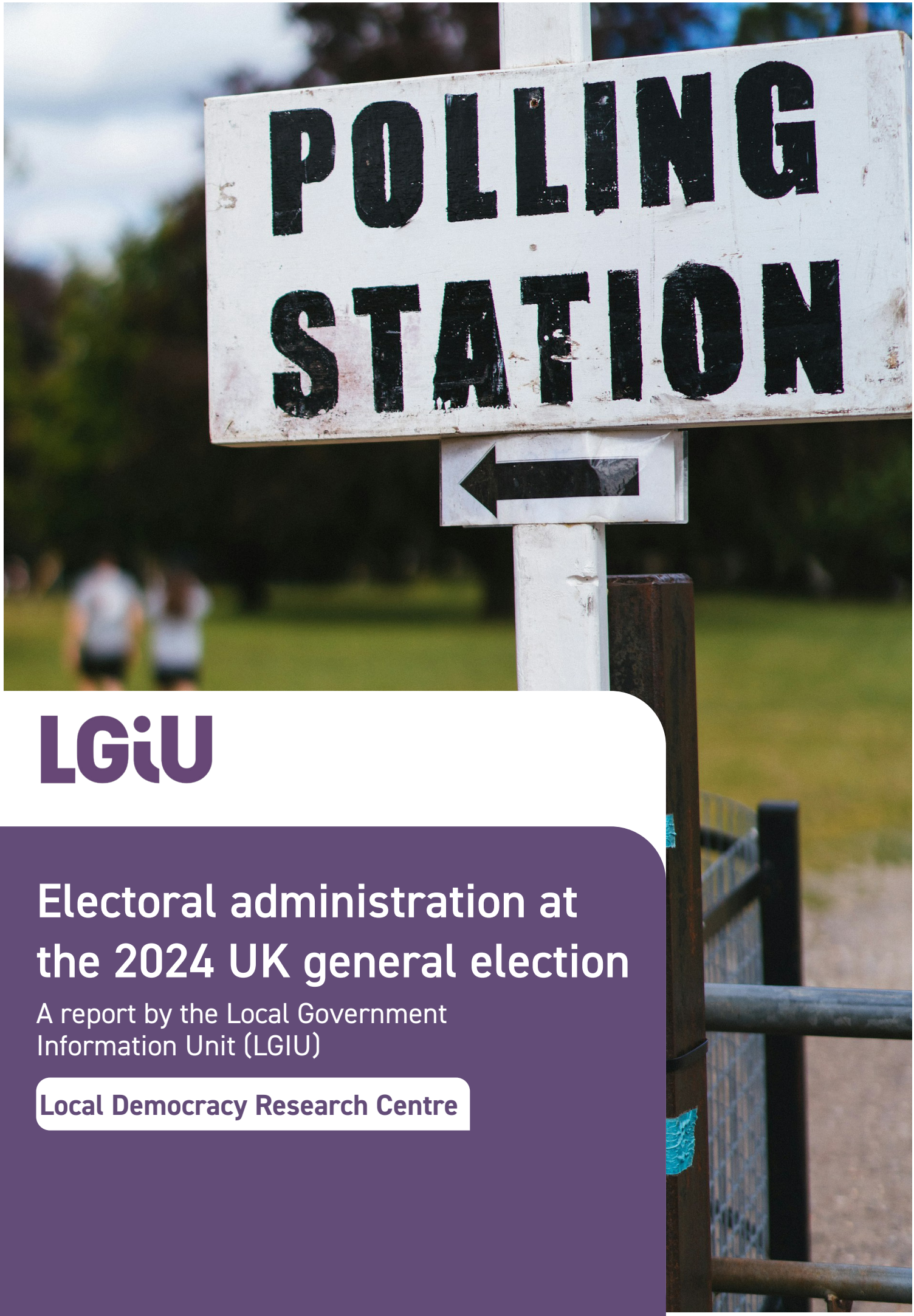

LGiU

Electoral administration at the 2024 UK general election

A report by the Local Government Information Unit (LGIU)

Local Democracy Research Centre

About this report

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About the LGIU
The LGIU – Local Government Information Unit – is an independent, not-for-profit membership organisation working to make local democracy around the world collectively stronger through shared ideas, resources and connections for local government.

About the Local Democracy Research Centre
The Local Democracy Research Centre was set up by the LGIU to carry out practical research on some of the key challenges for local democracy around the World.

We have a broad, international programme that engages universities and local authorities to develop new ideas and approaches for governance, municipalism and citizen participation.

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Executive summary

- The 2024 general election was completed, again, without widespread administrative issues. However, beneath the surface the resilience of electoral processes is questionable, with staff consistently reporting that they do not have sufficient time or resources to deliver elections without enduring intolerable stress, and that elections are at risk from a large range of issues - with the resilience and capacity of the electoral services workforce often cited as one of the most prominent risks.
- As in previous years, administrators raised many of the issues with organising elections: ninety-four percent of administrators raised the challenge of organising snap elections as a problem, and 86% the statutory timetable. 80% cited complex electoral law as an issue, 87% getting postal votes to electors on time, 73% insufficient funding of electoral services departments, and 72% recruiting polling station staff. Staff in Scotland and Wales also raised issues with the timing of elections.
- In terms of inclusivity, there were not significant changes from how electoral services staff across the UK viewed this election's inclusivity when compared to elections staff in England in May 2023. Sixty-eight percent of respondents said low voter turnout was a problem, similar to previous years, and 31% that barriers to participation for minority groups was an issue. Administrators were split over the impact of voter ID (see our previous report for an overview).
- The security of elections was not considered to be a significant issue by administrators, similar to the results of other studies.
- However, 60% of electoral administrators in our survey reported that they, or another member of their team, experienced abuse or harassment at the general election. And 30% said that there were reported disturbances at polling stations.

Recommendations

- The election timetable should be extended and standardised across elections, in consultation with administration, to ensure that there is enough time to deliver elections at an acceptable standard while reducing the personal burdens on staff. In considering these changes, attention should also be paid to the question of returning postal votes and how this can be made to work better for overseas electors.
- The resources available to electoral services staff should be considered, alongside their capacity to deliver adequate and standardised services across local authority areas given the ongoing local authority funding crisis and its corresponding impact on electoral services teams.
- Automatic registration should be considered, taking into account the views of administrators and the experiences in Wales, to ensure that any changes reduce the workload of administrators while simultaneously ensuring the completeness and accuracy of the register to the highest possible standard, and developing a process that works for all electors.
- The next changes to electoral legislation should be accompanied by a wholesale consolidation of existing legislation, and developed alongside Scottish and Welsh legislatures to harmonise electoral law in policy areas where confusion is common, such as online postal vote applications.
- The government should consider the protection of electoral services staff and temporary election workers alongside campaigners and electors, and review the legislation on electoral offences accordingly to ensure their protection as an equally vital part of the democratic electoral process.

Introduction

Most of us never have to think about how elections happen. They just happen. We trust that the processes work, that the results match the genuine preferences of the people who voted, and the people managing it know what they are doing even if we don't. That is how things should be. In the memorable words of Bullock et al (2005), when there are no problems citizens believe that elections work in a dependable if mysterious way 'like air conditioners and automobiles' (p.283).

But, unlike cars, with elections there are no engines, there are dedicated people behind the scenes working all year round to ensure that they keep moving. This report is about those people's experience in the 2024 general election.

In 2024, as with every other election in recent years in the UK, we did not see dramatic scenes of widespread rejection of the results, or thousands of people failing to get their ballot papers, or electoral violence. But the elections were not held without any incidents. There were numerous examples of delayed postal votes, including those that did not reach electors in time for the election across Scotland and parts of England (BBC News 2024a). On one occasion, in Uttlesford, the Chief Executive of the council (and Returning Officer) said they would consider their position as a result of postal vote delays (BBC News 2024b). Despite these challenges, and the many electors unable to vote because of them, the election was still seen as largely successful on the surface. There were no serious challenges to the results.

The nightmare scenario, as always, would be an election where candidates and citizens refuse to accept the results. As it happens, in 2024, the result was a landslide victory for the Labour party. Difficult to deny.

But we cannot take the ongoing successes of our electoral processes for granted. The results of this survey demonstrate again the extent to which elections are dependent on the good will and hard work of tiny groups of dedicated staff. As part of the critical infrastructure of the United Kingdom, the resilience of our electoral processes should not be on such shaky footing. The foundations of UK democracy need to be strengthened.

Context

On the 22nd May 2024, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak made the surprising announcement that there would be a general election on the 4th July.This had previously seemed unlikely as Sunak had previously commented that the election would be in the "second half of 2024". This meant that electoral administrators up and down the country, many of whom had only just finished running the English local elections on the 2nd May, had to organise an entire general election in just six weeks.

It has not been a normal five years for electoral administrators: in May of 2019, just a few weeks after the local elections, administrators had to run a surprise set of European elections that many had assumed would be cancelled due to Brexit until the extension of the withdrawal timetable in April. In December 2019 there was a surprise general election, the first December election since 1923, this circumvented the Fixed-Terms Parliaments Act and left administrators planning an election they could not have expected. Then, in 2020, scheduled elections were

postponed for a year due to the covid-19 pandemic, meaning that in 2021 administrators had to deal with a bumper crop of elections during a worldwide health emergency.

After these unpredictable disruptions, there were legislative changes introduced by the government that changed the work of administrators again. The Dissolution and Calling of Parliaments Act (2022), the Elections Act (2022), and the Ballot Secrecy Act (2023) all added additional complexity to a system that, already by 2020, was considered too complex by administrators (Stride 2023a). The new legislation introduced mandatory photographic identification in polling stations, online absent vote applications, changes to voting eligibility for British citizens overseas and for EU citizens in the UK, and postal vote handling rules.

These changes, many of which had been rolled out piece by piece before, came together and were fully applied across the UK for the first time in the 2024 general election.[1]

Previous research

These changes were not brought into a system of electoral administration without existing problems. As far back as 2020, research found that electoral services staff in England were under intense pressure caused by short timetables, convoluted legislation, inefficient processes and inadequate resourcing (Stride 2023a).

In 2023, the LGIU, funded by the JRSST-CT, investigated the experience of electoral administrators during the 2022 English local elections to determine the impact of voter ID. The report found that the electoral process was under significant strain, reliant on good will and additional work from teams whose capacity was stretched very thin, undersupported and underfunded. The introduction of compulsory voter ID requirements was additional, many argued unnecessary pressure, with little consideration or support to implement it properly. Despite the lack of visible problems during these elections, our research shone a light on the personal costs faced by electoral administrators in order to deliver the service.

1 The devolution of election legislation means that election rules are different for local and devolved elections in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. In previous years, this research has only focussed on England to take account of the different circumstances. However, this year because the general election requires almost identical measures across England, Scotland and Wales, the three have been surveyed together. In areas where there are differences between the three - such as the distribution of responsibility for registration in Scotland, this will be mentioned in the text when relevant.

Who are electoral administrators?

Electoral administrators are responsible for registering electors and organising the process for casting votes (James 2012). They are more permanent than the on-the day staff, such as poll clerks, presiding officers or count centre staff, and have a wider range of responsibilities. Across England and Wales, these are performed by local authority officers (on behalf of the Electoral Registration or Returning Officers), in Scotland, registration duties and other duties can be performed by separate groups of electoral administrators, in local authorities or valuation joint boards depending on whether the area has a VJB.

Electoral administrators in England perform a large number of roles, including but not limited to this list (adapted from Montjoy 2008; Stride 2023a):

- Registering electors,
- Finding and preparing polling stations,
- Preparing ballots,
- Recruiting and training polling staff,
- Processing candidate nominations,
- Answering questions from the public,
- Organising alternative voting procedures,
- Organising and performing the counting of votes and the certification of winners.

See Appendix 1 for the proportions of respondents answering which of these tasks they performed.

Methodology

The survey was sent out to every electoral services department and valuation joint board in England, Scotland and Wales (a total of 379 email addresses), as well as being shared by the Association of Electoral Administrators, and received 259 unique responses. See Appendix 1 for information on the respondents, including their regional and national balance.

There is no simple way to estimate the total number of electoral administrators across England, Wales and Scotland. One report from 2021 estimated that there were 4.3 FTE staff on average per electoral services department in England (Democracy Volunteers 2021). Assuming approximately the same level in England, Scotland and Wales (although there may be discrepancies, particularly because the registration and other roles are separated in much of Scotland) we could get a rough estimate of around 1200-1300 electoral administrators.

