



Scotland on the Eve of the Independence Referendum

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Dr Jan Eichhorn
Chancellor's Fellow | University of Edinburgh

Jan.Eichhorn@ed.ac.uk

Structure

- Background and study details
- The situation at the beginning of September 2014
- What counts for the voters?
- Who votes on 18 September?
- Was it a good idea to reduce the voting age to 16?

The background

“Should Scotland be an independent country?”

18 September 2014



Study background



Scottish Social Attitudes Survey (SSA)

- SSA since 1999 (post devolution)
- Face-to-face survey (CAPI)
- Representative sample with 1200-1500 participants
- Extensive pilot phase and cognitive interviewing
- Multiple weighting procedures
- 2012: 40 questions
- 2013: 80 questions
- 2014: 30 questions (May – July)
- Partners: John Curtice, Lindsay Paterson, Rachel Ormston

→ www.whatscotlandthinks.org

Attitudes of young people

- Target survey of 14-17 year olds (April/May 2013 and 2014)
- Reason: reduction of the voting age
- Questions based on SSA for comparison
- Pilot with 110 school students → adjustment of 1/3 of questions
- Consultation with MRUK to optimise telephone survey
- Random-Digit-Dialling (RDD) with 1000 participants
- Approval by one parent
- Weighting by educational attainment of parents

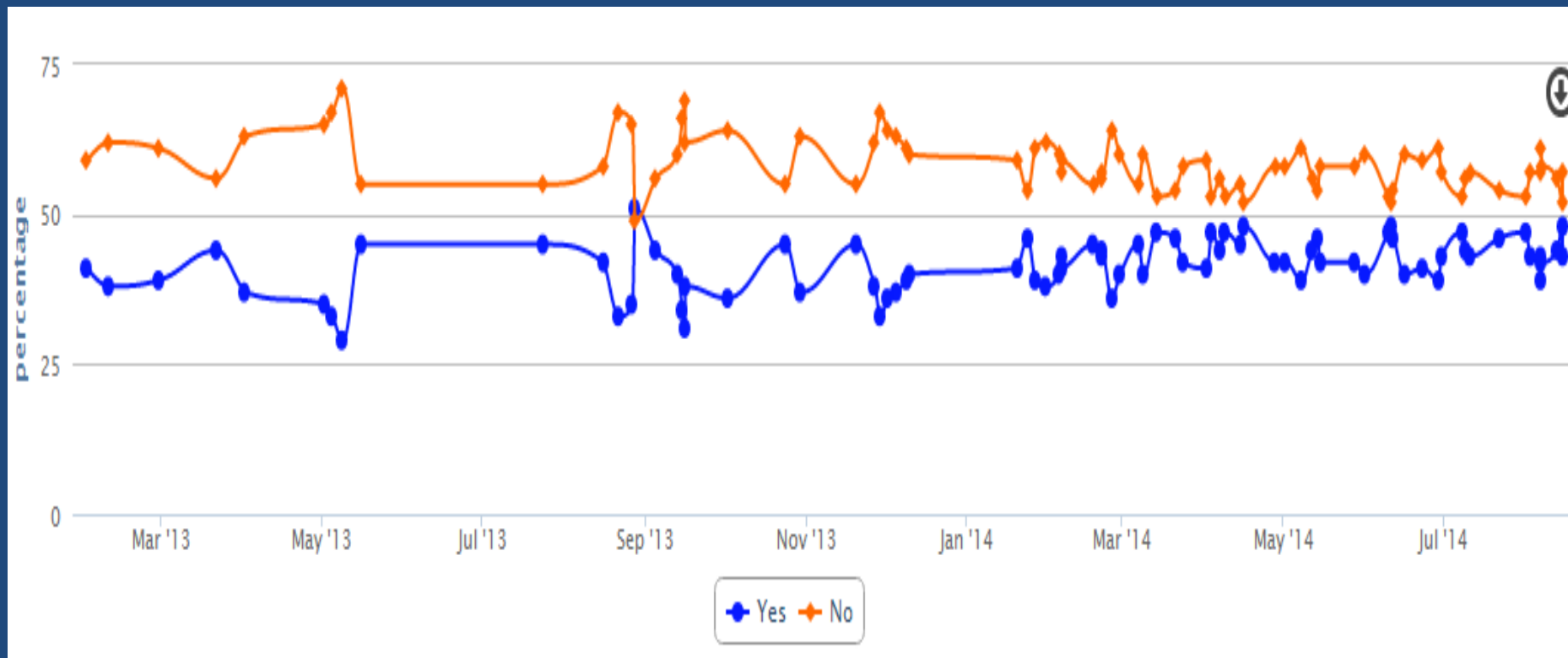


→ Development of teaching materials: <https://www.aqmen.ac.uk/Resources/IndyRef/TeachingMaterials>

**The situation at the beginning of
September 2014**

“Should Scotland be an independent country?”

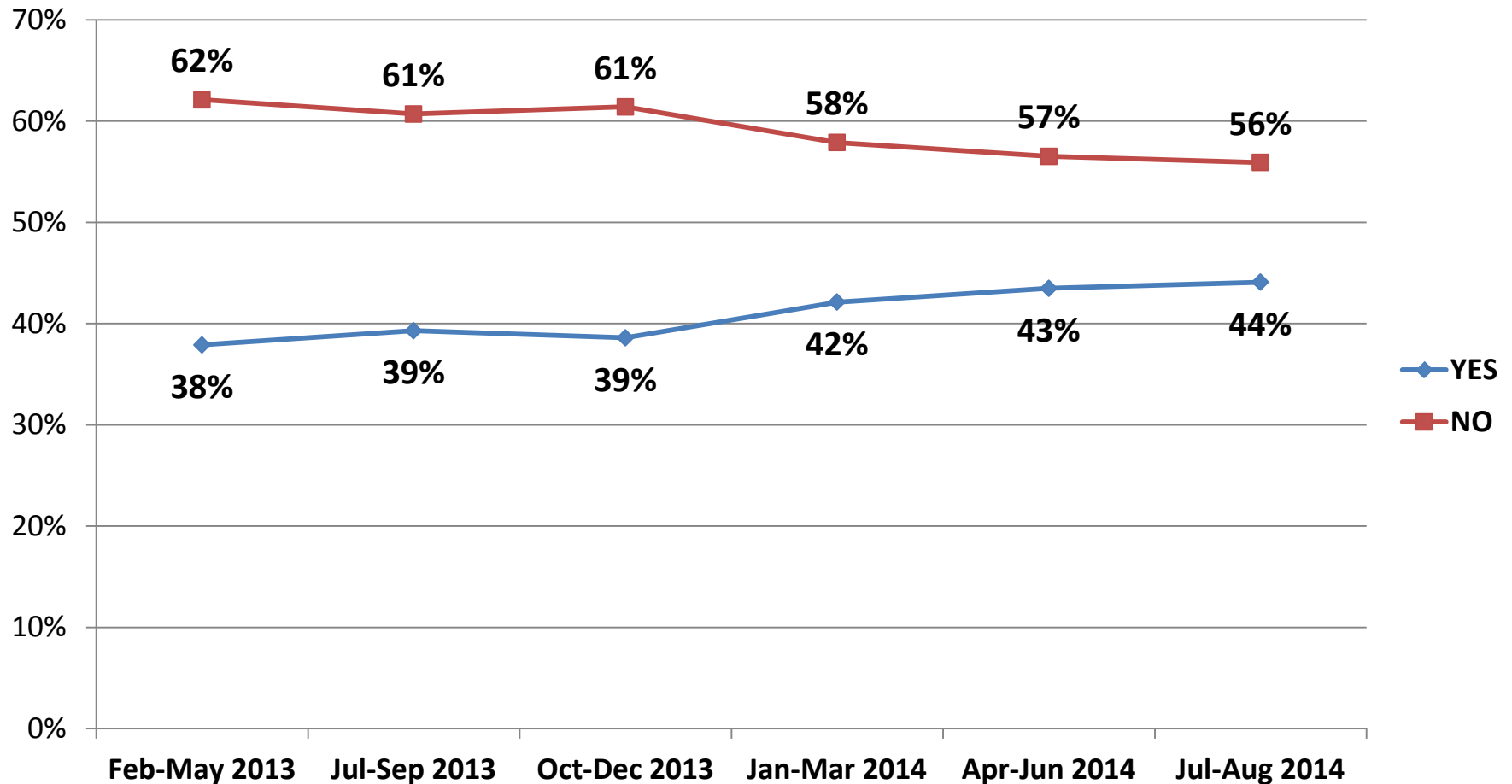
The state of the polls



As of: 01/09/2014 – 80 polls

“Should Scotland be an independent country?”

