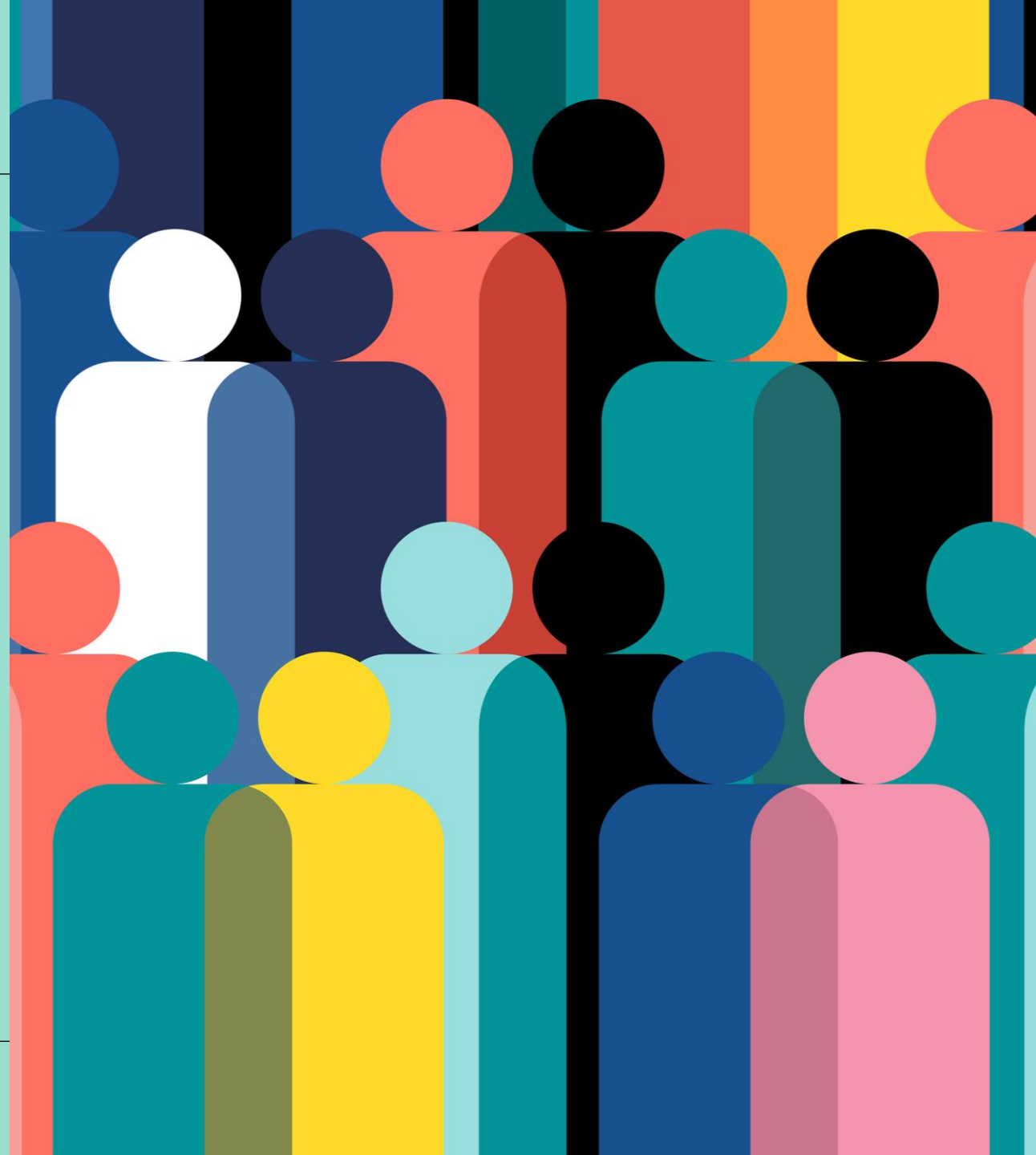


# Current issues in survey data collection

Paul Bradshaw

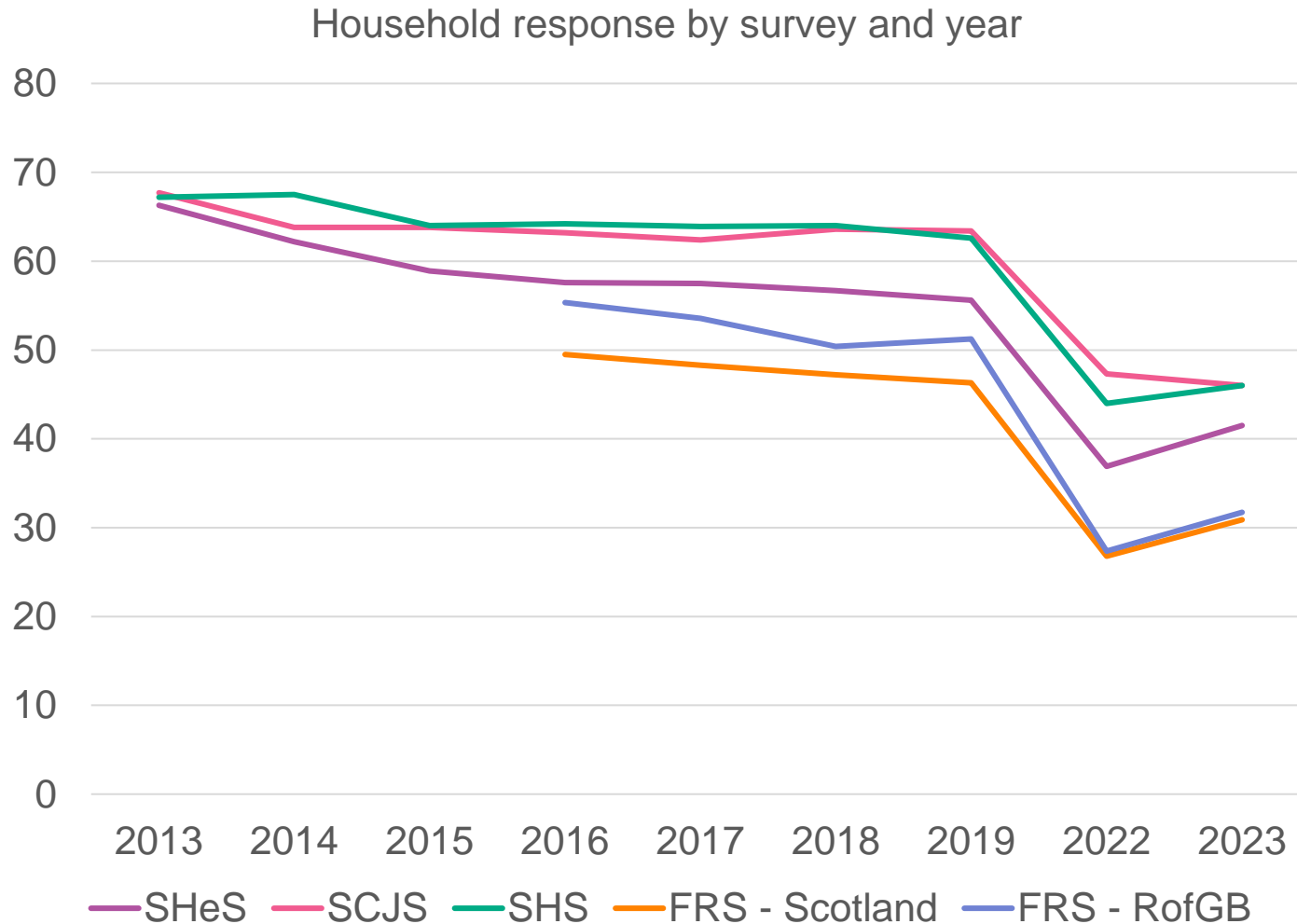


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# Overview

- What do we know about changes in response?
  - Is Scotland different?
  - What can we say about why response has decreased?
- Interviewer issues
  - Covering rural and remote populations
- Some thoughts on sampling
  - The potential of administrative data

