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Scottish Social Attitudes: Data Trust, 2017

An Official Statistics publication for Scotland

PUBLIC SERVICES AND GOVERNMENT

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Introduction

The Scottish Social Attitudes (SSA) Survey has been conducted annually by the independent research organisation ScotCen since the advent of devolution in 1999 (with the exception of 2008).

It is based on face-to-face interviews with between 1,200 to 1,700 people in Scotland drawn using probability sampling. The SSA interviews in 2017 took place between July 2017 and February 2018. The sample size in 2017 was 1,234. The survey provides an important source of data on attitudes to government and to the Scottish Parliament over this period.

This annex presents the findings of the Scottish Government funded questions in the SSA 2017, covering level of trust in public service organisations and private companies to use personal data only for acceptable purposes

We explored whether attitudes varied by social groups. Details of the statistical tests conducted and the full list of variables tested are presented in the supporting documents¹.

This report was produced by professionally independent statisticians in the Office of the Chief Statistician and Strategic Analysis, in line with the UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice for Official Statistics.²

¹ Scottish Social Attitudes 2017 – Data Trust Annex - Variations In Attitudes Between Subgroups

² [UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice](#)

Data Trust

The Scottish Social Attitudes (SSA) Survey 2017 asked participants questions about their views on use of personal data:

“How much do you trust public service organisations and private companies to use your personal data only for acceptable purposes?”

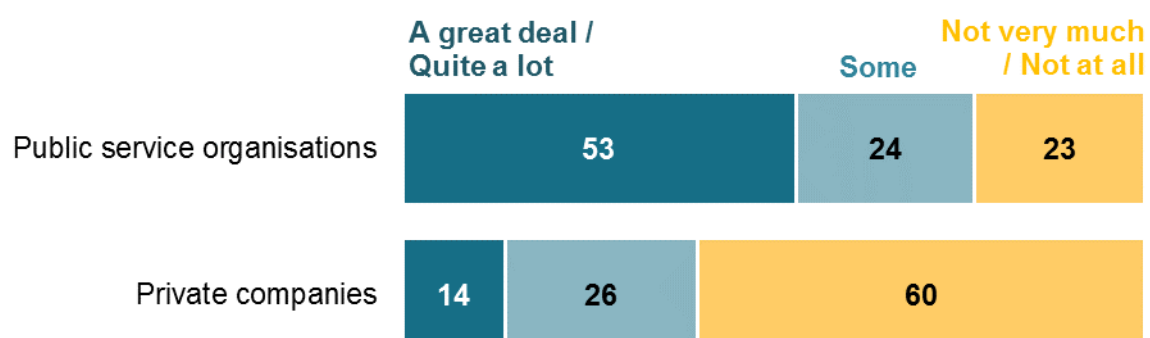
Trust in public service organisations and private companies to use personal data for acceptable purposes only

People were more likely to trust public service organisations to use personal data for acceptable purposes compared to private companies.

53% trusted public service organisations ‘a great deal’ or ‘quite a lot’, compared to 14% for private companies.

23% trusted public service organisations ‘not very much’ or ‘not at all’, compared to 60% for private companies.

Figure 1 Trust in public service organisations and private companies to use personal data for acceptable purposes only (2017, %)



Variations in attitudes between subgroups

Levels of trust in public service organisations and private companies to use personal data for acceptable purposes varied across population subgroups. The main differences are discussed below and are from subgroups where there were statistically significant differences³.

Trust in public service organisations varied across subgroups as follows:

- **Living comfortably** – Those living comfortably on their present income were more likely to trust public service organisations to use personal data than those struggling to live on their present income.
- **Main income source** – Those whose main income source was wages or private income were more likely to trust public service organisations to use personal data than those whose main income source was state benefits.
- **Educational qualifications** – Those with a degree or equivalent were more likely to trust public service organisations to use personal data than those with no formal qualifications.
- **Economic activity** – Those in education or full time training were the most likely to trust public service organisations to use personal data. Those in work or waiting to take up work are more likely to trust public service organisations to use personal data than those in retirement or unemployed.
- **Age** – Young people (16-24) were more likely to trust public service organisations to use personal data. The older the age category the less likely those are to trust public service organisations to use personal data.
- **Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)** – Those in the least deprived areas were more likely to trust public service organisations to use personal data than those in the most deprived areas.

Trust in private companies varied across subgroups as follows:

- **Age** – Around a quarter of young people (16-24) trusted private companies to use personal data; more than any other age category.
- **Economic activity** – Those in education or full time training were the most likely to trust private companies to use personal data. Those in work or waiting to take up work were more likely to trust private companies to use personal data only than those in retirement or unemployed.

³ The full list of statistically significant subgroups compared is provided: Scottish Social Attitudes 2017 – Data Trust Annex - Variations In Attitudes Between Subgroups

Tables

This section contains the 2017 results for questions on data trust.

Table 1: How much do you trust public service organisations to use your personal data only for acceptable purposes? (2017, column %)

	2017
	%
A great deal	16
Quite a lot	37
Somewhat	24
Not very much	17
Not at all	6
(Don't know)	1
<i>(Not answered)</i>	-
<i>Sample size</i>	1234

Table 2: How much do you trust private companies to use your personal data only for acceptable purposes? (2017, column %)

	2017
	%
A great deal	2
Quite a lot	12
Somewhat	26
Not very much	36
Not at all	23
(Don't know)	1
<i>(Not answered)</i>	-
<i>Sample size</i>	1234

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Official and National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Both undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs and are produced free from any political interference.

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How to access background or source data

The data collected for this statistical bulletin

are available in more detail through Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics

are available via the UK Data Archive

may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors.

cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.

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