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Taking England Seriously: The New English Politics

The Future of England Survey 2014

**Charlie Jeffery, Richard Wyn Jones,
Ailsa Henderson, Roger Scully and Guy Lodge**

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1. Introduction

Scotland's big question was resolved on 18 September 2014. Early the next morning David Cameron opened up the English question, announcing:

I have long believed that a crucial part missing from this national discussion is England. We have heard the voice of Scotland – and now the millions of voices of England must also be heard. The question of English votes for English laws – the so-called West Lothian question – requires a decisive answer.

So, just as the Scottish No vote was to lead to rapid progress to additional devolution for Scotland, so it also opened up in the Prime Minister's analysis a pressing need to give people in England a distinctive voice in how they are governed.

As this report shows the Prime Minister, though he may have been pursuing a tactical line to isolate Labour on the English issue, has a point. It presents the findings of the third Future of England Survey carried out in April 2014 following earlier surveys in the summer of 2011 and autumn 2012. The 2014 survey presents further evidence that England has a distinctive politics that combines a politicisation of English national identity with an increasingly clear political prospectus, and an increasingly vocal advocate for that prospectus.

The rallying point is an English desire for self-government. Some of that desire is defined by a continuing sense that Scotland has privileges that are unjustly denied to England. Some also has to do with a perceived loss of political control due to European integration, which in policy and practical terms is related to a perceived loss of control over immigration.

But people in England are not just reacting against their 'others' in Scotland and the EU. They are also searching more positively for an institutional recognition of England that can express their concerns better than the current political system, which submerges the representation of England within the wider UK's institutions in Westminster and Whitehall. From the various alternatives, the most preferred one is English votes on English laws in the House of Commons.

People in England are also searching for advocates to press their case. They do not readily see such advocates in the major parties in the House of Commons, even though some backbenchers, mainly but not exclusively Conservative, do appear to recognise specifically English concerns. More by default than by design the United Kingdom Independence Party appears to have become a vessel for those concerns. UKIP's prominence in 2014 – its victory in the European Parliament elections in May, the apparent omnipresence of Nigel Farage's continually cheery and Teflon-coated visage, and the Carswell and Reckless defections from the Conservative party – has drawn heavily on prevailing sentiment in England.

The opportunity is there (despite the 'UK' in its title) for UKIP to nurture the English and their desire for self-government. The big question is whether the other parties will cede that ground to them, or whether they will, at last, come to take England, the English, and the way they are governed seriously.

2. The Future of England Survey in 2014

The Future of England Survey (FoES) was funded under the Future of the UK and Scotland programme of the Economic and Social Research Council. Fieldwork was conducted by YouGov between 11-22 April 2014. The online survey included a sample of 3705 adults (age 18+) in England. For the first time we added samples of 1014 Scottish and 1027 Welsh respondents to allow us to identify whether views in England were similar to those held by Scottish and Welsh residents.

Our questions were designed to build on, and explore further, key findings of our earlier surveys in 2011 and 2012.² Among the consistent findings in our earlier surveys were:

- *Deep dissatisfaction* among people in England with the way England is governed through UK-wide institutions in Westminster and Whitehall. No matter how we asked the question – and we tried varying question formats – the status quo attracted support from no more than a quarter of respondents. There was less clarity on alternatives: none of the widely-cited options command clear majority support. But institutional alternatives with an England-wide reach (English votes for English laws in the House of Commons, or an English Parliament) were far more popular than alternatives of strengthening regional or local government within England
- Strong '*devo-anxiety*': a perception that devolution has conferred advantages on Scotland (also but to a lesser extent on Wales, less so still on Northern Ireland) that were unfair to England, notably around the West Lothian Question and levels of public spending.
- A *strong Euroscepticism* that appeared, relative to findings from other surveys, to be stronger in England than in Scotland and Wales. We also had some, though limited, evidence that concern about immigration was especially strong in England.
- As outlined in our 2013 report, dissatisfactions with both of England's unions – the UK and the EU – were strongly related to one another, and were felt most strongly by those people in England who claimed an *English rather than a British identity*. Black and minority ethnic people in England were among those least likely to hold these dissatisfactions.

² These findings were reported and analysed in two reports. See Richard Wyn Jones, Guy Lodge, Ailsa Henderson and Daniel Wincott, *The dog that finally barked: England as an emerging political community* (Institute for Public Policy Research, 2012) and Richard Wyn Jones, Guy Lodge, Charlie Jeffery, Glen Gottfried, Roger Scully, Ailsa Henderson and Daniel Wincott, *England and its two unions: The anatomy of a nation and its discontents* (Institute for Public Policy Research, 2013). The reports are available at <http://www.ippr.org/publications/the-dog-that-finally-barked-england-as-an-emerging-political-community> and <http://www.ippr.org/publications/england-and-its-two-unions-the-anatomy-of-a-nation-and-its-discontents>.

- These dissatisfactions did not vary significantly by region within England. These were clearly *England-wide* sentiments.
- Finally, there was an emergent party-political dimension to England's dissatisfactions. UKIP was identified as the best advocate for English interests (the best of a bad bunch, it has to be said), while UKIP supporters generally exceeded even Conservatives as the most dissatisfied with how England is governed, and the most devo-anxious, as well as being the most Eurosceptic.

Reflecting further on our earlier findings when designing the 2014 survey, we developed the idea that a political 'project' was forming in England around the question 'who governs us?' Put simply, people in England see a democratic deficit in the way they are governed and are looking for a remedy in the form of self-government. We believe there are four 'pillars' which underpin this self-government project. The first three are about different dimensions of the democratic deficit. They are the main inspirations behind the growing demand for self-government. They have to do with: *Scotland*, compared to which people in England feel disadvantaged and under-represented; *the EU*, over which there is a sense of lack of control in England; and *immigration* where we also find that sense of lack of control.

The fourth pillar of England's self-government project concerns the *institutional arrangements* through which the democratic deficit should be remedied.

We used these four pillars to frame the questions posed in the 2014 survey. We were able to explore the perception of England's disadvantage relative to Scotland in the light of Scotland's independence debate, as well as through issues addressed in our earlier surveys.

On Europe and immigration (which we explored in greater detail in 2014 than in earlier surveys) we introduced a comparative element. We did so in the light of debate about whether attitudes in England towards European integration and immigration are actually different from those in other parts of the UK. So we flanked our main 2014 survey in England with parallel, simultaneous surveys in Scotland and Wales. Comparison across the three nations enables us to be clear how far Euroscepticism, and concerns about immigration, are distinctively or disproportionately *English* phenomena.

The fourth pillar of England's self-government project concerns the institutional arrangements through which perceived deficits might be addressed. In the 2014 survey we sought to explore further the evidence of demand for all-of-England, as compared to alternative regional or local, solutions to England's democratic deficit. Is there a genuine demand for English votes for English laws or some other England-wide institutional solution?

As we discuss these four pillars of the English self-government project we explore the relationship of each to national identity in England. In our earlier research we found that

dissatisfaction and Englishness were strongly and positively associated with one another. We take this further in the 2014 survey: exploring how far English national identity suffuses the self-government project or, to put it another way, how far this project is a *nationalist* project which expresses the politicisation of the national identity of Englishness within England.

We also take forward our analysis of party politics in England by exploring how the party affiliations of our respondents map onto political attitudes. We explore the varying extents to which supporters of particular parties identify with the different pillars of the English self-government project. We aim to develop a sense, through considering the views of those supporters, of which parties appear best-placed to be the advocates in addressing English concerns over how they are governed. Put simply, is there a political party ready and able to take up a nationalist project in England?

As will become clear, we think UKIP has the potential to be an English nationalist party. In the final section of the report we return to this question by exploring in more depth the social and attitudinal bases of UKIP's support, and with that the scope for UKIP to establish itself as an enduring feature of an English party system.

