2018 or in spring 2019. While any ballot can only be held with the consent of the UK Parliament, it is now quite possible that Scotland will be voting on the question of independence once again in the not too distant future.

It is thus a propitious moment to assess the popularity of nationalism in Scotland. By the popularity of 'nationalism' we mean both the level and the character of support for the SNP in particular and for independence in general. How has this been affected by the first independence referendum in 2014? And what appear to be the implications for the future of nationalism in Scotland, including not least in any second referendum ballot?

Our evidence comes from the Scottish Social Attitudes (SSA) survey, an annual high-quality survey that has tracked both attitudes towards Scotland's constitutional status and people's party preferences ever since the advent of devolution in 1999. The most recent survey, the relevant results from which are being published here for the first

time, interviewed a random probability sample of 1,237 people aged 16 and above between July and December 2016, representing a response rate of 50%. (Note that previous surveys in the series only interviewed those aged 18 and older.) The figures quoted here are those that have been obtained after the data have been weighted for known patterns of non-response and to ensure that the demographic profile of the sample matches that of Scotland as a whole.

The Impact of IndyRef1: Support for Independence

We begin by looking at attitudes towards how Scotland should be governed, and how these have evolved during and since the independence referendum. Every time that the SSA survey has been conducted since the creation of the Scottish Parliament in 1999, the survey has asked the following question about how Scotland should be governed, providing us with a unique ability to trace the long-term evolution of attitudes to the constitutional question in Scotland:

Which of these statements comes closest to your view?

Scotland should become independent, separate from the UK and the European Union

Scotland should become independent, separate from the UK but part of the European Union

Scotland should remain part of the UK, with its own elected parliament which has some taxation powers

Scotland should remain part of the UK, with its own elected parliament which has no taxation powers

Scotland should remain part of the UK without an elected parliament

For our purposes here, we combine those who pick either of the first two responses and regard them as supporters of independence, while those who choose either the third or the fourth option are classified together as backers of devolution. Table 1 shows the level of support for independence and devolution in every SSA survey, together with the level of support for the proposition that there should not be any kind of Scottish Parliament at all.

Table 1 Attitudes towards how Scotland should be governed 1999-2016

	Constitutional Preference		
	Independence	Devolution	No Parliament
1999	27	59	10
2000	30	55	12
2001	27	59	9
2002	30	52	13
2003	26	56	13
2004	32	45	17
2005	35	44	14
2006	30	54	9
2007	24	62	9
2008	n/a	n/a	n/a
2009	28	56	8
2010	23	61	10
2011	32	58	6
2012	23	61	11
2013	29	55	9
2014	33	50	7
2015	39	49	6
2016	46	42	8

Note: Up to and including 2015 SSA interviewed adults aged 18 and over. In 2016 those aged 16 or 17 were also interviewed for the first time. If these 16 and 17 year olds are excluded the proportion choosing independence falls to 45% while the remaining figures are unchanged.

Prior to the announcement in 2012 that an independence referendum would take place, the level of support for independence in response to this question oscillated between a low of 23% and a high of 35%. There was no evidence of a trend in any particular direction, and certainly no evidence that the experience of being governed by a SNP administration was serving to increase support for independence. The lowest levels of support were registered in 2010, three years after the SNP first came to power (as a minority administration) and again in 2012, just twelve months after the SNP won an overall majority in the Scottish Parliament. Even the 2014 survey, conducted in the weeks and months immediately before the independence referendum, still put support for independence at no more than 33%, no higher than it had been as long ago as 2005 (when it stood at 35%).

Yet the picture now looks very different. In 2015, when the survey was conducted after the general election that propelled 56 SNP MPs into the House of Commons, support for independence rose to an all-time high of 39%. But now in the most recent survey it stands at 46%. For the first time independence is the single most popular of the three options.

