

SCOTLAND & INDEPENDENCE



**Independence
in Your Pocket**

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this booklet is to describe briefly the case for an independent Scotland and how it may be achieved.

Importantly it will set out a brief history of our nation, our progress towards independence, the setting up of our country's institutions and our relationship with our close neighbours & friends England, Wales and Ireland as well as our relationship with the rest of Europe and the wider world.

A clear picture of where we are coming from, where we are heading and what we expect our country to be will be set out to inform all with an interest in our cause. We hope this will be particularly helpful and informative for all 'new Scots' and indeed anyone who may wish to increase their knowledge of our wonderful country and its potential as an independent nation.

Our national story underpins our case for regaining our country's independence,

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A BRIEF HISTORY & THE WAY FORWARD

Scotland has been a distinct national entity for around 1200 years, since 844 when Kenneth McAlpin united Scots and Picts. Our present border with England dates back to 1018, ratified by the Treaty of York in 1237. The boundaries of Scotland have been largely unchanged for the best part of 1,000 years.

Under our laws and customs, the people of Scotland claimed and consented only to kings and rulers who will defend our nation and sovereignty – most notably in the justly famous Declaration of Arbroath, issued by the community of the realm in 1320.

The Union of the Crowns (1603) inevitably led to the loss of power in Edinburgh, but dynastic and religious upheaval in the 17th century probably did more harm.

The Union of the Parliaments of England and Scotland (Treaty of Union 1706, and Acts of Union 1707) was driven by a mixture of bribery, thwarted ambition and coercion. Undoubtedly, if Scotland had not agreed to an incorporating union, political, economic and military pressure would have forced a union. It was not popular, and removed all political power from Scotland, although in fact Scots law, religious freedom and most other day to day functions such as education and local Government remained in Scotland's control.



Declaration of Arbroath (1320)

19th Century

As democracy slowly developed in the UK, Scotland felt a lack of democratic control and accountability, and in response to this the Scottish Office was established in 1885, to administer aspects of Government in Scotland, albeit with no special democratic accountability. A Secretary of State for Scotland became the effective Governor General of Scotland for the next 100 years until 1999.

20th Century

When compared with developments in other Western countries this century was a disaster for Scotland. A lot of that can be attributed to the Great War (1914-18), where Scottish losses were horrendous, much greater pro rata than other parts of the UK. The war was followed by further large scale emigration, industrial decline and slump, with high levels of unemployment and poverty.

Into this picture came the rise of the Independent Labour Party, and the foundation of the National Party of Scotland, the forerunner of the SNP. The Labour Party initially supported home rule for Scotland, but never managed to implement it.

The Second War, in a sense, rescued Scotland from depression, with shipbuilding, munitions and other heavy industries given a boost. Post war, the UK Attlee Labour Government led to a radical change in direction for British politics, with nationalisation of coal, gas, electricity, steel, railways and road transport, as well as

bringing in the NHS and welfare state. This was coupled with atrocious austerity and ongoing food rationing, which meant a Tory Government in the 1950s was inevitable.

From the late 50s, Scotland went into a long decline, which lasted until the advent of the Holyrood Parliament 40 years later, with closure of heavy industry, unemployment, huge emigration and general depression. The first flickering of an independence revival occurred in the 1960s, culminating in Winnie Ewing's historic by-election win in Hamilton in 1967.

North Sea Oil was discovered soon after then, and kindled the idea of a prosperous independent Scotland, and the two elections of 1974 saw first 7 then 11 SNP MPs elected. A panicking UK Labour Government decided devolution was the way to save the union and hang on to North Sea oil and its revenues. The result was the Scotland Act, passed in the face of opposition from both Labour and Tory MPs. A referendum in 1979, at the tail end of the winter of discontent was won narrowly by those wishing devolution, but the result overturned by the gerrymandered 40% rule. The Labour Government fell, heralding 18 years of Tory rule, initially led by Margaret Thatcher, even though Scotland voted largely for Labour.

By the late 80s, there was a clear consensus in favour of some degree of home rule for Scotland, and through the civic Scottish Constitutional Convention of 1988, a plan for a devolved Scottish Parliament was drawn up, which was then enacted by the Tony

Blair Labour Government of 1997. A referendum on 11 Sept 1997 was overwhelmingly in support of devolution with tax varying powers.

1999 – The Scottish Parliament opened

The first election to the Parliament, in May 1999, was comfortably won by the Labour Party led by Donald Dewar, who had carried through the legislation for the Parliament, and this led to a Labour/Liberal Democrat coalition. However, the SNP led by Alex Salmond gained their largest ever number of Parliamentary seats (35) and became the official opposition.

The opening years of the Parliament's life were not helped by the untimely death of Donald Dewar in 2000, as well as the resignation of Alex Salmond as leader of the SNP.