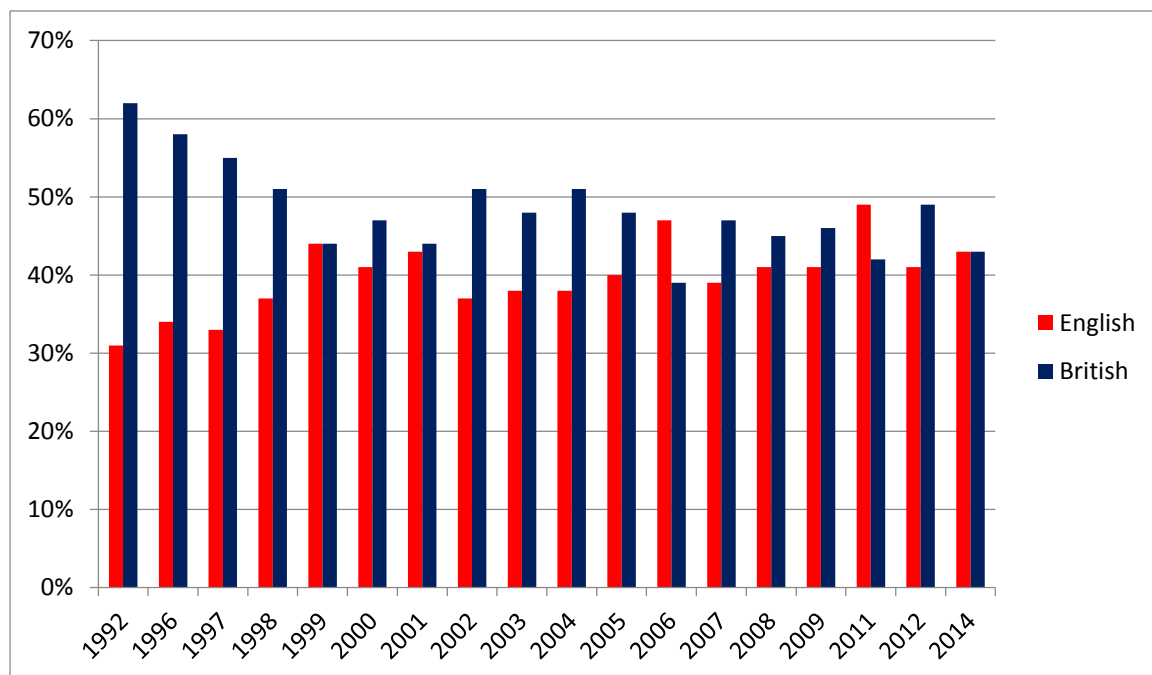
We develop these thoughts below, exploring in turn the four pillars of the English self-government project, and the party politics of English nationalism. First, though, we provide initial data on national identity, which runs through our analysis of the four pillars.

3. Englishness and Britishness in England

In our previous reports (Wyn Jones *et al* 2012, 2013) we sought to identify the relative strength of English compared with British national identity among people in England. Here we up-date those previous findings with data from 2014.

One standard measure asks respondents which one out of a list of national identities ‘best describes the way you think of yourself’. Responses to this ‘forced choice’ measure in England are dominated by ‘English’ and ‘British’.³ Figure 1 below displays responses to the three FoES surveys. In 2011, we found English identity to be slightly more prominent than British identity. Our 2012 survey saw the relative strengths of the two identities flip. In our new survey, Englishness and Britishness are exactly equal, with 43% of respondents choosing each.

Figure 1: Exclusive National Identity, England 1992-2014



Source: 1992, 1997 British Election Study, 2011-2014 Future of England Survey, all other years British Social Attitudes Survey

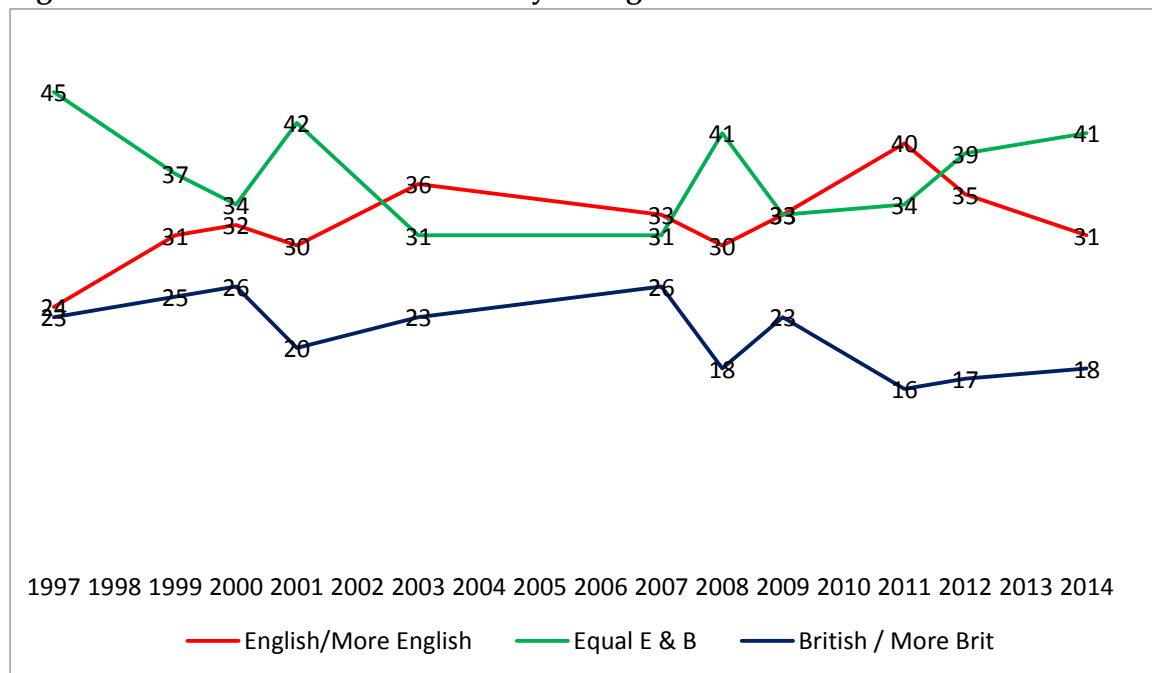
If we examine these trends over time, we see a gradual reduction in the proportion of people describing themselves as British. The increase in support for English identity appears to occur in waves, rising to heights in 1999 – just as the devolved legislatures held their first elections – then 2006, and again in 2011, when the Future of England Survey was first

³ Other options, including Scottish, Welsh and Irish, were available to respondents, but chosen by very few.

conducted. We do not see a marked decrease in Britishness and matched increase in Englishness. English and British identity both appear strong in England. This distinguishes identity in England from identity in Scotland and Wales, where there are similar proportions as in England prioritizing a sub-state identity but significantly lower proportions of people using 'British' as the best way to describe themselves

There are, however, different ways to ask about identity and a more pronounced message seems to come from another common measure, the long-standing 'Linz/Moreno' measure, which asks respondents to locate themselves on one of five points on a single spectrum ranging from exclusively English to exclusively British. When we look at trends over time within England (as in Figure 2 below), the data for the Linz/Moreno measure also shows flux. But across the period, and by a significant amount, the 'more English' categories have come to outweigh the 'more British' categories. In 1997, for example, the proportion of people describing themselves as English only, or more English than British, was similar to the proportion prioritising their sense of Britishness. Since then a sizeable gap has opened between the two, with almost twice as many people in England choosing to prioritise their English identity over a British one.

Figure 2: Linz/Moreno National Identity in England 1997-2014



SOURCE: 1997-2009, British Social Attitudes Survey, 2011-2014 Future of England Survey

Finally, we deployed a new measure of national identity for the first time in the 2014 FoES. Respondents were asked 'to describe to what extent you think of yourself as English' (where 0 meant 'not at all English', and 10 meant 'very strongly English'). They were also asked to make an assessment of their Britishness on a similar 0-10 scale. We put the equivalent

questions to respondents in our parallel Scottish and Welsh surveys. The results are set out in Table 1. Unsurprisingly, British identity is weakest in Scotland and strongest in England. But English identity in England is almost as strong as Scottish identity in Scotland, and significantly stronger than Welsh identity in Wales. Within England, both Englishness and Britishness are strong with a slightly higher average score for Britishness.

Using these two separate scales allows for the possibility that people may feel a strong – or weak – sense of identification with both England and Britain simultaneously. And, indeed, in England, two scales correlate positively, that is many feel strongly English and strongly British. In Wales and Scotland, by contrast, the correlation is both weaker and negative. That is, the more Welsh or Scottish someone feels, the less British they are likely to feel. Despite the fact that a sizeable portion of the electorate in Scotland and Wales feels an overlapping identity with both Britain and Scotland/Wales, for a significant number of people the relationship has come to feel more of a zero-sum game: one is either more Scottish/Welsh or more British. England has not, for most people, reached that point. Many people in England still feel both strongly English and British.

Table 1: 0-10 Scale National Identities

| | <i>England</i> | <i>Scotland</i> | <i>Wales</i> |
|--------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| British: | | | |
| 0-10 average | 8.35 | 6.49 | 7.65 |
| % giving score of 0 | 2 | 9 | 4 |
| % giving score of 10 | 46 | 27 | 41 |
| English/Scottish/Welsh: | | | |
| 0-10 average | 8.12 | 8.28 | 6.63 |
| % giving score of 0 | 4 | 6 | 16 |
| % giving score of 10 | 49 | 55 | 39 |

Our overall conclusion is that the two national identities, English and British, are about equally strong in England. The question that follows is whether differences in national identity are associated with differences in political attitudes. As we discuss the four pillars of the English self-government project below we will at each stage examine whether identity differentiates attitudes, using the evenly balanced forced choice measure (43% English, 43% British from Figure 1). As will become clear, while many people in England do feel both British and English, those who emphasise Englishness differ in some distinct, interesting and politically important ways.

