



The Third Scotland

Scottish Parliament Election 2021
What Happened, and What Next?

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The commonly held view of Scottish politics is that of two entrenched sides engaged in bitter stand-off over the constitution. This view holds that there are only two options for Scotland going forward. Either we hold an Independence referendum whose timing and terms are decided purely by one side of the constitutional debate. Or we should completely ignore one of the most animating issues at the heart of devolved Scotland.

We at Our Scottish Future believe that this story paints an entirely misleading portrait of the Scotland that most people actually experience.

Over recent months, we have spent time listening and talking to Scots across the country. We held online events (entitled "Scotland in a Zoom") which brought Yes and No voters together to talk about the constitution and a referendum. We plan to publish the results from these groups very soon. What they show is a country that is conflicted, confused, and by no means certain about the right way forwards on the constitution. More importantly they have also revealed that the aspirations and priorities of both Yes and No voters have far more in common than might have been thought.

With our final report on the programme being released shortly, we decided to use the election to test our key emerging hypotheses. So we wrote a 'Morning After Poll' – commissioned and carried out online to British Polling Council standards by Stack Data Strategy – and heard from 1,000 Scots (879 of whom voted in the election) over the two days immediately following the polls closing. We wanted to test why voters made the choices they did with their ballots, and what they really wanted next from the Scottish and UK governments. And we wanted to gauge real priorities and strength of feelings by presenting respondents a spectrum of options, not just putting arbitrary choices in front of them.

What we have found is that not only is there a third 'Middle' Scotland that neither conforms to a binary Pro-Union or Pro-Independence view of the world, but that it greater in size than either of the extremes in the constitutional debate. Citizens in this Middle Scotland are both primarily Scottish and meaningfully British. They vote in their droves for the SNP not because they want a referendum, but because the SNP appear to offer good leadership and government within a devolved state. They do not oppose a referendum in principle, but have deep concerns over its practicality that must be resolved first. Most of all they want their two governments to stop competing and start co-operating.

We hope that Scottish politicians from both sides can start listening to them



Key Findings

Executive Summary

1. There are Not Two Scotlands, But Three
2. The SNP's victory was built on an offer to Middle Scotland that had little to do with the constitution
3. Pro-Independence and Pro-Union tactical voting both created a Parliament that over-represents pro-Independence parties and denied the SNP a majority
4. Support for a 2nd referendum is highly dependent on conditions that are not yet met
5. Pro-Independence campaigners need a clearer constitutional blueprint
6. Pro-Union campaigners can best make the case for the UK through cooperation, not competition or confrontation

The SNP's election success was built on a leadership-based offer to 'Middle Scotland' that had little to do with the constitution

Executive Summary (1/2)

1. Between Pro-Independence and Pro-Union voters there is a large Middle Scotland that comprises 40% of the electorate

- Most polling on the binary Yes/No question on Independence shows a country and an electorate deadlocked over the constitution – 49/51 overall according to our poll; 50/50 when adjusted for probably turnout in a future referendum; 51/49 when applied to voters in the 2021 Scottish election
- However, when placed on a scale rather than only in two camps, it is clear that there is in fact a third Scotland – 30% dyed in the wool Pro-Union, 30% Pro-Independence, and 40% 'In the Middle' on the constitution
- 'Middle Scotland' identifies as Scottish first (like Pro-Independence), but meaningfully British (like Pro-Union); they tend to be younger, and are more likely to be women than men, and although they have much lower turnout are much more Remain than Leave

2. The SNP's election success was built on winning almost all Pro-Independence voters with the promise of Indyref2 plus half of 'Middle Scotland' with an offer that was based on how Nicola Sturgeon's leadership has been perceived during the pandemic

- The SNP and the Tories consolidated their positions as leaders of their respective constitutional tribes in this election – each retaining c.80% of their 2019 vote vs far lower vote retention for Labour and the Lib Dems
- The SNP won half of Middle Scotland, 2x the next most successful party (Labour); the Tories appeal was limited primarily to Pro-Union voters, where they won 51% of the regional list vote vs 8% of Middle Scotland
- Therefore even on a 'Yes/No' basis, only ¾ of SNP list voters support Independence, with the party winning more current No voters (12%) than the Lib Dems (8%)
- Whilst a potential referendum animated both extremes, Middle Scotland voted for the SNP on the list because they believed that they had the best leader, the best vision, and were best able to lead Scotland through COVID
- Therefore, when we look at why the SNP gained votes, <30% of their voters had delivering a second referendum as a top 3 reason behind their choice (vs 67% of Tory voters and 40-45% of Lab/Lib voters who voted stop a referendum)

3. The outcome of the election was close to the perfectly balanced Parliament that Scottish voters wanted: Pro-Independence tactical voting on the list balanced out Pro-Union tactical voting to retain constituencies at the cost of an SNP majority

- The 'ideal Parliament' for voters in the election was an exact 50/50 split between Yes and No parties: against this benchmark Yes parties did disproportionately well
- Pro-Union tactical voting was pivotal in retaining at least 2 and at most 4 seats - preventing an SNP majority but only 'saving' net 2-3 seats after the List wash through
- ~50% of the Green regional vote was explicitly made to elect as many Pro-Independence MSPs as possible (68% of their regional voters wanted the SNP to win the most seats, 73% voted for the SNP in constituencies); these votes were responsible for 6 of the Greens' 8 seats, and cost the SNP 3 seats

The conditions where even 50% would support another referendum are not yet met; right now Scots want cooperation between their two governments

Executive Summary (2/2)

4. Whilst ~50% of Scots support another referendum in principle, in practice even the SNP's own voters do not back their proposed timeline and overall support is highly conditional on it being safe, clear and wanted

- Majority support for a referendum during the next parliament is highly contested and conditional – and it is in no way representative to state that all SNP voters immediately want a referendum to be prioritised for the early part of the Parliament as was in the SNP manifesto
 - There is c.50% support for having a referendum at some point in the next 5 years – 20% in 2021-22, 21% in 2023-24, and 9% in 2025-26; only 32% of SNP constituency voters want a referendum in the next 2 years, and 15% don't want one in the next Parliament at all
 - Of the 50% of Scots in favour of holding referendum in the next 5 years, 28% support one unconditionally, with 22% only supporting one subject to conditions; only 54% of SNP voters support holding a second independence referendum under any scenario
- There is overwhelming support for not having a referendum until both the Pro-Union and Pro-Independence campaigners have had time to refine clearer offers and the country has recovered physically and economically from COVID; Middle Scotland would also rather wait until a clear majority of Scots support one within 2 years
- The median Scottish voter would prefer for the terms and timing of a referendum to be decided jointly with the UK government; there is no support for the Scottish Government acting as 'captain and referee' by deciding these things alone

5. The Pro-Independence side do not have a clear blueprint, and both SNP voters and Middle Scotland have more pressing priorities

- The SNP and Greens do not have a clear case for independence: 58% of the Scottish public feel that we do not know enough about the details of Independence to make a fully informed choice in a second referendum, vs 30% who do; only 21% of Middle Scotland feel sufficiently informed
 - The Border arrangements, currency, security arrangements, and tax policy of an independent Scotland are all currently understood by <30% of the public
- Preparing for a Second referendum on Independence is the bottom priority out of 11 that Middle Scotland has for the new Scottish government (vs the 3rd for Pro-Independence), with only 13% having it as a top 3 priority vs managing COVID, NHS catchup, protecting jobs, and establishing a National Care Service;
- Preparing for an independence referendum the 5th most important priority for all SNP constituency voters, only being in the top 3 for 29%

6. Cooperation, not competition or confrontation, is the best way for the Pro-Union side to make its case to Scotland

- 64% of Scots – a clear majority of all segments – believe that the best way for the UK government to make a case for the Union would be to encourage better cooperation and inclusion; by comparison less than half of all Scots would support a more 'muscular' approach
 - 73% of Scots actively want better cooperation between the Scottish and UK government, with 68% thinking it would be good for Scotland
 - 66% - including a majority of Pro-Independence - want greater alignment of policy and messaging on key issues such as COVID between the two governments
- Only 23% of Scots think that the UK and Scottish governments work well together today – and there is wide-ranging support for more co-operation, in particular to: invest in the economic recovery and create jobs (75%), Fight crime and terrorism (74%), Reduce poverty (74%) and Improve the NHS (73%)

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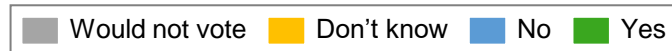
3. Pro-Independence and Pro-Union tactical voting both created a Parliament that over-represents pro-Independence parties and denied the SNP a majority

4. Support for a 2nd referendum is highly dependent on conditions that are not yet met

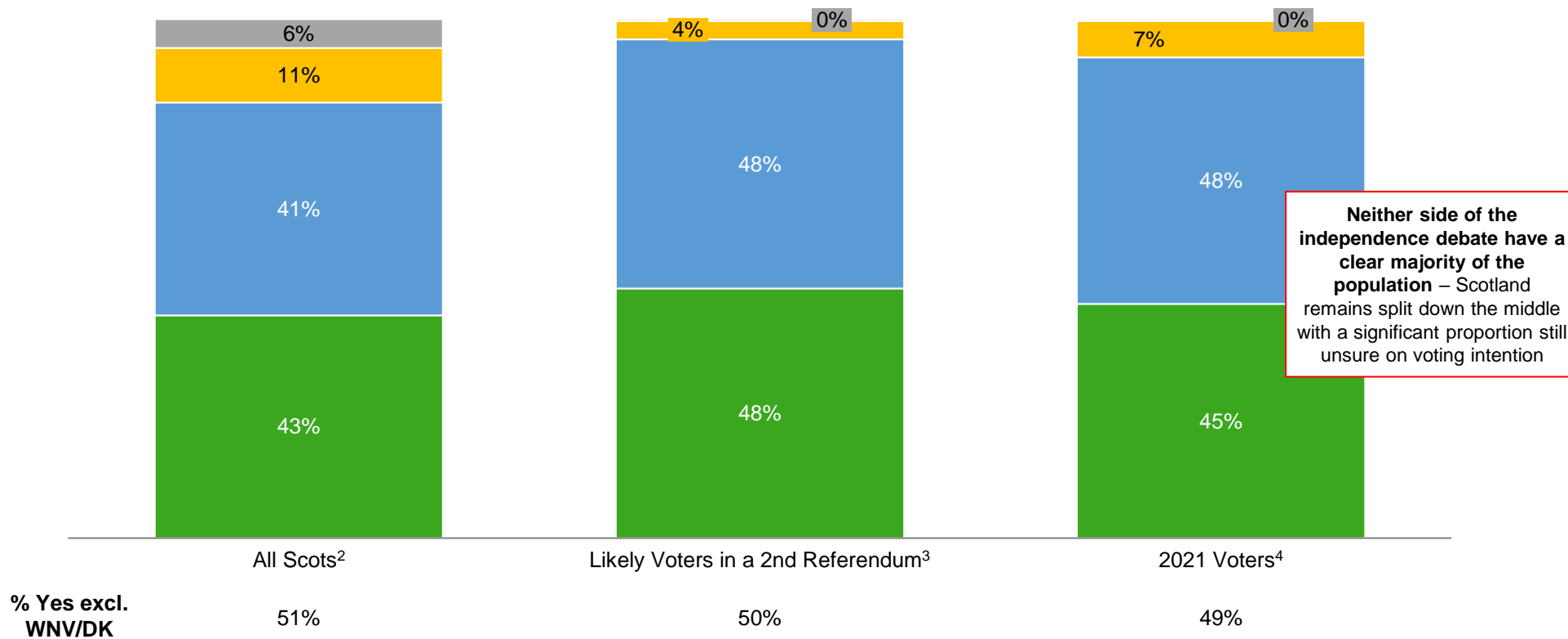
5. Pro-Independence campaigners need a clearer constitutional blueprint

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Most polling on the binary Yes/No question on Independence shows a country and an electorate deadlocked over the constitution



How would you vote if there was a referendum tomorrow with the question 'Should Scotland be an independent country?'^{1,2}
 % of All Scots / Likely 2nd Referendum Voters / 2021 Voters



1. 1,000 Scots were polled between the 7th and 8th of May 2021. Responses were weighted to census figures on age, gender, education level, and recorded 2021 vote in the Scottish Parliamentary elections

2. Polling Question: How would you vote if there was a referendum tomorrow with the question 'Should Scotland be an independent country?'

