

# Devolution

## Identities and constitutional preferences across the UK

In 1983 the United Kingdom was a unitary state, with all legislative power and executive responsibility lying with Westminster and Whitehall. Thirty years on Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland all have separately elected representative bodies with law-making powers. Has the advent of devolution strengthened or weakened the foundations of public support for keeping Britain together?

### National identity and constitutional preferences

**The arrival of devolution has not been accompanied by an increase in people's readiness to acknowledge a British national identity. If anything the reverse has happened. But there is no consistent evidence that devolution has either strengthened or weakened the foundations of public support for the Union.**

#### Scotland

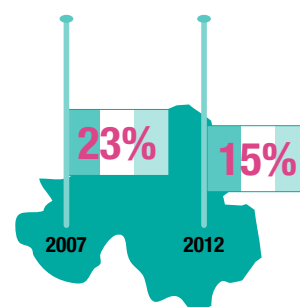
- Only 20% of people in Scotland choose British as their main identity, but the figure was just the same in 1997.
- **Support for independence** has fallen from 30% in 2006 to 23% now. Only around half of those with a strong Scottish identity back independence.
- However, around three-fifths feel that the Scottish Parliament should be running taxes and welfare north of the border.



30% 2006      23% 2012

#### Northern Ireland

- In Northern Ireland support for remaining in the UK dropped from 70% to 56% during the decade before the Good Friday Agreement in 1998.
- More recently, the proportion saying they are British has fallen, from 48% in 2004 to 39% now. People seem more inclined to say they are Northern Irish instead.
- However, since 2007 **support for reunification** with the rest of Ireland has fallen from 23% to 15%.



#### England

- Asked to make a single choice, 43% of people in England now say they are British, down from 65% in 1992 – but the drop occurred before devolution.
- 25% now think that Scotland should leave the UK, up from 19% in 2000, while the proportion thinking **Scotland gets more than its fair share of public spending** has doubled since 2000 to 44%.
- However, there is little evidence that this apparent 'English backlash' has occurred primarily among those who feel English rather than British.



## Introduction

### Authors

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In 1983 the United Kingdom was very clearly a unitary state. Despite consisting of three distinct nations and a territory whose national status is disputed, all legislative power and executive responsibility lay with Westminster and Whitehall. Proposals to introduce separately elected devolved assemblies in Scotland and Wales had failed to secure adequate support in referendums held in 1979. Meanwhile in Northern Ireland, where a devolved parliament and government had existed until 1972, hopes of reintroducing devolution were looking unlikely to be fulfilled in the wake of continuing civil strife. All that was in place was an assembly that had the ability to scrutinise the Westminster government's Secretary of State, but which was being boycotted by its nationalist members – and before long even that limited institution was to come to an unheralded end.

Thirty years on the position is very different. Both Scotland and Wales now have separately elected representative bodies that have the ability to make laws without reference to Westminster, and governments that can decide for themselves how many of the public services in their country should be funded and run. Northern Ireland too now enjoys devolution once more, albeit in a very different form to what was in place before 1972 or is to be found anywhere else in the UK today. In order to ensure that power is shared between the two distinct ethno-religious communities living there – a Protestant community whose roots lie in 17th-century immigration from Scotland and a Catholic community that shares many ties and affinities with the rest of the island of Ireland – not only is the territory's law-making Assembly elected by proportional representation, but ministerial posts are allocated in that way too.

Much of the impetus for these developments lay in a wish to demonstrate that the United Kingdom was capable of accommodating the diverse identities and aspirations that lie within it, and thereby help end disputes that threatened its territorial integrity (Aughey, 2001; Bogdanor, 1999; Mackintosh, 1998). It was hoped that by giving Wales and (especially) Scotland their own separate political institutions that had the ability to determine much of their country's domestic affairs, demands for independence that were being spearheaded by nationalist political parties would be headed off. Meanwhile in Northern Ireland it was anticipated that, together with the creation of institutions to facilitate dialogue and collaboration with the neighbouring Irish Republic, giving nationalist politicians who represented the minority Catholic population a guaranteed role in the territory's government would facilitate accommodation of the identities and aspirations of Catholics, while recognising that, for the time being at least, a majority of the territory's population wanted to remain part of the UK (McGarry and O'Leary, 1995; 2006).

These innovations were not, however, without their critics. In Scotland in particular, it was argued that the creation of a separate parliament would put the country on a 'slippery slope' towards independence (Dalyell, 1977). The new institution's politicians would inevitably want to increase their power at Westminster's expense. Creating distinctively Scottish political symbols would simply stimulate and fuel Scottish national identity rather than strengthen adherence to Britishness and the UK state (Thatcher, 1998). At the same time, relations with England would be soured because while Scotland and Wales would now be able settle many of their own affairs for themselves, politicians from the rest of the UK could still meddle in the affairs of England, where no



**In 1983 the UK was a unitary state. Thirty years on the picture is very different**

devolution was in place and where public spending per head would continue to be less than that enjoyed elsewhere. It was even suggested that an 'English backlash' might ensue (Wright, 2000).

In Northern Ireland there were doubts whether the devolution settlement that was agreed in talks concluded on Good Friday 1998 would succeed in bringing all parts of the territory together. One of the two main Protestant political parties, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), chose not to be party to the Agreement. For many unionist politicians, much rested on whether the proposals for decommissioning weaponry that had been accumulated during 30 years of civil strife, not least by the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA), would be seen to work in practice. Meanwhile, by providing guaranteed representation to both unionist and nationalist politicians in the executive<sup>[1]</sup> as well as the legislature, and in requiring that major legislative decisions have the support of the representatives of both communities in the Assembly, some commentators were concerned that the settlement would simply reinforce existing lines of division as well as potentially undermine the effectiveness and accountability of ministerial decision-making (Wilson and Wilford, 2003; Horowitz, 2001).

Initially, at least, it was the doubts about the stability and effectiveness of the settlement in Northern Ireland that appeared to have the greater force. The Assembly only operated for 10 weeks before it had to be suspended because of a perceived lack of progress on arms decommissioning. After a number of other hiccups the devolved institutions actually lay in abeyance for nearly five years, from 2002 to 2007. However, some nine years after the conclusion of the Good Friday Agreement (also known as the Belfast Agreement) and with the issue of decommissioning finally resolved, the devolved institutions began to operate in 2007 on a continuous basis, and this time with the DUP as full participants. Indeed Northern Ireland was faced with the remarkable sight of the DUP's leader, the Revd. Ian Paisley, a long-standing and rhetorically flamboyant advocate of hard line unionism, working in government with Martin McGuinness, who had formerly been an active member of the Provisional IRA.

More recently, however, it has been the durability of Scotland's constitutional position that has looked to be in most doubt. Far from killing nationalism 'stone dead' as had been anticipated by the former Labour Cabinet Minister, (Lord) George Robertson (Hassan, 2011), it soon became apparent that elections to the Scottish Parliament were proving to be a relatively happy hunting ground for the Scottish National Party (SNP) (as indeed were Assembly elections for the Welsh nationalist party, Plaid Cymru, in Wales). In 2007 the SNP narrowly succeeded in securing the largest number of MSPs, and for the next four years formed a minority government. Still, the party's ambitions to hold a referendum on whether Scotland should leave the UK and become an independent country remained on hold thanks to the absence of a majority for such a move in the Edinburgh Parliament. However, in 2011 the nationalists dramatically won an overall majority and the UK government accepted that this gave the party the moral right to hold an independence referendum. After extended negotiations between the two governments the way has now been cleared for a referendum on independence to be held in September 2014. Should there be a majority 'Yes' vote then preparations will begin to be made for Scotland to leave the UK.

In this chapter we look underneath the bonnet of these election outcomes and political developments to examine the trends in identities and constitutional preferences among the general public since the advent of devolution in Scotland

and Northern Ireland.[2] Has public support for remaining part of the UK in fact either grown or diminished in the wake of constitutional change? At the same time we also examine developments in the UK's largest component: England. Does it accept the patchwork of asymmetric devolution that has emerged or are there signs of discontent? To answer these questions we address three key issues that are central to understanding the role that devolution has so far played in helping to maintain – or fracture – the UK.



### **A shared sense of Britishness is often seen as the emotional glue that keeps the UK together**

First, what has happened to patterns of national identity? A shared sense of Britishness is often regarded as the emotional glue that helps keep the UK together. Yet it coexists alongside other 'national' identities, Scottish, English, Irish, Northern Irish and Welsh. Has the establishment of a distinctive Scottish Parliament undermined adherence to Britishness north of the border? Has England become more aware of its own separate English identity? And has greater acknowledgement of the aspirations of many Northern Irish Catholics served in practice to reinforce in them a sense of having a distinct Irish identity?

Even if the pattern of national identity has not changed, people's preferences as to how they would like to be governed may have done so. The electoral success of the SNP certainly gives good reason to wonder whether in Scotland support for leaving the UK has increased since devolution has been in place. Meanwhile, perhaps England has begun to question whether it should continue to accommodate the demands of its seemingly increasingly truculent neighbour and/or whether it should be enjoying some form of devolution itself. At the same time, we might wonder now that the devolved institutions in Northern Ireland have been up and running for a while, whether more people in the region are willing to accept its continued role as part of the UK. So, our second key issue is, 'What trends have emerged in how people in each part of the UK would like to be governed?'

Finally, we turn to the relationship between identity and preferences, and ask how far those with different national identities disagree about how their part of the UK should be run. If devolution really has been successful in strengthening public support for keeping the UK in its current form, then arguably those whose primary sense of identity is something other than British should have come to accept that where they live should remain in the UK. In short it should have succeeded in healing the constitutional divisions between those with different identities. On the other hand, if the fears of those who were critical of devolution have been realised we might find those who do not feel primarily British have become even less likely to accept that they should be part of the British state. Those who feel Scottish or Irish may have become even more determined to want to leave the UK, while those who primarily feel English may have particularly come to wonder whether their part of the UK is getting a raw deal. So our third issue is then, 'Has the link between identity and constitutional preference strengthened or weakened?'

To answer these questions, we draw on data from three complementary sources. The first is the British Social Attitudes survey which, since the late 1990s, has been asking its respondents in England, on a regular basis, about both their national identity and their constitutional preferences. In addition, since 1983 British Social Attitudes has asked all respondents in Britain what they think the constitutional position of Northern Ireland should be, and so we can examine how far the rest of the UK believes that territory should form part of the British state.

British Social Attitudes covers Scotland too, but it contains too few respondents in any one year to provide us with reliable estimates of the distribution of public opinion north of the border. Instead for this information we turn to British Social Attitudes’ sister survey, the Scottish Social Attitudes survey, which was first established in the immediate wake of the creation of the Scottish Parliament in 1999 and is conducted using the same methodological approach as British Social Attitudes. It is the only survey to have asked the same questions about national identity and constitutional preferences in a consistent manner ever since the advent of devolution in 1999.

