

Growing Up in Scotland

Life at age 17

Growing Up in Scotland is a longitudinal study following a nationally representative sample of children born in 2004-5. Data were collected from 2,649 families in 2021-23, when the children were aged around 17.

Current activity

At age 17, young people were in a range of activities.



47%

working



44%

at school



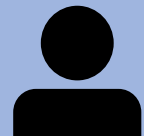
21%

at college or
university



6%

in apprenticeships



4%

not in education,
employment, or
training

Career aspirations

At age 17, the majority (92%) 'agreed' or 'agreed strongly' that having a career or profession was important and 69% 'agreed' or 'agreed strongly' they had a clear idea of the career they wanted.

When asked which factors are most important when applying for a job, young men were more likely to prioritise high income than young women, while young women were more likely than young men to feel it was important to have a job with flexible hours or a job that helps other people.

High income:

50%

All young
people



60%

Men



41%

Women

Flexible working hours:

46%

All young
people



41%

Men



50%

Women

Job that helps others:

21%

All young
people



13%

Men



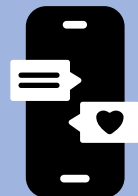
28%

Women

Social media

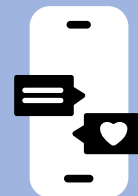
A third of 17 year olds checked their social media at least every half hour. Young women checked more often than young men.

Checked every half an hour:



30%

Men



38%

Women

Almost all 17 year olds agreed social media helped them stay in touch with friends.



93%

agreed

Young women were much more likely than young men to agree that other people's posts make them feel worse about their own life.



13%

Men

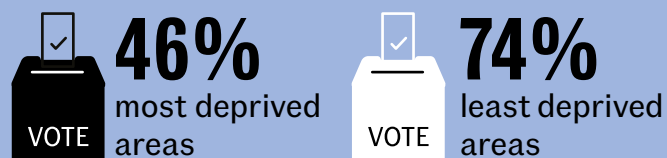


41%

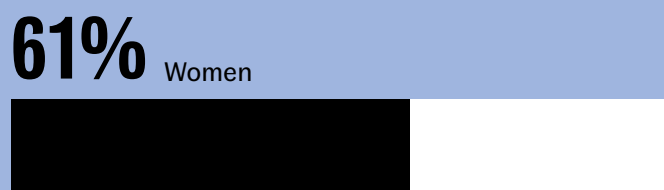
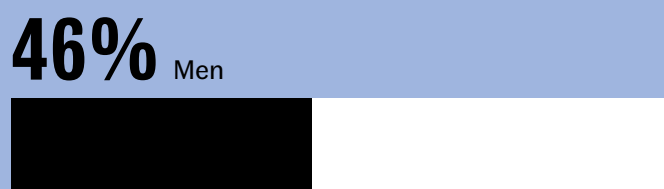
Women

Political attitudes and civic participation

In the Scottish Parliament election of May 2021, 58% of 17 year olds voted. Participation was lower in the most deprived 20% of areas compared with the least deprived 20%.



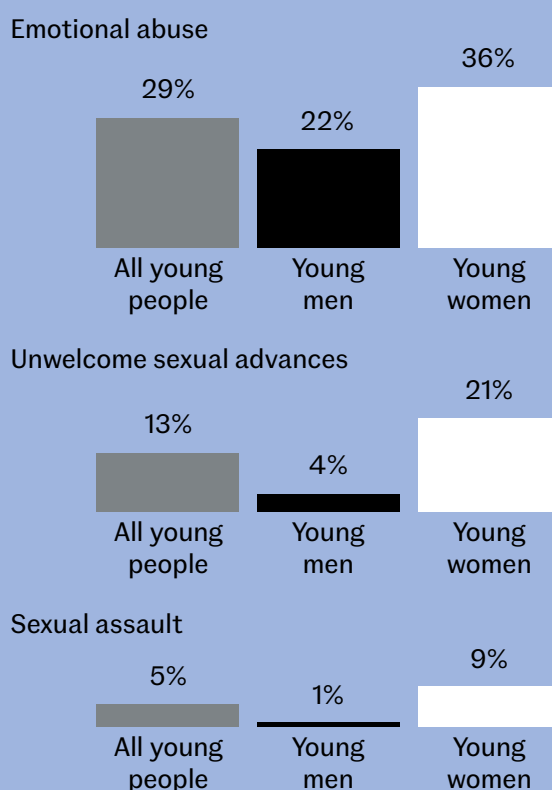
Around half of 17 year olds 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that 'Sometimes politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me cannot really make sense of it all'. Women were more likely than men to agree with this.



Victimisation

Half of 17 year olds had experienced some form of victimisation in the last 12 months. Most commonly these involved 'insults, name-calling, threats, or shouting' or 'gossip, being ignored, or other emotional abuse'.

Young women were more likely than young men to have experienced several types of victimisation.



Mental health

Disabled young people were more likely than non-disabled young people to report a range of mental health issues. Disabled young people were also more likely to report feeling lonely in the last week.