At this point, however, readers may feel that the results are rather curious. After all, did not as many as 45% vote for independence in the September 2014 referendum? And did not opinion polls

conducted in the weeks and months thereafter suggest that support for independence subsequently remained at that level? So why then did the 2015 survey only record 39% support for independence?

One explanation can be dismissed straight away - that the 2015 sample underrepresented those who voted Yes. For the 2015 survey also asked people how they had voted in the referendum, and of those who indicated that they had cast a vote, as many as 48% said they had voted Yes. That suggested that, if anything, the sample slightly overrepresented those who voted Yes.

Instead what happened is that many a respondent – around a quarter (26%) - to the 2015 survey who said they had voted Yes in September 2014 did not follow that through with an expression of support for independence when answering SSA's long-running question. Rather many chose one of the devolution responses. Those who voted No in the referendum, in contrast, were more consistent in their choices – as many as 86% expressed support for either devolution or no parliament at all. It seemed that perhaps some of those who voted for independence would in fact be content with a much more powerful Scottish Parliament within the framework of the UK.

However, this discrepancy has now disappeared. Here we should note that in addition to our long-running question, the latest SSA survey also asked respondents how they would vote if an independence referendum were to be held now. This elicited 44% support for Yes, just a point below the 45% who said they would vote No. (The remainder either said they were not sure, would not vote, or in a few cases refused to answer the question.) If we look at the responses to our long-running question of those who said they would vote Yes, we find that as many as 87% of them chose one of the independence options in SSA's long-running question. This is well above the equivalent figure of 74% in the 2015 survey. It is also little different from the proportion of current No supporters who backed devolution or no parliament at all (89%). This greater consistency of responses suggests that support for independence has solidified during the course of the last twelve months.

That it should have done so is perhaps is not surprising, given the pattern of responses to another question about how Scotland should be governed that SSA has also asked on a regular basis in recent years. Rather than referring to terms such as 'independent', this question simply asks people where they think responsibility for particular decisions should lie. It reads:

Which of the statements on this card comes closest to your view about who should make government decisions for Scotland?

The Scottish Parliament should make all the decisions for Scotland

The UK government should make decisions about defence and foreign affairs; the Scottish Parliament should decide everything else

The UK government should make decisions about taxes, benefits and defence and foreign affairs; the Scottish Parliament should decide the rest.

The UK government should make all decisions for Scotland

The first of these options is intended to refer to independence, the second to some variant of ‘devo max’ or ‘Home Rule’, and the third to limiting the responsibilities of the Scottish Parliament to those set out in the original Act that established the Scottish Parliament. The last option, of course, represents opposition to any kind of devolution.

Table 2 Attitudes towards Division of Powers between Scottish Parliament and UK Government, 2010-16

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Scottish Parliament should make...	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
All decisions	28	43	35	31	41	51	49
All except defence and foreign affairs	32	29	32	32	27	30	31
All except defence, foreign affairs, taxation and welfare	27	21	24	25	22	12	12
No decisions	10	5	6	8	6	3	4

Note: Up to and including 2015 SSA interviewed adults aged 18 and over. In 2016 those aged 16 or 17 were also interviewed for the first time. If these 16 and 17 year olds are excluded the proportion choosing all except defence, foreign affairs, taxation and welfare increases to 13%, while the remaining figures are unchanged.

As Table 2 reveals, the pattern of answers to this question can prove to be quite volatile. For example, in 2010 just 28% said that the Scottish Parliament should make all decisions, whereas just a year later as many as 43% did so. Even so, the level of support for the independence option reached a new high in 2015. However, at 51% it was much higher than the level of support for independence registered by our long-running question, suggesting that the appetite for a de facto independent parliament may well be higher than the answers to our long-running question that year suggested. Now, while support for independence in response to our long-running question has indeed increased, the proportion saying that the Scottish Parliament should make all decisions has simply stabilised at 49%, little different from that obtained by either of our other measures of constitutional preference.

