



SCOTTISH POLICE AUTHORITY

Public attitudes towards policing during the pandemic

Martin Smith

Strategy and Research Lead



OVERVIEW



1

Authority's Strategic Approach – Proportionate scrutiny and independent perspectives / public voice / dissemination of insights

2

The ScotPulse Panel Surveys Four surveys conducted so far throughout the pandemic, mix of core and topical questions

3

Top Level Insights – Views on public support for the “4Es” Policing Approach

4

Compliance and Police Enforcement – Complying with lockdown measures and expectations on level of police enforcement

The Authority's Strategic Approach

Corporate Plan 2020-23: Vision is **Policing in the Public Interest**



Strategic Outcome 2

The public are confident in policing with issues of public interest being addressed transparently, and the voices of communities taken into account in decision-making



Strategic Outcome 6

Decision making, scrutiny and reporting is based on robust evidence and analysis of current and emerging policing issues

“track continued public confidence and consent for policing in Scotland as it fulfils the expanded and unprecedented public health role it is playing and in utilising the emergency powers placed at its disposal, including considering the advice and findings of the Independent Advisory Group chaired by John Scott QC”

Corporate Plan <https://www.spa.police.uk/spa-media/u0xbiwjx/spacorporateplan202023.pdf>

Oversight of Policing of Covid <https://www.spa.police.uk/spa-media/uu2n0rt0/spa-covid-19-strategy-on-a-page.pdf>

The *ScotPulse* Panel Surveys



Four Surveys

April 2020 n = 1,600
May 2020 n = 1,572
Oct 2020 n = 3,791
February 2021 = 2,617



Core Questions

Views on Policing
Approach to Lockdowns



Topical Questions

Ability to comply with
regulations and
expectations on police
involvement in
enforcing them

Additional Questions, Analysis and Reports

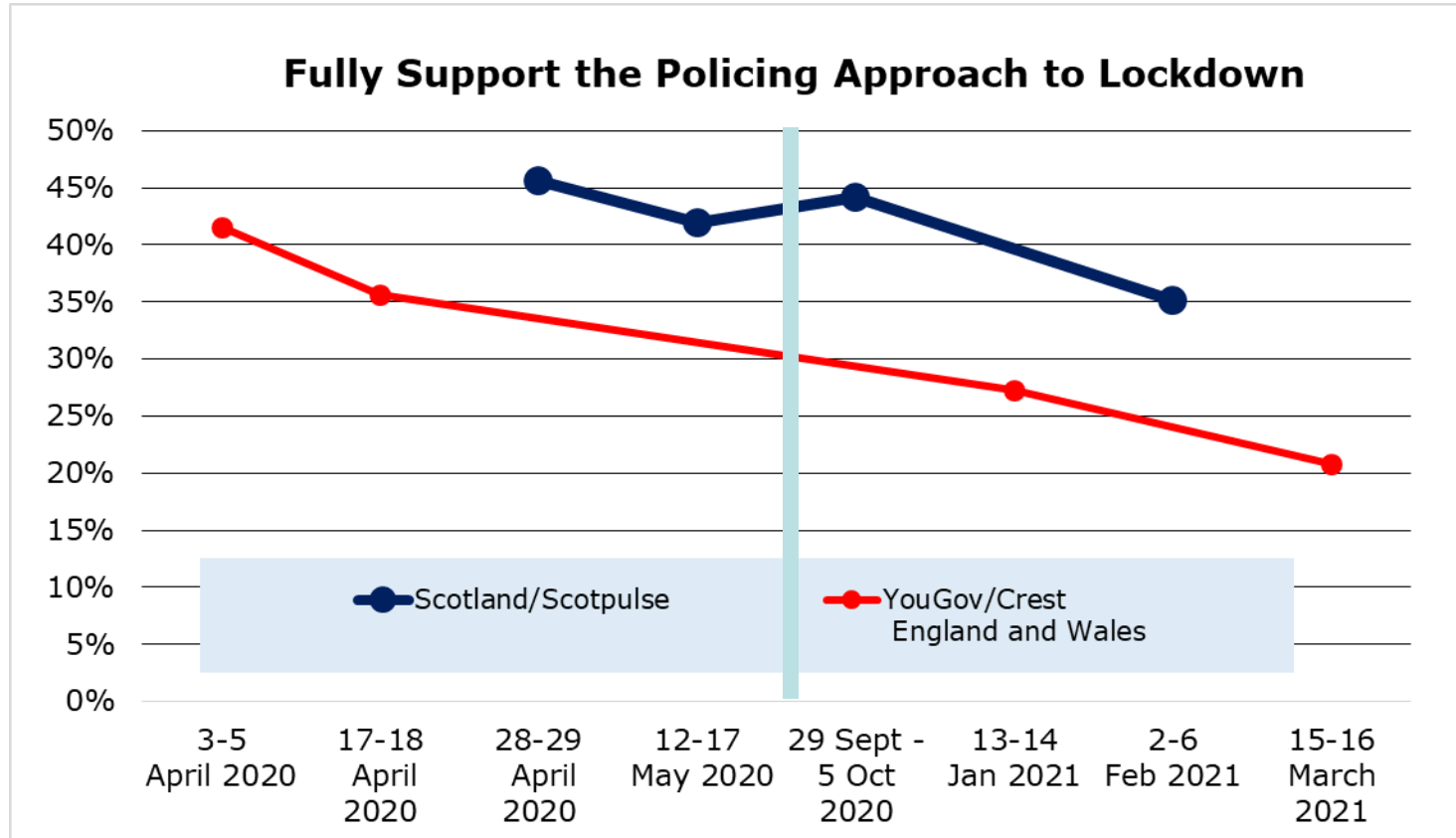
We have also been asking the public about how they view local policing performance and how much confidence they have in different aspects of policing, as well as police visibility

