Migration Policy Scotland Attitudes to Immigration Survey – Topline Results

February 2026

Migration Policy Scotland commissioned Diffley partnership to conduct the fourth wave of its annual Attitudes to Immigration survey in February 2026. 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 four waves were sent out through the Scotpulse panel.[1] The survey questions (including any year on year variations) 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? (2023-26)

	Increased a lot	Increased a little	Net: Increased	Remain the same as it is	Reduced a little	Reduced a lot	Net: Reduced
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Feb 26 (2,160)	7	16	23	27	18	33	50
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. (2024-26)[2]

	0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41+
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Feb 26 (2,129)	21	27	12	15	6	7	3	4	6
Feb 25 (2,147)	17	29	11	17	6	8	2	4	6
Feb 24 (2,256)	19	28	11	16	7	8	3	4	5
Feb 23 (1,147)	23	21	10	13	5	11	3	5	11

[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…? (2023-26)

		Scotland	Your local area
		%	%
Feb 26 (2,150)	Negative: 0-4	32	29
	Indecisive: 5	11	16
	Positive: 6-10	49	41
	DK	8	14
	Mean	5.6	5.2
Feb 25 (2,182)	Negative: 0-4	26	23
	Indecisive: 5	13	16
	Positive: 6-10	47	37
	DK	14	24
	Mean	5.8	5.5
Feb 24 (2,295)	Negative: 0-4	26	23
	Indecisive: 5	12	17
	Positive: 6-10	50	38
	DK	12	22
	Mean	5.9	5.5
Jan 23 (1,155)	Negative: 0-4	18	20
	Indecisive: 5	23	32
	Positive: 6-10	59	48
	Mean	6.3	5.8

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 (2024-26)/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 26 (2,154)	16	29	45	19	17	16	33	3
	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 26 (2,158)	29	23	52	14	17	16	32	2
	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 26 (2,155)	12	16	28	19	30	22	52	1
	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 26 (2,156)	27	38	65	14	10	10	20	1
	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 26 (2,154)	15	27	43	25	16	13	29	3
	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 26 (2,153)	21	32	54	18	13	14	27	2
	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 26 (2,157)	18	23	42	21	17	16	33	4
	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 26 (2,154)	15	29	44	21	17	15	32	3
	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 26 (2,155)	20	39	59	18	15	6	21	2
	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 26 (2,153)	15	22	38	18	17	24	41	3
	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 .... (2024-26)[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 26 (2,157)	13	26	39	22	18	15	33	5
	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 26 (2,154)	21	24	45	15	22	15	36	3
	Feb 25 (2,179)	17	23	40	19	19	17	35	5

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

	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 26 (2,153)	12	14	26	21	28	23	51	3
	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 26 (2,154)	19	36	55	17	14	10	24	3
	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 26 (2,152)	11	24	36	26	17	17	34	4

	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 26 (2,157)	18	30	48	20	16	13	29	3
	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 26 (2,155)	17	22	39	17	18	21	39	4
	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 26 (2,153)	13	24	37	22	21	16	38	3
	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 26 (2,152)	17	33	50	20	18	10	28	3
	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 26 (2,157)	13	16	29	20	16	31	48	3
	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 (2024-26).

		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 26 (2,153)	25	30	55	29	6	5	11	6
	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 26 (2,158)	20	24	44	26	10	12	23	8
	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 26 (2,157)	13	23	37	36	11	9	20	7
	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 26 (2,156)	11	20	31	40	12	11	23	5
	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 26 (2,157)	8	13	20	37	13	21	35	8
	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 26 (2,155)	5	8	14	29	18	31	48	9
	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 26 (2,157)	14	24	38	35	12	10	22	5

	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 26 (2,155)	12	14	26	24	15	30	45	6
	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 26 (2,156)	9	15	24	39	12	16	28	9
	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 26 (2,158)	6	14	20	32	14	25	39	9
	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? (2023-26)

	Jan 23 (1,158)	Feb 24 (2,302)	Feb 25 (2,187)	Feb 26 (2,160)
	%	%	%	%
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	26
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	45
Neither	10	14	15	18
Don't know	8	9	12	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? (2024-26)