Even so, the results obtained by asking about the constitutional question in this way still suggest that the link between voters’ stated constitutional preference and their views about the distribution of power and responsibility between the UK government and the devolved institutions is not as firm as we might anticipate. It remains the case that as many as one in five of those who say that they

would vote now for independence - and also one in five of those who choose independence in response to our long-running question - do not say that the Scottish Parliament should make all decisions. Conversely, around one in five of those who state that they would vote no to independence choose one of the devolution options, while much the same is true of those who otherwise indicate they want a devolved parliament. It looks as though some voters may have an adherence to the symbolism of 'independence' or the 'union' that is not necessarily related to their views about the appropriate division of powers between London and Edinburgh.

Still, that said, one thing is now crystal clear. The long-term consequence of holding the independence referendum in 2014 was a much higher level of support for the idea of independence than ever existed beforehand. Before the referendum campaign got under way in 2012 at best little more than one in three and maybe even as few as one in four backed independence. Now, some two years after the referendum, approaching half of all voters in Scotland back the idea, irrespective of how they are asked. It is little wonder that the independence referendum has failed to settle the debate about Scotland's constitutional status.

Not only has the level of support for independence changed - so also has some of its character. It has long been evident that many people in Scotland feel a strong sense of Scottish national identity (McCrone and Bechhofer, 2015) However, many of those who felt that way did not necessarily feel that their Scottish identity should be reflected in the way they are governed. This is now much less the case.

Table 3 Support for Independence by Moreno National Identity, 2012-16

National Identity	% support independence					Change 2012-6
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	
Scottish, not British	46	51	59	66	69	+23
More Scottish than British	23	34	44	47	56	+33
Equally Scottish and British	11	14	11	18	26	+15
More British than Scottish/ British not Scottish	8	7	12	14	14	+6

This can be seen in Table 3, which shows the level of support for independence as registered in response to our long-running question broken down by a measure of national identity known as the Moreno question (Moreno, 1988). This question invites respondents to indicate what combination of feeling Scottish and feeling British best describes themselves. Most people put themselves in one of the first three categories in the table – in 2016, for example, 29% said they were equally Scottish and British, 28% that they were more Scottish than British, and 24% that they were Scottish and not British, figures that are little different from those obtained by other SSA surveys in recent years. In contrast, just 3% said that they were more British

than Scottish and 5% that they were British, not Scottish. Because these last two groups are so small, they have been combined in Table 3.

Those with a strong sense of Scottish identity have always been more likely to back independence. However, on the eve of the referendum campaign in 2012, that still meant that only around half of those who said they were ‘Scottish, not British’ said that they wanted Scotland to become independent. Now that figure is at least two-thirds. Support for the idea has increased even more – from around a quarter to well over half – amongst those who say they are ‘more Scottish than British’. As a result, a clear majority of those who say they are exclusively or predominantly Scottish now back the idea of independence.

In contrast, while there has been some increase in support for independence amongst those who say they are ‘equally Scottish and British’, it has been less marked and even now no more than one in four of those in this group would like Scotland to leave the UK. Meanwhile, there has been little increase in support amongst the minority who feel wholly or predominantly British, and still no more than one in seven of this group back the idea. People’s views about independence in Scotland now reflect their sense of national identity to a greater extent than ever before.

In addition, the gap between older and younger voters in their level of support for independence, a gap that has long been present, also seems to have widened somewhat. In 2012, only 19% of those aged 45 and over backed independence, while 28% of those aged under 45 did so. Now while support for the idea of independence has increased by 19 points to 38% amongst those aged 45 and over, it has increased even more – by 27 points to 54% amongst those aged between 18 and 44. The gap is currently especially wide between those aged between 16 and 24, 72% of whom support independence, and those aged 65 and over, just 26% of whom do so. Of course, there is no guarantee that younger voters will not change their minds or that those who have yet to enter adulthood will prove to be as supportive of independence as today’s younger adults, but unless one of these two things does happen then demographic change alone could, other things being equal, result in support for independence increasing further in future.

