

# 6 Post

## 6.1 Recent developments in Scotland

In October 2014 the Scottish Parliament debated end-to-end competition in postal services and its potential impact on Royal Mail's ability to provide the universal service.

The Scottish Parliament has an active cross-party group on postal issues, of which Ofcom is a member, and which takes an interest in the universal service obligation and issues such as post offices and access to services. In December 2014 it discussed Ofcom's statement on end-to-end competition.

## 6.2 Sending post: residential customers

### Adults in Scotland are the least likely to send post each month

Over a third of adults living in Scotland (36%) said they had not sent any post in the past month, the highest across all the nations. This compares to just under a quarter of those in England (22%) and a quarter of those in Wales (25%) who said they had not sent any items in the past month. Adults in Scotland also send fewer items than other nations on average each month (5.0) except Northern Ireland, where the average is 4.5 items.

**Figure 6.1** Approximate number of items of post sent each month



Source: Ofcom Residential Postal Tracker, Q2 2014-Q1 2015

Base: All respondents (n = 3557 UK, 2123 England, 580 Scotland, 418 Wales, 436 Northern Ireland) QC1. Approximately how many items of post - including letters, cards and parcels - have you personally sent in the past month?

### One in five adults in Scotland have sent a parcel in the past month

A fifth (21%) of adults in Scotland said that they had sent a parcel in the past month, lower than the UK overall (30%). Those in Scotland were the least likely to have sent a parcel, with 79% saying that they had not done so in the past month.

**Figure 6.2 Parcels sent in the past month**



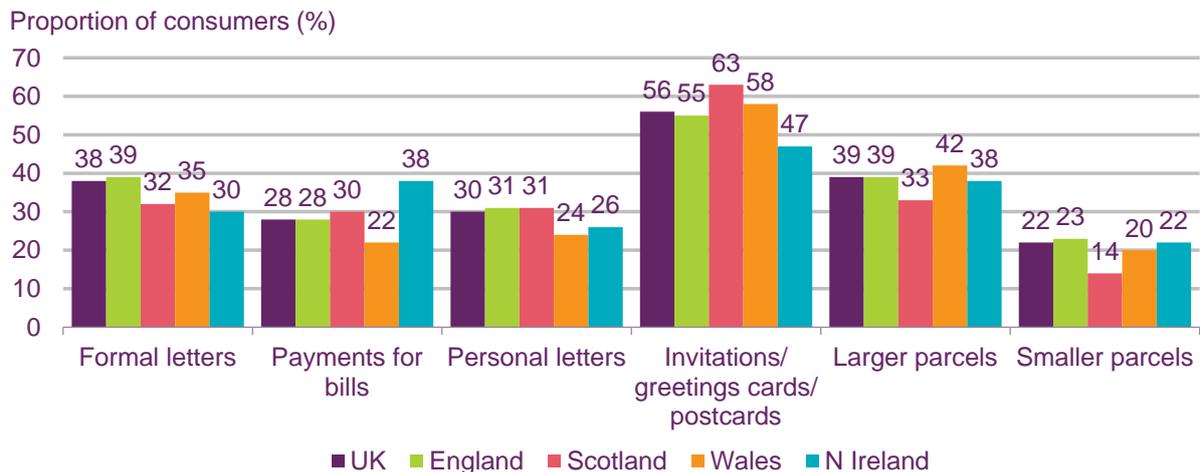
Source: Ofcom Residential Postal Tracker, Q2 2014-Q1 2015  
 Base: All respondents (n = 3557 UK, 2123 England, 580 Scotland, 418 Wales, 436 Northern Ireland)  
 QC2. And how many of these items sent in the last month were parcels rather than letters and cards?

**Adults in Scotland send more personal mail than in other nations**

Although fewer people in Scotland had sent a parcel than the UK average, nearly two thirds of adults in Scotland (63%) said that they had sent invitations and greeting cards in the past month.

Those in Scotland were more likely to have sent any item of personal mail, three-quarters of adults having done so in the past month. This is higher than any other nation, and 5pp higher than the UK overall (70%).

