

Country Profile: Scotland

- **Population:** 5.55 million people
 - Unprecedented changes in Scotland's population - [National Records of Scotland \(NRS\)](#)
- **Languages:** English, Scots, Scottish Gaelic
- **Culture:**
 - Around 1 in 10 people in Scotland were born outside the UK
 - Many faiths, and cultures shape life in Scotland
- **Geography:** includes major urban cities, rural towns, and islands. There are over 100 inhabited islands, and many more uninhabited ones
- Scotland's population is similar to Greater London's outer boroughs combined
- Smaller than England, but larger than Wales



The Scottish Parliament:

- Scotland's law-making body
- Created in 1999
- 129 MSPs, elected every 5 years
- MSPs make decisions on behalf of the people of Scotland
- They represent local areas and regions

The Scottish Government:

- Formed from MSPs in Parliament
- Led by the First Minister
- Puts laws and policies into action
- Runs public services and budgets

Votes for all:

- In the 2021 Scottish Parliament election voter turnout was at a record high, with around 63.5% of registered voters taking part. However, this also means that over one third of registered voters did not vote.
- At the end of 2024, about 4.28 million people were registered to vote in Scottish Parliamentary and local elections. ([National Records of Scotland](#))
- 16- and 17-year-olds can vote in Scottish Parliament and local elections. This was made possible by the Scottish Elections (Reduction of Voting Age) Act 2015, which MSPs passed unanimously.
- Among these, around 74,800 were aged 16 or 17. ([National Records of Scotland](#))
- The council areas where 16 and 17 year olds made up the highest proportion of the electorate in 2024 was East Renfrewshire (2.7%), Aberdeenshire (2.5%) and West Lothian (2.5%). This proportion was lowest in North Lanarkshire, Glasgow City and South Lanarkshire (all 1.2%)

Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund

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