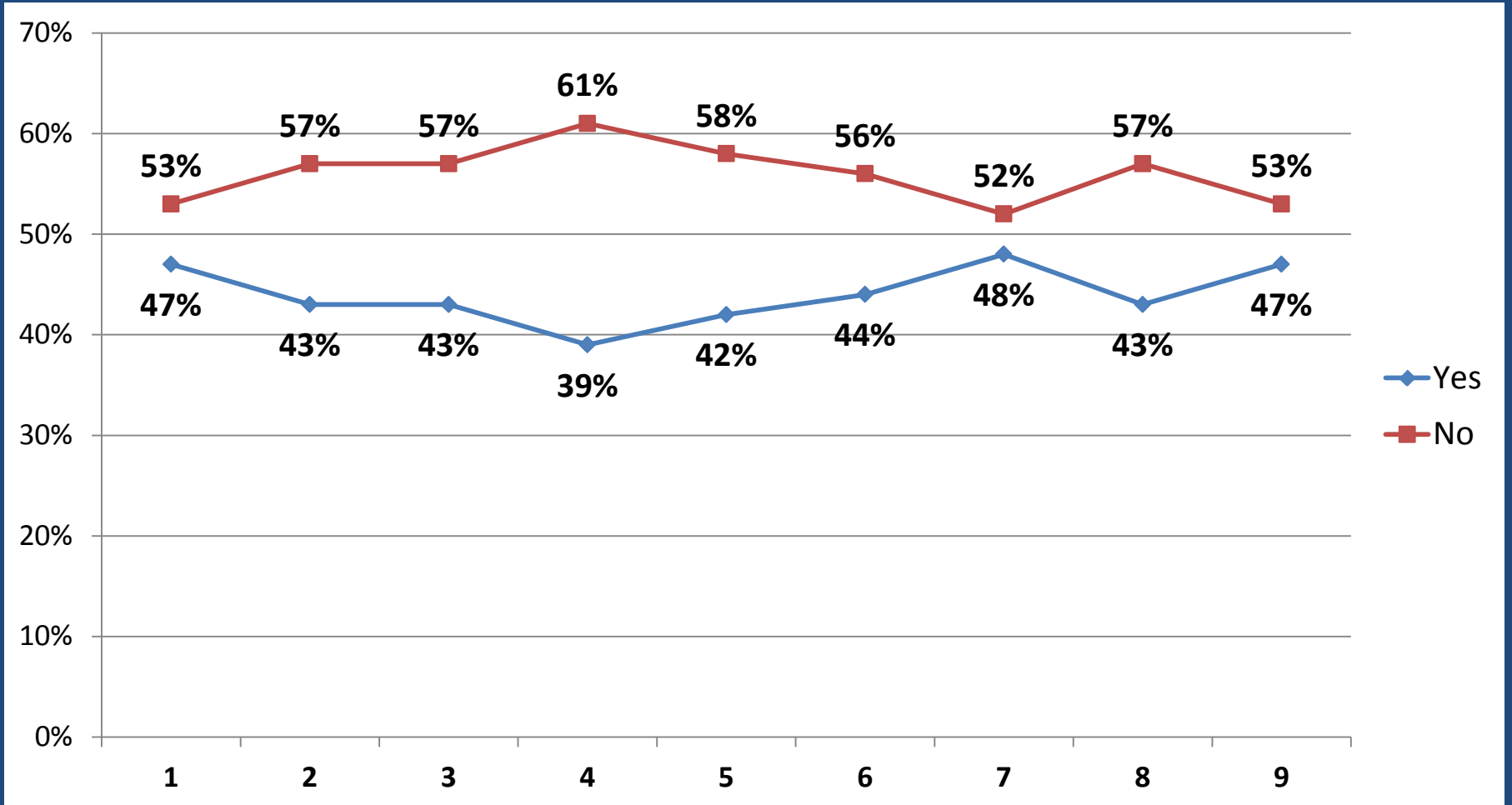
The state of the polls



As of: 01/09/2014 – 80 polls

“Should Scotland be an independent country?”

The state of **August** polls



As of: 29/08/2014 – 9 polls

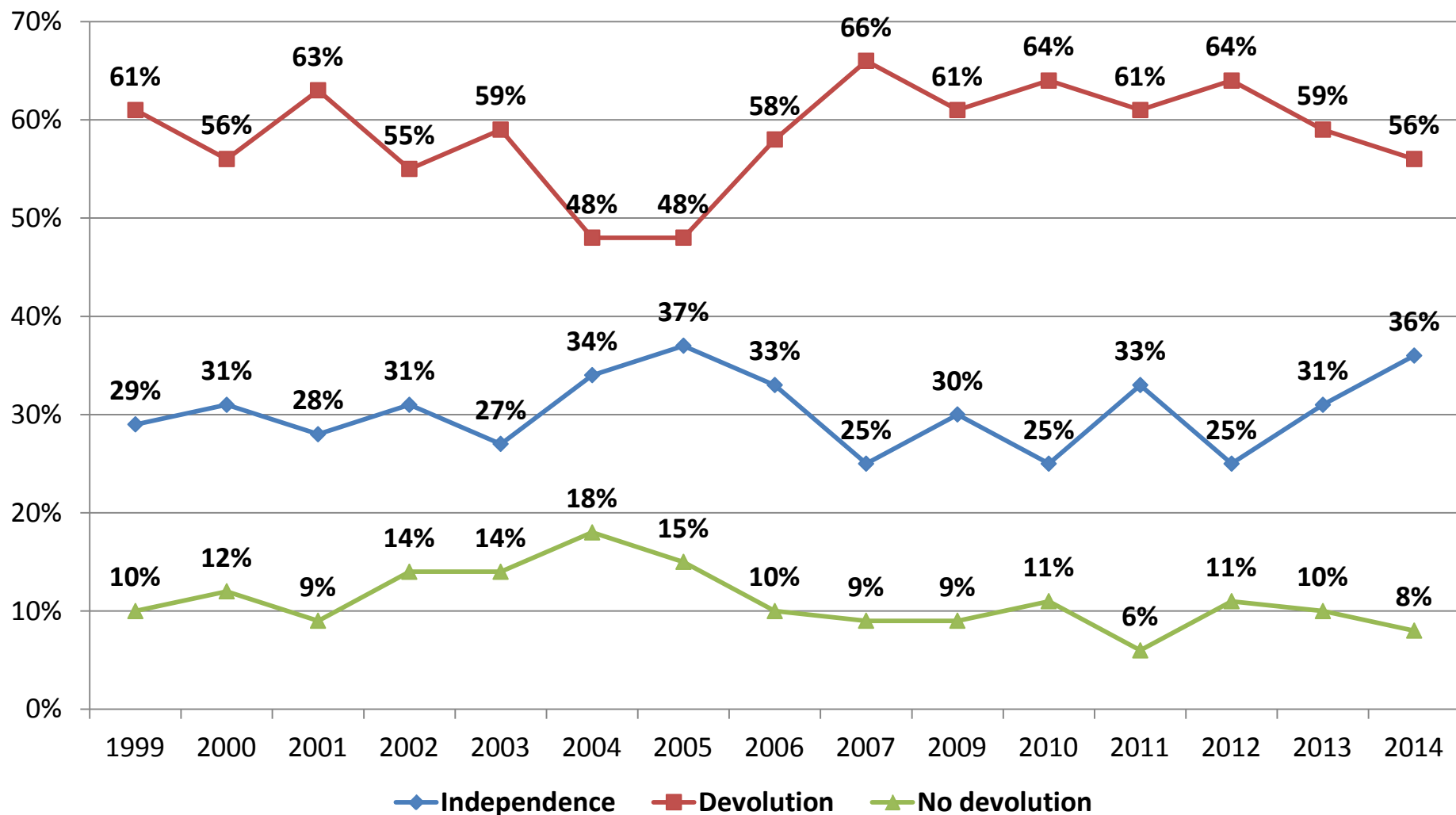
Constitutional preferences since devolution

The long-term perspective (SSA)

Independent of UK and outside the EU	Independence
Independent of the UK, but inside the EU	
Part of the United Kingdom, with an elected parliament with some tax raising powers	Devolution
Part of the United Kingdom, with an elected parliament without tax raising powers	
Part of the United Kingdom, without an elected parliament	No Devolution

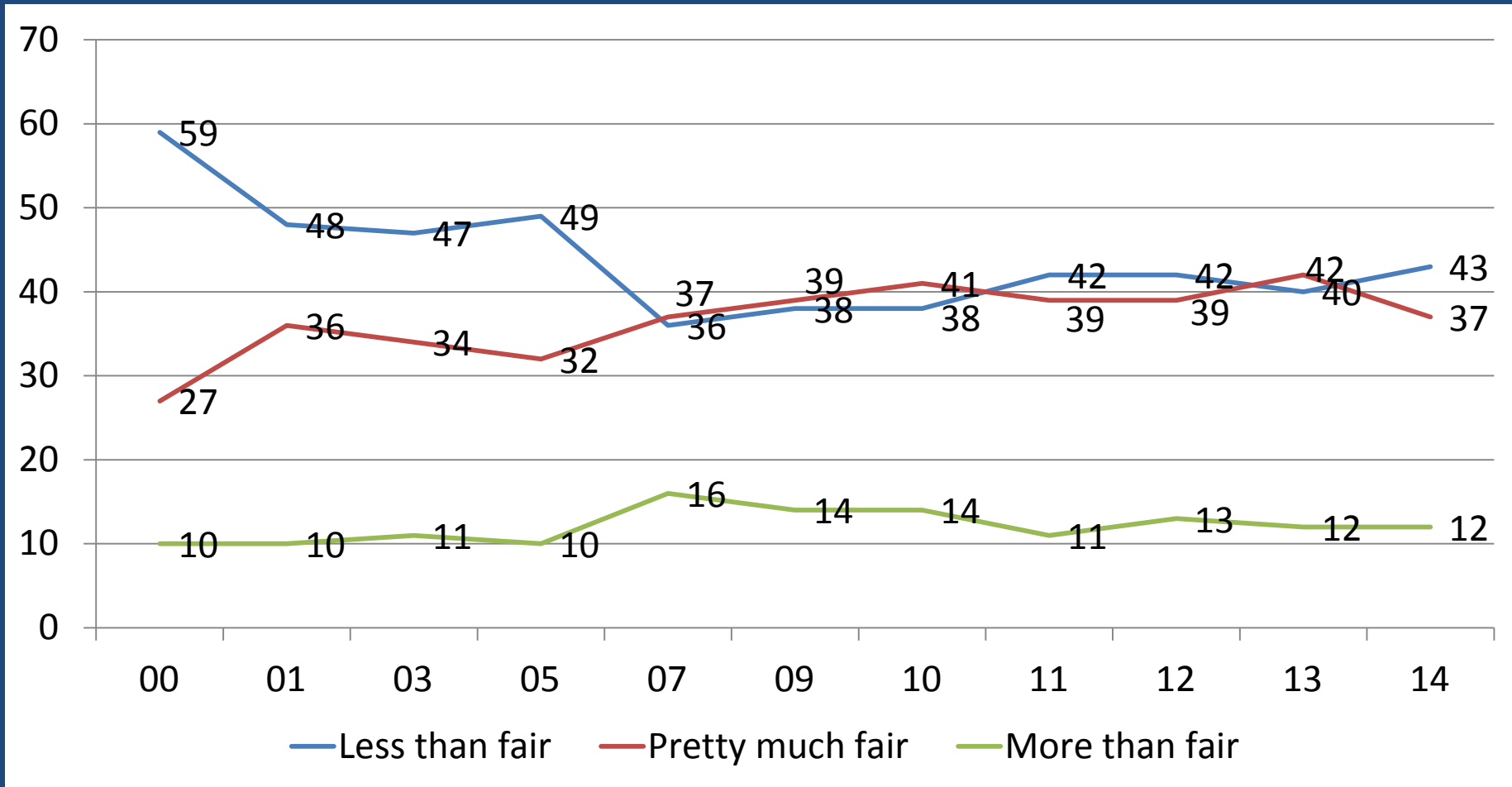
Constitutional preferences since devolution

