

Scottish Survey Core Questions (2019 update) and the findings for Scottish Borders

A Scottish Borders Insight produced by the Corporate Performance and Information R&I Team

About the SSCQ

SSCQ provides annual reliable and detailed statistics on the composition, characteristics and attitudes of Scottish households and adults across a number of topic areas, to supplement the information from the decennial Population Census.

Results from the three large-scale Scottish Government population surveys are published separately as National Statistics:

- Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS)
- Scottish Health Survey (SHeS)
- Scottish Household Survey (SHS)

Since the beginning of 2012 each of the surveys included a set of around 20 core questions that provide information on the composition, characteristics and attitudes of Scottish households and adults across a number of topic areas. Responses on these questions from all three surveys have been pooled to provide the Scottish Surveys Core Questions (SSCQ) dataset with a sample size of around 20,000 responses in Scotland as a whole.

The sample size in most of the questions for Scottish Borders varies between 430 and 470, depending on the question. All “core” questions are asked in all three cross-sectional surveys, to provide harmonised outputs.

The 2019 Scottish Surveys Core Questions 2019 Update was published by Scottish Government in January 2021. This insight analyses the information that is new for Scottish Borders.

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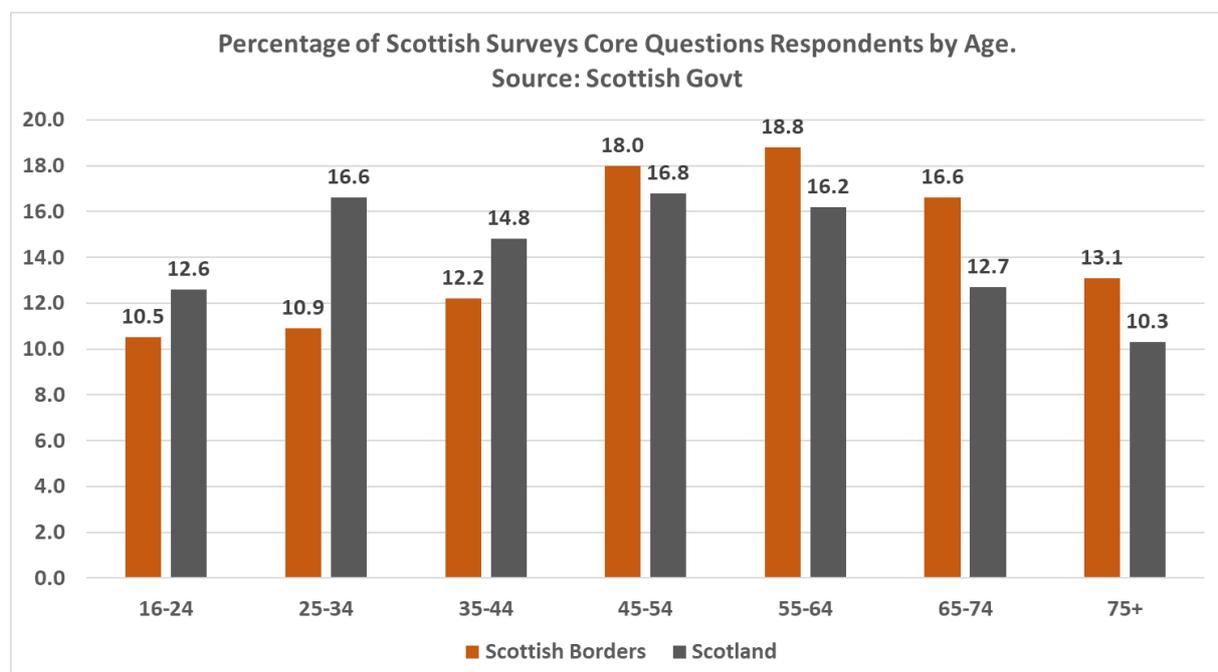
Part 1: The Characteristics of the Scottish Borders Population

Age profile of respondents

The age profile of the respondents to the 2019 SSCQ in Scottish Borders is older than average for Scotland.

The SSCQ is weighted so that the sample of respondents is designed to reflect the actual population profile in Scottish Borders. Two thirds of respondents in Scottish Borders were aged over 45, compared with 56% in Scotland overall. The gender balance is 52% female, 48% male, the same as it is in Scotland.

Respondents in Scotland living in the most-deprived Quintile are significantly more likely to be aged under 35 than those in the least-deprived quintile. There are also significantly higher proportions of people aged over 45 living in small-town and rural areas.



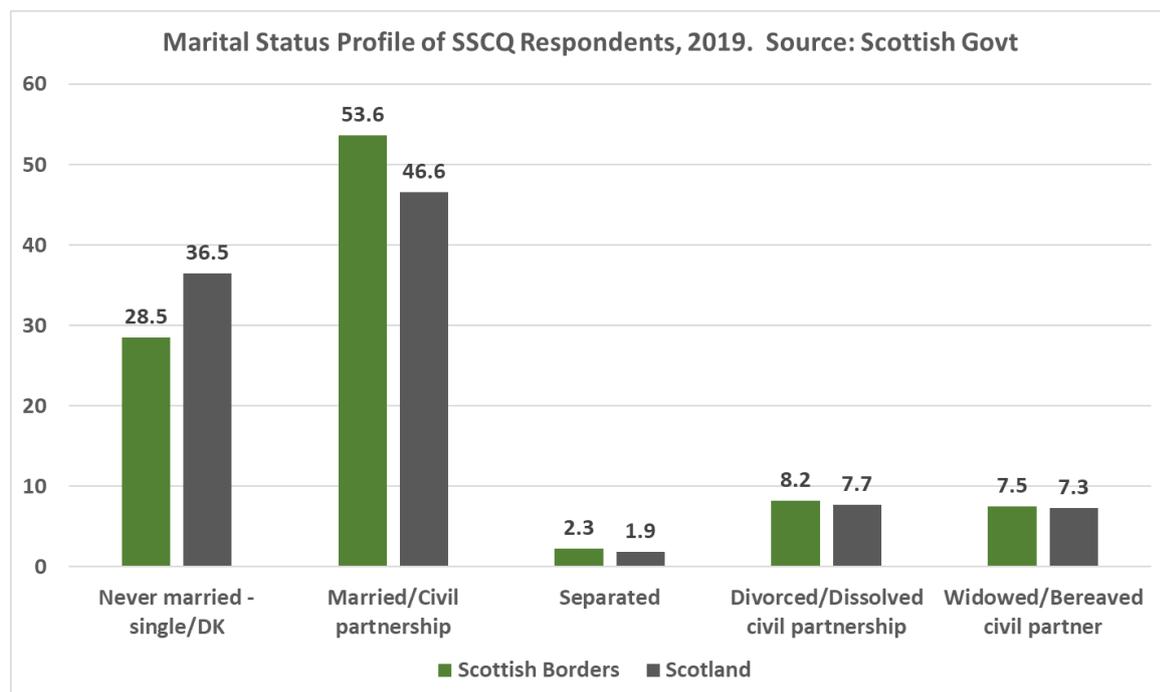
Marital Status

The Marital Status profile in Scottish Borders also reflects an older age group, confirming the age profile.

Only 28.5% of respondents said they had never married, compared with 36.5% in Scotland as a whole.

Respondents in the most-deprived quintile are significantly more likely to be single, separated, divorced or widowed than residents in the least-deprived quintile.

Residents in urban areas are significantly more likely to be single than residents in small towns and rural areas.