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Moving Towards Independence

In 2007 the SNP, led once again by Alex Salmond (he returned in 2004), formed a minority Government with a narrow one seat majority over Labour. Up till then previous Governments had been called Executives. The new administration started to behave like a Government and drove through changes including major infrastructure projects – roads, railways, schools and hospitals. This was despite the banking collapse of 2008, with its disastrous effects on Edinburgh's banking companies.

2014 The Independence Referendum

The competence of the first SNP Government led to an overall majority for the SNP in 2011, with a mandate for an independence referendum. The next three years until the referendum on 18th September 2014 saw the most frantic political activity in Scotland's history.

Ultimately the referendum was a binary choice "should Scotland be an independent country?". For the first time 16 year olds and EU citizens were allowed to vote. The campaign was lively, to say the least. The result was 55% No, and 45% Yes, although with 10 days to go, Yes appeared to be ahead.

The Way Forward to Independence

Perhaps inevitably, Alex Salmond resigned as SNP leader, to be succeeded by his deputy, Nicola Sturgeon. The period since September 2014 has seen repeated SNP election victories at Westminster (2015, 2017 and 2019) and Holyrood (2016), but

the period has been dominated by BREXIT. The vote to leave the EU in June 2016 was opposed by 62% in Scotland, but our views were totally ignored, and finally on 31 Jan 2020, the UK left the EU. The Covid 19 pandemic and a transition period have partly obscured the effects of BREXIT, but it is clear that there will be dreadful implications for Scottish fishing, farming, the environment, education and exporting industries.

The Scottish Government led by Nicola Sturgeon has arguably spent too long fighting the inevitable in trying to keep the UK in the EU, and has failed to prepare for the only positive solution for Scotland's future, namely independence. Despite having numerous mandates for a further referendum, there is an impasse. The Scottish Government asks for a "Section 30 order" from Westminster to allow it to run another independence referendum, and is summarily turned down by the UK Government.

In 2021, with a Holyrood election rapidly approaching, a solution to this impasse must be found.

In the face of clear UK opposition the case for an independent Scotland is as strong as ever and achieving our goal isn't about individual policies or the views of political parties outside Scotland. UK law cannot determine the legality of Scotland's democratic move to independence under international law. Whether the UK government grants a Section 30 order or not is irrelevant. Individual states and the wider international

community may consider the democratic means of our self-determination (by referendum or plebiscite election), and whether or not to recognise Scotland as an independent state.

The need for bold political action within Scotland to break the impasse is increasing as opinion polls indicate the settled will of the people is for independence. An unequivocal manifesto commitment of prompt and bold strategic action on independence together with clearly stated tactical options are now required from all political parties who lead and support the independence campaign.

Local and national independence campaign groups (existing and new) across Scotland are ready, reforming and reactivating to drive forward the independence message and inform those not fully engaged to understand the difference independence can make.

Independence in the 2020s

In the 21st century interrelated world, with global communications, internet and social media, no country can be entirely independent, but equally a country which is recognised as independent can take part fully in the affairs of our interconnected world. These affairs include dealing with poverty, disease, climate change and conflict. Without independence Scotland cannot fully participate. An independent Scotland could join the United Nations, and choose whether to join EFTA and hence the EEA or the European Union.

Closer to home, the UK is nominally a democratic state, but during the post-war period Scotland has suffered a major democratic deficit, being ruled for over half the post war period by a Government it did not elect.

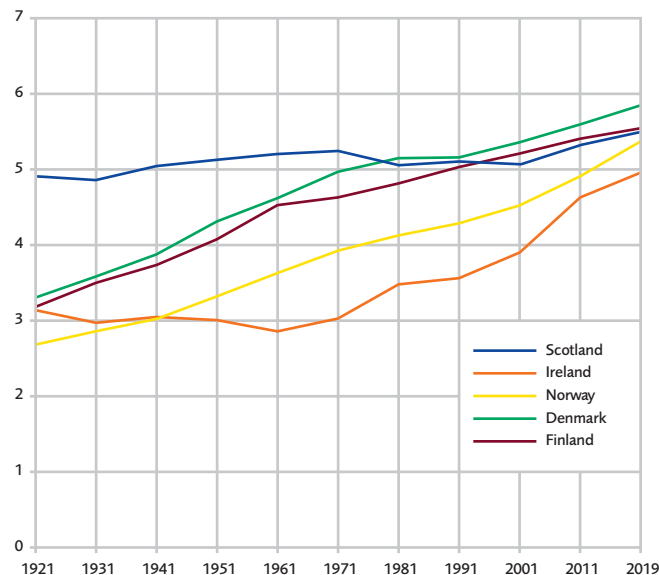
Governments we didn't elect have led to policies Scotland doesn't want being imposed. Weapons of mass destruction are based on the Firth of Clyde 30 miles from our largest city – at vast expense and considerable risk. We have been taken out of the European Union against our wishes (BREXIT) and this will have huge economic, social, human rights and educational detriment to Scotland.