And we've been examining the data by age, gender, region, urban/rural split etc.

Check out: <https://www.spa.police.uk/strategy-performance/oversight-of-policing-covid-19/>

and/or contact SPAStrategyandPerformance@spa.pnn.police.uk

Top Level Findings



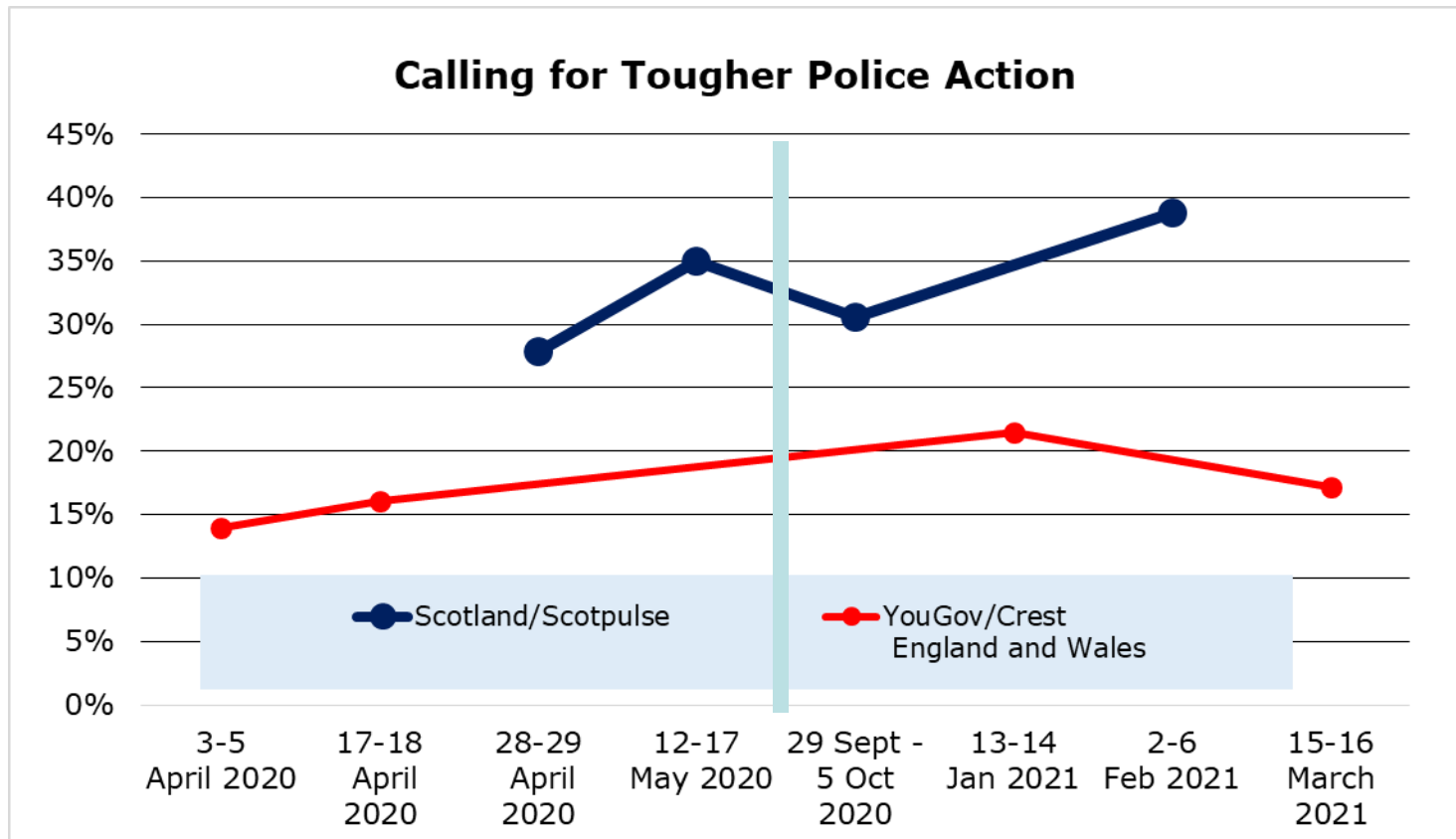
Full Support has fallen across Great Britain