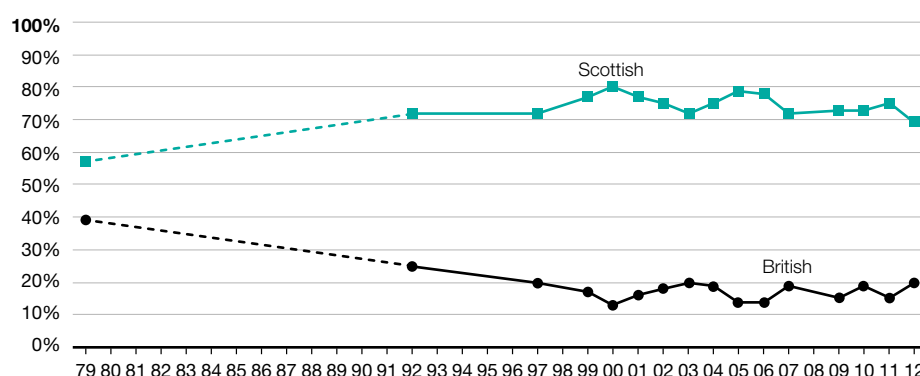
British Social Attitudes has never been conducted in Northern Ireland, but in 1989 NatCen Social Research helped establish an equivalent survey there, known as the Northern Ireland Social Attitudes survey. Funding ended in 1996, but two years later researchers at Queen’s University, Belfast and the University of Ulster launched the Northern Ireland Life and Times survey, using much the same methodological approach as the Northern Ireland Social Attitudes survey and, in turn, British Social Attitudes. Between them the Northern Ireland Social Attitudes survey and the Northern Ireland Life and Times survey provide the longest running series of Northern Irish data on our subject matter. Furthermore, the similarity in the way in which all three surveys are conducted means they provide the most robust opportunities for comparing trends in opinion across all three parts of the UK.[3]

## Trends in national identity

### Scotland

We begin by looking at what has happened to the incidence of British national identity in Scotland since the advent of devolution. Scottish Social Attitudes has regularly presented its respondents with a list of all the national identities associated with one or more parts of Great Britain and Ireland and asked which best describes themselves. Respondents can select more than one if they wish, but are then asked to choose one single identity. A few surveys conducted before 1999 presented their respondents with much the same list but asked them to choose just one identity in the first place. By combining the two sources of information we can see how the most salient national identity of people living in Scotland has evolved since 1979. As by far the two most popular answers throughout have been “Scottish” and “British” and given too that these are the two responses that are of most interest to us, we only show in Figure 6.1 the proportion choosing one or other of those.

**Figure 6.1 Trends in ‘forced choice’ national identity, in Scotland, 1979–2012**



Source: 1979–1997: *Scottish Election Study*; 1999–2012: *Scottish Social Attitudes*  
 The data on which Figure 6.1 is based can be found in the appendix to this chapter

# 69%

**in Scotland identify as Scottish, 20% as British when forced to choose a single identity**

British identity clearly plays second fiddle to Scottish identity north of the border. Forced to choose a single identity, at most only around one in five say that they are British, while typically around three-quarters or so indicate that they are Scottish. There is, though, nothing new about this. Much the same pattern has been in evidence since the late 1990s; there is no evidence of a secular increase in adherence to a Scottish identity since the advent of devolution. However, throughout the last decade and a half, far fewer people have regarded themselves as British than did so in the 1970s. Evidently Britishness has been in decline north of the border over the longer term, but it would seem that devolution is better seen as a consequence of Scotland's distinct sense of identity rather than something that has led to its development.

However, forcing people in Scotland to choose just one identity runs the risk of underestimating the degree to which they are willing to acknowledge at least some sense of Britishness. When Scottish Social Attitudes has given them the chance to choose more than one identity, typically around 40 per cent have chosen both Scottish and British, with the most recent reading (for 2012) standing at 45 per cent. The possibility that people might feel both identities is explicitly acknowledged in a different approach to asking about national identity that has also been implemented on a regular basis on Scottish Social Attitudes. This is the so-called Moreno question, which was originally inspired by the existence of a pattern of dual identities in much of Spain (Moreno, 1988; 2006). Respondents are presented with a set of options that range from exclusively Scottish at one end to exclusively British at the other, while at the same time also offering various possible combinations of feeling both Scottish and British:

*Which, if any, of the following best describes how you see yourself?*

*Scottish not British*  
*More Scottish than British*  
*Equally Scottish and British*  
*More British than Scottish*  
*British not Scottish*

The responses to this question confirm the impression that Scottishness is the more strongly felt of the two identities. Typically no more than around one in ten place themselves in one of the last two rows of Table 6.1, thereby indicating that they are exclusively or predominantly British. In contrast, the proportion claiming to be exclusively or predominantly Scottish has often exceeded 60 per cent. However, there is no sign that this proportion has increased since devolution has been in place. Indeed, if anything, in recent years it has tended to be a little lower, averaging 58 per cent since 2007 as opposed to 66 per cent between 1999 and 2006.[4] True, the proportion saying they were Scottish and not British was lower in 1997 than in all but one year thereafter, but this is the only evidence that can possibly be cited in support of any claim that there is a link between the introduction of devolution and a decline in Britishness.[5] Overall, our evidence suggests that devolution has not served to undermine Britishness in Scotland, though it is clearly relatively weak compared with Scottishness.

**Table 6.1 Trends in Moreno national identity, in Scotland, 1992–2012**

|                              | 92  | 97  | 99   | 00   | 01   | 03   | 05   | 06   | 07   | 09   | 10   | 11   | 12   |
|------------------------------|-----|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|                              | %   | %   | %    | %    | %    | %    | %    | %    | %    | %    | %    | %    | %    |
| Scottish not British         | 19  | 23  | 32   | 37   | 36   | 31   | 32   | 33   | 27   | 27   | 28   | 29   | 23   |
| More Scottish than British   | 40  | 38  | 35   | 31   | 30   | 34   | 32   | 32   | 30   | 31   | 30   | 33   | 30   |
| Equally Scottish and British | 33  | 27  | 22   | 21   | 24   | 22   | 22   | 21   | 28   | 26   | 26   | 23   | 30   |
| More British than Scottish   | 3   | 4   | 3    | 3    | 3    | 4    | 4    | 4    | 5    | 4    | 4    | 5    | 5    |
| British not Scottish         | 3   | 4   | 4    | 4    | 3    | 4    | 5    | 5    | 6    | 4    | 4    | 5    | 6    |
| <i>Weighted base</i>         | *   | 882 | 1482 | 1663 | 1605 | 1508 | 1549 | 1594 | 1508 | 1482 | 1495 | 1196 | 1229 |
| <i>Unweighted base</i>       | 957 | 882 | 1482 | 1663 | 1605 | 1508 | 1549 | 1594 | 1508 | 1482 | 1495 | 1196 | 1229 |

Source: 1992, 1997: Scottish Election Study; 1999–2012: Scottish Social Attitudes

\*There is no weighting variable in this dataset

## Northern Ireland

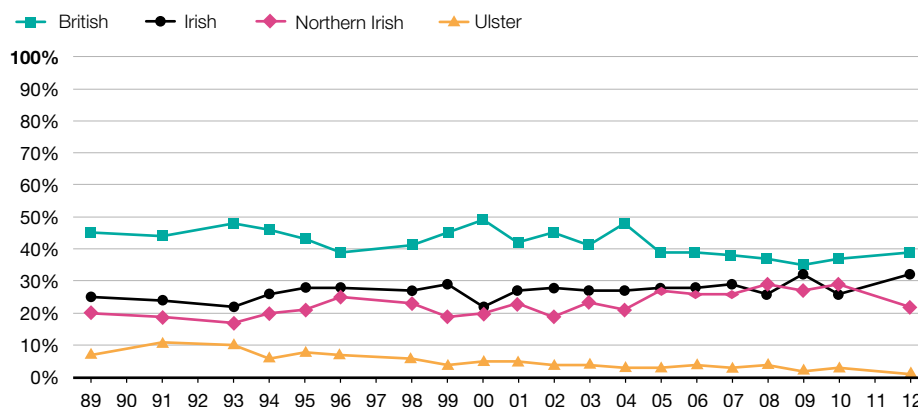
While many people in Scotland might be willing to acknowledge more than one identity, in Northern Ireland identity is often regarded as singular and therefore a potential source of conflict. Those who say they are British are thought to deny any sense of being Irish, and vice versa. Indeed when in 2003 the Northern Ireland Life and Times survey gave respondents the opportunity to select more than one identity, only 11 per cent chose both, far fewer than we have seen claim in Scotland to be both Scottish and British. However, on the couple of occasions, in 2007 and 2012, when the Northern Ireland Life and Times survey administered the Moreno question, as many as between 47 per cent (2012) and 58 per cent (2007) claimed to be some mixture of British and Irish. Though still rather less than the three-fifths or so in Scotland who claim to be some mixture of Scottish and British (see Table 6.1). This suggests that in practice many people in Northern Ireland may in fact have at least some sense of both British and Irish identity.

Further evidence pointing in this direction emerges from Figure 6.2, which shows the responses to the question on national identity that has been asked on a regular basis on the Northern Ireland Life and Times survey. Respondents are asked to choose which one of four possible identities best describes themselves: British, Irish, Northern Irish or Ulster. It is not just British and Irish that prove to be relatively popular, Northern Irish proves to be too, and especially so since 2005. Since then, on average, 27 per cent have said they are Northern Irish, compared with 20 per cent in the period between 1989 and 2004.<sup>[6]</sup> Meanwhile, further analysis reveals that over three-quarters of this group (78 per cent in 2012) say that they are some mixture of British and Irish when presented with the Moreno question. It appears then that Northern Irish is an identity that is particularly likely to be adopted by those who do not feel that British and Irish are necessarily mutually exclusive identities. The increase in its popularity might therefore be regarded as some evidence of a decline in the potential of national identity to act as a source of division and conflict – in line with the hopes of many supporters of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement.



**It appears that Northern Irish is an identity adopted by those who do not feel British and Irish are mutually exclusive identities**

**Figure 6.2 Trends in ‘forced choice’ national identity, in Northern Ireland, 1989–2012**



Source: 1989–1996: Northern Ireland Social Attitudes; 1998–2012: Northern Ireland Life and Times  
The data on which Figure 6.2 is based can be found in the appendix to this chapter

But while claiming a Northern Irish identity may signal some sense of being both British and Irish, the increase in the identity’s popularity seems to have been wholly at the expense of the proportion who simply say they are British. Before 2005, on average, 45 per cent said that they were British. Since then only 38 per cent have done so. In contrast, the proportion saying they are Irish has not declined at all. Indeed it has in fact been slightly higher, on average, since 2005 (29 per cent) than it was beforehand (26 per cent). The rise in the proportion of people saying they are Northern Irish seems to represent an increased willingness to acknowledge having an Irish as well as a British heritage rather than an increased acceptance of having a British as well as Irish one.

Indeed, if we examine separately the trends in identity among those who claim adherence to a Protestant denomination and those who say they are Catholic (see Table 6.2), we find that the increase in adherence to a Northern Irish identity has occurred more or less exclusively among Protestants. As a result, whereas once a Northern Irish identity was more common among Catholics than Protestants, now, if anything, it is more likely to be claimed by the latter. Not only does claiming a Northern Irish identity seemingly enable people to avoid having to make the historically polarised choice between British and Irish, but also it appears to help bridge the divide between the region’s two religious communities.