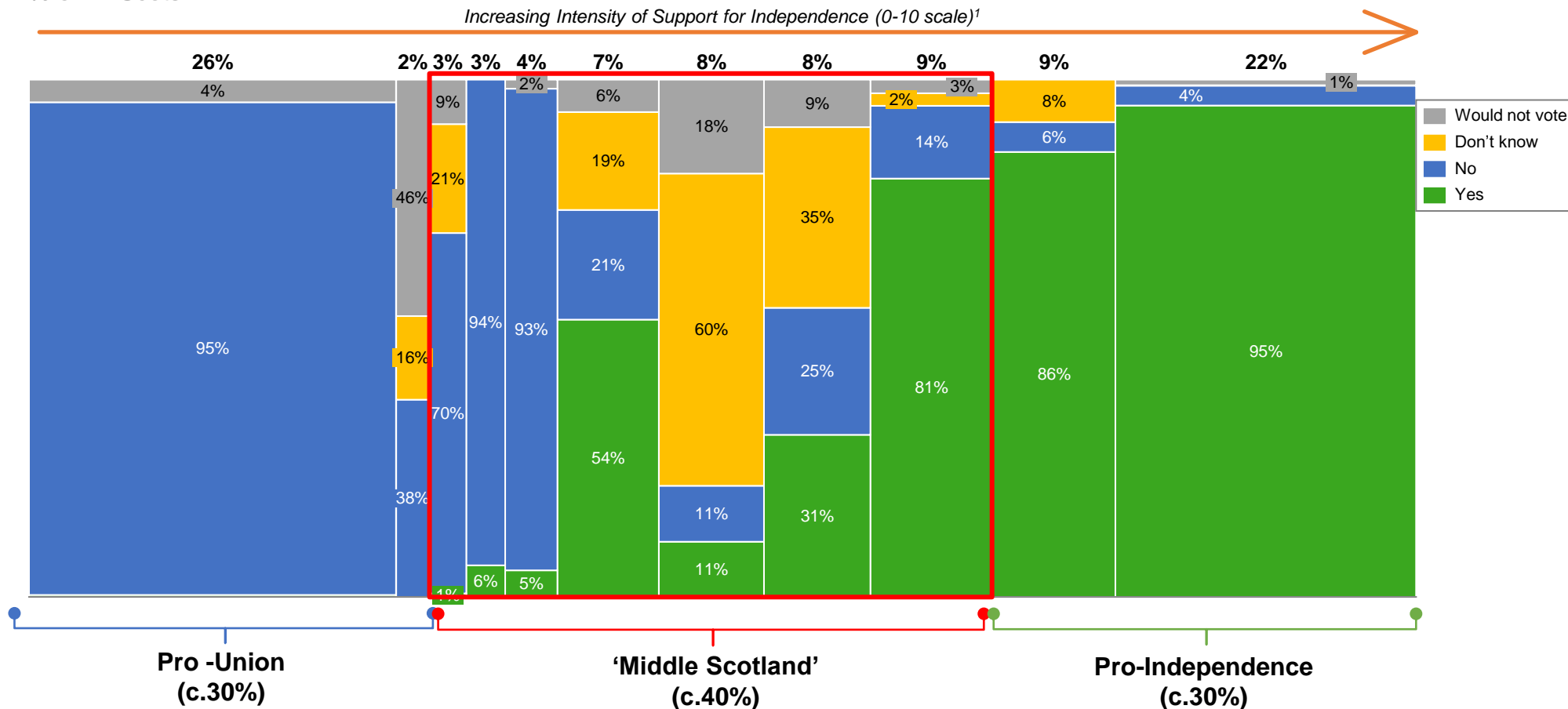
3. Cross cut against Polling Question: On a scale of 0-10 where 0 is 'very unlikely' and 10 is 'very likely' how likely would you be to vote in a referendum on Scottish independence if it occurred tomorrow? ; Very Likely respondents gave 8 - 10 ranking

4. Cut against Polling Question: Did you vote in the Scottish Election held on Thursday May 6th across Scotland?

Source: OSF Morning After Poll May 2021, OSF Analysis

When placed on a scale, a large 'Middle Scotland' that sits between the two equally sized Pro-Union and Pro-Independence camps comes into focus

How would you vote if there was a referendum tomorrow with the question 'Should Scotland be an independent country?'^{1,2}
 % of All Scots



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2. Polling Question: 'How would you vote if there was a referendum tomorrow with the question 'Should Scotland be an independent country?' Cross cut with 'On a scale of 0-10 where 0 is 'strongly against' and 10 is 'strongly in favour', what is your view on whether Scotland should be an independent country?'. Pro-Union = responses 0-1, Middle Scotland = responses 2-8, Pro-Independence = 9-10

Source: OSF Morning After Poll May 2021, OSF Analysis

'Middle Scotland' is young, female, and progressive/Remain; she identifies both as patriotically Scottish and meaningfully British

Segments Overview^{1,2}

		Pro-Union	Middle Scotland	Pro-Independence
Demography	Average HH Income	£38k	£36k	£48k
	% Graduates	20%	27%	30%
	% Under 35	14%	51%	25%
	% Female	56%	56%	39%
Identity (/10)	Scottish ³	6.4	7.6	9.0
	British ³	8.1	5.6	3.8
	European ³	3.1	3.9	5.8
Voting History	2014 % Yes ⁴	4%	46%	86%
	2016 Remain ⁵	48%	68%	75%
	2021 Turnout ⁶	84%	52%	86%

1. 1,000 Scots were polled between the 7th and 8th of May 2021. Responses were weighted to census figures on age, gender, education level, and recorded 2021 vote in the Scottish Parliamentary elections

2. Segments based on following 'On a scale of 0-10 where 0 is 'strongly against' and 10 is 'strongly in favour', what is your view on whether Scotland should be an independent country?', Pro-Union = responses 0-1, Middle Scotland = responses 2-8, Pro-Independence = 9-10

3. Cross Cut Polling Question: On a scale of 0-10, how strongly do you identify with the following personal identities? A) Scottish, B) British, C) European; average taken for each segment

4. Cross Cut Polling Question: Thinking back to the 2014 Scottish Independence Referendum, how did you vote? Asked to all in segment that voted in the 2014 referendum; % that voted Yes to become independent

5. Cross Cut Polling Question: Thinking back to the 2016 EU referendum, how did you vote? Asked to all in segment that voted in the 2016 EU referendum; % that voted to remain In EU

6. Cross Cut Polling Question: Did you vote in the Scottish Election held on Thursday May 6th across Scotland? % of segment that voted

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The SNP and the Tories consolidated their positions in this election – each retaining high proportions of their 2019 vote

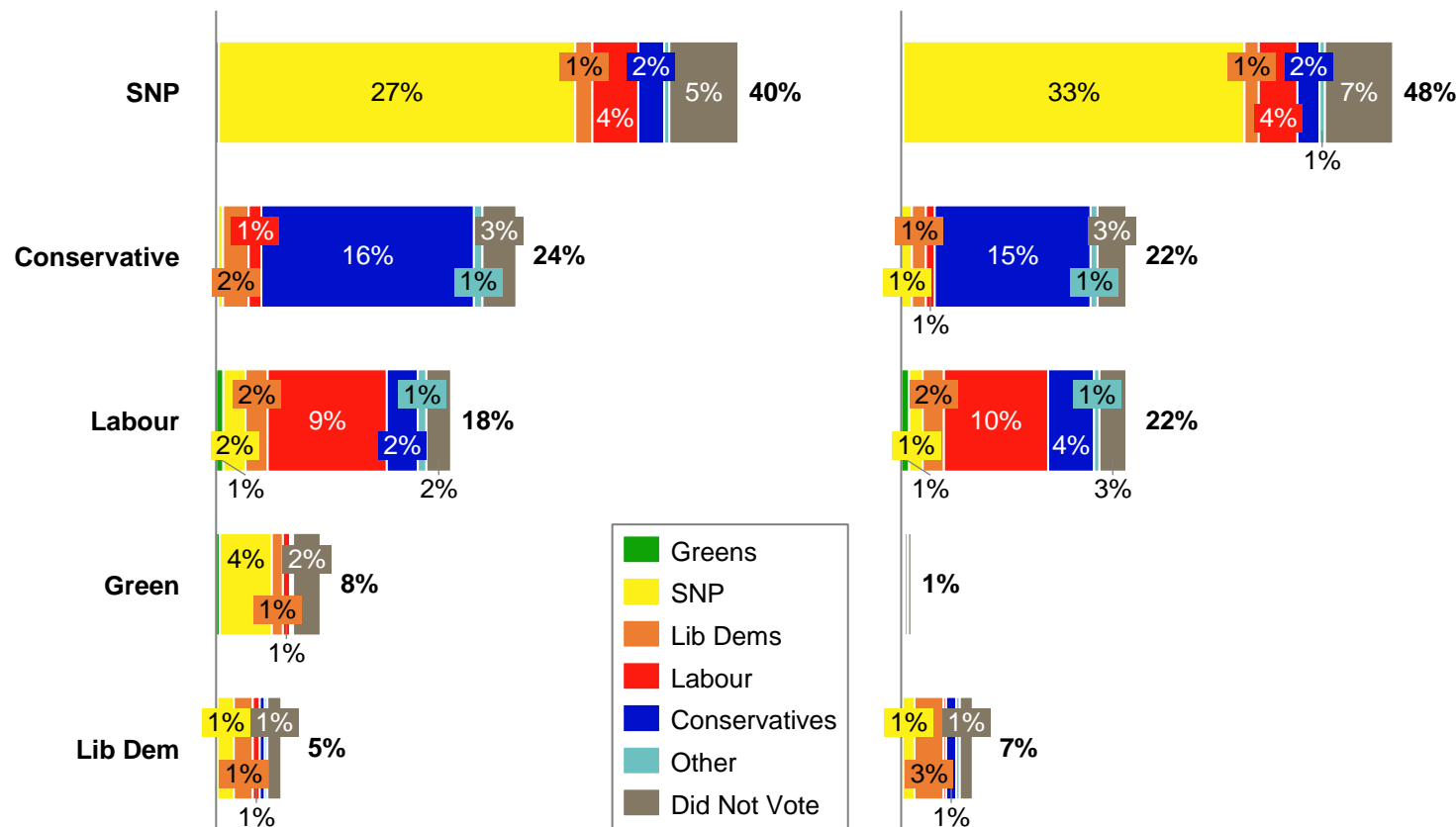
Which party did you vote for with your (a) regional list ballot and (b) constituency ballot?

