

LEAD THE WAY



Scottish Youth Parliament
Manifesto 2016-2021

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FOREWORD



Making sure that young people are listened to on the issues that affect them is a key component of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Article 12 of the UNCRC states that young people ‘have the right to an opinion and for it to be listened to and taken seriously’.

I believe the principle behind Article 12 is very clearly encapsulated in the document you have in your hands. The Scottish Youth Parliament’s manifesto articulates the views contained in more than 70,000 responses from young people, across a wide range of issues and topics that matter to them.

I warmly congratulate the Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament on their success in ensuring that the views of children and young people are reflected in this manifesto, especially in such significant numbers.

I have no doubt that you will be equally tenacious in ensuring that the views expressed in this document are heard by the politicians and decision makers who decide on the laws and policies that affect your everyday lives.

And I urge politicians and decision makers to uphold the principle of Article 12 and ensure that these views are, indeed, both listened to and taken seriously.

Yours,

Ms Amal Aldoseri, Vice Chair
UN Committee on the Rights of the Child



About Amal

Ms Amal Aldoseri is Vice Chair of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. The Committee is a body of independent experts that monitors and reports on implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child by governments that ratify the Convention. Ms Aldoseri visited Scotland in September 2015 at the invitation of the Commissioner for Children and Young People for Scotland, Tam Baillie. Tam asked the Scottish Youth Parliament to host the visit. The purpose of the visit was for Amal to hear for herself to what degree the rights of children and young people were being upheld in Scotland, directly from those children and young people.

INTRODUCTION

The Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) represents all of Scotland's young people. Our vision for Scotland is of a nation that actively listens to and values the meaningful participation of its children and young people. Our goal is to make this vision a reality, in order to ensure Scotland is the best place in the world to grow up.

As a fundamentally rights-based organisation, our mission, vision, and values are grounded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Our democratically elected members listen to and recognise the issues that are most important to young people, ensuring their voices are heard by decision-makers. We exist to provide a national platform for young people to discuss the issues that are important to them, and campaign to effect the change they wish to see.

Since 2003, we have published a number of youth manifestos as a core part of our work. A strong youth manifesto, which is the product of a youth led, large scale consultation, provides us with a strong mandate to represent the views of Scotland's young people over a five year period.

Our previous manifesto, *Change the Picture*, received 42,804 responses from young people. Our consultation for 2016-2021, *Lead the Way*, was published in June 2015. At the launch of *Lead the Way* we set ourselves the target of securing 70,000 responses: a significantly higher number than we achieved with *Change the Picture*.

The number 72,744 is rendered in a large, bold, purple font. The digits are composed of a grid of smaller squares, some of which are white, creating a pixelated or mosaic effect. The background is a light purple color with a faint, stylized gear or cogwheel pattern. The gear has several teeth, and the number 72,744 is positioned in the upper left quadrant of the gear's face.