	Feb 24 (2,301)	Feb 25 (2,187)	Feb 26 (2,158)
	%	%	%
Strongly support	24	24	22
Tend to support	36	35	35
Net: Support	60	59	58
Neither support nor oppose	19	19	19
Tend to oppose	12	12	14
Strongly oppose	6	7	8
Net: Oppose	18	19	22
DK	3	3	2

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? (2024-26)

	Feb 24 (2,301)	Feb 25 (2,186)	Feb 26 (2,159)
	%	%	%
12 months or less	15	13	11
1-2 years	23	21	18
3-5 years	24	24	23
6-10 years	7	7	11
Longer than 10 years	4	5	7
Only UK citizens should be eligible for benefits and social housing	20	24	25
DK	7	6	5

Question 10

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements (2024-26):

		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 26 (2,116)	16	37	53	19	18	8	27	1
	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 26 (2,117)	37	36	73	10	9	6	15	1
	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 26 (2,111)	30	41	71	13	11	5	15	2
	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 26 (2,127)	5	9	14	13	35	35	69	3
	Feb 25 (2,147)	4	10	14	14	35	35	70	2
	Feb 24 (2,247)	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	Feb 26 (2,088)	25	38	63	21	9	3	12	5
	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 26 (2,085)	45	35	81	10	3	2	5	4
	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? (2024-26)

	Feb 24 (2,301)	Feb 25 (2,186)	Feb 26 (2,154)
	%	%	%
Strongly support	21	19	19
Tend to support	34	32	29
Net: Support	55	50	48
Neither support nor oppose	23	25	22
Tend to oppose	7	9	11
Strongly oppose	11	11	16
Net: Oppose	18	20	27
DK	4	5	3

Question 12

And how likely, if at all, would you personally be to take part in a welcoming programme? (2024-26)

Data not reported here

Question 13

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following? (2023-26)

		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 26 (2,152)	19	29	47	28	13	10	24	2
	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 26 (2,158)	12	17	29	32	23	15	38	1
	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
	Feb 26	28	33	62	18	11	8	19	1

I believe that diversity is good for Scotland	(2,156)								
	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 14

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. How frequently do you interact with immigrants in Scotland in the following spaces? (2026)

Data not reported here

Question 15

And thinking about your interactions with immigrants in Scotland in these spaces, how positive or negative are these generally? Please answer on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means 'Extremely negative' and 10 means 'Extremely positive' (2026)

Data not reported here

Question 16

Thinking about the successful integration of immigrants into Scottish society, which of the following statements is closest to your personal view: (2026)

Data not reported here

Question 17

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? (2024-26)[4]

	Jan 23 (1,162)	Feb 24 (2,305)	Feb 25 (2,194)	Feb 26 (2,161)
	%	%	%	%
I am an immigrant living in Scotland	3	2	3	3
I have friends who are immigrants currently living in Scotland	20	17	17	22
I have family members who are immigrants currently living in Scotland	5	4	5	5
I regularly speak to people who are immigrants living in Scotland	32	30	32	34
None of the above	46	51	47	42
Don't know / Not Applicable	7	8	9	11

Question 18

At the 2024 UK General Election, which party did you vote for? (2025-26)[5]

	Feb 24 (2,301)	Feb 25 (2,191)	Feb 26 (2,160)
	%	%	%

[4] (2023) Which of the following statements applies best to you?

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

Conservative	12	6	7
Labour	14	27	20
Liberal Democrats	4	6	6
Green Party	2	4	6
The Brexit Party	1	-	-
Reform UK	-	5	6
The Scottish National Party	44	29	32
A different party (Please specify)	1	1	1
Don't remember	6	2	0
Didn't vote	9	10	13
Prefer not to say	7	8	9

Technical details:

- 2026:
  - 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 2,161 respondents,
  - Fieldwork was conducted between 1st – 4th February 2026,
  - Results are weighted to the Scottish population by age and gender.
- 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.