SES XII

Why we voted that way

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'Performance politics' in Scottish elections

Why did the SNP win narrowly in 2007?

- Competence: SNP > Lab
- Image: SNP > Lab
- Leadership: SNP > Lab
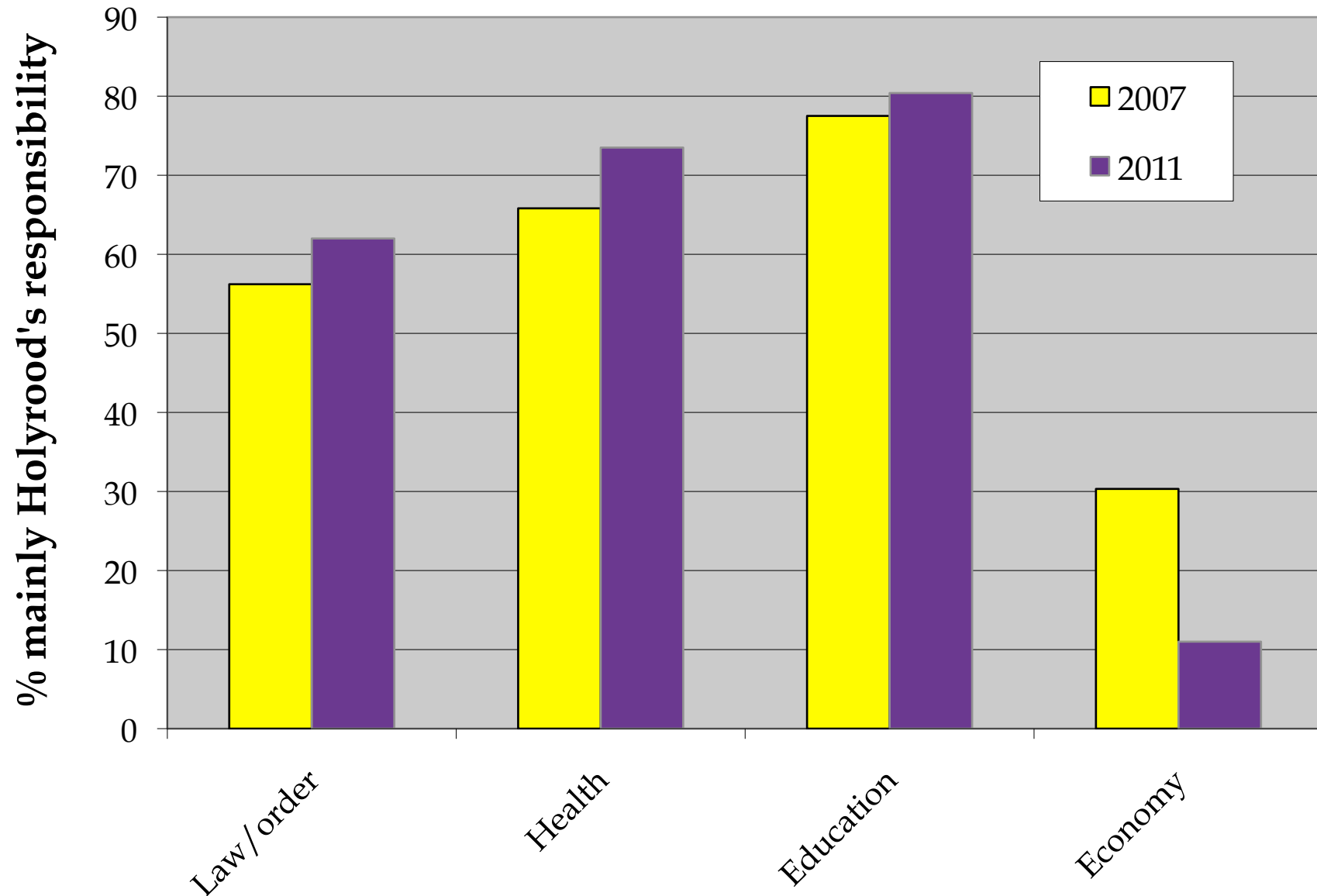- Scottish interests: SNP > Lab

Why did the SNP win handsomely in 2011?

- Competence: SNP **>** Lab
- Image: SNP **>** Lab
- Leadership: SNP **>** Lab
- Scottish interests: SNP **>** Lab