The survey was sent out to electoral service email addresses on the 16th July, just under two weeks after the election, and reminders were sent on the 23rd, 30th and 6th August. Alongside this, the Association of Electoral Administrators shared a link to the survey in their newsletter. The survey response rates are detailed in Appendix 1.

Overview

Our 2023 study into the administration of voter identification asked electoral administrators to rate how much of a problem for electoral integrity a series of different features of the electoral process were (Stride 2023b). This year we extended the question, including new options and making the question relevant to the UK rather than just England.

The answers this year paint a similar picture. Administrators were most concerned with problems related to the proper functioning of electoral processes: the challenge of organising snap elections (which also topped the list last year), getting postal votes to electors on time, the statutory timetable, complex electoral law, insufficient resources, and the challenge of recruiting polling station staff all featured as major problems with elections.

There were several notable differences from the results after the May 2023 local elections (which only covered England):

- ➡ First, recruiting polling station staff was said to be an issue by nearly 90% of respondents in 2023, but this reduced to 72% in 2024, still a major issue across the UK. The lower figure might be explained by the difference in relative levels of interest for a local versus general election, which may have reduced pressures on polling station staff recruitment.
- ➡ Secondly, voter turnout was considered to be a problem by over 80% of respondents in 2023, as opposed to 68% after the 2024 general election. Again, this could be explained by the different election dynamics - local elections have much lower turnout than general elections in nearly all cases.
- ➡ Finally, our general election research highlights troubling aspects of the way elections work. Eighty seven per cent of administrators said that getting postal votes to electors on time was a problem, reflecting news stories that emphasised this issue. We will discuss the drivers of this issue later in the paper, but for now it is worth noting that almost 90% of administrators believed this to be an issue.

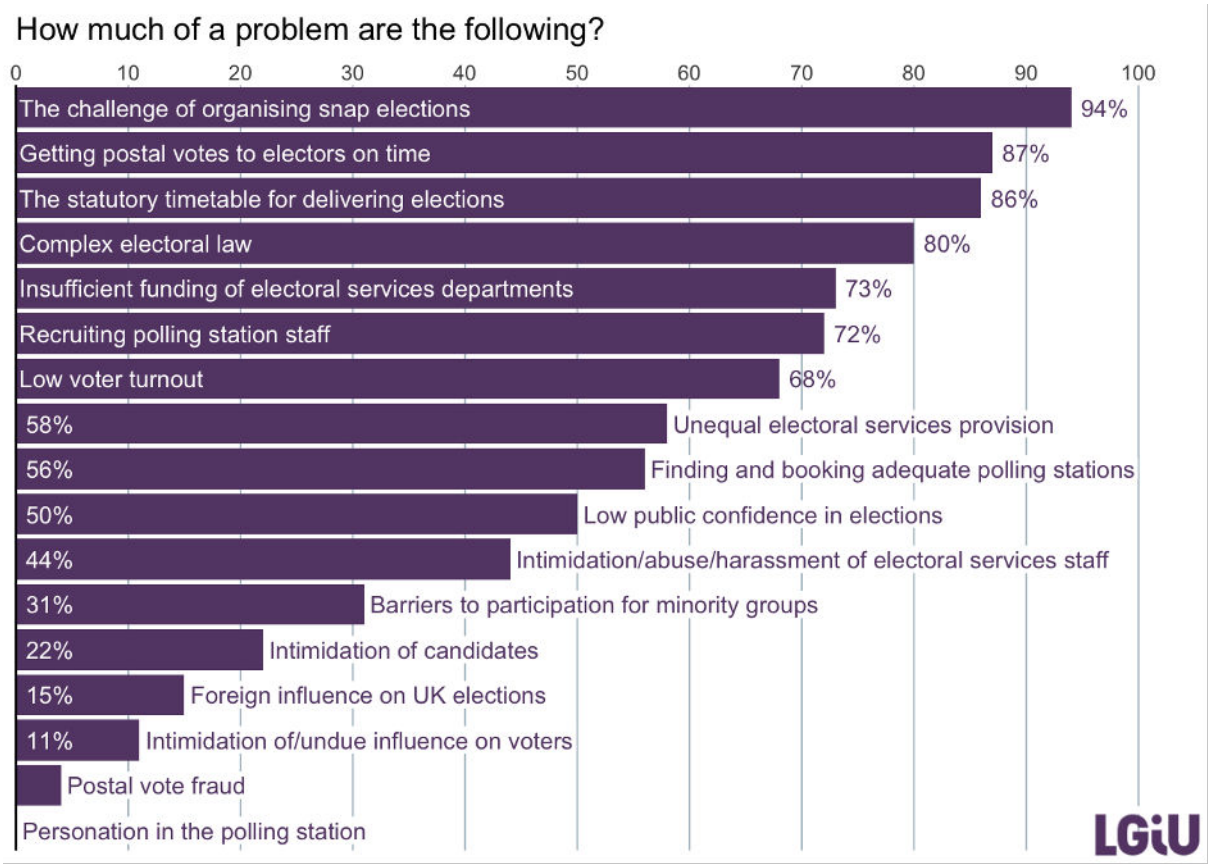
A new question on intimidation/abuse/harassment of electoral services staff found that around 44% of administrators consider this to be a problem. This is a serious development, and highlights an issue that has been severely underexplored in previous research.

The risks to elections

"Too many to pick one"

Elections are a 'no-fail' service. Unfortunately, this does not mean that they cannot fail, just that the consequences of failure are too much to contemplate.

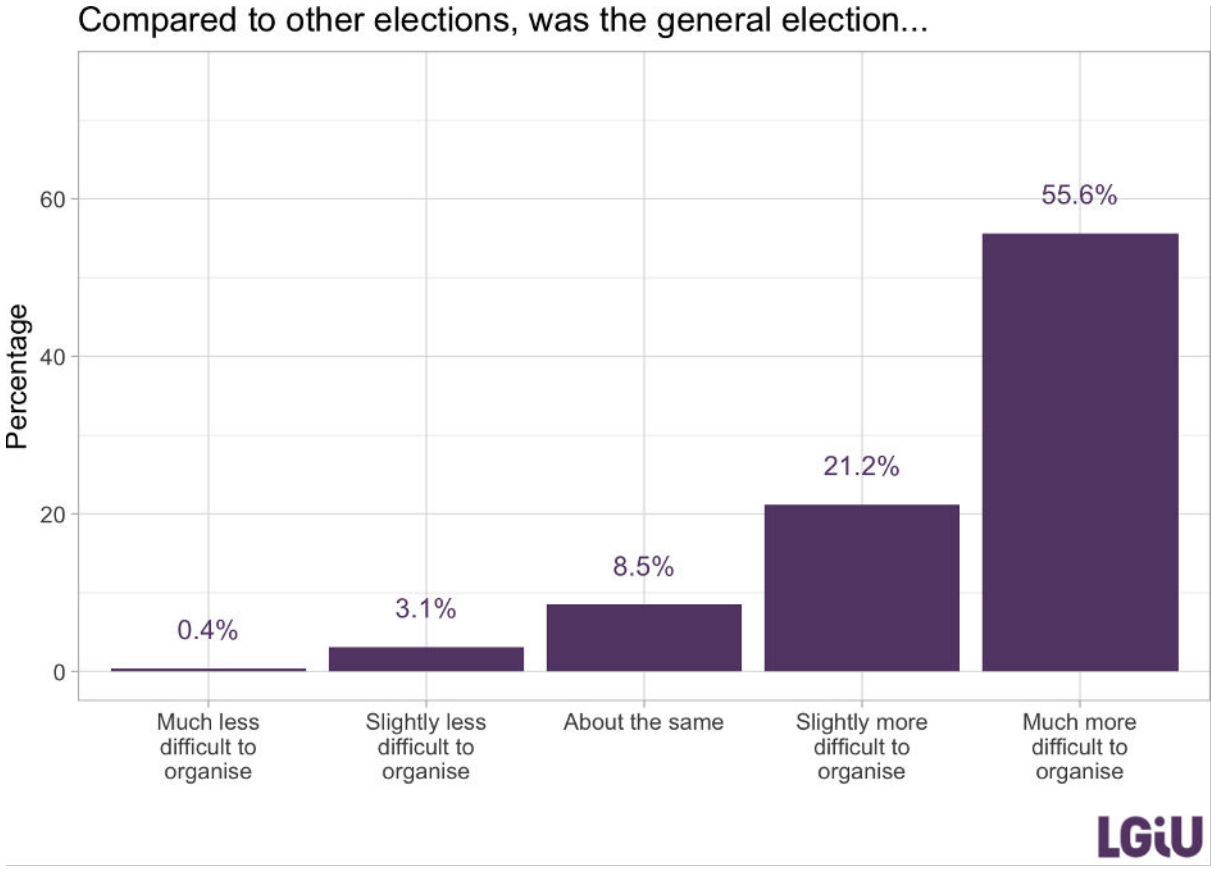
We asked electoral administrators to list what they consider to be the "the main risk, if any, to the successful delivery of elections today?" The results give an important indication of the major risks electoral administrators have identified, and range across a series of themes - administration, security, inclusivity and public perceptions, all of which will be developed more in the upcoming sections.

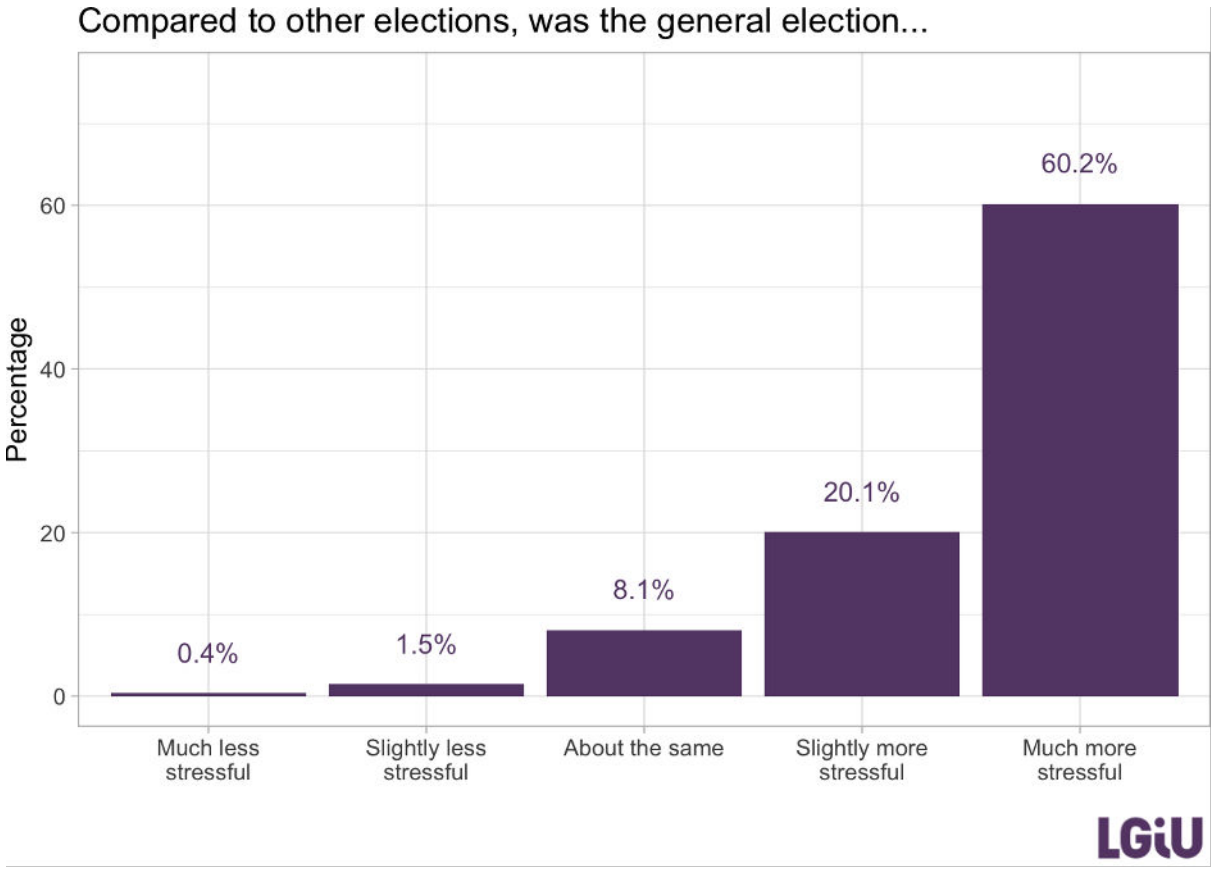


Administration

One of the key values by which administrators judge elections is based on the effectiveness and efficiency of administration and the welfare of electoral administrators (Stride 2023a). These administrative values can give us an insight into how electoral processes are working. As we can see in the two graphs below, the 2024 general election was judged to be both more difficult to organise and more stressful than previous elections by the vast majority of respondents. There were several major reasons for this: the fact the election was called at a surprise time coupled with the short election timetable left little time to make all the necessary arrangements for a successful election, administrators do not feel as though they have enough resources, and changes in the Elections Act (2022) and recent reforms have added additional absent voting pressures. Overall, electoral administrators are, and not for the first time, calling for changes to make electoral processes less complicated, more reliable, and less stressful to organise.

