



# HOW INDEPENDENCE IS SEEN BY OTHERS

How do people in Scotland and Catalonia who contributed to our project think about independence?

In Scotland, there is also a strong sense of identity among participants. Some felt Scottish, whilst others felt a lack of sense of belonging to the UK as a whole. The sense of being politically different to the rest of the UK seems to be stronger here than in Wales: policy differences between Scotland and the rest of the UK were often highlighted, and many people felt frustrated that Scotland's potential was being limited in critical policy areas, for instance, on green energy and re-joining the EU. But others expressed their desire to remain part of the UK and stressed the idea of being "better together". There is, however, the same sense of uncertainty about the future. Many participants were also unsure about how they would vote in a second referendum on independence; some felt they didn't have enough information to make a decision, others were just not interested in the issue.

In Catalonia, like in Wales, language and culture are important for participants and shape their feelings about independence. Many are worried that the Catalan language is being minoritised and want it to be protected and promoted. They are concerned that the rights of minority

language speakers are not guaranteed under the current institutional arrangements and some see independence as a way to address this issue. In Catalonia, there was greater discussion the process of achieving independence as the events surrounding the 2017 referendum have shaped people's views on independence and how to achieve it. Many of the images were about the attempt to hold an independence referendum in 2017, and the way in which the Spanish police tried to stop people from voting. Some were shocked and outraged by this response and it encouraged them to support independence. Others were deeply frustrated, especially by the refusal of foreign countries – and the European Union in particular – to put pressure on the Spanish state to allow the referendum to go ahead. Reflecting on the years since the attempted referendum, many participants spoke of their disappointment with the current state of the debate, in terms of the strategy of pro-independence parties and the lack of progress on negotiations on holding a new legal referendum on independence. This experience has had a different effect on different people: some continue to feel strongly in support of independence, others have decided that they no longer care.

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