2021 Voters by 2019 Vote, %^{1,2}

Regional List Vote²

Constituency Vote³

Narrative vs 2019



45% (2019)	The SNP continued long-run share gain from Labour (and Leave voting Pro-Independents who voted Tory in 2019)
25%	The Tories retained a high % of their 2019 vote, replacing Labour switchers with Lib Dems
19%	Labour's leaky bucket to the SNP continued, made up for by 2019 Con voters
1%	The Greens list gains were primarily SNP voters
10%	The Lib Dems were squeezed outside of held constituencies by other pro-UK parties

1. 1,000 Scots were polled between the 7th and 8th of May 2021. Responses were weighted to census figures on age, gender, education level, and recorded 2021 vote in the Scottish Parliamentary elections
 2. Polling Question: Which party did you vote for with your regional / list vote (peach ballot)? Cross cut by Polling Question: 'How did you vote in the 2019 General Election?' for all voters that voted in each election
 3. Polling Question: Which party did you vote for with your constituency lilac ballot? Cross cut by Polling Question: 'How did you vote in the 2019 General Election?' for all voters that voted in each election
 Source: OSF Morning After Poll May 2021, OSF Analysis

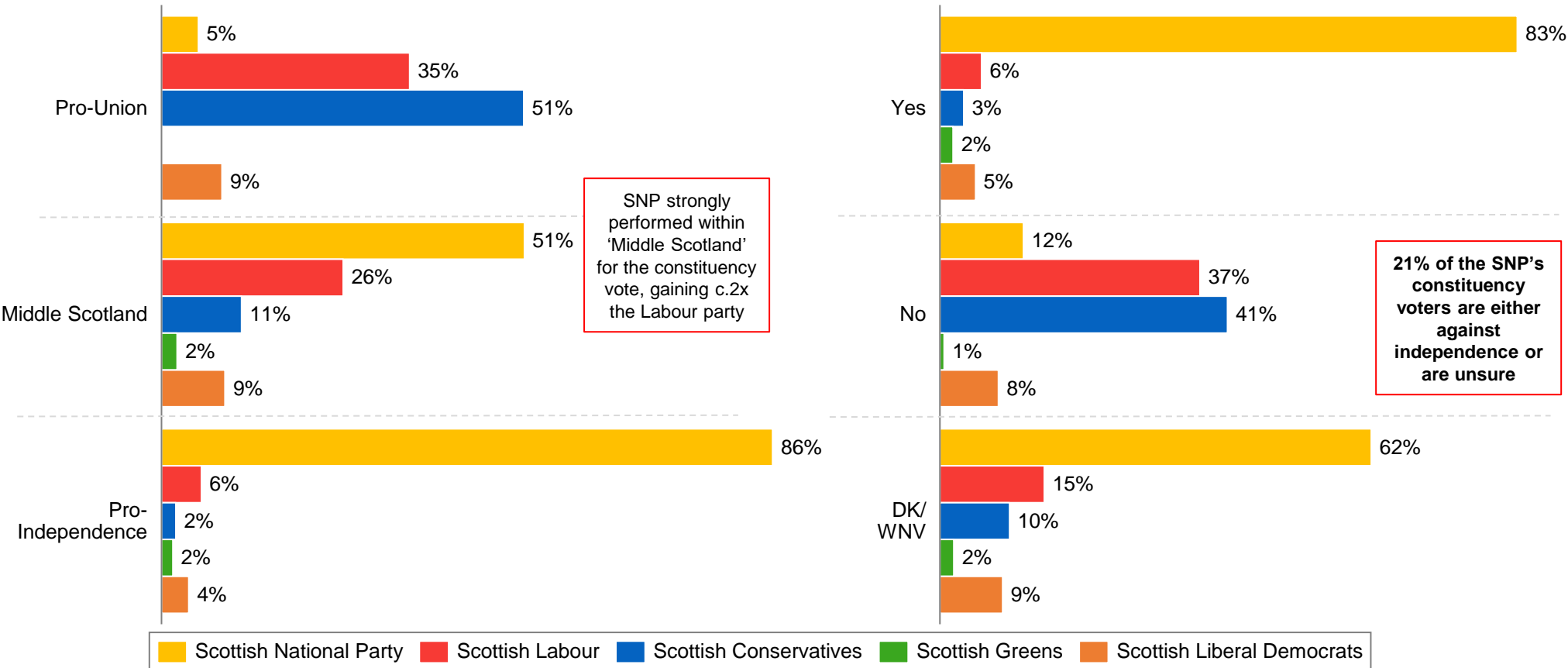
The SNP won 50% of 'Middle Scotland' and nearly all of the Pro-Independence vote

Which party did you vote for with your constituency vote (lilac ballot)?

2021 voters, %^{1,2}

By Independence Sentiment,³

By Independence Referendum Voting Intention,⁴



1. 1,000 Scots were polled between the 7th and 8th of May 2021. Responses were weighted to census figures on age, gender, education level, and recorded 2021 vote in the Scottish Parliamentary elections

2. Polling Question: 'Which party did you vote for with your constituency vote (lilac ballot)?'

3. Cut by: 'On a scale of 0-10 where 0 is 'strongly against' and 10 is 'strongly in favour', what is your view on whether Scotland should be an independent country?', Pro-Union = responses 0-1, Middle Scotland = responses 2-8, Pro-Independence = 9-10,

4. Cut by: 'How would you vote if there was referendum tomorrow with the question 'Scotland should be an independent country?'

Whilst a potential referendum animated both extremes, Middle Scotland voted for the SNP on the list as a result of their vision and leadership

Here are some reasons people have given for deciding on the party or parties they ended up voting for on the regional list. Can you rank your top three in order of how important they were in your decision, from first to third?

By List Party Vote, 2021 Voters, % ranked in top 3^{1,2}

	Pro-Union		Middle Scotland (all)		Middle Scotland (SNP List Voters)		Pro-Independence	
1 st	They will stop a second referendum on independence	69%	They have the right priorities for Scotland	32%	They have the best leader	38%	They have the right priorities for Scotland	38%
2 nd	They will provide the best opposition to the SNP	46%	They are best able to lead Scotland through Covid	25%	They have the best vision for the future of Scotland	37%	They will deliver a second referendum on independence	37%
3 rd	They have the right priorities for Scotland	23%	They have the best vision for the future of Scotland	25%	They are best able to lead Scotland through Covid	34%	They have the best vision for the future of Scotland	36%
4 th	They have the best vision for the future of Scotland	21%	They have the best leader	24%	They have the right priorities for Scotland	27%	They are best able to lead Scotland through Covid	27%
5 th	They want to bring people in Scotland together	19%	They are best able to manage NHS Scotland	24%	They are best able to stand up for Scotland	26%	They are best able to stand up for Scotland	27%

'They will deliver a second referendum on Independence' only a Top 3 reason for 8% of Middle Scotland that voted SNP – the third lowest of 15 reasons tested

1. 1,000 Scots were polled between the 7th and 8th of May 2021. Responses were weighted to census figures on age, gender, education level, and recorded 2021 vote in the Scottish Parliamentary elections
 2. Polling Question: What were the most important issues to you when it came to deciding how to vote in the Scottish election? For all that voted; Rank top 3. % given of all that ranked in top 3, unweighted by value
 3. Cross cut with Polling Question: 'On a scale of 0-10 where 0 is 'strongly against' and 10 is 'strongly in favour', what is your view on whether Scotland should be an independent country?', Pro-Union = responses 0-1, Middle Scotland = responses 2-8, Pro-Independence = 9-10,
 Source: OSF Morning After Poll May 2021, OSF Analysis

Therefore fewer than 30% of SNP constituency voters saw a second referendum as a Top 3 factor when making their choice

Here are some reasons people have given for deciding on the party or parties they ended up voting for on the regional list. Can you rank your top three in order of how important they were in your decision, from first to third?

By List Party Vote, 2021 Voters, % ranked in top 3^{1,2}

	SNP	%	Scottish Conservatives	%	Scottish Labour	%	Scottish Greens	%	Scottish Liberal Democrats	%
1 st	They have the best vision for the future of Scotland	39%	They will stop a second referendum on independence	69%	They will stop a second referendum on independence	39%	They have the right priorities for Scotland	34%	They will stop a second referendum on independence	44%
2 nd	They have the right priorities for Scotland	36%	They will provide the best opposition to the SNP	49%	They have the right priorities for Scotland	32%	They have the best vision for the future of Scotland	33%	They have the right priorities for Scotland	29%
3 rd	They are best able to lead Scotland through Covid	33%	They want to bring people in Scotland together	23%	They will provide the best opposition to the SNP	31%	I like their policies and ideas the most	33%	They are best able to stand up for Scotland	26%
4 th	They have the best leader	29%	They have the right priorities for Scotland	22%	They most share my values	28%	They are honest and trustworthy	28%	They want to bring people in Scotland together	24%
5 th	They will deliver a second referendum on independence	28%	They most share my values	19%	They want to bring people in Scotland together	27%	They will deliver a second referendum on independence	26%	They are honest and trustworthy	22%

1. 1,000 Scots were polled between the 7th and 8th of May 2021. Responses were weighted to census figures on age, gender, education level, and recorded 2021 vote in the Scottish Parliamentary elections

2. Polling Question: Here are some reasons people have given for deciding on the party or parties they ended up voting for on the regional list (peach ballot). Please take a moment to think carefully about the factors that affected your decision. Can you rank your top 3 in order of how important they were in your decision, from first to third, even if there were other reasons that were important to you? For all that voted; Rank top 3. % given of all that ranked in top 3, unweighted by value; Cross cut with Polling Question: 'Who did you vote for with your constituency vote (lilac ballot)?

Source: OSF Morning After Poll May 2021, OSF Analysis

Independence was used in the election to galvanise both Pro-Union and Pro-Independence, leaving Middle Scotland behind despite other shared priorities

What were the most important issues to you when it came to deciding how to vote in the 2021 election? – Top 5 reasons
 2021 Voters, % ranked in top 3^{1,2,3}

	All Scotland	%
1st	The NHS and Social Care	50%
2nd	Jobs and the Economy	39%
3rd	COVID	36%
4th	Preventing a Second Referendum on Independence	34%
5th	Scotland gaining independence	26%



	Pro-Union	%	Middle Scotland	%	Pro-Independence	%
	Preventing a Second Referendum on Independence	75%	The NHS and Social Care	55%	Scotland gaining independence	58%
	The NHS and Social Care	50%	Jobs and the Economy	40%	The NHS and Social Care	46%
	Jobs and the Economy	49%	COVID	37%	COVID	40%
	COVID	30%	Poverty and Social Inequality	26%	Jobs and the Economy	27%
	Education	23%	Education	25%	Poverty and Social Inequality	27%

Gaining independence the 11th most important priority out of 13 for Middle Scotland (15%)