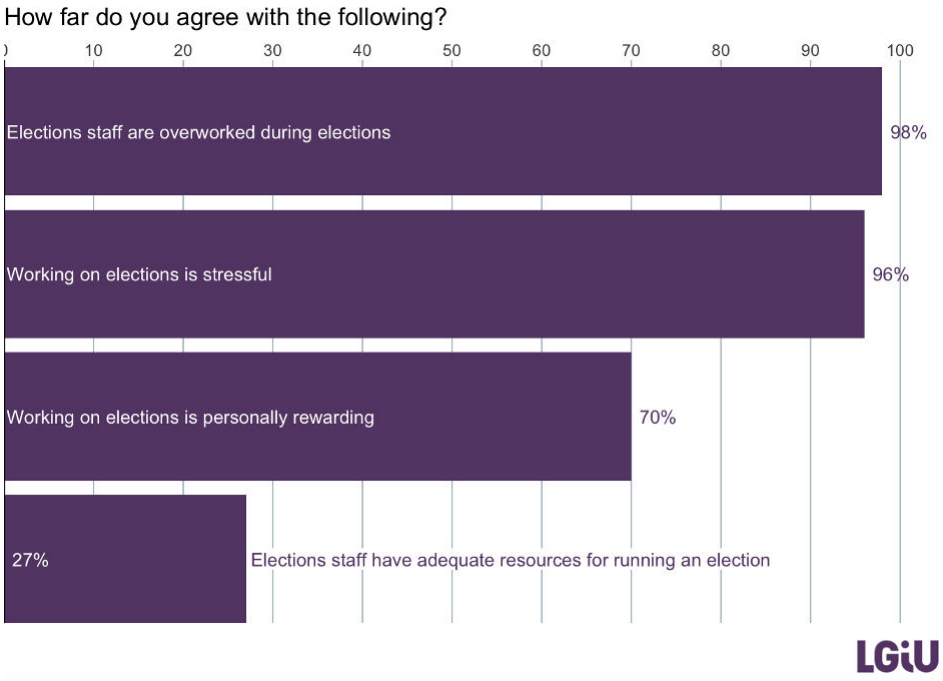
> **"I think it's important to recognise the personal sacrifice and dedication of Electoral Administrators. This year has been extremely challenging and without the hard work of the teams polls simply would not happen."**





Workload and stress

> **"The core team working excessive hours, getting very tired and can be very stressful."**



As we have argued in previous research, the experience of electoral administrators when implementing elections should be considered to be a key part of the integrity of electoral processes (Stride 2023a; Stride 2023b). No part of the critical infrastructure of the UK, as elections surely are, should be dependent on the goodwill of overstretched staff. As one administrator put it:

> **"Elections can be implemented, but only at a significant cost to the wellbeing of the electoral administrators running them. If there is to be a sufficient retention of elections staff, then staffing and training resources need to be increased significantly country-wide, or it may result in an insufficient number of qualified professionals who are willing to remain in the profession."**

Ninety-eight per cent of surveyed electoral administrators said they are overworked during elections, and 96% that working on elections is stressful. This is similar to what we have seen in previous research, regardless of the most recent type of election (Stride 2023b). This would suggest that all elections cause stress for administrators, but the specific pressures of a general election were raised in many written responses.

A general election can be called at any time, without any prior warning – as in 2024, the calling of the election for 4th July was completely unexpected (BBC 2024c). This would have caught electoral administrators off guard, and as much of the groundwork has to be completed during the (short) election timetable, would have increased pressure on administrators. Ninety-four per cent of respondents said that the challenge of organising a snap election was a problem for elections. This, coupled with administrative and legislative changes, the timing of the election during the summer, and the increased interest in general elections, were cited as reasons that a general election is more stressful to run than other elections.

> **"The timetable is too short for the effective management of an unscheduled election."**

Timetables

> **"The insufficient timetable to deliver everything when there has been no change to this when more and more is added to do, and the expectation that it is our civic duty not our job for electoral administrators to deliver snap elections…"**

Election timetables were raised more often than any other problem as the main risk for the delivery of elections. They are widely considered to be too short, as has been raised many times by the Association of Electoral Administrators and LGIU (Association of Electoral Administrators 2021, Stride 2023a, Stride 2023b). Although electoral administrators are usually able to deliver the general election in the allotted time, the evidence we have collected over the years suggests that this is only possible when electoral administrators make significant

sacrifices, all of which increases the chance of administrative errors, and, as importantly, makes for an inhumane working environment.

> **"The timeframe is too short for a snap election to enable us to run an election without having to work 100+ hours overtime, being exhausted and stressed."**

The election timetable for a general election is only 25 working days (Electoral Commission 2024). Within this time, there are a large number of tasks that must be completed, several of which cannot be finished until another time-consuming task has already been done (for example: postal ballots cannot be sent off until ballots are printed, which cannot be done before nominations close). In various areas this is not long enough to complete the tasks in time, the main example being overseas electors who live far away (for example Australia) and request a postal ballot late in the process. In many more areas, it is not long enough to complete the required tasks comfortably with the resource constraints electoral administrators face. For an example of how election timetables are causing strains in the electoral sector, particularly with the increasing number of administrative tasks introduced through new legislation, see LGIU's report: The Impact of Voter ID: The Views of Administrators.

Electoral administrators have raised the issue of short election timetables at many levels of election, but the fact of this general election being announced by surprise (whereas many elections are scheduled) and the additional time-sensitive requirements (particularly overseas electors) mean that a general election has different and intensified time pressures than other elections. A longer election timetable, and reforms designed to improve the efficiency of electoral processes – such as automatic registration – should be considered to ameliorate the issues we saw in this election.

Timing

Alongside this election being both a surprise and conducted on a short timetable, there were other complications for administrators caused by its exact date. First, in England the election was announced just three weeks after the end of local elections, where electoral administrators were still dealing with the final stages of administering those elections.

> **"Staff were already exhausted from delivering the May elections to be suddenly thrust into this mayhem. People were tired and stressed and indeed unwell. Resources from varying different places were difficult to procure at such short notice especially at this time of year. Polling stations not available – count venue not available, meaning that new premises were required resulting in tables being hired in – very difficult…."**

Second, there was a particular issue with the timing of these elections in Scotland, where they coincided with school holidays. This increased two types of pressures: staffing pressures, where the permanent elections staff and short-term elections staff (who operate polling

stations and count venues) were less likely to be available, and demand pressures for postal votes. These concerns about the timing of the election in the holidays and the resulting issues with postal voting were shared by the public, as the Electoral Commission found in survey research (Electoral Commission 2024b).

> **"Significant reduction in staff availability, including in the [Returning Officer's] team, due to the elections being held in Scottish school holidays, Council recess and local trades' fortnight. Many people were on holiday, which impacted on availability of people to work and on the number of postal votes, which increased substantially."**

The issues with the timing of the election falling during a holiday period in Scotland and during the post-poll period for local elections in England is again evidence that a longer election timetable, or a more structured process for determining the date of an election, would be useful for electoral administrators.

Delivering postal votes

Connected to the issue of timing, and as outlined by the Electoral Commission (2024b) there were a significant number of challenges with delivering postal votes. When considered through the lens of administration (and we will return to the other issues raised with the inclusivity and security of postal votes later) there were several key problems with the delivery of postal votes this year.

The interaction of a series of different circumstances meant that delivering postal votes, which is often difficult, was more complicated for the general election. First, as already touched on, timing. The July election, called with only six weeks notice, meant that more electors – particularly in Scotland where the election coincided with school holidays, were likely to be away from their polling station. There is limited evidence of overall increased demand for postal votes, which has increased from 18% in the December 2019 election to 20% in 2024, with increases during the pandemic (Electoral Commission 2024b). The Commission concluded that the volume of postal votes was not an issue, given that in Scotland (where postal vote demand was often cited as an issue) the 2021 Scottish parliamentary elections had slightly more postal votes.

Many administrators noted that there were challenges caused by electors' expectations with the speed of postal voting. Part of this was ascribed to the introduction of Online Absent Vote Applications, as one administrator put it:

> **"Absolute nightmare, it needs to be made much clearer to those who apply close to the deadline when their ballot pack will be issued, we had a lot of people going on holiday before they received them."**

The next section will go over administrators' assessments of Online Absent Vote Applications more generally, but for now it is worth emphasising that our evidence accords with the

Electoral Commission's conclusion (2024b) that there were issues with public understanding of the timing of postal vote delivery. One suggestion from our survey was that there could be *"better facilities when electors are applying online to inform them if they already have a postal [vote,] or dates when postal votes are due to land before they complete the application."*

Third, increased demand over the long term. It is worth noting that although the volume of postal voting did not significantly increase in 2024 (across all areas) compared to previous elections, in the long term, administrators cited their experience of increased demand as putting more pressure on their work.

> **"Postal voting is increasing year on year and the ability to get postal votes out to electors is becoming more problematic with scheduling of posting and the lack of awareness of electors of how it all works."**

Finally, third party suppliers, particularly printers and Royal Mail, were raised as problems for electoral administrators when attempting to deliver postal votes in time. These represent a significant issue for electoral administrators, who do not have the resources to take these services in-house, and therefore must rely on external providers. This was raised as a particular problem for reissued postal votes close to the deadline.

> **"Failure of external contractors to deliver e.g. Royal Mail and printers."**

> **"Electoral Administrators and Returning Officers then take the brunt of the complaints and reputational damage for something that is out of our hands."**

At this stage, it is worth considering electoral processes as a whole-system where electoral administrators are only one set of actors working in a complex network (Stride 2023a; James 2020). Within these networks, electoral administrators are central, but improving the administration of elections may involve changes unrelated to administrators, such as improving the capacity of printers of postal services to deliver.

> **"It would be helpful if there were better facilities when electors are applying online to inform them if they already have a postal or dates when postal votes are due to land before they complete the application."**

Overall, the delivery of postal votes was considered to be an issue by a large proportion of electoral administrators – 87%. This should necessitate changes to ensure that postal votes can be delivered on time in the volumes that are being demanded, that electors understand and are confident in the processes necessary to deliver postal votes, and that electoral administrators are supported and listened to regarding changes to postal voting and the practical reality of implementing postal voting procedures.

Online Absent Vote Applications

One major change to the postal voting process made between the 2019 general election and the 2024 general election was the introduction of Online Absent Vote Applications (OAVA). Under this new system, from the 31st October 2023, it was possible for electors to apply for an absent vote online. This reform was criticised at the time for being released without full functionality (AEA 2023) and in our evidence, by the time of the 2024 general election, held just nine months after the introduction of the reform, electoral administrators were still experiencing significant difficulties.

> **"The system is still experiencing some problems. Because of this, it should have been introduced much sooner to iron out any problems before a UKPGE."**

This relates to a common issue electoral administrators raise, known as the Gould principle, that electoral law or processes should not be changed within six months of an election. In this case, although the law was changed with ample time, reforms and changes to the functionality of the system were being made in the run up to the elections.

> **"While a good idea in theory I don't think the system's functionality was sufficient when it was initially launched (and parts still are not today)."**

Many issues were raised with the functionality of the online application process for administrators, the portal, and the way in which the portal interacts with Election Management Systems. We received significant feedback along these lines, indicating that more user-testing and reform of the functionality of the system is required, particularly with how it integrates with other electoral processes.