**The increase in adherence to a Northern Irish identity has occurred mainly among Protestants**

**Table 6.2 Trends in ‘forced choice’ national identity, by religion, in Northern Ireland, 1989–2012<sup>[7]</sup>**

|      |   | Protestant |       |                | Catholic |       |                |
|------|---|------------|-------|----------------|----------|-------|----------------|
|      |   | British    | Irish | Northern Irish | British  | Irish | Northern Irish |
| 1989 | % | 66         | 4     | 16             | 10       | 60    | 25             |
| 1994 | % | 70         | 3     | 15             | 9        | 62    | 28             |
| 1998 | % | 67         | 3     | 18             | 8        | 65    | 24             |
| 2002 | % | 75         | 3     | 14             | 10       | 62    | 25             |
| 2005 | % | 63         | 6     | 24             | 8        | 60    | 20             |
| 2008 | % | 57         | 4     | 32             | 8        | 61    | 25             |
| 2010 | % | 60         | 3     | 29             | 7        | 58    | 26             |
| 2012 | % | 69         | 3     | 24             | 9        | 68    | 16             |

Source: 1989, 1994: Northern Ireland Social Attitudes; 1998–2012: Northern Ireland Life and Times



All of this might well be thought beneficial to reducing the potential for conflict in Northern Ireland, without necessarily undermining support for its continued membership of the UK – although intriguingly the shift in national identities started a little before the successful conclusion of the political agreement that finally lead to the resumption of devolution in 2007. Still, as Table 6.2 shows, the distributions of identities among Protestants and Catholics continue to look very different from each other – Britishness remains almost exclusively a preserve of the former while Irishness remains largely confined to the latter. In fact, the most recent reading for 2012 suggests that there has been something of a reversal of the increase in a Northern Irish identity (and especially so among Catholics) while both British and Irish identities have become more common within the religious communities with which they are traditionally associated. This may represent a reaction to a sequence of events that took place shortly before or during the period when the 2012 survey was conducted, including a row about the number of days the Union flag was to be flown over Belfast City Hall.[8] This reversal is a reminder that despite the growth in acknowledgement of what appears to be a more cross-community form of identity, issues of identity can still cause conflict in the region.

### England

If in Northern Ireland national identity often appears to be a source of conflict, in England it is perhaps most commonly seen as a source of confusion. National identity in the UK's largest nation has been described as 'fuzzy', and the terms 'English' and 'British' called a distinction without a difference (Cohen, 1995; Kumar, 2003). But perhaps the emergence of devolved institutions in the rest of the UK has helped make people in England more aware of the fact that the two are not synonymous and, more importantly, more inclined to say that they are English rather than British?

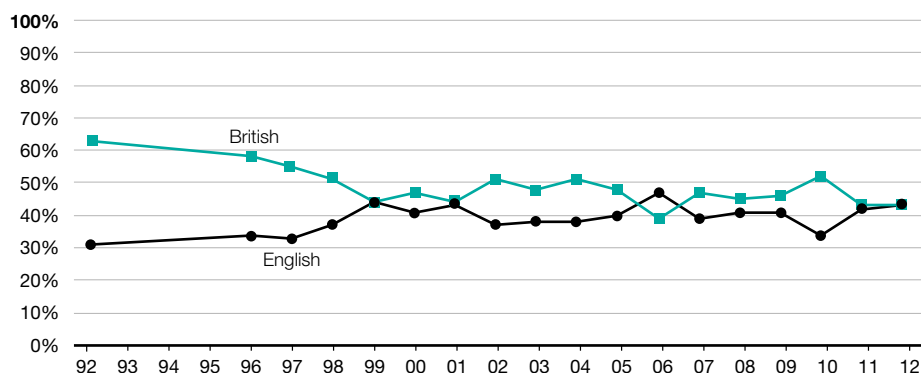
In Figure 6.3 we show how people in England have responded when presented with a list of identities and asked to initially choose more than one if they wish, but then asked to pick just one. In this case we can add one further reading, for 1992, from a survey that only invited people to choose one identity in the first place. Once again we focus on the two most common identities, British and English.

It would appear that English has proved relatively more popular, and British less so, since and including 1999. Before that, the proportion choosing English ranged between 31 per cent and 37 per cent; it has been above that range on all but two subsequent occasions. Conversely, the proportion saying they are British has usually been lower than it was at any time before 1999. To that extent the advent of devolution elsewhere in the UK appears to have coincided with some increase in the relative popularity of Englishness as opposed to Britishness. However, we should also note that the reduction in the proportion selecting a British identity is only evident when respondents are required to choose a single identity; the proportion choosing British as one of their identities has not discernibly changed at all, standing usually at a little under 70 per cent. Moreover there is no evidence of any further change in the relative popularity of the two identities since 1999; the figures for 2012 (43 per cent English, 43 per cent British) are almost exactly the same as those for 1999 (44 per cent English, 44 per cent British). In short, any effect that devolution has had on national identity in England has only been in the form of a one-off step change, rather than a continuous secular change.



### National identity in England has been described as 'fuzzy'. Has this changed with devolution?

**Figure 6.3 Trends in ‘forced choice’ national identity, in England, 1992–2012**



Source: 1992 and 1997: British Election Studies; 1996, 1998–2009: British Social Attitudes (respondents living in England only)

The data on which Figure 6.3 is based can be found in the appendix to this chapter

**43%**  
of people in England say that British is their main identity, little different from 1999

Unfortunately, evidence on the pattern of responses to the Moreno question is only available for one year prior to 1999 (see Table 6.3). However, this proves to be consistent with the suggestion that a one-off step change occurred in 1999. In 1997 just seven per cent said that they were English not British; since then the figure has never been less than 17 per cent. However, once again there is no sign since 1999 of any secular trend towards more people saying they are predominantly or wholly English.[9] At 29 per cent, the most recent reading for the proportion saying either that they are English not British or that they are more English than British, is much the same as the equivalent figure for 1999, 31 per cent.[10]

**Table 6.3 Trends in Moreno national identity, in England, 1997–2012**

|                             | 97                | 99   | 00   | 01   | 03   | 07  | 08   | 09   | 12   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|
|                             | %                 | %    | %    | %    | %    | %   | %    | %    | %    |
| English not British         | 7                 | 17   | 18   | 17   | 17   | 19  | 16   | 17   | 17   |
| More English than British   | 17                | 14   | 14   | 13   | 19   | 14  | 14   | 16   | 12   |
| Equally English and British | 45                | 37   | 34   | 42   | 31   | 31  | 41   | 33   | 44   |
| More British than English   | 14                | 11   | 14   | 9    | 13   | 14  | 9    | 10   | 8    |
| British not English         | 9                 | 14   | 12   | 11   | 10   | 12  | 9    | 13   | 10   |
| Weighted base               | 2492 <sup>+</sup> | 2722 | 1956 | 2786 | 1929 | 870 | 1001 | 1970 | 2800 |
| Unweighted base             | 3150              | 2718 | 1928 | 2761 | 1917 | 859 | 982  | 1940 | 2729 |

Source: 1997: British Election Study; 1999–2012 British Social Attitudes (respondents living in England only); 2012 figure excludes those born in Scotland or Wales (N=76)

+In 1997 the British Election Study contained an ethnic boost, which was then weighted down, hence the difference between the weighted and unweighted base

Still, we should also note that, contrary to what we might have expected from the evidence of Figure 6.3, the proportion saying they are exclusively or primarily English is typically greater than the proportion indicating they are exclusively or primarily British. One possible explanation is that some of those who say they are British in response to the question on which Figure 6.3 is based are stating a fact about their legal citizenship rather than indicating their identity. Perhaps it is only when asked a question that explicitly asks them to weigh the two that their Englishness emerges. That said, we should bear in mind that by far the most common answer to the Moreno question is “Equally English and British”. In truth, identity still seems to be much ‘fuzzier’ in England than it is in the rest of the UK.

### Summary

One point is clear: devolution has certainly not proved to be the harbinger of any strengthening of Britishness. Rather that identity seems to have weakened somewhat in both England and Northern Ireland, while in Scotland it has remained as weak as it has ever been. However in Northern Ireland, the decline has been accompanied by an increase in people’s willingness to say they are Northern Irish, a change that seems motivated more by a degree of willingness to acknowledge having a British and an Irish heritage rather than any rejection of Britishness. (It is also a change that potentially still seems to be capable of being reversed when inter-communal disagreements and disputes break out.) And although in England, the relative importance of being English and being British tipped a little in favour of the former in 1999, since then the two identities have lived side by side with each other in much the same way as before. Still, arguably the acid test of whether devolution has undermined the popular basis of the Union is what has happened to constitutional preferences since 1999. It is to that topic that we now turn.

## Constitutional preferences

### Scotland

In Figure 6.4 we show how people in Scotland have responded when asked the following question:

*Which of these statements comes closest to your view?*

*Scotland should become independent, separate from the UK and the European Union*

*Scotland should become independent, separate from the UK but part of the European Union*

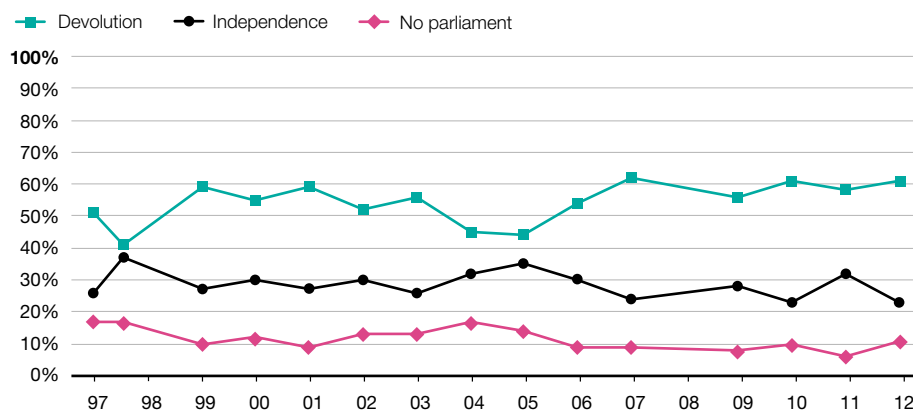
*Scotland should remain part of the UK, with its own elected parliament which has **some** taxation powers*

*Scotland should remain part of the UK, with its own elected parliament which has **no** taxation powers*

*Scotland should remain part of the UK **without** an elected parliament*

Figure 6.4 shows combined responses for the first two options, both of which refer to independence, and the third or fourth, both of which indicate support for having a devolved Scottish Parliament within the framework of the UK.

**Figure 6.4 Constitutional preferences, in Scotland, 1997–2012**



*The data on which Figure 6.4 is based can be found in the appendix to this chapter*  
 Source: May 1997: Scottish Election Study; September 1997: Scottish Referendum Study; 1999–2012: Scottish Social Attitudes

# 23%

in Scotland want independence, down from 30% in 2006

What stands out above all from this chart is the relative stability of constitutional preferences north of the border. Some form of devolution has consistently been the most popular option, independence has typically secured the support of between a quarter and a third, while usually only around one in ten or so have not wanted any kind of parliament for Scotland at all. There is certainly no evidence that the electoral success of the SNP in 2007 and 2011, success that led to the decision to hold a referendum on independence, was occasioned by an increase in support for leaving the UK. In fact, if anything the opposite is the case. Between 1999 and 2006 support for independence averaged 30 per cent; since the SNP first came to power in 2007 it has averaged 26 per cent. As we have demonstrated elsewhere (Curtice and Ormston, 2013a) one reason at least for this apparent decline seems to have been the emergence since the SNP first came to power in 2007 of a less critical attitude towards the deal that Scotland gets from the Union. Thus, for example, whereas previously, on average 36 per cent felt that England benefited most out of the Union economically, while just 20 per cent reckoned Scotland did, since and including 2007 the former figure has fallen to 27 per cent while the latter has increased a little to 24 per cent.<sup>[11]</sup> Much the same change has occurred with respect to the views of people in Scotland towards the share of public spending that their country enjoys.<sup>[12]</sup> Having an SNP government in power in Edinburgh that avowedly and publicly stands up for Scotland's interests seems to have helped persuade some that the Union can be made to work satisfactorily after all (see also Curtice and Ormston, 2010).

However, even if there is no evidence of any growth in support for independence since 1999, and it has therefore remained a minority point of view, this does not necessarily mean that the current constitutional settlement matches the contours of public opinion north of the border. In Table 6.4 we show how people in Scotland have responded when on four separate occasions during the last five years they have been asked which institution "ought to make most of the important decisions for Scotland" about various policy areas. Two of these, health and schools, are primarily the responsibility of the Scottish Parliament. Two others, taxation and welfare benefits, are the two main areas of domestic policy that are still primarily the preserve north of the border of the UK government. The list also includes defence and foreign affairs, responsibility for which is the distinguishing feature of an independent state.