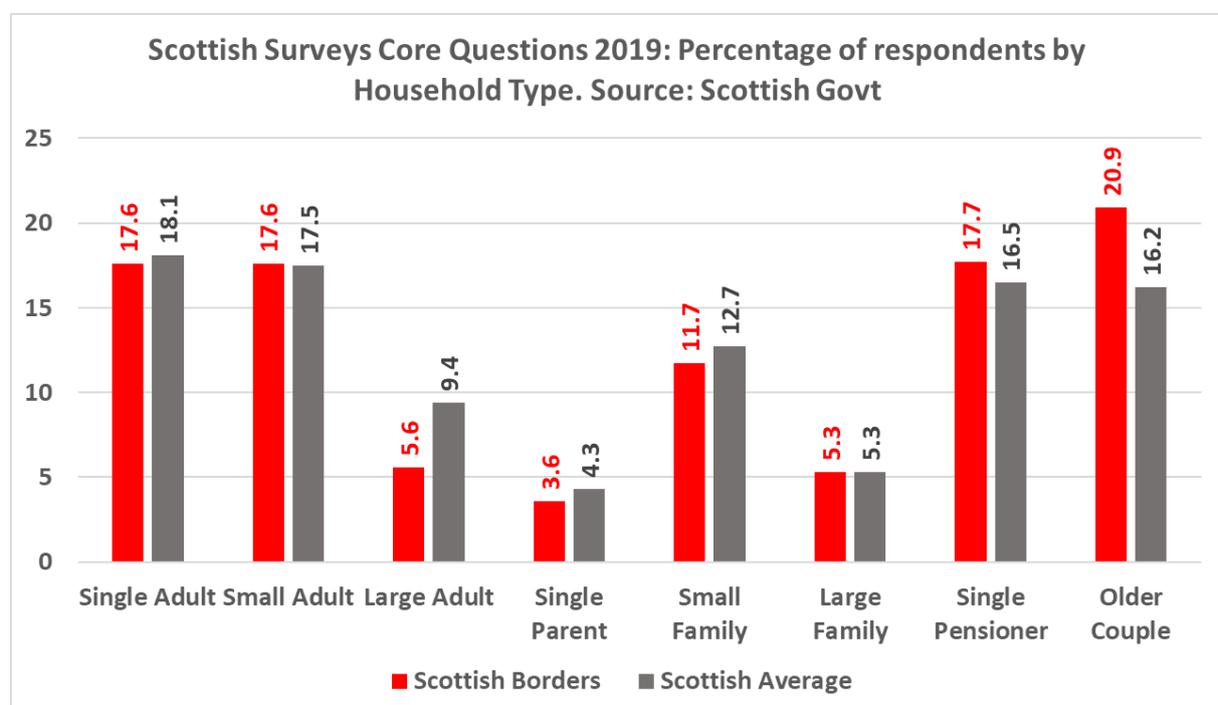
Household Type

Scottish Borders is characterised by older-households and families.

The numbers and proportions of older-couple households are significantly above average. These are typical of rural Local Authority areas and reflect the age and marital status profile of Scottish Borders.

Residents in the most-deprived quintile are more than twice as likely to be single-adult, four times as likely to be single-parent and significantly more likely to be single-pensioner than those the least-deprived quintile.

Single-adult and small-adult households are also significantly more likely to be found in urban areas, with significantly higher proportions of older households in rural areas.



Tenure

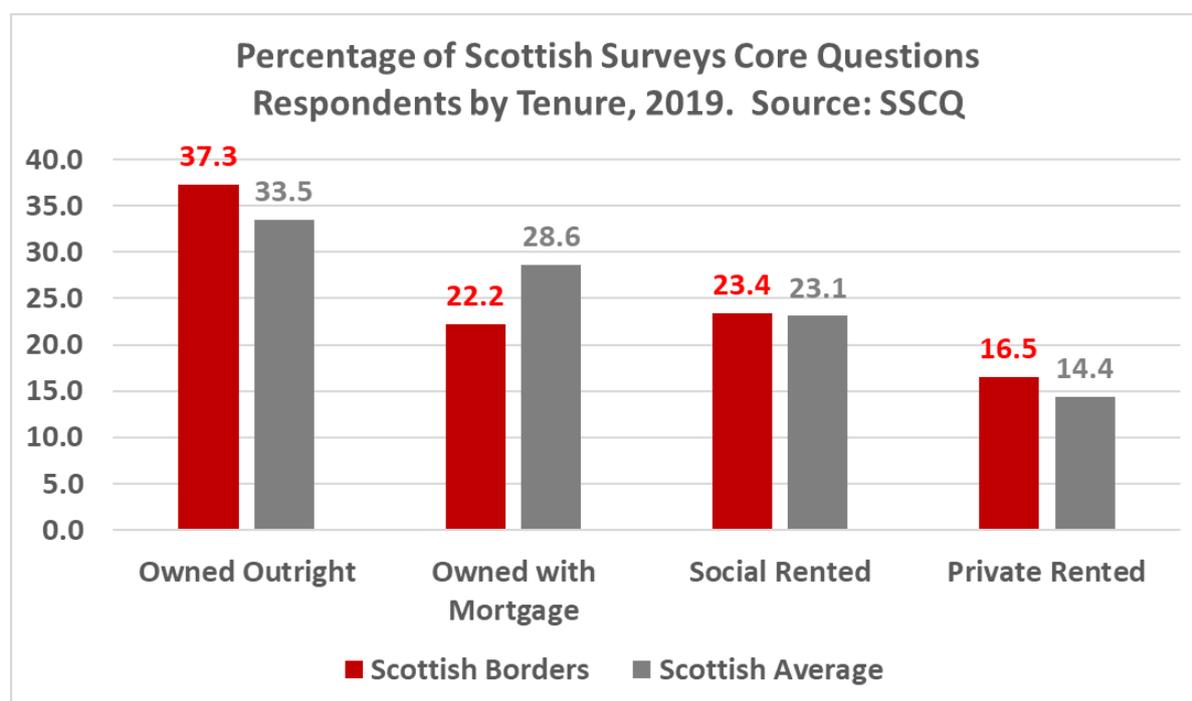
Housing tenure patterns in Scottish Borders reflect an older population and lower levels of deprivation

The biggest group of respondents in Scottish Borders is paid-up owner-occupiers. This proportion belies the assumptions made by SSCQ from a smaller sample size - Scottish Borders in fact has the sixth-lowest proportion of owner-occupiers in Scotland, and the lowest of any comparable rural area.

Scottish Borders has the sixth-largest proportion of respondents who are private tenants, with only Moray and the four City Local authority areas having a higher proportion.

The social rented sector plays a vital role in providing safe, affordable and good quality housing to less affluent sections of the community, so the sector is, unsurprisingly, strongly associated with Multiple Deprivation. Over half of respondents in the most-deprived quintile were Social tenants and almost 85% of respondents with above-average deprivation were social housing tenants. Around 80% of respondents in the least-deprived quintile owned their own house, compared with around 36% in the most-deprived quintile.

People in rural areas are around twice as likely to own their home outright as people in urban areas, but the respondents who are mortgage-holders are split fairly evenly across urban and rural settings. Social rented properties are unusual in remote rural settings.



Car Access

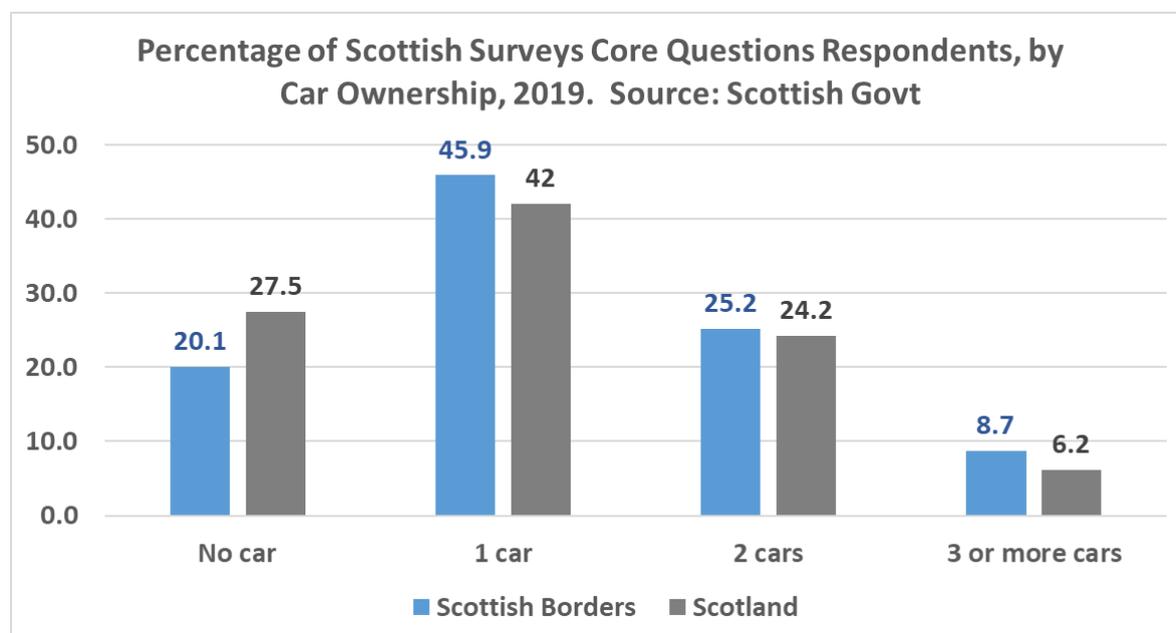
Access to at least one car in the household was higher in Scottish Borders than on average for Scotland, which is to be expected in a rural area with infrequent public transport.