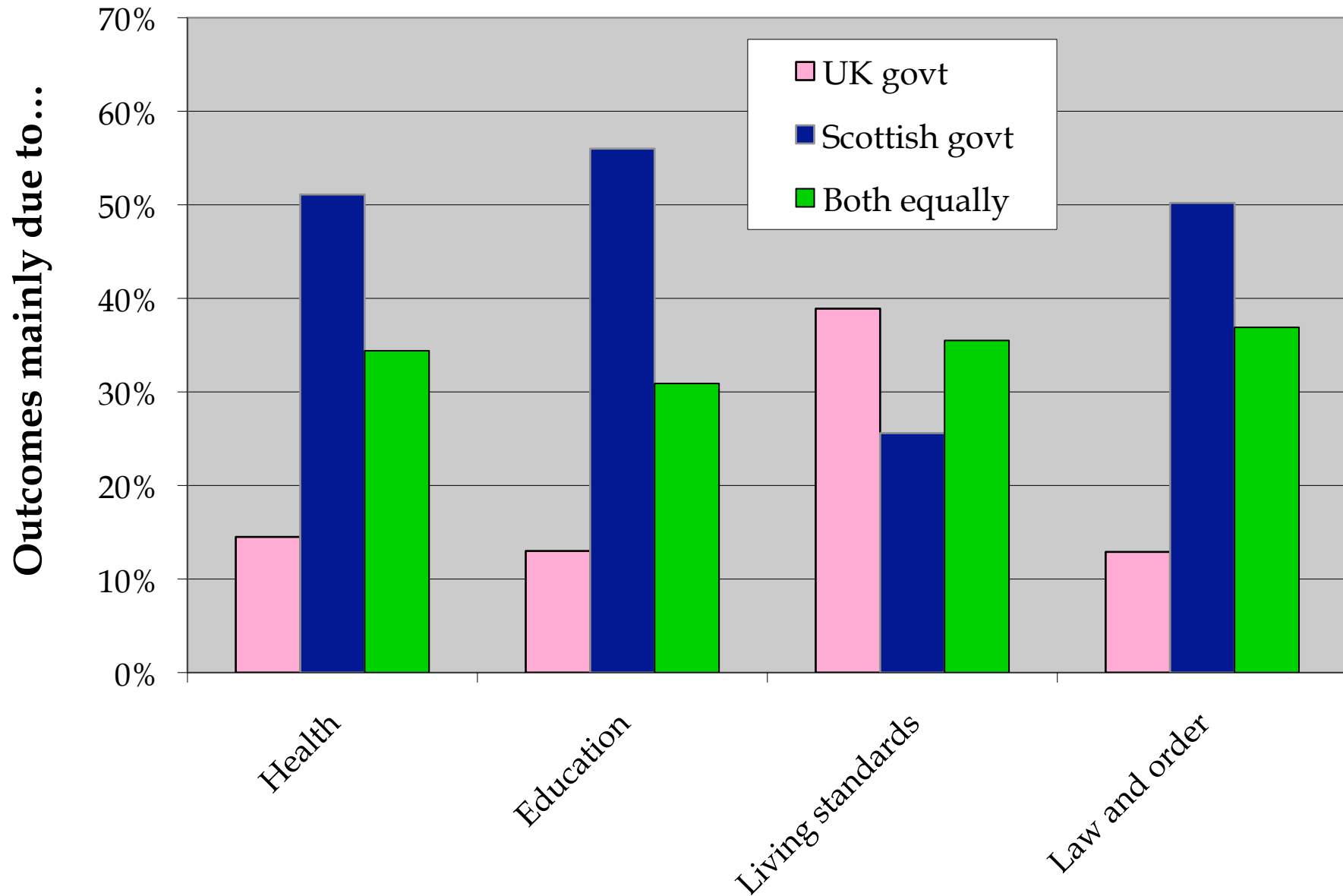# Why does 'performance politics' win Scottish elections?

Four key aspects of context:

1. The Scottish Parliament matters

2. Class and party dealignment

3. Ideological convergence

4. Reshaping of the constitutional issue

Context 1 – the Scottish Parliament matters

Context 1 – the Scottish Parliament matters

Outcomes mainly due to…

Legend:
- UK govt
- Scottish govt
- Both equally

Categories: Health, Education, Living standards, Law and order

Context 2 - dealignment

Q: "Do you usually think of yourself as being a supporter of one particular party?"

- – 44% said 'No'
- – Many saying 'Yes' then abstained or defected

	Pre-election party identification					
Regional vote	None %	Con %	Lab %	LD %	SNP %	Other %
Did not vote	**61**	34	45	40	25	62
Conservative	3	**54**	1	1	1	0
Labour	7	1	**44**	3	0	4
Lib Dem	2	0	1	**32**	0	0
SNP	18	9	6	13	**69**	8
Other	9	2	5	11	4	**26**
N	*885*	*125*	*424*	*75*	*211*	*26*