**Figure 6.3 Type of post sent in the last month**



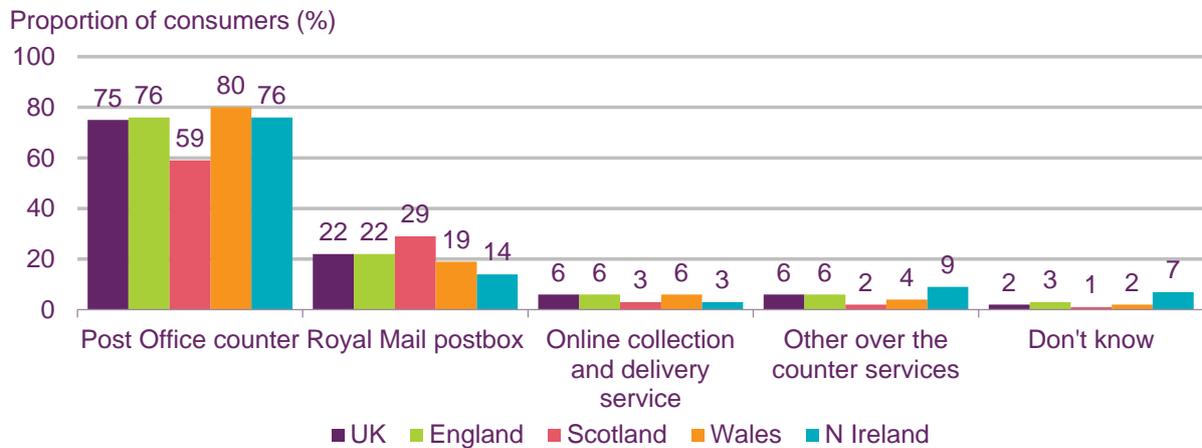
Source: Ofcom Residential Postal Tracker, Q2 2014-Q1 2015  
 Base: All who have personally sent any items of post in the last week (n = 2685 UK, 1673 England, 382 Scotland, 330 Wales, 300 Northern Ireland)  
 QC5. Which of these types of mail would you say you have personally sent in the last month by post? (multicode)

**Adults in Scotland are more likely to use a Royal Mail post box to send parcels**

Adults in Scotland are more likely than those in the other nations to use a post box to send a parcel (29% vs. 22% across the UK) and less likely to go to a post office counter (59% vs

75% across the UK). This suggests that, although people in Scotland send fewer parcels overall, they are more likely than those in other nations to send small parcels capable of being posted in a post box.

**Figure 6.4 Methods used to send parcels**



Source: Ofcom Residential Postal Tracker, Q2 2014-Q1 2015

Base: All who have sent any parcels in the last month (n = 1088 UK, 688 England, 146 Scotland, 135 Wales, 119 Northern Ireland)

QC20. You said earlier that you have sent one or more parcels in the last month... When you sent these parcels, which of these methods did you use? (multicode)

**Those in Scotland are more likely than all UK adults to have reduced, and to continue to reduce, the amount of post they send**

When asked about how the amount of post they send has changed in recent times, people in Scotland were more likely than the UK average to say they now send less (-18% net). They also anticipated that they will further reduce their use of post in the future (-16% net).

**Figure 6.5 Net claimed change in amount of post sent in the past two years**



Source: Ofcom Residential Postal Tracker, Q2 2014-Q1 2015

Base: All respondents (n = 3557 UK, 2123 England, 580 Scotland, 418 Wales, 436 N Ireland)

QC10: Compared with two years ago, would you say that the number of items you send through the post has...increased greatly, increased slightly, stayed the same, decreased slightly, decreased greatly? (Multiple choice)

Note: chart shows net (% who claim use has increased - % those who claim use has decreased)

**Figure 6.6 Predicted change in amount of post sent in the next two years**



Source: Ofcom Residential Postal Tracker, Q2 2014-Q1 2015

Base: All respondents (n = 2354 UK, 1433 England, 379 Scotland, 278 Wales, 264 N Ireland)

QC25: Looking to the future... Compared with now, would you say that the number of letters, cards and parcels you will be sending in the post two years from now will have.....increased greatly, increased slightly, stayed the same, decreased slightly, decreased greatly?