## Changes in response – is Scotland different?

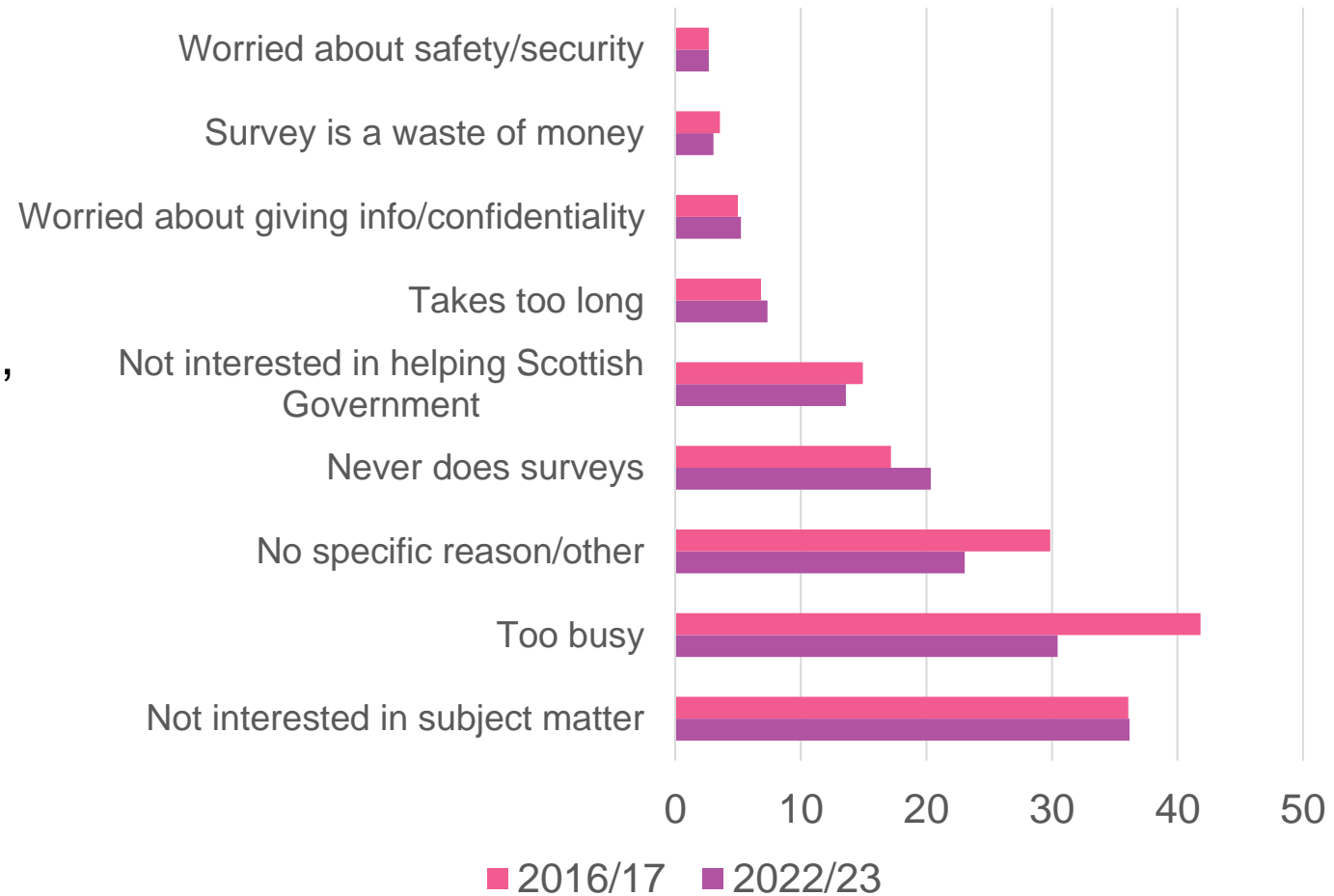


- Not particularly
- FRS response in rest of GB follows similar trend to Scottish surveys
- Scottish FRS response consistently marginally lower than rest of GB
- Similar patterns of refusal and non-contact rates between Scotland and rest of GB (until recently)