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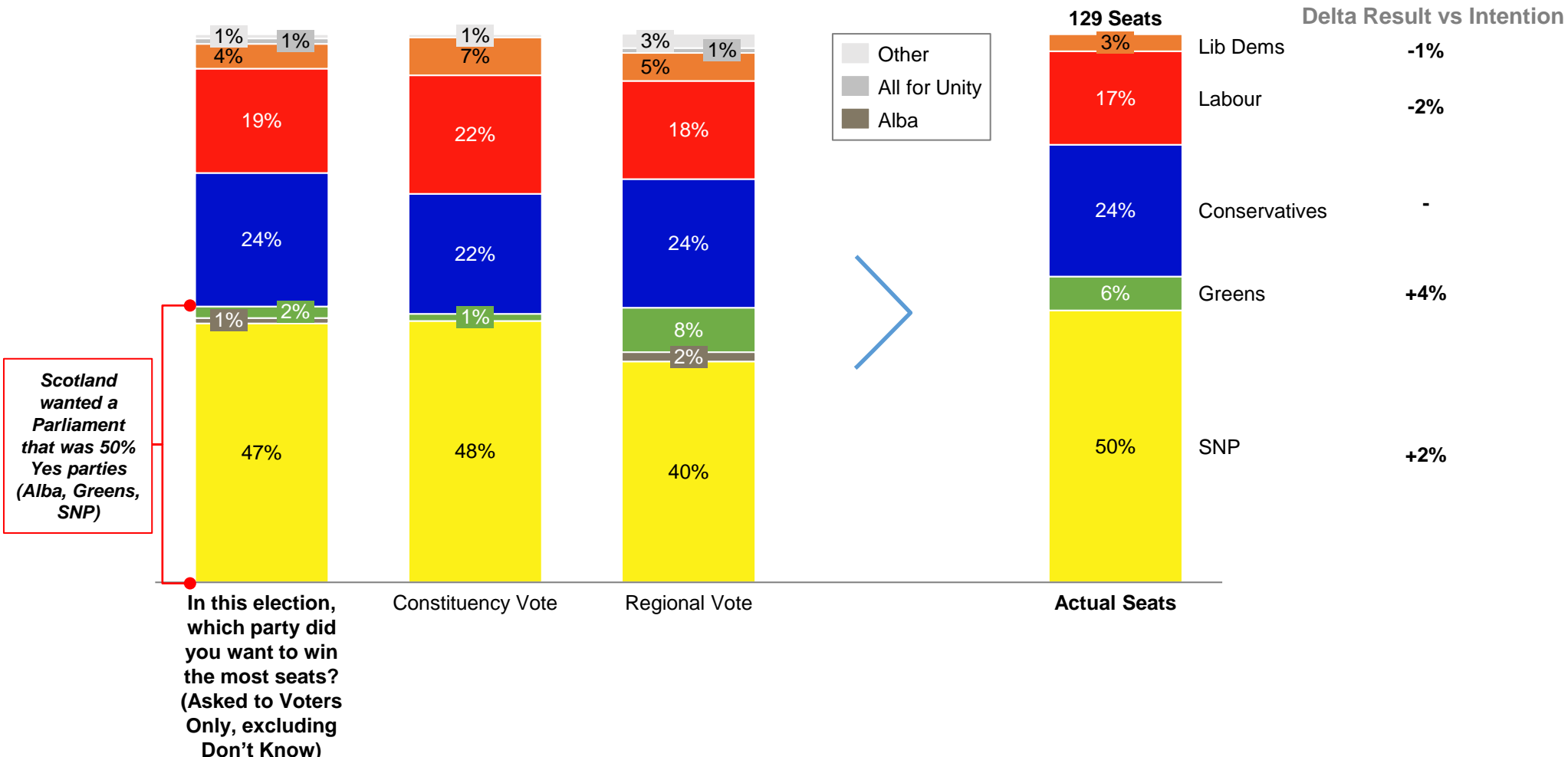
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Scotland voted for a Parliament that was exactly split between Yes and No parties; the Parliament it got over-represents the SNP and the Greens

Scotland – Intention^{1,2} vs Vote vs Outcome
2021 Voters, %

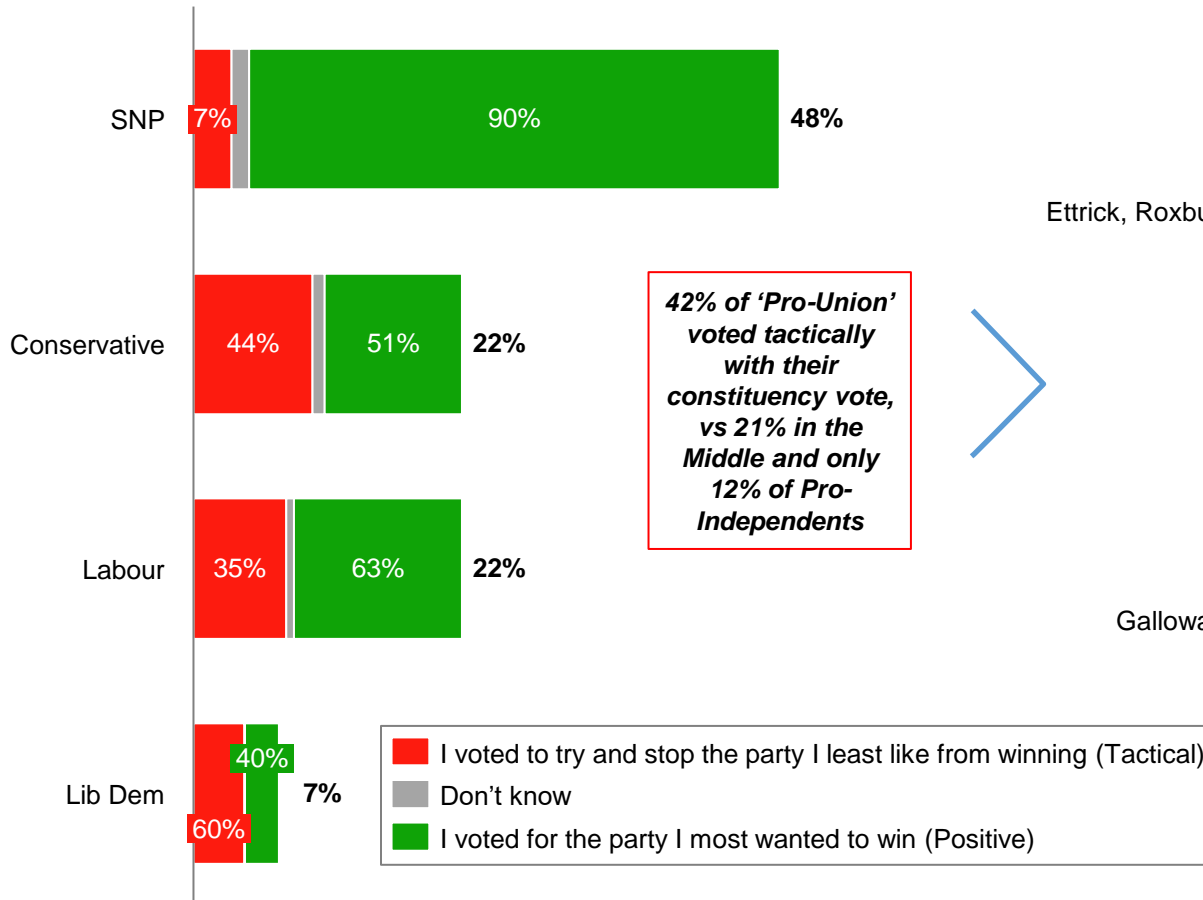


1. 1,000 Scots were polled between the 7th and 8th of May 2021. Responses were weighted to census figures on age, gender, education level, and recorded 2021 vote in the Scottish Parliamentary elections
2. Polling Question: In this election, which party did you want to win the most seats? Asked to voters only, excluding don't know

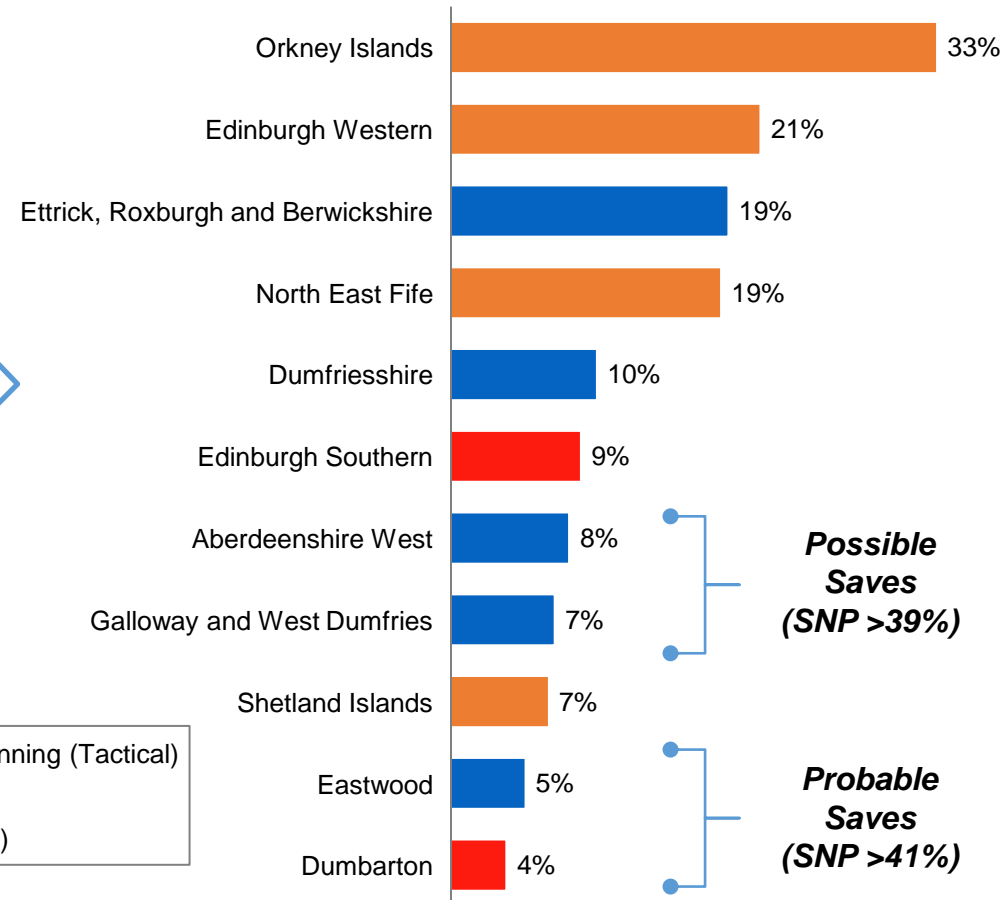
Source: OSF Morning After Poll May 2021, 2021 Scottish Election Result and Parliamentary Composition, OSF Analysis

Pro-Union parties won zero new seats, but appear to have taken advantage of tactical voting in retaining 2-4 seats

Tactical vs Positive Vote Intention,^{1,2}
2021 Voters, %



Non-SNP Constituencies – winning margin

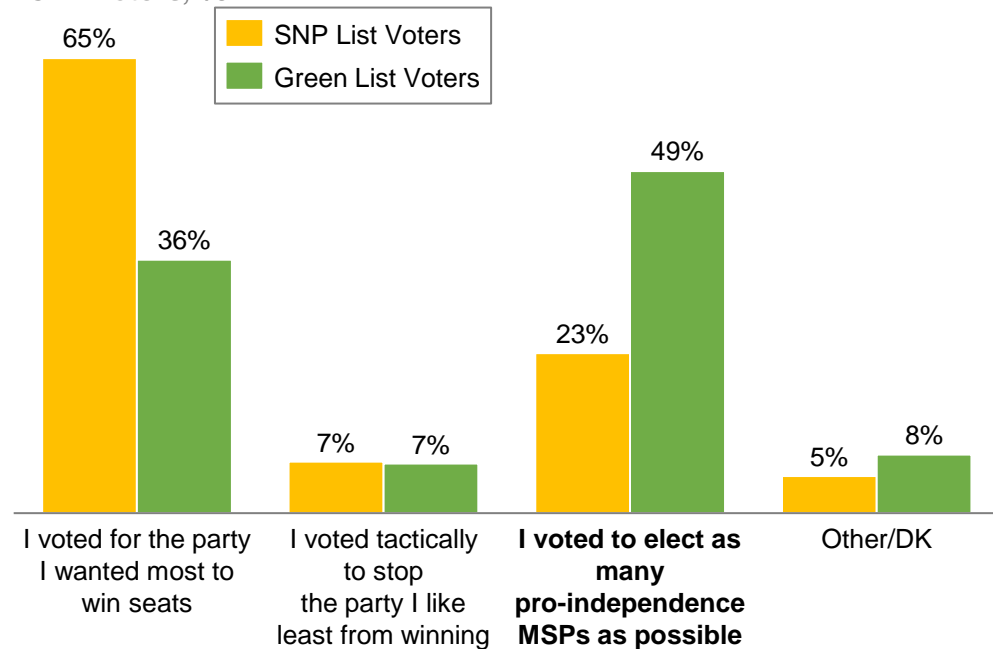


1. 1,000 Scots were polled between the 7th and 8th of May 2021. Responses were weighted to census figures on age, gender, education level, and recorded 2021 vote in the Scottish Parliamentary elections
 2. Polling Question: Which of the following was more important in your voting decision at this election for your lilac constituency vote? Cross cut by Polling Question: Which party did you vote for with your consistency vote (lilac ballot)?
 Source: OSF Morning After Poll May 2021, 2021 Scottish Election Result and Parliamentary Composition, OSF Analysis