Note: chart shows net (% who claim use will increase - % those who their use will decrease)

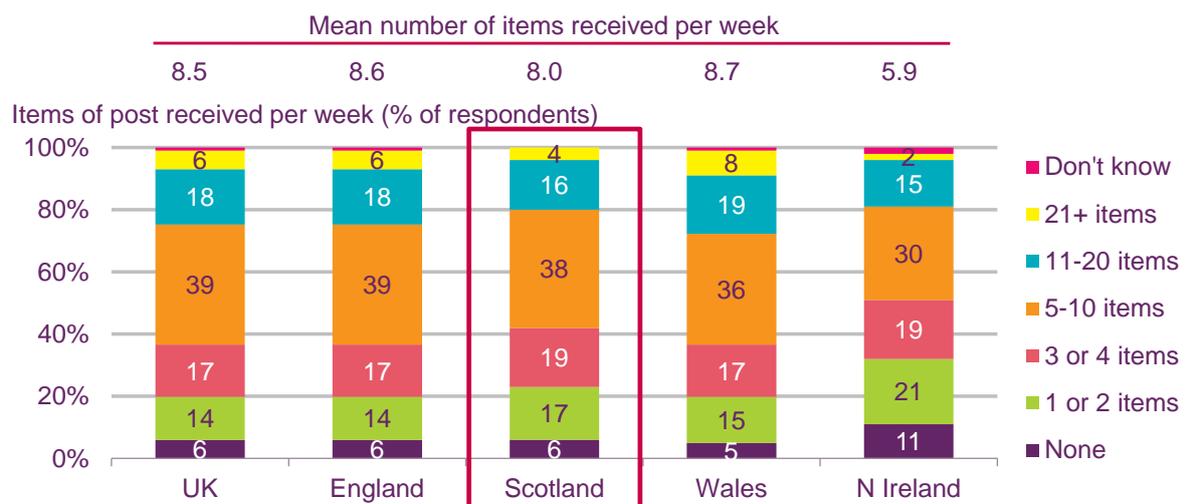
### 6.3 Receiving post: residential customers

**Those living in Scotland claim to receive eight items of post each week, slightly fewer than the UK average**

People in Scotland are more likely to receive four items or fewer each week than the UK average, with a third of adults (36%) saying that they had received between one and four items in the past week.

Although the average number of letters, cards and parcels received by adults in Scotland is lower than the UK average (8.0 vs 8.5), it is much higher than the Northern Ireland stated average of 5.9 items received per week.

**Figure 6.7 Approximate number of items received in the past week**



Source: Ofcom Residential Postal Tracker, Q2 2014-Q1 2015

Base: All respondents (n = 3557 UK, 2123 England, 580 Scotland, 418 Wales, 436 Northern Ireland)

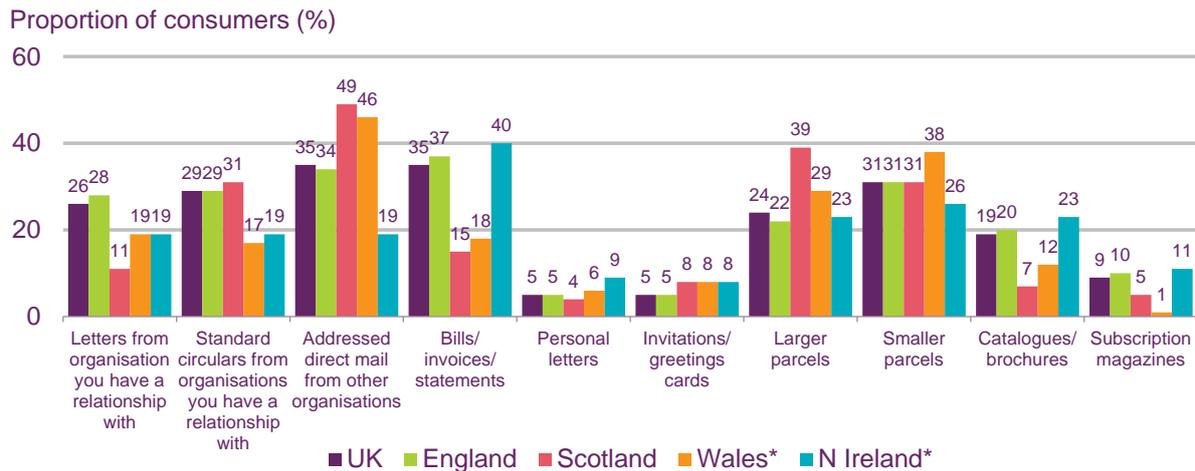
QD1. Approximately how many items of post – including letters, cards and parcels – have you personally received in the last week?

## Increases in post received in Scotland appear to be driven by direct mail and parcels.

When asked to compare the amount of post they receive now with what they typically received two years ago, almost a quarter of adults in Scotland (23%) think they are receiving more.

Around half of those who say they are receiving more post than two years ago report receiving more addressed direct mail (49%), and four in ten say that they are receiving more large parcels (39%). Only 4% say that they are receiving more personal letters.

