Migration Policy Scotland Attitudes to Immigration Survey – Topline Results

February 2025

Migration Policy Scotland commissioned Diffley partnership to conduct the third wave of its annual Attitudes to Immigration survey in February 2025. The survey is part of a national poll of adults in Scotland, exploring experiences with and perceptions of immigration. Invitations to complete the survey for all three waves were sent out through the Scotpulse panel.[1] The survey questions and topline results are presented in the tables below.

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? (2023-25)

	Increased a lot	Increased a little	Net: Increased	Remain the same as it is	Reduced a little	Reduced a lot	Net: Reduced
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Feb 25 (2,191)	9	18	28	27	18	27	45
Feb 24 (2,297)	10	21	31	26	17	25	42
Jan 23 (1,162)	12	26	39	34	12	16	28

[1] Scotpulse

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. (2024-25)[2]

	0-2	3-5	6-10	11-20	21-50	51+
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Feb 25 (2,147)	3	15	29	27	23	3
Feb 24 (2,256)	6	13	28	26	25	2
Jan 23 (1,147)	6	17	21	22	29	6

[2](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...? (2023-25)

		Scotland	Your local area
		%	%
Feb 25 (2,182)	Negative: 0-3	19	17
	Neutral: 4-6	29	30
	Positive: 7-10	38	29
	DK	14	24
	Mean	5.76	5.47
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 (2024-25)/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 25 (2,188)	16	30	46	23	15	11	26	4
	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 25 (2,187)	23	25	48	16	18	15	32	3
	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 25 (2,185)	8	16	25	20	28	26	53	2
	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 25 (2,188)	26	41	68	15	10	6	16	2
	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 25 (2,186)	15	29	44	26	15	11	26	4
	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 25 (2,189)	22	32	54	20	12	11	23	3
	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 25 (2,186)	15	23	38	21	19	16	35	5
	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 25 (2,188)	17	32	48	21	17	10	26	4
	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 25 (2,188)	16	36	51	23	15	7	22	3
	Feb 24 (2,299)	12	34	46	27	17	7	24	3
Increases the risk of terrorism	Feb 25 (2,191)	13	19	32	22	20	23	43	3
	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 …. (2024-25)[3]

		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 25 (2,180)	15	27	41	26	17	10	27	7
	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 25 (2,179)	17	23	40	19	19	17	35	5
	Feb 24 (2,300)	16	20	36	20	21	18	39	5
	Jan 23 (1,156)	7	18	25	22	26	22	48	4

[3] (2023) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements. Overall immigrants in my local area …

Takes jobs away from local workers	Feb 25 (2,175)	8	14	23	21	27	24	51	5
	Feb 24 (2,294)	9	13	22	19	29	24	54	5
	Jan 23 (1,154)	4	10	14	20	32	31	63	3
Helps to fill jobs for which it's hard to find local workers	Feb 25 (2,183)	18	37	55	20	12	7	19	6
	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 25 (2,183)	13	26	39	26	16	12	28	7
	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 25 (2,178)	20	27	47	22	14	11	25	6
	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 25 (2,181)	12	20	32	22	19	20	39	7
	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 25 (2,182)	12	29	41	24	17	12	29	6
	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 25 (2,179)	12	29	40	23	19	12	31	6
	Feb 24 (2,297)	11	24	35	24	21	13	35	6
Increases the risks of terrorism	Feb 25 (2,181)	11	14	25	21	19	29	48	6
	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 (2024-25).

		Increased a lot	Increased a little	Net: Increased	Remain the same	Reduced a little	Reduced a lot	Net: Reduced	DK
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
People who come to work in Scotland on a skilled worker visa	Feb 25 (2,183)	24	31	55	27	6	4	10	8
	Feb 24 (2,297)	28	31	59	26	6	3	9	6
People who come to work in Scotland on a health and social care visa	Feb 25 (2,181)	20	23	43	27	9	10	19	11
	Feb 24 (2,295)	23	25	48	25	9	9	18	10
People who come to Scotland to do seasonal or temporary work	Feb 25 (2,182)	16	26	41	31	10	9	19	8
	Feb 24 (2,293)	19	29	48	29	10	8	17	6
People who come to Scotland to study	Feb 25 (2,182)	14	20	34	39	14	7	21	6
	Feb 24 (2,291)	14	23	37	39	11	8	20	5

People who come to Scotland accompanying immediate family members who have a work visa	Feb 25 (2,182)	8	15	23	33	15	18	33	11
	Feb 24 (2,297)	9	19	28	34	13	16	29	9
People who come to Scotland accompanying immediate family members who have a study visa	Feb 25 (2,180)	6	11	17	28	17	27	44	11
	Feb 24 (2,298)	6	13	19	29	17	25	42	9
People who come to Scotland on specified humanitarian visas (e.g. from Ukraine)	Feb 25 (2,179)	15	22	37	36	9	11	20	7
	Feb 24 (2,298)	19	26	45	31	9	9	18	6
People who come to Scotland seeking asylum	Feb 25 (2,177)	14	16	30	24	15	25	40	7
	Feb 24 (2,296)	15	18	33	25	14	22	36	6
People who come to Scotland to join immediate family members who are British citizens	Feb 25 (2,178)	9	16	25	39	12	14	26	10
	Feb 24 (2,297)	11	19	30	37	13	13	25	8
People who come to Scotland to join extended family members who are British citizens	Feb 25 (2,181)	7	13	20	34	17	19	35	11