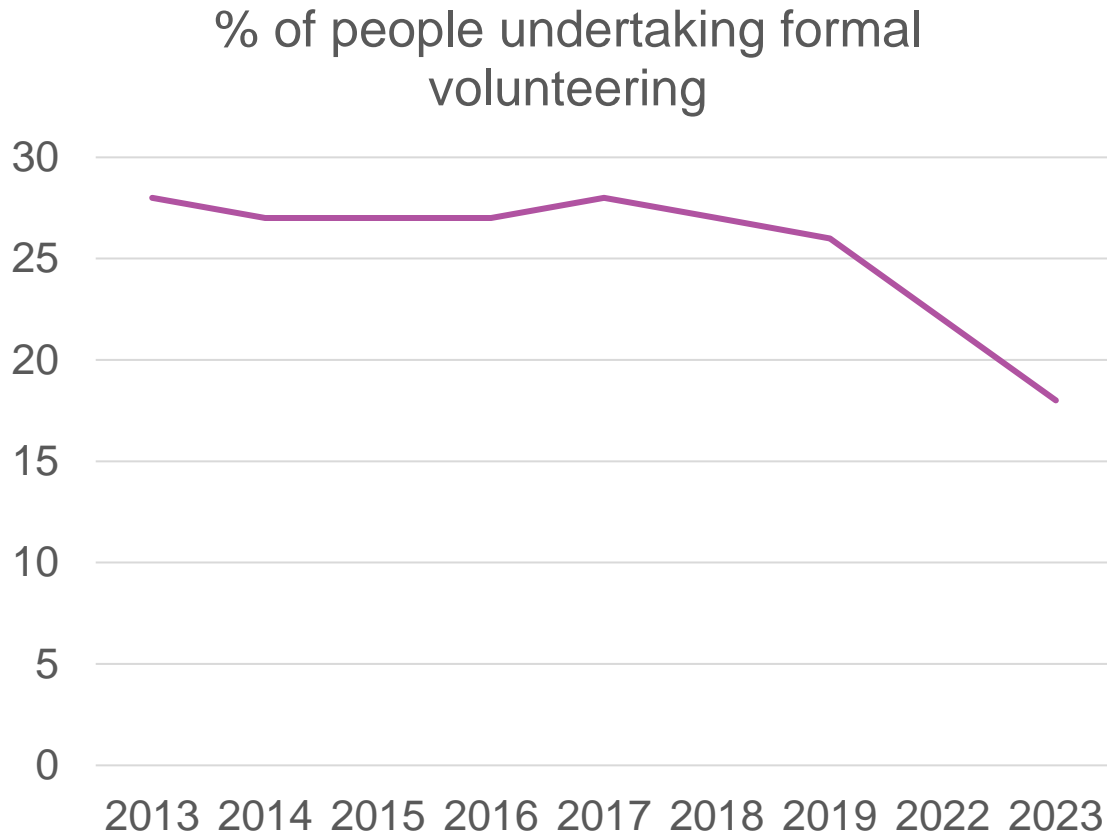
# Why do people refuse?

- Data is indicative only
- Some change over time (perhaps due to coding):
  - Decrease in 'too busy'
  - Decrease in 'other'/'no specific reason'
- But dominant reasons persist:
  - Too busy
  - Not interested
  - Indifference?