**Figure 6.8** Types of items people are receiving more often



Source: Ofcom Residential Postal Tracker, Q2 2014-Q1 2015

Base: All respondents who say that the number of items received by post has increased, compared to two years ago (n = 885 UK, 580 England, 130 Scotland, 98 Wales, 77 Northern Ireland)

QD6. Which of these types of addressed items are you personally receiving more often through the post now? (multicode) \* Caution: Low base

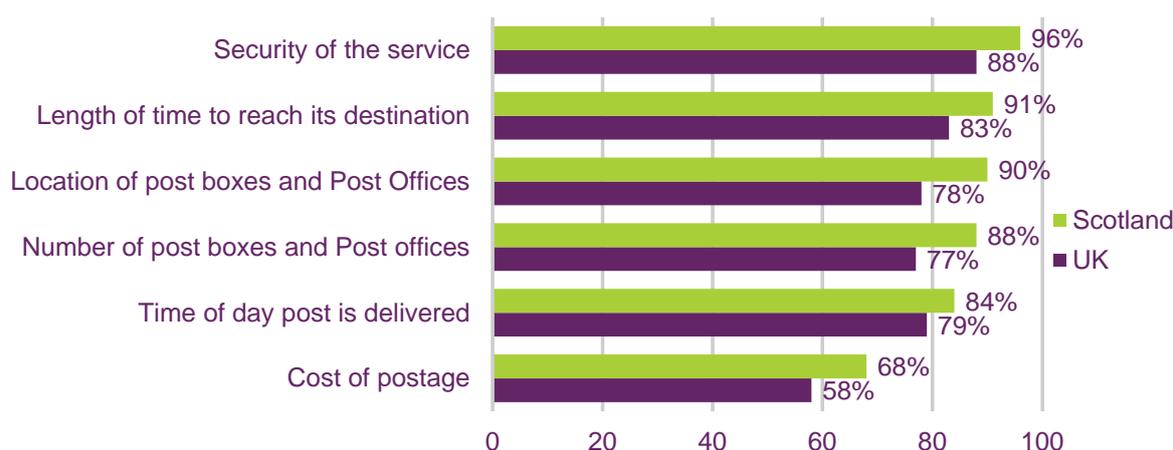
## 6.4 Attitudes towards Royal Mail

### Adults living in Scotland are more satisfied than the rest of the UK with the cost of postage

Eighty-six per cent of people in Scotland are 'very' or 'quite' satisfied with Royal Mail overall. Figure 6.9 shows that this satisfaction is seen across all aspects of Royal Mail's service, in particular the cost of postage: almost seven in ten (69%) adults in Scotland express satisfaction with this, compared to just 58% across the whole of the UK.

More than nine in ten (93%) people in Scotland were satisfied with the security of the service, and 90% were satisfied with the length of time taken for post to reach its destination.

**Figure 6.9 Satisfaction with specific aspects of Royal Mail's service**



Source: Ofcom Residential Postal Tracker, Q2 2014-Q1 2015

Base: All respondents (n = 3557 UK, 580 Scotland)

QE3A-F. Satisfaction with specific aspects of Royal Mail's services (very or quite satisfied)

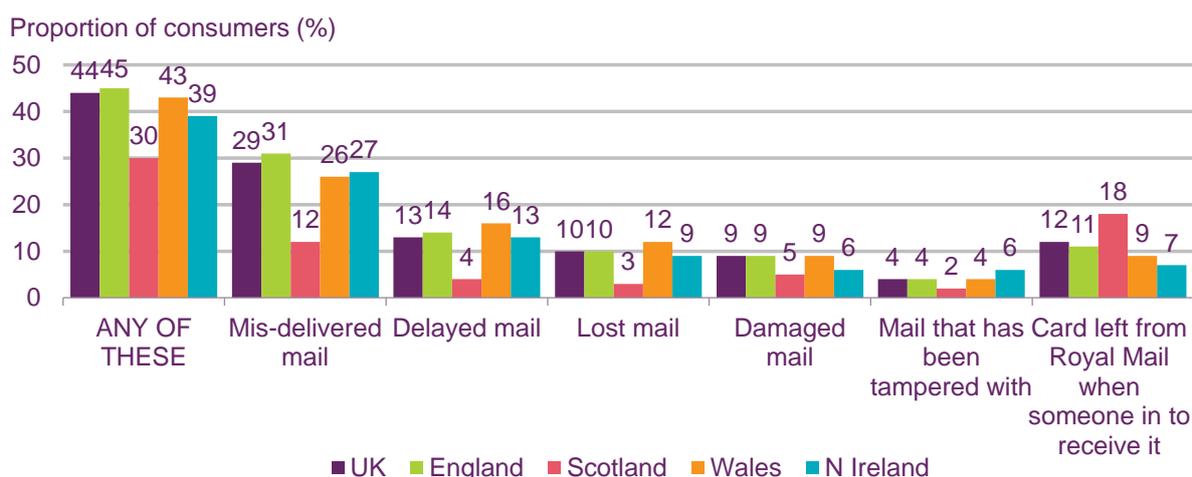
Ranked by proportion satisfied among Scotland adults

