

## **Review: Scottish Life and Institutions, Then and Now**

The part of the course “Scottish Life and Institutions, Then and Now” taught by Mr Tuschinsky dealt with the ongoing process of devolution, the National Health Service of Scotland and the housing and living conditions in Scotland.

It was a very interesting class, flavored with talks by Neil McInnes and Kathy Jenkins, who proved to be experts on their respective topics. Mr Tuschinsky usually presented the topic of the session in its general context, especially with regard to the current situation and possible problems. During the first lesson, Mr Tuschinsky gave us a short glimpse at Scottish history, which, for me, was group wise later discussed in detail in the second, the historical part of the course by Ms Reitemeier. The historic background allowed us to explore the difficulties in Anglo-Scottish relations and their causes. Interestingly, we got to know that Scotland is not, as I personally thought, economically weaker than England but has a lot of sea oil and gas resources. We also talked about the differences between Scottish and English systems, for instance in regard to education and law, which allowed us students to shape our own point of view on the idea of devolution. Neil McInnes completed the picture by giving new information, especially concerning Scottish nationalism and the referendum as well as the political parties’ points of view which reminded us of how current the subject is.

Another topic we learned about was the National Health Service (NHS). Again, we started with a brief look at the history and later had a look at the welfare and explored several branches. Mr Tuschinsky also compared the system to our German health system which illustrated the topic. Lastly, we talked about housing and living conditions. Among other things, we watched short clips about the housing conditions in Edinburgh in the past and explored the current situation, for instance the 2013 Housing Commitment or how Scots climb the property ladder. For most of us, it was also quite surprising to find out what a high significance the detached house has to Scots.

Overall, it was a very impressive class which fulfilled its purpose, teaching us about Scottish “Landeskunde” in an exceedingly vivid manner. Thanks, Mr Tuschinsky!

Report by Anonymous Participant