72,744

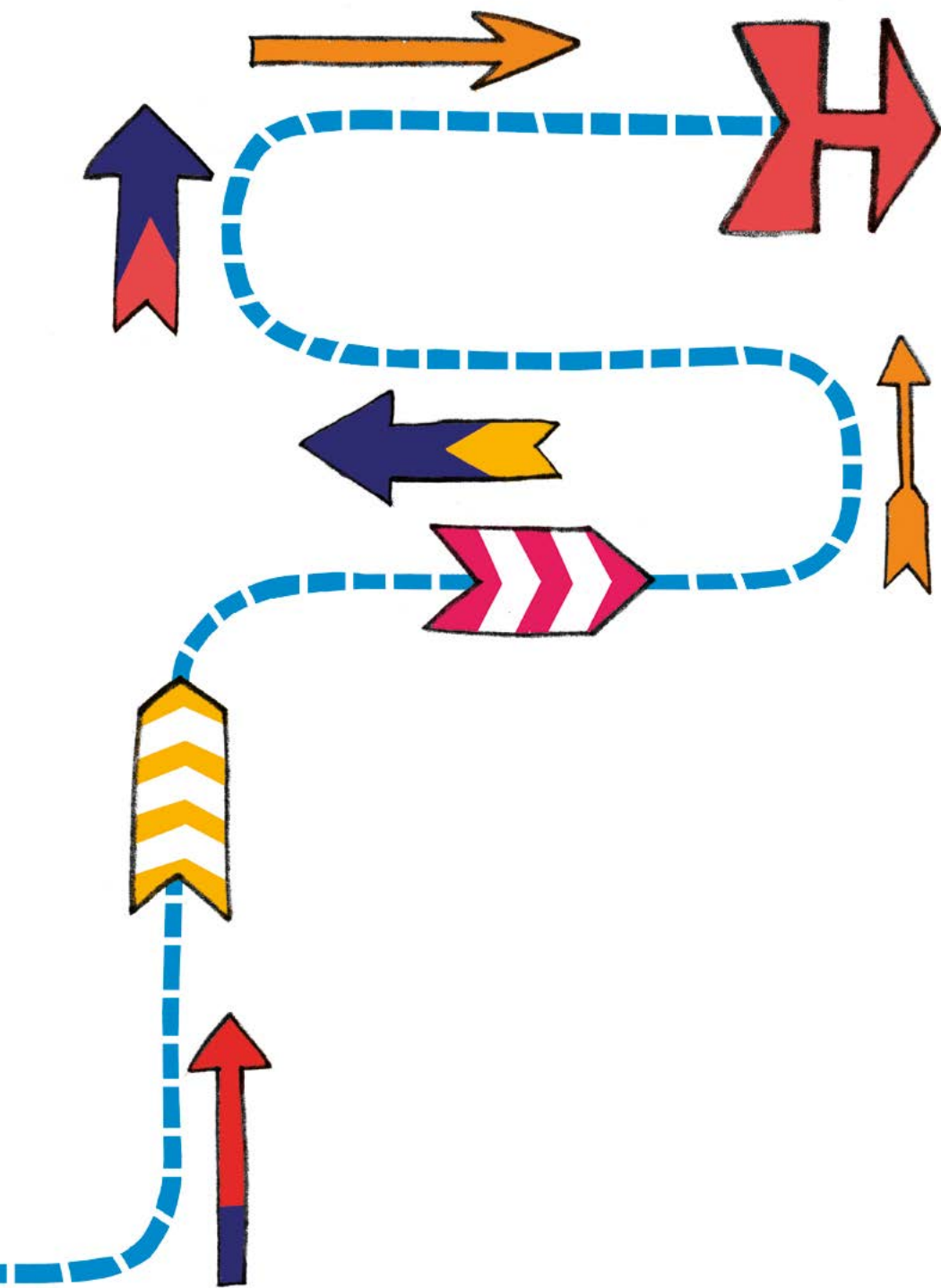
RESPONSES FROM YOUNG PEOPLE

Throughout the second half of 2015, and early in 2016, Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs) worked with their local authority and/or national voluntary organisation team to ensure as many young people (aged 12-25) as possible were consulted. Every week, MSYPs worked tirelessly at events in schools, community centres, colleges, universities, shopping centres, and other venues across Scotland, to capture the views of young people. The SYP staff team also promoted the consultation on

our website and on social media, as well as at numerous events.

Thanks to the efforts of our partners in local authorities, national voluntary organisations, and partner organisations, our dedicated staff team and, most of all, the efforts of MSYPs across the country, 72,744 responses from young people have been gathered.

This consultation exercise gives us the clearest mandate we have ever had to accurately represent the views of all of Scotland's young people.



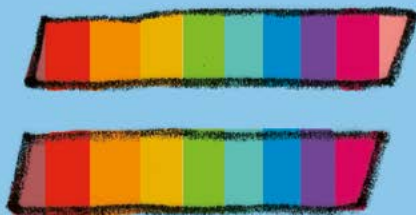
LEAD THE WAY

The logo for the Student Representative (SR) body, featuring the letters 'SR' in a stylized blue and yellow font with the text 'STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE' underneath.

**THE FOLLOWING
STATEMENTS
RECEIVED SUPPORT
FROM MORE
THAN 50% OF
RESPONDENTS.**



Please note: The figures have been rounded to the nearest figure and may not add up to 100



EQUALITIES

Action should be taken to tackle gender-based violence, violence against women and girls, sexism, and gender-based discrimination.



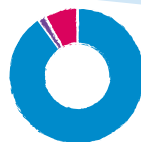
AGREE 90%
DISAGREE 3%
NOT SURE 8%

Action should be taken to protect the rights of LGBT+ and MOGAI individuals.



