

**Keynote  
Speaker**

**Friday**



## **Prof. Sir John Curtice**



Professor Sir John Curtice is Professor of Politics at Strathclyde University in Glasgow and a Senior Research Fellow at the National Centre for Social Research and the ESRC's 'The UK in a Changing Europe' initiative. He has written extensively about voting behaviour in elections and referendums in the UK, as well as on British political and social attitudes more generally. He has been a co-editor of NatCen's annual British Social Attitudes reports since 1994 and is a regular contributor to British and international media coverage of politics in the UK, including as a member of the BBC's election night team. He is a Fellow of the British Academy, the Royal Society of Edinburgh, the Academy of the Social Sciences and the Political Studies Association. He is also an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society and the Market Research Society.

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## **The Politics of Moral Issues**

Many of the decisions governments make are about money, about the taxes they raise and the services their spending provides. Some people want big government that tries make people more equal economically. Others want smaller government that lets business get on with growing the economy. However, there is usually room for compromise. The fiscal pie can be sliced many different ways – and can grow over time. Politics can be a positive sum game in which everyone gets at least some of what they want.

But not all politics is like this. Sometimes it is about moral and ethical choices. Should abortion be allowed or not? Should trans women be able to use women's toilets? Should gay men and lesbians be able to marry? For many people, the answers to questions are about 'right' and 'wrong', not about 'more or less'. The issues tap into feelings about culture and identity. Finding compromise in these circumstances is more difficult, and on both sides of the Atlantic, such moral issues have become more prominent in politics in recent years. In this keynote speech, Prof. Curtice will consider why moral issues have become more important in our politics and consider the implications.