4. The Four Pillars of the New English Politics

A. Devo-Anxiety and the Scottish Referendum

A common theme in our series of FoES surveys has been that people in England do not feel they get a good deal in the post-devolution era. That theme persists in 2014, although as with national identity it is in some respects slightly less potent than in our earlier surveys. For example Table 2 shows perceptions in England of whether England and Scotland get a fair share of UK public spending. As in earlier surveys, many more respondents think England gets less than its fair share than think it gets more; the opposite is the case for Scotland. But in each case there has been a drift into the 'Don't Know' column which has at least limited the starkness of the perception of unfairness. Perhaps debate around the Scottish referendum confused rather than clarified the issue.

Table 2: Fair Shares of Public Spending?

| | 2011 | 2012 | 2014 |
|---------------------------|------|------|------|
| England | | | |
| Gets fair share | 26 | 27 | 25 |
| Gets more than fair share | 7 | 8 | 8 |
| Gets less than fair share | 40 | 40 | 31` |
| Don't know | 27 | 24 | 36 |
| | | | |
| Scotland | | | |
| Gets fair share | 21 | 18 | 20 |
| Gets more than fair share | 45 | 52 | 38 |
| Gets less than fair share | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Don't know | 31 | 26 | 38 |

But national identity continues to be a striking differentiator of responses to these questions (Table 3). On the two strongest indicators of a sense of injustice for England (England gets less than its fair share, and Scotland gets more) the assessment polarises. English identifiers clearly perceive more injustice than do British ones.

Table 3: Fair Shares by National Identity

| | 2014 Total | English | British |
|---------------------------|------------|---------|---------|
| England | | | |
| Gets less than fair share | 31 | 38 | 20 |
| | | | |
| Scotland | | | |
| Gets more than fair share | 38 | 45 | 31 |

The prominence of the Scottish independence referendum enabled us to explore English attitudes on Scotland through the lens of both of the possible outcomes. This allows us to gauge English attitudes to wider questions of constitutional reform in the UK: the ideal architecture for the state (in a Yes scenario of Scottish independence) as well as the division of responsibilities across its component parts should Scotland remain within the UK (the actual outcome).

Table 4 sets out the English response had Scotland voted for independence. The Scottish Government’s prospectus for independence was one which involved strong, continuing and friendly partnership with the rest of the UK. This was not, on the whole, a prospectus that was welcomed by English voters. On one central question in the independence debate – whether an independent Scotland would continue to use sterling by entering a currency union – a clear majority rejected the Scottish Government’s position. More also disagreed than agreed that the rest of the UK should be helpful in securing Scottish membership of the EU and NATO. More agreed than disagreed that the UK’s standing in the world would be diminished. And a clear majority felt that Anglo-Scottish relations would not improve as a result of independence. Only on passport-free travel – and by a resounding majority – did people in England share the Scottish Government’s vision of post-independence partnership with the remainder of the UK. There is a clear sense that people in England, passport-free travel aside, would have inclined to a tough line in independence negotiations with Scotland.

Table 4: If Scotland had voted Yes

| If Scotland votes Yes ... | Agree | Disagree | Neither | Don’t know |
|---|--------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| An independent Scotland should be able to continue to use the pound | 23 | 53 | 15 | 9 |
| People should be able to travel between England and Scotland without passport checks | 69 | 13 | 11 | 6 |
| The rest of the UK should support Scotland in applying to join international organisations like the EU and NATO | 26 | 36 | 26 | 12 |
| The UK’s standing in the world will be diminished | 36 | 29 | 24 | 10 |
| Relations between Scotland and England will improve | 10 | 53 | 26 | 11 |

In the run-up to the referendum, and in light of opinion polls which showed that the race was neck and neck, the No side committed itself to delivering additional devolution to Scotland through legislation that would be at an advanced state of debate by the May 2015 UK General Election. In a ‘Vow’ printed on the front page of the *Daily Record* two days before the referendum, that commitment was reiterated by David Cameron, Ed Miliband and Nick Clegg, and supplemented by a pledge to maintain the current Barnett formula that

determines the funding received by the Scottish Parliament (a formula which delivers significantly more public spending per head in Scotland than England gets).

Immediately after the referendum the Prime Minister underlined all this again, but also added and linked a new commitment to work quickly to deliver English votes on English laws in the House of Commons – or, to put it the other way round, to establish arrangements in the House of Commons in which MPs from Scotland (and, presumably, Wales and Northern Ireland) would not be involved in determining legislation on England.

Our No scenario questions give clear insight into English attitudes on these issues. (See Table 5). The first two questions – on tax devolution and welfare devolution – are at the heart of the discussions in the current cross-party commission led by Lord Smith of Kelvin. These discussions are intended to set the parameters for a new draft Scotland Bill to be introduced in the House of Commons by January 2015. It is clear that the balance of opinion in England lies firmly in support of tax and welfare devolution in Scotland. But there is a very strong sense that such additional devolution needs to be accompanied by some form of English votes on English laws; five times as many agree that Scots MPs should not vote on English laws as disagree. This suggests that in broad terms the Prime Minister’s post-referendum commitment to link further devolution to Scotland with giving England greater recognition at Westminster has strong support. However the pre-referendum ‘vow’ on the Barnett formula is not supported by public opinion in England. A clear majority in England wishes to see per capita public spending levels in Scotland reduced to the UK average – a move, if undertaken, that would imply substantial public spending cuts north of the border.

Table 5: Attitudes to the Scottish No

| If Scotland votes No ... | Agree | Disagree | Neither | Don’t know |
|--|--------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| The Scottish Parliament should be given control over the majority of taxes raised in Scotland | 42 | 25 | 21 | 12 |
| The Scottish Parliament should be given the power to decide its own policies on welfare benefits | 40 | 26 | 22 | 11 |
| Scottish MPs should be prevented from voting on laws that apply only to England | 62 | 12 | 15 | 10 |
| Levels of public spending in Scotland should be reduced to the levels in the rest of the UK | 56 | 9 | 21 | 13 |
| England and Scotland will continue to drift apart | 37 | 21 | 29 | 13 |

These findings may appear on the surface to be inconsistent, but there is a sense – conveyed in the last question in Table 5 – that they reveal two sides of the same coin. On the one hand Scotland should have more power over its own affairs, and be more financially self-reliant in doing so. On the other, the way England is governed should also become more distinct and beyond the influence of Scottish MPs. There is a desire for a clearer demarcation of the way

Scotland is governed from the way England is governed. Thus, the higher level of agreement than disagreement with the proposition in the last question – that England and Scotland will continue to drift apart – could be seen as a message not of regret but of endorsement.

That certainly appears to be the case for English identifiers in England. Table 6 explores attitudes to the Scottish No by national identity. The first point to note is that additional devolution for Scotland is a consensus issue barely differentiated by identity. The striking differences emerge around questions of funding and English laws. English identifiers are more strongly in favour of removing Scottish MPs from discussion of English laws and of eliminating Scotland’s advantage in public spending per head. Nonetheless, while British identifiers in England are under the average on these issues, at least half are in favour of English votes on English laws and addressing the perceived advantages Scotland has from the Barnett formula.

Table 6: The Scottish No by National Identity

| If Scotland votes No ... | Total | English | British |
|--|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| The Scottish Parliament should be given control over the majority of taxes raised in Scotland | 42 | 41 | 43 |
| The Scottish Parliament should be given the power to decide its own policies on welfare benefits | 40 | 39 | 41 |
| Scottish MPs should be prevented from voting on laws that apply only to England | 62 | 71 | 58 |
| Levels of public spending in Scotland should be reduced to the levels in the rest of the UK | 56 | 65 | 53 |
| England and Scotland will continue to drift apart | 37 | 42 | 33 |

B. England’s Distinctive Euro-Scepticism

The EU is not popular in England. That said it has actually become a little less unpopular than in our last survey in 2012. While in 2012 some 43% of FoES respondents in England agreed that the UK’s membership of the EU was a ‘bad thing’, and only 28% believed it to be a ‘good thing’, in 2014 the figures were evenly balanced, with 34% selecting each option. Likewise, when asked about voting intention if there was a referendum on the UK’s EU membership, 50% said they would vote to leave in 2012 and only 33% vote to stay. In 2014 the leave option was still ahead, but rather more narrowly at 40% to 37%.

Beyond these fluctuating headline figures we are interested in two things: how views in England compare with views in Scotland and Wales; and how far national identity differentiates views in England. Our parallel surveys in Scotland and Wales enable us to give a very clear answer to the first question. The findings in Table 7 show Wales to be a little less sceptical than England about the value of EU membership, and a little more inclined to vote to remain in the EU. Scotland is actually quite positive about EU membership, and inclined to vote to remain by a ratio of three to two. So while views in Wales are not much different from those in England, Scotland is clearly distinct.