**Table 6.4 Preferences for who should decide policy areas, in Scotland, 2007–2012**<sup>[13]</sup>

|                                    |   | Scottish Parliament | UK Government at Westminster | Local councils in Scotland | EU  |
|------------------------------------|---|---------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|-----|
| <b>Health Service</b>              |   |                     |                              |                            |     |
| 2007                               | % | 63                  | 25                           | 10                         | *   |
| 2009                               | % | 65                  | 25                           | 6                          | 1   |
| 2010                               | % | 66                  | 26                           | 5                          | *   |
| 2012                               | % | 66                  | 24                           | 8                          | *   |
| <b>Schools</b>                     |   |                     |                              |                            |     |
| 2007                               | % | 62                  | 13                           | 23                         | *   |
| 2009                               | % | 65                  | 12                           | 19                         | 1   |
| 2010                               | % | 62                  | 14                           | 23                         | *   |
| 2012                               | % | 63                  | 11                           | 24                         | *   |
| <b>Taxation</b>                    |   |                     |                              |                            |     |
| 2007                               | % | n/a                 | n/a                          | n/a                        | n/a |
| 2009                               | % | 59                  | 33                           | 4                          | 1   |
| 2010                               | % | 57                  | 37                           | 3                          | *   |
| 2012                               | % | 56                  | 36                           | 4                          | *   |
| <b>Welfare benefits</b>            |   |                     |                              |                            |     |
| 2007                               | % | 63                  | 18                           | 16                         | 1   |
| 2009                               | % | 60                  | 19                           | 16                         | 1   |
| 2010                               | % | 62                  | 25                           | 9                          | 1   |
| 2012                               | % | 64                  | 19                           | 13                         | *   |
| <b>Defence and foreign affairs</b> |   |                     |                              |                            |     |
| 2007                               | % | 33                  | 58                           | *                          | 4   |
| 2009                               | % | 31                  | 61                           | 1                          | 3   |
| 2010                               | % | 31                  | 63                           | 1                          | 3   |
| 2012                               | % | 34                  | 59                           | *                          | 4   |

*n/a = not asked*

*Source: Scottish Social Attitudes*



**Only when it comes to defence and foreign affairs does a majority think responsibility should lie with Westminster**

As we might anticipate, around two-thirds or so think that the Scottish Parliament should be primarily responsible for making decisions about health and schools, a figure that has changed little during the last five years. Indeed, in so far as there is much dispute about where responsibility for schools in particular should lie, it centres on whether local councils in Scotland should be making the key decisions instead of the Scottish Parliament – and not on whether the UK government should be the principal decision-maker. What we might not have anticipated, however, is that support for devolving responsibility for both taxation and welfare benefits to the Scottish Parliament is almost as high as for health and schools – and has been consistently so too. Only when it comes to defence and foreign affairs does a clear majority of the Scottish public think that responsibility should lie with the UK government.

It appears that the instinctive reaction, of a majority of the Scottish public at least, is that the legitimate locus for deciding their country's domestic affairs is Edinburgh and not London. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that, although the option of more devolution will not appear on the referendum ballot paper, all three of the principal political parties that back Scotland's continued membership of the United Kingdom are now at various stages of developing plans for further devolution (Scottish Liberal Democrats, 2012; Curtice and Ormston, 2013b; Scottish Labour Party, 2013; Davidson, 2013). If Scotland does opt to remain part of the UK its terms of membership look likely to remain the subject of continuing discussion.

### Northern Ireland

At the heart of the long-standing constitutional debate in Northern Ireland is whether the territory should continue to be part of the UK or whether it should be reunified with the rest of Ireland, from which it was separated when the remainder of the island became independent in 1922. The Northern Ireland Life and Times survey, and before it the Northern Ireland Social Attitudes survey, has regularly asked its respondents to choose between these two diametrically opposed options for how Northern Ireland should be governed – though the view of respondents who instead spontaneously stated that Northern Ireland should become a separate state has also been recorded separately. However, following the final restoration of devolution in 2007 this question was amended so that respondents were presented with two alternative ways of remaining part of the UK – with direct rule from Westminster or with devolved government at Stormont – as well as the prospect of reunifying with the remainder of Ireland. We clearly need to bear this change in mind when examining the resulting time series, shown in Table 6.5.

Once we take that caveat into consideration, it appears that support for remaining within the UK has fallen since the late 1980s, when the initial political moves that were to lead eventually to the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement were being made.<sup>[14]</sup> Between 1989 and 1993 around 70 per cent of people in Northern Ireland said that they preferred to remain part of the UK. By the time the Agreement was concluded in 1998 that figure had fallen to a little under 60 per cent, while by 2006, shortly before the suspension of devolved government was ended, only 54 per cent were saying they wished to remain in the Union. Thereafter, the change of question wording in 2007 clearly served to increase the level of support expressed for remaining within the UK, but at 63 per cent the most recent reading is the lowest since that wording change was made (as well as still being lower than it was at any time between 1989 and 1993).

**15%**  
want Northern Ireland to  
reunify with the rest of  
Ireland, down from 23%  
in 2007

**Table 6.5 Preferred long-term constitutional future, in Northern Ireland, 1989–2012**

|   | 89  | 90  | 91  | 93  | 94  | 95  | 96  | 98   | 99   | 00   | 01   |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------|------|------|
|   | %   | %   | %   | %   | %   | %   | %   | %    | %    | %    | %    |
| Remain part of the UK                                   | 70  | 68  | 72  | 70  | 63  | 64  | 62  | 57   | 56   | 60   | 50   |
| Reunify with the rest of Ireland<br>(Independent state) | 24  | 25  | 22  | 20  | 27  | 27  | 24  | 22   | 21   | 17   | 28   |
| Don't know/other answer                                 | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 1   | 2   | 6    | 11   | 9    | 6    |
|   | 6   | 6   | 5   | 9   | 9   | 7   | 12  | 15   | 12   | 14   | 17   |
| <i>Weighted base</i>                                    | 861 | 890 | 890 | 838 | 763 | 737 | 783 | 1801 | 2213 | 1799 | 1800 |
| <i>Unweighted base</i>                                  | 861 | 889 | 889 | 838 | 759 | 733 | 782 | 1800 | 2200 | 1800 | 1800 |

|   | 02 | 23   | 04   | 05   | 06   | 07   | 08   | 09   | 10   | 12   |      |
|---|----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|   | %  | %    | %    | %    | %    | %    | %    | %    | %    | %    |      |
| Remain part of the UK                                   |    | 55   | 55   | 59   | 58   | 54   | 66*  | 70*  | 69*  | 72*  | 63*  |
| Reunify with the rest of Ireland<br>(Independent state) |    | 22   | 23   | 22   | 22   | 30   | 23   | 18   | 21   | 16   | 15   |
| Don't know/other answer                                 |    | 7    | 7    | 10   | 6    | 3    | 5    | 6    | 4    | 3    | 5    |
|   |    | 14   | 14   | 9    | 13   | 13   | 6    | 7    | 7    | 9    | 16   |
| <i>Weighted base</i>                                    |    | 1800 | 1800 | 1800 | 1201 | 1230 | 1169 | 1212 | 1221 | 1192 | 1193 |
| <i>Unweighted base</i>                                  |    | 1800 | 1800 | 1800 | 1200 | 1230 | 1169 | 1210 | 1221 | 1191 | 1191 |

\*Change in question text. From 2007 respondents were offered to remain part of the UK with direct rule and "remain part of the United Kingdom with devolved government". Figures represent the proportion choosing either option

Source: 1989–1996: Northern Ireland Social Attitudes; 1998–2012: Northern Ireland Life and Times

And yet while commitment to the maintenance of the Union may have been eroded, there is no sign of increased support for reunification with the rest of Ireland. Between 1989 and 2006 support oscillated around an average of 23 per cent, without any discernible trend in either direction. Support for reunification proved to be 23 per cent once again in 2007 immediately after the change in wording of our survey question – while since then there has actually been some slippage in support for reunification. Rather than being accompanied by an increase in support for reunifying with the rest of Ireland, the decline in support for remaining part of the Union has been accompanied instead by an increase in the proportion saying either that Northern Ireland should become an independent state or else “don’t know”. The constitutional debate in the region has, it seems, become a little less polarised around two apparently diametrically opposed alternatives.

We can gain further insight into what has happened by looking separately at how support for remaining part of the UK has varied over time among those with different religious affiliations (see Table 6.6).

**Table 6.6 Support for remaining in the UK, by religion, in Northern Ireland, 1989–2012**<sup>[15]</sup>

| % support remaining part of the UK | Protestant | Catholic | No religion |
|------------------------------------|------------|----------|-------------|
| 1989                               | 93         | 32       | 83          |
| 1993                               | 89         | 36       | 71          |
| 1996                               | 85         | 35       | 54          |
| 1998                               | 84         | 19       | 58          |
| 2000                               | 83         | 20       | 53          |
| 2003                               | 82         | 21       | 45          |
| 2006                               | 85         | 22       | 46          |
| 2007*                              | 89         | 39       | 71          |
| 2008*                              | 89         | 43       | 71          |
| 2009*                              | 91         | 47       | 66          |
| 2010*                              | 91         | 51       | 60          |
| 2012*                              | 86         | 42       | 65          |

\*Change in question text. From 2007 respondents were offered to remain part of the UK with direct rule and "remain part of the United Kingdom with devolved government". Figures represent the proportion choosing either option

Source: 1989, 1993, 1996: Northern Ireland Social Attitudes; 1998–2012: Northern Ireland Life and Times

In the years immediately after our first reading in 1989, much of the erosion in support occurred among Protestants. But once the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement was concluded in 1998, it was among Catholics that support fell away. It would seem that in the earlier period some Protestants became disenchanted with the Union as a result of the moves that the UK government were gradually making to secure a political accommodation that recognised the distinctive aspirations of the minority nationalist community. However the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement had been concluded the principal effect may have been to have made it easier for Catholics to believe that leaving the UK and unifying with Ireland could actually happen.

Yet it was among Catholics (together with those of no religion) that the change in the wording of our question in 2007 did most to *increase* the level of support expressed for remaining in the Union. In the longer run the existence of devolved institutions that give representatives of the minority nationalist community a guaranteed role in decision-making has seemingly served to secure some acceptance of Northern Ireland's continued membership of the UK.<sup>[16]</sup> Even so, the question of Northern Ireland's constitutional status remains a source of considerable division between the two communities.

## England

We now turn to what the largest part of the UK, England, wants. Here there are two aspects for us to consider. First of all, how do people in England think that Scotland and Northern Ireland should be governed? Are they happy that these two territories remain an integral part of the UK even though they have a measure of self government, or are there signs of a backlash against the 'privileges' that they now enjoy? Second, is there any evidence that having seen devolution introduced in the rest of the UK, England would now like some measure of self-government for itself? We deal with each of these issues in turn.





## England has become less sympathetic towards the ‘demands’ of its Scottish neighbour

In Table 6.7 we show how people in England have responded when they have been asked exactly the same question about how Scotland should be governed as has been asked on a regular basis in Scotland itself. It suggests that in the early years of devolution at least, people in England were quite willing to accommodate Scotland’s wish to have its own parliament. Indeed, at between some 50 per cent and 60 per cent, until 2003 support for devolution was as high in England as it was in Scotland itself. However, since then support for Scottish devolution has tailed off somewhat and now stands at just 43 per cent, well below the figure – 61 per cent – found north of the border. This decline has been accompanied by *both* somewhat greater opposition to the idea of having a Scottish Parliament at all and by rather greater support for the idea that Scotland should leave the United Kingdom. Indeed, at 25 per cent, support in England for Scottish independence is now at least as high as it is in Scotland itself (23 per cent). England has, it seems, become rather less sympathetic towards the ‘demands’ of its Scottish neighbour.