Context 3 – ideological convergence

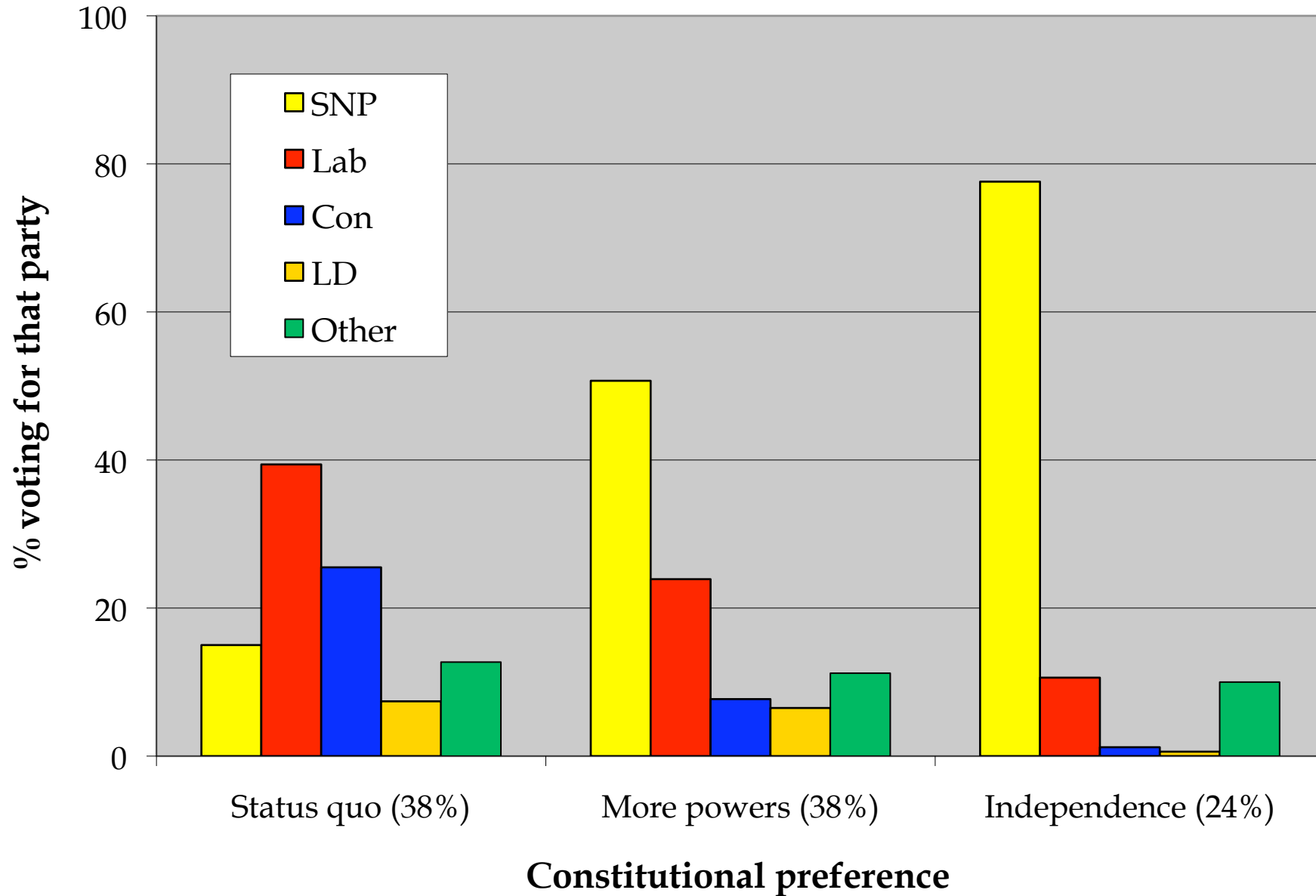| How much difference between Labour and SNP?	2011	2007
A great deal	17	26
Quite a lot	35	42
Some	32	21
Not very much	14	9
None at all	2	2
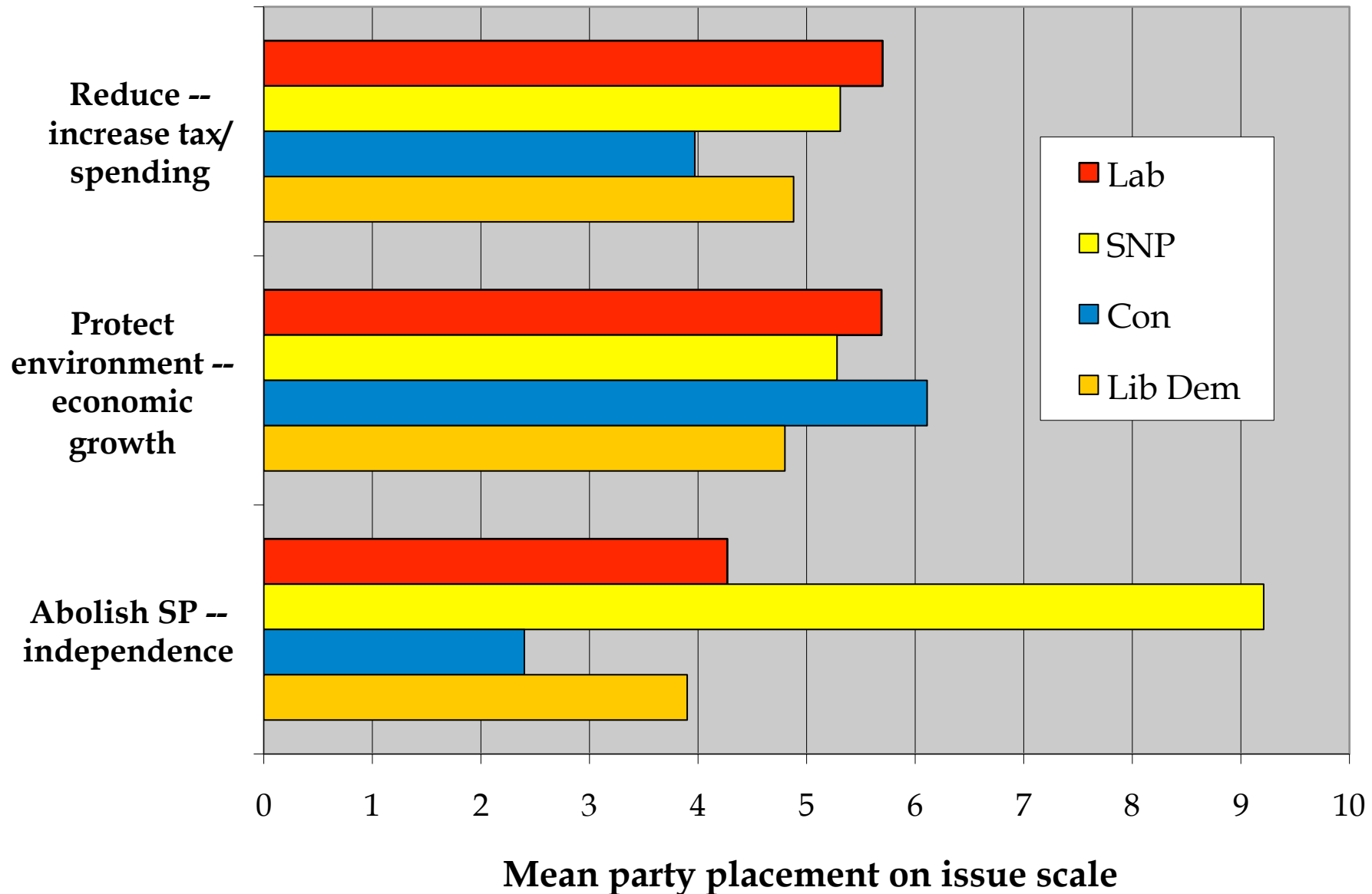
Context 4 – the constitutional issue

Q: "How do you think the return of an SNP minority government would affect the likelihood of independence?"