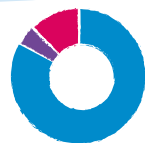
AGREE 74%
DISAGREE 4%
NOT SURE 23%

Action should be taken to tackle all forms of racial discrimination.



AGREE 90%
DISAGREE 2%
NOT SURE 8%

Action should be taken to tackle all forms of religious discrimination.

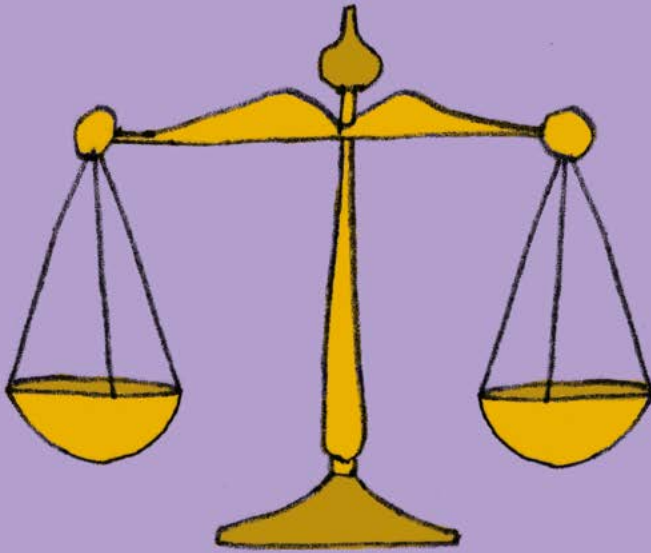


AGREE 83%
DISAGREE 5%
NOT SURE 12%

There should be a review of the 12 month ban on gay and bisexual men donating blood.



AGREE 54%
DISAGREE 13%
NOT SURE 32%



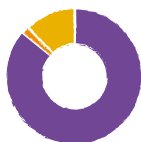
JUSTICE

All physical assault against children should be illegal.



AGREE 82%
DISAGREE 6%
NOT SURE 12%

There should be more after-care support and protection for survivors of sexual violence and abuse, female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, human trafficking, and domestic abuse.



AGREE 85%
DISAGREE 2%
NOT SURE 12%

There should be compulsory education and training to help young offenders reintegrate into society.



AGREE 71%
DISAGREE 7%
NOT SURE 22%

The ban on the death penalty should be kept in place.



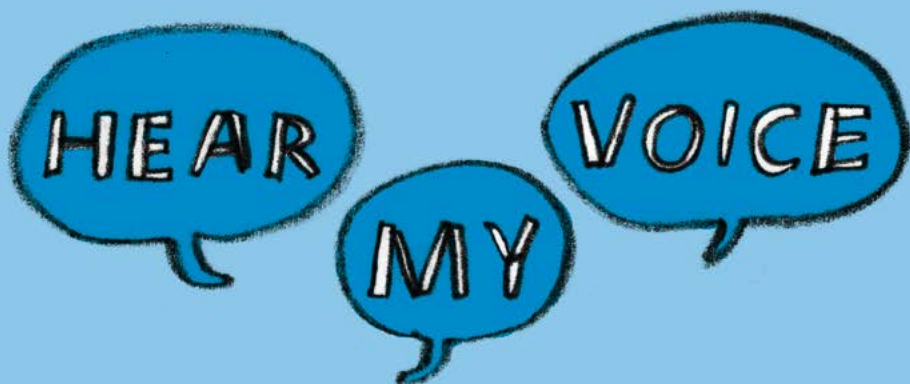
AGREE 54%
DISAGREE 22%
NOT SURE 24%

The ban on fox hunting should be kept in place.



AGREE 70%
DISAGREE 12%
NOT SURE 18%

RIGHTS AND PARTICIPATION





AGREE	76%
DISAGREE	3%
NOT SURE	22%

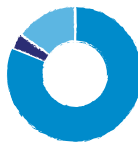
The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) should be fully incorporated into Scots Law, and the rights of children and young people should be protected and promoted.

Human rights and civil liberties should be strongly protected by law.



AGREE	82%
DISAGREE	2%
NOT SURE	16%

The freedom of speech should be protected.