**Two in ten adults in Scotland claim that a card has been left by Royal Mail when there was someone at home to receive the post, in the past year**

Customers in Scotland reported the lowest level of most problems with Royal Mail, compared to the other nations. Three in ten people in Scotland had experienced any problem with Royal Mail, far lower than the UK average of 44%.

Of the problems experienced in Scotland, just over one in ten (12%) had had post incorrectly delivered to their address, compared to 29% across the UK and 27% in Northern Ireland. Just 4% had experienced delayed mail, again the lowest of all the nations. However, Scotland had the highest number of adults claiming that a card was left for them by Royal Mail when someone was in to receive the post (18% vs 12% UK average).

**Figure 6.10 Problems experienced with Royal Mail in the past 12 months**



Source: Ofcom Residential Postal Tracker, Q2 2014-Q1 2015

Base: All respondents (n = 3557 adults 16+, 2123 England, 580 Scotland, 418 Wales, 436 Northern Ireland)

QG1A-E. Problems experienced with Royal Mail service in the last 12 months, ranked by proportion among all UK adults

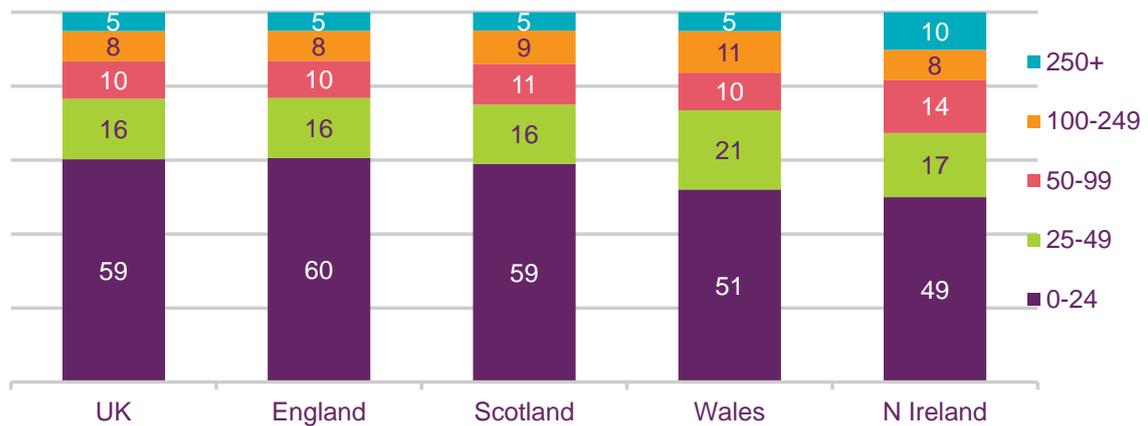
## 6.5 Sending and receiving post: business customers

### Over six in ten businesses in Scotland send fewer than 25 letters each month

Almost six in ten (59%) of organisations based in Scotland say they send fewer than 25 letters each month. This is in line with the UK average (59%).

**Figure 6.11 Average volume of letters sent each month**

Proportion of respondents (%)