	%
Much more likely	7
Bit more likely	29
No difference	42
Bit less likely	13
Much less likely	9
N	*1784*

Context 4 – the constitutional issue

Context 4 – the constitutional issue

	2003	2007	2011	2003	2007	2011

% SNP vote among indep. supporters | % indep. support among SNP voters
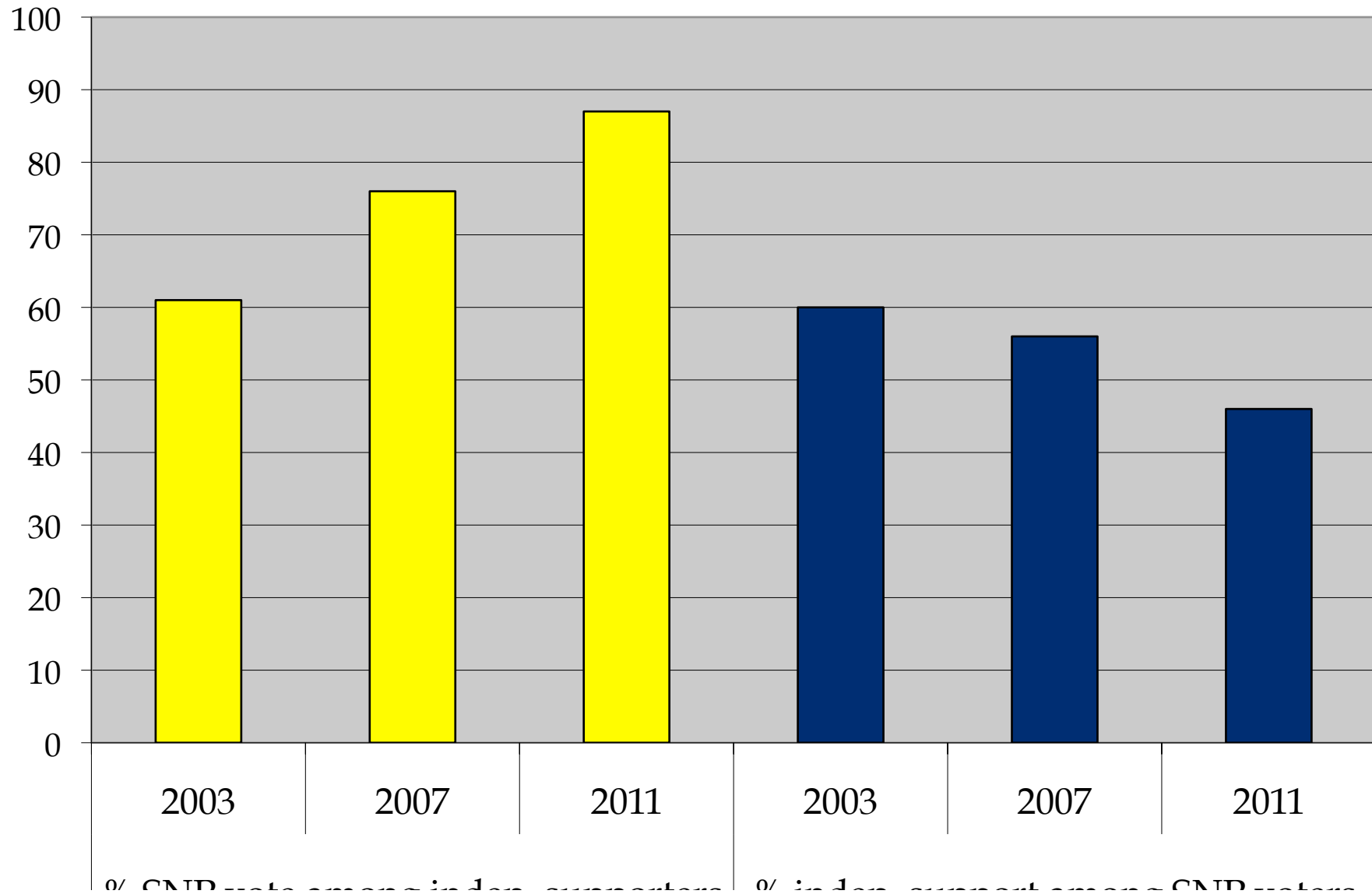
Overall performance evaluations