Table 7: EU Membership, England, Scotland and Wales

| | <i>EU Membership: Good/Bad Thing</i> | | | | <i>EU Referendum Vote</i> | | | |
|----------|--------------------------------------|-----------|---------|------------|---------------------------|-------|----------|------------|
| | Good Thing | Bad Thing | Neither | Don't Know | Remain | Leave | Not Vote | Don't Know |
| England | 34 | 34 | 19 | 13 | 37 | 40 | 5 | 17 |
| Wales | 35 | 32 | 20 | 13 | 39 | 35 | 6 | 20 |
| Scotland | 43 | 27 | 17 | 13 | 48 | 32 | 2 | 18 |

In earlier FoES surveys we have also used a third EU-related measure, where we ask which of several different levels of government has ‘most influence over how England is run’. In 2011 we found that 27% of FoES respondents felt the EU had ‘most influence’, in 2012 it was 30%, and in 2014 it was 26%. This same question was used in a wider, comparative study of fourteen other sub-state jurisdictions in western Europe, where the highest score for the EU as having the ‘most influence’ in any region was 9%. We therefore remarked in the report on our 2012 survey that ‘England appears truly to be an outlier in its attitudes to Europe’.⁴

Our parallel 2014 surveys in Scotland and Wales allow us to test for that outlier status in the UK context. Strikingly, we find that only 6% of respondents in Wales, and only 4% in Scotland, felt that the EU had most influence (Table 8). So within the UK as well, England really does stand out. There is a methodological proviso: the choice of relevant institutions is different for Wales and Scotland, given the existence of devolved governments. But perhaps that is precisely the point: having such institutions of national self-government may bring a perception of influence on (or insulation against) EU-level institutions that is unavailable to the English.

Table 8: Which has the most influence?

| | England | Wales | Scotland |
|---------------------|---------|-------|----------|
| Local Councils | 4 | 4 | 3 |
| Devolved Government | -- | 35 | 40 |
| UK Government | 58 | 43 | 41 |
| European Union | 26 | 6 | 4 |
| Other/Don't Know | 12 | 11 | 13 |

Table 9 explores these issues by national identity. It shows that English identifiers are generally hostile to the EU, would vote to leave it, and see it as intrusive in their lives; British identifiers are more favourable in their attitudes, would tend to vote to stay in the EU, and perceive it to be less intrusive. Feeling English in England appears to harden attitudes towards England’s two ‘others’: Scotland, and its perceived advantages within the UK; and the EU. We turn next to a third ‘other’: immigration.

⁴ Richard Wyn Jones, Guy Lodge, Charlie Jeffery, Glen Gottfried, Roger Scully, Ailsa Henderson and Daniel Wincott, *England and its two unions: The anatomy of a nation and its discontents* (Institute for Public Policy Research, 2013), p. 18, at <http://www.ippr.org/publications/england-and-its-two-unions-the-anatomy-of-a-nation-and-its-discontents>.

Table 9: EU attitudes by national identity

| | Total | <i>Nat. Identity</i> | |
|-------------------|-------|----------------------|---------|
| | | English | British |
| Good Thing | 34 | 23 | 42 |
| Bad Thing | 34 | 45 | 26 |
| Remain | 37 | 26 | 45 |
| Leave | 40 | 52 | 32 |
| EU Most Influence | 26 | 34 | 19 |

C. English Attitudes to Immigration

If Europe distinguishes England from Scotland (and to a lesser extent Wales) and divides opinion between both English and British identifiers, does the same apply to what we suspect is a third pillar of the English self-government project – namely, immigration? This is a theme we are examining in depth for the first time in the 2014 FoES; we therefore have no previous data to identify trends. However, with data from our parallel surveys in Scotland and Wales we can explore how distinct English views are on immigration.

Overall, there are fewer distinctions by nation on this issue. In general, Wales has very similar attitudes and concerns about immigration as England; in Scotland concerns are consistently less pronounced, but still held by a clear majority of Scots. This becomes clear when we examine the salience of immigration. We asked respondents in all three nations to select up to three ‘most important issues facing the country at this time’ from a common list. In each case ‘the economy’ was the top choice: chosen by 64% of respondents in both England and Scotland, and 61% in Wales. ‘Immigration and Asylum’ was the second most frequently chosen issue in both England (54%) and Wales (51%); it was third in Scotland at a significantly lower, but still high, level (38%). ‘Scottish Independence’ was second in Scotland (49%), perhaps displacing what might otherwise have been a higher score for immigration.

Scotland shows other differences. Table 10 outlines responses, on a 0-10 scale, to a question asking people whether or not they supported ‘restricting immigration into the UK’, where 0 denoted being ‘strongly against’ restricting immigration, and 10 ‘strongly for’. There are clear majorities in all three nations for restrictions, but support is at a notably lower level in Scotland than either England or Wales.

Table 10: 0-10 scale on ‘Restricting immigration into the UK’

| | England | Scotland | Wales |
|------------------------------|---------|----------|-------|
| % 10/10 (Strongly in favour) | 44 | 35 | 46 |
| % 7-10/10 | 78 | 55 | 71 |
| Average /10 | 7.55 | 6.47 | 7.73 |

Much recent debate about immigration in the UK has been about migration within the EU, prompted by the end of the transition period limiting free movement for Bulgarian and Romanian citizens. Table 11 shows responses by nation to the statement that ‘the EU has made migration between European countries too easy’. A full two-thirds of English and Welsh respondents agree, with Scots only a little less in agreement at 59%.

Table 11: ‘The EU has made migration between European countries too easy’

| | England | Scotland | Wales |
|----------------------------|---------|----------|-------|
| Agree/agree strongly | 67 | 59 | 67 |
| Neither | 14 | 16 | 13 |
| Disagree/disagree strongly | 12 | 19 | 11 |
| Don’t Know | 7 | 6 | 8 |

When looking at responses to these questions in England through the lens of national identity, we see a now familiar pattern. Table 12 shows how identity differentiates views on restricting immigration. Here we show results only for point 10 on our 10-point scale, that is ‘strongly in favour’ of restricting immigration. We also show results on the EU and immigration question set out in Table 11. We again see clear differentiation by national identity, with English identifiers in England significantly more opposed to immigration, and the EU’s perceived role in immigration flows, than British identifiers. So while immigration is a concern widely shared across England, Wales and (somewhat less so) Scotland, it does appear to have a specifically English dimension in terms of national identity.

Table 12: Immigration Attitudes by National Identity

| | Total | Nat ID | |
|---|-------|---------|---------|
| | | English | British |
| Strongly in favour of restricting immigration | 44 | 57 | 37 |
| Agree EU makes migration too easy | 67 | 77 | 64 |
| Disagree EU makes migration too easy | 12 | 6 | 14 |

D. Governing England

Our previous discussion has shown that the European Union looms large in public perceptions in England, with fully 26% of our English respondents regarding the EU as having most influence over the way England is run. This question is paired with one that asks respondents which level of government *should* have the most influence. When offered the same response options as those set out in Table 9 (namely the EU, the UK Government, Local Councils or Other) almost three-quarters (72%) opt for ‘the UK Government’ option. When, however, respondents were invited to consider a future in which ‘there were different types of institutions in England’ a very different picture emerged. It is a picture that speaks not only to a deep dissatisfaction with the current arrangements by which England is governed, but also to a desire to see England (qua England as a whole) receiving institutional recognition.

Given that an English Parliament has never been part of the election manifesto of any mainstream political party, it is striking that this option, rather than the ‘UK Government’ one, wins (if only narrowly) plurality support (Table 13). Indeed, support for an English Parliament is double that for ‘stronger local councils’ (an option often suggested as a solution to English needs) and three times greater than support for regional assemblies. Also striking is that support for an English Parliament is almost twice as high among those respondents who identify themselves as English (42%) when compared to those who identify themselves as British.

Table 13: Should have most influence over the way England is run by National Identity (2014)

| | All | English | British |
|-----------------------------|-----|---------|---------|
| English Parliament | 31 | 42 | 23 |
| UK Government | 29 | 25 | 35 |
| Stronger Local Councils | 16 | 15 | 18 |
| Elected Regional Assemblies | 10 | 8 | 11 |
| EU | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Other | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Don't Know | 12 | 9 | 12 |

A key feature of the Future of England Survey is the way in which different question wordings are utilised to explore constitutional preferences. Methodologically, this helps to minimize so-called ‘question wording effects’ – which are potentially very influential in the context of issues where political debate has been limited. Analytically, it allows us to ensure that attitudes to a range of various ‘solutions’ are covered. This is particularly relevant for ‘English Votes for English Laws’ (EVEL): an option put forward in every Conservative party general election manifesto from 2001 on and which is currently under consideration by the UK government.⁵ This option has never featured in the British Social Attitudes survey that, until the establishment of the Future of England Survey, offered the most detailed information on constitutional attitudes in England.