Roughly half of Green regional votes appear to have been cast tactically for a Yes supermajority

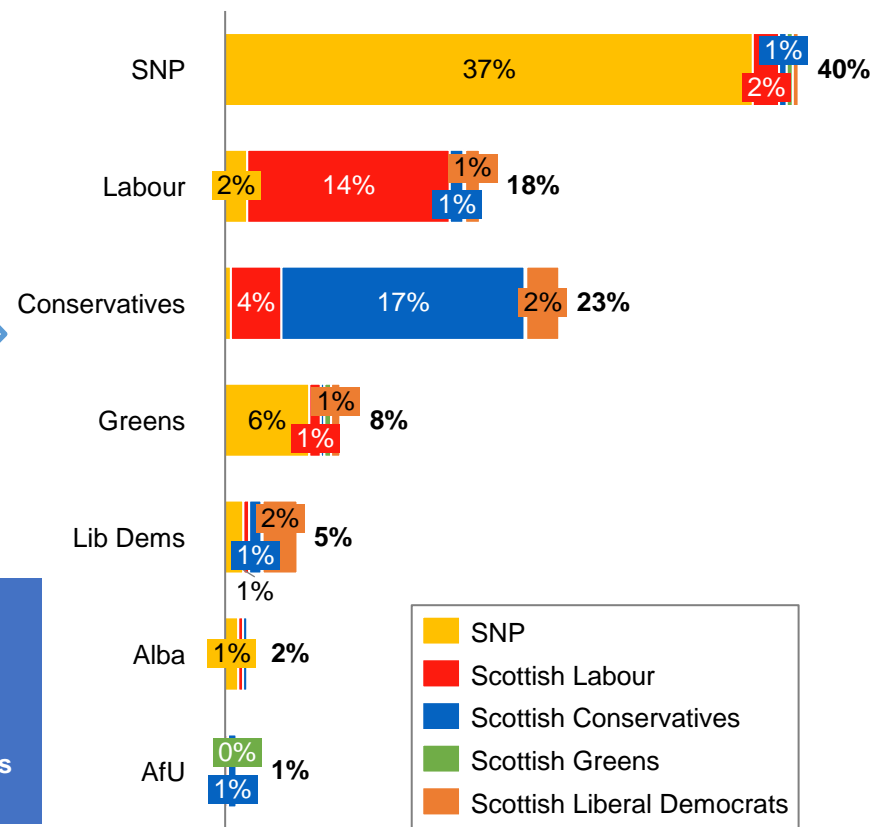
Which of these was most important to you in your voting decision at this election for your peach list vote?

2021 Voters, %^{1,2}



Which party did you vote for with your regional / list vote (peach ballot)?

2021 Voters, By Constituency Party Vote^{1,3}



A higher share of Scottish Green regional voters voted for them to maximise pro-Independence MSPs (49%) than voted for the Tories maximise Pro-Union MSPs (44%)

The Greens took a higher share of their list vote from the SNP (73%) than Alba (55%)

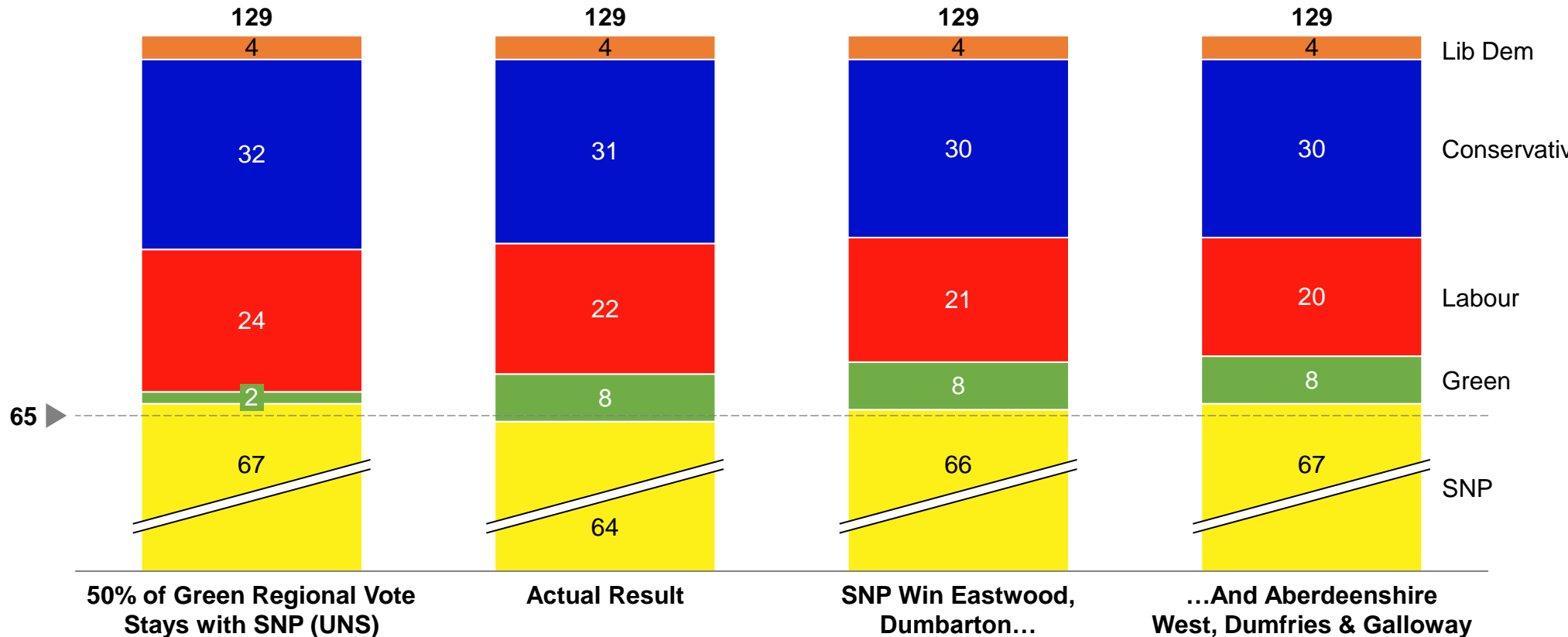
Scotland becoming Independent was the #1 issue area for Scottish Green regional voters when deciding how to vote; climate change was #4

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 3. Polling Question: Which party did you vote for with your regional / list vote (peach ballot)? , Cross cut by Which party did you vote for with your consistency vote (lilac ballot)?

Source: OSF Morning After Poll May 2021, OSF Analysis

The net result of tactical voting on both Yes and No sides was to deprive the SNP of 65+ seats and a majority

Non-Tactical Voting Scenario Analysis
Seats



- Greens only retain 1 seat in each of Glasgow and Lothian
- SNP pick up Green H&I, Lothian, and West Scotland seats
- Both losses being in West of Scotland mean that list seats remain unchanged for Lab and Con
- Tories take additional seat in North East from Labour if they loose Aberdeenshire West

Source: OSF Morning After Poll May 2021, 2021 Scottish Election Result and Parliamentary Composition, OSF Analysis

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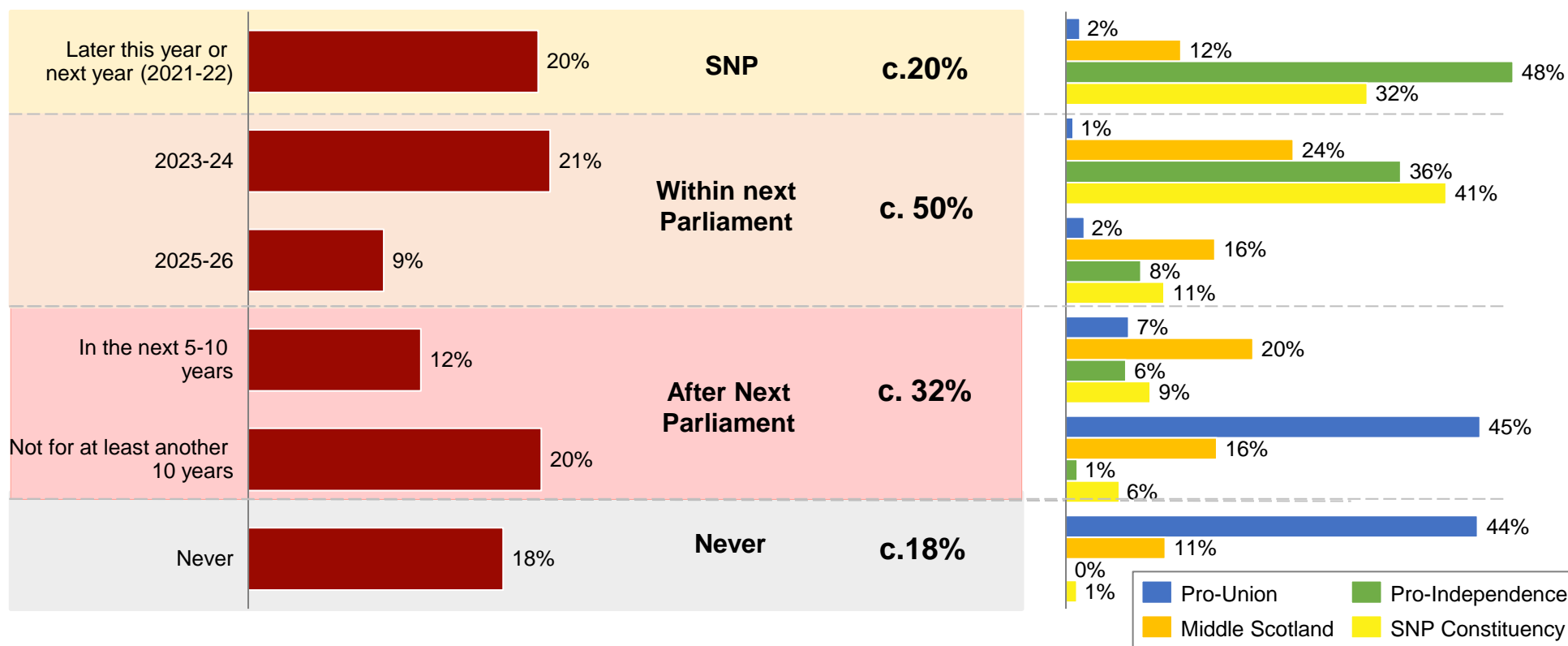
Scotland is divided 50-50 on whether to have a second independence referendum within the term of the newly elected Parliament...

If a second referendum were to take place, when ideally do you believe it should happen?