AGREE	82%
DISAGREE	4%
NOT SURE	15%

The right to protest in a peaceful manner should be protected.



AGREE	81%
DISAGREE	3%
NOT SURE	15%



SOCIAL JUSTICE

Poverty and income inequality should be tackled, and action should be taken to support those living in poverty.

AGREE 81%
DISAGREE 3%
NOT SURE 16%



AGREE 77%
DISAGREE 3%
NOT SURE 20%

Any reforms to the welfare system should be proportionate and fair. People should be treated with compassion and respect.

There should be adequate financial support for young carers and young adult carers, and awareness should be raised about services which support them.

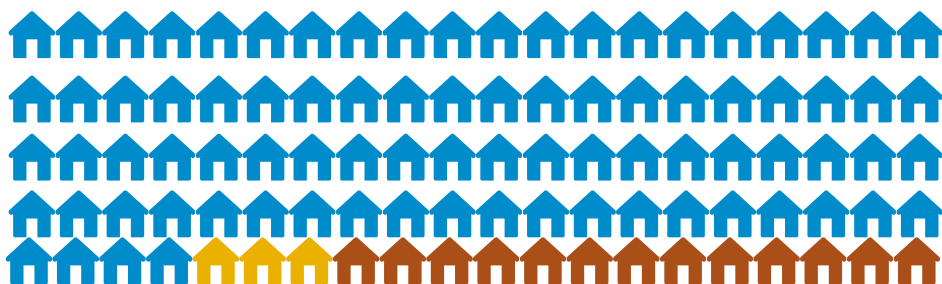


AGREE 79%
DISAGREE 2%
NOT SURE 18%

COMMUNITIES

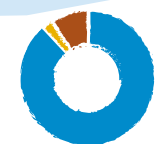


Rural life should be improved for the young people of Scotland through better internet access, more affordable housing, more frequent and affordable transport, rural job creation and promotion, and more education opportunities in rural communities.



AGREE 84% **DISAGREE** 3% **NOT SURE** 13%

There should be plenty of youth-friendly services and activities for young people in their local communities.

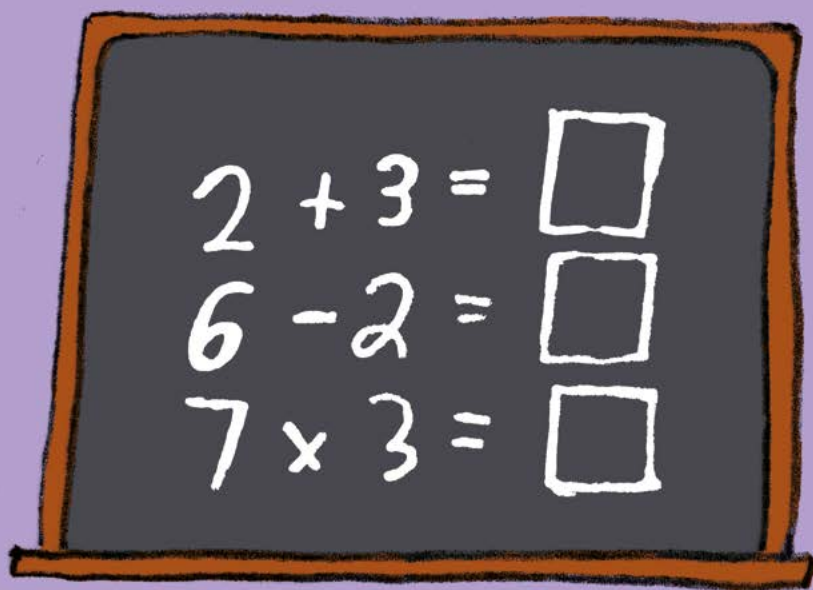


AGREE 89%
DISAGREE 3%
NOT SURE 9%

Authorities should tackle crime by working with young people to address the root causes of crime.



AGREE 73%
DISAGREE 7%
NOT SURE 20%



EDUCATION (SCHOOLS)

All pupils should have access to up-to-date and effective PSHE (Personal, Social, and Health Education) from a primary age, which addresses lifestyle, health, relationships, equality, social justice, and citizenship.