In our 2014 survey, three sets of institutional options for the future governance of England that included EVEL were canvassed. The responses are collected together in Table 14. These data confirm findings from previous Future of England Surveys:

⁵ It is, however, important to note that the term ‘English Votes for English Laws’ covers a wide spectrum of possible institutional arrangements, from the relatively more modest proposals of the McKay Commission (established by the Coalition) which suggested a number of procedural measures by which MPs from England could express their collective view on English legislation, to the proposals for a full blown English Parliament at Westminster advocated by the likes of John Redwood MP. The McKay report is at <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130403030652/http://tmc.independent.gov.uk/>. Charlie Jeffery, one of our co-authors, was a member of the Commission.

- That support for status quo is relatively low – in these questions at no more than 25%;
- That support for regionalism is very low; and,
- That there is very significant support for the constitutional recognition of England as a whole as a political unit.
- More tentatively, the 2014 data also suggests that EVEL is emerging at the preferred option for the future governance of England.

Table 14: Constitutional Preferences, England 2014 (%)

| | Option 1 | | | Option 2 | | | Option 3 | | |
|--------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | All | English | British | All | English | British | All | English | British |
| Status Quo | 18 | 17 | 21 | 25 | 21 | 32 | 22 | 17 | 27 |
| EVEL | 40 | 43 | 41 | 31 | 37 | 27 | 36 | 44 | 35 |
| Regions | 9 | 7 | 9 | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| English Parliament | 16 | 19 | 13 | 13 | 14 | 12 | 25 | 29 | 21 |
| Independence | -- | -- | -- | 15 | 17 | 12 | -- | -- | -- |
| Don't Know | 17 | 13 | 17 | 16 | 10 | 18 | 17 | 16 | 10 |

In the light of David Cameron's endorsement of EVEL in the aftermath of Scotland's independence referendum, this final point is worth further exploration. Given that we know there is strong opposition among the English electorate to non-English MPs voting on laws that apply only in England (see Table 6 above), it is perhaps unsurprising that this option receives substantial support. It is also noteworthy, however, that there are at least some indications that support for EVEL is growing. On the Option 1 wording, support for EVEL was 34% in 2011 whilst it stood at 40% in 2014. On the Option 3 wording, support for EVEL has grown from 30% in 2012 to 36% in 2014. Complicating any simple narrative, though, is the fact that on the Option 2 wording, current support for EVEL (at 31%) is slightly down on the 2012 figure (of 33%).⁶ Throughout, support for EVEL is particularly pronounced among those who emphasise their English identity.

⁶ Option 1 wording "With all the changes going on in the way different parts of the United Kingdom are run, which of the following do you think would be best for England?" a) For England to be governed as it is now with laws made by all MPs in the UK Parliament, b) For England to be governed with laws made by English MPs in the UK Parliament, c) For each region of England to have its own assembly, d) For England as a whole to have its own new English Parliament with law-making powers, e) Don't know. Option 2 wording: "Thinking about how England should be governed, which ONE of the following statements comes closest to your view?" a) England should be governed as it is now with laws made by all MPs in the UK Parliament, b) England should be governed with laws made solely by English MPs in the UK Parliament, c) England should have its own new English Parliament with law-making powers, d) England should be an independent state inside the European Union, e) England should be an independent state outside the European Union, Don't know. Option 3 wording: "Thinking about possible arrangements for making laws for England two options are often mentioned. If you had to choose which ONE would you prefer?" a) For England to be governed with laws made solely by English MPs in the UK Parliament, b) For England to have its own Parliament with law-making powers, c) Keep things as they are at present, d) Don't know

The 2014 Survey also explored attitudes towards two additional options that have occasionally been touted as ways of addressing the English question. These are a Secretary of State for England with a seat in the UK cabinet, and the appointment of a UK Government Minister for each English region (as was rather half-heartedly implemented by the previous Labour Government). As these options are not (at least logically) mutually exclusive, either with regards each other or to other options such as EVEL or an English parliament (Scotland currently has both a Secretary of State and a Parliament), it did not make sense to force respondents to choose between them. We have rather explored the extent to which the electorate agree or disagree with each idea, including alongside them longer established alternatives. The results are reported in Table 15.

Given the exploratory nature of these options, and the lack of public debate around some of them, care is required in interpreting these results. Three points are nonetheless worth making. First, it is clear that EVEL is the option that wins the most and strongest support (though of course it is not clear which variant of EVEL respondents have in mind here: more modest versions proposed by the McKay Commission or the Conservative Party’s Democracy Taskforce under Ken Clarke, or more radical models which would require a separate English executive).

Second, *all* options for change garner majority support, underlining the extent of disaffection with the status quo and the appetite for change that challenges the current operation of Westminster/Whitehall in England. Any change, it seems, will do.

Finally, with the exception of government ministers for the regions, support for the various options for change is always substantially stronger among English identifiers. So, for example, 78% of English identifiers strongly agreed with the proposition that only English MPs should vote on laws applying only in England compared to 65% of British identifiers.

Table 15: Ideas for how England is governed, Agree/Disagree (%)

| | Total Agree (Strongly Agree) | Total Disagree |
|--|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Sec of State for England in Cabinet | 53 (22) | 11 |
| UK Government Minister for each English Region | 51 (18) | 16 |
| English Parliament | 54 (26) | 15 |
| EVEL | 69 (40) | 8 |

Our data demonstrate clear dissatisfaction with the current territorial constitution in England. It does not necessarily follow, however, that the issue is accorded great priority by the electorate. It is, after all, an issue that the established political parties have found easy enough to ignore in the past.

In the previous Future of England Survey we sought to explore the relative salience of different constitutional issues by asking respondents to identify up to 3 issues they thought required ‘urgent action or change’. This question was repeated in our most recent survey and the results from both 2012 and 2014 are listed in Table 16.

Table16: Which three, if any, do you think require urgent action or change?

| | 2012 | 2014 |
|--|------|------|
| The UK’s relationship with the EU | 59 | 56 |
| How England is governed now that Scotland has a Parliament and Wales an Assembly | 42 | 30 |
| Scotland’s future relationship with the UK | 25 | 30 |
| A more proportional system of electing MPs | 29 | 29 |
| Strengthening local government | 27 | 28 |
| Reforming the Lords | 26 | 24 |
| Future of Northern Ireland | 5 | 5 |
| None of these | 4 | 5 |
| Don’t know | 11 | 13 |

Several points are noteworthy. First, in 2012, the governance of England was very clearly in second place as the most salient constitutional issue. By 2014, however, the English question was less prominent. It was rather one of several issues of similar salience – all standing well behind the UK’s relationship with the EU. Secondly, although the proportion identifying ‘Scotland’s future relationship with the UK’ as a key issue had grown somewhat since 2012, even in referendum year this issue ranked no higher than PR and the English question (both often derided as ‘niche’ issues), and far below than ‘Europe’. In April 2014, at least, the English remained remarkably sanguine about the territorial integrity of their state.

One possible criticism of this question is that by asking respondents to choose three issues from among a relatively short list of options, the survey design had (inadvertently) boosted the numbers citing the English question as a priority. Rather than a reflection of salience, our 2012 data might simply indicate that the governance of England is an easy third choice for people who don’t care much about constitutional issues. To explore this possibility, half of our 2014 sample were instead asked to choose up to two (rather than three) issues requiring ‘urgent action or change’ (Table 17). Yet even when choice is squeezed in this way, English governance retains its status as part of a second rank group of issues with broadly similar

levels of salience, while ‘strengthening local government’ suffers most. It should come as no surprise by this stage in our analysis that English identifiers are more likely to cite the EU and the English question as priority issues than those who emphasise their Britishness.

Table 17: Which two, if any, do you think require urgent action or change?

| 2014 | All | English | British |
|--|-----|---------|---------|
| The UK’s relationship with the EU | 48 | 56 | 45 |
| A more proportional system of electing MPs | 24 | 20 | 28 |
| How England is governed now that Scotland has a Parliament and Wales an Assembly | 22 | 27 | 18 |
| Scotland’s future relationship with the UK | 21 | 19 | 23 |
| Reforming the Lords | 17 | 18 | 15 |
| Strengthening local government | 15 | 14 | 16 |
| Future of Northern Ireland | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| None of these | 8 | 6 | 9 |
| Don’t know | 10 | 10 | 11 |

N=1878

The relatively low priority accorded to ‘strengthening local government’ is worth exploring further. The main UK political parties are united, rhetorically at least, in support for ‘localism’. All three main parties – and UKIP – claim to favour granting more power and autonomy to more local government within England, be that to city regions, elected mayors, or more traditional local councils. All three main parties suggest localism in England as a possible component of reforms to ‘rebalance’ the territorial constitution of the UK after devolution. Indeed for Labour and the Liberal Democrats, it can appear that localism is viewed as the preferred or even the only way of dealing with the English question.⁷ The implication is that the recognition of England as a whole as a political unit within the UK is unnecessary if powers are devolved internally *within* England.