Source: Ofcom Business Postal Tracker, Q2 2014-Q1 2015

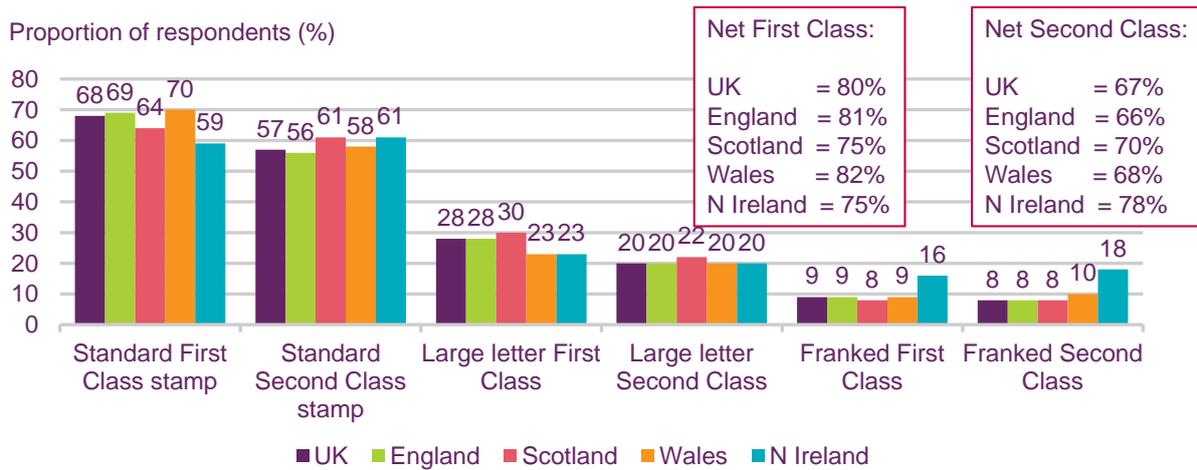
Base: All respondents (n = 1591 UK, 973 England, 217 Scotland, 198 Wales, 203 N Ireland)

QV2a. On average, how many letter items does your organisation send per month? Please think only about all the letters and large letters you may send as an organisation.

### Three in ten businesses in Scotland use large letter First Class stamps for their post

Just over six in ten (62%) of businesses in Scotland send their letters using standard First Class stamps, lower than the overall across the UK (68%). However, businesses in Scotland are more likely to use large letter First Class stamps, with three in ten using this product. This compares to 23% in Wales and Northern Ireland and 28% in the UK overall (28%).

**Figure 6.12 Royal Mail services used to send items of post**



Source: Ofcom Business Postal Tracker, Q2 2014-Q1 2015

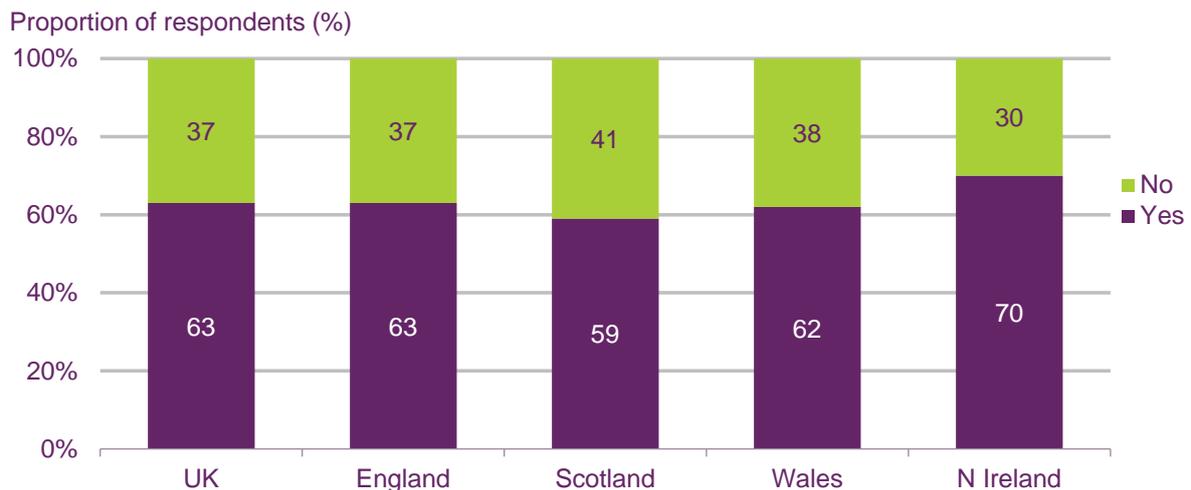
Base: All respondents using RM standard delivery services (n = 1493 UK, 916 England, 205 Scotland, 182 Wales, 190 N Ireland)

QV6d. Which, if any, of the following Royal Mail services does your organisation use to send your standard mail?

**Six in ten organisations in Scotland say they have switched some post to other methods over the past 12 months**

Businesses were asked if they had substituted any of their postal communications with other methods such as email or other electronic alternatives. Six in ten (59%) of organisations in Scotland said they had switched some of their communications from post to another method in the past 12 months. This is the lowest across all of the UK nations. Across the UK, 63% of business said that they had switched some post to another method.