Nevertheless, 20.1% said they did not have access to a car, which indicates that up to a fifth of Scottish Borders residents are entirely dependent on public transport. In Scotland as a whole, only 10-12% of respondents in the most rural areas had no access to a car at all.

If this proportion is applied to the remote-rural parts of Scottish Borders, this represents a small but significant group of people who are particularly vulnerable to access deprivation.

The proportion of respondents in Scotland without access to a car is over three times higher in the most-deprived quintile (47.5%) than in the least-deprived quintile (14.3%).

Rural residents are also significantly more likely to have several cars in the household than residents in urban areas. This reflects some success by Scottish Government in persuading householders in urban areas to reduce the number of cars in the household, by improving public transport alternatives

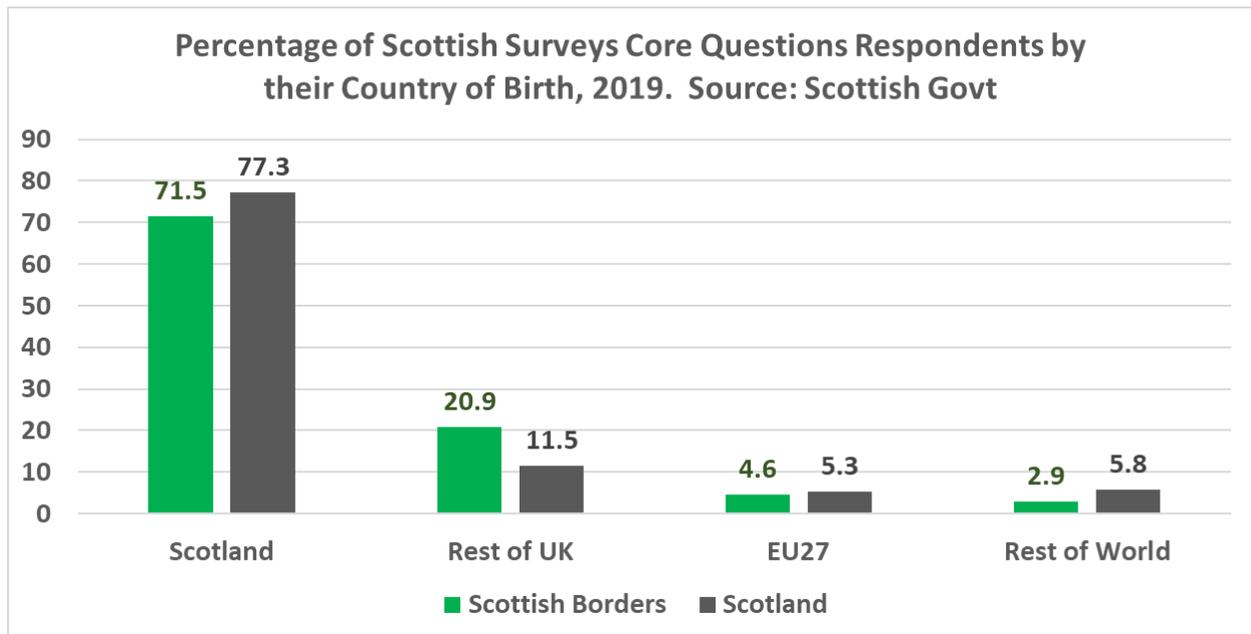


Country of Birth

Scottish Borders has a significantly higher Anglo-Scottish population than average, which is to be expected, given its position on the Scotland-England Border.

Fellow South of Scotland area Dumfries and Galloway has a similar proportion and the only two Local Authority areas with higher proportions are Highland and Argyll & Bute.

Scottish Borders, like many rural areas, is suffering a natural demographic decrease and an ageing population. The region is dependent on in-flow from elsewhere in UK, and elsewhere in the world, to keep its population vibrant.

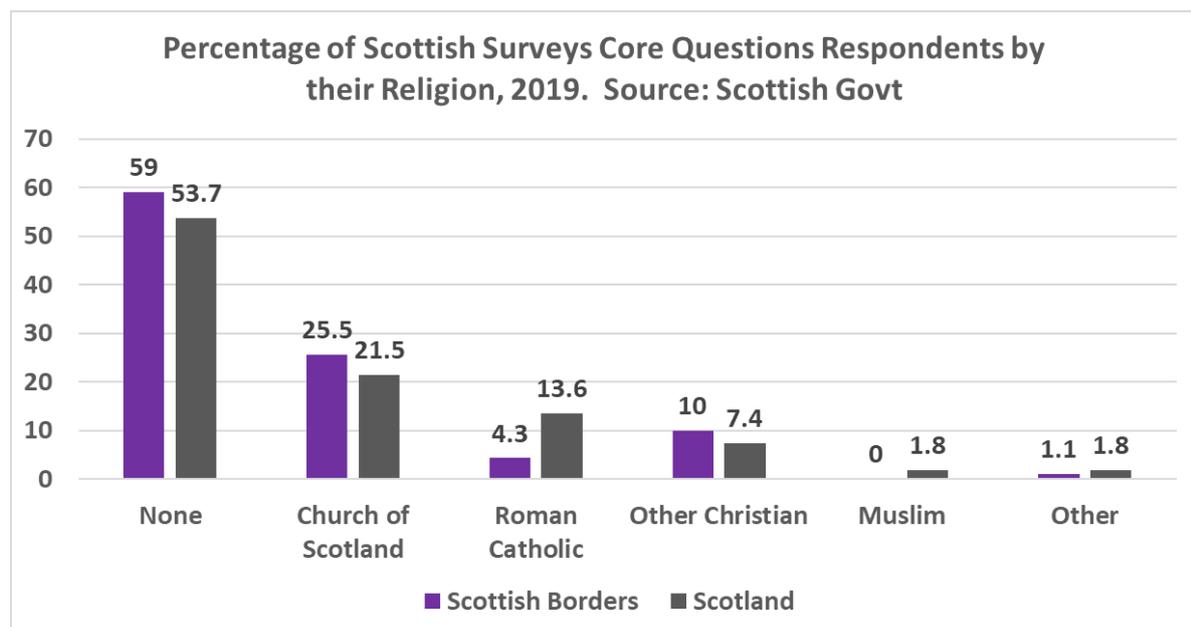


Religion

The population of Scottish Borders is becoming increasingly secular, with a lack of religious diversity in the region, which also reflects the lack of ethnic diversity.

A more accurate analysis is presented in the decennial Census of the Population, but the SSCQ did pick up a tiny proportion of “other” religions, such as Sikh, Hindu, Jewish, Buddhist and Pagan in its collective survey sample.

“Other Christian” includes Church of England, reflecting the increased Anglo-Scottish diversity in the region.



