

So which way would I vote? Yes or No?

Published: January 13, 2026, 12:31 pm

Rupert Murdoch's Sun has prevaricated on the issue of Yes or No in Scotland. I suspect it's doing so as a threat to Scottish politicians whatever the outcome of tomorrow's vote. That's the Murdoch style. But I cannot and would not ever want to issue such a threat. So what would I do tomorrow if I could vote, bearing in mind that I can't?

I admit this is a tougher question to answer than I expected. I am sure it is for many more than me.

I am to some degree a nationalist. I am pleased to have Irish heritage. But I love a great deal of what is good about England too. Yet when it comes to filling in my nationality on a form I never hesitate to write British. I am all three at once. As far as I know I have not an ounce of Scottish in me. But if I had, would it matter? Yes, I think so, and very much. In a minority situation- and Scotland is in a minority situation - identity becomes a bigger and more important issue, and even one of enormous significance. By itself it would incline me strongly to vote Yes. That may not be rational, but we are not rational beings and we should celebrate that. Identity is of enormous significance.

And I would also be inclined, very heavily, to vote Yes because this would be a chance to break the stranglehold of neoliberalism. That has to happen in the UK if we are to, quite literally, have a future. Neoliberalism is, after all, burning the hopes of future generations right now by its failure to embrace the green agenda and why it matters. In that sense this is the biggest issue of all in this vote.

So the downside is? The first is that Scotland may not get independence. The SNP say they want the Crown, sterling and the EU. It's a bad combination that will take away almost all choice from a new state. I simply do not get that. But then, I have to also remember that the SNP and an independent Scotland are not synonymous.

The second is that if mainstream politics is only adapted for Scotland then there would still be neoliberalism. The No campaign is a depressing example of that. The SNP commitment to tax competition is another. The battle for real independence based on

new political thinking to turn Scotland into a Courageous State would have to be fought as strongly in an independent Scotland as it has to be now.

And third, the fact is that this campaign has been a depressing tale of far too many truths untold and misinformation spread, especially on economics.

Those three factors would all leave me with doubt about the virtues of independence. But, and I stress, the important point is not to view this from an English perspective when considering how I would vote. If I was able to vote I could and would only view it from a Scottish perspective and then the question is how to balance these issues. It's easy to say nothing would change when viewed from England, because to some extent we can only pick up the down side from all this knowing as a result we may have an even bigger problem on our hands on Friday (and we might). But from a Scottish perspective there would be an upside. There would be a new opportunity to create a new vision for what will be an existing nation but in a new era of its history and that, I suspect, would be enough to make me have that essential missing ingredient that is absent, come what may, from the rest of the UK perspective on so many of these issues, which is hope.

And that's why I think I would vote Yes.

But I would do so with fingers crossed, because right now there is no guarantee Scotland will get what it wants or deserves post independence. Having said which, No would offer no better chance of change, and that is why the risk would be worth taking.