AGREE
DISAGREE
NOT SURE

79%
6%
15%

The educational attainment gap needs to be narrowed. To support this, the impact of poverty on pupils and students should be minimised, financial barriers to participation should be removed, and the cost of the school day should be addressed.



AGREE 69%
DISAGREE 5%
NOT SURE 26%

There should be vegetarian, vegan, dairy-free, and gluten-free options in the cafeterias of educational institutions.



AGREE 79%
DISAGREE 9%
NOT SURE 12%

There should be mandatory foreign language education from a primary level through a secondary level.



AGREE 55%
DISAGREE 24%
NOT SURE 21%

EDUCATION (FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION)



Tuition for further and higher education should be kept free in Scotland.



AGREE	86%
DISAGREE	3%
NOT SURE	11%

Students should be supported to ensure that financial considerations should not limit their ability to pursue or participate in further or higher education.



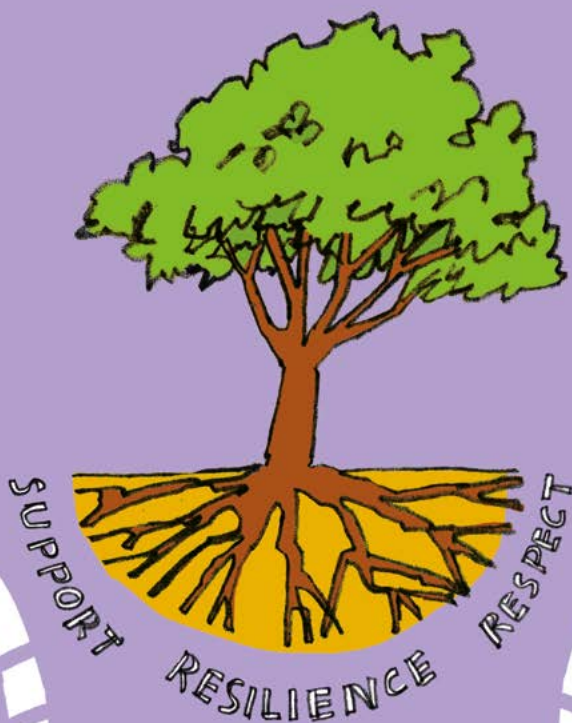
AGREE	81%
DISAGREE	3%
NOT SURE	16%

Further and higher education institutions should be protected from budget cuts.



AGREE	76%
DISAGREE	4%
NOT SURE	20%

YOUTH WORK



High quality youth work
should be available to all
Scotland's young people.