Although devolution since 1999 has given Scotland democratic control over areas of governance which have long been administratively run from Scotland (Health, Education, Law/Justice, Agriculture, Food and Fishing and Infrastructure), foreign affairs, defence, the economy and most other(reserved) matters are managed from Westminster. This democratic deficit means we have no responsibility and little influence on reserved policy. We cannot raise the UK pension to an acceptable level; energy, media, telecoms, most taxation and social security are outwith our control.

Scotland has huge resources in relation to its population, and is potentially a rich country, but over the last 100 years its population has been static, while independent small countries have grown their population and wealth. Our glens have emptied, the

Highlands are grossly underpopulated. After the clearances of the 18th and 19th centuries, the 20th century saw continued emigration, and economic stagnation. Devolution has helped, emigration is reduced, our population is rising again through immigration, but much remains to be done to fulfil our potential as a country.

Population Growth (millions)
1921-2019



WHAT DIFFERENCE WOULD INDEPENDENCE MAKE?

Governing a devolved Scotland is like governing with one hand tied behind your back. While devolution allows control over some public services, like health and education, it has major limitations. Funding of services depends largely on the Barnett formula of block grant from Westminster (our own taxes returned). Only around 30% of revenue is directly collected by Holyrood. Expenditure on services in Scotland is therefore dependent on spending decisions in England. Borrowing by Holyrood is very limited. Hence, it is difficult to carry out large scale infrastructure projects, such as large roads, railways, hospitals etc.

Although health services are devolved, the Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated the inadequacies of devolution. Scotland had to await decisions on borrowing and financial support from Westminster, limiting its ability to make timely and appropriate public health decisions like lockdown.

Furthermore, there are large swathes of powers which are reserved to Westminster, including areas which are pivotal to improving life and wealth in Scotland. Broadband and telecoms are reserved, yet internet access and mobile reception are pivotal to rural economic development. Transport is only partly devolved, and we are left with Victorian era rail and port facilities. Improving road, rail and sea transport around the country are vital but financing the necessary improvements to and replacement of

neglected infrastructure is difficult within the constraints of devolution.

Scotland is energy rich, in terms of oil, gas and much more importantly today, renewable energy. However, energy policy is reserved, and despite being energy rich, people in Scotland suffer the worst energy poverty in the UK. Electricity generators in the North of Scotland pay heavily to access the National grid, and consumers there pay for the most expensive electricity in the UK. This must stop.

Scotland is a resource rich country. With independence, it can use this wealth to create a prosperous and fair country, and democratically manage ALL aspects of its economy, and all its services.

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Did you know?

In 2016 Scotland's electricity exports to the rest of the UK were worth £5.8Bn.

This is not included in Scotland's current GDP figures.

Independence can allow Scotland to participate in the World directly, in particular to put an end to nuclear weapons on our soil, and enable us to rebuild and repopulate our land. Our goal will be a country totally at ease with itself . . . fair, prosperous and democratic.

Cultural Aspects of Independence

Our culture, history and literature are often forgotten in the debate on independence. Many visitors to Scotland, especially those from overseas, come here to absorb Scotland's history, music and literature. Sadly, some Scots are often ignorant of our literature beyond Burns and Walter Scott . . . and Scott is now woefully neglected. Our folk music in Gaelic and Scots are also little known by the majority. Too many young Scots in the last century had their native Gaelic or Scots tongue 'belted' out of them at school. Our national story is rich and fascinating, but sadly many Scots were taught to believe that Scottish history stopped in 1707.

Not all this cultural suppression was due to the Union; the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, despite its support of education, was partially responsible for theatre being virtually suppressed from the days of Sir David Lyndsay (Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis-1552) until the 20th century. Also, lowland Scots, more so than the English, were responsible for the marginalisation of Gaelic. Furthermore, the development of television in the UK has been on a UK-wide basis, with minimal output from Scotland.

This has led to almost total neglect of Scottish literature, film, art and music, and has been a major element in the atrophy of our rich cultural life.

Independence, with full control of media and all aspects of culture, gives a chance for the flowering of languages, music, drama and art, which has not been possible within the Union.

Can Scotland Afford Independence?

Much of the Unionist case against Scottish independence in 2014 was based on Scotland allegedly being too poor to afford to go it alone. Their case was based on one set of figures, the Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland – GERS,



Big enough. Smart enough. Rich enough.

Yes

yes.scot.nhs.uk

originally designed almost 30 years ago to prove this particular point. GERS deals only with one aspect of the economy, Government spending in relation to income; it does not deal with private sector or international trade balance of payments – the latter area where Scotland is a net exporter in contrast to the rest of the UK.

Nevertheless, addressing the Unionists' false argument: The Government in Scotland spends £13bn (pre-Covid expenditure figures) or circa 8% of GDP more than it raises in revenue. Therefore taxes would need to go up or spending go down. This assertion is WRONG. There are a number of major issues surrounding GERS which utterly destroy their premise, and if we look at other aspects of the Scottish economy, in comparison with other small Northern European countries, it becomes quite clear that Scotland would thrive as an independent country.

