

Scottish Independence Referendum – today's views



The Yes campaign published a new finding of the Panelbase poll commissioned by Yes Scotland, which finds that – by a majority of nearly three-to-one – people in Scotland expect that Scotland's budget would be cut after a No vote.

The Panelbase poll also showed headline referendum voting intentions of 48 per cent Yes, to 52 per cent No.

The new poll finding is:

Chancellor George Osborne has signed up to a further £25 billion of spending cuts following the next UK general election, and Labour leader Ed Miliband has also stated that Labour will cut spending if elected next year. Given that the Scottish Government's funding comes primarily from Westminster in the form of a block grant, do you believe the Scottish budget would be cut in the event of a No vote?

Yes: 58%

No: 20%

Don't know: 22%

After people who voted SNP in the 2011 Holyrood election, Labour voters are the next most likely to believe that Scotland's budget would be cut after a No vote.

SNP VOTERS

Yes: 74%

No: 10%

Don't know: 16%

LABOUR VOTERS

Yes: 53%

No: 21%

Don't know: 26%

LIB DEM VOTERS

Yes: 52%

No: 31%

Don't know: 18%

CONSERVATIVE VOTERS

Yes: 46%

No: 37%

Don't know: 17%

Commenting on the poll, Deputy First Minister and Yes Scotland Advisory Board member Nicola Sturgeon said: 'Next month's referendum is a choice of two futures, and one of the reasons for the increase in support for Yes is the threat to spending and services under continued Westminster austerity, including our precious NHS.

'By a majority of nearly three-to-one, people in Scotland believe that our budget would be cut if we voted No – posing huge damage to the health service. This reflects the Future of England survey published this week, which actually found four-to-one support south of the border for cutting Scottish spending.

'But the reality is that Scotland is a very wealthy country – with higher economic output per head than France, Japan and indeed the UK – and we have generated more tax per head than the UK average in each and every one of the last 33 years.

'With the full powers of an independent Scotland, we can grow our economy, boost revenues, and invest in our vital services – for example, we have shown how by boosting economic growth in Scotland we can generate additional tax revenues of £5 billion a year by 2029/30.

'The referendum is Scotland's one opportunity to pursue a

different path, because a Yes vote in September is the only alternative to Westminster austerity.”

Another expert has spoken out against what they call the nationalists’ lies about the NHS.

Dr Anna Gregor CBE who lives in Edinburgh said she felt the need to speak out after the “total and utter” lies of those associated with the campaign to break up the UK.

Dr Gregor CBE is a consultant oncologist for NHS Lothian and previously led Scotland’s cancer strategy.

Dr Gregor CBE joins Professor Mike Dixon and Professor Malcolm Macleod in speaking out against the nationalist scare stories.

A recent poll by the British Medical Journal showed that 60% of doctors back Scotland remaining part of the UK.

Expert analysis from the Institute for Fiscal Studies has shown that a separate Scotland would face extra spending cuts of £6 billion.

Jackie Baillie MSP said:

“With no answers on currency, and no answers on public spending, the SNP are so desperate that they are telling the people of Scotland lies to scare them into voting for separation.

“Unfortunately for the nationalists, the experts have noticed. Experts like Dr Anna Gregor, one of our country’s leading cancer specialists. This is a devastating intervention.

“The fact is, health is fully controlled by the Scottish Parliament but is funded through the pooling and sharing of resources across the whole UK. It is the best of both worlds.

“Scotland’s NHS gets almost 10 per cent more spending per head

of population than in England. That means that yearly health spending is around £200 per person higher than the UK average. This is a clear positive benefit of staying in the UK.

“A separate Scotland would face £6 billion in in spending cuts. The real risk to our NHS is Alex Salmond’s obsession with independence.”

Scotland would be taking a giant step into uncertainty with separation, the chairman of HSBC has warned.

HSBC is the UK’s largest bank, and employs more than 3,000 people in Scotland.

Writing in the Daily Telegraph today, Douglas Flint said that Scotland is part of one of the most successful currency unions in history, but that uncertainty over currency could see money in our Scottish banks move south of the border where investors and savers feel it would be safer.

Douglas Flint said that the rejection of Alex Salmond’s assertion of a formal currency union by everyone who would be involved in the decision was wholly consistent with what we have learned from the Eurozone crisis.

Writing about using the pound as Panama uses the US dollar, Douglas Flint said that Scotland’s fiscal policy would have to be permanently constrained. This would means cuts to our spending on public services like our NHS.

Earlier this week, Crawford Beveridge, Chair of the Fiscal Commission Working Group and a long time economic advisor to Alex Salmond, said using the pound informally was a transition option for a separate Scotland.

Better Together said this leads to the question – transition to what? The Euro or a separate currency?

The HSBC chair said that, regardless of what Alex Salmond's Plan B on currency is, costs to business and consumers would rise.

✘ Ian Murray, MP for Edinburgh South and Shadow Business Minister said:

"This is another hugely experienced expert who has underlined the currency chaos which has plagued Alex Salmond's campaign.

"When a voice such as Douglas Flint's warns of the risks of money leaving a separate Scotland to somewhere safer, you pay attention.

"With just days to go until up to a million Scots start voting by post, Alex Salmond is running out of time to name Plan B.

"Using the pound without any formal currency union would mean to cuts to our public services higher costs for Scottish families of things like credit card bills, car loans and mortgage costs. It would risk the livelihoods of millions of people in Scotland.

"Alex Salmond's lifelong quest for independence at all costs would harm Scotland, cost jobs and create economic uncertainty.

"Alex Salmond has spent his entire political career campaigning to break up the UK. With days to go, he needs to name Plan B on what would replace the pound."

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Yes Scotland today revealed that the number of people who have signed the Yes Declaration for an independent Scotland has reached the one million target.

Chief Executive Blair Jenkins, making the landmark announcement in Edinburgh, said breaking the million barrier with four weeks still to go to the referendum was a clear indication that Yes was on a winning trajectory.

He said: 'We are hugely grateful – not just to the one million plus people in Scotland who have now signed the Yes Declaration, but also to our many thousands of volunteers all around the country who have worked so hard to help us reach this target with just under a month still to go.'

'More and more people are waking up to the fantastic opportunities created by a Yes vote. People realise that only with a Yes can we protect our NHS and other public services, grow our economy to create better jobs, and make Scotland a fairer society.'

'Today's announcement is a clear indication of the level of support we're getting, and it gives us great confidence as we work towards securing a Yes majority on September 18.'

The Yes Declaration and the one million target was announced by First Minister Alex Salmond on May 25, 2012, when the Yes campaign was officially launched.

At 4pm on Thursday, August 21, the precise number of signatories was 1,001,186

Mr Jenkins, other members of the Yes Scotland team and volunteers were joined by Scotland's premier singing duo The Proclaimers to celebrate the million target being reached.

Charlie and Craig Reid, who completed a two-year world tour late last year, have been focusing on writing new songs for recording a new album later this year.

But today they said they were delighted to take time out to help highlight the major campaign milestone.

Charlie said: 'With this fantastic target now hit, it looks

like the Yes campaign is on its way to success. I certainly hope so. Nobody doubts that Scotland has the wealth, the talent and the ambition to be a successful independent country and we can make this a reality if only we grab this tremendous opportunity on September 18.'

Craig said: 'We have so much going for us in Scotland. All we need is a bit of self-belief and with our own future in our own hands we can build a much better and much fairer country. Let's not let this fantastic opportunity slip from our grasp.'

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](#).