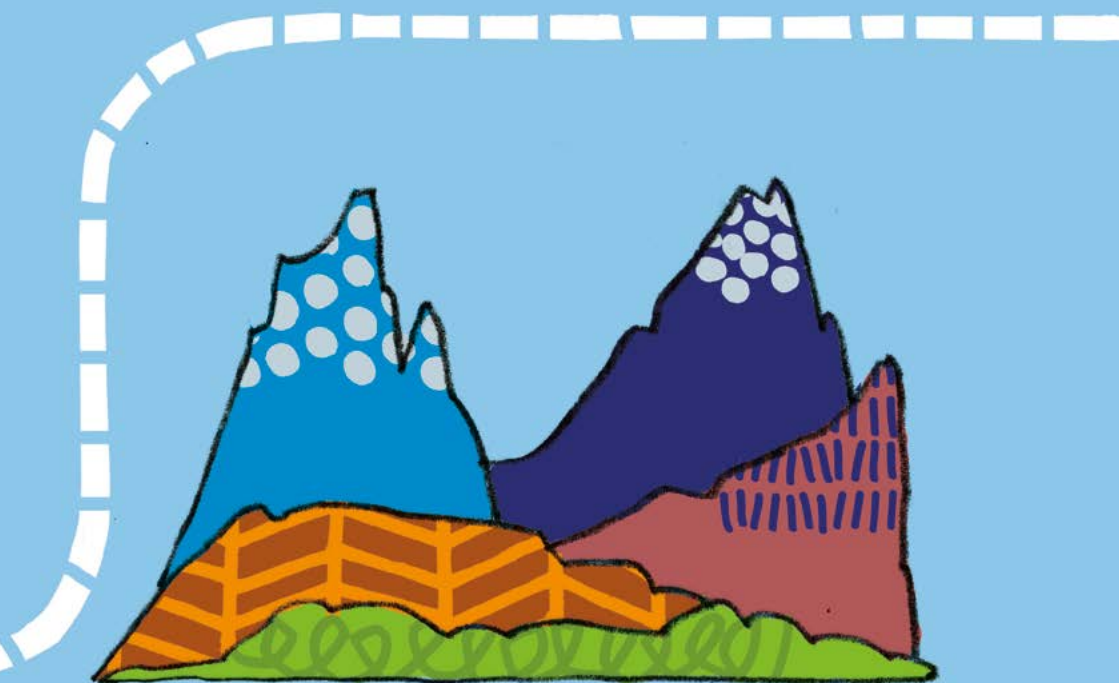
AGREE 82%
DISAGREE 3%
NOT SURE 14%

SUPPORT
RESILIENCE
RESPECT

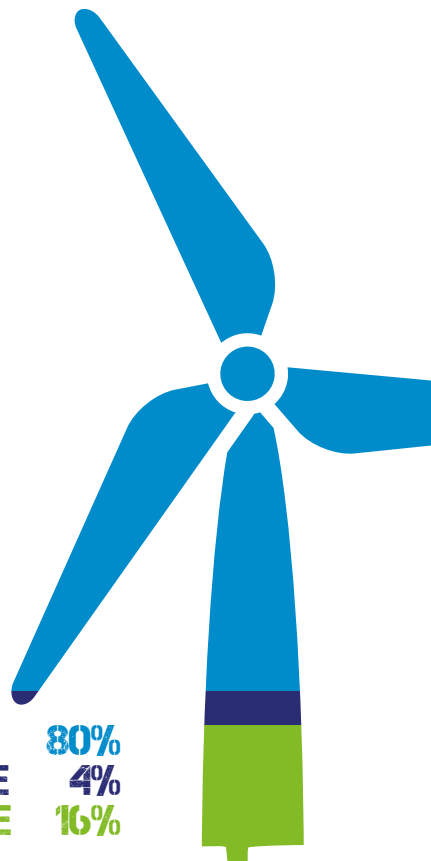
Funding for young groups and projects should be a priority for
local authorities.



ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY



Action should be taken to drastically tackle climate change, protect the environment, and promote green initiatives, such as investing in clean and renewable energy, reducing emissions, encouraging recycling, reducing waste, and investing in public and active transport.



AGREE 80%
DISAGREE 4%
NOT SURE 16%

National parks, national heritage sites, and green spaces should be protected.



AGREE 85%
DISAGREE 4%
NOT SURE 11%

There should be support for sustainable, local, and healthy food production.



AGREE 82%
DISAGREE 3%
NOT SURE 15%

HEALTH AND WELLBEING



There should be quality mental health services for young people, and support for mental health literacy and awareness, including investment in resources, better policies to educate practitioners, and movement to tackle negative stigmas and barriers.



AGREE 84%
DISAGREE 3%
NOT SURE 14%

Health inequalities in Scotland should be tackled so everyone has the same opportunity to live a healthy life.



AGREE 87%
DISAGREE 3%
NOT SURE 10%

There should be an opt-out rather than an opt-in system for organ donation.



AGREE 52%
DISAGREE 16%
NOT SURE 33%

New Psychoactive Substances should be either banned or placed under strict regulations, and young people should be educated about the dangers of using them.



AGREE 65%
DISAGREE 7%
NOT SURE 28%

SPORT AND LEISURE



Publicly-funded sports centres and cultural and arts facilities should have reduced entry fees or discounts for young people to ensure they are affordable.

AGREE 83%
DISAGREE 4%
NOT SURE 13%



All sporting facilities should include shower curtains or cubicles in all changing rooms to respect the privacy of users.



AGREE 84%
DISAGREE 4%
NOT SURE 11%

All cyclists on Scotland's roads should be required by law to wear and carry appropriate safety equipment.



AGREE 69%
DISAGREE 12%
NOT SURE 18%



TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

There should be reduced or concessionary travel for young people on all public transportation.