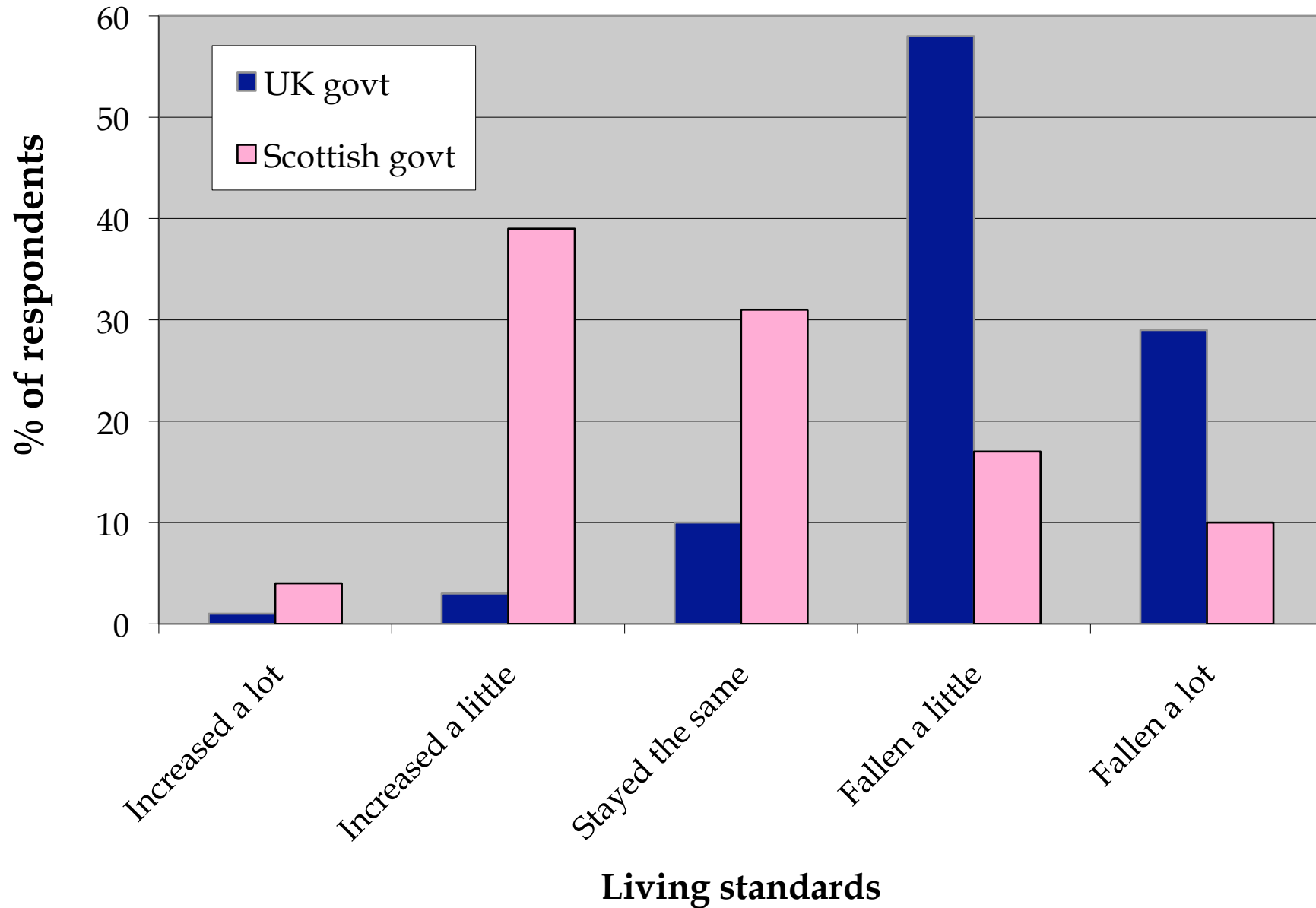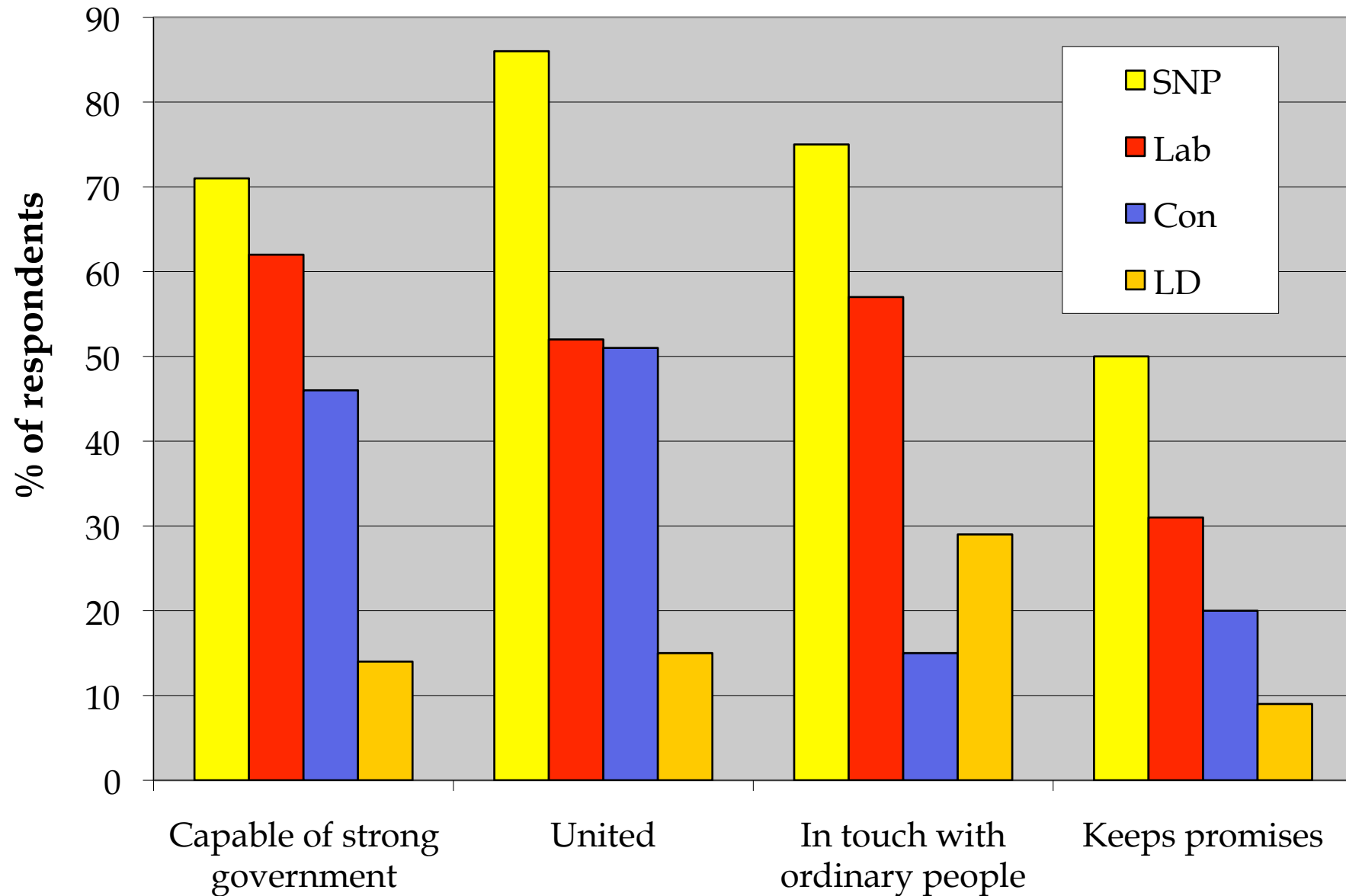| | Scottish govt | | UK govt | | |
| | *How good a job done by…* | | | | |
	SNP 07-11 %	Lab if in govt %	Lab 97-10 %	Con 2010- %	LD 2010- %
Very good	14	4	5	4	1
Fairly good	42	27	31	18	13
Neither	25	26	19	23	23
Fairly bad	12	25	21	25	26
Very bad	8	18	25	30	36
Good - bad	**+36**	**-12**	**-10**	**-33**	**-48**

Specific issue evaluations

Q: "Since the last election to the Scottish Parliament in 2007, would you say that the standard of _____ in Scotland has increased or fallen?"

	Health	Education	Living standards	Law and order
	%	%	%	%
Increased a lot	6	3	1	4
Increased a little	27	20	13	20
Stayed the same	41	38	27	40
Fallen a little	18	28	40	23
Fallen a lot	8	11	19	13
Up minus down	**+7**	**-16**	**-45**	**-12**

Who gets credit, who gets blame?