Spring 2020 – full support in Scotland at almost 50%, higher than for England and Wales by 10-15%

Autumn 2020 – in Scotland around 45% compared with 30% in England and Wales

Winter 2021 – clear drop across Great Britain, becoming more of a minority view (20% by March for England and Wales, 35% for Scotland by February)

Top Level Findings

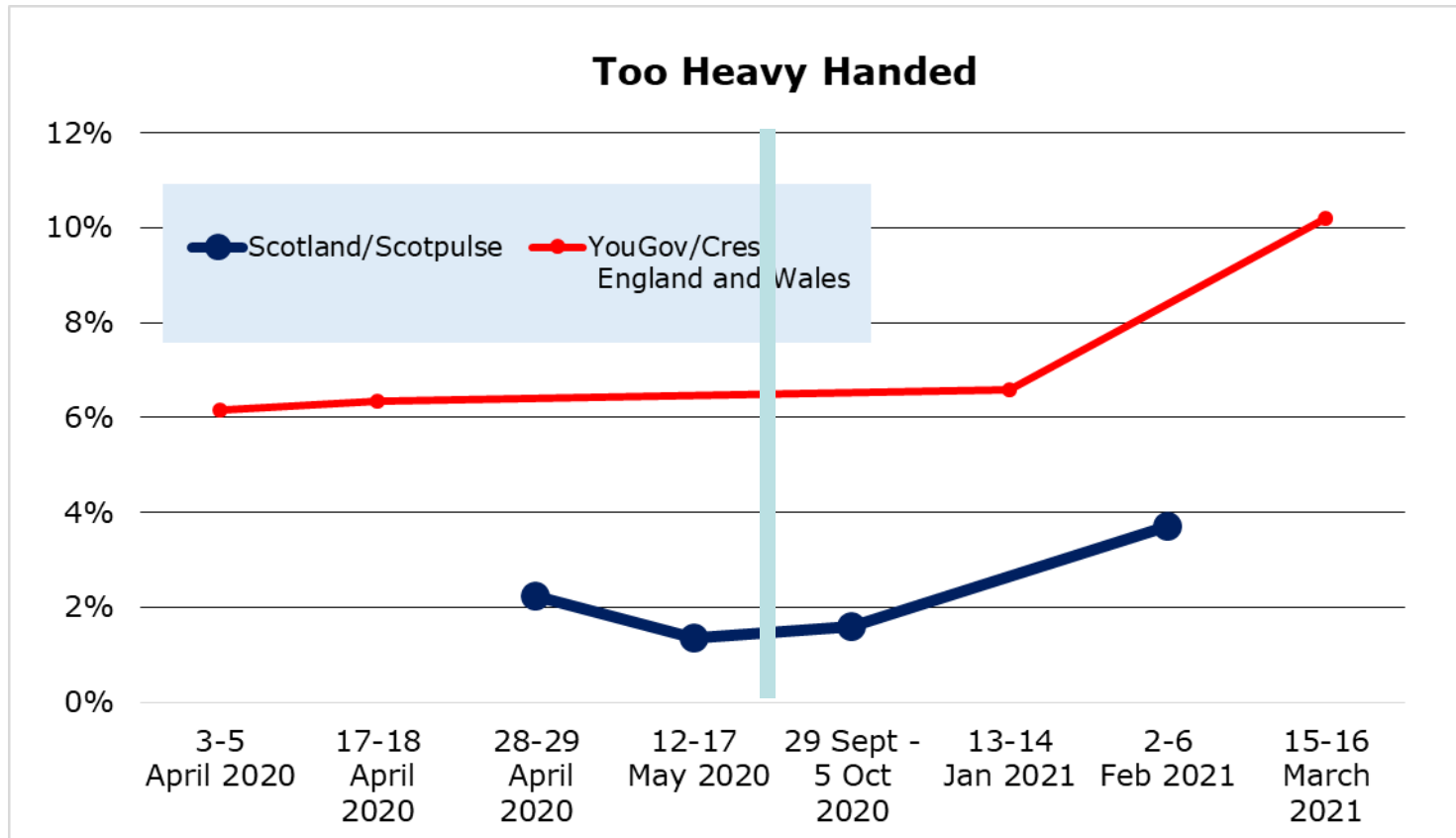


Call for tougher police action has been stronger in Scotland by around 15-20% compared with England

Peaked in Winter 2020/21 for both Scotland and England and Wales

Becomes the majority view in Scotland in February 2021, replacing the previous majority view of "Full Support"

