

Landmark book on independence published



National Academies call for clear, open and meaningful information on Scottish independence debate as they launch landmark book

The Royal Society of Edinburgh (RSE) and the British Academy (BA) today call for clear, open and meaningful information to be presented to the public ahead of the vote on Scottish independence. The RSE and BA have collaborated to produce a landmark book, offering the most comprehensive and factual views of some of the UK's leading academics and experts. *Enlightening the Constitutional Debate* emerged from the series of events gathering the UK's top thinkers, over two years, to examine the main concerns surrounding the future of Scotland and the UK.

The book lays bare fundamental issues that have emerged as those which voters feel must be addressed clearly before they can make an informed choice in the referendum on Scottish independence: a viable currency option; distribution of the national debt; the future security of pensions; and Scotland's place in Europe. The RSE and BA are now calling for the public to be made aware of and have better access to the facts and expert opinions on what Scottish independence means for the communities that will live with this historic decision.

As national Academies, the RSE and BA recognise their responsibility to ensure that academic expertise and a non-partisan perspective are brought to bear on matters of great importance. Both academies are independent of government and have no party-political affiliation. Together, their Fellowships comprise over 2000 individuals, including many of

the UK's most outstanding academics and scientists. This is the first time they have come together to publish a book of such scope and weight, which will further serve as a historical record of their contribution to a very significant period in Scottish history.

A vital sourcebook for anyone who takes an interest in Scottish and UK affairs, *Enlightening the Constitutional Debate* presents reports from a series of events held since January 2013, and addressed by the UK's foremost experts and thinkers, to examine the core concerns surrounding Scotland's future. Each report is unique in offering both highly-informed and non-party political analyses of the key issues at stake in the independence debate. Also included is an introductory chapter on likely early implications for the UK and Scottish Governments after 18 September 2014. The book, which runs to over 250 pages, is being made available free of charge, in order to share the information with as many people as possible.

Full chapter list:

- Currency, Banking and Financial Services
- Scotland and the EU
- Borders, Immigration and Citizenship
- Defence and International Relations
- The Real Economy
- Culture and Broadcasting
- Science and Higher Education
- Welfare and Public Services
- Tax and Spending
- Scotland's Referendum and Britain's Future

Commenting, Presidents of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, Sir John Arbuthnott MRIA, and British Academy, Lord Stern, said, "We hope that people will engage with the wide range of

information and views contained in this book and that it will help inform their own thoughts on the questions surrounding the UK's constitutional future. The reports vividly illustrate the issues that will shape the future relationship between Scotland and the other UK nations, whatever decision is made in September."

Enlightening the Constitutional Debate is also available online and can be downloaded from the [RSE](#) and [BA](#) websites.