% of respondents (y-axis)

Living standards (x-axis)

Legend:
- UK govt
- Scottish govt

x-axis categories: Increased a lot, Increased a little, Stayed the same, Fallen a little, Fallen a lot

Party image

Campaign evaluations
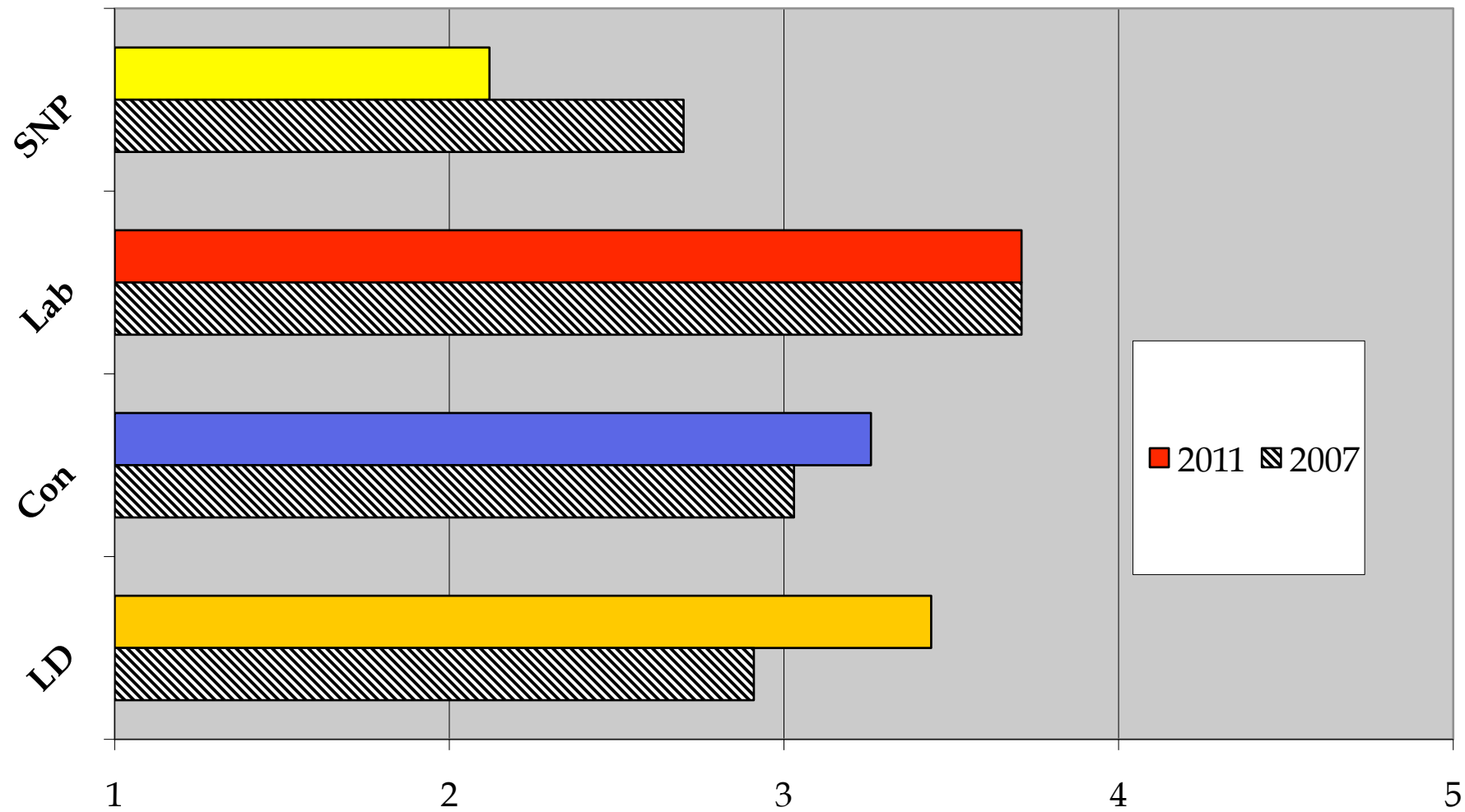
Mean ratings of campaigns (1 = v. positive, 5 = v. negative)