The Impact of Indyref1: Support for the SNP

As we noted at the beginning of this paper, the independence referendum was followed just a few months later by a 50% vote for the SNP in the 2015 general election. The party was not quite so successful in the 2016 Scottish Parliament election, and indeed thanks to a number of defeats against the national tide in individual

constituencies, the party failed to retain its overall majority in the Holyrood chamber (Curtice, 2017). Even so, at 46.5%, the SNP's share of the constituency vote was still up a point on what it achieved at the previous Scottish Parliament election in 2011, although the party's share of the list vote fell back by a couple of points to 41.7%.

The explanation for this success might be thought to be straightforward. Given that support for independence has increased markedly, we might expect this to be reflected in increased support for the SNP. However, hitherto the party has performed less well in elections to the UK Parliament at Westminster than it has in elections to the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh. In the first three UK elections held after the advent of the Scottish Parliament the party never managed to win more than 20% of the vote. In the first three elections to the Scottish Parliament, in contrast, it never won less than 24% (of the constituency vote). That therefore makes it particularly remarkable that in the Westminster contest of 2015 the party should perform better than it had done at any previous election, Scottish or Westminster. Meanwhile, given the increase in support for independence, it might have been thought rather disappointing for the SNP that in the 2016 Scottish Parliament election the party should have more or less done no more than match its electoral performance five years previously.

Table 4 SNP Support by Constitutional Preference 1999-2016

% voted SNP in:	Constitutional Preference	
	Independence	Union**
1999	62	17
2001*	35	9
2003	58	14
2005*	33	8
2007	80	22
2010*	55	12
2011	79	38
2015*	85	25
2016	80	24

* Westminster election.

** Constitutional preference is measured as at Table 1. 'Union' refers to those either backing devolution or favouring not having a Scottish Parliament at all.

In Scottish election years, the figures are based on the proportion reporting voting SNP on the constituency vote.

Table 4 provides an initial indication of why the electoral performance of the SNP has not simply followed the trajectory of support for independence. It shows the share of the vote won by the SNP at each Westminster and Scottish Parliament election since 1999, broken down by whether respondents indicated support or not for independence in our long-running question about Scotland's constitutional status. The first point to note is that while, unsurprisingly, at each and every election those in favour of

independence have been more likely to vote for the SNP than have those who wanted to remain the UK, support for independence and voting for the SNP have been far from synonymous with each other. At the Westminster elections of 2001 and 2005 it seems that little more than a third of those in favour of independence at that time voted for the SNP. Supporters of independence were, on the other hand, more inclined to back the SNP in the earliest Scottish Parliament elections, whereas unionists were almost as disinclined to do so as they were in a Westminster contest. Even then, however, no more than around three in five of those in favour of independence voted for the party.

This pattern changed significantly in 2007. A central foundation of the party's relative success that year was its achievement in pushing its support amongst supporters of independence up to 80%. In contrast, support for the party amongst unionists was still only five points higher than it had been in 1999. This was perhaps the first election since the advent of devolution in which the constitutional question could be said to have been a central dividing line in how people in Scotland voted. Even so, the change was not sustained. Little more than half of those supporting independence voted for the SNP in the 2010 Westminster election. Meanwhile, although in the 2011 Scottish election once again around four in five of those who preferred Scotland to be independent voted for the SNP, what was remarkable at this election was the level of support for the party amongst unionists. At nearly two in five, the proportion was well above that at any previous election; the party seems to have gained ground in 2011 primarily because it was thought to be providing Scotland with effective government rather than because of enthusiasm for its policy of independence (Johns et al., 2013).