The long-term perspective (SSA)



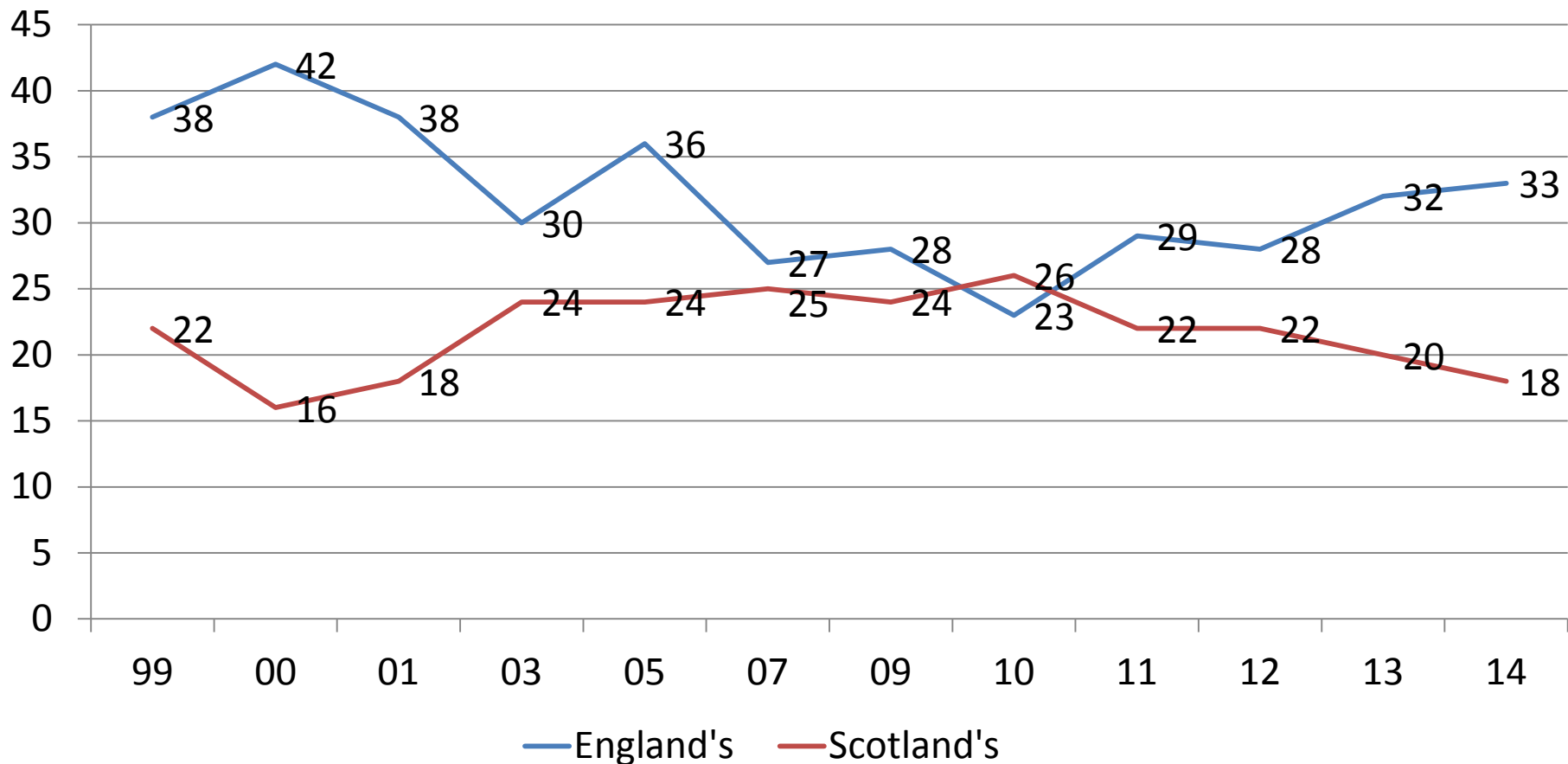
Scotland's share of public spending

The long-term perspective (SSA)



Who benefits more from the union?

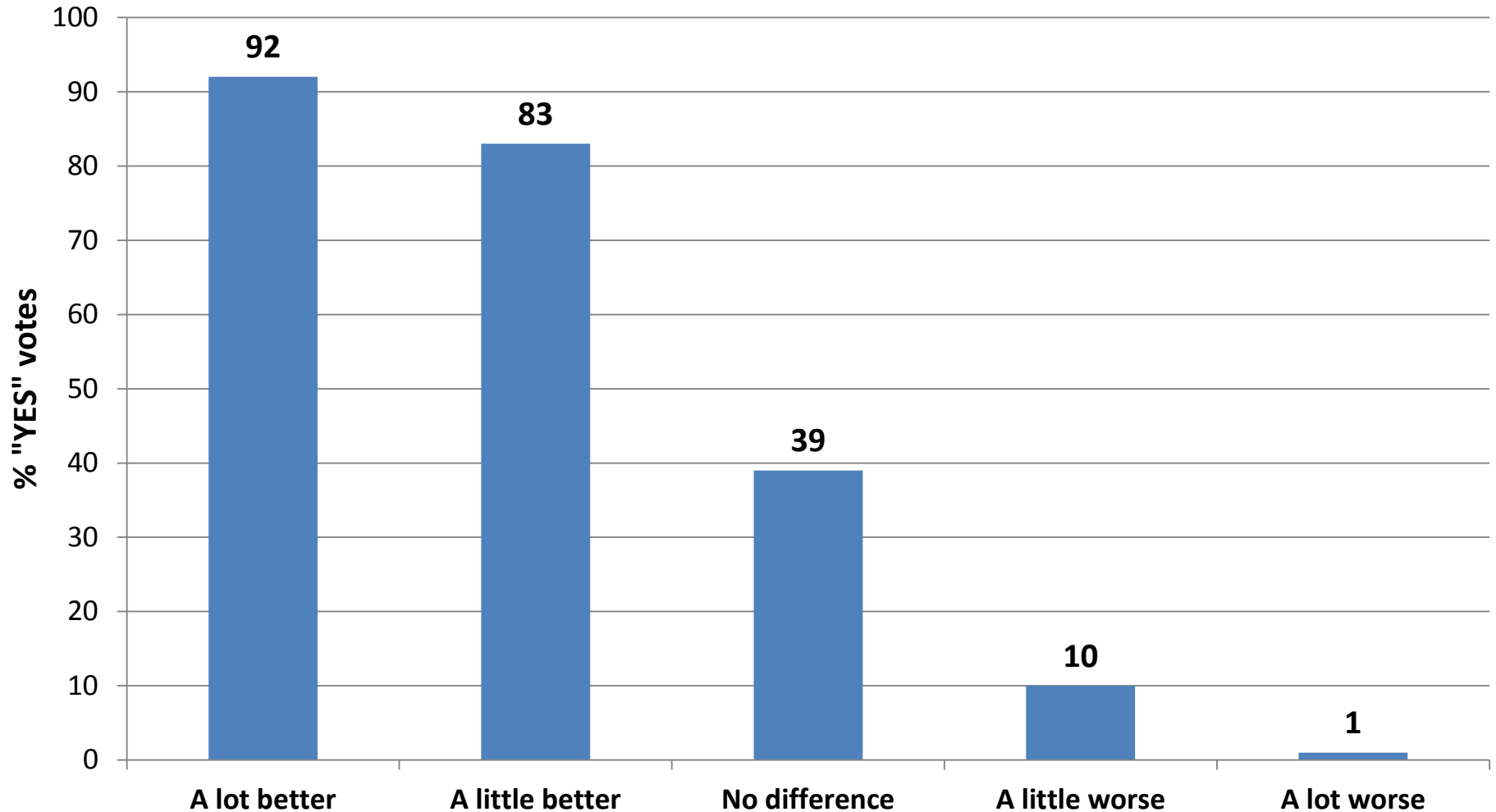
The long-term perspective (SSA)



What counts for the voters?