All Scots, %^{1,2}

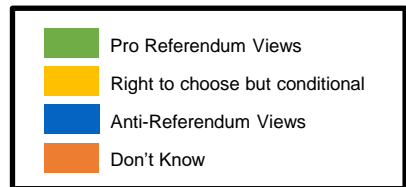
All Scots

By 'Three Scotlands' and SNP Voters



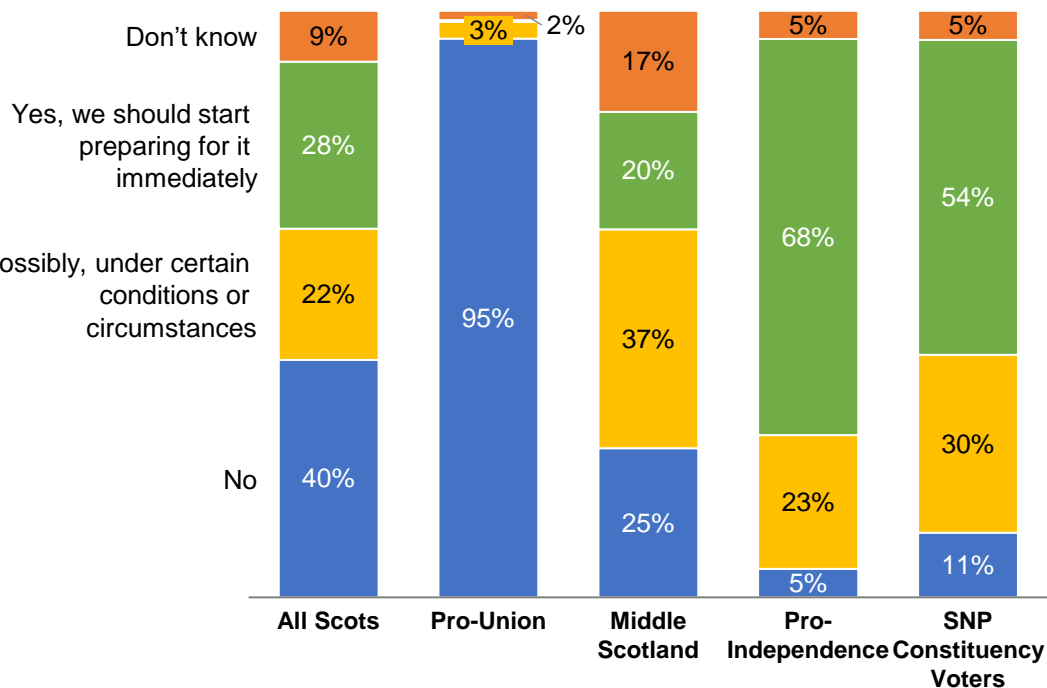
1. 1,000 Scots were polled between the 7th and 8th of May 2021. Responses were weighted to census figures on age, gender, education level, and recorded 2021 vote in the Scottish Parliamentary elections
 2. Poling Question: If a second referendum were to take place, when ideally do you believe it should happen?
 3. Cross Cut with: Polling Question: 'On a scale of 0-10 where 0 is 'strongly against' and 10 is 'strongly in favour', what is your view on whether Scotland should be an independent country?', Pro-Union = responses 0-1, Middle Scotland = responses 2-8, Pro-Independence = 9-10, and cut by 'Which party did you vote for with your constituency vote (liac ballot)?'

...However, support for a referendum during the next parliament is highly conditional, and not absolute



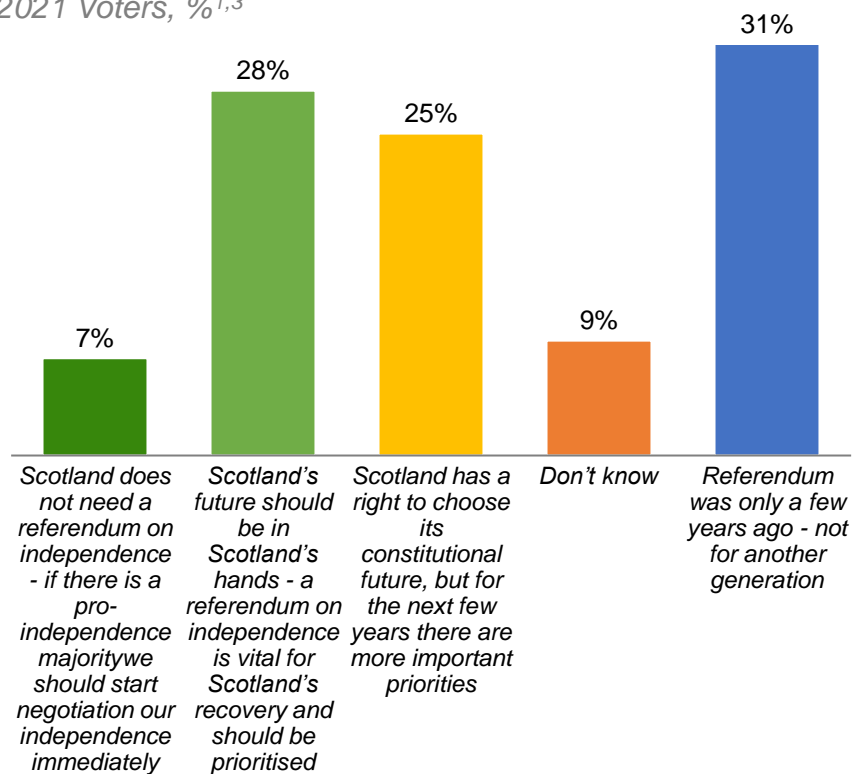
After the Scottish elections, do you think there should be a second referendum?

All Scots and Independence Sentiment, %^{1,2}



Which statement about a Second Referendum on Scottish independence is closest to your view?

2021 Voters, %^{1,3}

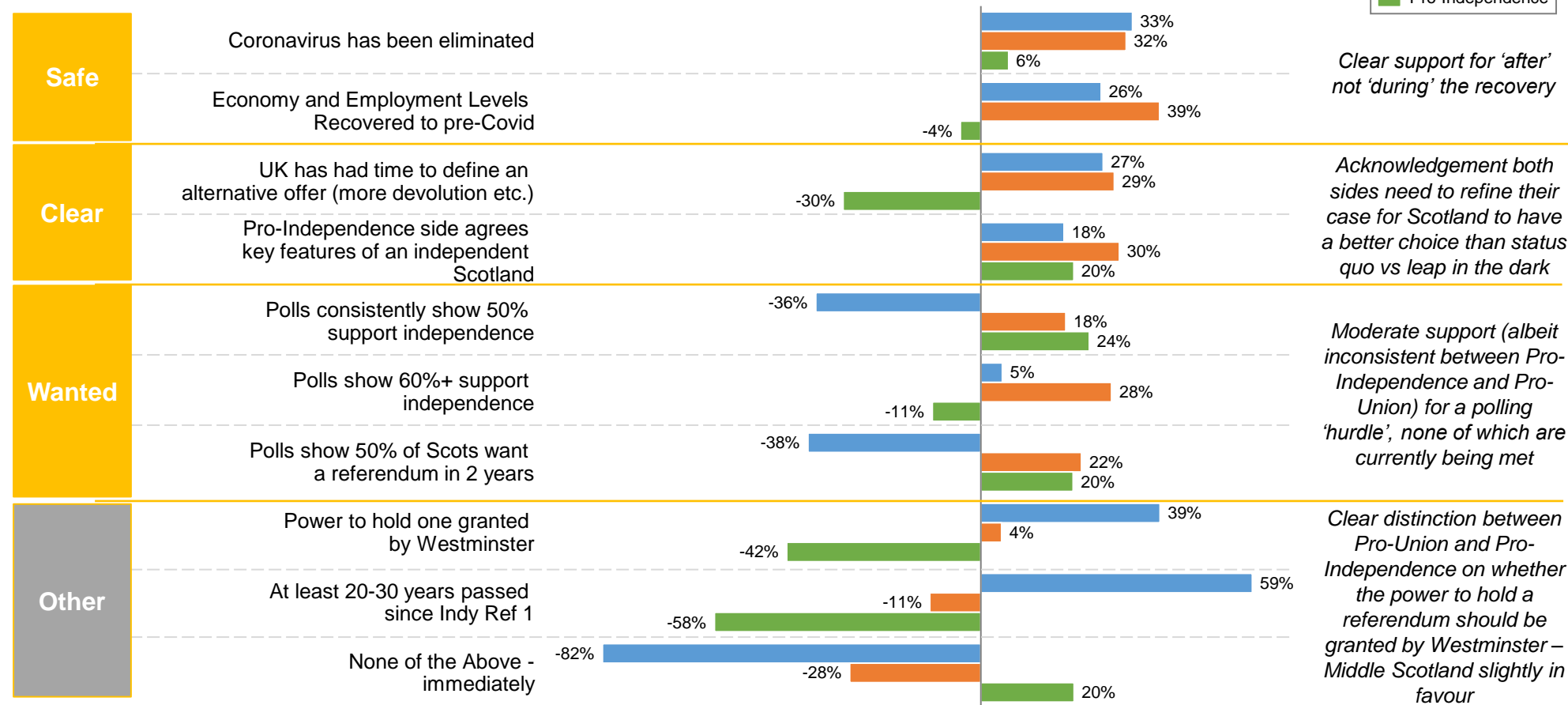


1. 1,000 Scots were polled between the 7th and 8th of May 2021. Responses were weighted to census figures on age, gender, education level, and recorded 2021 vote in the Scottish Parliamentary elections
 2. Poll Question: After the Scottish elections, do you think there should be a second referendum? Cross cut by Polling Question: 'On a scale of 0-10 where 0 is 'strongly against' and 10 is 'strongly in favour', what is your view on whether Scotland should be an independent country?', Pro-Union = responses 0-1, Middle Scotland = responses 2-8, Pro-Independence = 9-10, excludes non respondents
 3. Poll Question: Which statement about a Second Referendum on Scottish Independence is closest to your view?

Regardless of mandates and legalities Middle Scotland will only support a referendum that is safe, clear, and wanted

To what extent do you agree with the following arguments: Scotland should not hold a second referendum on independence until...

Net score (agree / disagree) with option, % of All Scots^{1,2}

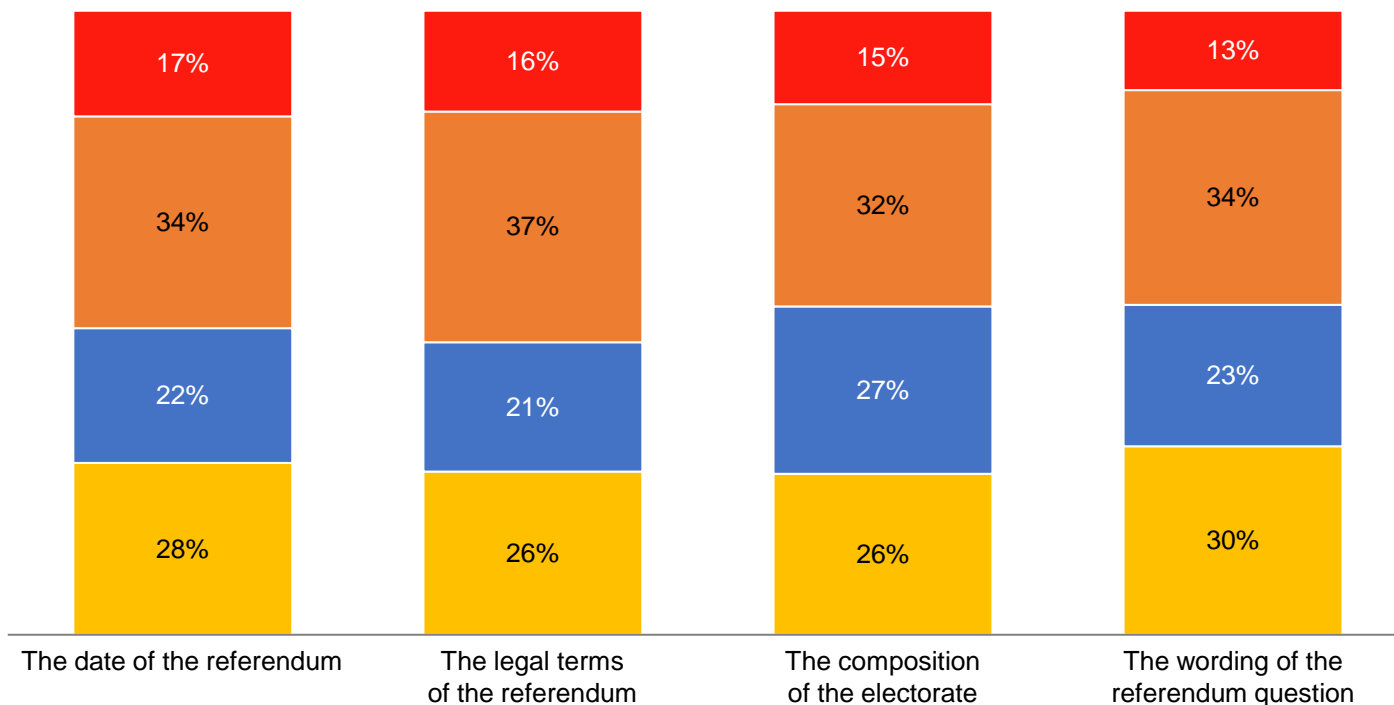
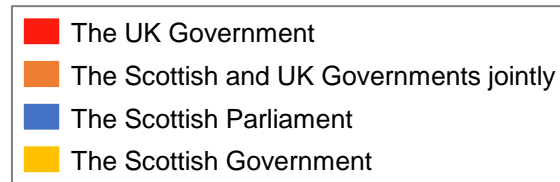