Legend: 2011, 2007

Leader evaluations

Mean evaluations (0-10 like-dislike scale)
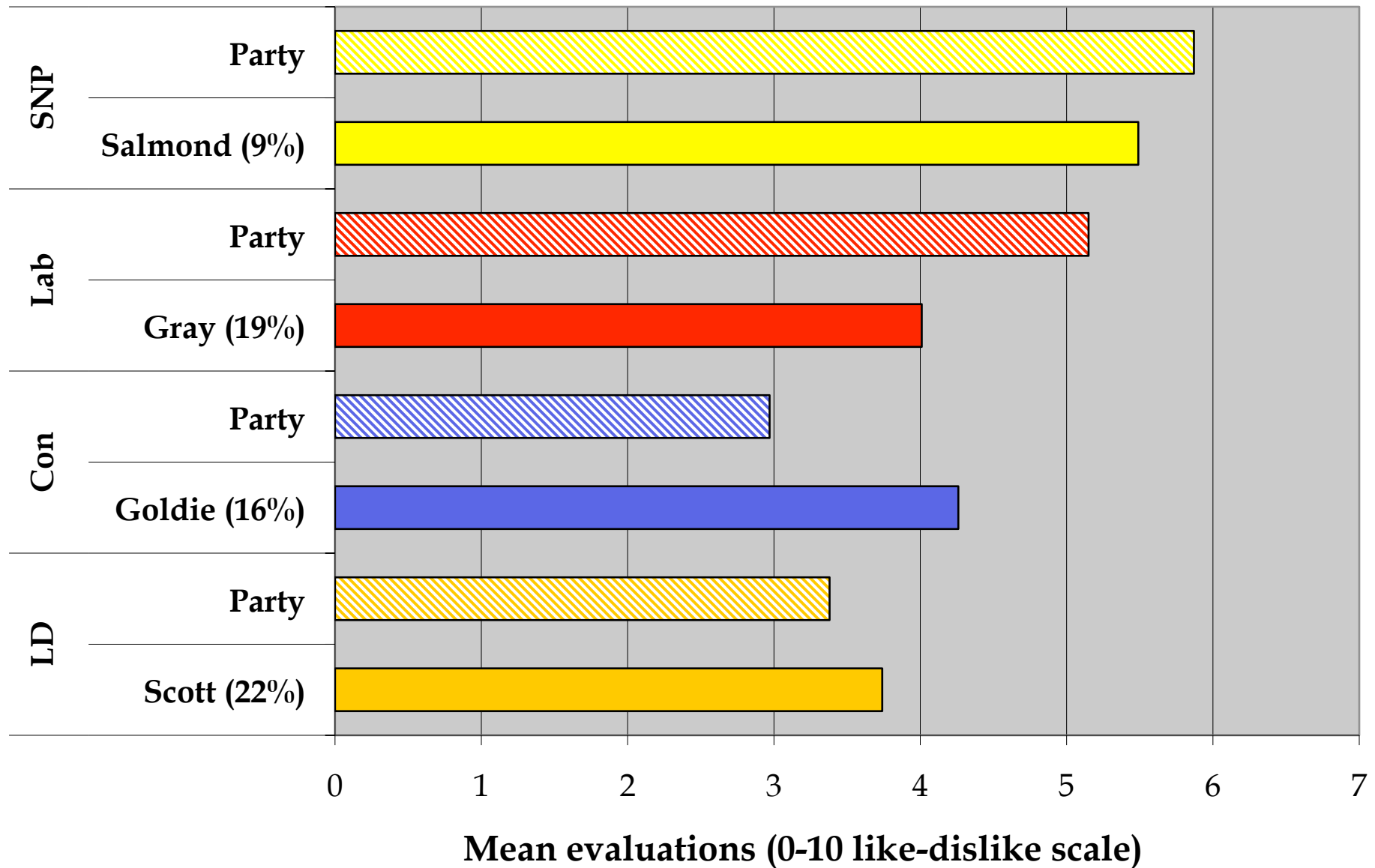
Scottish interests: general

Legend: 2011 (red) 2007 (hatched)
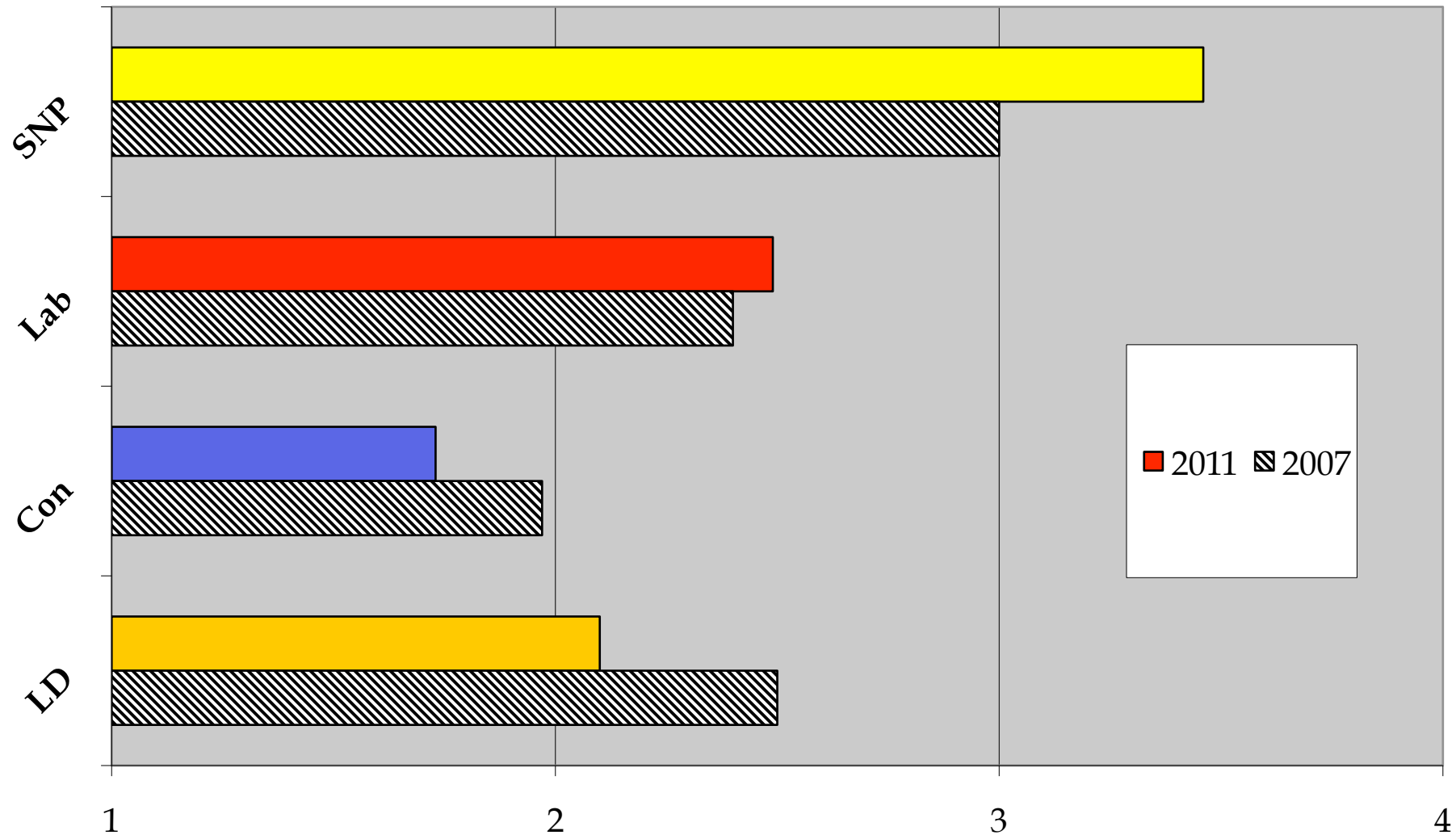
How closely look after Scottish interests (1 = not at all; 4 = very)

