

Scottish Independence Referendum – the Yes and No of it



The start-up costs for an independent Scotland would run to nearly £2.5bn with another £2bn costs because of the need for new currency arrangements, according to the Better Together campaign.

A new paper from the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR) said that if Scotland walked away from the rest of the UK it would cost ten times what Alex Salmond has previously suggested.

Alex Salmond described £250m as a “reasonable” figure for start-up costs. However, the CEBR report indicates that it would cost £1bn alone for new tax and welfare systems with £400m for a Scottish defence force and £450m for a Scottish foreign office’s real estate and offices around the world.

The cost of replicating the government bodies and IT systems we already have as part of the UK works out at £1,000 for every Scottish household, according to the expert report.

Previously, Professor Patrick Dunleavy estimated that costs could run into the billions, with £200 million needed to create new government departments and potentially £900 million required for a tax and welfare system. Iain McLean, Professor of Politics at the University of Oxford, has set the start-up costs at around £2bn.

Better Together have said that this money would be better used on schools or hospitals instead of replicating what we already have.

Commenting, Anne McGuire MP said:

“This latest expert analysis confirms what we already know: independence isn’t a price worth paying.

“The SNP are asking us to take on all these extra costs to try to replicate what we already have today. Where is the sense in every Scottish family paying through the nose for something we already have today as part of the UK?

“Any money spent on start-up costs is money that could be spent on schools or hospitals.

“We can have the best of both worlds for Scotland within the UK. That means more powers for Scotland guaranteed, without taking on the risks and costs of independence. We should say No Thanks on 18 September.”

Campaigners marching the length of England to save their National Health Service said today that only a Yes vote will protect Scotland’s own NHS.

They are currently walking hundreds of miles from Jarrow to London to protest against health privatisation south of the border – part of a process of Westminster public spending cuts which also pose a threat to the funding of the Scottish NHS.

With a Yes, the NHS in Scotland will continue to be properly funded and will always be in public hands.

Labour Party member and NHS activist James Doran, who is on the walk, said he thought Scottish independence could help stop privatisation in England too.

He explained: ‘A Yes vote would open the way for the NHS to be written into the Scottish constitution, preventing a government coming in and privatising it before voters have a chance to kick them out at the ballot box.

'This could be inspiration to the rest of the UK, giving a good example to those campaigning for a People's NHS.'

And Green Party Campaigns Officer Adrian Crudan, who is also marching, warned that there were already discussions going on in England to charge up to £25 for GP visits and even more for using accident and emergency departments at hospitals.

'The NHS is fast becoming a brand name for a profit seeking franchise rather than an integrated public service," he said. "I hope Scots do the only logical thing on 18 September and vote Yes to protect and nurture a truly caring commonweal.

He added: 'Wake up and get out of the nightmare while you can – by voting Yes.'

The current People's March for the NHS mirrors the famous 1936 walk from Jarrow to London which was organised to protect against unemployment and extreme poverty.

Scottish Health Secretary Alex Neil said: 'The Jarrow marchers are absolutely right. I have huge admiration for the way they are marching from the North East of England to London to save a public institution which, like us, they hold dear.

'They're using the Proclaimers song I'm Gonna Be (500 Miles) on their long walk. We're lucky. We don't have to march 500 miles to protect our NHS – we just have to vote Yes on September 18.'

He added: 'Only this week the Home Secretary, Theresa May, said she could not guarantee NHS funding increases after next year's UK General Election.

'This austerity, privatisation and patient charging agenda which the Tories are forcing on to the NHS in England impacts on how much we in Scotland can spend on our own Scottish health service.

'Every £10 lost to the NHS in England means we lose £1 off the

money we have to spend here in Scotland.

'With a Yes vote, we will be able to maintain the Scottish NHS and its funding as the jewel in the crown of our public services.'

The Edinburgh Reporter produces a selection of remarks and comments and pointers to articles about the Scottish Independence Referendum whenever we can.

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.](#)