Some of our 2014 data may appear to buttress this line of argument. So, for example, 39% of our sample agreed that local councils in England should have more powers, as compared to 12% who thought that powers should be reduced (see also Table 20 below). Given, however, that another 29% thought that things should be left as they are, there is less than

⁷ Somewhat idiosyncratically, the Liberal Democrats seem to regard ‘localism’ and ‘federalism’ as – in essence – synonymous. See the recent policy statement *Power to the People: Policies for Constitutional and Political Reform. Policy Paper 117* (Liberal Democrats, Spring 2014) http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/libdems/pages/4138/attachments/original/1392840156/117_-_Power_to_the_People.pdf.

overwhelming support for change. Even more pertinently, perhaps, only 15% of our respondents chose strengthened local government as their preferred institutional option for the future governance of England (see Table 13 above).

Moreover the attitudes of the English electorate seem to provide a striking example of what we have termed (in other work) the ‘devolution paradox’. Whilst in the abstract somewhat supportive of enhanced local control and autonomy, voters display a distinct and paradoxical aversion to the logical corollary, namely policy outcomes that differ from place to place. This becomes clear from Table 18 which reports respondents’ views as to whether policy should be uniform across England or should be a matter for each local council to decide.

The policy areas probed here are ones in which there are long-standing traditions of local policy differentiation. Yet only in the cases of planning approval, and refuse collection and recycling, do we find majority support for local decision making. Even in these cases, a substantial minority of respondents favour uniformity across England. In the areas of primary and secondary education – policy areas that, until recently, were characterised by significant local differentiation – support for uniformity climbs to three in four respondents. It should be noted that there were no significant differences here in views between English and British identifiers.

Table 18: Policy uniformity or difference across England, 2014 (%)

| | Nurseries and child care | Primary school education | Secondary school education | Planning approvals | Public transport | Refuse Collection and recycling | Housing | Social Services |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|---------|-----------------|
| Should be uniform across England | 64 | 74 | 76 | 39 | 50 | 39 | 48 | 69 |
| Local council to decide | 28 | 19 | 17 | 53 | 43 | 54 | 44 | 24 |
| Don't know | 8 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 8 | 7 |

There may well be good functional arguments for strengthening local government, or the development of more powerful city- or county-regions within England. Our data suggest, however, that there is a strong public presumption across England for policy uniformity.

Table 19 throws an alternative light onto this point. It disaggregates attitudes on several measures discussed in the earlier sections of this report by region within England. There is a small proviso around sample sizes. Though our full sample of around 3,700 respondents in England gives us good-sized regional samples in most cases, the North East in particular has too small a sample size to offer statistical robustness. Having said that, the overall picture – from which the North East does not stand out – is remarkably uniform.

On most items there is limited variation around the England-wide figure. Identification as English or British does not vary significantly by region. Nor do our indices of concern about Scotland, or concern about immigration, or attitudes on English institutional reform. There is a little more variation around the EU questions, but this is not especially significant given our sample sizes. With one exception there is no distinctive pattern of regional political attitudes in England. That exception aside, north-easterners appear to view political questions in much the same way as south-westerners and as people in the East of England and the West Midlands. There is an England-wide climate of opinion – except in London.

Londoners do appear to have different views. They are markedly less likely to claim an English identity than people in the rest of England. They are markedly less sceptical than the average English view on the European Union. And they are markedly less strongly opposed (though still clearly opposed) to immigration. They appear a little less robust in their views about a post-No Scotland than others in England. All this suggests a statement of the obvious: London is a more cosmopolitan place more accustomed to social diversity than other parts of England. It also suggests that with this partial exception political attitudes in England are essentially *English*, and not regionalist or localist. If institutional reform is needed to give expression to English views, then that reform needs to be about England as a whole, not parts of it.

Table 19: Variation in Attitudes by Region, 2014 (%)

| | England | North East | North West | Yorkshire and the Humber | East Midlands | West Midlands | East of England | London | South East | South West |
|--|---------|------------|------------|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|--------|------------|------------|
| Identity (Figure 1) | | | | | | | | | | |
| English | 43 | 43 | 45 | 41 | 47 | 45 | 45 | 34 | 46 | 43 |
| British | 43 | 45 | 42 | 46 | 42 | 45 | 45 | 41 | 42 | 43 |
| Devo-Anxiety (Tables 1,5) | | | | | | | | | | |
| England less than fair share | 31 | 32 | 33 | 33 | 31 | 34 | 30 | 28 | 32 | 25 |
| Scotland more than fair share | 38 | 39 | 37 | 37 | 38 | 42 | 36 | 35 | 40 | 41 |
| Agree reduce public spending in Scotland to UK average | 56 | 57 | 59 | 60 | 57 | 61 | 56 | 49 | 56 | 55 |
| Agree Scots MPs not to vote on English laws | 62 | 62 | 62 | 61 | 65 | 62 | 65 | 59 | 63 | 62 |
| Euro-scepticism (Tables 7,8) | | | | | | | | | | |
| EU a bad thing | 34 | 26 | 36 | 36 | 32 | 40 | 36 | 28 | 35 | 31 |
| Vote to leave the EU | 40 | 34 | 43 | 38 | 39 | 47 | 43 | 33 | 42 | 38 |
| EU has most influence over how England is run | 26 | 26 | 27 | 21 | 25 | 29 | 29 | 18 | 28 | 27 |
| Immigration (Tables 10,11) | | | | | | | | | | |
| 10/10 in favour of restricting immigration | 44 | 46 | 50 | 46 | 41 | 47 | 46 | 31 | 46 | 45 |
| EU has made migration too easy | 67 | 68 | 72 | 65 | 72 | 69 | 71 | 57 | 67 | 64 |
| English institutions (Tables 16, 15, 13) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Urgent action on how England is governed | 30 | 34 | 36 | 27 | 35 | 27 | 24 | 25 | 31 | 29 |
| English votes on English laws | 69 | 69 | 70 | 65 | 70 | 70 | 74 | 61 | 70 | 71 |
| Elected regional assemblies should have most influence | 10 | 10 | 7 | 10 | 14 | 8 | 10 | 11 | 8 | 10 |
| More powers for local councils | 39 | 40 | 44 | 38 | 42 | 37 | 37 | 37 | 36 | 37 |
| Number of respondents | 3705 | 187 | 477 | 397 | 346 | 368 | 446 | 468 | 600 | 416 |

5. Party Politics in England: UKIP and English Nationalism

We have set out above four pillars of an English political project focused on addressing a democratic deficit in England. That deficit is defined by Scotland’s perceived advantages within the UK union; the sense that the EU is overly intrusive in the way England is governed; and a belief that immigration flows need to be restricted. The remedy – the fourth pillar – is the institutional recognition of England as a whole in the UK political system. We have shown that concerns about these issues are associated much more with those people in England who define their identity as English, and less with people who define themselves as British.

We turn now to the party-political dimensions to the English project. Our aim in this section is to explore how party affiliation differentiates attitudes on the four pillars of the English self-government project. Through this we aim to develop a sense of which parties appear best (or less well) placed to be the advocates in addressing English concerns over how they are governed.

A. Views of Party Supporters on the Four Pillars

Table 20 sets out descriptive information, taken from FoES 2014, about party support in England . We have two measures of party support: voting intentions for the next UK general election, and voting intentions for the 2014 European Parliament (EP) election (which followed a month or so after the survey was conducted). The differences between the two measures show a variation in voting intention typical of so-called second-order elections (like those to the European Parliament) when ‘outsider’ parties like UKIP often do better than in elections which produce national governments. (Our survey actually estimated UKIP’s final EP election vote share in England, of 29.1%, almost perfectly).

Table 20: General and EP Election Voting Intentions, 2014 (%)

| Voting intention | Labour | Conservative | UKIP | Lib Dem | Other |
|------------------|--------|--------------|------|---------|-------|
| UK Election | 37 | 34 | 14 | 11 | 4 |
| EP Election | 30 | 22 | 29 | 11 | 8 |

Support in the context of a general election lacks this ‘second-order’ element, and is a more robust indicator of underlying political support. So we use this measure in the analysis that follows. Significantly, answers on this question still give us a substantial sub-sample of UKIP supporters (415 in total), which enables us to use the UKIP sub-sample (alongside the slightly smaller Liberal Democrat one, and the much bigger ones for Labour and Conservative supporters) as a reliable indicator of the attitudes of party supporters to the four pillars we discuss above.