> **"Quite frankly, it was a huge move from how we have always processed AV applications in our system, to a fractured and temperamental process which does not allow for processing times, the Election timetable (i.e. considerations for synchronising applications in to the EMS on deadline days), postal proxies (a nightmare to process as we need the proxy in our system first) and unclear signatures (supplied by electors were not clear enough for postal vote opening)."**

However, this should not be taken as a simple rejection of Online Absent Vote Applications from the community. There were many respondents who wrote about how it was an important step for opening up absent votes to more electors, but hampered by limited functionality within the system, limited joining-up with other processes, excessive burdens on electoral administrators in cases where ID verification or signature waiver requests are needed, and the increased expectations electors had for the timeliness of postal votes

given the ease of the application process. Overall, in England at least, there were many administrators broadly supportive of the concept.

> **"Being able to apply online has made the process much easier for electors, however the new systems make the job of an electoral administrator much harder as they are clunky and unnecessarily long-winded."**

> **"This is good but was not sufficient for the snap election in [July] and created most of the work, and appalling that the council can not claim this back from the government as apparently this is work as usual - I have never experience this volume of postal votes...in my whole 20 years of working in election[s] this is not business as usual."**

> **"When they are straightforward it makes our lives easier, it is the tricky ones that take so much more time."**

Complications in Scotland and Wales

In Scotland and Wales, the assessment of OAVAs was considerably less positive, owing to the fact that electors need to make a separate application for devolved elections. This was widely considered to be an issue that confused electors and caused significant extra work for staff.

> **"Voters in Wales unable to apply online for devolved elections has caused a great deal of confusion and an inordinate amount of work for staff."**

> **"People don't understand that no matter how early they apply for a postal vote, no postal ballots can be issued until the candidate nomination process is completed. In Scotland, there is complexity in the OAVA as it is not always clear to electors they need to make a separate application for devolved elections. Also, electors often think they have applied for a postal vote online when they have in fact submitted an ITR to re-register."**

> **"In Wales, having separate processing systems for reserved and devolved polls is incredibly time-consuming."**

> **"The idea is great and I'm sure it works brilliantly for England. But for us in Wales, it is extremely complex due to the split in governances."**

This divergence between the rules for different types of election should be considered in the context of its effect on administrators, and attempts should be made to resolve the discrepancy. This could be through allowing the same application to work for multiple levels of election, or through other data sharing agreements.

Resources

Resource pressures were another significant problem raised by electoral administrators. Insufficient funding for electoral services departments was described as a problem by 73% of administrators, and recruiting polling station staff by 72% (a reduction from the over 85% who considered this a problem after the 2023 English local elections). These issues, alongside the problems with recruiting and retaining full time elections staff, are cited as significant pressures for the delivery of successful elections.

> **"Reduced resources - people, time and money..."**

These three resources: people – in the form of temporary and permanent staff, time – as caused by the short timetables and increasing list of tasks to fulfil within the tight timeframes, and money, were all frequently cited as being in short supply. Occasionally elections staff would give their explanations as to why this is, for example:

> **"I did not have sufficient staff in the Elections Team when delivering this election. Election teams are underfunded consistently due to the peak and trough nature of this job. Local authorities are not encouraged, or given the funds to maintain a sufficient complement of staff year-round, which results in unmanageable workloads and stress levels for those staff that are in post."**

This links the problem of limited resources to stress and overwork, as mentioned in the previous chapter. Equally, various respondents raised the way in which costs and staffing pressures fall on local authorities, which are themselves struggling from financial issues, as opposed to being recoverable from central government (Stride and Woods 2024).

> **"Getting the extra resources to help out at election from the local authority is very difficult because the staff are being reduced more and more due to money shortage for their services."**

> **"...it is not clear whether this will be fully funded under the new claims regime."**

> **"For local authorities facing financial strain and limited resources, the increased work caused by the Elections Act and snap general election put huge pressure on (usually small) Electoral Services teams."**

In terms of short-term staffing, many pointed to the problems with finding adequate numbers of staff for polling stations, particularly in Scotland where there were summer holidays at the same time.

All of these reported resources shortages should be viewed as undermining the resilience of electoral services in the UK. But perhaps the most important type of resource shortage that

electoral administrators were warning about is the potential shortage in fully trained electoral services staff.

> **"I want to retire as this is the worst profession to be in these days. Staff are taken for granted, my colleagues are burnt out and under valued. Yet more changes are piled on and we still deliver – at a personal cost of course."**

Nobody should feel like this in any area of work, let alone one that is so critical to the infrastructure of UK democracy. The point here is not only a moral one, it is a practical one. Electoral services staff are required to be knowledgeable, take on significant responsibility, and work to severe deadlines. It is not a job where people can walk into it at the last minute, and the supply of experienced electoral services staff should be a priority moving forward.

> **"If there is to be a sufficient retention of elections staff, then staffing and training resources need to be increased significantly country-wide, or it may result in a insufficient number of qualified professionals who are willing to remain in the profession."**

The important point here is not only about the short-term minimum level of staffing necessary to deliver an election, it is about retaining staff with the skills and experience to run an election – a fiendishly complicated task – in the future.

Suppliers

As already mentioned in the case of delivering postal votes, electoral administrators are dependent on external suppliers. Of these, the most prominent are Electoral Management Software suppliers, printers, and postal service providers. In this survey many electoral administrators raised their concerns about the capacity of these suppliers to deliver.

> **"Print suppliers have also seemed overwhelmed at times by the demands of delivering a snap general election so soon after the May elections and on new constituency boundaries."**

> **"Royal Mail for the last couple of years have not been able to deal with the demand resulting in our office having to reissue a number of postal votes which has put undue stress onto the team whilst dealing with multiple deadlines in the election timetable."**

> **"IT failure. Everything we do now is totally reliant on digital services and software providers."**

This dependence on external suppliers is unlikely to change (and in many cases, such as the provision of electoral services software or postal services, it is not clear how local teams could take on these roles) but there should be contingencies in place at a national level for dealing with/mitigating the risk of supplier failure.

Legislation

In recent year, electoral processes have been through several significant changes, particularly following the Elections Act (2022) which, among many other changes, introduced mandatory photographic identification in polling stations, the Ballot Secrecy Act (2023) and the Dissolution and Calling of Parliaments Act (2022) which repealed the Fixed-term Parliaments Act (2011). Electoral legislation has undeniably changed significantly in recent years, but none of these changes have addressed the criticisms of the Law Commission, who in a 2021 report described the legislation as 'complex, voluminous and fragmented' (Law Commission 2021, p.1). Electoral law is often criticised for being fragmented and difficult to understand, as well as diverging between different types of elections (Stride 2023a).

Both of these issues, the rapid change in electoral law (often at short notice) and the complexities of the fragmented legislation, were criticised by administrators in our survey.

> **"The biggest risk to the successful delivery of elections, particularly big, national elections, is the implementation of the Elections Act, and in particular how Electoral Administrators are being asked to process absent votes, and overseas elector applications."**

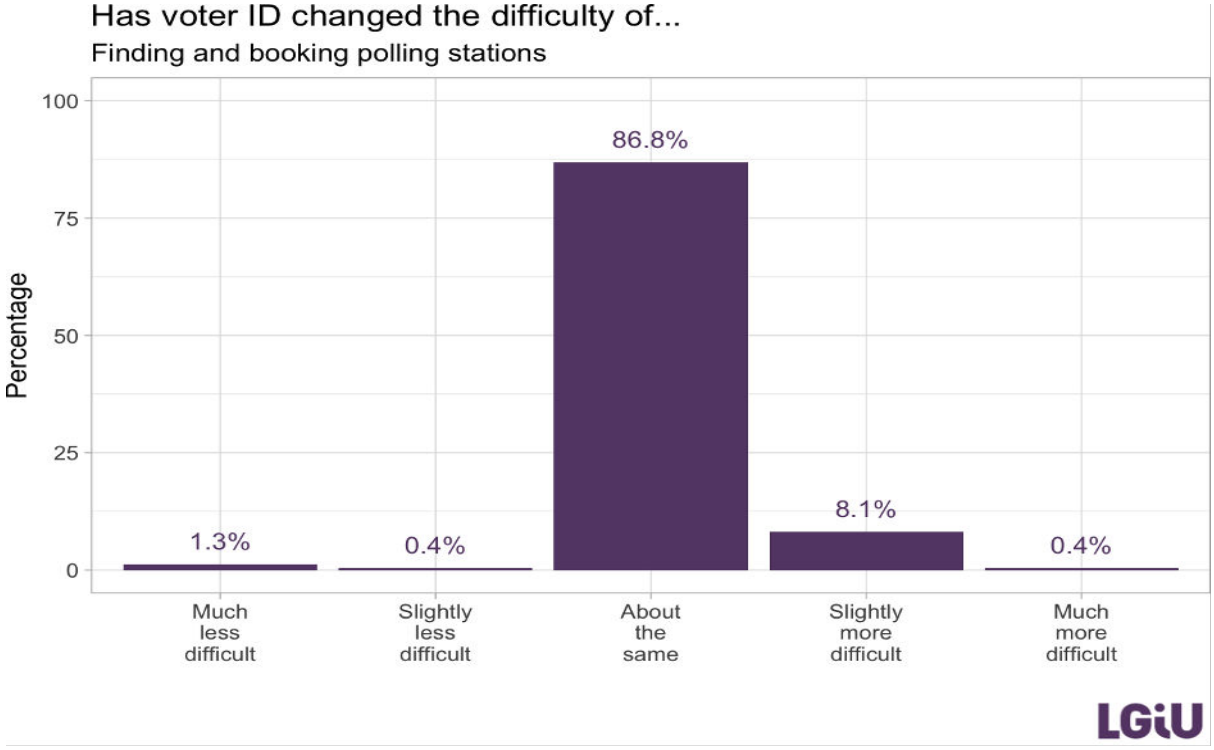
> **"Elections Act 2022 and all other legislation needs to be reviewed and collated so it's all in one place."**

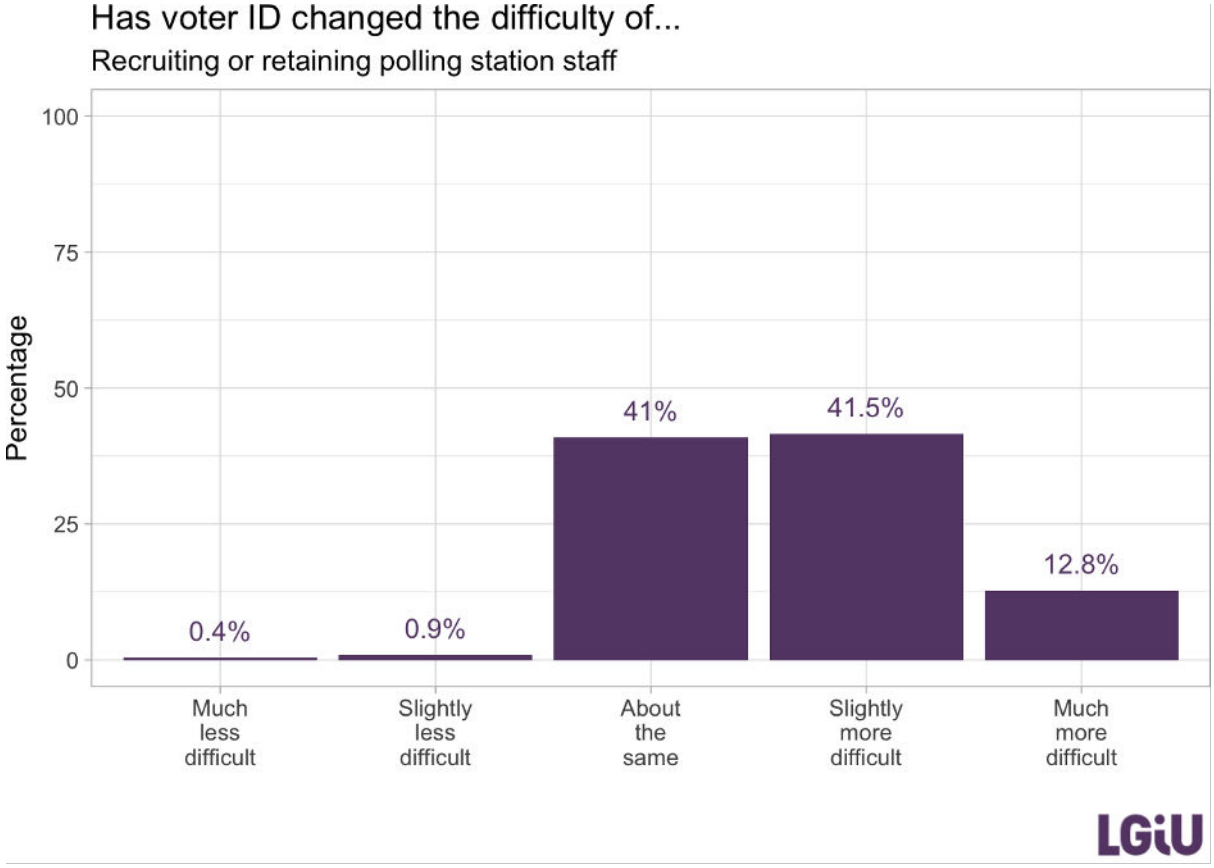
> **"Legislative changes being brought in too close to an election."**