That, however, was less obviously the case both in 2015 and 2016. At the Westminster election of 2015, as many as 85% of those who supported independence voted for the SNP. The apparent previous reluctance of those who want Scotland to leave the UK to reflect this belief in how they voted in a UK election had apparently disappeared. Meanwhile, the party was once again successful in winning the votes of four in five of this group in the 2016 Holyrood contest. However, on this occasion (and indeed in 2015), support for the party amongst unionists was much lower than in it had been in 2011 (and was little different from 2007). Since the independence referendum the constitutional question has seemingly quite firmly become the central dividing line of Scottish electoral politics, irrespective of whatever election is taking place.

That whether the election in question is a Scottish one or a UK one now makes less difference to voters' willingness to vote for the SNP is also suggested by the analysis in Table 5. At each Scottish election since 1999, SSA has not only asked its respondents how they actually voted in the election earlier that year, but also how they would have voted if a Westminster election had been taking

place on the same day. On the left-hand side of the table we show the difference between the percentage who said they had actually voted for the SNP in the Scottish election and the percentage who said that they would have done so in a hypothetical Westminster ballot. Equally, after each Westminster election the survey has asked people how they would have voted if instead a Scottish Parliament election had taken place. On the right-hand side of Table 5 we show the difference between the percentage who voted for the party in the Westminster election and the percentage that would have done so in a hypothetical Scottish election.

One point is immediately apparent. At each Scottish Parliament election (shown on the left-hand side of the table) more people have consistently reported having voted for the SNP than said they would have done so in a Westminster election. At the 2011 election the difference was no less than 19 points, suggesting that rather than obtaining the 45% of the vote that they actually did, the SNP would have won little more than a quarter of the vote in a Westminster election held on that day. Meanwhile, at each Westminster election (shown on the right-hand side of the table) fewer people said they had voted for the party than claimed they would have done so in a Scottish Parliament election. It seems as though when voters were being asked, ‘who and what would be best for Scotland?’ some were inclined to give a different answer than when they were considering, ‘who and what would be best for the UK as a whole?’.

Table 5 Difference Between Actual Level Support for the SNP at Elections held since 1999 and the Hypothetical Level of Support the Party would have obtained in an Alternative Electoral Contest

Scottish Election	Difference Between % SNP vote and % in a Hypothetical Westminster Election	Westminster Election	Difference Between % SNP vote and % in a Hypothetical Scottish Election
1999	+8	2001	-10
2003	+7	2005	-6
2007	+11	2010	-10
2011	+19	2015	-4
2016	+7		

These differences were, however, smaller in both 2015 and 2016. This is more obviously the case in 2014 where at four points the gap is in absolute terms smaller than at any previous Westminster election. In the case of the 2016 contest the seven-point difference is still absolutely as large as it was in 2003, but in 2003 the party only won 24% of the constituency vote in the first place. Relatively the gap in 2016 is much smaller. The really striking contrast is with the 2011 election when the party won much the same share of the vote as it did in 2016, but the gap was nearly three times as big as it was in 2016.

Voting for the SNP thus evidently still seems a somewhat more attractive prospect to some voters in a Scottish Parliament election

than at a Westminster one. But since the referendum the difference has narrowed. Not only have the SNP become more effective since the independence referendum at winning over the support of those who back independence (a much larger group as they now are) but also at doing so irrespective of the election in question.

Post-Brexit Prospects

We have seen that the 2014 independence referendum has had a profound impact on public opinion and electoral politics in Scotland. First, it has resulted in a very substantial increase in support for independence, such that, however people are asked, nearly half are in favour of leaving the UK. Any initial apparent inconsistency that may have existed in how Yes voters expressed their views on the constitutional question seems to have disappeared. Moreover, the link between people's sense of national identity and people's views about how Scotland should be governed has strengthened, such that amongst those who feel wholly or primarily Scottish independence now seems by far the most popular option.

Second, the independence referendum has increased the salience of the constitutional question in Scotland's electoral politics. Not so long ago the SNP often struggled to persuade those who supported independence to vote for the party. Not any more. People's willingness or otherwise to vote for the SNP now depends heavily – although not entirely – on their views about how Scotland should be governed. And because the proportion of the electorate that backs independence is now so much higher, the SNP have what, at the moment at least, looks like an almost impregnable foundation for electoral success. All in all, nationalism in Scotland has never seemed to be in finer fettle.