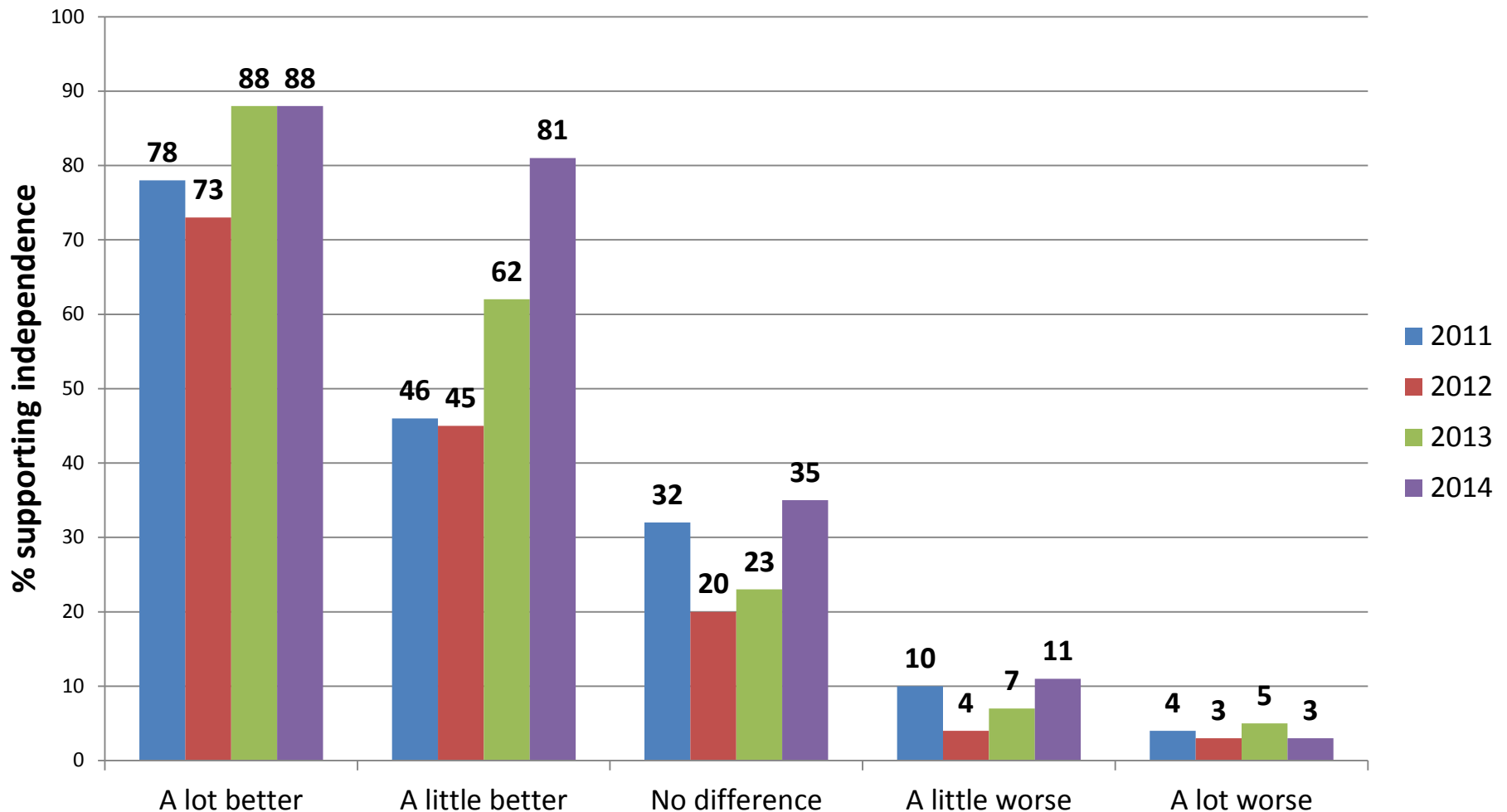
“It’s the economy, stupid”

Expectations about the economy in an independent Scotland



“It’s the economy, stupid”

Expectations about the economy in an independent Scotland



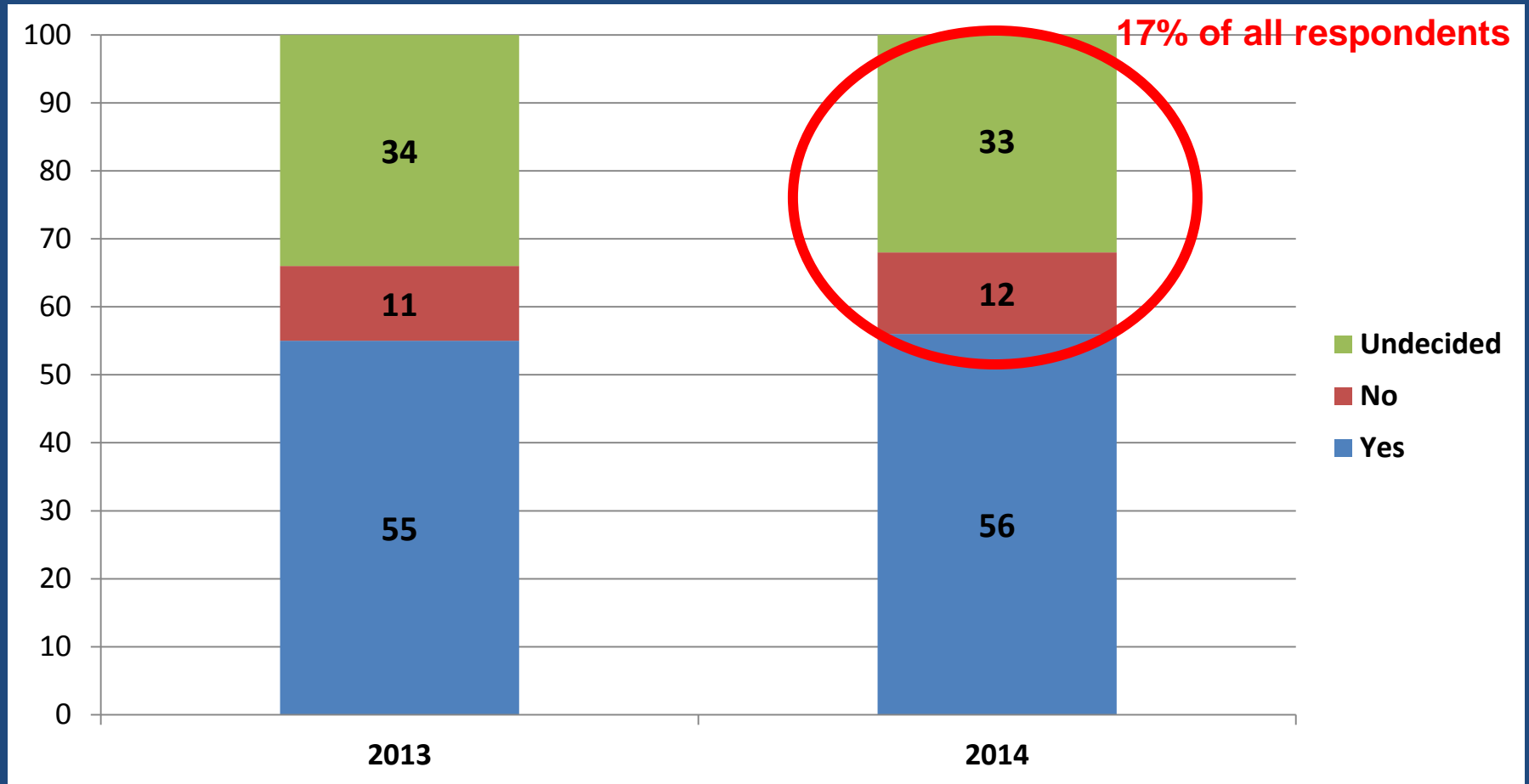
The ideal...

Preferred option for the governance of Scotland

	2013	2014
The Scottish Parliament should decide everything for Scotland	31	41
The UK government should decide about foreign affairs and defence; the Scottish Parliament about everything else	32	29
The UK government should decide about foreign affairs and defence, taxation and welfare; the Scottish Parliament about everything else	25	22
The UK government should make all decisions for Scotland	8	6
Don't know/Refused	4	3