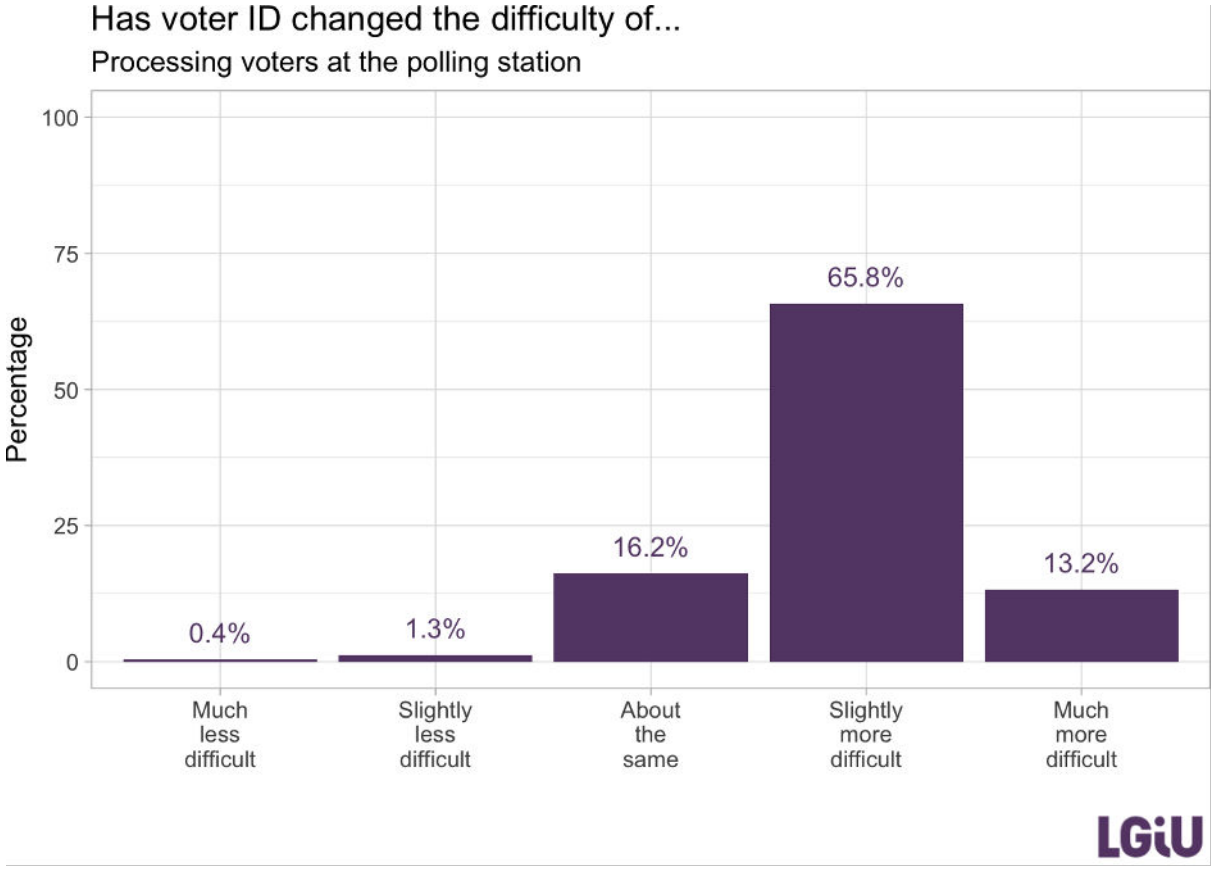
> **"Complicated electoral legislation, especially the increasing divergence for reserved and devolved elections."**

These complications with electoral legislation are not new, but this evidence usefully demonstrates how the complex electoral law is not an esoteric issue, it is a practical problem that has an effect on the work of administrators, and we would recommend that any significant change to electoral law should be considered alongside a consolidation and streamlining of existing legislation.

Voter ID


Has voter ID changed the difficulty of...
Finding and booking polling stations
Percentage
100
75
50
25
0
1.3%
0.4%
86.8%
8.1%
0.4%
Much less difficult
Slightly less difficult
About the same
Slightly more difficult
Much more difficult
LGiU


Has voter ID changed the difficulty of...
Recruiting or retaining polling station staff
Percentage
100
75
50
25
0
0.4%
0.9%
41%
41.5%
12.8%
Much less difficult
Slightly less difficult
About the same
Slightly more difficult
Much more difficult
LGiU



The 2024 general election was the first parliamentary election to require mandatory photographic identification in polling stations. In previous research we outlined the experience administrators had with implementing these new requirements for the 2023 English local elections, the first widespread use of voter ID (Stride 2023b). By July 2024, many places in England and Wales had already had some experience of voter ID in either the May 2023 or May 2024 local elections (the latter of which included Police and Crime Commissioner elections in Wales, which also require photographic identification under the same laws). In Scotland, the 2024 general election was the first major electoral event to require mandatory ID.

The administrative issues with implementing voter ID have been thoroughly examined in previous research (Stride 2023b). From the perspective of administration, the specifics of voter ID are often less important than the fact of voter ID acting as yet another complication in the delivery of elections: more complexity, more resources needed for dealing with voter communications and processing, and another series of tasks that need to be completed within the limited timetable. Both processing voters at the polling station and recruiting and retaining polling station staff were said to be more difficult by a majority of respondents due to the introduction of voter ID. There were relatively few comments about voter ID as a specific measure in terms of its impact on administrators. There were many more comments relating to how voter ID was perceived to have an impact on the inclusivity of elections, which we will cover in the relevant section.

As we will cover in the section on public perceptions of elections, voter ID was seen as making communicating election rules to the public slightly more difficult, an issue that appears to have been exacerbated by the different rules at different levels of elections – particularly in the devolved nations.

> **"Photo ID in the polling station is not a bad thing, but again, being in a devolved nation causes more confusion as every single election being run is different."**

However, having said voter ID in general was well-implemented, several administrators raised issues with Voter Authority Certificates (VAC), the type of free photographic ID that electors can request from their local electoral services team to use in the polling station. Eight per cent of respondents said they had failed to process every VAC before the deadline.

In general, the issues raised with VACs were often to do with communication that this offer is available, the problems collecting evidence and suitable photographs from electors, and the tight deadlines for processing VAC applications.

Differing provision

Fifty-eight per cent of respondents said that they believed unequal electoral services provision was a problem with elections. We asked administrators to elaborate on why they believed that was an issue, and in what ways they thought electoral services provision differed between local authority areas.

Often the differences between service provision were put down to variation in the available resources and staff:

> **"I would anticipate that each authority have access to different resources which will impact the level of service they can offer to electors."**

> **"Each election team is staffed and run differently. Whilst we all strive to get the job done and we all reach the final goal at the end of the process, I believe that most local authorities provided slightly different levels to each other."**

Alongside this, other factors beyond the electoral services teams' control, such as geography (urban/rural), the size or the level of support from across the local authority, or the specific performance of their contractors in each area were used to explain differing electoral services provision.

The complicated nature of electoral law and procedures was also interpreted as creating vagueness that could allow for different interpretation, particularly in policy areas that have changed recently.

> **"The reality of so many changes coming into effect at the election means implementation will have been varied."**

> **"We all work to the same outcome, however we all get there differently. The legislation is so fragmented that it can be interpreted and (dare I say it) manipulated differently depending on who the ERO/RO is."**

> **"The reality of so many changes coming into effect at the election means implementation will have been varied."**

Electoral administrators were keen to point to the complexity of the law, and the speed at which changes were implemented, as making the uniform provision of electoral services a near-impossibility.

Overseas electors

Overseas electors have often appeared as one of the most difficult groups of electors for administrators to manage, simply because in cases where they apply for a postal vote and live a significant distance from the UK, it can be very difficult to get the ballot paper to them in time (Stride 2023a; Stride 2023b).

The Elections Act (2022) removed the maximum length of time (previously set at 15 years) that an elector could live away from the UK while still having the right to vote. In general, when administrators raised any issues with this, it was to reference how it added another burden to them administratively:

> **"This is a pain during a general as they wish to register but it takes us time to find when they were last registered as the electors got confused and would put the wrong date so there was a lot of back and forth."**

> **"Very difficult to confirm whether electors were ever registered or lived in the area if they left many years ago. We were seeing applications from people who lived here in 1950s. Takes a disproportionate amount of time to process these applications for a small section of the electorate."**

This administrative issue should be considered alongside the other evidence that electoral administrators' roles have substantively changed. And that the administrative burdens placed on them have increased, while the access to resources, the time available to complete their tasks, and the complexity of their roles, have not.

Administration: Conclusion

Electoral administrators raised many issues with how easy and efficiently they were able to implement the 2024 general election. Very few of these are new. Most of the issues raised: short timetables, changes made without adequate time to implement them, and perhaps most persistently of all: the complete reliance of the electoral processes on staff going above and beyond with a corresponding negative impact on their wellbeing. The administration of the 2024 general election, again, happened without obvious visible problems, outside of a few significant issues with the delivery of postal votes, but the toll that delivering elections takes on staff, and the consequent effect that this may have on the resilience of the working population of electoral administrators, should be cause for serious concern and should necessitate significant reform to make elections easier to run.

Security

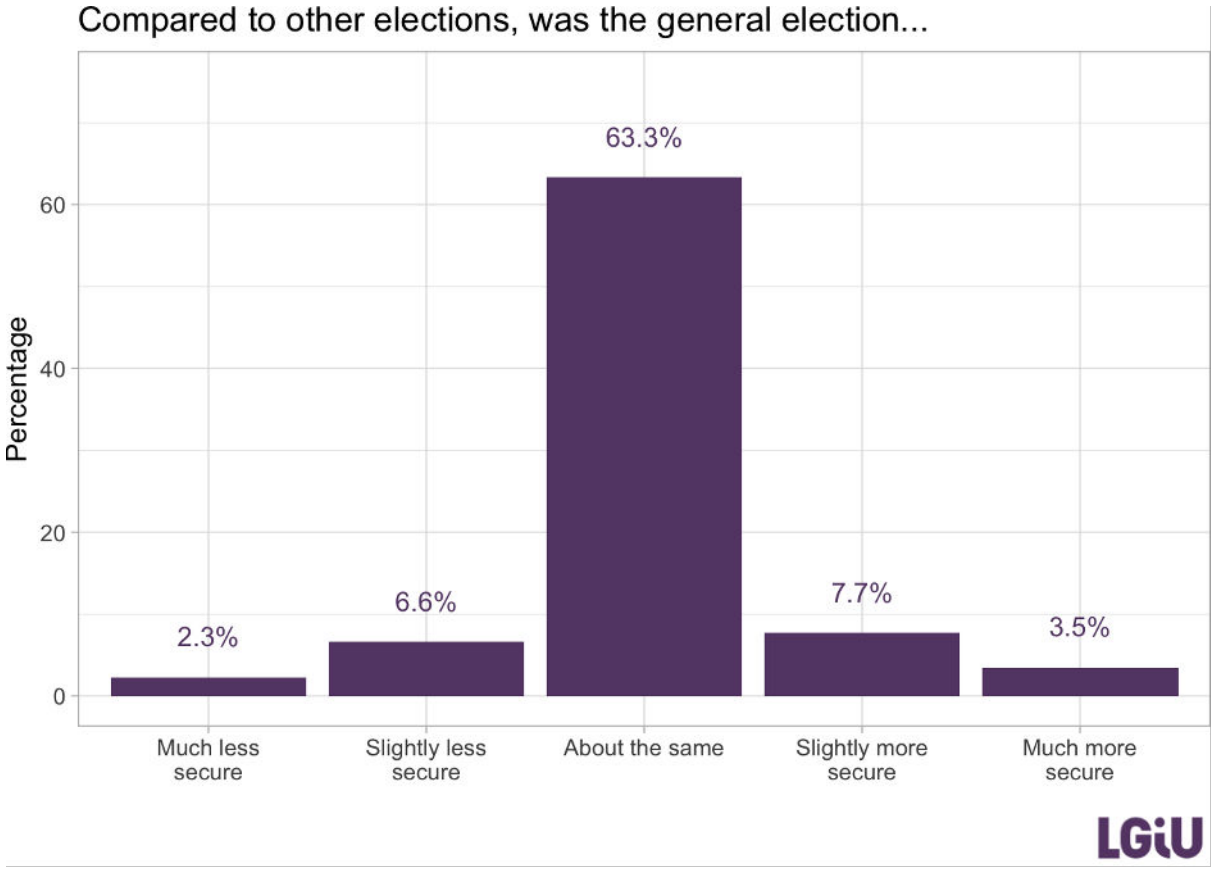
Electoral administrators have also been found to judge electoral processes based on their security: that is their vulnerability to intentional subversion, and the chance that they will result in harm unrelated to elections (such as abuse or identity theft) to people involved in the process (Stride 2023a). As we will see from this year, concerns over the intentional subversion of electoral processes remain very limited, but administrators did raise severe concerns about the abuse and harassment of temporary elections staff and electoral services staff at the 2024 general election.