Parties (top to bottom): SNP, Lab, Con, LD

X-axis: 1, 2, 3, 4

Scottish interests: specific

Q: "Thinking now of the parties in Scotland, how effective do you think each would be at managing the impact of cuts from Westminster?"
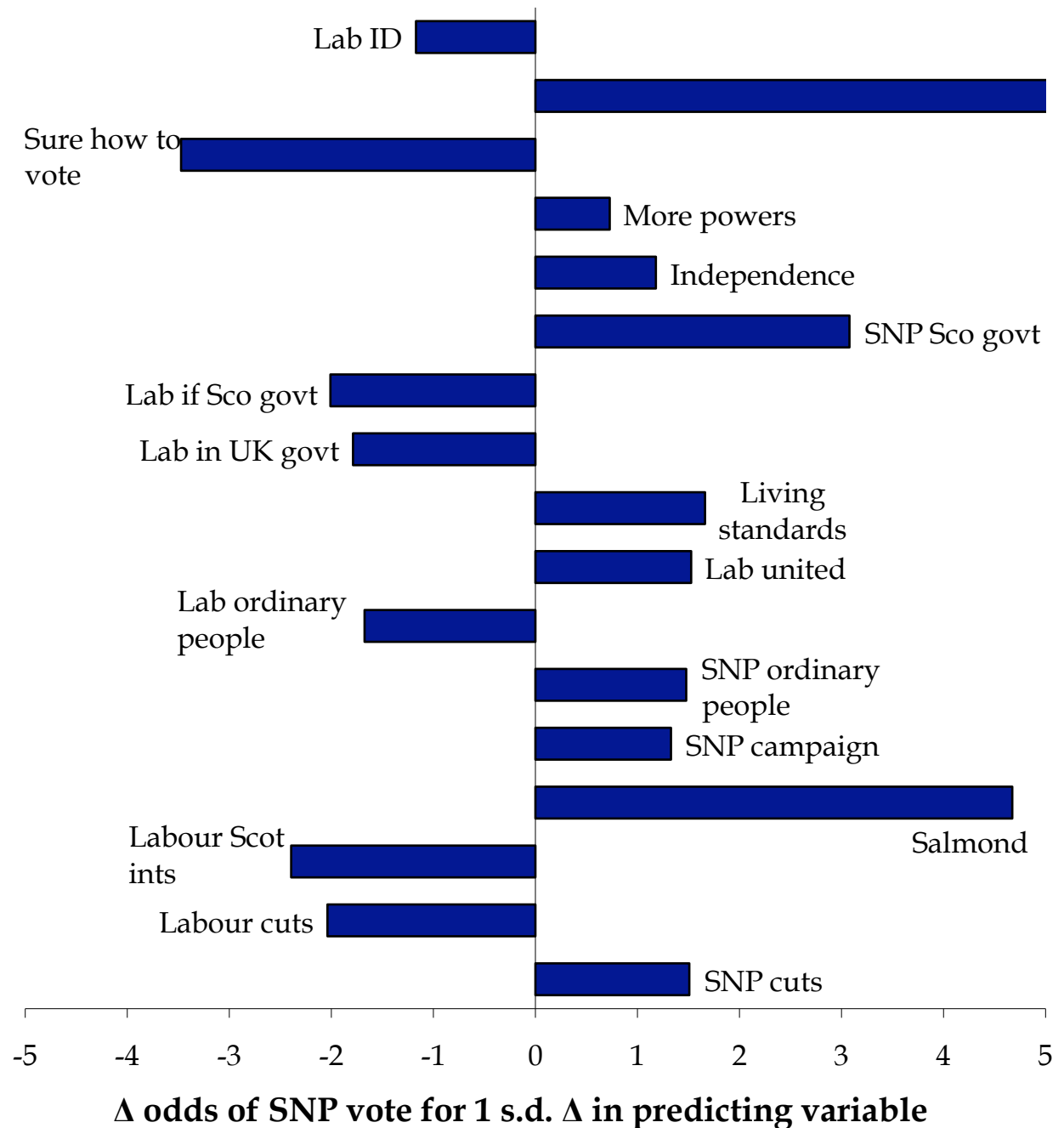
	SNP %	Lab %	Con %	LD %
Very	18	10	7	2
Fairly	46	38	24	20
Not very	22	30	31	40
Not at all	14	21	38	38

Factors significantly predicting SNP vote

	Sig.		Sig.
Predispositions		*Party image*	
Labour (-)	***	Lab strong govt	
SNP (+)	***	SNP strong govt	
Sure how to vote (-)	***	Lab united (-)	**
Issue positions		SNP united	
Tax and spending		Lab ordinary people (-)	**
Environment vs. growth		SNP ordinary people (+)	**
Knife crime		Lab keeps promises	
Community sentences		SNP keeps promises	
Tuition fees		*Campaign tone*	
Free prescriptions		Labour	
Constitution		SNP	*
More powers (+)	*	*Leaders*	
Independence (+)	***	Salmond	***
Performance		Gray	
SNP Scots govt (+)	***	Miliband	
Lab if Scot govt (-)	***	Brown	
Lab in UK govt (-)	*	*Scottish interests*	
Issue outcomes		Labour	***
Health		SNP	
Education		*Defend against cuts*	
Living standards (+)	***	Labour	***
Crime		SNP	*

Which factors mattered most?

Δ odds of SNP vote for 1 s.d. Δ in predicting variable

Lab ID
Sure how to vote
More powers
Independence
SNP Sco govt
Lab if Sco govt
Lab in UK govt
Living standards
Lab united
Lab ordinary people
SNP ordinary people
SNP campaign
Salmond
Labour Scot ints
Labour cuts
SNP cuts

-5   -4   -3   -2   -1   0   1   2   3   4   5

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