1. Almost all figures for revenue and spending in GERS are estimates. Other than council tax and business rates, most taxes are of doubtful accuracy. Some tax is missed out altogether, such as by UK landlords based outwith Scotland on rentals for buildings (homes and offices) in Scotland. Expenditure on health and education is accurate, but only 60% of all spending attributed to Scotland by GERS is actually made by the Scottish Government. Almost 20% is attributed as expenditure on behalf of Scotland, although it comes nowhere near us.

2. The actual spending IN Scotland by the Scottish Government and UK Government is covered by Scottish revenues.
3. The deficit mainly relates to spending "on behalf of Scotland" largely spent elsewhere (London & SE England). This includes defence, foreign affairs, UK Government reserved administration and much else. Most of this spending relates to salaries, whose taxes are counted in London's revenues, not Scotland's.
4. It is a myth that large infrastructure projects in SE England (Crossrail, HS2) benefit the rest of the UK and are accounted as charges and benefits to Scotland. If a high speed rail line were built from Glasgow to Inverness, there is no way the rest of the UK would accept it as spending on their behalf or accept a population share.
5. An independent Scotland could make different spending decisions on its own behalf. Spending could be cut in defence (Scotland's share is £3.5bn, <£1.5bn spent in Scotland, the average in small countries is circa £1bn). Scotland would have its own civil service, paying taxes in Scotland, not London. Our foreign embassies could be compact, flexible and some shared. Once again salaries would be taxed in Scotland. Scotland could make other choices on taxation, for example bringing in a land value tax, affecting large estates.

6. Oil revenues could be increased: The UK only obtains £8.1m from £17bn of oil and gas extracted, 0.6% of what Norway gets from less than twice the oil. This low level of petroleum revenue tax maximises profits and corporation tax to the UK Treasury.
7. When Scotland becomes independent, a population share of UK assets needs to be agreed; otherwise Scotland is not liable for a share of UK debts, in this case £3.5bn debt interest is wiped from our deficit.

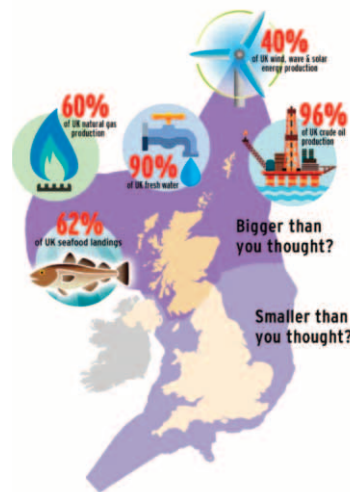
In summary, the so-called GERS black hole is wholly misleading; it is inaccurate in the first place, and the effects of independence and more appropriate decision making will cut it to acceptable levels.

On a positive note, Scotland's assets are highly visible; most countries would love to have them. For example:

- Immense natural resources (around 30% of UK's): renewable energy, oil, gas, fresh water, timber, food etc. Scotland can feed, fuel and power itself.
- Fabulous brand image: scenery, castles, whisky, golf, tartan etc
- World class tourism based on cities, landscape, history, culture.
- Iconic exports: whisky, fresh food including seafood, Harris Tweed, knitwear.

- World class universities: a major centre of scientific and medical research, to which many students come from around the world.
- An industrial heritage: with current strengths in advanced engineering, information technology and life sciences.
- Space industry – building 90% of Europe's satellites.
- An extremely well educated population.

As an exporting, developed North European country, it seems inconceivable that an independent Scotland would not prosper as all other such countries, especially as we would be able to run



SCOTLAND:
Net exporter of
FUEL, POWER,
FOOD & DRINK.

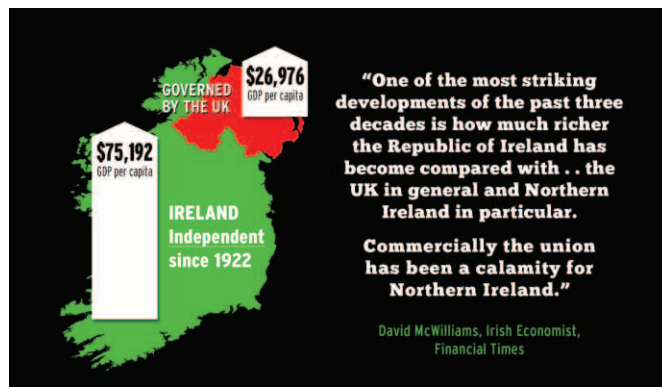
The only part of the UK
able to feed itself, fuel
itself, power itself, and
still have enough left
over to export.

Seafood: gov.uk/government/news/fishing-industry-in-2015-statistics-published Renewables: gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Business/Energy/ESG/ESG2017data Oil & Gas: gov.scot/Resource/0059/00595657.pdf

our own economy, instead of suffering from inappropriate decisions made in London.