Fraud

Electoral administrators did not consider electoral fraud to be a major issue at the 2024 general election. Concerns were on a par with their levels in 2020 or 2023 when similar questions were asked in England (Stride 2023a, Stride 2023b). Not a single respondent described personation as a problem in 2024, which is perhaps to be expected given it was never considered to be a significant issue (in 2023, 2% raised personation as a problem with elections - Stride 2023b), and should be almost impossible with the introduction of voter ID.

Other types of intentional subversion were also rarely raised as issues: postal vote fraud (under 5%), foreign influence on UK elections (15%) and intimidation/undue influence on voters (11%) were all considered to be a problem by a minority of administrators, all in proportions very similar to those found in previous studies.

The graph below demonstrates this well. The 2024 general election was considered to be roughly as secure as other elections.



Ballot Secrecy Act

However, the relatively similar results on the security of elections, belies the fact that there had been a significant change to the rules designed to bolster election security with the Ballot Secrecy Act (2023). We asked administrators their opinions on the act, which introduced a new offence for attempting to influence people in the polling station (Legislation.gov 2023).

> **"It went pretty much unnoticed and I honestly don't think it made much difference."**

> **"Seemed to have no effect in the polling station - electors don't pay attention anyway, and staff are too busy to act on all but the most egregious breaking of the legislation."**

> **"I think having provisions in place to reduce voters influencing other peoples' votes is good. I don't think in the majority of areas this is an issue but in some places it is more common. However in these particular areas this causes issues for polling station staff. If they raise this with an elector who they have suspicions that they might try and influence another elector, the voter can become aggressive and intimidating towards staff."**

Perhaps unsurprisingly given the similarity between the results of this survey and the results of previous surveys on the issues of security and intimidation of voters, the Ballot Secrecy Act (2023) was not considered to have had a major impact on the security of the election. Most electoral administrators reported having no comments on the changes.

Disturbances at polling stations

Thirty per cent of administrators responded saying they had reports of disturbances at polling stations. This is higher than the 17% who reported the same at the May 2023 local elections. Whether this is a statistically robust difference is difficult to say because of the difference in samples, but it is in line with both the predictions electoral administrators had about heightened tensions at the general election, and the expected increase in the opportunities for disturbances at a higher turnout election.

This is a significant issue for the security of elections, and in the future polling station staff need to be assured that they can discharge their duties without the threat of disturbances.

Abuse and harassment

Nobody working in public services, and indeed nobody under any circumstances, should have to deal with abuse or harassment. Shockingly, 60% of electoral administrators in our survey reported that they, or another member of their team, experienced abuse or harassment at the general election.

The written responses from electoral administrators expose a litany of abuse directed at them throughout the election. The majority of responses referred to abuse from electors, who were

often said to be irate about aspects of the electoral process. There were also a smaller number of references to candidates.

There were an extensive list of complaints, those that were mentioned frequently included:

- ➡ postal votes not arriving in time (domestic and overseas electors)
- ➡ EU electors not entitled to vote
- ➡ those who had missed key deadlines for registration or absent votes
- ➡ accusations of intentional corruption or disenfranchisement
- ➡ complaints over voter ID.

Although the existence of these complaints should not be seen to amplify the voices of those that were abusive to staff. The point here is not about the areas where members of the public experienced frustration, although that is important to note, the more important point is that the way in which these frustrations were voiced was to abuse and harass electoral services staff. More than half of all electoral administrators, the people who work under intense pressure to deliver elections, have reported abuse or harassment directed at their teams.

> **"At every election, you get verbal abuse from electors who feel that we haven't done all we can for them, even if we have! At this election, a lot of this came from electors who had issues receiving their postal votes."**

> **"The General Election really made me realise just how horrid the public can be, and it is only this election that really brings that out of people."**

> **"Angry electors blaming us, sometimes quite rudely, for disenfranchising them in whatever way possible, despite the vast majority of the situations being completely out of our hands."**

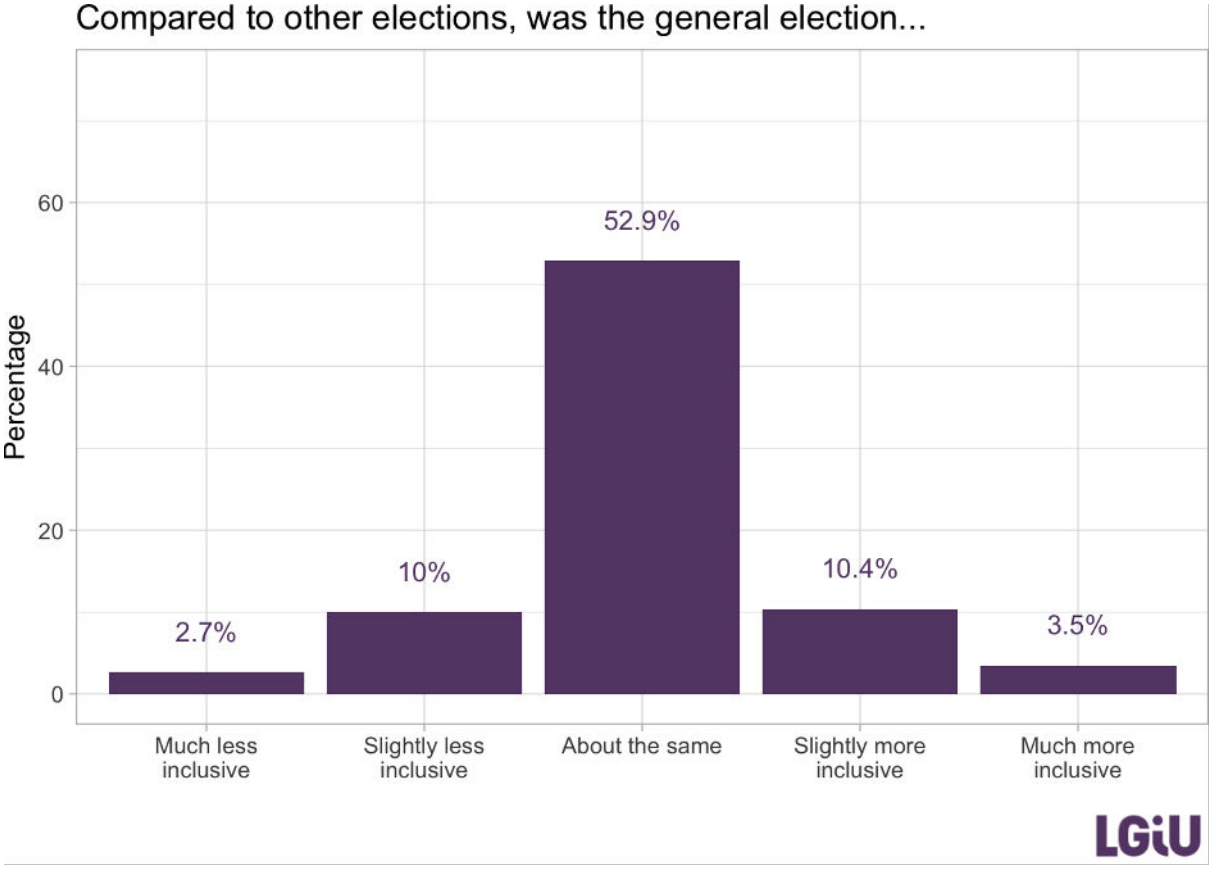
This abuse and harassment should not be tolerated, and should, in the view of the LGIU, be considered alongside the abuse of candidates and campaigners as an offence worthy of legal protections.

Security: Conclusion

The security of electoral processes is undeniably an important part of electoral integrity. However, the security of a process cannot only refer to its vulnerability to intentional subversion. It should be noted that a process cannot be considered secure if it places those responsible for the process in harm's way. In the case of electoral administrators, the abuse and harassment that they have reported in this survey is unacceptable, and should be tackled through targeted policies. This is not only important for ensuring the wellbeing of staff, and their protection from non-electoral harm, but also to ensure the long-term resilience of the profession and therefore electoral processes more generally.

Inclusivity

In terms of inclusivity, previous research has identified that electoral administrators value turnout and accessibility, essentially that the number of people who vote is maximised and that there are no significant differences in access to the vote between social groups (Stride 2023a).



Do you believe, based on what you heard, that any particular groups found it harder than average to vote because of voter ID requirements?	Number	Proportion of answers
Don't know/prefer not to say	53	22.8
No	122	52.6
Yes	57	24.6

Turnout

This general election has an historically low turnout at only 59.8% (Electoral Commission 2024). The lowest turnout of the registered population at a general election since 2001, and the lowest since the rollout of individual electoral registration. Research on the completeness and accuracy of the electoral register has concluded that millions of eligible electors are missing from the register, which implies that the true proportion of eligible electors who cast their votes is likely significantly lower than the 59.8% figure (James 2024).

However, compared to local elections this level of turnout is still high, which might be why electoral administrators were less concerned about turnout in 2024 (68% said it was a

problem) compared to 2023 (80%). Even considering this drop in the proportion judging turnout to be a problem, this was still easily the largest non-administrative problem identified by administrators.

Of the many factors that might affect turnout, electoral administrators usually only commented on the administrative. In written responses, these often related to electors not understanding processes, e.g, on the risks to elections:

> **"Voter lack of understanding of electoral processes – that postal votes aren't instant, that registration is not automatic, that you can't go to any polling station, that you need to apply for a postal vote separately to registration, what a qualifying address is if you're an overseas elector, etc."**

Although other administrators mentioned voter apathy and distrust of politicians as factors driving disengagement from the electoral process. On the other hand, electoral administrators did often mention the relative turnout of different groups, as well as the accessibility of electoral processes and the ways in which they were able to cater to different social groups with differing needs.

Equality

When electoral administrators talk about equality, what they are referring to most often is the idea that different social groups have roughly the same access to participation or that they participate at roughly similar rates (Stride 2023a). In this survey 31% of electoral administrators said they believed that barriers to participation for minority groups are a problem with elections today. This is similar to (or slightly lower than) the findings in previous research (Stride 2023a).

However, although this may suggest that there is no significant difference between the inclusivity of the 2024 general election and other elections, there were many written responses referring to how voter ID in particular can have a negative impact on rates of participation.

> **"[voter ID is a]n unnecessary measure which unfairly impacts on certain groups of electors due to small range of accepted ID. Even increasing range of ID is unnecessary as there was no problem in the first place and now high numbers of electors are disenfranchised."**

> **"Without a national ID scheme, it remains unfair for those who do not possess photo ID. At the very least the list must be expanded with attestation by a family or close member."**

> **"Disenfranchisement-such as ethnic minority and hard to reach groups not able to vote due to lack of voter ID, disabled voters not understanding how to use postal and proxy voting systems and overseas voters not able to use postal ballot within timescales."**

These reflect widespread concerns that voter ID has a more significant negative impact on participation rates for certain social groups (Fieldhouse et al 2024). Those referenced in the answer included older voters, those without ID, low income groups and black and minority ethnic voters, those in care homes, students and young people, people with disabilities, transgender people, and those in rural areas.