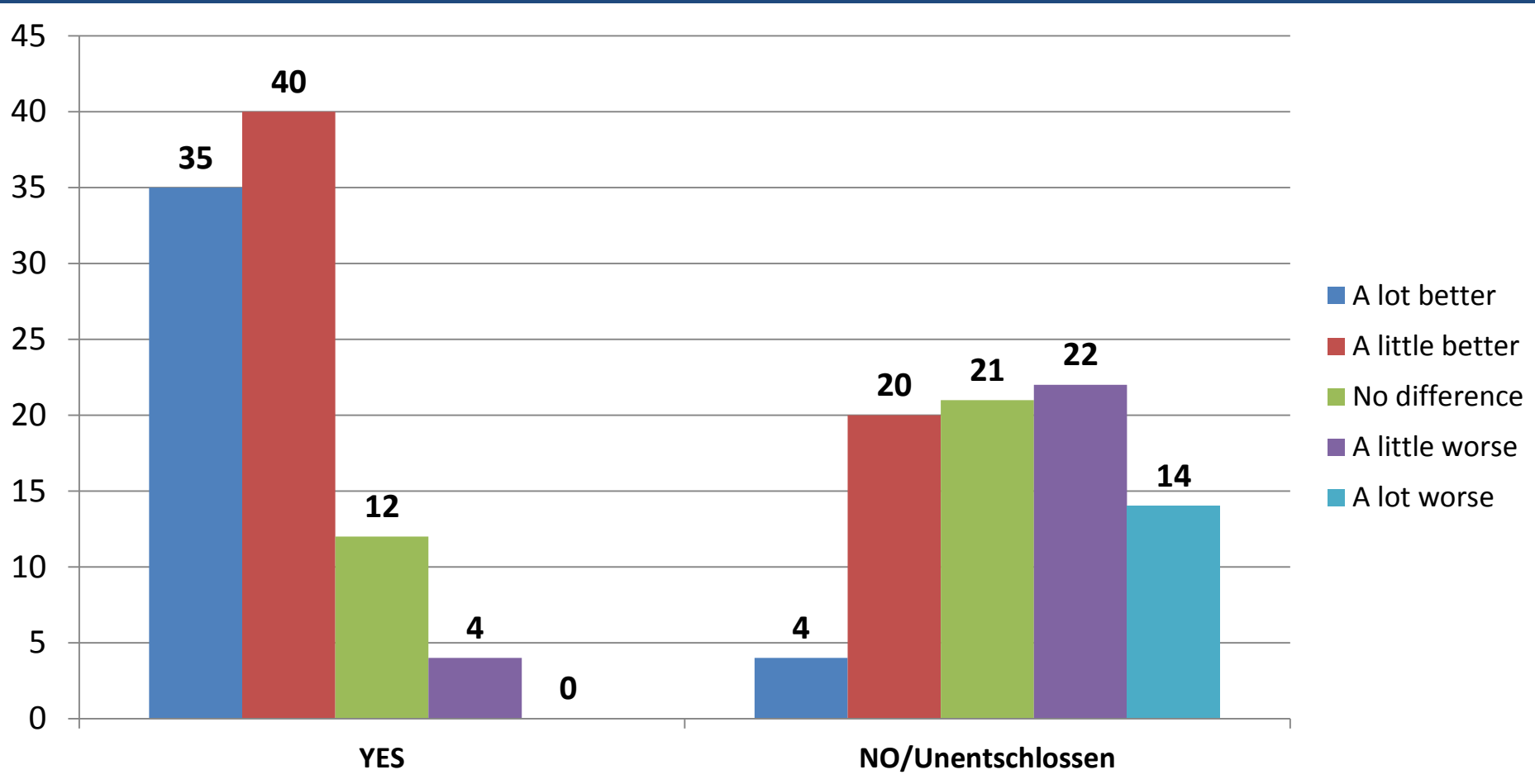
The ideal is not always acted upon

Voting intention of independence-sympathisers



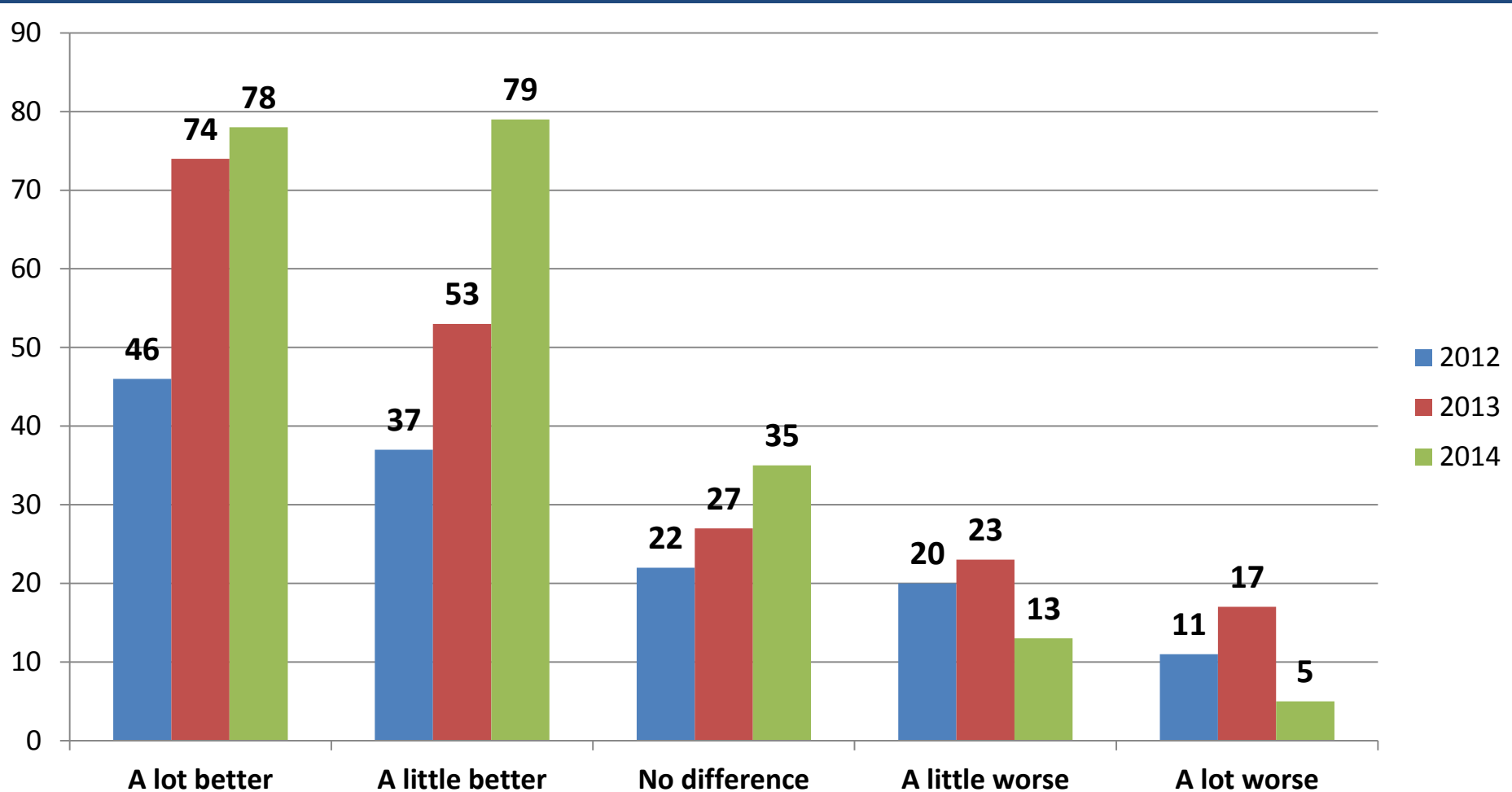
The ideal has to be considered realistic

Voting intention of independence-sympathisers by expectations about the economy in an independent Scotland



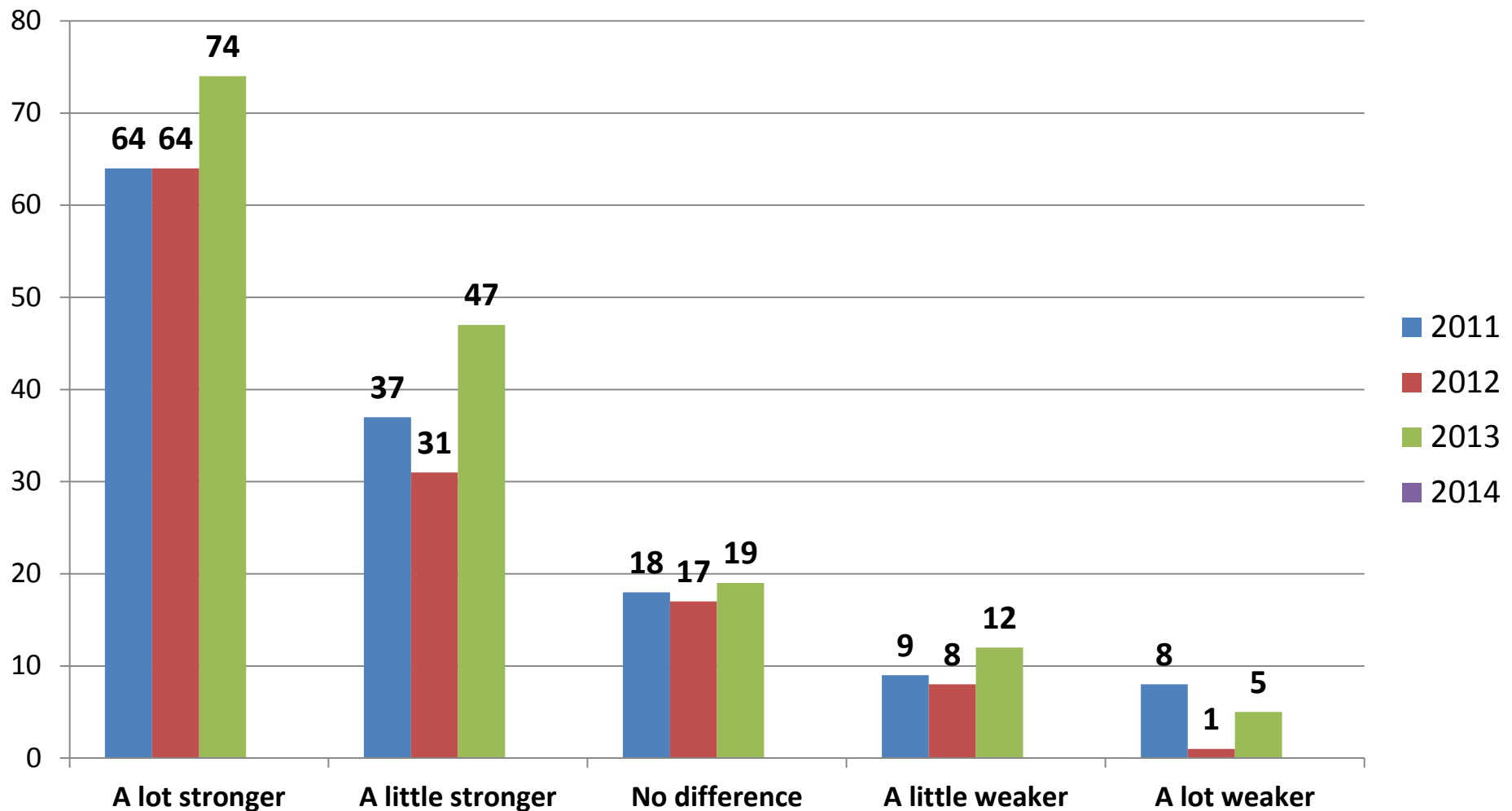
Success for “Yes” – Focus in social inequality

Expectations of about inequality after independence



Scotland's role in the world

Expectations about "Scotland's Voice in the World"