Reasons for refusal on SCJS by survey year

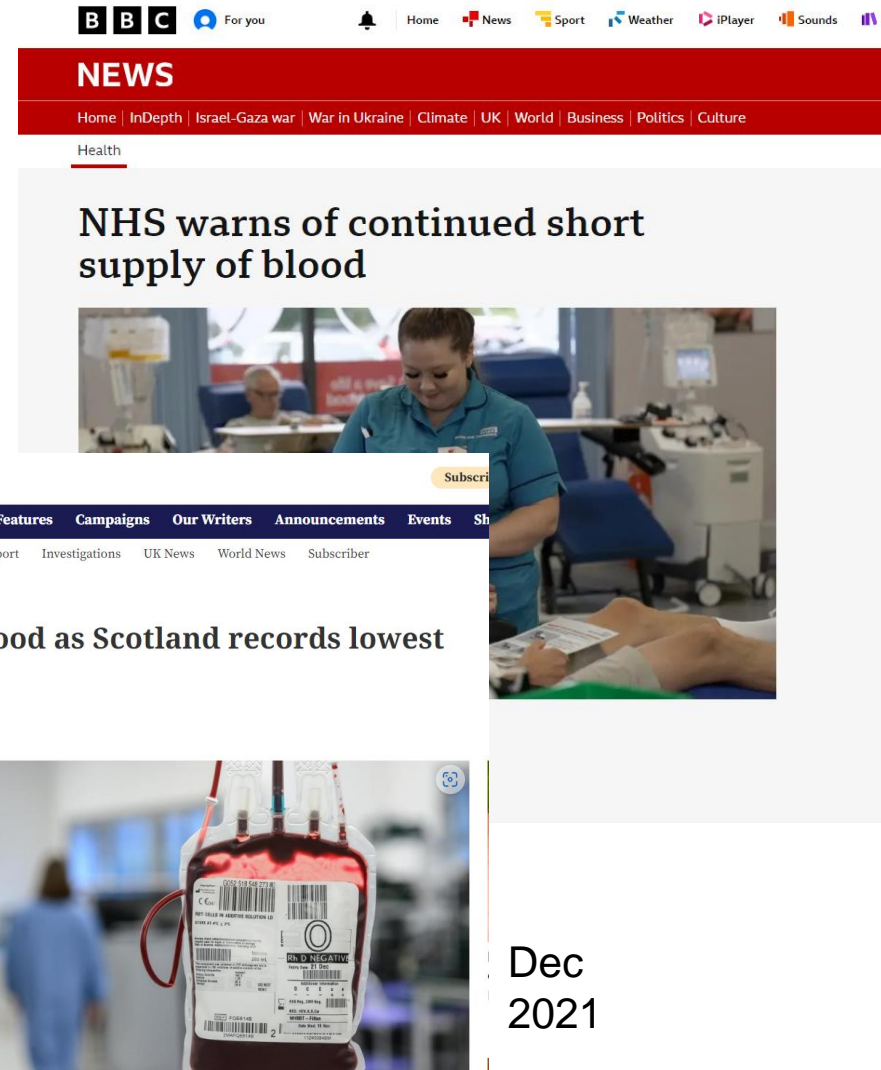


## Is there a wider societal participation issue?

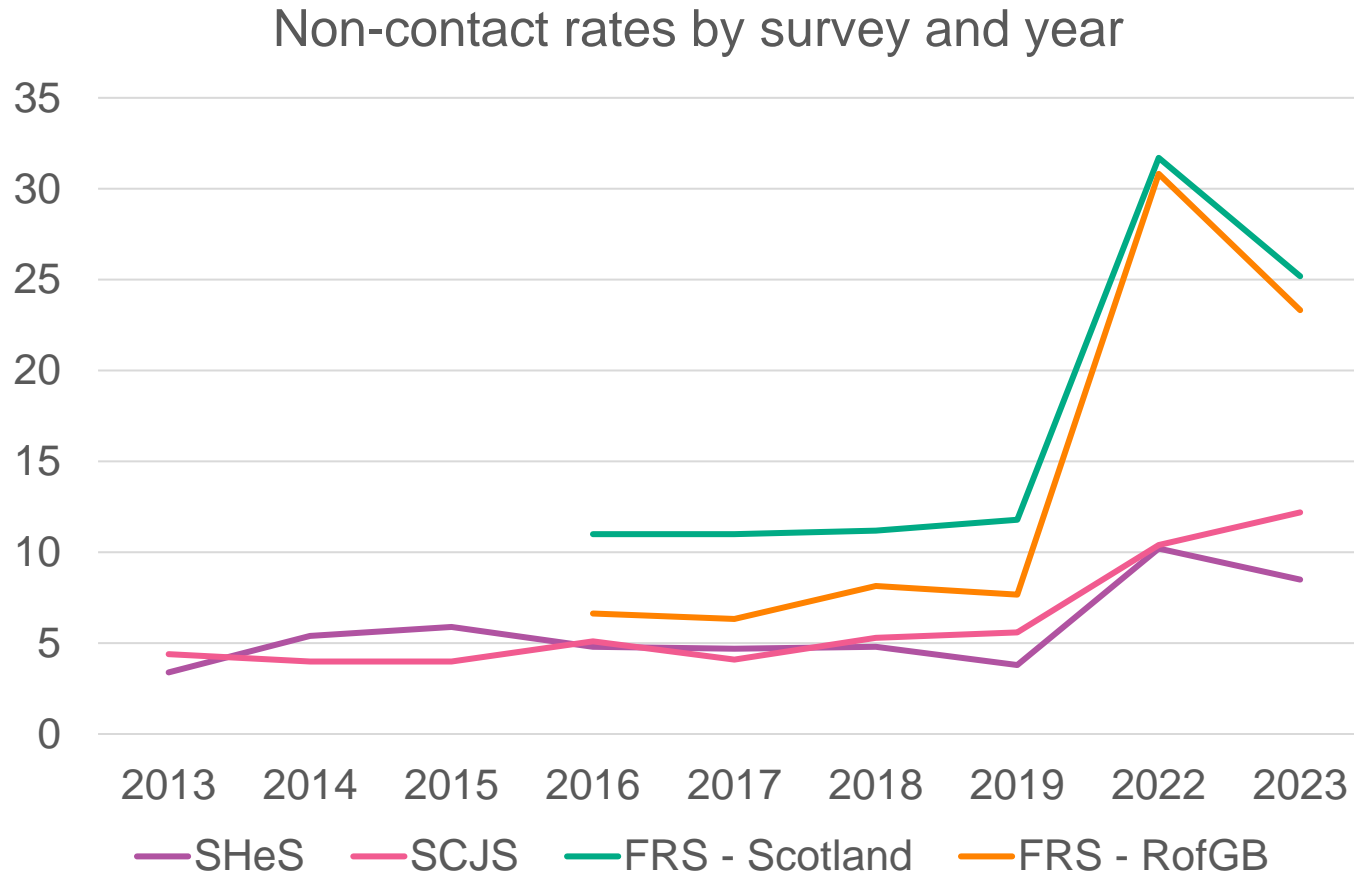


Volunteering - Scottish Household Survey Statistics, 2023

July  
2024



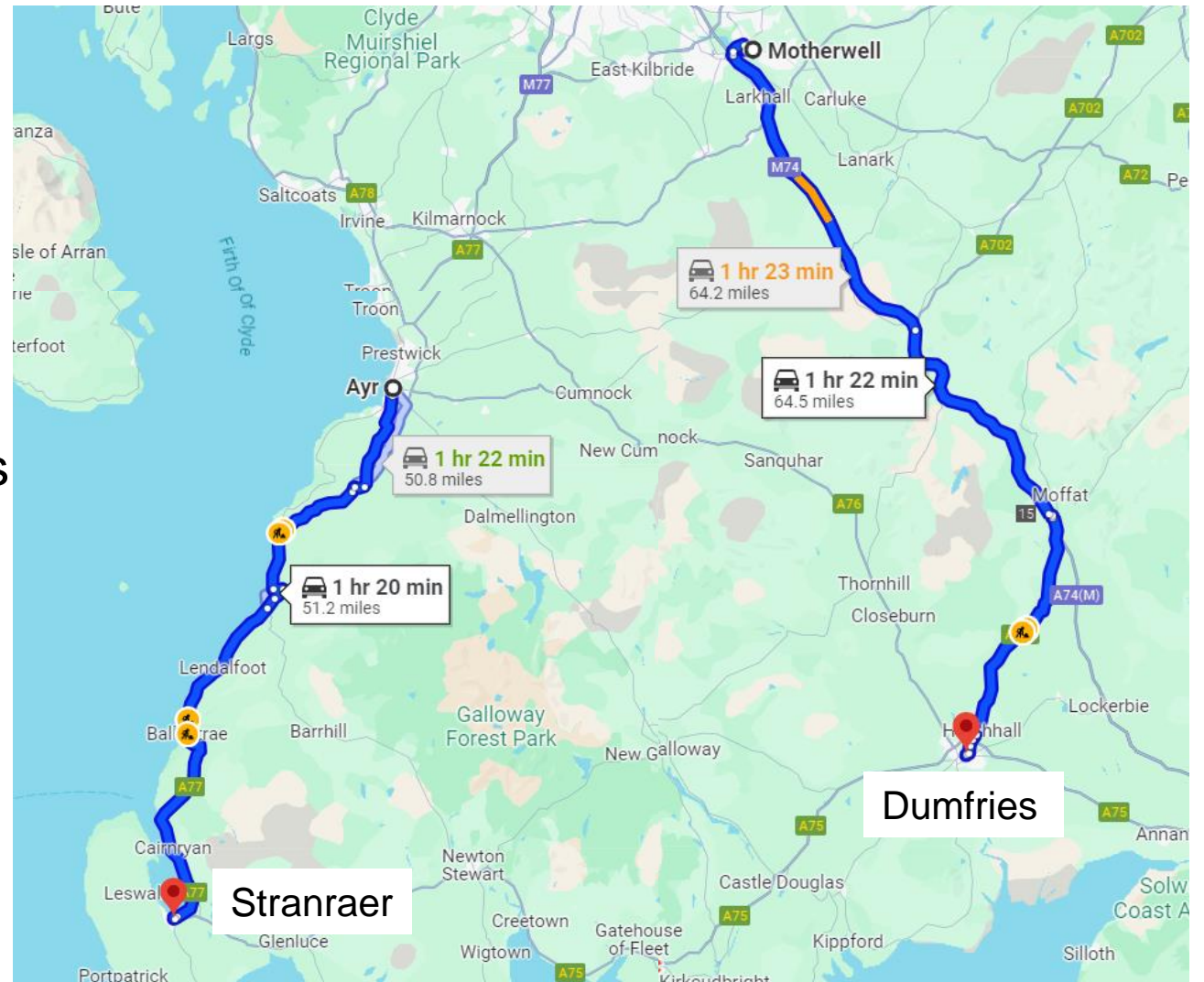
## Interviewer issues – non-contact



- NC rates fairly static over 2013-2019
- FRS rates consistently higher and slightly higher in Scotland than rest of GB
- All surveys see an increase post-pandemic
- Notably larger increase in FRS overall
- This has persisted in 24/25 for Scotland but not rest of GB

# A lesson in Scottish geography

- Difficulties with recruitment and retention post-pandemic meaning reduced panel size
- Lack of full geographic coverage
- Not just an issue in highlands and islands but in other remote and rural areas
- Increased travel time reduces strike rate and efficiency