As in previous research (see Stride 2023b) there were also electoral administrators who said they had not seen evidence of any examples of particular groups disadvantaged by voter ID in their local authority area. Twenty-five per cent said they believed certain groups found it harder to vote than others due to voter ID, while over 50% said they did not.

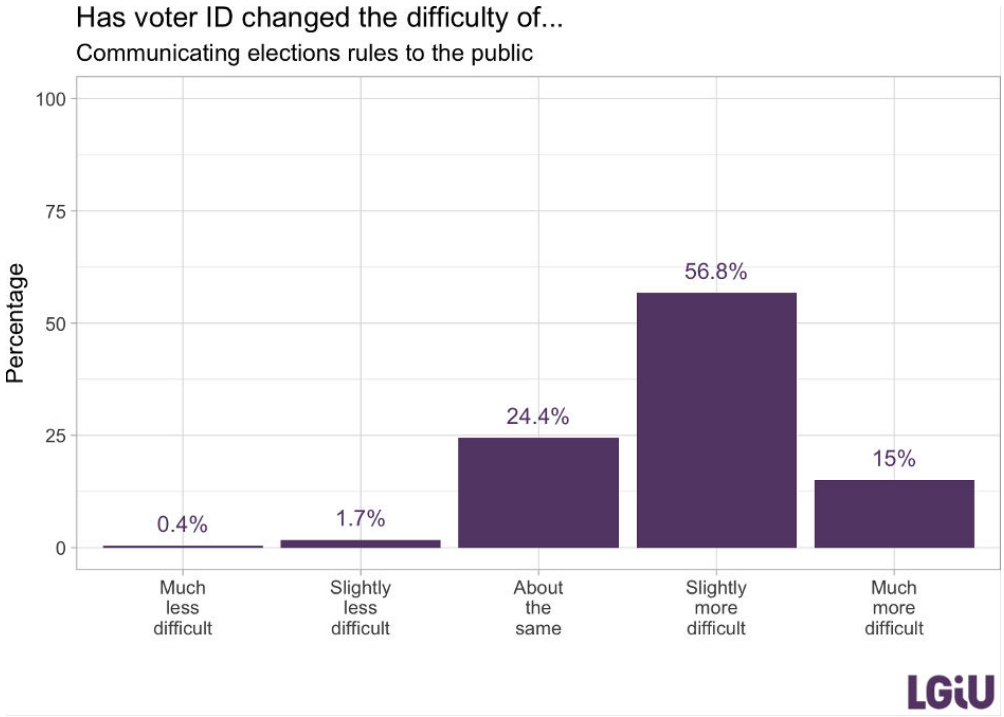
Administrators did occasionally suggest widening the types of ID accepted at polling stations:

> **"This works but more types of ID should be bought in to allow as many people to vote as possible, we shouldn't be putting more barriers in place."**

Or they raised how voter ID is more likely to have an adverse effect in places where there is no national ID – as in the United Kingdom, in comparison to countries where national ID is standard (see Barton 2022 for a list of international voter ID requirements).

> **"The voter ID works best when the country operates a national ID card (e.g. Spain), thus minimising this aspect [disproportionate impacts on some social groups.]"**

In this context, electoral administrators in England demonstrated concern that voter ID was making it more complicated to communicate election rules to the public, and that is still the case this year across the UK, where around 70% said it was increasing the difficulty.



More evidence from other types of research will be necessary to determine the impact of voter ID on different social groups – particularly within social groups that are harder to reach by traditional survey methods (such as disabled or transgender electors). From the evidence we have collected, electoral administrators appear to have mixed opinions about the effects of voter ID on the accessibility of elections.

Equally, when it comes to the other accessibility changes made in recent years (including changes to the support and equipment Returning Officer can offer in the polling station and the changes to who can accompany voters – Electoral Commission 2024b), there were administrators who expressed dissatisfaction with their capacity to meet new accessibility requirements, or who suggested ways in which voting could be made more accessible:

> **"With the new accessibility requirements, ROs will give a different level of service to those electors."**

However, these changes were not brought up in the evidence often, necessitating more focussed research on the experience of disabled electors.

Inclusivity: Conclusion

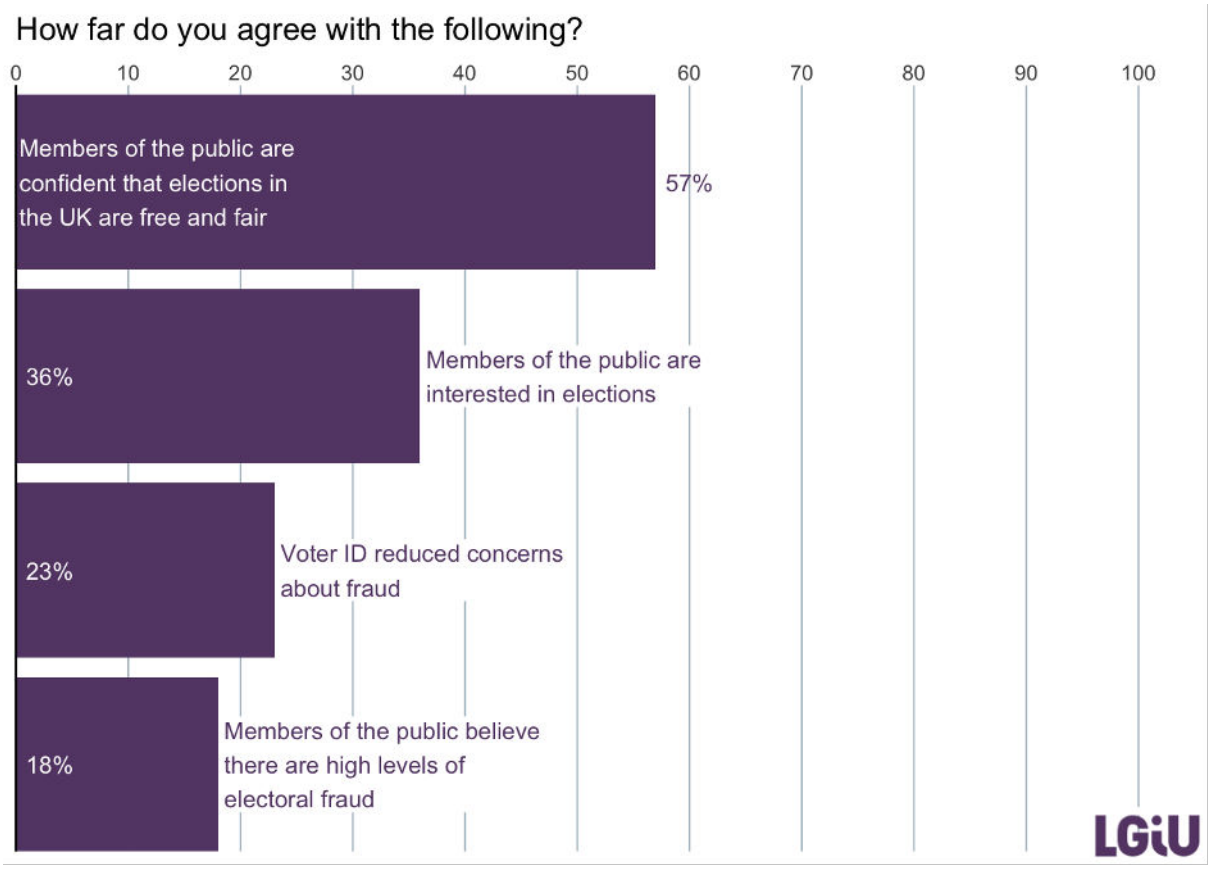
Despite the historically low turnout, and the new rules for elections that according to many observers and academics had the potential to exclude electors, there was no obvious difference between electoral administrators' views on the inclusivity of this general election and other elections (Stride 2024a, Stride 2024b). In general, electoral administrators judged the turnout and accessibility of these elections to be roughly similar to previous years (although differences in sampling make it hard to determine whether this could pass tests of statistical significance).

It is worth noting that many of the changes to the accessibility of elections had been tested across England and Wales in previous elections by July 2024. Also that in terms of turnout – electoral administrators have always expressed concerns in previous research, and that in comparison to the other elections that they run, the general election still sees the highest levels of turnout. Both of these facts would imply that we should not expect major changes to views of inclusivity in these elections.

The fact that this research does not indicate anything new is wrong with the inclusivity of elections does not imply that electoral administrators believe that elections are perfect in terms of their inclusivity, and 68% of respondents still pointed to turnout as a problem, while 31% said barriers to participation for minority groups was an issue. There is still work to be done to improve the accessibility and rates of participation of elections.

Public perceptions

Administrators are also acutely interested in public perceptions of elections. In general, electoral administrators have expressed their views that the public should be confident and interested in elections, and have expressed concerns about the type of public and political reaction that has driven the rejection of election results in other political contexts (Bright Line Watch 2024; Stride 2023a).



As demonstrated in the graph above, electoral administrators do generally believe members of the public are confident that elections are free and fair, and this proportion does not seem to have changed in recent years (57% is similar to the 60% we found when surveying English electoral administrators after the May 2023 local elections). Equally, around 18% of administrators agreed with the statement that "members of the public believe there are high levels of electoral fraud" which is still a low proportion, although higher than we would hope for given administrators' own views that electoral fraud is very rare. It should also be noted that electoral administrators are generally skeptical of the idea that voter ID has reduced public concerns about fraud which was one of the justifications for introducing the policy (Pickles 2016).

Assessments of the public's relative interest in elections are much worse than assessments of their confidence. At 36%, they are still significantly higher than the 20% measured at the English local elections in 2023. It is to be expected that electors are seen as more interested in a general election, where turnout tends to be much higher, but it would be worth additional research to explore why electoral administrators believe the public are not interested in elections and what, if anything, the electoral community can do to improve interest.

> **"One of the main risks is disinformation and misinformation through social media and other platforms can mislead voters and undermine trust in the electoral process."**

As one administrator pointed out, there are risks to perceptions of electoral integrity that administrators are not well placed to address, but where they will face the consequences of public mistrust. Chief amongst these is the risk of online misinformation, where electoral administrators must be assured that their administrative work, and their personal safety, will be protected.

Proposals for reform

We asked electoral administrators what changes, if any, they would make to the way electoral processes in the United Kingdom works. The most common reform suggested by electoral administrators was the extension of the election timetable. This follows a pattern from previous research, and fits with the proposals made by the Association of Electoral Administrators in their Blueprint for Modern Electoral Landscape (2021). This was often represented as being for the benefit of both administrators and electors:

> **"The timeline should be extended to enable elections staff to plan elections and for postal voters/overseas voters to return their postal ballot papers."**

In terms of other changes, the support and funding available for electoral services staff was deemed crucial, particularly considering the issues electoral administrators have spoken about for years in terms of their workload and wellbeing.

Concerning the issues electors had with postal voting, administrators suggested that there could be, at a minimum, better messaging for when electors can expect to get their postal vote, and when it will not longer be possible or likely for them to receive one.

The consolidation of electoral legislation as suggested by the AEA (2021) and the Law Commission (2020), was raised by many administrators. This should be introduced as a priority whenever there is a major change in electoral legislation next. Equally, the government should consider joint working with Scottish and Welsh governments to harmonise electoral law in policy areas where confusion is common, such as online postal vote applications

To tackle the issues with abuse and harassment of electoral administrators and disturbances in polling stations, the government should consider legal protections for election workers on a par with campaigners, as an equally important group in the functioning of electoral democracy.

Automatic registration

We asked a specific question to respondents about the introduction of automatic registration - a change that has been mooted as having a potential positive impact for both electors and administrators.

However, electoral administrators' responses were quite nuanced, with many saying that if it could decrease the workload for processing registrations and make it easier for electors then it could be welcomed, but that there are issues that need to be addressed: on the completeness and accuracy of the available data, how inaccurate registrations would be dealt with in decent time for an elector to be able to cast their vote, concerns over what additional work electoral administrators would expect to be able to do, data quality issues and variances between local authorities.

Any attempt to introduce automatic registration should be with electoral administrators - taking into account how the reforms may affect them, and how their expertise can be used to design the system in such a way that it reduces their workload, that it ensures the accuracy

and completeness of the electoral register, and that it improves the experience for elector.

> **"An excellent idea that would also hopefully result in the scrapping of the costly and ineffectual Annual Canvass."**

Conclusion

The 2024 general election was well-managed, delivered without significant issues across the UK, and in general resulted in a small number of visible issues. There were pockets of difficulty, such as with the delivery of postal votes, but we did not see widespread dissatisfaction with electoral processes, or attempts to discount the results, as you might expect in the event of a contested election. From the surface, all appears to be working as intended.