**Figure 6.13 Switched some post to other methods over past 12 months**



Source: Ofcom Business Postal Tracker, Q2 2014-Q1 2015

Base: All respondents (n = 1591 UK, 973 England, 217 Scotland, 198 Wales, 203 N Ireland)

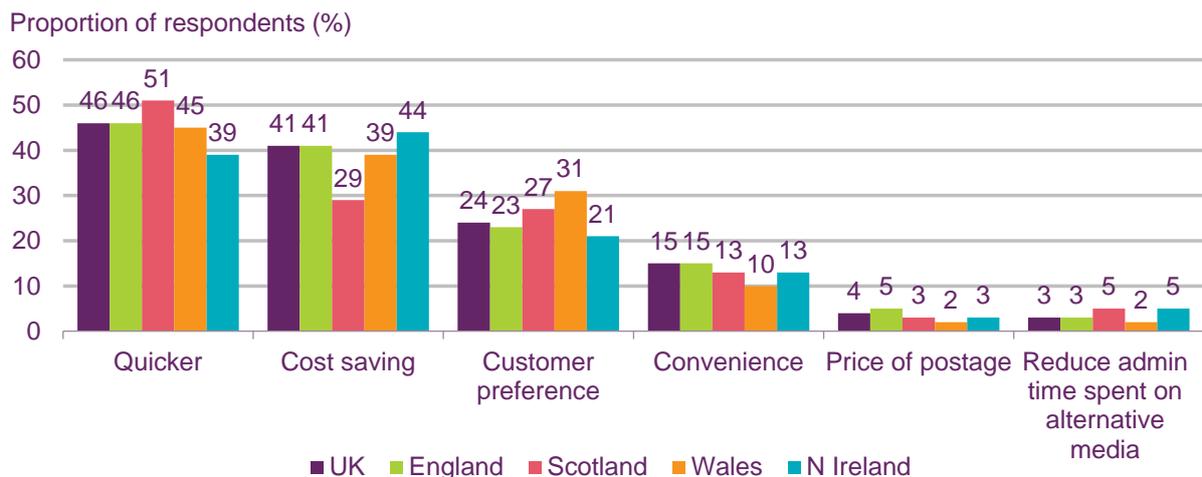
QF4. Over the last 12 months, has your organisation moved some mail to other communication methods?

## Speed is more important than cost saving when considering switching mail to another method in Scotland

Figure 6.14 shows that businesses in Scotland are the most likely of all the UK nations to say that speed is a reason to switch post to other methods. Although Scotland was the most likely to say speed was a motivating factor, this was one of the most-cited reasons for almost all nations.

Cost saving is the least likely reason for switching in Scotland, with less than three in ten (29%) choosing this, compared to 39% in Wales and 44% in Northern Ireland.

**Figure 6.14 Reasons for switching some mail to other methods over past 12 months**



Source: Ofcom Business Postal Tracker, Q2 2013-Q1 2014

Base: All who have moved to other communication methods (n = 909 UK, 543 England, 123 Scotland, 130 Wales, 113 N Ireland)

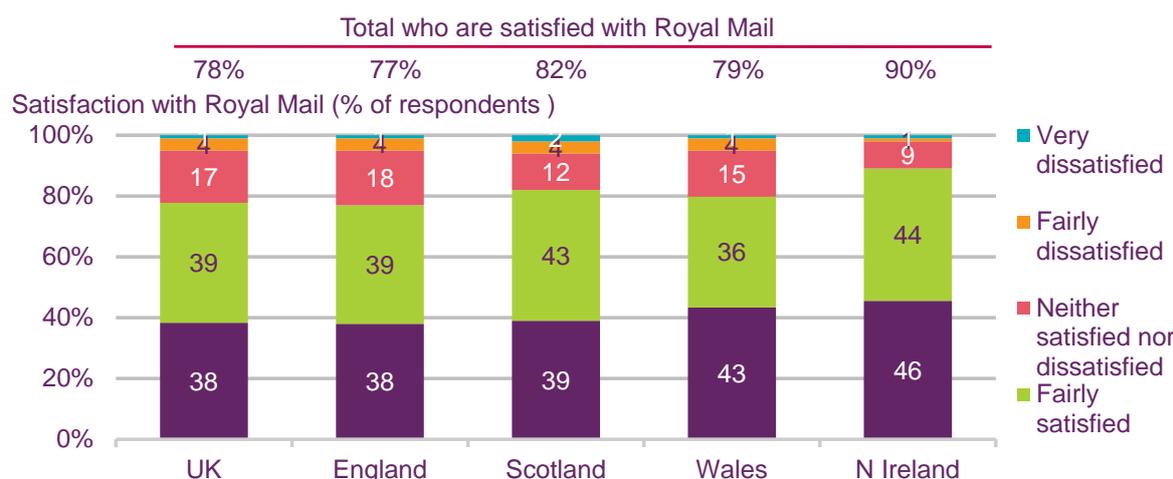
QF6: Why have you moved some mail to other communication methods? Open-ended