**Table 6.7 Attitudes in England to how Scotland should be governed, 1997–2012**

|                        | 97+   | 99  | 00   | 01   | 02   | 03   | 07  | 11  | 12  |
|------------------------|-------|-----|------|------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|
|                        | %     | %   | %    | %    | %    | %    | %   | %   | %   |
| Independence           | 14    | 21  | 19   | 19   | 19   | 17   | 19  | 26  | 25  |
| Devolution             | 55    | 57  | 52   | 59   | 51   | 59   | 47  | 44  | 43  |
| No parliament          | 23    | 14  | 17   | 11   | 15   | 13   | 18  | 19  | 23  |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   | 2492* | 905 | 1956 | 2786 | 1948 | 1929 | 870 | 974 | 937 |
| <i>Unweighted base</i> | 3150  | 902 | 1928 | 2761 | 1924 | 1917 | 859 | 967 | 939 |

+Source: British Election Study

\*In 1997 the British Election Study contained an ethnic boost, which was then weighted down, hence the difference between the weighted and unweighted base

Base: British Social Attitudes respondents living in England

The source of England’s increased reluctance to accept devolution for Scotland seems, in part at least, to lie in growing discontent with some of the apparent anomalies thrown up by the asymmetric devolution settlement. As Table 6.8 shows, even in the early years of devolution nearly two-thirds of people in England agreed that Scottish MPs should no longer be able to vote on laws that only apply in England. That overall proportion is little changed, but whereas once most people simply agreed with the proposition rather than doing so “strongly”, now the proportion who “agree strongly” is only a few points lower than the proportion who “agree”. It would thus seem that the strength of feeling about the subject has intensified.[17]

**Table 6.8 Attitudes in England towards the West Lothian question, 2000–2012**

|  | 00   | 01   | 03   | 07  | 10  | 12  |
|--|------|------|------|-----|-----|-----|
| <b>Now that Scotland has its own parliament, Scottish MPs should no longer be allowed to vote in the House of Commons on laws that only affect England</b> | %    | %    | %    | %   | %   | %   |
| Agree strongly   | 18   | 19   | 22   | 25  | 31  | 29  |
| Agree  | 45   | 38   | 38   | 36  | 35  | 36  |
| Neither agree nor disagree   | 19   | 18   | 18   | 17  | 17  | 15  |
| Disagree   | 8    | 12   | 10   | 9   | 6   | 7   |
| Disagree strongly  | 1    | 2    | 1    | 1   | 1   | 1   |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   | 1721 | 2387 | 1548 | 752 | 794 | 806 |
| <i>Unweighted base</i>   | 1695 | 2341 | 1530 | 739 | 773 | 802 |

Base: British Social Attitudes respondents living in England

**44%**  
 in England feel Scotland gets more than its fair share of spending, double our 2000 reading

Even more striking is an apparent growth in discontent with Scotland’s share of public spending. As Table 6.9 shows, in the early years of devolution only around one in five people in England felt that Scotland secured “much more” or “a little more than its fair share” of public spending compared with other parts of the UK. By far the most common view was that it simply received its just deserts. However, in 2007 the proportion stating that Scotland receives more than its fair share rose to a third, while since 2008 it has consistently hovered around the 40 per cent mark. Still, it should be noted that around one in four or so have persistently said that they do not know whether Scotland receives its fair share or not, suggesting that the issue remains one of low salience for a significant proportion of England’s adult population.[18]

**Table 6.9 Attitudes in England towards Scotland’s share of public spending, 2000–2012**

|  | 00   | 01   | 02   | 03   | 07  | 08   | 09  | 10  | 11  | 12  |
|--|------|------|------|------|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| <b>Compared with other parts of the UK, Scotland’s share of government spending is ...</b> | %    | %    | %    | %    | %   | %    | %   | %   | %   | %   |
| ... much more than its fair share  | 8    | 9    | 9    | 9    | 16  | 21   | 18  | 21  | 22  | 21  |
| ... a little more than its fair share  | 13   | 15   | 15   | 13   | 16  | 20   | 22  | 17  | 22  | 23  |
| ... pretty much its fair share   | 42   | 44   | 44   | 45   | 38  | 33   | 30  | 29  | 30  | 30  |
| ... a little less than its fair share  | 10   | 8    | 8    | 8    | 6   | 3    | 4   | 3   | 3   | 4   |
| ... much less than its fair share  | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1    | 1   | *    | *   | 1   | *   | 1   |
| Don’t know   | 25   | 23   | 22   | 25   | 22  | 23   | 25  | 28  | 23  | 22  |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   | 1956 | 2786 | 2931 | 1929 | 870 | 1001 | 992 | 928 | 974 | 937 |
| <i>Unweighted base</i>   | 1928 | 2761 | 2897 | 1917 | 859 | 982  | 980 | 913 | 967 | 937 |

Base: British Social Attitudes respondents living in England

But if England has only begun to question Scotland’s position in the Union more recently, the same cannot be said of the constitutional status of Northern Ireland. For many years British Social Attitudes regularly gave its respondents the same clear choice as to how Northern Ireland should be governed – remaining part of the UK or reunifying with the rest of Ireland – that has also been presented regularly to people in Northern Ireland itself. The pattern of responses persistently suggested that the region is not necessarily regarded

as an integral part of the UK. In 1983 58 per cent of people in England backed Northern Ireland’s reunification with Ireland, a figure that then changed little from year to year, and remained as high as 53 per cent in 2003. In subsequent years support for unification did begin to fall somewhat, but at 41 per cent our most recent reading, taken in 2007, was still higher than the 31 per cent who felt that Northern Ireland should remain part of the UK. The political settlement in Northern Ireland, together with the conclusion of the civil strife, may have eventually helped to strengthen somewhat support for Northern Ireland’s continued membership of the UK among those living in the rest of the UK. Yet there seems little doubt that Scotland’s departure from the Union would give rise to more disappointment in England, if not necessarily dismay, than would any decision by Northern Ireland to take the same step.

Perhaps seeing devolution in action elsewhere, together with increased concern about the apparent anomalies that it has created, might have persuaded people in England that they should enjoy some form of devolution too. One important difference between the debate about devolution in England and that in the rest of the UK, however, is that there is disagreement about the form that it should take. Should it be devolution to the nation of England as a whole, just as it has been to the nations of Scotland and Wales, or should it instead be to the various regions of England, as would seem more appropriate if the aim is to bring decision-making closer to where people live? This disagreement is reflected in the set of possible answers that have been offered to respondents by a question on how England should be governed, asked regularly since 1999. We ask respondents:

*With all the changes going on in the way the different parts of Great Britain are run, which of the following do you think would be best for England ...*

- ... for England to be governed as it is now, with laws made by the UK parliament,*
- for each region of England to have its own assembly that runs services like health,[19]*
- or, for England as a whole to have its own new parliament with law-making powers?*

**Table 6.10 Constitutional preferences for England, in England, 1999–2012**

|  | 99          | 00          | 01          | 02          | 03          | 04          | 05          | 06         | 07         | 08          | 09         | 10         | 11         | 12         |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <b>Following is best for England ...</b> | %           | %           | %           | %           | %           | %           | %           | %          | %          | %           | %          | %          | %          | %          |
| ... UK parliament                        | 62          | 54          | 57          | 56          | 50          | 53          | 54          | 54         | 57         | 51          | 49         | 53         | 56         | 56         |
| ... regional assemblies                  | 15          | 18          | 23          | 20          | 26          | 21          | 20          | 18         | 14         | 15          | 15         | 13         | 12         | 15         |
| ... English parliament                   | 18          | 19          | 16          | 17          | 18          | 21          | 18          | 21         | 17         | 26          | 29         | 23         | 25         | 22         |
| <i>Weighted base</i>                     | <i>2722</i> | <i>1957</i> | <i>2786</i> | <i>2931</i> | <i>3742</i> | <i>2721</i> | <i>1815</i> | <i>936</i> | <i>870</i> | <i>1001</i> | <i>992</i> | <i>928</i> | <i>974</i> | <i>937</i> |
| <i>Unweighted base</i>                   | <i>2718</i> | <i>1928</i> | <i>2761</i> | <i>2897</i> | <i>3709</i> | <i>2684</i> | <i>1794</i> | <i>928</i> | <i>859</i> | <i>982</i>  | <i>980</i> | <i>913</i> | <i>967</i> | <i>939</i> |

*Base: British Social Attitudes respondents living in England*

**56%**  
 in England want England's  
 laws made by the UK  
 Parliament, the same as  
 10 years earlier

As Table 6.10 shows, for the most part public opinion in England has been both remarkably stable and relatively uninterested in either form of devolution. Typically just over half have said that England's laws should continue to be made by the UK Parliament, and there is no consistent evidence of any long-term decline in support for that option. At 56 per cent the most recent reading is exactly the same as it was 10 years earlier. Equally at 37 per cent, the proportion that now back some form of devolution is also exactly the same as it was in 2002, and is well in line with the average reading of 38 per cent obtained throughout the period since 1999. What has changed is the relative popularity of the two possible forms of devolution. Between 2000 and 2003 regional assemblies emerged as the more popular option as the then UK Labour government tried to introduce such assemblies in the North of England – until the idea of such an assembly for the North East was defeated in a referendum held in 2004 (Sandford, 2009). Since then having an English parliament has been the rather more popular option, though not overwhelmingly so.

So it seems that, despite the growth of some discontent about the deal that Scotland is getting out of the Union, a majority of people in England – though not much more than that – remain happy to be ruled by UK-wide institutions rather than their own. To that extent there is apparently little pressure to disassemble the core of the centralised British state as opposed to its periphery. Still we should remember that while people in England might still be willing to be governed by Westminster they are also doubtful whether MPs from outside of England should have a say in their affairs. England's reaction to asymmetric devolution seems to have been to call for Westminster to adapt its procedures accordingly rather than to demand the creation of another set of distinctive political institutions. As yet, however, the UK Parliament has still to take up any of the many suggestions made as to how such adaptation should happen (Hazell, 2006; Conservative Democracy Task Force, 2008; McKay Commission, 2013).

### Summary

As in the case of identity, there is no consistent evidence that devolution has had an impact on people's constitutional preferences in one direction or the other. In some respects the Union now looks stronger: in Scotland support for independence has declined somewhat, while Northern Ireland has seen a drop in the proportion favouring reunification with the rest of Ireland. But other changes would appear to have weakened the UK: over the longer term in Northern Ireland there has been a drop in explicit support for remaining in the UK, while England has become less happy about some of the apparent anomalies thrown up by the devolution settlement granted to Scotland. It seems that while devolution may have helped reduce some sources of tension in the UK it has also exacerbated others.

### Identity and preference

Still, any evaluation of the impact of devolution upon public support for the UK needs to consider not only what changes may have occurred in how many favour the continuation of the UK and how many its dissolution, but also among whom. In particular, is there any evidence that the issue has become more divisive, with those who feel strongly Scottish, Irish or even English becoming less keen on keeping the UK together, while perhaps at the same time those who feel mainly British becoming more keen? Such an outcome would suggest the potential for further disputation about the future of the UK rather than the emergence of a consensus about how the Union should be managed. It is to this possibility that we now turn.



