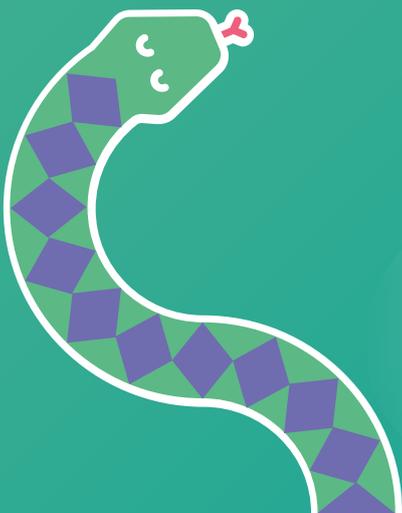


# Youth Voice Network for Scotland

## The Scottish Parliament Elections 2026

Snakes & ladders game for  
school and youth groups





## The resource

This learning resource was created by the **Youth Voice Network for Scotland**, a group of young people who share their views and ideas about ways to get more young people engaged in democracy and voting in the 2026 Scottish Parliament elections.

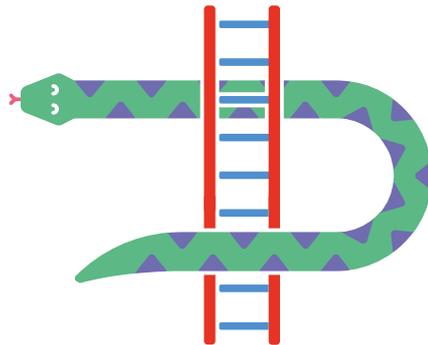
It encourages young people to think creatively about some of the ways that they can have their voice heard in decisions made about Scotland – and some of the things that get in the way of having their voices heard but can be overcome.

### What are the Scottish Parliamentary elections?

Elections to the Scottish Parliament happen every five years and are the opportunity for people aged 16 and above to choose their Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs). MSPs make important decisions on issues such as health, education and transport.

We can think of these things as 'snakes' and 'ladders'.

- **Ladders:** Things that help young people having their say
- **Snakes:** Things that get in the way of young people having their say but can be overcome.



### Learning outcomes

This resource can be used by pupils in secondary school and youth groups of secondary school age.

It will help pupils to meet the Curriculum for Excellence social studies experiences and outcomes including:

1. Develop my understanding of the principles of democracy and citizenship through experience of critical and independent thinking
2. Develop my understanding of my own values, beliefs and cultures and those of others.

## The game

The game itself is a familiar one to many – snakes and ladders! The game will take around **20 minutes** to complete, and the follow up class discussion can last around **15 minutes**.

There is a printout sheet for young people to make some dice, or a physical dice can be used if you have one available. It is recommended that the game is printed in A4 and the board on the ninth page printed in A3.

For those using the resource digitally, the game board can be displayed on a laptop, tablet or projector screen, and worksheets can be completed by the young people by hand on blank pages.

### Fun fact!

The game of snakes & ladders originated in ancient India and is believed to be nearly 2,000 years old!



## Instructions for players

1. Using Worksheet 1, pupils should add their own snakes and ladders to the worksheets.
2. Pupils will then take it in turns to roll the dice and move their character along the board of Scottish democracy – their goal is to reach the end on square 100.
3. If pupils land on a ladder, this will correlate to one of the ladders on the ladders list (see the numbered square of the ladder on **worksheet 1**).
4. If pupils land on a snake, this will correlate to one of the snakes on the snakes list (see the numbered square of the snake on **worksheet 1**).
5. First pupil to make it to square 100 wins – all pupils should keep playing until they too get to square 100 too.
6. After pupils have completed the game, they answer the discussion questions for each of the opportunities and barriers they encountered.
7. Once all questions are answered, pupils and teacher can discuss their answers as a class or in bigger groups.



## Ladders list

Square number	Ladder
1	Your character takes modern studies classes at school and learns about politics and democracy.
4	Your character is 16 so can vote in the 2026 Scottish Parliament election on 7 May.
9	
Now come up with your own!	
21	
28	
51	
72	
80	



# Worksheet 1



## Snakes list

Square number	Snake
17	Your character is not yet 14 so can't register to vote.
54	Your character's social media feed features a lot of misinformation about different news topics – sometimes it's difficult to tell what is real and what is not.
62 Now come up with your own!	
64	
87	
93	
95	
98	



## Worksheet 2

(Only necessary to print if the young people need more space to write down their thoughts)

### Ladders I encountered...

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	



## Worksheet 2

(Only necessary to print if the young people need more space to write down their thoughts)