One graphic demonstration of the effect of independence on economic performance compared with rule from London is the situation of Ireland. In 1922, when Ireland was partitioned, the six counties of Northern Ireland generated 80% of Irish GDP; in 2021, the position is now reversed with the Irish republic generating 80% of the wealth of the island of Ireland.

Perhaps, the question at the start of this section should be re-framed: Can Scotland afford NOT to be independent? This is particularly pertinent given that the Unionists seem to believe that 300 years within the "world's greatest union" has apparently led



Big enough. Smart enough. Rich enough.

Yes

to Scotland being an economic basket case unable to cope on its own, in a UK with the worst state pension in the developed world, and the greatest economic inequality.

Scotland has the natural and human resources to be a highly prosperous and successful independent country, and use its full economic powers of independence to achieve fairness and equality, including a pension level equal to the European average (twice UK level).

Currency, Pound, Pound Scots or Euro?

In the 2014 referendum, Scotland's future currency assumed huge importance as a result of the UK Government's rejection of the SNP's favourite option, a formal currency union encompassing Scotland and the rest of the UK, playing to a sort of sentimental attraction to the pound on the part of some of Scotland's population. There was also a worry about changing currency on crossing the border, from the point of view of cost and inconvenience.

However, every independent country must have a currency for trade and everyday transactions, and Scotland will be no different. Many countries have managed to establish a new currency without major problems. Also, financial transactions are now largely cashless; debit and credit cards have become even more prevalent due to Covid, and most bills are paid by bank transfer. Few folk even bother about buying foreign currency before international travel. Scotland's choice of a future currency

is no longer such an emotive one, and can be handled logically by weighing up advantages and disadvantages, and choosing the option best suited to her needs.

The options are:

1. Stay with the pound Sterling within a currency union with the UK. While this may seem eminently reasonable (but less logical post-Brexit), the UK Government has made it clear it will not cooperate, and so this WILL NOT HAPPEN.
2. Stay with Sterling, but without a formal currency union, sometimes described as "Sterlingisation". This is current Scottish Government policy, but has major disadvantages: no control over borrowing and interest rates, and also a post-Brexit pound will be relatively weak, and may depreciate. If Scotland rejoins the EU, this would be almost certainly untenable.
3. Create a Scottish pound – a separate currency – which may be initially pegged to Sterling for a short period before being allowed to find its own level. This will require setting up a Scottish Reserve Bank, not in itself a difficult process, given financial expertise in Scotland. By making use of the Scottish pound mandatory for transactions in Scotland individuals and companies will need to change sterling and other currencies into Scottish pounds thus helping to furnish Scotland with foreign currency reserves. Everyday transactions are now largely cashless, or involve cash dispenser withdrawal, all of

which operate irrespective of currency, and will cause individuals minimal disruption.

4. The Euro. If an independent Scotland seeks to return to the EU, it would be logical at that stage to consider entering the Eurozone – after all, it is one of the two major international currencies. It is not an essential requirement or urgent; the Scottish pound could be tied to the Euro like the Danish krone, as an alternative.

Scotland will choose the currency option best suited to her needs, to optimise financial management including borrowing and interest rates. In a situation like the Covid-19 pandemic, having one's own independent currency allows Scotland to borrow and maintain the economy without having to beg the UK to borrow on our behalf. The early establishment of an independent Scottish currency would appear to be the best option.

A Written Constitution, What about The Monarchy?

The United Kingdom is one of only four countries in the world without a written codified constitution. It means that the UK Constitution is basically what the Government of the day decides it is at a given time.

This means that devolution for Scotland and Wales is not embedded in a legal constitution. A subsequent Government is able to reverse what a previous Government has legislated for. The UK operates on the basis that Sovereignty resides with the

UK Parliament, representing the monarch, so the Government can do as it pleases. The UK Supreme Court can restrain the Government, but will always take the view that Parliament is sovereign;

In Scotland however, the people are sovereign as established in 1320 and again in the Claim of Right in 1689. The Claim of Right to self determination has been reaffirmed many times including on 4th July 2018, when the UK House of Commons officially endorsed the principles of the Claim of Right.

In practice, Scotland's sovereign rights are ignored by the UK Government and as a result, the devolution settlement is far from secure. Already, the legislative consent decisions of the devolved administrations have been overridden in devolved areas where the devolved administrations should have jurisdiction. More recently, the UK Parliament has passed laws (EU Withdrawal and Internal Market Acts) which override the devolution provisions of the Scotland Act of 1998. This allows the UK Government to take back devolved powers dealing with agriculture, food standards and the environment, and to make spending decisions on devolved areas over the head of the Scottish and Welsh Governments.

An independent Scotland will have a written constitution to enshrine clearly defined principles of governance whilst recognising individual rights and responsibilities.

It will be written, as much as possible, by the people of Scotland in a constitutional convention comprising all the talents and representatives of all facets of Scottish civic society, business, industry and the law. A draft model constitution will be produced for the independence transition period with the definitive constitution ratified by a referendum.