**Only around a half of those who say they are “Scottish not British” wish to leave the UK**

### Scotland

We begin by examining whether the relationship between national identity (as measured by the Moreno question) and constitutional preference has changed in Scotland. Table 6.11 shows that the more Scottish and the less British someone feels, the more likely they are to favour leaving the UK. However, the correspondence between identity and preference is far from perfect. True, few who have a strong sense of British identity wish to leave the UK. But only around half of those who deny they are British support independence, while the equivalent figure among those whose feelings of British identity are less strong than their sense of Scottish identity is only around a quarter.

**Table 6.11 Support for independence, by Moreno national identity, in Scotland, 1999–2012<sup>[20]</sup>**

| % prefer independence        | 1999 | 2003 | 2005 | 2007 | 2011 | 2012 |
|------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Scottish not British         | 44   | 47   | 51   | 45   | 53   | 46   |
| More Scottish than British   | 26   | 22   | 34   | 25   | 33   | 23   |
| Equally Scottish and British | 10   | 8    | 20   | 6    | 12   | 11   |
| More British than Scottish   | 4    | 5    | 15   | 7    | 11   | 12   |
| British not Scottish         | 8    | 10   | 22   | 10   | 9    | 6    |

Source: *Scottish Social Attitudes*

Still, it seems that identity matters no more or less now to how people in Scotland would like to be governed than it did when the Scottish Parliament was first created. In almost every case the proportions backing independence to be found in each row of Table 6.11 in 2012 are almost the same as they were in 1999 (though small bases mean that the percentages in the last two rows of the table need to be treated with caution). Although support for leaving the UK may have dropped a little overall since the advent of devolution, there is no sign that those with a strong sense of Scottish identity have particularly come to be more accepting of Scotland’s continued membership of the Union.

### Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, in contrast, there have been some changes in the link between national identity and constitutional preference. This is evident first of all in the link between identity and support for remaining in the UK (not shown). As we might have anticipated from our earlier discussion of Table 6.6, the initial decline in support for remaining in the UK that was evident before 1998 occurred among those with a British identity, while the decline that occurred following the signing of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement was evident primarily among those who feel Irish. At the same time the *higher* level of support registered since changes were made to the question wording in 2007 has also been evident among those stating they are Irish. The overall effect of these various movements has been to leave the link between identity and wishing to remain part of the UK looking a little weaker now than it did in 1989.

But what of explicit support for leaving the UK? As Table 6.12 shows, the proportion of those with an Irish identity that backed that view dropped a little (from 68 per cent to 61 per cent) in the immediate wake of the change in wording in the constitutional preferences question in 2007. Subsequently there has been a further much more marked decline in support for leaving the UK among those who claim an Irish identity, such that less than half of those with that outlook

**46%**  
of those who identify as Irish want to leave the UK, down from 61% in 2007

now take that view. There has also been a drop among those who say they are “Northern Irish”, one that can only be partially accounted for by the fact that, as we saw earlier, more Protestants now also claim that identity. Once again, it seems that we have evidence that the debate about the region’s constitutional future has become somewhat less polarised between those with a different sense of national identity.

**Table 6.12 Support for leaving the UK, by national identity, in Northern Ireland, 1989–2012<sup>[21]</sup>**

| % support reunify with Ireland/<br>support independent state | British | Irish | Northern Irish |
|--|---------|-------|----------------|
| 1989   | 4       | 65    | 26             |
| 1993   | 3       | 64    | 24             |
| 1996   | 4       | 58    | 28             |
| 1998   | 5       | 67    | 27             |
| 2000   | 8       | 67    | 30             |
| 2003   | 8       | 68    | 33             |
| 2006   | 8       | 68    | 34             |
| 2007*  | 8       | 61    | 24             |
| 2008*  | 7       | 57    | 16             |
| 2009*  | 4       | 56    | 13             |
| 2010*  | 5       | 46    | 17             |
| 2012*  | 5       | 46    | 15             |

Source: 1989, 1993, 1996: Northern Ireland Social Attitudes; 1998–2012: Northern Ireland Life and Times \*Change in question text. From 2007 respondents were offered remain part of the UK with direct rule and “remain part of the United Kingdom with devolved government”. Figures represent the proportion choosing either option

## England

But what of England, where we perhaps found the strongest evidence that there has been something of an adverse reaction to devolution? Perhaps the advent of devolution elsewhere has offended the sympathies of those with a strong sense of English identity in particular? Far from being a source of confusion, perhaps national identity has come to shape people’s views in a way that formerly was not the case? This view has certainly been argued by Wyn Jones et al. (2012; 2013).

**Table 6.13 Support in England for Scottish independence, by Moreno national identity, 1999–2012<sup>[22]</sup>**

| % support Scottish independence | 1999 | 2007 | 2012 |
|---------------------------------|------|------|------|
| English not British             | 29   | 27   | 29   |
| More English than British       | 20   | 27   | 41   |
| Equally English and British     | 19   | 13   | 20   |
| More British than English       | 22   | 16   | 21   |
| British not English             | 16   | 12   | 20   |

Base: British Social Attitudes respondents living in England

There is little evidence that this is what has happened, at least so far as attitudes towards Scotland’s continued membership of the UK is concerned (Table 6.13). Those who say they are English and not British are only some 10

or so percentage points more likely than those who claim to be British and not English to feel that Scotland should leave the UK – and this gap is much the same now as it was in 1999. There is not much evidence here to support the claim that it is those with a strong sense of English identity in particular who have become more inclined to believe that Scotland should leave the Union.

Much the same is true of the increased concern about Scotland's share of public spending (Table 6.14). True, in 2000 there was very little evidence at all that those with a strong sense of English identity were any more likely than those who felt primarily British to be critical of Scotland's share of public spending, whereas by 2003 they clearly were. But there is no sign that concern has subsequently increased more markedly among those who feel wholly or mostly English. Among those who say they are English and not British the proportion who say that Scotland secures more than its fair share of public spending is 18 percentage points higher now than it was in 2003, a little less than the equivalent figure, 21 points, among those who claim to be British and not English.

**Table 6.14 Attitudes in England towards Scotland's share of public spending, by Moreno national identity, 2000–2012<sup>[23]</sup>**

| % say Scotland gets more than fair share of spending | 2000 | 2003 | 2007 | 2012 |
|--|------|------|------|------|
| English not British                                  | 27   | 34   | 44   | 52   |
| More English than British                            | 25   | 27   | 43   | 62   |
| Equally English and British                          | 17   | 17   | 27   | 41   |
| More British than English                            | 25   | 19   | 27   | 46   |
| British not English                                  | 23   | 18   | 26   | 39   |

*Base: British Social Attitudes respondents living in England*

Finally, in Table 6.15 we look at the relationship between national identity and how people think England itself should be governed. As we might expect those who say they are English and not British tend to be most in favour of having an English Parliament and are somewhat less inclined to favour continued rule by the UK parliament. These relationships are, however, remarkably weak; those for example who say they are English and not British are only 18 percentage points more likely to back an English parliament than are those who say they are British and not English (though small bases in 2012 for the groups who say they are predominantly or wholly British mean those percentages need to be treated with caution). True, it might appear that support for the idea grew most after 1999 among those who regard themselves as exclusively or primarily English – the 11 point increase in support among that group is higher than in any other – but once we undertake statistical testing that takes into consideration the relatively small size of some of these groups, we find that the difference is not statistically significant.<sup>[24]</sup> There is remarkably little evidence in our data to support claims that the advent of devolution has so far served to turn English identity into a politically important force.<sup>[25]</sup>



**There is little evidence that devolution has turned English identity into a politically important force**

**Table 6.15 Constitutional preferences for England, in England, by Moreno national identity, 1999, 2007 and 2012<sup>[26]</sup>**

|   | English<br>not British | More<br>English<br>than British | Equally<br>English<br>and British | More<br>British<br>than English | British<br>not English |
|---|------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>% say England should be governed as it is now, with laws made by the UK Parliament</b> |                        |                                 |                                   |                                 |                        |
| 1999  | 59                     | 63                              | 61                                | 71                              | 65                     |
| 2007  | 54                     | 52                              | 61                                | 66                              | 61                     |
| 2012  | 49                     | 54                              | 57                                | 64                              | 59                     |
| <b>% say England as whole to have its own new parliament with law-making powers</b>       |                        |                                 |                                   |                                 |                        |
| 1999  | 23                     | 19                              | 18                                | 11                              | 17                     |
| 2007  | 28                     | 23                              | 14                                | 20                              | 9                      |
| 2012  | 34                     | 26                              | 20                                | 16                              | 16                     |

Base: British Social Attitudes respondents living in England

## Conclusions

As we noted at the beginning of this chapter, one might imagine from looking at a timeline of political developments that the advent of devolution has been followed by growing discontent with the Union in Scotland, some accommodation with it in Northern Ireland, and little reaction at all in England. Yet once we look at the long-term trends in identity and constitutional preferences, only one of those statements appears to be true.

There are some signs that in Northern Ireland a devolution settlement that aimed to recognise the aspirations and identities of both communities in a deeply divided society has been followed by some reduction in the degree to which its constitutional debate is polarised between being in the UK or becoming part of a united Ireland. Rather more Protestants now seemingly prefer to call themselves Northern Irish rather than British compared with 20 years ago. This could well be an implicit acknowledgement on their part that they are Irish as well as British, or at least an indication of a reluctance to have to choose between them. Meanwhile, members of the Catholic community and people who regard themselves as Irish now seem less inclined to seek unification with the rest of Ireland and thus appear more willing to accept Northern Ireland's position as part of the UK. That said, the majority outlooks of the two communities are still very different from each other, and as the re-emergence of a rather more polarised pattern of identity in 2012 underlined, the potential for serious dispute over both substance and symbols (as evidenced by the 'flags dispute' of December 2012) remains.

However, the decision to hold a referendum on independence in Scotland does not seem to be the result of any increased demand north of the border to leave the Union. If anything, support for independence has appeared somewhat weaker since the SNP first came to power in 2007, a consequence perhaps of that party's perceived ability to defend Scotland's interests within the framework of the Union. British identity may play second fiddle to their Scottish identity in



the minds of many living north of the border, but no more so now than when the Scottish Parliament was first created in 1999. Moreover, while in Scotland those with a relatively weak British identity are more inclined than those with a strong British identity to support independence, they are no more likely to do so now than when devolution took effect. Indeed, such a disposition alone does not appear to be sufficient to persuade people to back independence.

Yet that does not mean that Scotland is entirely happy with its existing constitutional status. There is an appetite for the Parliament in Edinburgh to have more responsibility for taxation and welfare benefits. Any moves in that direction will, however, also have to be acceptable to England, which instead of playing the apparent role of uninterested bystander in the devolution process, has shown some signs of growing discontent with the demands of its neighbour to the north. There appears to be less willingness to accept the idea that Scotland should have its own relatively autonomous institutions within the framework of the Union while at the same time enjoying a seemingly generous financial settlement and MPs that have a say in England's affairs at Westminster. True, this discontent may have little to do with some renewed or reawakened sense of English identity that seeks parity for England in the form of its own distinctively English political institutions, let alone widespread questioning of Scotland's right to be part of the Union on a scale that once at least was true of Northern Ireland. Rather, it seems that people in England have simply become more inclined to feel that the ways of Westminster and Whitehall should be adjusted so that England's interests are treated fairly given the very different constitutional structure the UK has now as compared with 30 years ago. Devolution may not have undermined public support for the Union, but it has left some continuing challenges to those with responsibility for managing relations between its component parts.