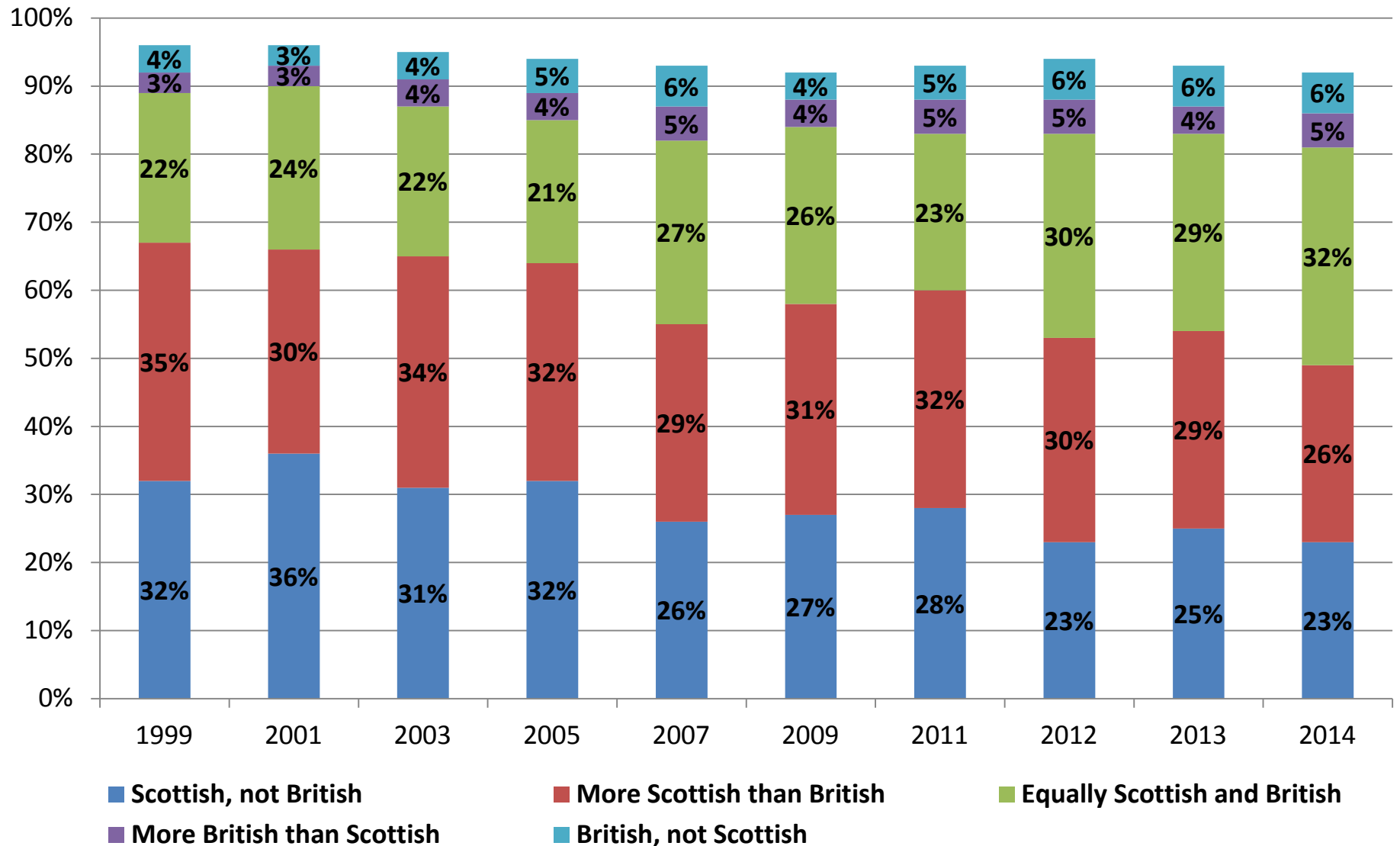
The most important factors influencing voting intention

1. **Expectations** about the development of the economy
2. **Expectations** about Scotland's voice in the world
3. **Expectations** about the pride of Scots
4. **Expectations** about the development of inequality in Scotland

5. National identity
6. Evaluation of having enough personnel to govern Scotland
7. Evaluation of the ability to bail out banks
8. Expectation about the development of own finances

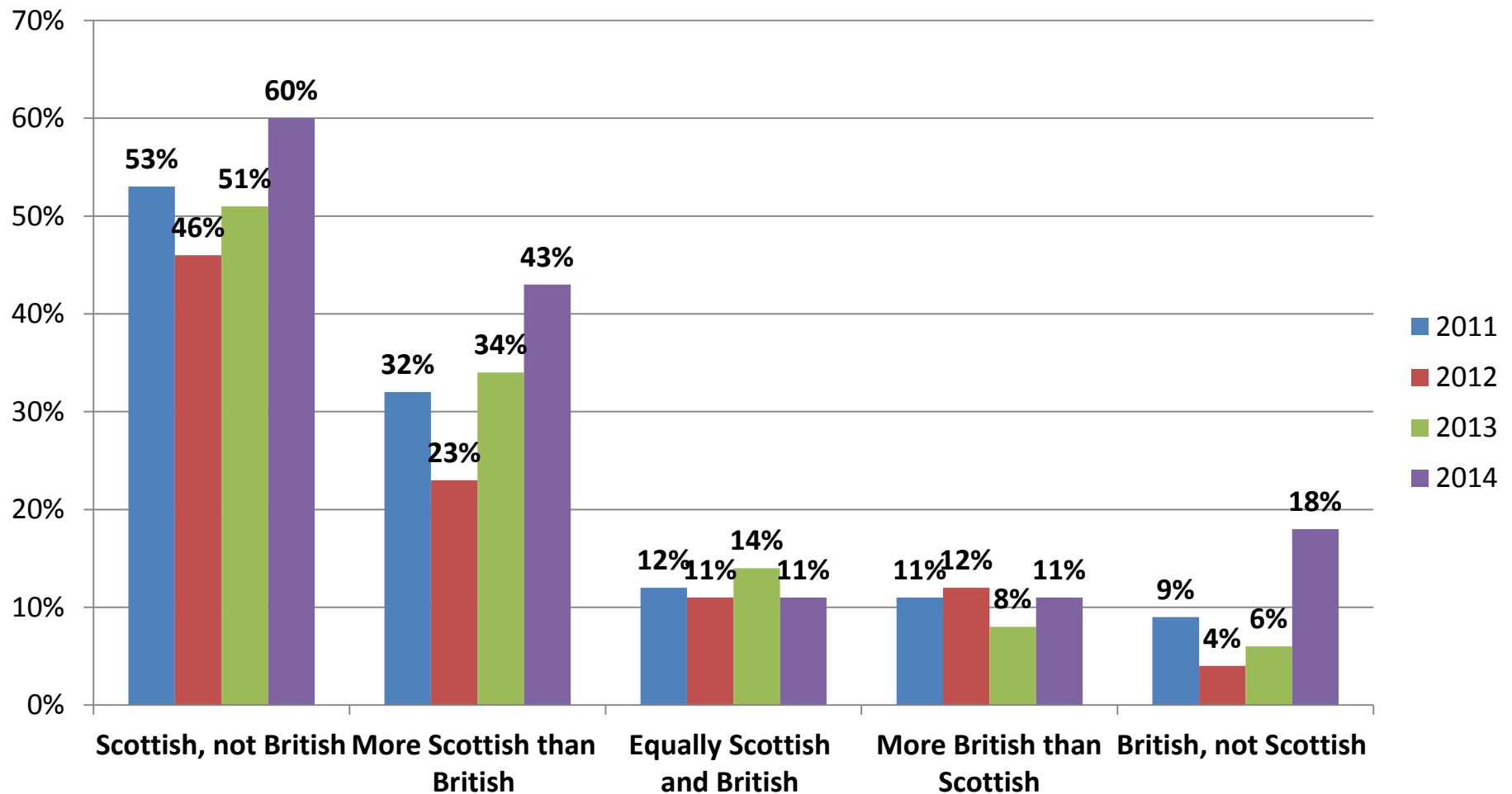
9. Being male
10. Pensions as Scotland-only or UK-shared
11. Age (65+ → No)
12. Political positioning (Left → No)

National identity



National identity

Independence support by national identity



The EU debate dominated the media ...

Should/would an independent Scotland become a member of the European Union?



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Current Committees

European and External Relations Committee

The Scottish Government's proposals for an independent Scotland: membership of the European Union

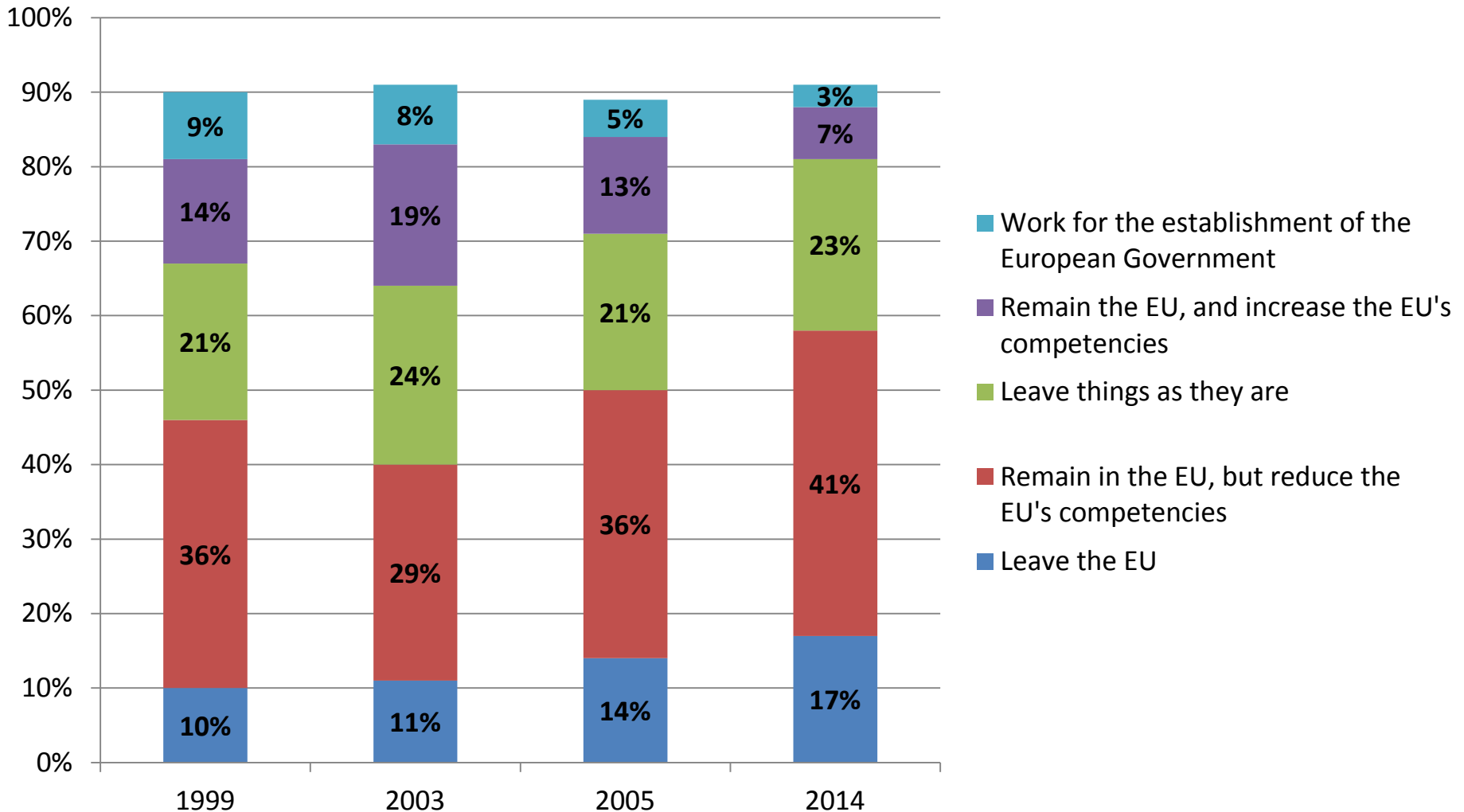
... but is not decisive for the vote

If Scotland became independent, should it be a member of the European Union?

