

The Scottish Independence Referendum this week



A resumé of remarks and comments and pointers to articles about the Scottish Independence Referendum during the last week.

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](#).

During the Financial Statement last Wednesday when he announced his Budget for the next year, UK Chancellor George Osborne said:-“One key British export is the North sea’s oil and gas. We will take forward all recommendations of the Wood report, and we will review the whole tax regime to make sure it is fit for the purpose of extracting every drop of oil we can. We will introduce now a new allowance for ultra-high pressure, high temperature fields to support billions of pounds of investment, thousands of jobs and a significant proportion of our country’s energy needs. Even with these measures, the North sea is a mature basin, and the OBR has today revised down the forecast tax receipts by a further £3 billion over the period. The Scottish economy is doing well and jobs are being created, but this is a reminder of how precarious the budget of an independent Scotland would be. These further downgrades in the tax receipts would leave independent Scots with a shortfall of £1,000 per

person—Britain is better together.”

Economics professor says Treasury's rejection of a currency union with iScotland does not make sense:
<http://t.co/70rbRcnvFs> [#indyref](#)

– James Cook (@BBCJamesCook) [March 23, 2014](#)

Dismissing George Osborne's attack on the economics of an independent Scotland, SNP MSP Kenneth Gibson said:

“Yet again we hear the hypocrisy of the Tories saying oil is a burden for Scotland, so Westminster had better hang on to it – and the three hundred billion pounds which have flowed from Scottish waters to the London Treasury, with over half of the value still to come.

“The reality is that over the five years to 2012/13, Scotland's finances have been stronger than the UK's as a whole by £8.3 billion – or £1,600 per person.

“And an independent Scotland would be 14th in the league table of wealthy nations, compared to the UK's 18th place.

“People in Scotland aren't daft – they know that George Osborne wants to keep hold of Scotland because of our resource riches. And they know that Scotland has got what it takes to be a successful independent country – where our wealth works for all the people – which is why more and more people are moving to Yes.”

On Thursday 20 March Yes Scotland welcomed a new poll showing support for a Yes vote at its highest level since last summer and a further significant narrowing of the gap on No.

Excluding 'don't knows', the Panelbase poll revealed that support for Yes had reached 47% with No on 53% – meaning a

swing of only some three points is needed to put Yes ahead in September.

Yes Scotland Chief Executive Blair Jenkins said: 'This is another extremely encouraging poll and confirms that momentum is very much with the Yes campaign. It continues the trend we have seen this year of a steady and significant narrowing of the gap and we are confident that we are on a winning trajectory.

'The scaremongering of the No campaign is backfiring because people understand that as the 14th wealthiest country in the international league table – compared to the UK's 18th place – Scotland has got what it takes to be a successful independent country.

'Scotland can, should and must vote Yes – so that we gain the powers needed to build a fairer society and more prosperous economy, where the wealth of Scotland works for all our citizens.'

Former FM Henry McLeish tells Labour to stop "hating" [@AlexSalmond](#) but says he will be voting "No" in [#indyref](#) <http://t.co/5t8vB8HTlg>

– BBC Scotland News (@BBCScotlandNews) [March 23, 2014](#)

Exactly two years ahead of what could be Scotland's day of independence on March 24th 2016, Deputy First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has set out a timetable for delivering Scotland's interim written constitution.

As part of her Wales Governance Centre Annual Lecture in Cardiff, Ms Sturgeon announced that – as part of the Scottish Government's ongoing preparations for the transition to independence, should people choose it in the referendum – the draft Scottish Independence Bill will be published before the Scottish Parliament's summer recess. The Bill will provide for Scotland to become an independent state in March 2016 and set out its interim constitution. The fundamental principle underpinning the Bill will be that, in Scotland, the people

are sovereign. This core principle resonates throughout Scotland's history and will be the foundation stone for Scotland as an independent country. The Bill will also set in place the process by which Scotland, as an independent country, will prepare its permanent written constitution in a fully participative process led by the people.

Following a vote for independence, the Scottish Independence Bill would be introduced to the Scottish Parliament. It would form the interim written constitution for Scotland until the constitutional convention, which would be established by the Scottish Parliament elected in May 2016, prepared a permanent constitution for Scotland. As First Minister Alex Salmond outlined last year, that constitutional convention will involve input from a wide cross-section of civic Scotland, articulating the nation's values and enshrining them in a permanent written constitution.

Ms Sturgeon said: "Today, the date which will become our independence day following a vote for independence this September, I want everyone in Scotland to consider who we are as a nation and what we have the potential to become. "Independence is not a historical argument, it is the opposite – a live and vital opportunity to chart our own course, to give us the power to determine our own future and build the kind of country we can all be proud of.

"A written constitution is an important part of a nation's identity – it defines who we are and sets out the values that we hold dear. Currently we are without a written constitution, and the UK is the only country within the European Union or the Commonwealth that does not have a written constitution or a constitution Act – that is a democratic deficit an independent Scotland will not replicate.

"It is a cornerstone of Scottish democracy that sovereignty rests with the people. That is why we want to make the drafting of our permanent written constitution an inclusive process involving all the people of Scotland – it must be a constitution by the people, for the people – articulating Scotland's values, enhancing our liberties and defining our responsibilities. "I believe the process of drafting our constitution will energise and inspire people across the country – woman and men, young and old, rural and urban, people in all the diverse communities that make up modern

Scotland. It would be an exciting and unique opportunity to shape our nation, celebrate and protect our values and commit ourselves to building a better country.”

Scottish independence would leave poorer families worse off, by £1bn, says Gordon Brown <http://t.co/acwuW7dv9W>
[@GdnScotland](#) [#indyref](#)

– Severin Carrell (@severincarrell) [March 20, 2014](#)

The Edinburgh Reporter rounds up the variety of views we find across all media as often as we can.

This may be a daily article if there is a lot of chat about the independence referendum, or less frequently if we have too much else to do. 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 <http://www.yesscotland.net>

Better Together has a website here <http://bettertogether.net>