To that extent, it would seem that the nationalist movement will enter any second referendum in a much stronger position than the one it enjoyed before the September 2014 independence referendum. However, Ms Sturgeon is intending to hold the next ballot on the back of the claim that leaving the EU single market would be deleterious for Scotland's economic prospects and thus the country needs to become independent in order to avoid having to leave the EU along with the rest of the UK. In short, a vote for independence could well be presented as a vote for securing Scotland's future in the EU.

This, however, raises a key question. Just how keen are voters in Scotland – and especially nationalist voters – on the EU? After all, although the SNP has backed 'independence in Europe' for more than a quarter of a century, we might wonder whether some of those who object to the role that the UK government plays in Scotland's affairs are also reluctant to accept decisions being made in Brussels. Meanwhile, although as many as 62% of people in Scotland might have voted to remain in the EU, we might wonder whether their

commitment is strong enough to persuade them of the merits of independence.

We begin our examination of this issue by looking at how attitudes towards the EU have evolved in Scotland since the advent of devolution. In Table 6 we show how respondents have answered when presented with a question that sets out a range of options for Britain's relationship with the EU. It asks:

Do you think Britain's long-term policy should be.....

... to leave the European Union,

to stay in the EU and try to reduce the EU's powers,

to leave things as they are,

to stay in the EU and try to increase the EU's powers,

or, to work for the formation of a single European government?

(In 2016, the question began: Leaving aside the result of the referendum on Britain's membership of the European Union, what do you think Britain's policy should be...)

Two key points emerge from the table. First, voters in Scotland were rather more sceptical about Britain's relationship with the EU in the years immediately running up to the EU referendum than they had been in the early years of devolution. In 1999, only two in five (40%) said either that Britain should leave the EU or that while it should stay it should try to reduce the EU's powers. However, even by 2005 over half (53%) were of that view, and by the time the 2015 general election had been held and the prospect of an EU referendum was firmly on the horizon, the figure had risen to three in five (60%). This long-term increase in scepticism about Europe reflects a not dissimilar trend elsewhere in the UK (Curtice, 2016).

	1999	2000	2003	2004	2005	2013	2014	2015	2016
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Leave the EU	10	11	11	13	14	19	17	17	25
Stay in EU but reduce its powers	30	27	25	23	39	29	36	43	42
Leave things as are	16	22	20	20	19	18	23	20	21
Stay in EU and increase its powers	28	22	28	28	8	16	9	11	5
Work for single European government	10	9	8	8	6	7	8	6	3

Second, it seems that Scotland emerged from the EU referendum even more sceptical about the EU than it had been at the outset of the referendum campaign. The proportion saying that Britain should leave the EU in response to this question increased between

2015 and 2016 by eight points, to an all-time high of 25%, while the proportion saying that it should seek to reduce the EU's powers remained at just over two in five. As a result, two in three (67%) of people in Scotland could now be said to be sceptical about the EU.

This scepticism is far from being the preserve of those who voted to leave the EU. No less than 56% of those who said they voted to Remain in the EU said that Britain should seek to reduce the EU's powers. Only 9% would actually like the EU to become a more powerful institution. So there must be some doubt about the strength of the commitment to the EU of many of those in Scotland who voted to Remain.

Moreover, despite the SNP's advocacy of 'independence in Europe', there is far from consensus on the question of EU membership amongst those who are in favour of independence. According to our latest survey, no less than one in three (33%) of those who say they would now vote in favour of independence (and who voted in the EU referendum) reported that they voted to Leave. This figure, which is not dissimilar to that obtained by other polls and surveys, is only a little lower than the equivalent figure (37%) amongst those who say they would vote No to independence. As we might anticipate, much the same picture emerges if we look at the vote choice in the EU referendum of those who choose independence and those who back staying in the UK in response to our long-running question on how Scotland should be governed. As many as 36% of those who choose independence say they voted to leave, almost exactly the same as the 35% of unionists who do so.