	YES (%)	NO (%)
Definitely yes	31	36
Probably yes	34	34
Probably no	13	13
Definitely no	13	13
Don't know	10	10

Scots do not “love” the EU

What should Great Britain's long term strategy towards the EU be?



Not a vote winner either

If Scotland became independent which currency do you think it should use? broken down by 'At the moment, which way do you think you are most likely to vote, Yes or No? (only asked of those who say they haven't decided yet)' All years (2013- 2013)

[Notes and methodology for this question](#)

Bar

Table

Option	Yes	No	Don't Know/Won't Vote	Don't know	Refused
The pound	77%	87%	78%	100%	100%
The euro	5%	5%	5%	0%	0%
Its own new currency	17%	7%	10%	0%	0%
Don't know	0%	2%	7%	0%	0%
Refused	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Nuclear weapons?

Do you agree or disagree if Scotland becomes independent, Britain's nuclear weapons submarines should continue to be based here? broken down by 'Should Scotland be an independent country? (Combined responses of those who have and those who haven't decided yet)' All years (2013- 2013)

Option	Yes	No
Strongly agree	11%	15%
Agree	24%	31%
Neither agree nor disagree	14%	19%
Disagree	19%	20%
Strongly disagree	29%	11%
Don't know	1%	3%

Who votes on 18 September?

High voter participation is expected

SSA

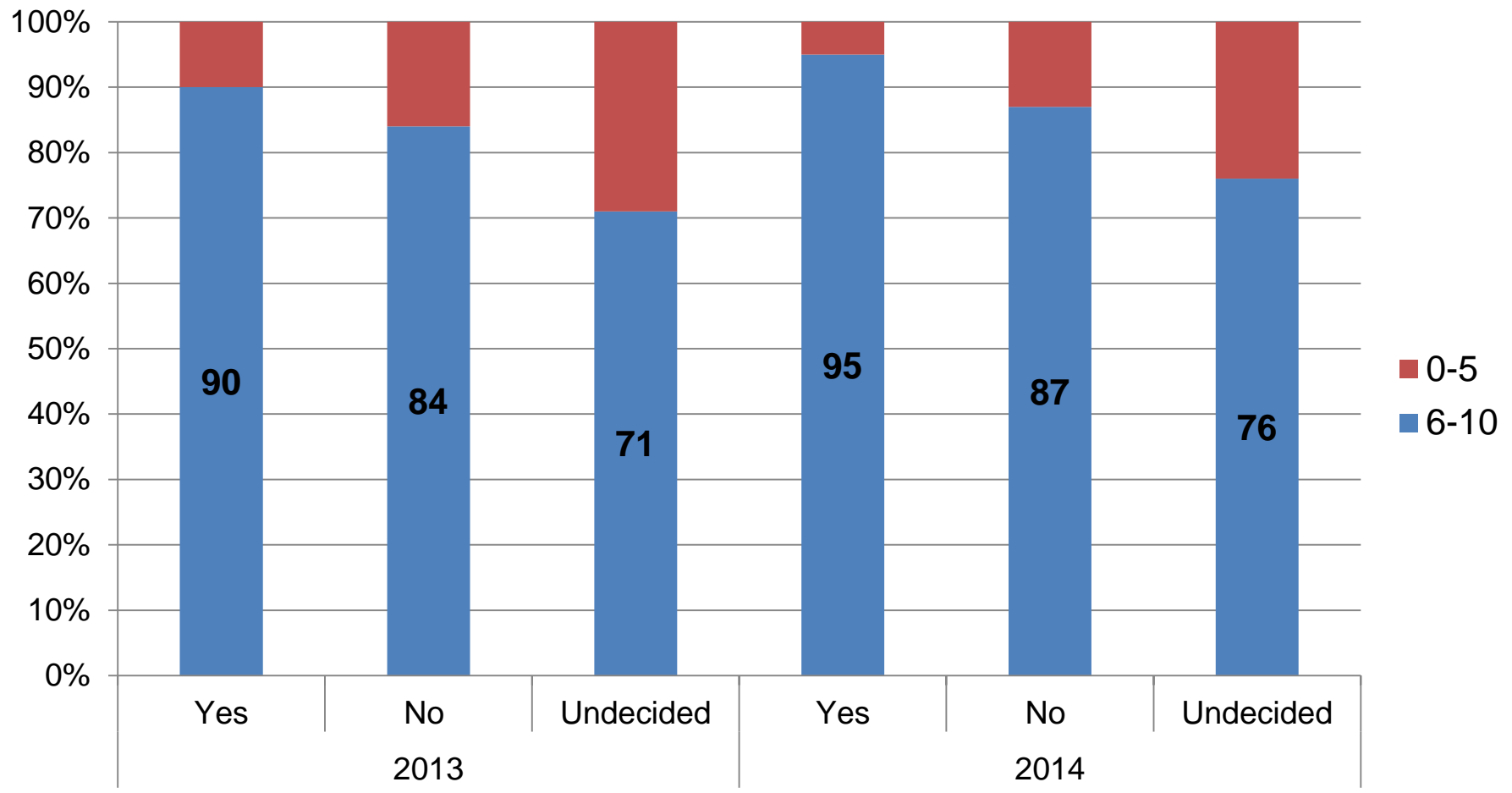
	2013	2014
Certain to vote (10)	62%	74%
Likely to vote (6-10)	81%	87%

For comparison

	2010 Westminster	2011 Scottish Parliament
Voter turnout	64%	50%

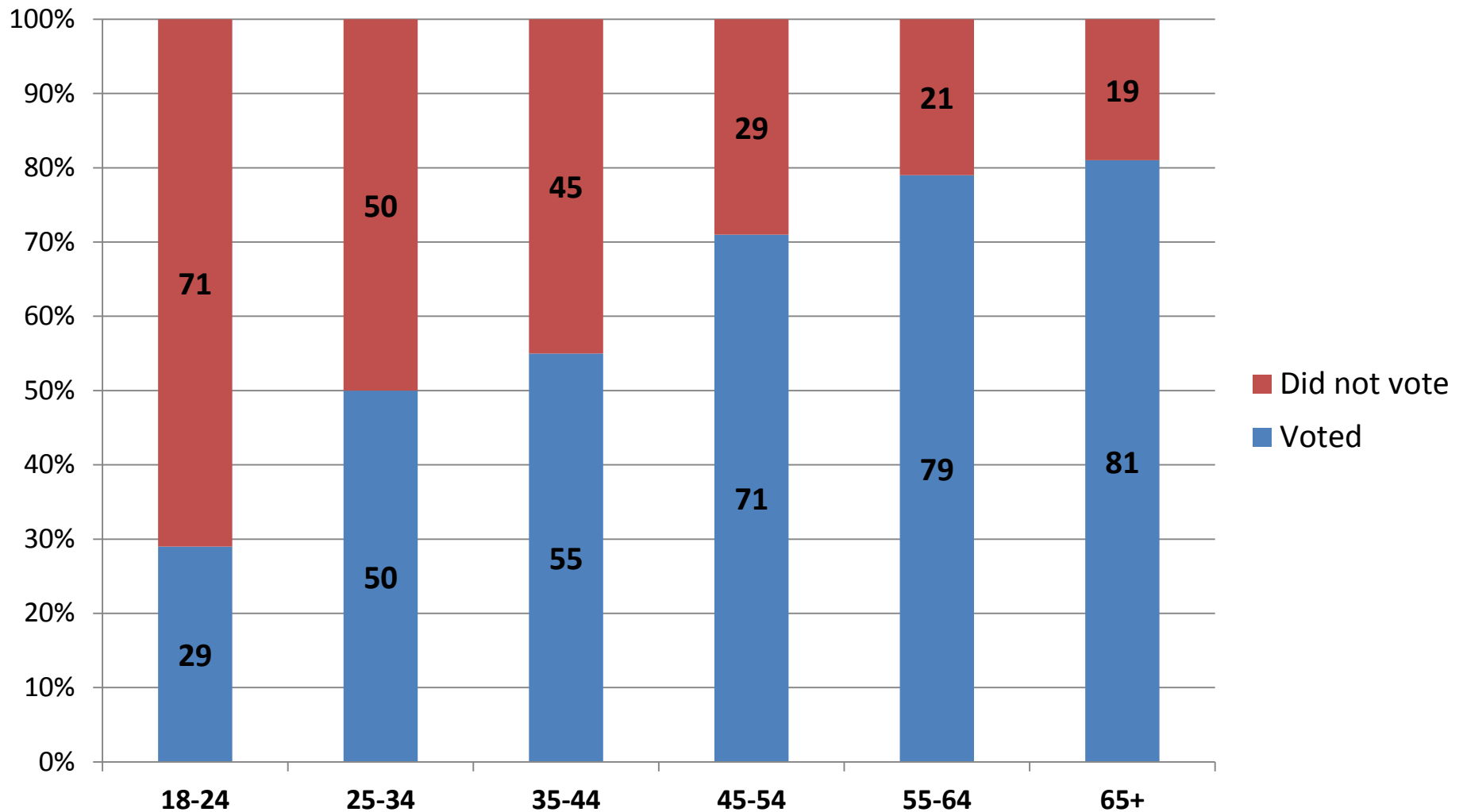
A small advantage for “Yes”