Top Level Findings

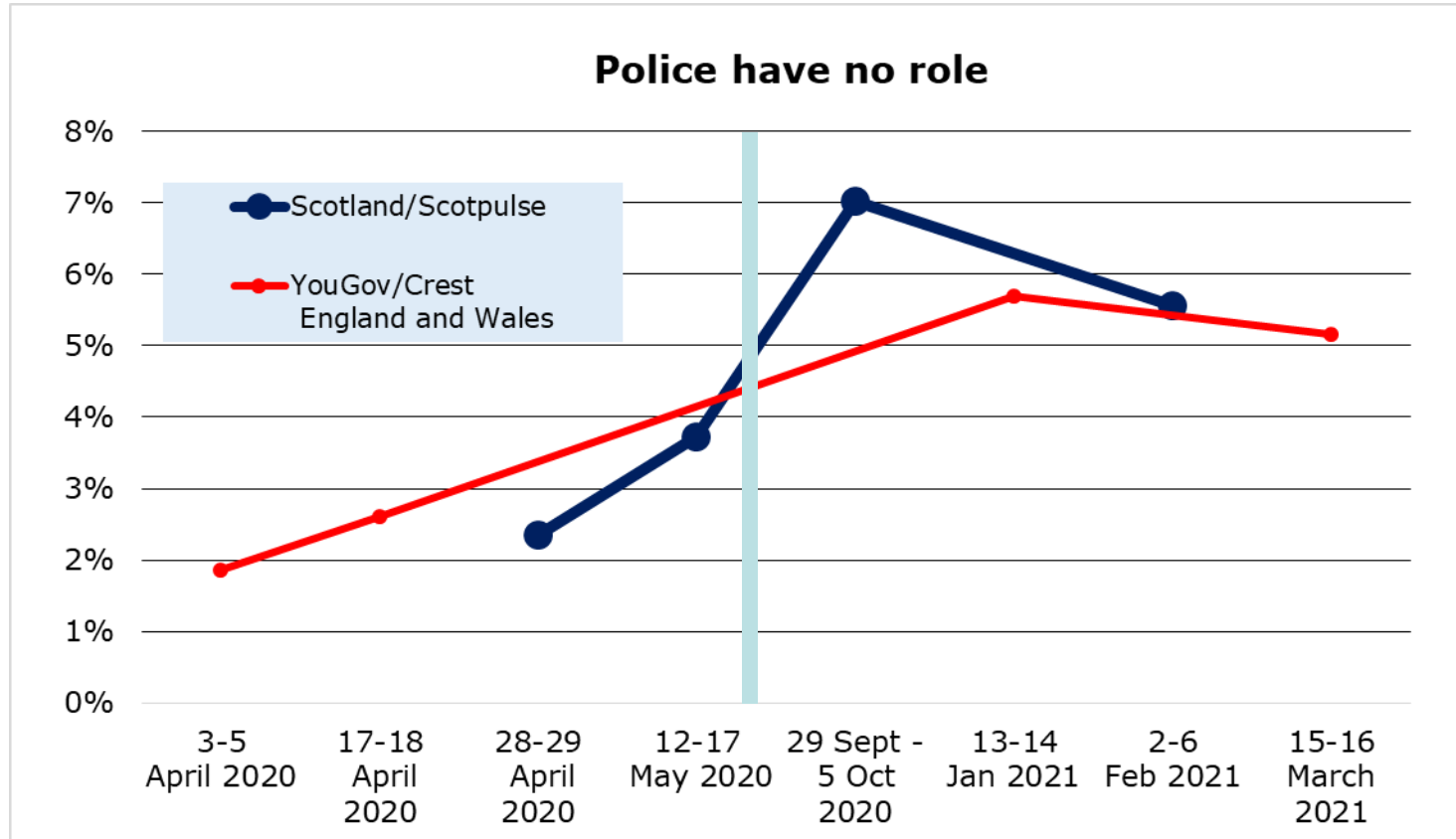


Remains a minority view across Great Britain

Lower by about 4% in Scotland compared with England and Wales, but follows a similar trend

Peaks in the Winter 2021 period

Top Level Findings




Also a minority view across Great Britain

Similar trend and level between Scotland and England and Wales

Notably higher in the Autumn and Winter Lockdown versus the initial Spring/Summer lockdown

Police Intervention - Enforcement

In October 2020, over 3,700 people in Scotland were asked about whether the following measures required **full enforcement** by the police (as the **lead agency**):

- 
- The size of public social gatherings outdoors (48%)
 - Quarantining after going abroad (36%)
 - Self-isolating following a positive test result or a Test and Protect Alert (33%)
 - Wearing a face covering when required (30%)
 - Businesses complying with regulations e.g. promoting physical distancing, complying with open hours restrictions (26%)
 - People visiting one another in their homes (17%)
 - Travelling for recreation, leisure and/or exercise (16%)

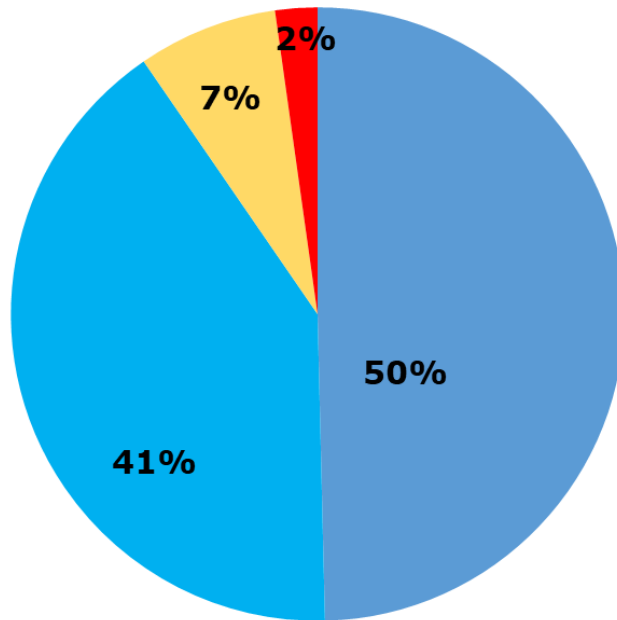
DEFINITION -
“Full police enforcement - the police should lead on enforcement i.e. by removing people, arresting people or issuing people with fines”

More support for police taking the lead on enforcing regulations regarding large gatherings of people, as well as issues around quarantine and self-isolation

Far less support for the police being as involved in the enforcement of people going about their everyday private business

Experience of Compliance

Experiences of Complying with Lockdown Measures



- It has been quite easy to comply with all of the regulations
- It has been a challenge but I have mostly complied with the regulations
- It has been difficult at times and I have struggled to comply with some aspects of the regulations
- It has been overwhelmingly difficult to comply with most of the regulations

We are currently carrying out further analysis of our data on compliance and some of the challenges that people have experienced – and we will share this in due course with our Policing Performance Committee at the Scottish Police Authority.

<https://www.spa.police.uk/meetings/policing-performance-committee/>

We have data on how compliance experiences have varied according to different personal circumstances e.g. having caring responsibilities, a mental or physical health issue, as well as socio-demographic factors

Thank you.....

SPA Strategy and Performance Team

SPAStrategyandPerformance@spa.pnn.police.uk