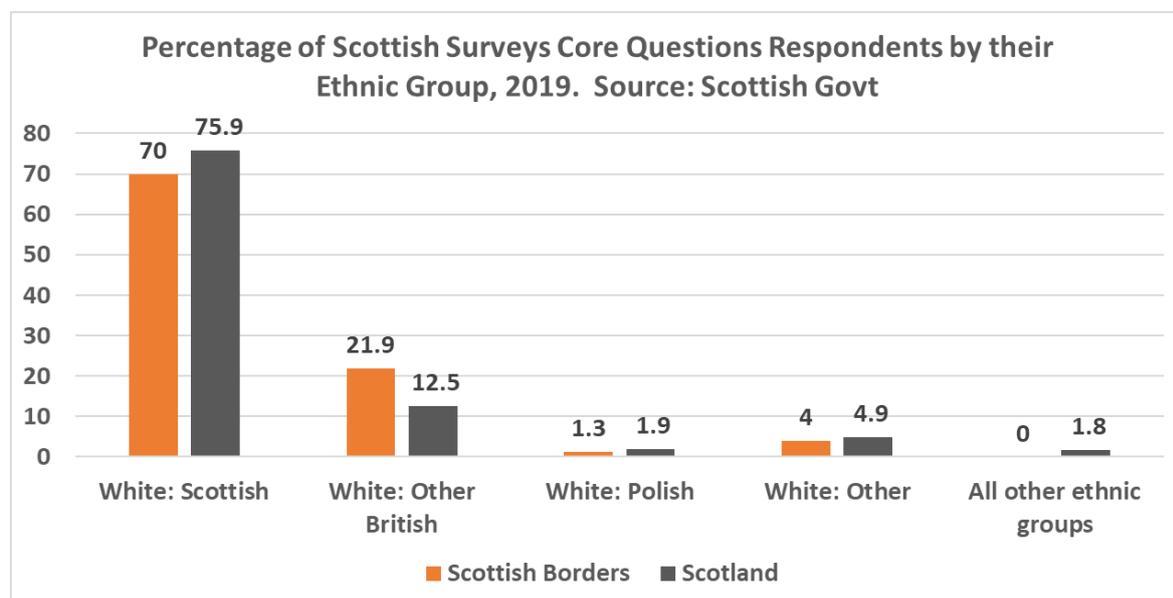
Ethnic Group

The ethnic composition of SSCQ respondents reflects the Anglo-Scottish nature of the Scottish Borders population and the lack of non-White diversity in the region.

We know from the Census that around 1-2% of the Scottish Borders population is non-White, but the joint SSCQ surveys failed to detect any significant proportions of non-White ethnicities at all amongst their sample of respondents in the 2019 update.

In Scotland as a whole, people are significantly more likely to be “White Scottish” and significantly less likely to be “White other British” in the most deprived decile.

Respondents who are “White Other British” in Scotland as a whole are significantly more likely to live in rural settings than in large urban areas.



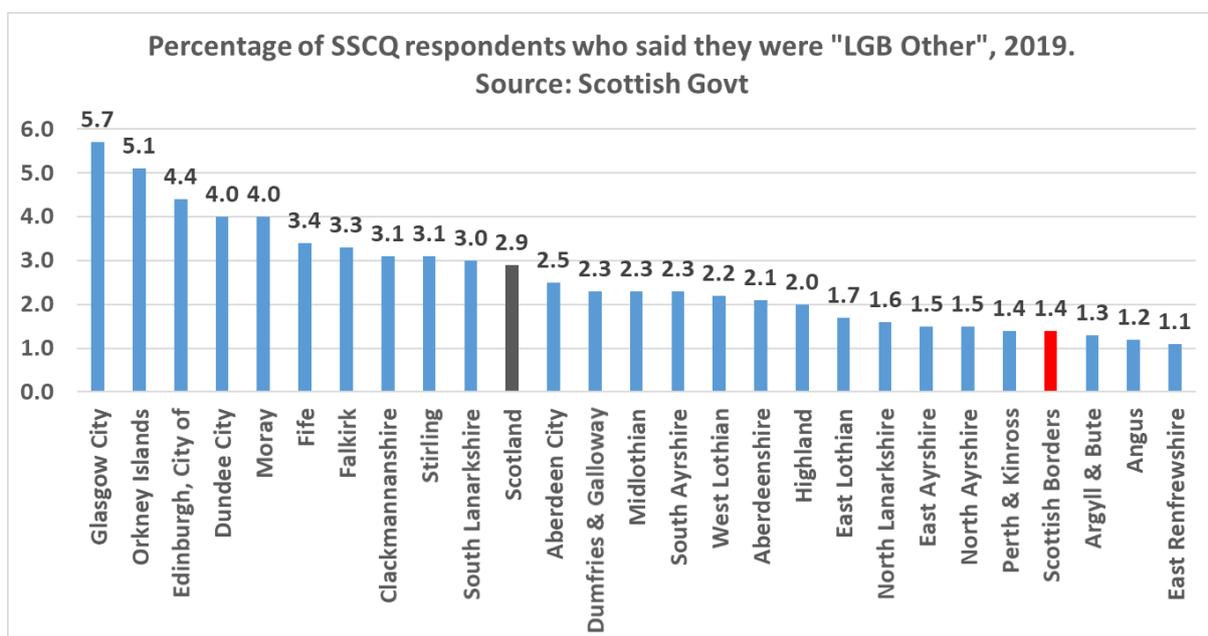
Sexual Orientation

1.4% of Scottish Borders respondents said that they were “LGB and other”, which is insignificantly smaller than the Scottish average of 2.9%.

This is nevertheless the fourth-lowest proportion out of the 27 Local authority areas that recorded a significant proportion. Five Local authority areas: East Dunbartonshire, Na h-Eileanan Siar, Inverclyde, Renfrewshire, Shetland Islands and West Dunbartonshire did not record a significant number of affirmative responses to this question.

In Scotland, people in the most-deprived quintile were significantly more likely to be “LGB Other” than those in quintile 5, reflecting the tendency for increased diversity in more deprived areas.

Diversity in sexual orientation is also very much an urban phenomenon, with at least twice the proportion of “LGB Other” respondents in the larger urban areas, compared with small-town or rural settings.



Part 2: Health and Wellbeing

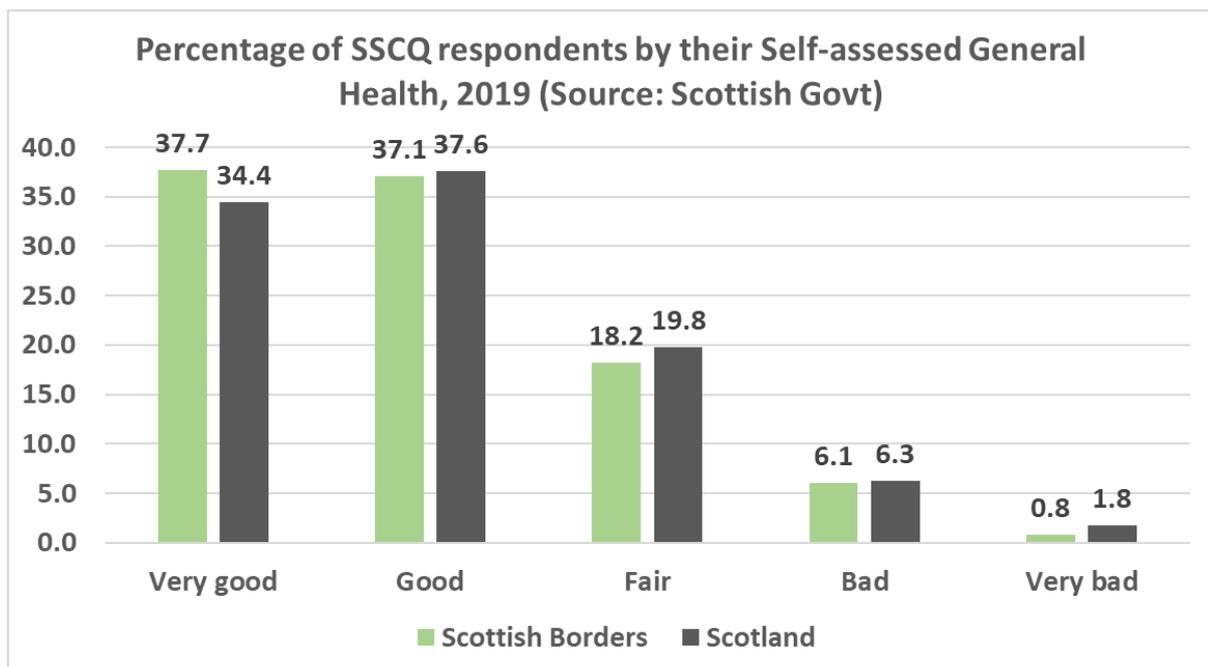
Self-Perception of Health

Scottish Borders respondents enjoy slightly better general health than average for Scotland.