Voting turnout likelihood by voting intention



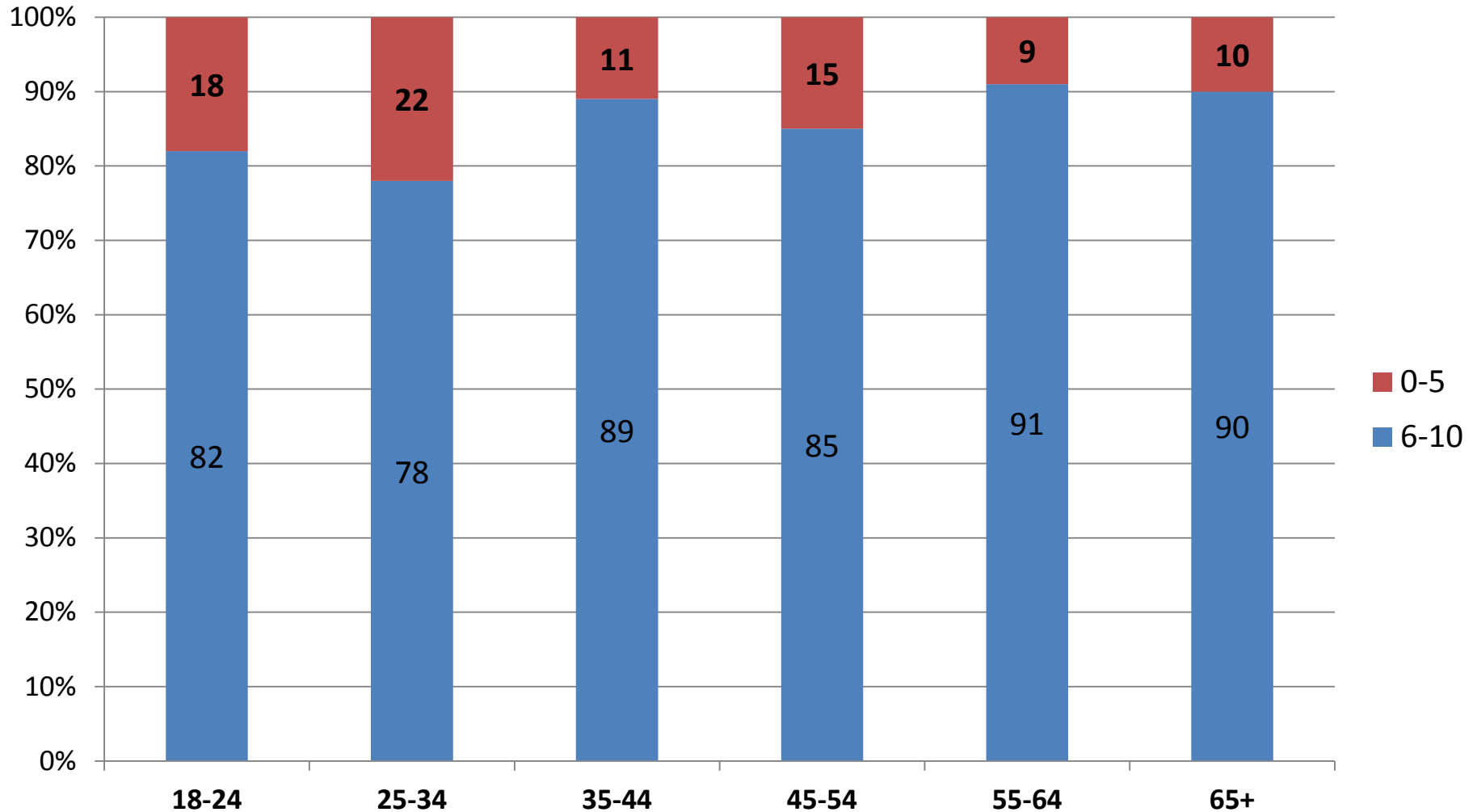
Activation of voters

Voting participation in 2011 Scottish Parliament elections by age group



Activation of voters

Voting participation likelihood by age group



Activation of voters

Reduction in undecideds including (disproportionately for)

- Persons of lower social occupational class
 - Persons with lower socio-economic status
 - Those less politically interested
 - Persons who do not feel close to any political party
- Not completely accounting for difference in undecideds
- Disadvantaging of people commonly not engaged in the political process

Who are the ones still “undecided”?

SSA 2014 (May-July)

33% Undecided

Of which

28% YES leaning

29% NO leaning

42% No particular leaning

12% fully undecided

Who are the undecideds?

	% Undecided 2014 (2013 Value)				
Sex	Women		Men		
	33 (39)		26 (30)		
Party affinity	Conservatives	Labour	Lib Dem	SNP	None
	11 (11)	27 (36)	26 (15)	29 (35)	37 (48)
Political interest	A great deal	Quite a lot	Some	Not very much	None at all
	21 (20)	20 (30)	30 (36)	38 (39)	44 (47)
Knowledge of referendum	A great deal	Quite a lot	Some	Not very much	None at all
	2 (19)	14 (17)	29 (32)	46 (49)	39 (48)
Influence on own life	A great deal	Quite a lot	Some	Not very much	None at all
	12 (16)	22 (25)	32 (39)	41 (47)	43 (37)

Not decisive: Age, occupational social class

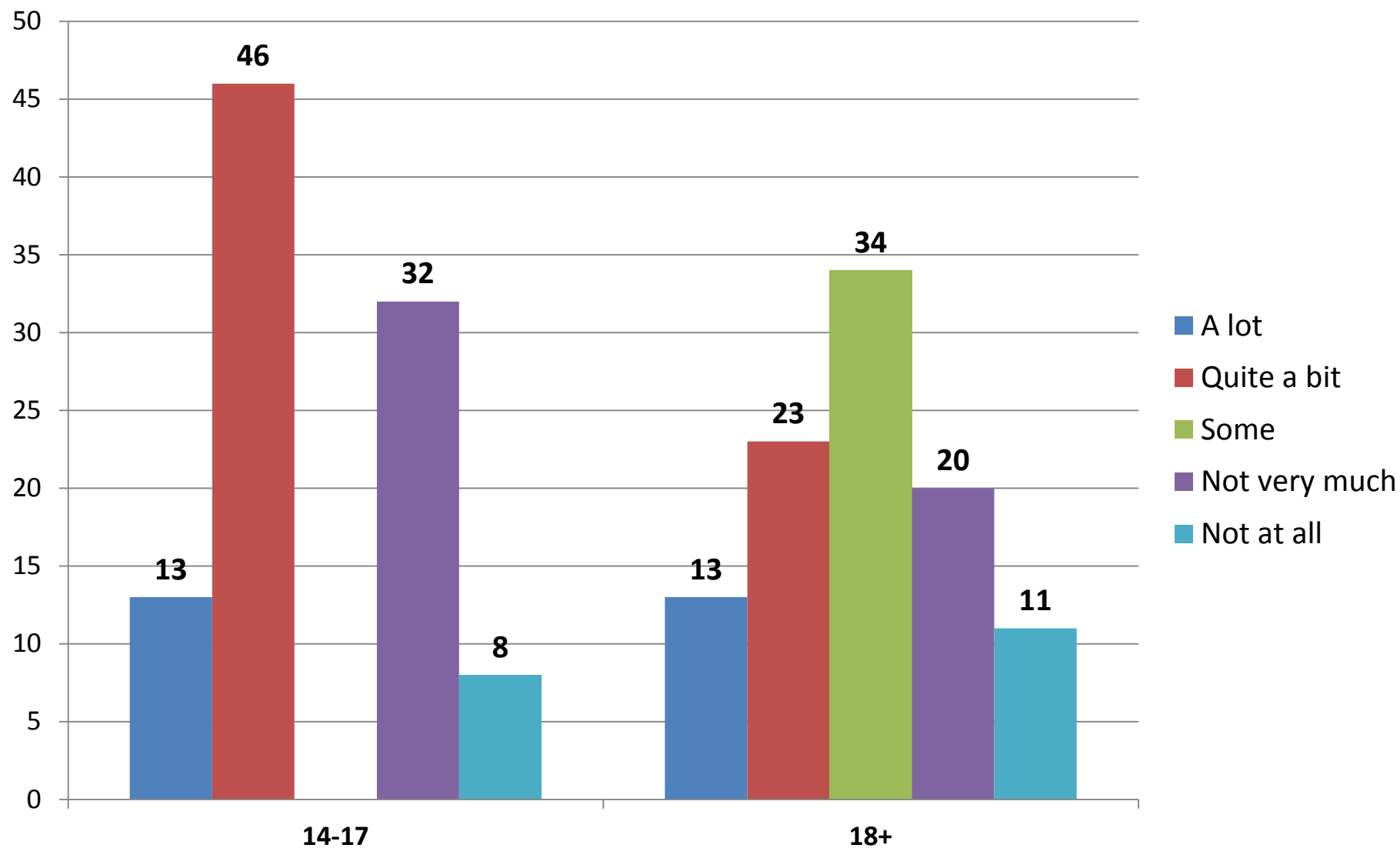
**Was it a good idea to reduce the
voting age to 16?**

Under 18-year old voters

“Should Scotland be an Independent Country?”

	Yes	No	Undecided (%)
2013	23	58	19
2014	29	52	19
2013	28	72	
2014	36	64	

Political interest



Voting turnout likelihood

	2013 (%)	2014 (%) (eligible voters only)
Very unlikely	7	6
Rather unlikely	6	6
Neither likely nor unlikely	19	15
Rather likely	26	21
Very likely	40	51
Don't know	2	2

The most decisive factor....

Expectations about the economy in an independent Scotland

	A lot better	A little better	No difference	A little worse	A lot worse
YES	92	65	33	3	1
NO	4	13	39	89	95
UNDECIDED	4	22	28	8	4

Differences to “adults”?

National
identity

	2014 (%)
Scottish, not British	15
More Scottish than British	38
Equally British and Scottish	39
More British than Scottish	5
British, not Scottish	2

British EU
strategy

	2014 (%)
To leave the EU	5
To remain in the EU, but to reduce the EU's powers	22
To leave things as they are	44
To remain in the EU, and to increase the EU's powers	19
To work for the establishment of a European government	4

Thank you for your attention
Your questions, please.

Dr Jan Eichhorn

Jan.Eichhorn@ed.ac.uk | Email
@eichhorn_jan | Twitter

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