There is nothing new about this undercurrent of Euroscepticism within the nationalist movement. This is evident in Table 7, which compares the attitudes towards Britain's membership of the EU of those who support independence with those of backers of the Union, as recorded by each of the last four SSA surveys. Between 2013 and 2015 those in favour of independence were actually more likely to say that Britain should leave the EU than were those who want Scotland to remain in the UK. True, they were less likely to say that Britain should stay in the EU while trying to reduce its powers, but even so the combined total of those who either wanted Britain to leave or that it should try to reduce the EU's powers was much the same amongst supporters of independence (for example, 61% in 2014) as it was amongst those who backed staying in the Union (60% in 2014).

Table 7 Attitudes in Scotland towards Britain's relationship with the EU by Constitutional Preference 2013-2016

Britain should..	2013		2014		2015		2016	
	Inde- pendence	Union	Inde- pendence	Union	Inde- pendence	Union	Inde- pendence	Union
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Leave the EU	24	17	25	13	23	12	21	29
Stay in EU but reduce its powers	33	45	36	47	39	47	41	44
Leave things as are	26	25	22	25	18	21	27	17
Stay in EU and increase its powers	8	7	7	7	8	11	5	5
Work for single European government	2	3	6	3	4	3	3	3

The EU referendum campaign does seem to have made some difference to this pattern. While attitudes towards the EU remained much the same amongst supporters of independence as they had been in 2015, those who would prefer to stay in the UK became more intensely sceptical, with as many as 29% now saying in response to this question that Britain should leave the EU, up 17 points on just the previous year. Indeed, it would appear that more or less all of the overall increase in Scotland in Euroscepticism during the EU referendum campaign occurred amongst those who wish to stay in the UK.

Even so, this still means that the nationalist movement is divided over Europe. Not only did as many as one in three of those who would vote Yes to independence vote to leave the EU, but many of those supporters of independence who did vote to Remain are – much like those backers of the Union who voted to Remain – seemingly relatively unenthusiastic about being part of the EU. Even in its much strengthened state, the nationalist movement needs to gain new supporters if it is to win a second independence referendum, and running such a ballot on the premise that independence is the only way of keeping Scotland in the EU may not necessarily be the most effective way of changing the minds of many No voters. Meanwhile for some existing Yes supporters such a prospect would be regarded as a potential disadvantage, perhaps making them think twice about whether to vote for independence after all.

Conclusion

At first glance, the divergent outcome of the EU referendum could not have fallen on more fertile soil so far as the nationalist movement in Scotland is concerned. The 2014 independence referendum resulted in a significant increase in support for the proposition that Scotland should leave the UK, leaving the country close to being evenly divided on whether that proposition should be pursued or

not. At the same time, the referendum increased the salience of the constitutional question in voters' eyes, providing the basis for the SNP to become the dominant party of Scottish politics. If now some voters were to be affronted at the prospect of Scotland being 'forced' to leave the EU, then it would seem that a majority for independence should be capable of being secured.

However, the EU is potentially a divisive issue for the nationalist movement, while the commitment of many voters in Scotland to remain in the EU does not appear to be especially strong. As a result, a referendum that is called on the basis that independence would enable Scotland to remain part of the EU may not necessarily provide the most propitious circumstances for nationalists to win a second referendum after all. Of course, if and when such a referendum is called, perhaps the initial impetus for the ballot will fade in the background once the campaign gets under way; after all, if many voters are relatively indifferent about the EU but are exercised about independence, the debate may well move on to a wider issues about the respective merits of independence and the Union. And maybe the SNP will decide to adopt a now familiar strategy and promise that an independent Scotland would hold its own referendum on the EU! Trouble is, as David Cameron can well advise, promising referendums can be a risky political strategy.

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