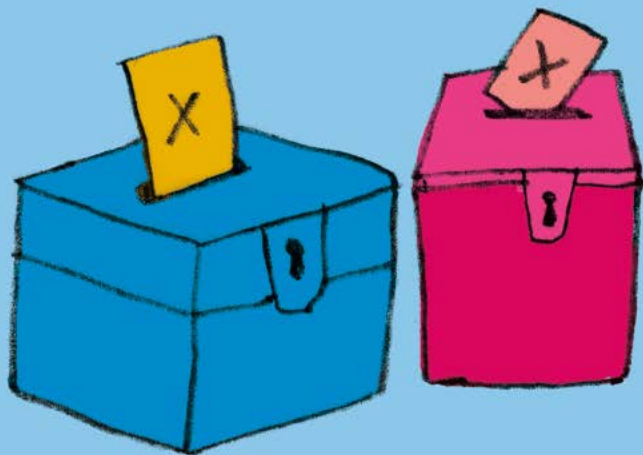


AGREE	77%
DISAGREE	5%
NOT SURE	17%

Car insurance for young drivers should be less expensive, and there should be no restrictions on nighttime driving.



AGREE	70%
DISAGREE	12%
NOT SURE	18%



CONSTITUTION AND DEMOCRACY

The voting age should be lowered to 16 for all elections and referendums in Scotland, the UK, and Europe.



AGREE	70%
DISAGREE	17%
NOT SURE	13%

There should be a constitutional convention in the UK so that all people can have a say in the political future of the country.



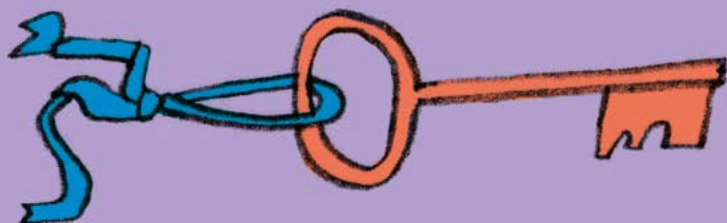
AGREE	68%
DISAGREE	7%
NOT SURE	25%

The government and political parties should actively encourage young people, women, and minority groups to participate in politics and stand as candidates.



AGREE	71%
DISAGREE	7%
NOT SURE	22%

CULTURE



AND MEDIA

Cultural diversity and respect for different cultures should be promoted and actively encouraged.



AGREE	75%
DISAGREE	5%
NOT SURE	20%

There should be support and funding for the arts, museums, heritage sites, cultural events, and the promotion and protection of the Gaelic language and all Scottish dialects.



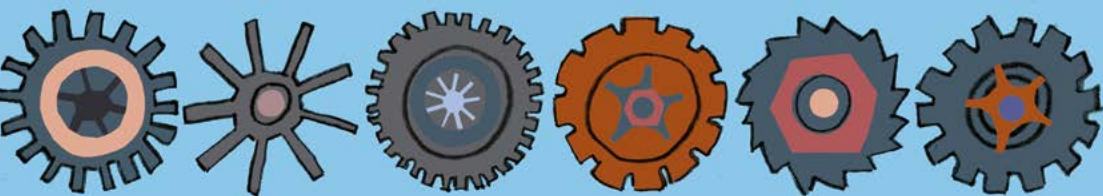
AGREE	65%
DISAGREE	11%
NOT SURE	24%

There should be an end to false advertising and the use of gender stereotypes to advertise goods and services.



AGREE	74%
DISAGREE	8%
NOT SURE	18%

ECONOMY AND WORK



The national minimum wage should be raised to the Living Wage for everyone, regardless of age.

AGREE 79%
DISAGREE 8%
NOT SURE 13%



There should be an end to the gender pay gap and gender discrimination in the workplace.



AGREE 83%
DISAGREE 5%
NOT SURE 12%

There should be an end to zero-hour contracts.



AGREE 58%
DISAGREE 11%
NOT SURE 31%

Youth unemployment should be tackled through job creation and access to training programmes, modern apprenticeships, vocational training, work placements, quality work experience, and paid internships.



AGREE 78%
DISAGREE 3%
NOT SURE 19%

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS



Sustainable and ethical international development should be supported.

AGREE 63%
DISAGREE 4%
NOT SURE 33%



Scotland should remain a member of the European Union.



AGREE 66%
DISAGREE 11%
NOT SURE 23%

Nuclear disarmament should be encouraged across the world. As part of this, the Trident missile programme should be scrapped in the UK.