74.8% of Scottish Borders respondents said that their general health was “good” or “very good”, which was insignificantly better than a Scottish average of 72%. 6.9% in Scottish Borders said that their health was “bad” or “very bad”, which was insignificantly lower than 8.1% in Scotland. This places Scottish Borders better-than-average out of the 32 Local Authority areas.

In Scotland as a whole, the proportion of respondents who said they enjoyed “good” or “very good” general health varied from 60.4% in the most deprived quintile to 82.7% in the least-deprived quintile. The proportion who said that it was “bad” or “very bad” varied from 14.7% in the most-deprived quintile to 3.5% in the least-deprived quintile.

The proportion of respondents who enjoy “good” or “very good” health varies surprisingly little between urban and rural areas. This reflects the universality of healthcare in Scotland, regardless of setting.



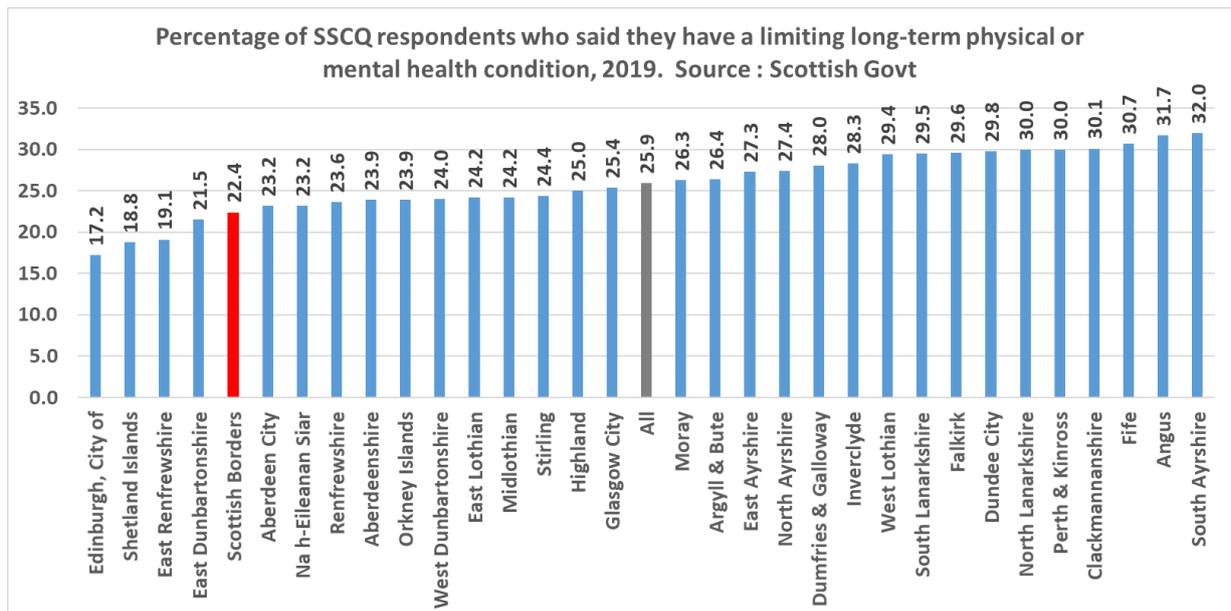
Disability or Long Term Health Condition

Scottish Borders respondents continue to enjoy good health for longer

22.4% of respondents in Scottish Borders said they had a limiting long-term disability or physical or mental condition, which is insignificantly lower than the Scottish average of 25.9%. This is the fifth-lowest out of the 32 Local Authority areas.

People in the most-deprived quintile are more than twice as likely to have a limiting health condition as people in the least-deprived quintile. 34.4% in the most-deprived quintile said that they did, compared with 16.3% in the least-deprived quintile.

People in large urban areas and people in remote rural areas are least likely to have a limiting health condition, compared with people in other urban and rural settings.



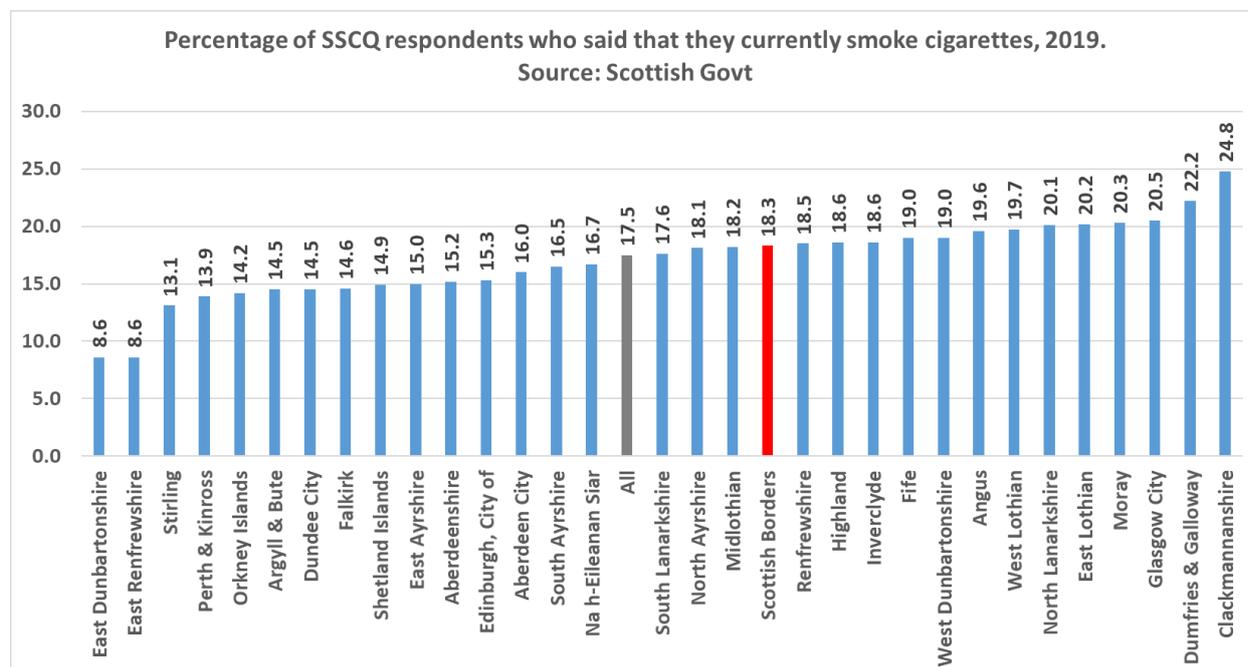
Smoking

Smoking appears to be more prevalent in Scottish Borders than average for Scotland.

18.3% of respondents in Scottish Borders said that they currently smoke, which is insignificantly higher than 17.5% in Scotland. This contradicts previous intelligence on smoking behaviour in Scottish Borders, although we know that smoking in pregnancy is a persistent problem.

Smoking is strongly associated with deprivation. People in the most-deprived quintile were four times more likely to be smokers (30.3%) than those in the in the most-deprived quintile (7.4%).

There is no particular correlation in smoking patterns between urban and rural areas, but those in rural areas are significant less likely to be current smokers than those in urban areas or small towns.