However, many administrators raised with us problems that we, as outside observers, would be unlikely to see. Administrators are still going above and beyond to deliver elections, working extraordinary hours under difficult circumstances, wrestling with complex legislation and ever-shifting requirements, and contending with significant abuse and harassment. The experience of electoral services staff is not separate from the delivery of elections, they are intrinsically linked.

This has to change. Elections are a crucial part of UK democracy, and they should not be dependent on the goodwill of staff, who are overworked and under-supported.

This survey has found several reasons to be concerned about the ongoing capacity of electoral administrators to deliver elections while remaining protected from abuse and harassment and not having to endure intolerable working conditions.

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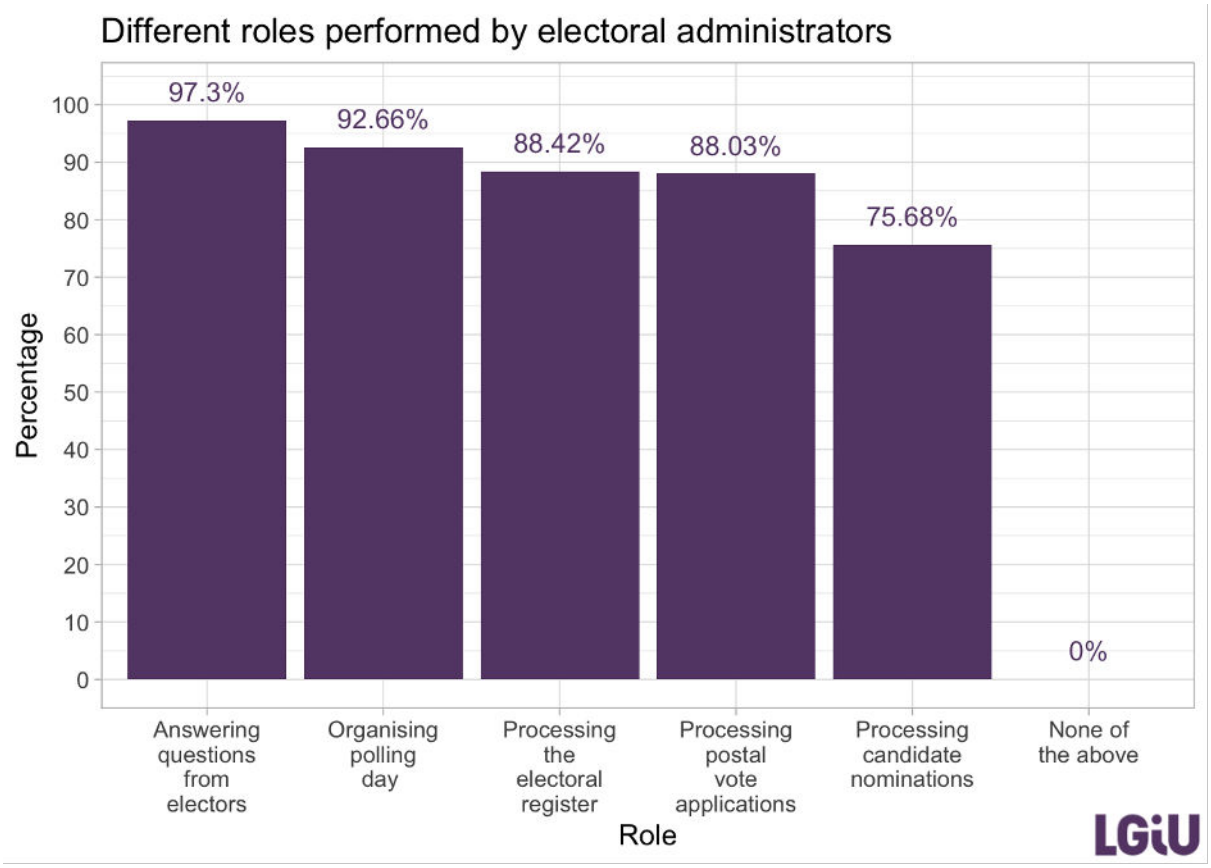
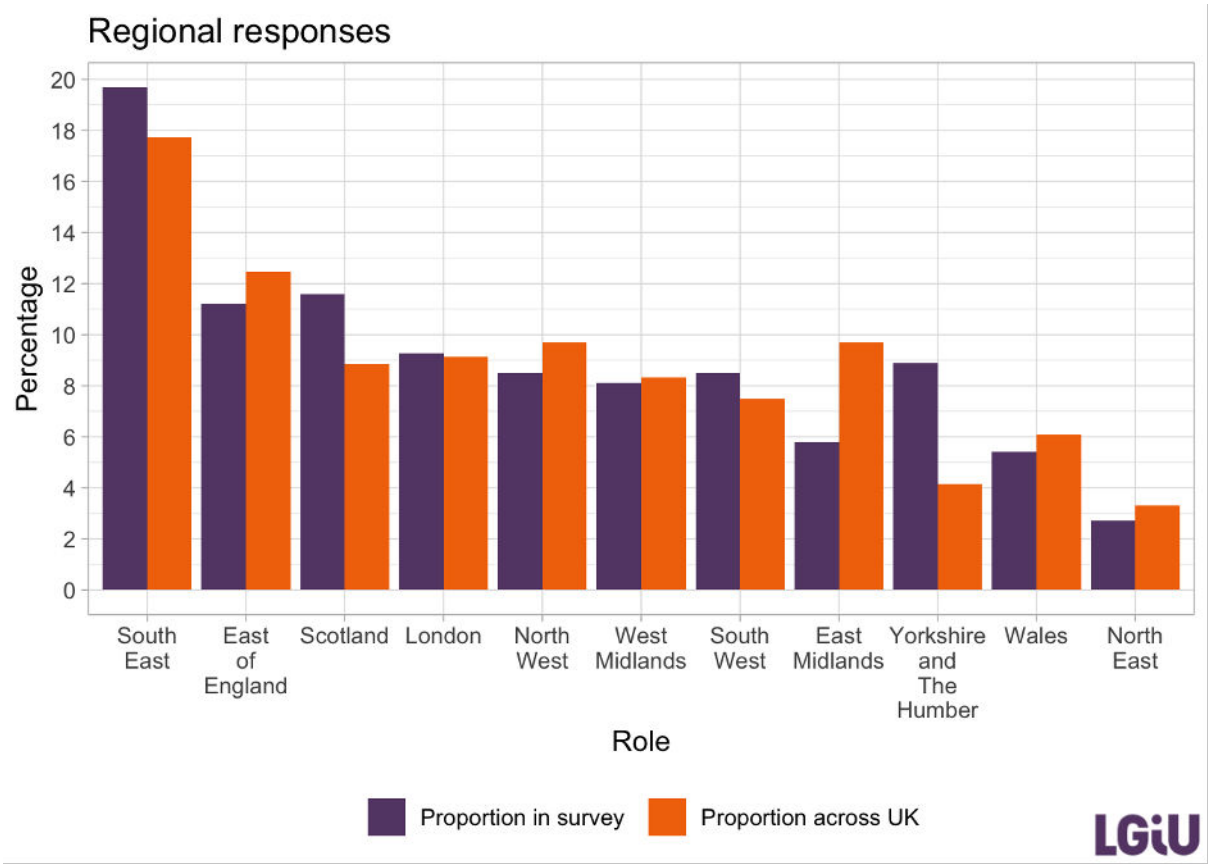
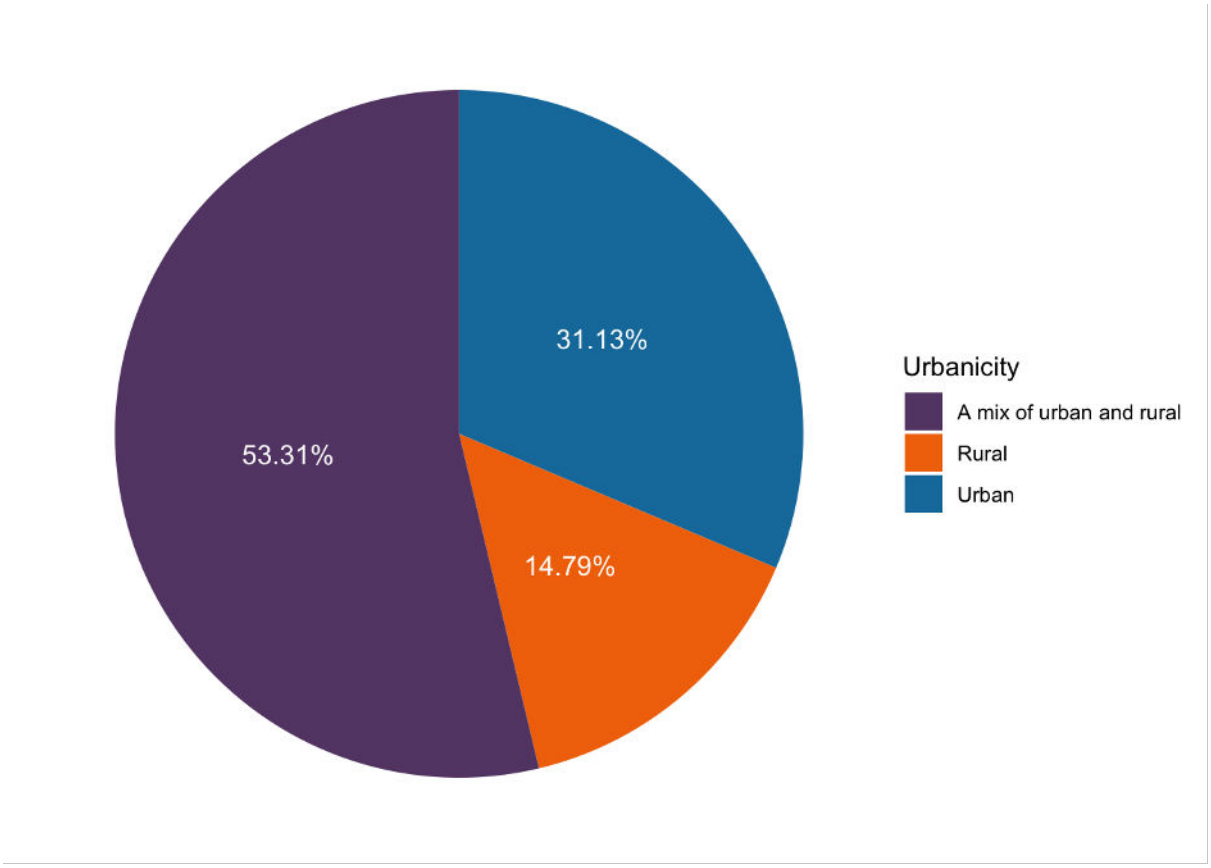
Appendix: Response rates






31.13%
53.31%
14.79%
Urbanicity
A mix of urban and rural
Rural
Urban

More from LGIU

Future Local Lab

Launched in January 2025, Future Local Lab is a holistic programme of resources to help local government prepare for and respond to the emerging challenges facing the sector internationally. From embracing the opportunities of new technology to tackling the threats of climate change, join us for ideas and inspiration. Explore the Lab and sign up.

LGIU@40: For the future of local government

Since 1983, LGIU has supported our members with the insights, ideas and connections they need to navigate a changing world. Based on research the LGIU has undertaken over the last decade and on a programme of in-depth conversations with our members, this manifesto sets out what we believe needs to happen to set local government on the right path for the next forty years. Read the manifesto.

Navigating risk in local government: challenge, change and capacity

This report – supported by Browne Jacobson and ALARM – explores how the role of risk managers is evolving and makes recommendations to ensure that a healthy and dynamic approach to risk management prevails across local governments. Read the report.

Learning from local government finance across the world

Over the last 10 years, a sustained failure to properly fund local services in England has become undeniable. We know local government finance in England is broken, the next question is: how can we fix it? To answer this, the LGIU's Local Democracy Research Centre has worked with a team of experts, led by Professor Kevin Muldoon-Smith at the University of Northumbria, to see how other countries have managed it. Read the report.

Latest on local government finance and devolution in England

Following the government's Devolution Priority Programme announcement and the final Local Government Finance Settlement, experts from LGIU's Local Democracy Research Centre dissected what these announcements mean for the sector. Read this briefing.

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