1. 1,000 Scots were polled between the 7th and 8th of May 2021. Responses were weighted to census figures on age, gender, education level, and recorded 2021 vote in the Scottish Parliamentary elections
 2. Polling Question: To what extent do you agree with the following arguments: Scotland should not hold a second referendum on independence until... , cross cut by Polling Question: 'On a scale of 0-10 where 0 is 'strongly against' and 10 is 'strongly in favour', what is your view on whether Scotland should be an independent country?', Pro-Union = responses 0-1, Middle Scotland = responses 2-8, Pro-Independence= 9-10, excludes non respondents

Whereas ~50% of Scots want Westminster to participate in planning for any referendum, only ~25-30% want the SNP to be both ‘referee and captain’

Who should decide on the following...?

All Scots, %^{1,2}



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2. Poll Question: Who should decide on the following? 'The Date of the Referendum', 'The Legal Terms of the Referendum', 'The Composition of the Electorate', 'The Wording of the Referendum'

Source: OSF Morning After Poll May 2021, OSF Analysis

Key Findings

Executive Summary

1. There are Not Two Scotlands, But Three
2. The SNP's victory was built on an offer to Middle Scotland that had little to do with the constitution
3. Pro-Independence and Pro-Union tactical voting both created a Parliament that over-represents pro-Independence parties and denied the SNP a majority
4. Support for a 2nd referendum is highly dependent on conditions that are not yet met
5. Pro-Independence campaigners need a clearer constitutional blueprint
6. Pro-Union campaigners can best make the case for the UK through cooperation, not competition or confrontation

The Pro-Independence side has not yet written a case that is sufficiently clear for the public to vote on it with confidence

Do you believe that campaigners for Independence have given enough information about what Scotland would be like if it became Independent (e.g. on currency, taxation, legal rights, EU membership, the border) for you to make a fully informed choice at a future referendum?

All Scots, %^{1,2}

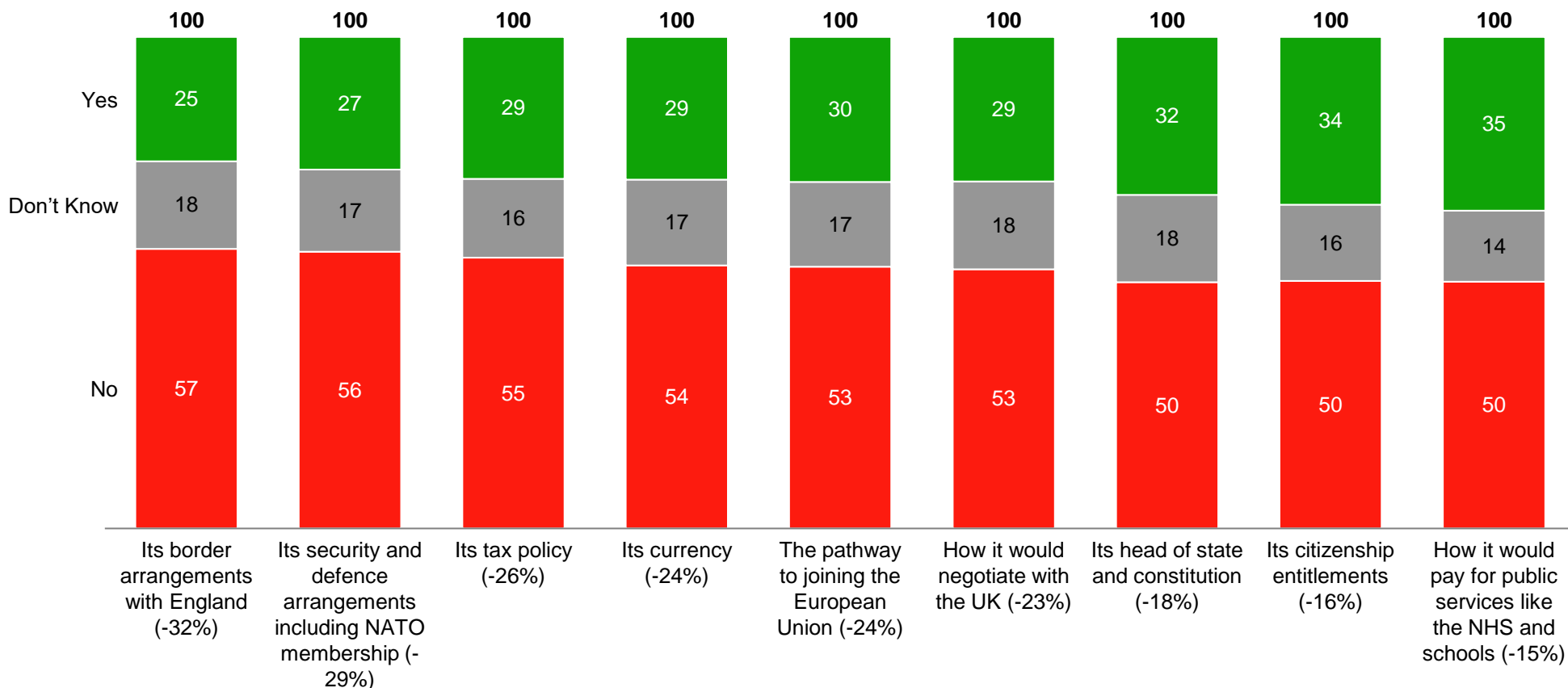


1. 1,000 Scots were polled between the 7th and 8th of May 2021. Responses were weighted to census figures on age, gender, education level, and recorded 2021 vote in the Scottish Parliamentary elections

2. Poll Question: Do you believe that campaigners for Independence have given enough information about what Scotland would be like if it became Independent (e.g. on currency, taxation, legal rights, EU membership, the border) for you to make a fully informed choice at a future referendum? , cut by Polling Question: 'On a scale of 0-10 where 0 is 'strongly against' and 10 is 'strongly in favour', what is your view on whether Scotland should be an independent country?', Pro-Union = responses 0-1, Middle Scotland = responses 2-8, Pro-Independence = 9-10, excludes non respondents

The border, currency, security arrangements, and tax policy of an independent Scotland are all currently understood by <30% of the public

Do you feel confident that you know what an Independent Scotland would look like in terms of the following key issues?
 2021 Voters, (Net Yes in Brackets), %



1. 1,000 Scots were polled between the 7th and 8th of May 2021. Responses were weighted to census figures on age, gender, education level, and recorded 2021 vote in the Scottish Parliamentary elections

— Poll Question: Do you feel confident that you know what an Independent Scotland would look like in terms of the following key issues?

Source: OSF Morning After Poll May 2021, OSF Analysis

There is very low support for the Scottish government starting any preparations for a second referendum on independence now

What do you think the top 3 priorities of the Scottish government should be now the election is over?

All Scots, % in Top 3

	All Voters		Pro-Union		Middle Scotland		Pro-Independence		SNP Const. Voters	
1 st	NHS Catch Up	51%	NHS Catch Up	66%	NHS Catch Up	47%	NHS Catch Up	42%	NHS Catch Up	49%
2 nd	Reduce COVID / Vaccines	45%	Reduce COVID / Vaccines	48%	Reduce COVID / Vaccines	45%	Reduce COVID / Vaccines	40%	Reduce COVID / Vaccines	47%
3 rd	Protect & Generate Jobs	35%	Protect & Generate Jobs	39%	Protect and Generate Jobs	36%	Prepare for 2 nd Independence Ref.	38%	Protect & Generate Jobs	31%
4 th	Education Catch Up	30%	Reopen Economy	37%	Education Catch Up	32%	Eliminate Poverty	33%	Eliminate Poverty	30%
5 th	Reopen Economy	30%	Education Catch Up	34%	Invest in NHS Capacity	29%	Protect and Generate Jobs	31%	Prepare for 2 nd Independence Ref.	29%
6 th	Eliminate Poverty	27%	Invest in NHS Capacity	24%	Reopen Economy	27%	Reopen Economy	25%	Reopen Economy	27%
7 th	Invest in NHS Capacity	26%	Eliminate Poverty	22%	Eliminate Poverty	25%	Education Catch Up	24%	Education Catch Up	25%
8 th	Prepare for 2 nd Independence Ref.	18%	Fight Crime	11%	National Care Service	16%	Invest in NHS Capacity	24%	Invest in NHS Capacity	25%
9 th	Reduce Carbon Footprint / Environment	14%	National Care Service	9%	Reduce Carbon Footprint / Environment	15%	Reduce Carbon Footprint	19%	Reduce Carbon Footprint / Environment	16%
10	National Care Service	14%	Reduce Carbon Footprint / Environment	7%	Fight Crime	14%	National Care Service	16%	National Care Service	14%
11	Fight Crime	11%	Prepare for 2 nd Independence Ref.	3%	Prepare for 2 nd Independence Ref.	13%	Fight Crime	7%	Fight Crime	7%

1. 1,000 Scots were polled between the 7th and 8th of May 2021. Responses were weighted to census figures on age, gender, education level, and recorded 2021 vote in the Scottish Parliamentary elections

2. Poll Question: What do you think the top 3 priorities of the Scottish government should be now the election is over?, cross cut by Polling Question: 'On a scale of 0-10 where 0 is 'strongly against' and 10 is 'strongly in favour', what is your view on whether Scotland should be an independent country?', Pro-Union = responses 0-1, Middle Scotland = responses 2-8, Pro-Independence = 9-10, excludes non respondents, and 'Which party did you vote or with your constituency vote (lilac ballot)?