In Table 21 we set out the views of these groups of supporters against the same measures used in Table 19 above to explore variation in attitudes by region. The results show a

consistent pattern: that UKIP supporters are consistently most likely to feel most strongly on the various measures, typically with Conservatives supporters the next most agitated, and Labour and Liberal Democrat supporters the least concerned.

So, for example, on whether England and Scotland get their fair share of public spending, UKIP and Conservative supporters clearly feel a stronger sense of injustice about patterns of public spending – and the perception of England’s disadvantage relative to Scotland – than Labour and Liberal Democrat supporters. They are also more likely to take a hard line on reducing public spending in Scotland and on Scots MPs voting on English laws. The latter is the first of a number of issues where four-fifths or more of UKIP supporters are clearly dissatisfied with the status quo. But 50% or more of the supporters of *all* four parties take a hard line on spending and Scots MPs. So while some form of English votes for English laws has the clear backing of citizens across the political spectrum (and especially of Conservative and UKIP supporters), the high profile vow on maintaining the Barnett formula made by the three party leaders is not endorsed by supporters of *any* of those parties (and least of all by UKIP supporters). It may be harder to square the circle of more powers but unchanged funding arrangements in Scotland than the party leaders imagined.

On Europe, Liberal Democrat supporters are very pro-European and the same is generally true for Labour supporters. Conservatives, by contrast, are opposed to the EU, while UKIP supporters are almost off the scale in their hostility to the EU. England is in general a Euro-sceptical nation, but opinions polarise starkly around party affiliation.

On immigration we also see wide variations by party. Around nine out of ten UKIP supporters have strong concerns about immigration, with Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat supporters progressively less strongly concerned. Liberal Democrat and Labour supporters are the least opposed to immigration, but around half of Liberal Democrats and 60% of Labour supporters in England associate concern about immigration with the EU.

On institutional options for England, there is a more diverse pattern. UKIP and Conservative supporters are most concerned that something should be done urgently about how England is governed. Nine out of ten UKIP supporters favour English votes on English laws, far more than supporters of all other parties. Nonetheless at least 60% of supporters of *all* parties are in favour of English votes on English laws. The maximum level of support for English regionalisation among any of the supporter groups is 18% among Liberal Democrat supporters. There is no significant reservoir of support for regionalisation in any party. But there is substantial support – a majority among Labour supporters, 40%-plus among UKIP and Liberal Democrat supporters – for strengthened local government. There is some suggestion here that a ‘both-and’ solution, combining some form of England-specific legislative process in the House of Commons *and* local decentralisation, may be attractive to most voters.

Table 21: Attitudes by Party Support, 2014 (%)

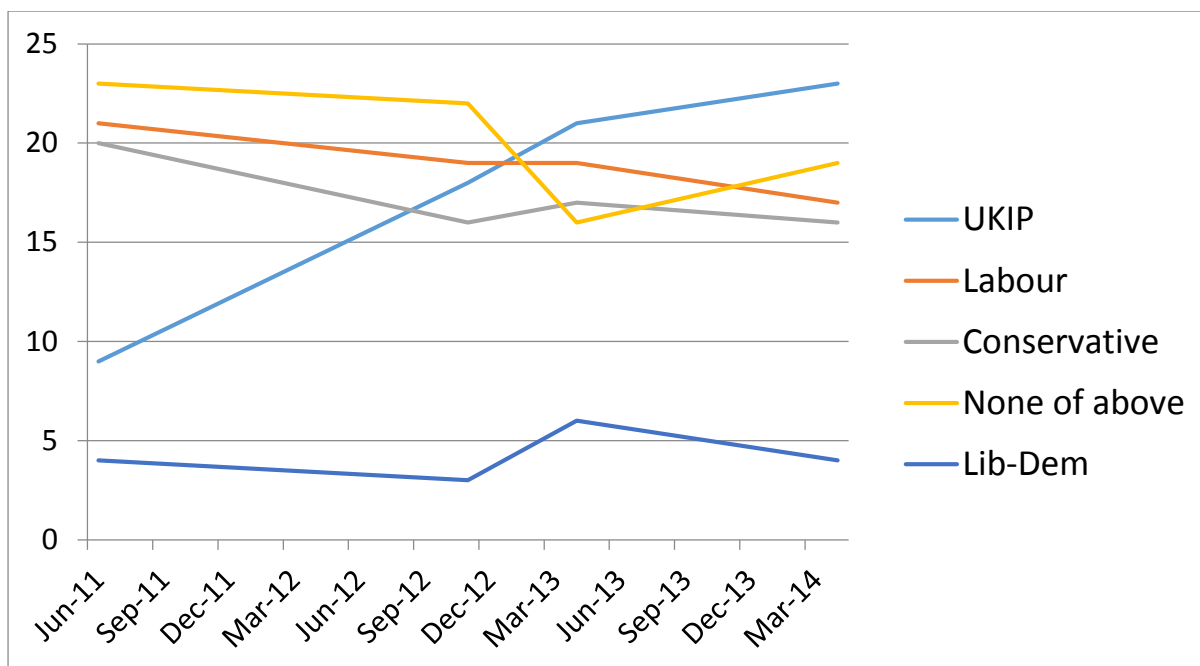
| | England | Labour | LibDem | Cons | UKIP |
|--|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Concern about Scotland | | | | | |
| England less than fair share | 31 | 23 | 28 | 42 | 50 |
| Scotland more than fair share | 38 | 30 | 43 | 52 | 53 |
| Agree reduce public spending in Scotland to UK average | 56 | 50 | 54 | 69 | 70 |
| Agree Scots MPs not to vote on English laws | 62 | 52 | 67 | 73 | 81 |
| Euro-scepticism | | | | | |
| EU a bad thing | 34 | 23 | 13 | 39 | 81 |
| Vote to leave the EU | 40 | 28 | 17 | 49 | 88 |
| EU has most influence over how England is run | 26 | 14 | 12 | 30 | 63 |
| Immigration | | | | | |
| 10/10 in favour of restricting immigration | 44 | 32 | 21 | 53 | 85 |
| EU has made migration too easy | 67 | 60 | 49 | 80 | 94 |
| English institutions | | | | | |
| Urgent action on how England is governed | 30 | 20 | 35 | 41 | 42 |
| English votes on English laws | 69 | 61 | 71 | 79 | 90 |
| Elected regional assemblies should have most influence | 10 | 12 | 18 | 5 | 11 |
| More powers for local councils | 39 | 51 | 43 | 26 | 40 |
| Number of respondents | 3705 | 934 | 385 | 969 | 415 |

B. UKIP as the Party of English Nationalism

In previous FoES surveys we have asked which party ‘best stands up for the interests of England’. In our initial survey in May 2011 ‘none of the above’ was the top choice, as it was again in our second survey in November 2012. YouGov kindly asked the question for us as part of one of its omnibus surveys in April 2013. By then UKIP had become the number one choice, a position it maintained in the latest FoES carried out in April 2014 (Figure 2). The second most popular choice in April 2014 was ‘none of the above, with Labour and the Conservatives limping in in third and fourth places on a declining trajectory. The Liberal Democrats barely figure.

Much the same pattern was revealed when we asked which political leaders best stands up for English interests. Nigel Farage was the top choice at 22%, just edging out ‘none of the above’ at 21%. David Cameron scored 15% and Ed Miliband 13%. So measured both by party and party leader, the ‘establishment’ parties are easily outweighed by the mix of UKIP and the generalised disdain of ‘none of the above’.

Figure 3: Which party best stands up for the interests of England? 2011-2014



UKIP appears to be seen as the best of a bad bunch in defending England’s interests. But who in England is attracted to the UKIP banner? What are the characteristics of UKIP supporters, beyond their concerns about Scotland, the EU, immigration and the institutional recognition of England? One starting point is to look at identity. We have shown above that English identifiers hold these concerns more strongly than British identifiers in England. So is UKIP a rallying point for those with an English identity? Table 22 suggests this is indeed the case. Identification as British does not significantly differentiate the supporters of the three establishment parties, while UKIP supporters are significantly less British than the population of England as a whole. But identification as English does produce wide differentiation. Liberal Democrat supporters are the least English by national identity, and Labour supporters also below the England-wide average. Conservative supporters are above-averagely English, and UKIP supporters significantly more English still: around twice as many UKIP supporters see themselves as English as those who see themselves as British. Conservative supporters are much more evenly divided. UKIP appears to be a party that mobilises English identifiers more effectively than any other.