	Feb 24 (2,298)	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? (2023-25)

	Jan 23 (1,158)	Feb 24 (2,302)	Feb 25 (2,187)
	%	%	%
Migrants should be allowed to come to Scotland for a short period of time only to work, then be required to return home	16	25	25
Migrants should be allowed to come to Scotland for a longer period of time to have the chance to settle and integrate	66	53	48
Neither	10	14	15
Don't know	8	9	12

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? (2024-25)

	Feb 24 (2,301)	Feb 25 (2,187)
	%	%
Strongly support	24	24
Tend to support	36	35
Net: Support	60	59
Neither support nor oppose	19	19
Tend to oppose	12	12
Strongly oppose	6	7
Net: Oppose	18	19
DK	3	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? (2024-25)

	Feb 24 (2,301)	Feb 25 (2,186)
	%	%
12 months or less	15	13
1-2 years	23	21
3-5 years	24	24
6-10 years	7	7
Longer than 10 years	4	5
Only UK citizens should be eligible for benefits and social housing	20	24
DK	7	6

Question 10

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements (2024-25):

		Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Net: Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Net: Disagree	DK
		%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Employers should be able to recruit workers from abroad to fill vacancies	Feb 25 (2,141)	19	37	56	19	15	7	22	2
	Feb 24 (2,241)	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	Feb 25 (2,137)	38	38	77	10	8	4	12	2
	Feb 24 (2,248)	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	Feb 25 (2,136)	33	41	73	13	7	4	11	2
	Feb 24 (2,245)	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	Feb 25 (2,147)	4	10	14	14	35	35	70	2
	Feb 24	4	9	14	12	36	35	71	3

	(2,247)								
Employers that recruit workers from abroad should be obliged to pay into a training fund that is used to develop skills in UK workers	Feb 25 (2,114)	23	40	62	21	7	4	11	6
	Feb 24 (2,198)	24	34	58	20	10	5	15	7
Wage regulations should be enforced better, so that workers from abroad do not undercut British workers	Feb 25 (2,110)	38	39	77	13	4	2	6	4
	Feb 24 (2,195)	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? (2024-25)

	Feb 24 (2,301)	Feb 25 (2,186)
	%	%
Strongly support	21	19
Tend to support	34	32
Net: Support	55	50
Neither support nor oppose	23	25
Tend to oppose	7	9
Strongly oppose	11	11
Net: Oppose	18	20
DK	4	5

Question 12

And how likely, if at all, would you personally be to take part in a welcoming programme? (2024-25)

Base: Support/Neither support nor oppose at Q11	Feb 24 (1,777) %	Feb 25 (1,598) %
Very likely	6	5
Fairly likely	24	23
Net: Likely	30	28
Not very likely	34	37
Not at all likely	27	25
Net: Not likely	61	62
DK	9	10

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? (2024-25)[4]

	Jan 23 (1,162)	Feb 24 (2,305)	Feb 25 (2,194)
	%	%	%
I am an immigrant living in Scotland	3	2	3
I have friends who are immigrants currently living in Scotland	20	17	17
I have family members who are immigrants currently living in Scotland	5	4	5
I regularly speak to people who are immigrants living in Scotland	32	30	32
None of the above	46	51	47
Don't know / Not Applicable	7	8	9

[4] (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? (2023-25)

		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 25 (2,188)	18	29	48	32	11	7	18	2
	Feb 24 (2,290)	20	32	52	29	11	6	17	2
	Jan 23 (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 25 (2,179)	8	15	23	33	24	18	42	2
	Feb 24 (2,289)	8	14	22	33	25	19	44	1
	Jan 23 (1,159)	6	12	18	33	24	24	48	1
I believe that diversity is good for Scotland	Feb 25 (2,183)	30	32	62	21	8	7	15	2
	Feb 24 (2,294)	30	35	65	22	6	5	11	2

	Jan 23 (1,159)	39	35	74	17	5	3	8	1

Question 15

At the 2024 UK General Election, which party did you vote for? (2025)[5]

	Feb 24 (2,301)	Feb 25 (2,191)
	%	%
Conservative	12	6
Labour	14	27
Liberal Democrats	4	6
Green Party	2	4
The Brexit Party	1	-
Reform UK	-	5
The Scottish National Party	44	29
A different party (Please specify)	1	1
Don't remember	6	2
Didn't vote	9	10
Prefer not to say	7	8

Technical details:

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

- 2025:
    - 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 2,194 respondents,
    - Fieldwork was conducted between 4th – 10th February 2025,
    - Results are weighted to the Scottish population by age and gender.
- 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.