Source: OSF Morning After Poll May 2021, OSF Analysis

Key Findings

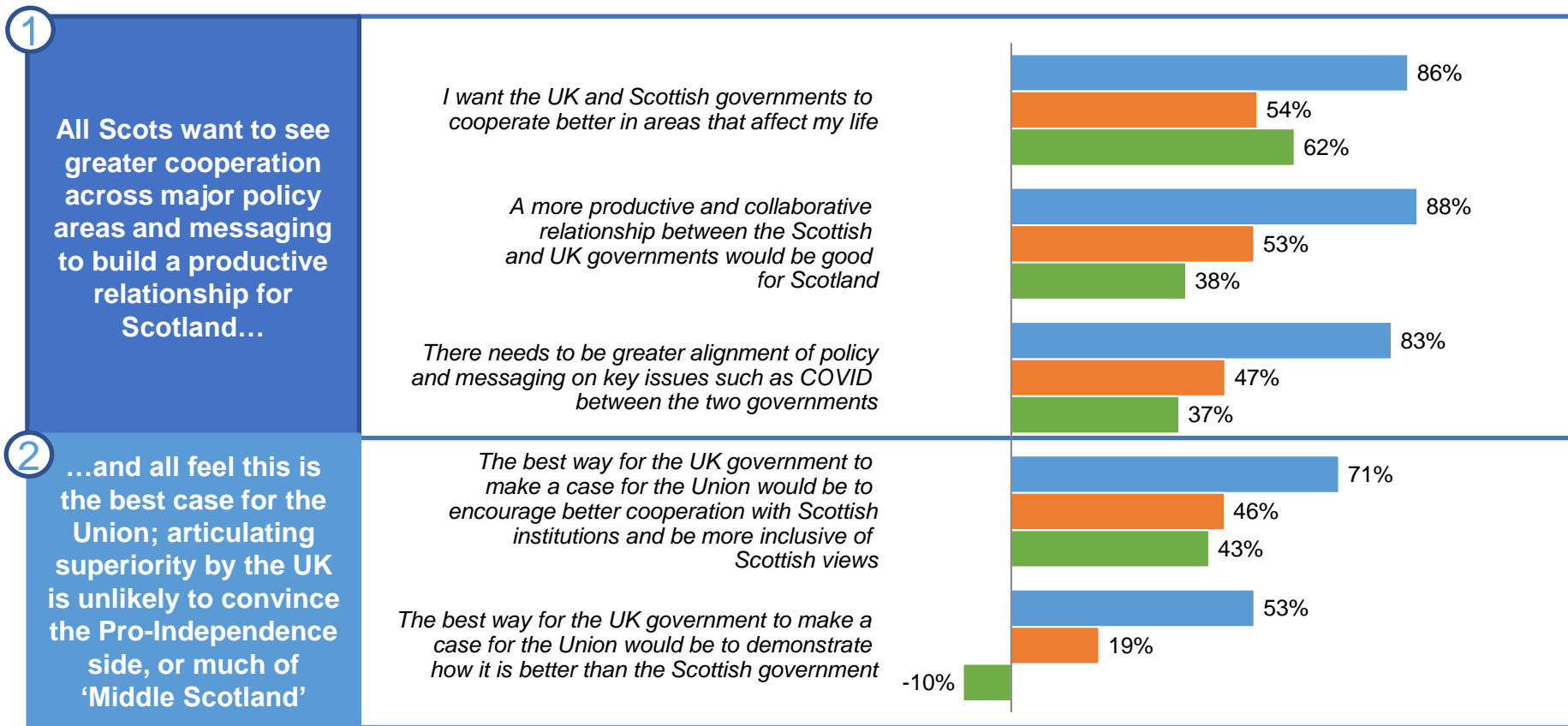
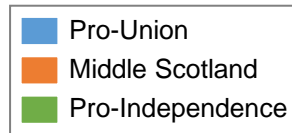
Executive Summary

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2. The SNP's victory was built on an offer to Middle Scotland that had little to do with the constitution
3. Pro-Independence and Pro-Union tactical voting both created a Parliament that over-represents pro-Independence parties and denied the SNP a majority
4. Support for a 2nd referendum is highly dependent on conditions that are not yet met
5. Pro-Independence campaigners need a clearer constitutional blueprint
6. Pro-Union campaigners can best make the case for the UK through cooperation, not competition or confrontation

Cooperation, not competition or confrontation, is the best way for the UK to make its case to Scotland

To what extent do you agree with the following statement on cooperation?

Net score (agree / disagree) with option, All Scots, %^{1,2}



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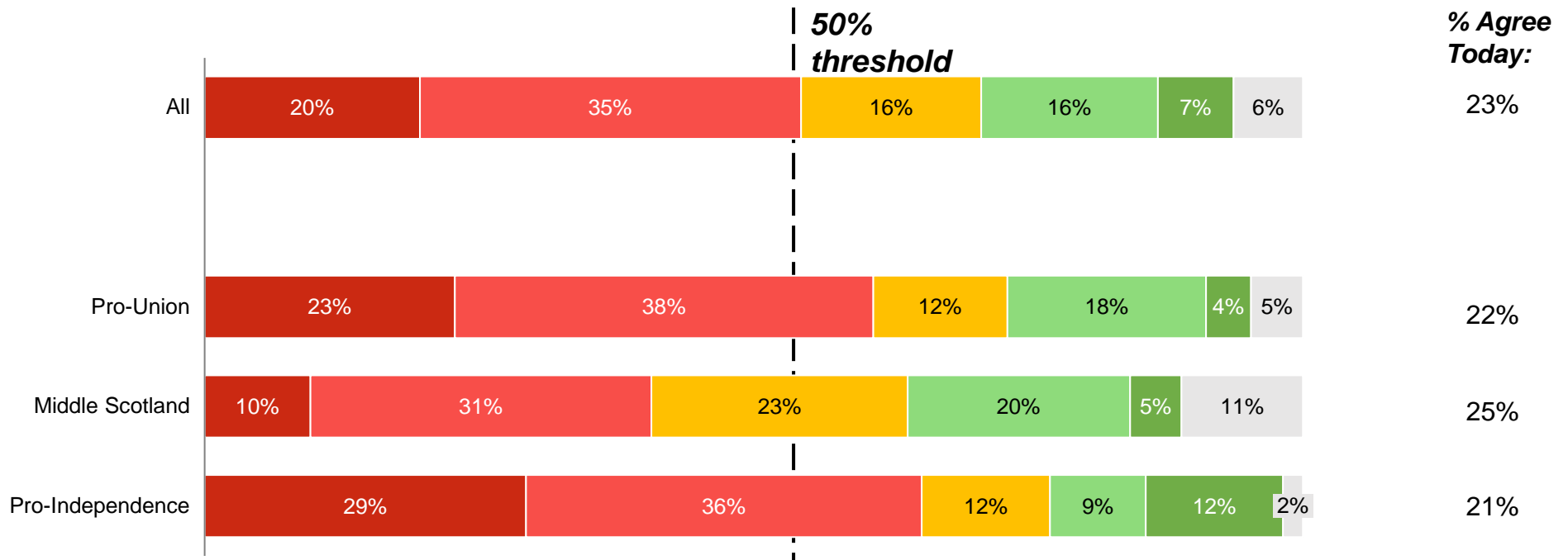
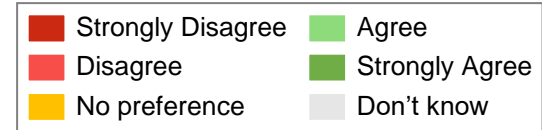
2. Polling Question: To what extent do you agree with the following statement on cooperation; cross cut by Polling Question: 'On a scale of 0-10 where 0 is 'strongly against' and 10 is 'strongly in favour' what is your view on whether Scotland should be an independent country?', Pro-Union = responses 0-1, Middle Scotland = responses 2-8, Pro-Independence = 9-10, excludes non respondents,

Source: OSF Morning After Poll May 2021, OSF Analysis

There is plenty of room for improvement in co-operation today

To what extent do you agree that the Scottish and UK Government cooperate well today?

All Scots, %^{1,2}



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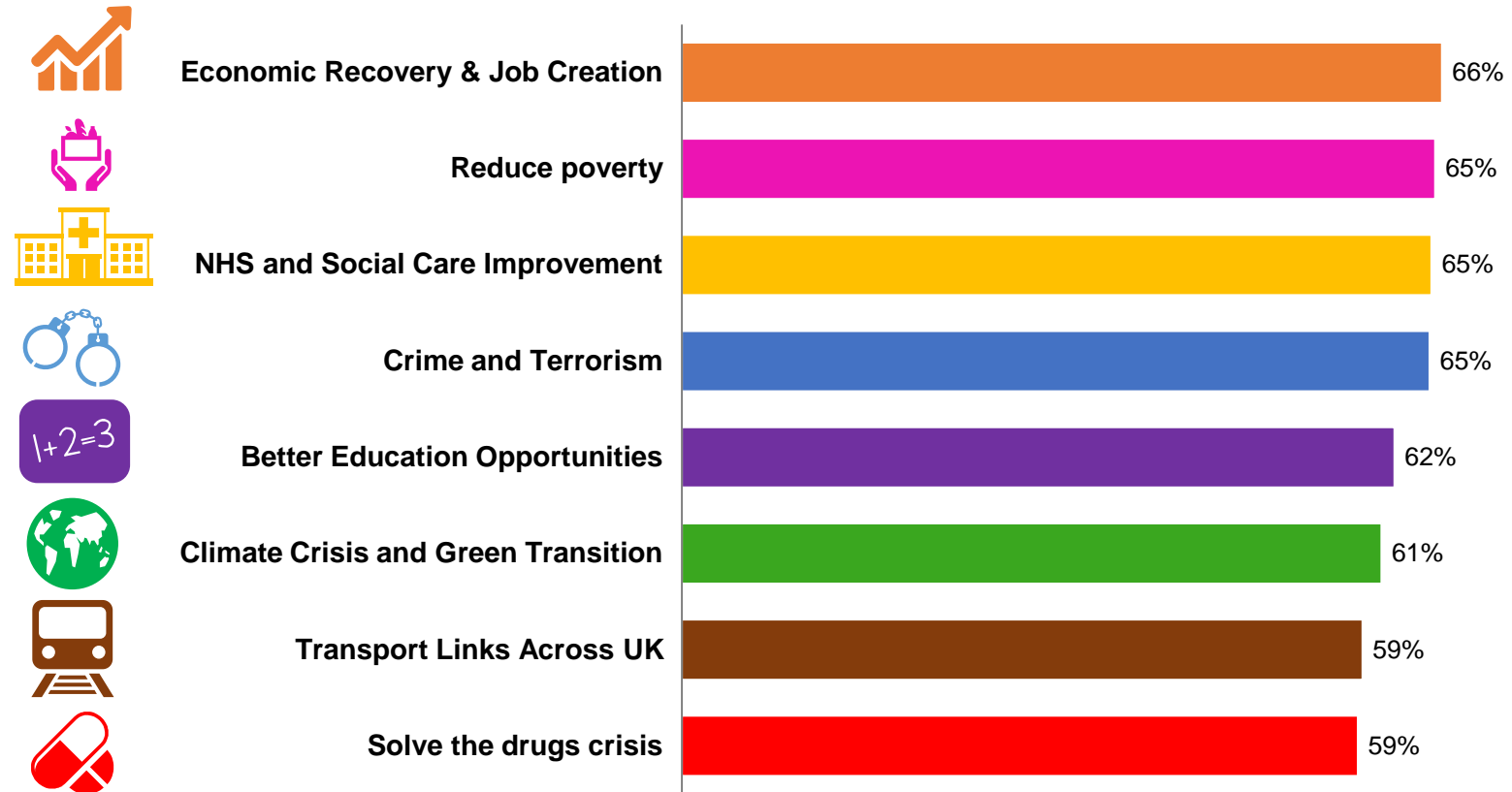
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Source: OSF Morning After Poll May 2021, OSF Analysis

...Across all major policy areas

I want more cooperation to/for...

Net score (agree / disagree) with option, All Scots,^{1,2}



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2. Polling Question: To what extent do you agree with the following statement that 'I want more cooperation for'; net score calculated as difference between % that agree and % that disagree

Source: OSF Morning After Poll May 2021, OSF Analysis