Table 22: Parties and Identity in England, 2014 (%)

| | Total | Labour | Lib-Dem | Conservative | UKIP |
|----------------|-------|--------|---------|--------------|------|
| English | 43 | 37 | 29 | 50 | 60 |
| British | 43 | 48 | 47 | 44 | 33 |

There are a number of other distinctive features of UKIP supporters, as reported in Table 23. Very much in line with the findings of Ford and Goodwin,⁸ we find that UKIP support is strongest – and stronger than any of the other parties – among the middle-aged and those

⁸ Robert Ford and Matthew Goodwin, *Revolt on the Right: Explaining Support for the Radical Right in Britain* (London: Routledge, 2014)

approaching retirement. A full half of UKIP support is in the age range 45-64. Another quarter is 65 or more, an age range in which the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats also have significant strength. UKIP is notably weaker among younger voters. UKIP supporters are more or less evenly split (as are those of Labour and the Liberal Democrats) between the social grades ABC1 and C2DE. Here Conservative supporters – predictably enough – stand out as significantly more likely to be ABC1 than C2DE.

Table 23: The Social Bases of Party Support in England, 2014 (%)

| | Labour | Lib-Dem | Conservative | UKIP |
|-------|--------|---------|--------------|------|
| 18-34 | 32 | 24 | 23 | 16 |
| 35-44 | 17 | 10 | 17 | 10 |
| 45-54 | 16 | 13 | 13 | 19 |
| 55-64 | 21 | 27 | 23 | 31 |
| 65+ | 14 | 27 | 23 | 25 |
| ABC1 | 50 | 63 | 67 | 53 |
| C2DE | 50 | 47 | 33 | 47 |

Table 24 shows where UKIP has drawn support from other parties, using the recalled vote at the last UK election in 2010 of FoES respondents intending to vote UKIP at the next UK election. By some way the biggest group is former Conservative voters, who make up 42% of UKIP’s support. The Liberal Democrats are the next biggest group at 19%, perhaps suggesting that UKIP is picking up some of the protest vote the Liberal Democrats used to attract before becoming a party of government. Former Labour supporters provide just 14% of UKIP support.

Table 24: UKIP Support by Recalled Vote in 2010

| Conservative | Lib- Dem | Labour | Didn’t vote | UKIP | BNP | Other |
|--------------|----------|--------|-------------|------|-----|-------|
| 42 | 19 | 14 | 9 | 8 | 3 | 5 |

The defection of Conservative voters to UKIP draws attention to the distinctions between Conservative and UKIP support. UKIP supporters are more middle aged and less affluent than Conservative supporters. They also have different values. Table 25 sets out attitudes by party supporters across a range of social issues. On each of the issues in Table 25 UKIP supporters are the most conservative, with a spectrum of decreasing conservatism among Conservative, then Labour, then Liberal Democrat supporters.

Table 25: Social Conservatism and Party Support

| | All | Labour | Lib-Dem | Cons | UKIP |
|---|-----|--------|---------|------|------|
| Strongly in favour (10 on 0-10 scale) of: | | | | | |
| restricting immigration | 44 | 32 | 21 | 53 | 85 |
| tougher sentences for young offenders | 26 | 24 | 14 | 28 | 44 |
| legalising gay marriage | 28 | 34 | 37 | 19 | 13 |
| Total agree that | | | | | |
| young people don't respect traditional British values | 66 | 58 | 52 | 78 | 84 |
| censorship of films/magazines necessary to uphold moral values | 48 | 43 | 41 | 53 | 59 |
| homosexual relations are always wrong | 13 | 11 | 11 | 17 | 24 |
| claims that human activities are changing the climate are exaggerated | 33 | 24 | 24 | 44 | 53 |

But there is a different rank ordering on economic issues (Table 26). UKIP supporters are the *most* likely to agree that public services and industries should be in state ownership, edging out Labour supporters on that issue. And in their scepticism about private enterprise and belief that governments are responsible for providing jobs UKIP supporters are second behind Labour supporters. Conservative supporters are the most pro-market on all of these issues.

Table 26: Economic Interventionism and Party Support

| | All | Labour | Lib-Dem | Cons | UKIP |
|---|-----|--------|---------|------|------|
| Total agree that | | | | | |
| major public services and industries ought to be in state ownership | 50 | 61 | 51 | 36 | 63 |
| private enterprise is the best way to solve Britain's economic problems | 38 | 22 | 48 | 64 | 42 |
| it is the government's responsibility to provide a job for everybody that wants one | 36 | 50 | 28 | 22 | 39 |

These findings echo those of Ford and Goodwin's detailed analysis of the social bases of UKIP support, which also found that UKIP supporters, while classically right wing on social issues looked distinctly 'old Labour' on economic issues, often favouring an active role for the state. As with other new parties of the right in Europe, UKIP appears to be mobilising the 'left-behinds', ill at ease with social change and economically insecure. There may also be an echo here of discussion in earlier decades about 'working class conservatives' whose support for the Conservatives appeared contrary to what were assumed to be their class interests. Arguably the Conservative Party was most successful in the Thatcher era in mobilising working class conservatives, attracting support from those who had bought their own council homes and who increasingly worked, and consumed, in the private sector. The bases of UKIP's support – ex-Conservative, and more working class and more economically interventionist than remaining Conservative supporters – may suggest that working class conservatives in an economically more precarious era are now switching to UKIP.

If that is indeed the case then UKIP has an opportunity to establish itself as an enduring force in English politics. It has, in essence, an English nationalist appeal: among English identifiers worried about Scotland, Europe and immigration, looking for the institutional recognition of England and for effective advocates of English interests. Its supporters also show a distinct set of social characteristics and values. It has an opportunity to bind that social base to the party by articulating the message those supporters want to hear. It is certainly doing this, but in part by default, as voters appear to feel that the established parties are failing to articulate that message, but swithering between UKIP and withdrawal from the political process (the 'none of the above' faction) as alternatives. If it can hone its message – and recognise that it is England's nationalist party, despite its 'UK' moniker – and boost its profile by defections from the Conservatives like Douglas Carswell and Mark Reckless it could be here to stay.

6. Conclusion

The findings of the Future of England Survey 2014 suggest, yet again, that the people of England are dissatisfied with the constitutional arrangements through which their country is governed. As any reader of the tabloid press will already be well aware, this dissatisfaction focuses on the European Union, with concern about immigration serving as a lightning rod for popular concern. But it also focuses on concern about the position of England within the post-devolution UK and a perception that the Union's largest nation is being unfairly treated. Dissatisfaction across all these issues is especially pronounced among those who emphasise their English national identity. Within England, those who regard themselves as English are more concerned about the position of England within the UK, are more hostile to the EU, and are more strongly in favour of restricting immigration, than those who emphasise their British identity. English identifiers are also more likely to favour the institutional recognition of England within the UK.

But even if it is English identifiers who feel most strongly that England qua England requires distinctive treatment, this sentiment is shared (even if less strongly) by many of those who, when forced to choose, emphasise their British identity. The most popular option for granting such recognition is clearly English Votes on English Laws (EVEL). How to implement this is less clear. The main recommendations of the McKay Commission report focus on parliamentary procedure. But it seems unlikely that the desire to recognise England within the UK's political system will be satisfied by (often arcane) procedural changes alone.

Legislation is the culmination of a much broader process of policy development. The embrace of EVEL apparently presaged in David Cameron's post-referendum remarks will require consideration of how the other parts of that policy process might be adjusted in order to recognise England as a distinctive political space. Political parties might develop policy programmes explicitly labelled as policies for England against which they could be held to account by the English electorate. Whitehall could more clearly distinguish its England-only from its all-UK functions. And, of course, legislation could be designed and drafted in a territorially demarcated way so that what was English legislation was clear. William Hague has perhaps a much broader agenda to consider than the Prime Minister imagined when he made his announcement on EVEL on 19 September.

Politicians and political parties will be crucial. Unlike Scotland and Wales, it is not clear that any of the main political parties in England has yet fully recognised the potential opportunities that that could arise from positioning themselves as advocates of an English territorial interest; or, indeed, the potential pitfalls that could arise from surrendering 'England' to their rivals. It will, however, be clear from the preceding analysis that UKIP and the Conservatives are currently best placed to capitalise. Indeed, there are now signs that the rivalry between both parties in England is encouraging them to emphasise their English credentials. All of which leaves Labour and the Liberal Democrats in what appears to be an increasingly uncomfortable position.

In the concluding remarks to our reports detailing the findings of previous Future of England Surveys, we have warned of the dangers to the centre-left of abandoning England and Englishness to the centre- or indeed populist right. We have also pointed out that the centre-left has plenty of resources to draw upon should it choose to take England seriously. It appears, however, that both Labour and the Liberal Democrats are so concerned at the prospect of losing the voting power of their Scottish and Welsh MPs at Westminster that they would prefer to ignore the English question entirely. Either that or, at best, they pursue a narrow agenda of localism/city regions as a solution to England's democratic deficit. By doing so they are in grave danger of ceding to their rivals the new politics of England that is emerging ever more clearly into view.. As the Conservatives and UKIP move in to stake their claims as advocates of the English territorial interest within the UK, opportunities on the left inevitably narrow. It is surely time for the left to start to take England seriously.