- Challenge with fully covering all addresses



# Cost-effective ‘mobile’ fieldwork an increasing challenge

## Record number of overseas tourists visit Scotland in 2023



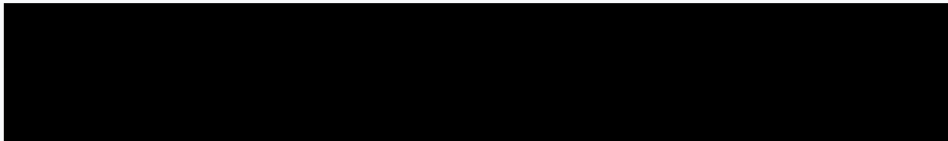
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News / Highlands & Islands

## Is Scotland’s version of Route 66 on the road to ruin?

Many believe the North Coast 500 tourist trail has become too popular for its own good.



## Visits to Skye's Storr could hit post-pandemic high



GETTY IMAGES

The Storr is an area of volcanic geology



The North Coast 500 route is being overrun by visitors with campervans said to be a particular problem

## Tourists told 'stay away' from overly popular UK attraction that is driving locals out

The Scottish North Coast 500 has only been running for five years, yet has become

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## Some thoughts on sampling

- Survey commissioners and funders want views of specific sub-groups (e.g. parents, school pupils, service users, benefit recipients, younger/older adults) including seldom heard and under-represented groups (e.g. ethnic minorities, people with a disability, care experienced) – with lower response, are we increasingly missing these groups?
- Household surveys rely on PAF
  - Complete coverage but offers little to nothing on characteristics of residents
- Budgets and timescales do not always allow a robust, probability approach to sampling – but solutions are possible, e.g.
  - Random probability panels
  - Enhancing PAF via health administrative records (SHeS Child Boost, HAGIS)
  - Birth registrations linked to health administrative records
- Potential for a population spine suitable for survey sampling?

# Thank you

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