The Scottish constitution will seek to:

- Set out a system of Government wherein the people of Scotland are the sovereign power and invest that sovereignty in a Scots Parliament for and of the people.
- Define the rights and responsibility of the state and the people, and define the powers, obligations, duties and limitations of the state.
- Provide a system of Government in which power is shared between national, regional and community Government and managed by elected representatives who are accountable to the people.

It would be up to the people of Scotland to agree to the constitution, but it is likely it would encompass freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from poverty and fear, and the right to food and a home.

A popular vote by referendum will decide the hereditary or elected status of the Head of State; the role and duties of the Head of State in Parliamentary and public life will be enshrined in

the constitution. At most, the current monarchy could be a purely ceremonial head of state, but it is much more likely that an independent Scotland will opt to become a republic.

Governance – Central and Local – A Scottish Public Service

On becoming independent, Scotland would of course already have a fully democratic Parliament on which to build. The nature and organisation of the current unicameral Parliament; the number of members and constituencies; the electoral system of proportional representation; the Council of ministers and administration of Government will all be set within the terms of the constitution. Eligibility, training and qualifications, life experience and restrictions to be an MSP, remuneration and expenses; the election and duties of the Presiding Officer, the appointment of bodies to manage the fabric and effective administration of Parliament will all need to be reviewed.

It is arguable that a second revising chamber might be required to scrutinise legislation, or alternatively a series of citizen's assemblies and commissions of enquiry with powers to summon evidence could be established to address broad issues of Government.

To deal with the increased responsibilities for foreign affairs, defence, energy, transport, social security and pensions, there would need to be an increase in MSP numbers to accommodate more Government departments and committees.

A new state infrastructure of Government departments, including defence, taxation and welfare, international relations, currency and competent economic management would need to be established, as well as a number of Government agencies to deal with matters such as passports, driving licences etc. Government departments could be deployed around the country, for example Agriculture in Dumfries, Fisheries in Inverness, Energy in Aberdeen, Social Security in Dundee, Industry, Enterprise and Trade in Glasgow etc.

Local Government in an independent Scotland will be revised and enshrined in the new constitution to address issues such as levels of representation and geographic scale – the Highlands being about the size of Belgium. The tiers of Local Authority, Responsibilities, Elections and the qualification of Regional, Burgh and Community Councillors; Funding, Remuneration, Boundaries; citizen referenda and Recall will all need to be codified and enacted.

A requirement for regional boards, such as for secondary and higher education, and social care, allowing some functions to be run at much more local level based in towns such as Elgin, Forfar, Oban, Dunoon, Wick etc. should be considered.

At present public service employees in Central and local Government are separate, with the Civil Service part of the UK Government. In an independent Scotland we can establish a new National Public Service, encompassing those working in central

Government, local Government, health service etc. A multi-level National Public Service will be underpinned by a University level training in public administration, based at universities around the country with special expertise in this field.

Immigration and Citizenship

Scotland depends on immigration to maintain population growth, and hence an independent Scotland must favour a fairly open immigration policy. The Constitution and a Citizenship Act will define citizens' rights and responsibilities. It is envisaged that initially, on the date of independence, all permanent residents of Scotland would become citizens of Scotland. In addition, those people born in Scotland or those with Scottish born parent(s) would be entitled to apply for Scottish citizenship. Spouses



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and children of Scottish citizens would also be entitled to be citizens.

Those residents of Scotland who did not wish to become Scottish citizens, but, for example, wished to retain British citizenship would be entitled to do so, and remain resident, although they may not be entitled to certain benefits available to Scottish citizens (to be defined).

An independent Scotland would be able to rejoin the European Union, or join the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the European Economic Area (EEA), and in that event residents of EU and EFTA countries would be entitled to live in Scotland. Otherwise, immigration to Scotland would be on the basis of a points based immigration system, with preference to those immigrants with specific skills.

Scotland, Europe and the World

On achieving independence, whether by democratic referendum or plebiscite election, Scotland's independent status would be recognised by other independent countries, possibly starting with the Nordic countries or Ireland. Thereafter, admission to the United Nations is straightforward, and highly unlikely to be opposed. With that comes admission to other international bodies e.g. UNESCO, WHO etc.

Within Europe, Scotland would enter into negotiations with the EU, probably simultaneously and in parallel with negotiations with

the UK Government. The first objective would be a tariff-free association agreement with the EU. The UK, post Brexit, has a similar trade agreement with the EU (although this agreement has many problems associated with being outside the customs union and single market.)

An alternative approach could see the Scottish Government immediately applying to join EFTA, which would allow Scotland to join the EEA thus permitting Scottish producers to export into the EU Single Market without the need for customs tax or tariffs, in effect free movement of goods and services, thus reversing the damage inflicted on Scotland's economy by Brexit. Membership of the EEA will reinstate reciprocal rights of EEA citizens and Scottish citizens to freedom of movement and other rights, such as the full benefits of the Erasmus Scheme for Scottish students to study in the EU and EU students to study in Scotland.