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### Notes

1. Entitled the Northern Ireland Executive.
2. Wales is not included because surveys using a methodology similar to that deployed by those analysed here have not been conducted there since 2007. For information on the surveys that have been conducted since then and the trends in respect of national identity and constitutional preference they suggest have occurred see Curtice (2013), and Wyn Jones and Scully (2012).
3. There is one small difference between the Northern Ireland Life and Times survey and the two social attitudes surveys so far as their reporting conventions are concerned. In the case of British Social Attitudes and Scottish Social Attitudes the standard practice is to include in the denominators on which percentages are based those who refused to answer a question or are otherwise recorded as not having answered a question. In the case of the Northern Ireland Life and Times survey, however, they are usually excluded. To avoid the risk of us quoting in this chapter figures for any of these surveys that might be slightly different from those given elsewhere we have followed as appropriate each survey's usual practice.

4. Though we should note that the fieldwork for the 2012 survey, when there was a particularly marked drop to 53 per cent, was undertaken during and in the weeks immediately following the 2012 London Olympics and that we cannot reject the possibility that that event may have helped to foster a short-term increase in feelings of British identity.
5. It should also be noted that as long ago as 1996, a System Three poll reported that 39 per cent said that they were Scottish not British, many more than did so in our 1992 and 1997 surveys. However this System Three poll was conducted using a rather different methodological approach and thus we cannot be sure that the difference represents a methodological artefact rather than evidence that the incidence of an exclusive Scottish identity had at some point been just as high before the advent of the Scottish Parliament as it has proven to be subsequently (Moreno, 2006).
6. On the events in 2012 that might help account for the lower level of Northern Irish identity in that year see Note 8.
7. Bases for Table 6.2 are as follows:

|      | Protestant           |                        | Catholic             |                        |
|------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
|      | <i>Weighted base</i> | <i>Unweighted base</i> | <i>Weighted base</i> | <i>Unweighted base</i> |
| 1989 | 438                  | 454                    | 310                  | 284                    |
| 1994 | 811                  | 834                    | 546                  | 516                    |
| 1998 | 915                  | 947                    | 678                  | 631                    |
| 2002 | 858                  | 891                    | 738                  | 701                    |
| 2005 | 614                  | 631                    | 442                  | 422                    |
| 2008 | 608                  | 612                    | 441                  | 432                    |
| 2010 | 581                  | 575                    | 441                  | 436                    |
| 2012 | 489                  | 496                    | 510                  | 490                    |

8. Belfast City Council voted in December 2012 to fly the Union flag only on a limited number of special days rather than, as hitherto, every day. The decision occasioned some rioting. There was also some serious rioting in Belfast and elsewhere the previous summer in the wake of that season's Orange Order parades (Nolan, 2013: 161). The year 2012 also saw the centennial commemoration of the events leading up to the signing of the Ulster Covenant in opposition to Home Rule.
9. Wyn Jones et al. (2012) claimed on the basis of an internet 'Future of England' survey conducted by YouGov in July/August 2011 that there had been a marked increase in English as opposed to British identity. They found that 40 per cent said they were exclusively or predominantly English (compared with 33 per cent on the 2009 British Social Attitudes survey). However, a subsequent YouGov poll conducted for Channel 4 News in January 2012 found only 33 per cent saying they were exclusively or predominantly English while a second Future of England survey in November 2011 put the figure at 35 per cent (Wyn Jones et al., 2013). Even leaving aside the many methodological differences between the two exercises, it would appear that Wyn Jones et al.'s relatively high 2011 figure could well have been the result of no more than sampling variation.
10. It should be noted that in 2012 the English version of the Moreno question was not administered to a small number of respondents who had been born in Scotland or Wales (N=76). However, given their place of birth they might reasonably be expected to be more likely to claim to be exclusively or predominantly British rather than exclusively or predominantly English. Their exclusion thus should not have diminished the proportion saying they are predominantly or wholly English.

## 11. We ask:

*On the whole, do you think that England's economy benefits more from having Scotland in the UK, or that Scotland's economy benefits more from being part of the UK, or is it about equal?*

*England benefits more*  
*Scotland benefits more*  
*Equal*

## 12. We ask:

*Would you say that compared with other parts of the United Kingdom, Scotland gets **pretty much** its fair share of government spending, **more** than its fair share, or **less** than its fair share of government spending?*

*Please choose your answer from this card.*

*Much more than its fair share of government spending*  
*A little more than its fair share of government spending*  
*Pretty much its fair share of government spending*  
*A little less than its fair share of government spending*  
*Much less than its fair share of government spending*

## 13. Bases for Table 6.4 are as follows:

|      | <i>Weighted base</i> | <i>Unweighted base</i> |
|------|----------------------|------------------------|
| 2007 | 1508                 | 1508                   |
| 2009 | 1482                 | 1482                   |
| 2010 | 1495                 | 1495                   |
| 2012 | 1229                 | 1229                   |

14. In 1991 talks with the parties (other than Sinn Fein) were instigated by the then Northern Ireland Secretary of State, Peter Brooke. Sinn Féin were excluded from these talks, but at the same time Brooke authorised secret contact be made with the Irish Republican Army. Meanwhile the UK government appeared to recognise nationalist sentiment by declaring that the Britain had “no selfish strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland”, a declaration that helped pave the way for talks between John Hume of the Social Democratic and Labour Party and Gerry Adams of Sinn Fein that in turn were eventually able to help pave the way towards the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement (Nolan, 2012: 20).

## 15. The bases for Table 6.6 are as follows:

|      | <i>Weighted base</i> |                 |                    | <i>Unweighted base</i> |                 |                    |
|------|----------------------|-----------------|--------------------|------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
|      | <b>Protestant</b>    | <b>Catholic</b> | <b>No religion</b> | <b>Protestant</b>      | <b>Catholic</b> | <b>No religion</b> |
| 1989 | 435                  | 308             | 102                | 455                    | 280             | 110                |
| 1993 | 487                  | 263             | 79                 | 492                    | 251             | 84                 |
| 1996 | 383                  | 287             | 108                | 397                    | 278             | 99                 |
| 1998 | 917                  | 677             | 162                | 947                    | 631             | 179                |
| 2000 | 1010                 | 573             | 189                | 1037                   | 547             | 189                |
| 2003 | 943                  | 690             | 139                | 974                    | 654             | 141                |
| 2006 | 572                  | 495             | 160                | 580                    | 475             | 171                |
| 2007 | 574                  | 475             | 112                | 587                    | 450             | 120                |
| 2008 | 606                  | 441             | 156                | 612                    | 432             | 160                |
| 2009 | 543                  | 520             | 144                | 545                    | 500             | 160                |
| 2010 | 577                  | 438             | 153                | 572                    | 432             | 162                |
| 2012 | 485                  | 508             | 171                | 493                    | 486             | 180                |

16. We should also note that there has since 2007 been a marked decline among Catholics in the level of support for reunification. In that year no less than 47 per cent backed that view, but now only 32 per cent do so. A similar decline, from 21 per cent to eight per cent, has occurred among those of no religion. One possible explanation is that the prospect has come to look less attractive, for the time being at least, as a result of the particularly adverse consequences that the banking crisis of 2008 visited upon the Irish Republic. Recent demands from Sinn Fein that another poll be held on Northern Ireland's constitutional status may also have encouraged people to consider the possible practical consequences of reunification.
17. We do not, however, find intensification on the scale claimed by Wyn Jones et al. (2012; 2013) who reported the results of two Future of England internet surveys that asked, in 2011 and 2012, the same question about the voting rights of Scottish MPs as that asked by British Social Attitudes and then compared these surveys' findings with those obtained by British Social Attitudes up to and including 2007. The Future of England surveys reported that in 2011 no less than 53 per cent *strongly* agreed that Scottish MPs should not vote on English laws, and in 2012 that as many as 55 per cent did so, far higher figures than obtained by British Social Attitudes either before or since 2007. The figure obtained by the 2011 survey might have been thought to have been occasioned by the fact it failed to offer respondents a "neither agree nor disagree" option, but this option was included on the 2012 survey and an even higher figure obtained. However, in both years the remaining response options on the Future of England survey read, "Strongly agree" and "Tend to agree" together with "Strongly disagree" and "Tend to disagree", whereas the options on British Social Attitudes are, "Agree strongly" and "Agree" together with "Disagree strongly" and "Disagree". We would suggest that respondents are more likely to say that they "Agree strongly" when the alternative is to say "Tend to agree" rather than "Agree", and that consequently there must be severe doubt about the merits of drawing substantive conclusions from any comparison of the findings of the two series. We would also note that those who evince a relatively high level of interest in politics are more likely to agree strongly with the proposition that Scottish MPs should not vote on English laws, and that while just 36 per cent of the 2012 British Social Attitudes sample in England said that they had "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of interest in politics, as many as 67 per cent of the 2012 Future of England sample said they were "very" or "fairly interested". In short part of the reasons for the difference between the two sets of findings may well be that the internet survey contained more people with a high level of interest in politics.
18. The Future of England surveys (Wyn Jones et al., 2012; 2013) also record relatively high levels of don't know responses on this issue, 31 per cent in 2011 and 26 per cent in 2012. However, they also report rather higher proportions saying that Scotland gets more than its fair share, 45 per cent in 2011 and 52 per cent in 2012, suggesting that attitudes have become yet more critical since 2007. However, we should note that the question is administered somewhat differently on the Future of England survey than on British Social Attitudes; respondents are simply invited to say whether Scotland gets pretty much its fair share, more than its fair share or less than its fair share whereas on British Social Attitudes respondents are presented with a showcard that lists all five options shown in Table 6.9. In addition, on the Future of England surveys the question is asked immediately after a question that asks respondents whether England gets its fair share of public spending and this may have helped cue some respondents into saying in the following question that Scotland gets less than its fair share.
19. In 2004–2006 the second option read "that makes decisions about the region's economy, planning and housing". The 2003 survey carried both versions of this option and demonstrated that the difference of wording did not make a material difference to the pattern of response. The figures quoted for 2003 are those for the two versions combined.

20. Bases for Table 6.11 are as follows:

|                              |                   | 1999 | 2003 | 2005 | 2007 | 2011 | 2012 |
|------------------------------|-------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Scottish not British         | <i>Weighted</i>   | 479  | 466  | 495  | 399  | 351  | 282  |
|                              | <i>Unweighted</i> | 479  | 486  | 496  | 393  | 346  | 269  |
| More Scottish than British   | <i>Weighted</i>   | 522  | 506  | 498  | 446  | 391  | 343  |
|                              | <i>Unweighted</i> | 507  | 490  | 490  | 452  | 381  | 341  |
| Equally Scottish and British | <i>Weighted</i>   | 322  | 331  | 333  | 415  | 270  | 360  |
|                              | <i>Unweighted</i> | 334  | 338  | 342  | 410  | 278  | 374  |
| More British than Scottish   | <i>Weighted</i>   | 46   | 64   | 67   | 69   | 57   | 59   |
|                              | <i>Unweighted</i> | 50   | 65   | 72   | 76   | 62   | 68   |
| British not Scottish         | <i>Weighted</i>   | 53   | 63   | 73   | 83   | 56   | 49   |
|                              | <i>Unweighted</i> | 53   | 62   | 78   | 94   | 68   | 50   |

