



Scotland the referendum and devolution: Selected timeline

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This Note gives a selected timeline of events and significant publications leading up to the referendum in Scotland on 18 September 2014 and to some of the planned follow-up events.

A shorter version of this timeline can also be found on the [Scotland, the referendum and independence](#) pages on the UK Parliament website.

Further details on the result of the referendum can be found in House of Commons Library publication [Scottish independence referendum 2014](#), RP14/50, 30 September 2014 and on proposals for further devolution in [Scotland: Devolution proposals](#) SN/PC/06987, 24 September 2014. Details on devolution agreed and in progress can be found in [The Scotland Act 2012: Devolution of tax powers to the Scottish Parliament](#), SN/BT/05984, 10 October 2014.

Other timelines have been compiled by a number of organisations. Sources for these can be found in the second part of this Note.

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Contents

| | | |
|----------|------------------------|----------|
| 1 | Timeline | 2 |
| 2 | Other timelines | 6 |

1 Timeline

| Date | Event | Organisation |
|------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1707 | Act of Union | |
| 1886 | Creation of Scotland Office, as department of UK Government | UK Government |
| 1886 | Scottish Home Rule Association founded. | |
| 1900 | Labour Party founded, with support for Home Rule for Scotland and Wales. | Labour Party |
| 1934 | Establishment of Scottish National Party. | Scottish National Party |
| 1945 | SNP wins first seat in Parliament (Motherwell), at by-election | Scottish National Party |
| November 1973 | Royal Commission on the Constitution (Kilbrandon Commission) final report (Cmnd 5460), recommends devolved legislatures for Scotland and Wales. | UK Government |
| 1978 | <i>Scotland Act 1978</i> , giving effect to referendum on devolution. | UK Government |
| 1 March 1979 | Referendum on devolution. | |
| 1989 | Establishment of Scottish Constitutional Convention | Scottish Constitutional Convention. |
| 30 November 1995 | Publication of <i>Scotland's Parliament: Scotland's Right</i> , final report of Scottish Constitutional Convention. | Scottish Constitutional Convention |
| 1 May 1997 | Election of Labour Government, with manifesto commitment to elected Scottish Parliament, based on Constitutional Convention | Labour Party |

| Date | Event | Organisation |
|-------------------|---|--|
| 11 September 1997 | Referendum on devolution. | |
| 1998 | Scotland Act passed, devolved power to Scottish Parliament. | UK Parliament Scottish Parliament |
| 12 May 1999 | Scottish Parliament opens | Scottish Parliament |
| 25 March 2008 | Commission on Scottish Devolution established, Chair Sir Kenneth Calman | UK Government |
| 15 June 2009 | Serving Scotland Better , Calman Commission Final Report published. | Calman Commission |
| 30 November 2009 | Your Scotland, Your Voice : A national conversation published to respond to Calman and make further proposals. | Scottish Government |
| 2011 | SNP win majority of seats in Scottish Parliament, with manifesto commitment to seek independence by referendum. | Scottish Parliament Scottish National Party |
| 10 January 2012 | Scotland's Constitutional Future consultation paper (Cm 8203) | UK Government |
| 25 January 2012 | Your Scotland, Your Referendum Consultation paper published. | Scottish Government |
| 1 May 2012 | Scotland Act 2012 receives Royal Assent | UK Parliament |
| 25 May 2012 | Launch of Yes Scotland campaign for Yes vote. | Yes Scotland Scottish National Party |
| 26 June 2012 | Launch of Better Together campaign for No vote. | Better Together Labour Party, Conservative Party and Liberal Democrats. |
| 15 October 2012 | Edinburgh Agreement signed | UK Government and Scottish Government |
| October 2012 | Federalism, the best future for Scotland proposals on further devolution published. | Scottish Liberal Democrats, Home Rule and Community Rule Commission. |
| 15 January 2013 | Section 30 order confirmed. Authority to hold referendum | House of Commons |

| Date | Event | Organisation |
|------------------|--|--|
| | transferred to Scottish Parliament. (HC Deb 556 c742-840) | |
| 16 January 2013 | Section 30 Order confirmed in Lords. (HL Deb 742, c694-756) | House of Lords |
| 30 January 2013 | Report on wording of referendum question published. | Electoral Commission. The Electoral Commission recommends the question should be altered to: “Should Scotland be an independent country? Yes / No” Advice accepted by both Governments. |
| 5 February 2013 | Scotland’s Future: from the referendum to independence and a written constitution report published | Scottish Government |
| 12 March 2013 | Scottish Independence Referendum (Franchise) Bill SP Bill 24 Session 4 (2013) introduced. | Scottish Government Scottish Parliament |
| 21 March 2013 | Referendum date announced | Scottish Government |
| 21 March 2013 | Scottish Independence Referendum Bill SP Bill 25 Session 4 (2013) Introduced. | Scottish Government Scottish Parliament |
| 13 May 2013 | Launch of United with Labour Campaign | Scottish Labour Party |
| 7 August 2013 | Scottish Independence Referendum (Franchise) Bill receives Royal Assent. | Scottish Parliament |
| 26 November 2013 | Scottish Government white paper Scotland’s Future: Your Guide to an independent Scotland published. | Scottish Government |
| 17 December 2013 | Scottish Independence Referendum Bill receives Royal Assent. | Scottish Parliament |
| 23 April 2014 | Better Together and Yes Scotland designated as lead campaigners for Referendum | Electoral Commission |
| 30 May 2014 | Start of regulated referendum period, with spending limits on campaigners, under Scottish Independence Referendum Act 2013 . | Electoral Commission |