The Scottish Government would then agree protocols with the EU covering Scottish Agriculture and Fisheries to give Scottish producers access to the EU Single Market. Thereafter, the new Government of Scotland would put a proposition to the Scottish people either to rejoin the EU or simply remain in EFTA and the EEA. This would be decided by the Scottish people in a referendum. Nevertheless, it is unthinkable that Scotland would not be a member of the EEA, enjoy free trade with Europe, nor be a part of ERASMUS or the European Convention on Human Rights.

Whether Scotland joined NATO would be a matter for a post-independence Government. It is arguable that neutral status like Ireland would be the best option, but would depend on current geopolitical risks. A newly-independent Scotland would want to be on friendly terms with as many countries as possible.

Relations within the British Isles, Borders

Perhaps one of the most difficult parts of the independence project is the relationship with England. England/the rest of the UK views the union differently from Scotland. Subconsciously England views England and Britain as indivisible. Scotland views the union as a partnership of equal partners.

Yet, while England regards Scotland as a very junior partner, and indeed a region of England/Britain, it nevertheless regards the loss of Scotland (one third of land area, and two thirds of sea area) as an existential loss to the UK. This paradox of a blatant disregard for Scotland, and a desperate need/desire to keep it, is the fundamental problem of the union.

When Scotland votes for independence, it will be taken by the UK establishment as a huge slight, and may well provoke anger and disbelief. Negotiations over independence will not initially be easy, and support from sympathetic neighbouring countries will be essential.

Once things settle down, however, trade will continue, especially as England sells more to Scotland than vice versa. There will be a

common travel area as with the UK and Ireland at present. No passports will be required for cross border traffic. Scotland will have a new currency (£ Scots) but most transactions will be cashless (cards and direct bank transfers). While England will be outwith the EU, it has a tariff-free trade agreement with the EU, and if Scotland joins the EU/EEA, there will be tariff free trade. It would be impossible for England to refuse to trade with Scotland, especially if Scotland was within the EU or in a trade agreement with the EU. Any refusal would be against international agreements, and the UK-EU trade agreement would doubtless be revoked.

The current Unionist mantra that Scotland trades more with the



rest of the UK than the EU, and therefore it is a choice of whom you trade with is nonsense. Independent countries trade with each other, and post-independence, Scotland and England would continue to trade. We are not in the 17th century.

There would undoubtedly be inter Governmental structures within the British Isles encompassing Scotland, England, Wales and Ireland, and there are many areas of common interest to be discussed at this level, but it would be an equal Council of the Isles, and its role would be essentially consultative.

During the transition to independence there will be a process of negotiating a settlement and, various issues would require detailed consideration, notably division of assets and debts, pensions and other social support and the removal of nuclear weapons from Scotland, but settlements have been achieved successfully by other countries, and will be done so here too.

Defence

Scotland's defence forces would change radically under independence. The current UK post-imperial armed forces aimed at maintaining a presence on the UN Security Council would be replaced in Scotland by a force which aims to address Scotland's needs.

In particular, Scotland has a very large offshore maritime area (around two thirds of the current UK area). There is significant activity in this area, with oil and gas production, renewable energy generation, fishing and shipping. At present, under the UK

Government, there is minimal surface naval or, until recently, air surveillance. Scottish naval and air services would be directed to this surface naval and air patrolling.

The requirement for army forces would be limited to contribution to international forces (arguable), peace keeping abroad and supporting the civil power i.e. police in, for example, natural disasters such as flooding.

At present Scotland's share of UK defence comes to around £3.5 billion, of which less than half is spent in Scotland (mostly on Trident submarines, which will have no place in an independent Scotland). An appropriate armed forces budget for Scotland should not exceed £1 billion. For comparison, Ireland spends £0.5 billion.

THE ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE; HOW WE CAN MAKE IT HAPPEN

Before the Scottish Parliament was established, the route to independence was clear; if the SNP won a majority of Westminster seats, they had a mandate to negotiate independence. Even Margaret Thatcher agreed this, but of course nobody thought this was remotely possible. After devolution, SNP policy changed, and the focus moved to Holyrood. The SNP sought to win power at Holyrood, and in the event of winning a majority for independence would call for a referendum.

This of course duly happened in 2011. There was an issue about the power – or otherwise – of the Scottish Parliament to call for a referendum. Constitutional matters are reserved to Westminster, but a consultative referendum on any matter may be legally permissible under the aegis of Holyrood. In 2011, David Cameron, the UK prime minister was confident that independence would be soundly defeated, and so welcomed the prospect of a referendum, while Alex Salmond was not so confident of winning and stalled for time. An agreement was made that Westminster would agree to make an order under Section 30 of the Scotland Act that Holyrood had temporary jurisdiction over a constitutional referendum.