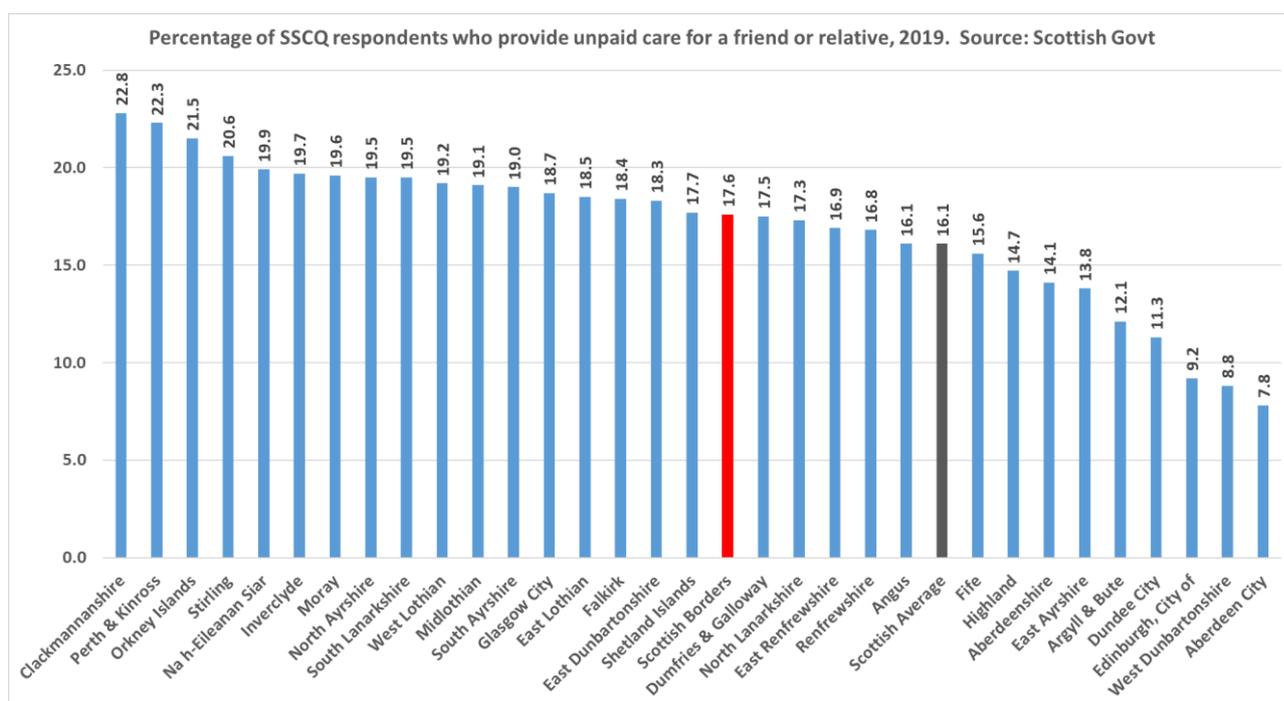
Caring

Scottish Borders has a slightly higher unpaid care burden than average due to its elderly population, but this is not a significantly greater burden than average.

17.6% of respondents in Scottish Borders said that they provide unpaid care for a friend or relative, which is insignificantly higher than the Scottish average of 16.1%.

There is surprisingly little variation between the most and the least-deprived areas in the proportion of people providing unpaid care. 16.7% in the most-deprived quintile provide unpaid care, which is insignificantly higher than the 15.4% who do in the least-deprived quintile. The age profile in the more deprived areas tends to be younger, which mitigates the need for unpaid care.

People in remote rural areas are significantly more likely to provide unpaid care than those in urban areas, but there is no direct relationship between unpaid care provision and urban or rural living.



Part 3: Education and Economic Activity

Highest Level of Qualification Held

Scottish Borders respondents are slightly more likely to be educated to a maximum of school-level and less likely to hold a degree than the Scottish average.

Around a third of adults in Scotland (32.4%) hold a Higher Education degree, but this is insignificantly smaller in Scottish Borders (30.7%).

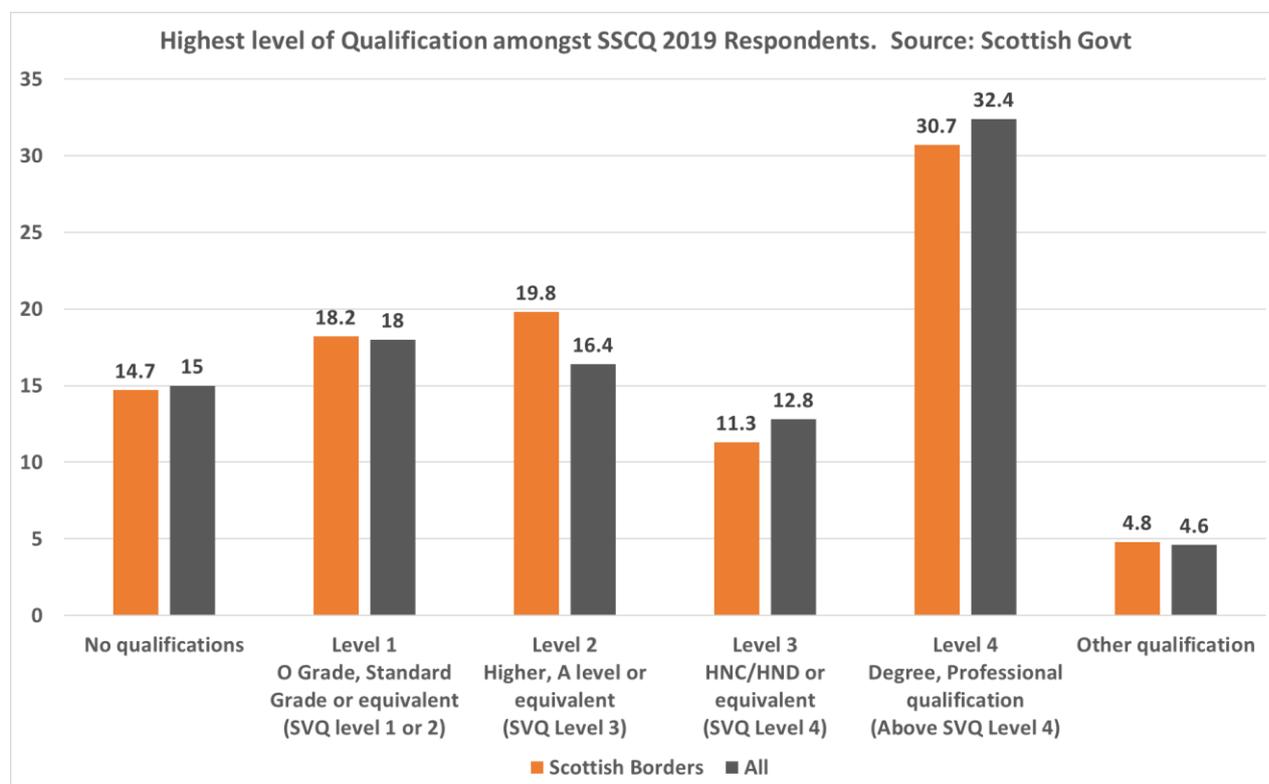
The second largest group is those whose highest level of qualification is “Level 2” (Advanced school qualification, e.g. Highers, Advanced Highers). 19.8% of Scottish Borders respondents are in this group, which is insignificantly higher than the Scottish average of 16.4%.

Education levels vary strongly with deprivation. In Scotland, respondents in the most-deprived quintile were five times more likely to have no qualifications and three times less likely to be Higher Degree-educated than respondents in the least-deprived quintile.

There is very little difference in the proportion who are further-degree educated, which shows the important role of colleges and other further education establishments in reducing inequalities by providing accessible, stigma-free education to everyone, regardless of background.

The proportion of respondents with no or low qualifications is also significantly higher in rural areas and remote small towns.

The Scottish Surveys Core Questions provides companion data on Highest Level of Qualification for comparison only. The best source of annually updated data on this topic is still ONS’s Annual Population Survey, which is published on the NOMIS data server.



Economic Activity

Scottish Borders has a similar proportion of people in employment as the Scottish average and a slightly higher proportion of economically inactive people, mostly retirees.

