

## Minority Ethnic Matters Overview

*MEMO+ is an occasional series of briefing papers on topics of interest to minority ethnic communities in Scotland. It is produced by the [Scottish Council of Jewish Communities](#) in partnership with [BEMIS - empowering Scotland's ethnic and cultural minority communities](#), and is supported by the [Scottish Government](#).*

# “Scotland’s Future” Scottish Government White Paper on Independence: Environment and Agriculture

On 18 September 2014 there will be a referendum in which voters will be asked the question, "Should Scotland be an independent country?", and the Scottish Government has produced a White Paper to explain its proposals for the way in which an independent Scotland would be governed.

A White Paper is a document produced by the Government that sets out details of their proposed future policy on a particular subject. It is not a consultation and does not set out alternatives, but only gives details of the Government’s intentions. This White Paper does not, therefore, provide an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of Scotland becoming an independent country, and it does not discuss what should happen if Scotland remains in the UK.

This MEMO+ is one of a series that summarises the main points of the White Paper. Other issues cover Scottish Government proposals for:

<a href="#">White Paper: General Info</a>	<a href="#">Education &amp; Employment</a>	<a href="#">Immigration &amp; Asylum</a>
<a href="#">Culture &amp; Communications</a>	<a href="#">Energy &amp; Resources</a>	<a href="#">International Relations</a>
<a href="#">Defence &amp; Security</a>	<a href="#">Equality &amp; Human Rights</a>	<a href="#">Justice</a>
<a href="#">Economy &amp; Finance</a>	<a href="#">Health &amp; Wellbeing</a>	<a href="#">Third Sector &amp; Civic Society</a>

While farming, the built environment, rural issues, and some aspects of transport and climate change are already devolved, – that is, decisions about them are made by the Scottish and not by the UK Parliament – some policy matters, such as international treaties and energy, are reserved to the UK Parliament.

### The Environment

Although legislation relating to climate change was approved by the Scottish Parliament in 2009, the Scottish Government believes that further improvement is hampered by the fact that Scotland does not have a direct voice in European Union or United Nations discussions.

The Scottish Government proposes that, If Scotland were to become an independent country:

- environmental protection would be included in its proposed written constitution;
- it would seek to negotiate increased European funding for environmental protection;
- it would contribute to international measures to tackle climate change.

The Scottish Government also proposes that an independent Scotland would buy into the weather forecasting services provided by the UK Met Office.

### **Rural and Island Communities**

The Scottish Government proposes that, if Scotland were to become an independent country, it would:

- bring forward legislation to implement the recommendations of the recently established Islands Areas Ministerial Working Group;
- improve local control of Crown Estate assets, including greater autonomy for the islands, and ownership of the foreshore and local harbours;
- safeguard postal deliveries to rural areas by bringing the Royal Mail back into public ownership;
- seek to negotiate an increase in European Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) rural development funding;

### **Agriculture**

The Scottish Government believes that Scotland's diverse agriculture, which ranges from crofters to large intensive farms, is more important to Scotland's economy than agriculture is to the UK economy as a whole. In its view, however, the UK Parliament has not recognised this, and has not, therefore, prioritised Scottish farming in either domestic policy or European negotiation, and consequently, Scotland has the third lowest average direct payment per hectare of any country in Europe, and, from 2014, will have the lowest average rate.

The Scottish Government proposes that, If Scotland were to become an independent country, it would:

- seek to represent Scottish interests in Europe, particularly in the next round of CAP negotiations, and to reduce the regulatory burden for livestock farmers;
- use livestock farming levies to promote Scottish produce;
- provide support for more people to become farmers.

### **Fisheries**

The Scottish Government proposes that, If Scotland were to become an independent country, it would prevent Scotland's fishing quota from being transferred outside Scotland.

[Click here](#) and [here](#) for more details about Scottish Government proposals about the Environment, and [here](#) and [here](#) for Scottish Government proposals about Agriculture and Fisheries.

## Useful Links

- **White Paper: Scotland's Future: Your Guide to an Independent Scotland**
  - Full Document <http://82.113.138.107/00439021.pdf>
  - Summary <http://82.113.138.107/00439013.pdf>
- **Scottish Government Q&A about Agriculture, Food and Rural Communities**  
<http://www.scotreferendum.com/topic/agriculture-food-and-rural-communities/>
- **Scotland's Future and Scottish Farming**  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0043/00439271.pdf>
- **Scottish Government referendum website**  
<http://www.scotreferendum.com/>
- **UK Government Scotland Office referendum website**  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/topics/scotland>
- **Yes Scotland** (Campaign for Scottish Independence)  
<http://www.yesscotland.net/>
- **Better Together** (Campaign for Scotland to remain part of the UK)  
<http://www.bettertogether.net/>
- **BBC Scottish independence: Referendum library**  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-21618252>



The **Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC)** is the representative body of all the Jewish communities in Scotland. It advances public understanding about the Jewish religion, culture and community, and also works in partnership with other organisations to promote good relations and understanding among community groups and to promote equality. (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438) <http://www.scojec.org/>



**BEMIS** is the Scottish national Ethnic Minorities led umbrella body, supporting, empowering, and building the capacity of minority third sector community organisations. As a strategic partner with Government, it is proactive in influencing the development of race equality policy in Scotland, and helps develop and progress multicultural Scotland, active citizenship, democracy, and Human Rights Education at the Scottish, UK, and European levels. <http://www.bemis.org.uk/index.html>



The **Scottish Government** is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and social justice for all those who live in Scotland. **One Scotland** is the Scottish Government campaign designed to tackle racism. It aims to raise awareness of racist attitudes, highlight its negative impact and recognise the valuable contributions that other cultures have made to our society – and make Scotland no place for racism. <http://www.scotlandagainstracism.com/>