### Snakes I encountered...

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

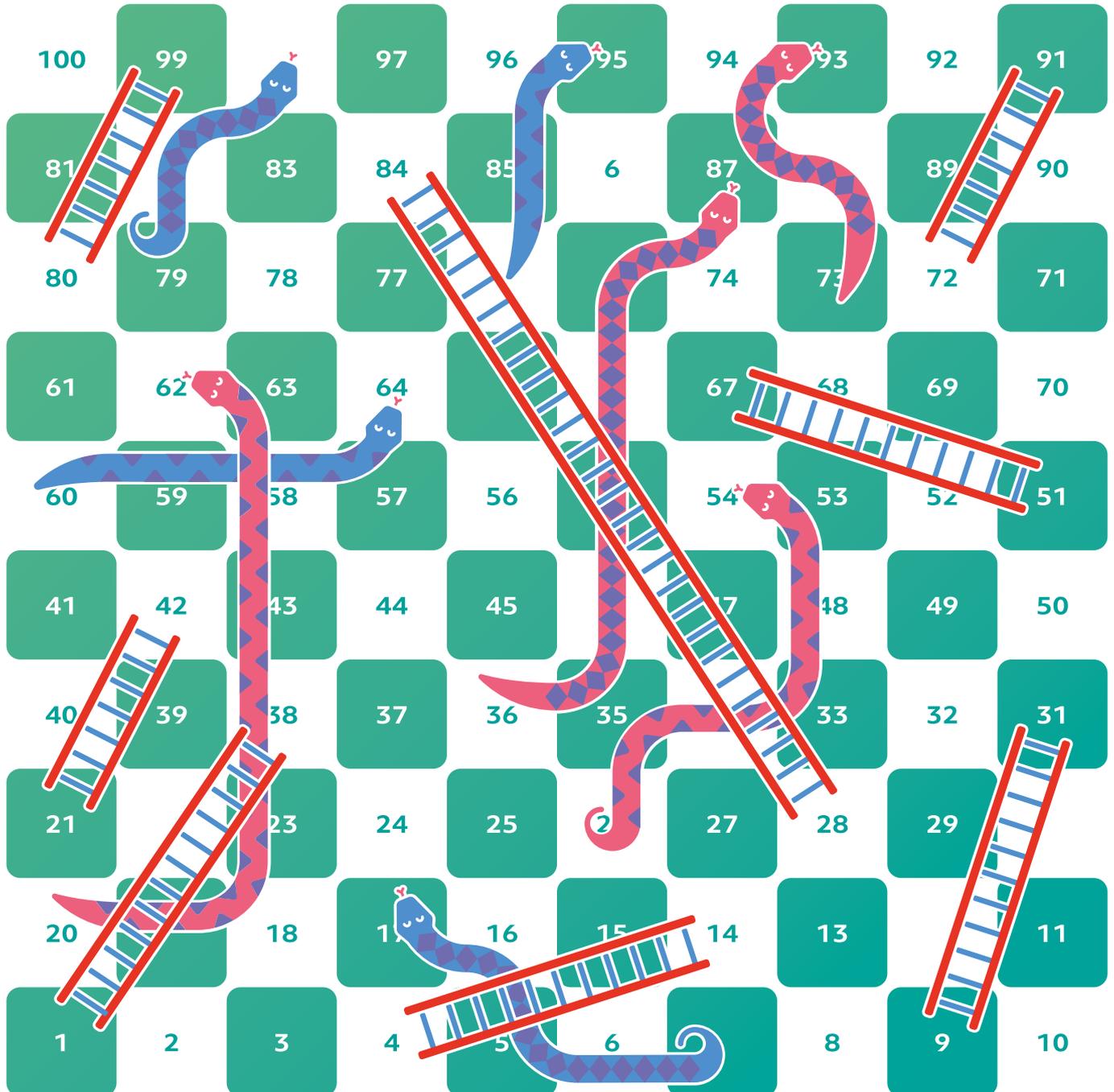
## Questions for discussion

1. What do you think young people are learning in these opportunities?
2. How are these opportunities making it easier for a young person to have their voice heard?
3. How would you access information about the upcoming election? What information do young people need to have?
4. What do you think would help young people to overcome these barriers to having their voices heard?
5. How are these barriers making it harder for young people to have their voices heard?
6. How can you as an individual or as a group help other young people overcome barriers that would stop them registering or using their vote in the upcoming election?

## Board design

Note for staff/pupils, it may be helpful to print out the board as **A3**.

Alternatively, pupils can create their own square instructions using worksheets 1 and 2 as a guide and teachers can share the game template on a screen or pupils could have the board displayed on a tablet.





## Dice template

To make your dice, cut out the templates below, fold and glue together.