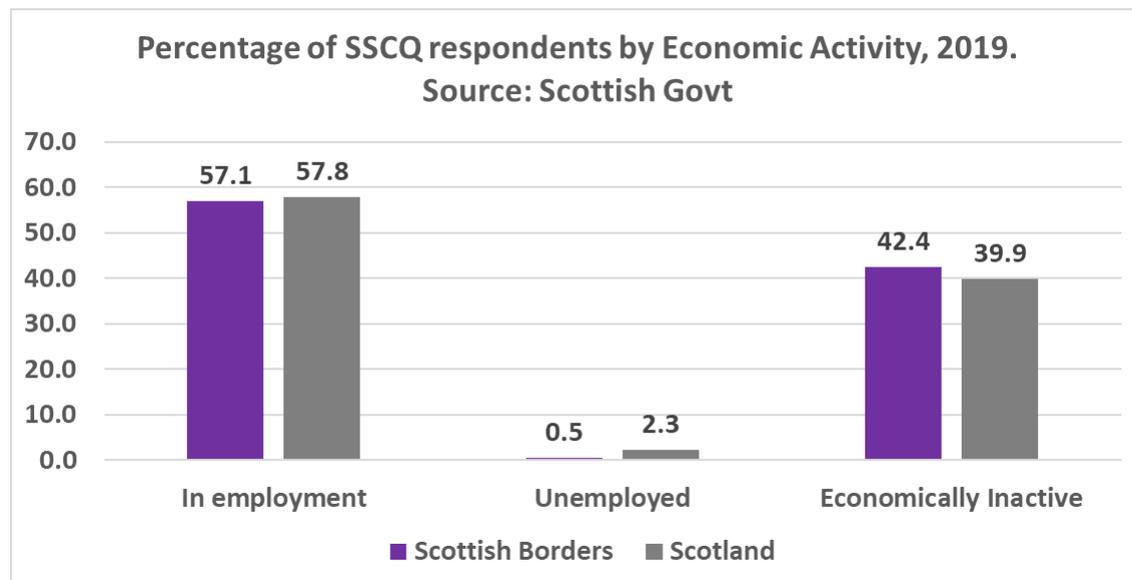
57.1% of respondents in Scottish Borders were in employment, which is similar to the Scottish average of 57.8%.

42.4% in Scottish Borders were economically inactive (not available for work). This is insignificantly higher than the Scottish average of 39.9%. Scottish Borders usually has a higher proportion of retirees and a lower proportion of sick/ disabled economically inactive people than the Scottish average.

Respondents from the most deprived quintile are significantly less likely to be in employment, and significantly more likely to be unemployed or economically inactive than respondents from the least-deprived quintile.

There is little difference between types of urban, small-town or rural area in the proportions of people who are in employment. Residents in urban areas are more likely to be unemployed than rural areas.

The Scottish Survey score Questions provides companion data on economic activity for comparison only. The best source of economic activity data is still ONS's Annual Population Survey, which is published on the NOMIS data server.



Part 4: Crime and Neighbourhood

Perception of local crime rate

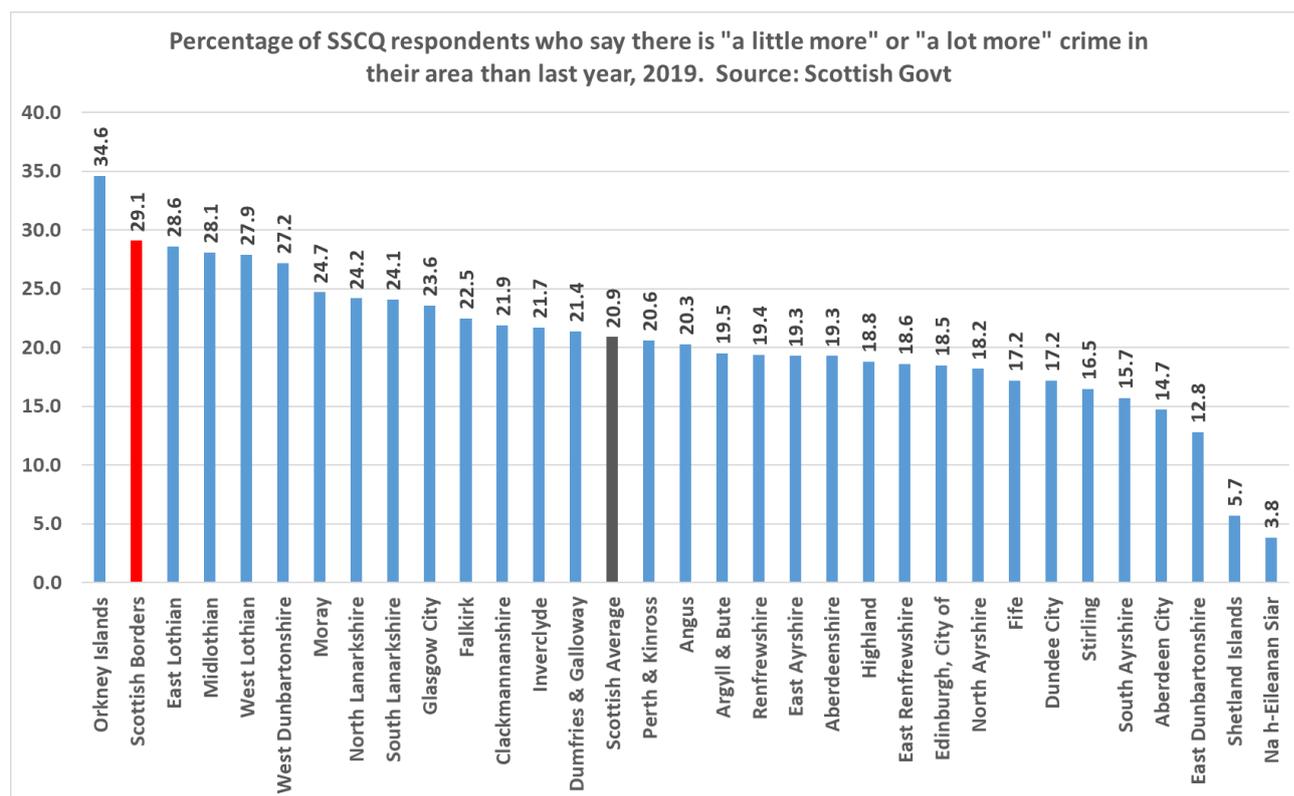
Scottish Borders residents have a less positive attitude towards perceptions of neighbourhood safety than expected.

66.8% of respondents in Scottish Borders said that crime in their area had remained the same or was less than the previous year, which is significantly lower than the Scottish average of 75%. This is the third least positive rate out of the 32 Local authority areas.

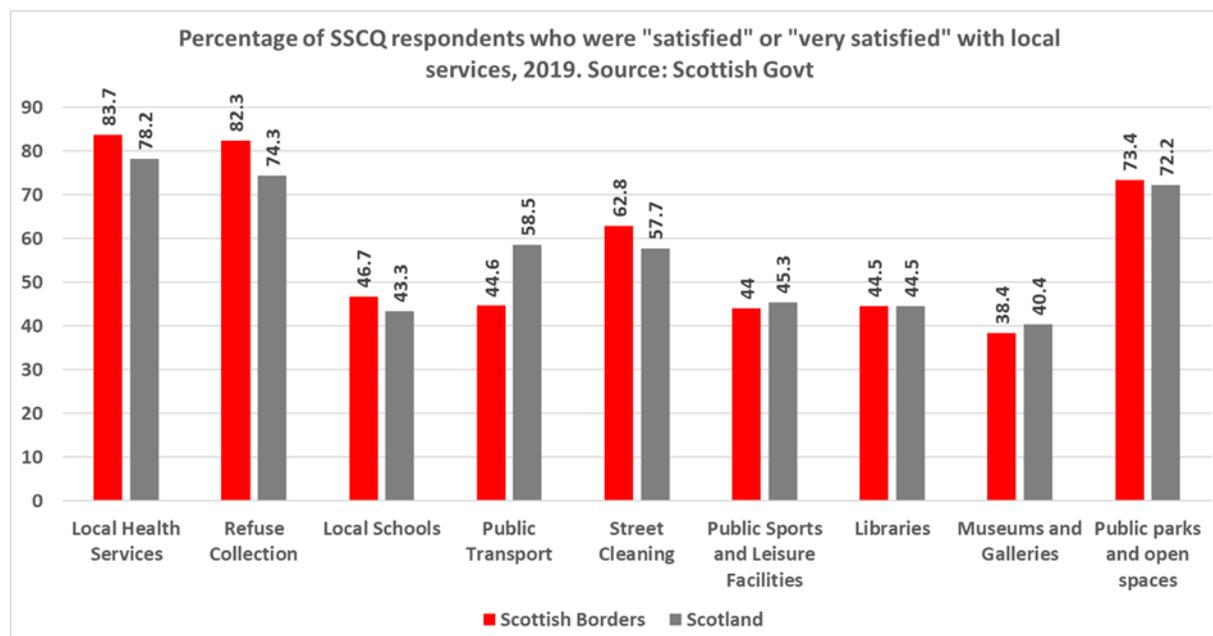
29.1% said there was a little or a lot more crime than the previous year, which is the second-highest negative response rate in Scotland, after Orkney Islands, and is significantly higher than the Scottish average of 20.9%.