21. Bases for Table 6.12 are as follows:

|      | <i>Weighted base</i> |              |                       | <i>Unweighted base</i> |              |                       |
|------|----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
|      | <b>British</b>       | <b>Irish</b> | <b>Northern Irish</b> | <b>British</b>         | <b>Irish</b> | <b>Northern Irish</b> |
| 1989 | 384                  | 215          | 174                   | 399                    | 197          | 171                   |
| 1993 | 401                  | 183          | 145                   | 407                    | 183          | 143                   |
| 1996 | 308                  | 215          | 196                   | 311                    | 223          | 180                   |
| 1998 | 743                  | 493          | 405                   | 782                    | 461          | 397                   |
| 2000 | 883                  | 395          | 356                   | 911                    | 379          | 338                   |
| 2003 | 742                  | 492          | 423                   | 763                    | 473          | 407                   |
| 2006 | 473                  | 350          | 316                   | 496                    | 344          | 304                   |
| 2007 | 439                  | 339          | 303                   | 458                    | 326          | 300                   |
| 2008 | 450                  | 316          | 345                   | 463                    | 320          | 332                   |
| 2009 | 434                  | 393          | 321                   | 433                    | 383          | 330                   |
| 2010 | 433                  | 306          | 344                   | 436                    | 308          | 332                   |
| 2012 | 457                  | 375          | 261                   | 473                    | 363          | 258                   |

22. Bases for Table 6.13 are as follows:

|                        | <b>English not British</b> | <b>More English than British</b> | <b>Equally English and British</b> | <b>More British than English</b> | <b>British not English</b> |
|------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1999                   |                            |                                  |                                    |                                  |                            |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   | 153                        | 133                              | 334                                | 103                              | 123                        |
| <i>Unweighted base</i> | 157                        | 141                              | 333                                | 101                              | 117                        |
| 2007                   |                            |                                  |                                    |                                  |                            |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   | 168                        | 124                              | 265                                | 118                              | 103                        |
| <i>Unweighted base</i> | 165                        | 129                              | 267                                | 116                              | 102                        |
| 2012                   |                            |                                  |                                    |                                  |                            |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   | 149                        | 117                              | 395                                | 66                               | 103                        |
| <i>Unweighted base</i> | 170                        | 118                              | 395                                | 65                               | 97                         |

23. Bases for Table 6.14 are as follows:

|                        | <b>English not<br/>British</b> | <b>More English<br/>than British</b> | <b>Equally English<br/>and British</b> | <b>More British<br/>than English</b> | <b>British not<br/>English</b> |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>2000</b>            |                                |                                      |  |                                      |                                |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   | 357                            | 264                                  | 657                                    | 268                                  | 230                            |
| <i>Unweighted base</i> | 357                            | 261                                  | 646                                    | 269                                  | 230                            |
| <b>2003</b>            |                                |                                      |  |                                      |                                |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   | 322                            | 369                                  | 598                                    | 258                                  | 201                            |
| <i>Unweighted base</i> | 325                            | 373                                  | 596                                    | 256                                  | 192                            |
| <b>2007</b>            |                                |                                      |  |                                      |                                |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   | 167                            | 125                                  | 265                                    | 117                                  | 103                            |
| <i>Unweighted base</i> | 165                            | 129                                  | 267                                    | 116                                  | 102                            |
| <b>2012</b>            |                                |                                      |  |                                      |                                |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   | 149                            | 117                                  | 394                                    | 67                                   | 104                            |
| <i>Unweighted base</i> | 170                            | 118                                  | 395                                    | 65                                   | 97                             |

24. If we undertake a loglinear analysis of the data in Table 6.15, we find that the data are fitted adequately at the 5% level of probability without fitting a term for the interaction between national identity, constitutional preference and year. The residual chi-square for such a model is 13.0, which, with eight degrees of freedom, has a p value of 0.11.

25. Note that in their attempt to argue the contrary position neither Wyn Jones et al. (2012) nor Wyn Jones et al. (2013) demonstrates that the link between Moreno national identity and attitudes towards devolution is stronger now than previously. They merely demonstrate that there is a link between national identity and such attitudes now, a point that is not in dispute. What has to be demonstrated for their argument to be sustained is that the link has grown stronger.

26. Bases for Table 6.15 are as follows:

|                        | <b>English not<br/>British</b> | <b>More English<br/>than British</b> | <b>Equally English<br/>and British</b> | <b>More British<br/>than English</b> | <b>British not<br/>English</b> |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>1999</b>            |                                |                                      |  |                                      |                                |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   | 469                            | 393                                  | 1004                                   | 301                                  | 368                            |
| <i>Unweighted base</i> | 491                            | 389                                  | 999                                    | 298                                  | 354                            |
| <b>2007</b>            |                                |                                      |  |                                      |                                |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   | 169                            | 124                                  | 265                                    | 117                                  | 103                            |
| <i>Unweighted base</i> | 165                            | 129                                  | 267                                    | 116                                  | 102                            |
| <b>2012</b>            |                                |                                      |  |                                      |                                |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   | 148                            | 116                                  | 395                                    | 67                                   | 104                            |
| <i>Unweighted base</i> | 170                            | 118                                  | 395                                    | 65                                   | 97                             |

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## Appendix

The data on which Figure 6.1 is based is shown below.

**Table A.1 Trends in 'forced choice' national identity, in Scotland, 1979–2012**

|                        | <b>79</b> | <b>92</b> | <b>97</b> | <b>99</b> | <b>00</b> | <b>01</b> | <b>02</b> | <b>03</b> |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                        | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         |
| Scottish               | 57        | 72        | 72        | 77        | 80        | 77        | 75        | 72        |
| British                | 39        | 25        | 20        | 17        | 13        | 16        | 18        | 20        |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   | *         | *         | 882       | 1482      | 1663      | 1605      | 1665      | 1508      |
| <i>Unweighted base</i> | 662       | 957       | 882       | 1482      | 1663      | 1605      | 1665      | 1508      |
|                        | <b>04</b> | <b>05</b> | <b>06</b> | <b>07</b> | <b>09</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>11</b> | <b>12</b> |
|                        | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         |
| Scottish               | 75        | 79        | 78        | 72        | 73        | 73        | 75        | 69        |
| British                | 19        | 14        | 14        | 19        | 15        | 19        | 15        | 20        |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   | 1637      | 1549      | 1594      | 1508      | 1482      | 1495      | 1196      | 1229      |
| <i>Unweighted base</i> | 1637      | 1549      | 1594      | 1508      | 1482      | 1495      | 1196      | 1229      |

Source: 1974–1997: Scottish Election Study; 1999–2012: Scottish Social Attitudes

\*There is no weighting variable in this dataset

The data on which Figure 6.2 is based is shown below.

**Table A.2 Trends in 'forced choice' national identity, in Northern Ireland, 1989–2012**

|                        | <b>89</b> | <b>91</b> | <b>93</b> | <b>94</b> | <b>95</b> | <b>96</b> | <b>98</b> | <b>99</b> | <b>00</b> | <b>01</b> |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                        | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         |
| British                | 45        | 44        | 48        | 46        | 43        | 39        | 41        | 45        | 49        | 42        |
| Irish                  | 25        | 24        | 22        | 26        | 28        | 28        | 27        | 29        | 22        | 27        |
| Northern Irish         | 20        | 19        | 17        | 20        | 21        | 25        | 23        | 19        | 20        | 23        |
| Ulster                 | 7         | 11        | 10        | 6         | 8         | 7         | 6         | 4         | 5         | 5         |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   | 862       | 898       | 841       | 1513      | 1510      | 784       | 1799      | 2212      | 1799      | 1800      |
| <i>Unweighted base</i> | 863       | 895       | 840       | 1514      | 1509      | 784       | 1800      | 2200      | 1800      | 1800      |
|                        | <b>02</b> | <b>03</b> | <b>04</b> | <b>05</b> | <b>06</b> | <b>07</b> | <b>08</b> | <b>09</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>12</b> |
|                        | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         |
| British                | 45        | 41        | 48        | 39        | 39        | 38        | 37        | 35        | 37        | 39        |
| Irish                  | 28        | 27        | 27        | 28        | 28        | 29        | 26        | 32        | 26        | 32        |
| Northern Irish         | 19        | 23        | 21        | 27        | 26        | 26        | 29        | 27        | 29        | 22        |
| Ulster                 | 4         | 4         | 3         | 3         | 4         | 3         | 4         | 2         | 3         | 1         |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   | 1800      | 1801      | 1800      | 1200      | 1230      | 1178      | 1215      | 1228      | 1199      | 1199      |
| <i>Unweighted base</i> | 1800      | 1800      | 1800      | 1200      | 1230      | 1179      | 1214      | 1228      | 1201      | 1197      |

Source: 1989–1996: Northern Ireland Social Attitudes; 1998–2012: Northern Ireland Life and Times

The data on which Figure 6.3 is based is shown below.

**Table A.3 Trends in 'forced choice' national identity, in England, 1992–2012**

|                        | <b>92</b> | <b>96</b> | <b>97</b> | <b>98</b> | <b>99</b> | <b>00</b> | <b>01</b> | <b>02</b> | <b>03</b> |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                        | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         |
| English                | 31        | 34        | 33        | 37        | 44        | 41        | 43        | 37        | 38        |
| British                | 63        | 58        | 55        | 51        | 44        | 47        | 44        | 51        | 48        |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   | 2442      | 992       | 2492*     | 2704      | 2722      | 2925      | 2786      | 2786      | 3742      |
| <i>Unweighted base</i> | 2428      | 1019      | 3150      | 2695      | 2718      | 2887      | 2761      | 2897      | 3709      |
|                        | <b>04</b> | <b>05</b> | <b>06</b> | <b>07</b> | <b>08</b> | <b>09</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>11</b> | <b>12</b> |
|                        | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         |
| English                | 38        | 40        | 47        | 39        | 41        | 41        | 34        | 42        | 43        |
| British                | 51        | 48        | 39        | 47        | 45        | 46        | 52        | 43        | 43        |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   | 2721      | 3674      | 3695      | 3553      | 3865      | 2948      | 2843      | 2856      | 2800      |
| <i>Unweighted base</i> | 2684      | 3643      | 3666      | 3517      | 3880      | 2917      | 2795      | 2859      | 2800      |

Source: 1992 and 1997: British Election Studies; 1996, 1998–2009: British Social Attitudes (respondents living in England only)

\*In 1997 the British Election Study contained an ethnic boost, which was then weighted down, hence the difference between the weighted and unweighted base

The data on which Figure 6.4 is based is shown below.

**Table A.4 Constitutional preferences, in Scotland, 1997–2012**

|                        | <b>May 97</b> | <b>Sept 97</b> | <b>99</b> | <b>00</b> | <b>01</b> | <b>02</b> | <b>03</b> | <b>04</b> |
|------------------------|---------------|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                        | %             | %              | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         |
| Independence           | 26            | 37             | 27        | 30        | 27        | 30        | 26        | 32        |
| Devolution             | 51            | 41             | 59        | 55        | 59        | 52        | 56        | 45        |
| No parliament          | 17            | 17             | 10        | 12        | 9         | 13        | 13        | 17        |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   | 882           | 676            | 1482      | 1663      | 1605      | 1665      | 1508      | 1637      |
| <i>Unweighted base</i> | 882           | 676            | 1482      | 1663      | 1605      | 1665      | 1508      | 1637      |
|                        |               | <b>05</b>      | <b>06</b> | <b>07</b> | <b>09</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>11</b> | <b>12</b> |
|                        |               | %              | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         | %         |
| Independence           |               | 35             | 30        | 24        | 28        | 23        | 32        | 23        |
| Devolution             |               | 44             | 54        | 62        | 56        | 61        | 58        | 61        |
| No parliament          |               | 14             | 9         | 9         | 8         | 10        | 6         | 11        |
| <i>Weighted base</i>   |               | 1549           | 1594      | 1508      | 1482      | 1495      | 1197      | 1229      |
| <i>Unweighted base</i> |               | 1549           | 1594      | 1508      | 1482      | 1495      | 1197      | 1229      |

Source: May 1997: Scottish Election Study; September 1997: Scottish Referendum Study; 1999–2012: Scottish Social Attitudes

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