| Date | Event | Organisation |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| 2 June 2014 | Report of Commission on future governance of Scotland (Strathclyde Commission) published. | Scottish Conservative Party |
| 16 June 2014 | Statement on further powers for Scottish Parliament. | Scottish Conservative, Scottish Labour and Scottish Lib Dem leaders (Repeated by UK Party leaders 5 Aug 2014) |
| 22 August 2014 | Start of 28 day “pre-vote period” of restriction on publications relating to the referendum. | |
| 16 September 2014 | Statement of undertakings headlined “The Vow”, published in <i>Daily Record</i> . | UK Conservative, Labour and Lib Dem Party leaders. |
| 18 September 2014 | Referendum vote in Scotland. | |
| 19 September 2014 | Establishment of Smith Commission (led by Lord Smith of Kelvin) | UK Government |
| 30 September | Members of Smith Commission nominated by Parties | Smith Commission |
| 10 October 2014 | More powers for the Scottish Parliament proposals published. | Scottish Government |
| 13 October 2014 | Parties’ proposals on further devolution (Conservative, Labour & Lib Dem) published (Cm 8946) | UK Government |
| 14 October 2014 | Commons debate on Devolution (Scotland Referendum). (HC Deb 14 Oct 2014, col 168-271) | UK Parliament |
| 16 October 2014 | Commons adjournment debate on devolution (Gordon Brown). (HC Deb 16 Oct 2014, col 555-564) | UK Parliament |
| 29 October 2014 | Lords debate on the Scotland referendum (HL Deb 29 Oct 2014, col 1201-1298) | UK Parliament |
| 27 November 2014 | Smith Commission Report giving Parties’ agreements and recommendations on further | Smith Commission |

| Date | Event | Organisation |
|------------------|--|--|
| | devolution to Scottish Parliament. | |
| 16 December 2014 | <i>The implications of devolution for England</i> published (Cm 8969). (The Hague review) | UK Government |
| 20 January 2015 | Agreement for 16 & 17 year olds to vote in Scottish Parliament Elections . Authority passed to Scottish Parliament. (Draft Section 30 Order published) | UK Government |
| 22 January 2015 | Proposals for Draft Bill and implementation of Smith Commission Report published, in Command Paper. (<i>Scotland in the UK: an enduring settlement</i> , Cm 8990) . | UK Government (informed by Smith Commission) |
| April 2015 | Some additional tax raising powers (on land transactions and landfill), devolves to Scottish Parliament, under <i>Scotland Act 2012</i> . | Scottish Parliament |
| 7 May 2015 | Elections to UK Parliament | UK Parliament |
| After 7 May 2015 | Publication of Scotland Bill on further devolution. | UK Government |
| April 2016 | Power to set Scottish rate of income tax devolves to Scottish Parliament, under <i>Scotland Act 2012</i> . | Scottish Parliament |
| 5 May 2016 | Elections to Scottish Parliament | Scottish Parliament |

2 Other timelines

Other timelines were compiled by a number of organisations in the run-up to the referendum. The Scottish Government timeline can be accessed on their website at [Scotland's Referendum Timeline](#). BBC News Scotland published [Timeline: Scotland's Road to Independence](#).

The Scottish Government's timeline on constitutional reform, looking backwards and forwards from the Referendum, can be accessed on their website at [Topics: Constitutional Reform](#).

Another timeline, with a longer view of [Scotland's Constitutional History](#), can be found on the official Scotland.org website, published by the Scottish Government and other official bodies.

After the referendum, BBC News Scotland prepared an outline timeline in early October 2014, as part of [Scotland Votes No: What happens now?](#)

The Scottish Constitutional Futures Forum, (an academics grouping), have [The Independence Referendum: Timeline of Events](#), which includes the preparation and aftermath of the vote. This is interactive and being updated as events arise.

Newspapers have offered their selection of events in these articles:

The Herald Scotland, [From treaties to referendums: Scotland's political timeline](#), 2 May 2012.

Scotsman, [Scottish independence: timeline to referendum](#), 17 July 2013.

Reuters, [Timeline: history of Scotland's bids for independence](#), 4 February 2014.

Daily Record, [Yes it's Indy Lite](#), 11 October 2014.