In 2021, with polls repeatedly showing a majority for independence, the granting of a section 30 order is now highly unlikely. Current SNP policy is, however, still to request that Westminster grants a section 30 order in the event of an SNP majority at a Holyrood election. In the event of it not being granted, it is planned to legislate for a referendum in the Scottish Parliament, and Westminster would be free to challenge this in the Supreme Court. It would be illegal under international law for the United Kingdom government to prevent the democratic expression of self-determination in Scotland.

The problem with a non-consensual referendum would be that it would likely be boycotted by Unionists, and its result contested. Other options would be a 'plebiscite election' for Holyrood,

whereby pro-independence parties would contest the election on an explicit manifesto for independence: in the event of a majority, all MPs and MSPs assemble as an independent Parliament, and invite recognition by the international community. In the meantime, the institutions of an independent state are set up, negotiations for dissolving the union undertaken, and a confirmatory referendum completes the process.

The likely outcome is a referendum agreed (albeit reluctantly) by the UK state, followed by a period of around 2 years when institutions of an independent state are established, and the terms of dissolution of the union are negotiated and agreed with the UK Government.

It would appear preferable that the independence negotiations are conducted by a broader group of politicians than the SNP Government alone, and a team of senior politicians supported by leading figures in public life be assembled for that purpose. Thereafter it would be envisaged that elections to the new independent Scottish Parliament be held before Independence Day, to take over following independence.

At the present time, the SNP Government is unclear as to its chosen route to achieve independence, and the rest of the Yes movement will need to maintain the support and pressure on the SNP to achieve our goal of an Independent Scotland.

THE PRIZE: OUR VISION FOR AN INDEPENDENT SCOTLAND

We all (should) have a vision for our country. Our country's governance should allow us to determine that vision and implement it. Some of our people feel their vision can be realised through a UK Government which prioritises nuclear warheads over child poverty, working alongside a devolved Scottish Parliament.

Certainly our Holyrood Parliament could have done more. Perhaps it could have done more to control land ownership and land use. However the lessons of the court battles over minimum pricing for alcohol show that a non-sovereign devolved parliament would have its work cut out in the courts to defeat landlords and correct the obscenity of 432 individuals and companies owning half the land in private hands in Scotland. It is also using limited resources, expending time and money mitigating Westminster policies like the bedroom tax.

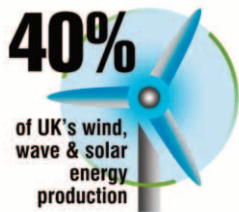
To achieve our vision and change Scotland, our parliament must be independent, with sovereignty resting with the people of Scotland. Then imagine what we could do:

We could have a fair land value tax, limit the acreage of land in single hands, encourage widespread local private and community land ownership. Efficient land use and employment would follow. We would repopulate the glens.

Energy could be brought under Scotland's control, through a National Energy company, with wind, tidal and hydro power not just providing cheap energy, but powering Europe too through a European grid . . . and becoming a significant money earner for Scotland. We could also build on our emerging tidal, wave power and energy storage companies to develop a whole new renewables industry.

We could follow Estonia's lead and create a digital society where resources are not wasted in form filling and inertia.

We could follow the lead of The Faroes and Norway, and link islands and sea loch-divided mainland (e.g. Argyll) with tunnels and bridges. We need to bring our country together and utilise all our resources and all our regions and districts for the benefit of all our people.



SCOTLAND:
**Net exporter of FUEL,
POWER, FOOD & DRINK.**

The only part of the UK able to feed
itself, fuel itself, power itself, and still
have enough left over to export.

Big enough. Smart enough. Rich enough.

Yes

Post-Brexit chaos at Dover and other English ports has highlighted Scotland's lack of transport connectivity with Europe. We could build a deep water ferry port and cruise liner terminal on the Firth of Forth at Cockenzie, and re-establish ferry links with mainland Europe and Scandinavia; that would be great news for our exporters.

On a local level, why shouldn't Aberdeenshire have a cultural and academic centre for the Scots and Doric language comparable to Sabhal Mor Ostaig?

We could make local government local again, so that decisions for Stranraer, Galashiels, Crieff and Huntly, for example, are made there by local people.

And so much more.

The challenge is there: we go out and make things happen in an independent Scotland, or we sit around waiting for our leaders, at Westminster and Holyrood. There is only one answer.

INDEPENDENCE

Editor's note

We are conscious that our narrative has not included some devolved areas of Government such as health or education, simply because these services are already almost entirely controlled by the Scottish parliament. However, both these services may be put at risk as a result of the power grab of the current Westminster Government, which is increasingly encroaching on devolved areas of government through the Internal Market Act. In particular, public health emergency planning and higher education funding are areas of immediate risk. The only way to prevent erosion of devolution is independence.

Our thanks go to the Scottish Independence Foundation for financial support and Colin Dunn of indyposterboy.com for the use of his images. Thanks also to Yes Cymru for use of their title 'Independence in your pocket' on which this booklet is modelled.

Printed in Scotland.

There is no fixed charge for this booklet, but donations to the Scottish Independence Foundation (www.sif.scot) would be very much appreciated.

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