AGREE 50%
DISAGREE 18%
NOT SURE 32%



METHODOLOGY

The Consultation Process

As the democratically elected voice of Scotland's young people, we have a responsibility to establish and then communicate the views of young people to local and national decision makers, to ensure they are taken into account when policy and laws are being developed. We do this in a variety of ways: through national campaigns; building strong relationships with elected representatives and government; and responding to consultations from the Scottish Government, the UK Government, both parliaments, and other organisations.

Gathering young people's views on specific issues enables us to comment and advocate on those specific issues based on those views. These views are sometimes called policy positions, or more commonly, policies.

The Lead the Way manifesto consultation exercise will determine our policy direction for the 2016-2021 period. The consultation process as a whole was led by MSYPs with support from the SYP staff team, in line with

our youth led approach. The strategy for this process was itself developed in consultation with our Committee Convenors Group.

The SYP staff team issued a call for policy ideas for the consultation to young people across Scotland early in 2015. We worked with our partner organisations to promote this call as widely as possible.

All existing MSYPs were asked which existing policies were still relevant, which needed to be reviewed, and what new policies they felt should be added.

Finally, the SYP staff team contacted a number of partner organisations and other national organisations for suggestions on policies from their area of expertise that were relevant to the young people they worked with.

Our Convenors Group undertook a shortlisting and redrafting process and ultimately agreed the wording of the statements. The SYP staff team then facilitated a consultation on the short list with MSYPs, including an online version, before the Lead the Way consultation survey was finalised.



The Consultation Document

The Lead the Way consultation was split into four separate sheets, each of which had between 12 and 19 separate statements. All statements were developed in consultation with young people. In response to each statement, participants could select 'Agree', 'Disagree' or 'Not Sure' as their response. Young people were also asked for things like their name, age, gender etc. They could fill in as many, or as few, of the statements as they liked. Each sheet we received was counted in the overall total as one response.

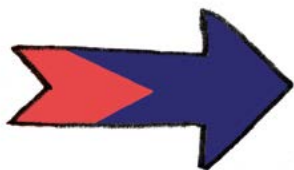
An online version of the consultation was also produced using Survey Monkey.

The consultation sheets were split thematically as follows:

- **The Red Sheet:** Equalities, Justice, Rights and Participation, Social Justice;
- **The Blue Sheet:** Communities, Education - Schools, Education - Further and Higher, Youth Work;
- **The Green Sheet:** Environment and Energy, Health and Wellbeing, Sport and Leisure, Transport and Infrastructure; and
- **The Purple Sheet:** Constitution and Democracy, Culture and Media, Economy and Work, External Affairs.

MSYPs were encouraged to work with their local authority and/or national voluntary organisation team to ensure as many young people as possible in their area filled in the consultation, at events in schools, community centres, colleges, shopping centres, and other locations.

The Lead the Way consultations were also promoted on our website and on social media, as well as at many external events.





How we analysed the data

The statements in this document were generated from our analysis of all responses received.

Each statement in this manifesto document gives the percentage of young people who responded to that question who agreed with it, who disagreed with it, and who were not sure. It is important to note that not all questions were answered by all respondents.

Any statement that received less than 50% agreement of the total responses to that question was discarded.

All of the statements in this document therefore become official SYP policy for the 2016-2021 period.

The Scottish Youth Parliament

www.syp.org.uk

hello@syp.org.uk

@OfficialSYP

SPECIAL THANKS

The development of this valuable piece of work has only been possible because of the hard work and support of our members and partners. Firstly, we would like to thank our core funders in the Scottish Government and all the local authorities in Scotland, who's support enables all that we do. We would like to thank our MSYPs who have consulted tirelessly with young people on this project, and all the Support Workers, Youth Work Managers, and partner voluntary organisations who have supported and enabled this important work.

Special thanks to the Commissioner for Children and Young People; our partner organisations (particularly Young Scot and Youthlink Scotland); the Scottish Parliament; and all the schools, universities, colleges, community centres, youth centres, and various venues who hosted consultation events.

Finally, our warmest gratitude and respect goes out to all the young people across Scotland who have contributed their voices during our consultation process. Not only have you shaped this document, but you are also helping shape the future of Scotland.