All above 2% across UK shown

## Over four-fifths of businesses in Scotland are satisfied with the postal service they receive from Royal Mail

Eighty-two per cent of business customers in Scotland say they are satisfied with the service they receive from Royal Mail, with 39% saying they are 'very satisfied'. Although satisfaction overall is higher in Scotland than in Wales, more businesses in Wales said that they were 'very satisfied'.

**Figure 6.15 Overall satisfaction with the service from Royal Mail**



Source: Ofcom Business Postal Tracker, Q2 2014-Q1 2015

Base: All respondents who use Royal Mail (n = 163 UK, 958 England, 213 Scotland, 195 Wales, 197 Northern Ireland)

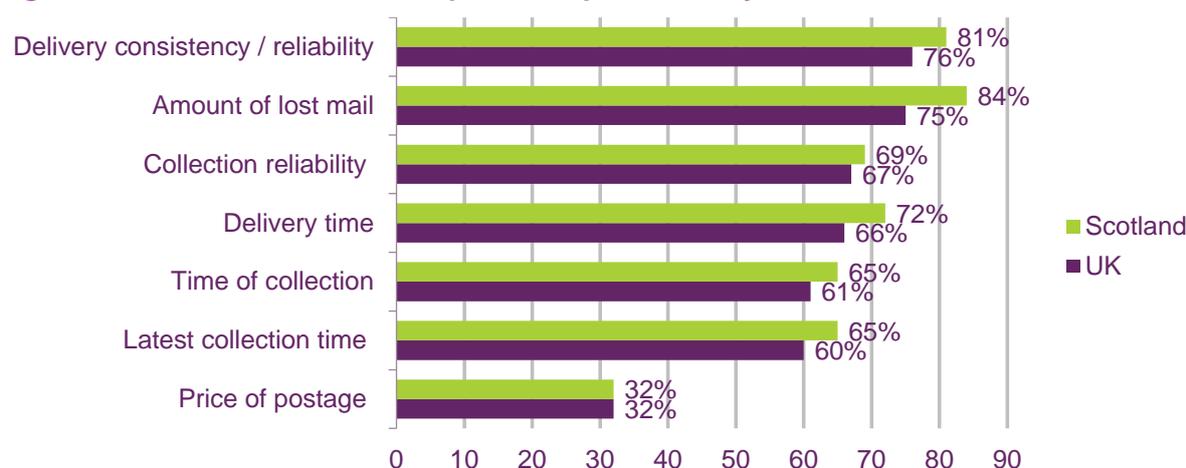
QRM2. Thinking generally about the service your organisation receives as a whole, on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 is very satisfied, how satisfied are you with the overall quality of the services you receive from Royal Mail as a recipient and sender?

**Businesses in Scotland are more satisfied than those in the UK overall with aspects of Royal Mail's service**

When asked about satisfaction with specific aspects of Royal Mail's services in Scotland, 81% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the consistency and reliability of delivery (76% across the UK) and 72% said they were happy with delivery times (66% across the UK). Eighty-four per cent of businesses in Scotland were satisfied with the amount of lost mail (75% across the UK).

With the exception of the price of postage, where 32% were satisfied – the same as the UK overall – businesses in Scotland were more satisfied than those in the UK as a whole.

**Figure 6.16 Satisfaction with specific aspects of Royal Mail's service**



Source: Ofcom Business Postal Tracker, Q2 2014-Q1 2015

Base: All respondents who use Royal Mail (n = 1563 UK, 213 Scotland)

QRM3: How would you rate the performance of Royal Mail, as a recipient and sender, in the following areas on a 5 point scale where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 is very satisfied?

Ranked by satisfaction levels in Scotland