This shows a split and a shift in attitude towards perceptions of rural crime, depending on the Local Authority area. Respondents in Western Isles and Shetland have the most positive attitudes in Scotland towards crime in their local area, but Orkney Islands and Scottish Borders, together with East Lothian, are the three areas that have the most negative view about crime in their local area.

Respondents are also significantly more likely to say that crime has got worse in their area if they live in the most-deprived quintile (20.9% as opposed to the least-deprived quintile (15.5%)



Part 5: Local Services



Satisfaction with local health services

Scottish Borders residents are significantly more satisfied with their local health services than average.

83.7% of respondents in Scottish Borders said that they were very or fairly satisfied with their local health services, which is significantly higher than the Scottish average of 78.2%.

9.8% said they were very or fairly dissatisfied, which is significantly lower than the Scottish average of 13.5%. The remainder didn't know or had no opinion. Dissatisfaction levels were lower in ten other Local Authority areas.

People in the most-deprived quintile were significantly more likely to be dissatisfied with their local health service (13.5%) than those in the least-deprived quintile (9.6%)

There was no particular relationship between urban/ rural living and satisfaction with local health services. This is a positive finding for rural health services, which need to deliver the same quality of service despite more challenging economies of scale.

Satisfaction with local refuse collection

Scottish Borders residents are significantly more satisfied with their local refuse collection than average.

82.3% of respondents in Scottish Borders were very or fairly satisfied with local refuse collection, which is significantly better than the Scottish Borders average of 74.5%.

10.4% of Scottish Borders residents were very or fairly dissatisfied, which is again significantly better than 17.1% in Scotland.

People in the most deprived quintile were significantly less likely to be very or fairly satisfied with their local refuse collection service (71.7%) than the least-deprived quintile (75.5%) and significantly more likely to be very or fairly dissatisfied (19.2% and 16.2% respectively)

Residents in small towns and rural areas were more likely to be satisfied and less likely to be dissatisfied with their refuse collection service than those in urban areas in Scotland.

Satisfaction with local schools

Scottish Borders residents are slightly more satisfied with their local schools than average.

46.7% of respondents in Scottish Borders were very or fairly satisfied with local schools, which is insignificantly better than the Scottish average of 43.5%.

4.2% of Scottish Borders residents were very or fairly dissatisfied, which is similar to 4.1% in Scotland.

Respondents in the most deprived quintile were significantly more likely to be very or fairly satisfied with their local schools (45%) than respondents in the least-deprived quintile (41.2%) but people in the most deprived quintile were also significantly more likely to be very or fairly dissatisfied with their local schools (4.2%) than the least-deprived quintile (3.8%).

The influence of rural living on local schools tended to divide opinion, with respondents from remote rural areas being most likely to be either satisfied or dissatisfied with their local schools.

Respondents in small towns were more satisfied than those in urban areas with their local education service.

Satisfaction with public transport

Scottish Borders were significantly less satisfied with their local public transport than average.

44.6% of respondents in Scottish Borders were very or fairly satisfied with local public transport, which is significantly worse than the Scottish average of 58.5% and is the seventh-lowest satisfaction rate out of the 32 Local authority areas.

20.7% of Scottish Borders residents were very or fairly dissatisfied, which is again significantly worse than 14.8% in Scotland.

Dissatisfaction with public transport corresponded directly with rurality, with respondents from urban settings significantly more likely to be satisfied than those from small towns, who were themselves significantly more likely to be satisfied than respondents from rural areas. This throws into focus the challenge of providing a public transport which meets the needs of people living in rural or small-town areas, despite the increased distances and less profitability.

People in the most deprived quintile were significantly more likely to be very or fairly satisfied with their local public transport service (64.3%) than the least-deprived quintile (59.9%) and significantly less likely to be very or fairly dissatisfied (9.8% and 13.9% respectively). This is one positive finding in the effort to reduce inequality in public transport and accessibility.

Satisfaction with Street Cleaning

Scottish Borders residents were slightly more satisfied with street cleaning services than average.

62.8% of respondents in Scottish Borders were very or fairly satisfied with local street cleaning, which is insignificantly better than the Scottish average of 57.7%.

16.6% of Scottish Borders residents were very or fairly dissatisfied, which is significantly better than 22.1% in Scotland.

Respondents in the most deprived quintile were significantly less likely to be very or fairly satisfied with their local street cleaning (53.0%) than respondents in the least-deprived quintile (62.7%) and significantly more likely to be very or fairly dissatisfied (28.6%) than the least-deprived quintile (17.8%).

As expected, dissatisfaction with street cleaning services varied directly according to urban living. Urban respondents in Scotland were more likely to be dissatisfied than those in small towns, who were in turn more likely to be dissatisfied than rural respondents.

Satisfaction with Sports and Leisure Facilities

Scottish Borders residents have average satisfaction levels with sports and leisure facilities

44.0% of respondents in Scottish Borders were very or fairly satisfied with local sports and leisure facilities, which is similar to the Scottish average of 45.3%.

10.2% of Scottish Borders residents were very or fairly dissatisfied, which is insignificantly worse than 7.6% in Scotland.

Respondents in the most deprived quintile were significantly less likely to be very or fairly satisfied with their local sports and leisure facilities (40.7%) than respondents in the least-deprived quintile (47%) but their likelihood of being very or fairly dissatisfied (7.7%) was not significantly higher than the least-deprived quintile (6.6%).

The influence of rural accessibility on satisfaction levels does not seem to be clear-cut. The highest satisfaction levels were from Scottish respondents in remote small towns or suburban areas. The lowest was from those in remote rural or large urban areas.

Satisfaction with library services

Scottish Borders residents have average satisfaction levels with library services

44.5% of respondents in Scottish Borders were very or fairly satisfied with local library facilities, which is the same as the Scottish average.

2.8% of Scottish Borders residents were very or fairly dissatisfied, which is insignificantly better than 3.3% in Scotland.

Respondents in the most deprived quintile were significantly less likely to be very or fairly satisfied with their local library facilities (38.8%) than respondents in the least-deprived quintile (46.7%) and insignificantly more likely to be very or fairly dissatisfied (3.8%) than the least-deprived quintile (2.8%).

The highest satisfaction levels were from Scottish respondents in small towns, and the lowest were from those in either accessible rural areas or large towns.

Satisfaction with Museums and Galleries

Scottish Borders residents' satisfaction with museums and galleries is ambivalent, reflecting low usage and low provision

38.4% of respondents in Scottish Borders were very or fairly satisfied with local museums and galleries, which is insignificantly lower than the Scottish average.

6.4% of Scottish Borders residents were very or fairly dissatisfied, which is insignificantly worse than 3.3% in Scotland.

Respondents in the most deprived quintile were significantly less likely to be very or fairly satisfied with their local museums and galleries (35.9%) than respondents in the least-deprived quintile (46.9%) but were also insignificantly less likely to be very or fairly dissatisfied (2.7%) than the least-deprived quintile (2.9%).

The highest satisfaction levels were from Scottish respondents in large urban areas, which is to be expected. Otherwise, satisfaction levels are universally modest throughout small towns and rural areas.

Satisfaction with parks and open spaces

Scottish Borders residents are reasonably satisfied with parks and open spaces

73.4% of respondents in Scottish Borders were very or fairly satisfied with local parks and open spaces, which is insignificantly higher than the Scottish average of 72.2%.

7.4% of Scottish Borders residents were very or fairly dissatisfied, which is insignificantly worse than 6.3% in Scotland. This question attracted a more opinionated response rate than the questions about museums, galleries and sports facilities, indicating higher usage amongst respondents.

Respondents in the most deprived quintile were significantly less likely to be very or fairly satisfied with their local parks and open spaces (64.9%) than respondents in the least-deprived quintile (81.1%) and significantly more likely to be very or fairly dissatisfied (8.3%) than the least-deprived quintile (4.3%).

The highest satisfaction levels were from Scottish respondents in large urban areas, which is seems counter-intuitive, and the highest dissatisfaction levels were in remote small towns. This suggests that residents value their outdoor spaces more in places where they are less able to take them for granted.