

Scottish Independence Referendum – today's chat



A few of the remarks and comments and pointers to articles about the Scottish Independence Referendum that we have found today.

People living in Scotland are invited to vote in the referendum on independence from the United Kingdom on 18 September 2014. The referendum question is “Should Scotland be an independent country?”

Whether you intend voting Yes or No to that question, your views, and those of others, have a place here. We invite comments and we also invite you to write about what you think by using our Submit your Story feature [here](#).

The Financial Times has today published the results of its 2014 [survey](#). Among the questions asked of respondents was:

“How would a yes vote for independence affect the Scottish economy and the rest of the UK in 2014?”

The overwhelming majority of the economists, academics and business leaders who responded to the poll highlighted the risks and uncertainties involved in Scotland leaving the UK. Among those responses:

Ruth Porter, Policy Exchange:

It is difficult to see how an independent Scotland bound by the Bank of England would work. Not only would the end of the Union damage the valuable economic and social integration across the nations involved with untold consequences, but the

raft of economically incoherent policies being proposed by Alex Salmond would be disastrous for Scotland specifically.

Charles Goodhart, former MPC member:

The uncertainty up to September will be a minor headwind. If Scotland should vote yes, it would have an adverse effect on the Scottish economy, but not one that would be immediately obvious for a year or two. There would be a minor blip in financial markets in the UK, but that would soon pass.

Professor Chris Pissarides, LSE:

It would not be good for either, especially the Scottish economy. Being part of the UK gives a smaller economy like Scotland's the assurance that if something goes wrong there will be help forthcoming. The last thing any Scot should wish is to give up the support potentially available from the UK (England?) for support from the European Union under Germany's rules.

Philip Booth, Institute of Economic Affairs:

The first major problem Scotland will have will be how to deal with a debt of nearly 100 per cent of national income and an ageing population as a new country with no debt servicing record. For that reason, I suspect Scots will be risk averse and not vote for independence!

Erik Nielsen, UniCredit:

A yes vote would cause massive uncertainty as the parties would begin to flesh out how to divide assets and liabilities as well as income streams. Scotland would also face the additional uncertainty of being (at least temporarily) outside the EU, and using a currency with (apparently) no influence on monetary policy. I am somewhat surprised that the market seems to brush aside the risk of a yes-vote.

Commenting on the Survey, Better Together leader Alistair

Darling said:-“Scotland benefits enormously from being part of one of the biggest economies in the world. Our companies have a home market of 60 million people to sell to, our currency is one of the oldest and most secure in the world and we are protected from the kind of economic shocks that have affected so many small countries.

“As these independent, impartial experts have highlighted in this survey, the risks involved in leaving the UK are massive. The choice we make will not only impact on our own jobs, pensions and savings – our choice will be felt by the generations who follow us.

“It is absolutely vital that we get this decision right. I believe that we have the best of both worlds in Scotland. We get all the benefits of being part of something bigger and we get to have our own parliament and make our own decisions. We all know from our own lives that we are stronger when we work together. Why on earth would you want to trade strength and security for risk and uncertainty?”

The Scottish National Party has today highlighted a “tale of two futures” over the level of fuel poverty in the UK and called upon Westminster to take stronger action as thousands of households continue to face fuel poverty this New Year.

A report has warned that a UK government scheme to improve the [energy efficiency](#) of homes could take 30 years to succeed and add to [energy](#) prices in the meantime, yet the number of households in fuel poverty in Scotland has fallen.

Whilst 300,000 more households in the UK have been plunged into fuel poverty, the latest figures from the Scottish Government show the number of households in Scotland in fuel poverty have decreased from 721,000 (30.5%) in 2011 to 647,000 (27.1%) in 2012.

SNP Energy spokesperson Mike Weir MP said:

“The reduction in Scottish households in fuel poverty is a real achievement of the Scottish Parliament which has always taken a much stronger stance on fuel poverty reduction measures than governments at Westminster, but it is completely unacceptable that in the twenty first century in an energy rich country so many Scots are still facing another winter in fuel poverty. The striking difference is a tale of two futures, continuing action from a Scottish Government or foot dragging from Westminster.

“At a time when wages are stagnant or, at best, rising well behind the rate of inflation, energy prices continue on their relentless rise throwing more households into fuel poverty and estimates suggest that for every 1% increase around 40,000 households are plunged into fuel poverty.

“The SNP have stated that in an independent Scotland we would remove the cost of energy efficiency measures from bills and place the cost on central Government funds – reducing bills by 5% or an average of £70 a year.

“The movement to renewable energy will reduce bills in the longer term, rather than depending on ruinously expensive nuclear power, as the UK intends to do.

“The Scottish Government is doing everything it can within its limited powers to provide a wide range of energy efficiency measures to individual households and to local authorities, and that is clearly having a positive effect, but Westminster is failing to keep pace, meaning that too many Scots continue to face fuel poverty. We need the full powers of independence to fully tackle all the causes of fuel poverty.”

The Edinburgh Reporter collates a variety of views on independence which we find across the media.

If you would like to write about your views on independence

then please feel free to submit your article using the Submit your Story feature [here](#). The Edinburgh Reporter does not have a stance on the independence question, but hopes to help you make your mind up about the vote on 18 September 2014 by providing as much unbiased coverage as possible.

There are two main websites where you can obtain further information:-

Yes Scotland can be found [here](#)

Better Together has a website [here](#)