

## Factsheet – EU membership referendum: The Campaigns

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### 'In' Campaign

Former Marks and Spencer boss Lord Stuart Rose launched the Britain Stronger in Europe campaign on 12 October. Britain Stronger in Europe has focused on the business case for staying in, arguing the benefits are “a stronger economy, stronger security and stronger leadership on the world stage”. Rose is attempting to defuse the claim that pro-Europeans are unpatriotic.

Former Prime Ministers Sir John Major, Gordon Brown and Tony Blair are supporting the campaign, alongside Labour MP Chuka Umunna, Green Party MP Caroline Lucas and Conservative MP Damian Green. Former chief of the general staff Sir Peter Wall, West Ham United vice-chairwoman Baroness Karren Brady, BT chairman Sir Mike Rake and television presenter June Sarpong are also prominent figures in the campaign.

The Green Party and the Liberal Democrats are in favour of remaining in the EU. The Labour Party appears to have also settled on staying in following newly elected leader Jeremy Corbyn's decision, although groups such as Labour Leave are campaigning for Brexit.

Organisations such as the Conservative Europe Group, Conservative European Mainstream, Business for New Europe, the European Movement, Open Europe, the Centre for European Reform and Labour in for Britain are campaigning to stay in the EU.

Britain Stronger in Europe is aiming to attract the under-25 vote. The National Union of Students (NUS) National President Megan Dunn has joined the campaign, stating that working with other nations makes our country, and our society, stronger. While this age group is more likely to be pro-EU, it is less likely to register to vote and less likely to vote.

### 'Out' Campaigns

There are two Eurosceptic campaigns, Vote Leave and Leave.EU. It will be up to the elections watchdog, the Electoral Commission, to designate which of the groups will become the official "Leave" campaign. Organisations such as The Bruges Group, Better Off Out, The Harrogate agenda, Campaign for an Independent Britain and Futurus favour leaving the EU.

Vote Leave launched on 9 October with the message “vote leave, take control”. Their main concerns are the EU budget contributions, the supremacy of EU law and trade restrictions. Vote Leave has clear cross-party support, including Conservatives for Britain, Labour Leave and Business for Britain. The co-treasurers are Peter Cruddas (Conservative), John Mills (Labour) and, Stuart Wheeler, Ukip's former treasurer. Key donors in the Vote Leave campaign include hedge fund manager Crispin Odey and Phones4U tycoon John Caudwell.

Former Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer Lord Lawson has taken on the role of president of Conservatives for Britain, stating that he believes that it is unlikely that Cameron will secure the reforms he seeks.

While Vote Leave states they will “negotiate a new UK-EU deal based on free trade and friendly cooperation”, it is not clear what that will entail.

Leave.EU was formerly called The Know. Founded by UKIP donor Arron Banks, the Democracy Movement, Global Britain and the Bruges Group are backing the campaign while the chair of Global Britain Richard Tice and entrepreneur Jim Mellon are major Leave.EU ambassadors. Leave.EU has decided to focus on immigration, although it also raises concerns about EU budget contributions, the supremacy of EU law and trade restrictions. If voters’ main concern is immigration, joining the European Economic Area after Brexit will not be an option. Leave.EU plans to negotiate a replacement trade deal with the EU, covering at least 90 per cent of trade.

## Undeclared

Some key figures have not yet declared a side, such as Prime Minister David Cameron and Mayor of London Boris Johnson. David Cameron is attempting to negotiate reforms to Britain’s relationship with the EU in four key areas as: banning EU migrants from claiming in-work benefits for four years, a British opt-out from the EU’s commitment to create an “ever closer union” of the peoples of Europe, the creation of safeguards for non-eurozone members to ensure they cannot be outvoted in the single market by eurozone members and giving national parliaments the right to work together to block EU legislation.

The ‘out’ campaigns will not change their stance on the EU if Cameron achieves his reforms, as they claim they are not far reaching enough. The official government position is to defer reaching a position until negotiations are complete.

## Comparison

Both campaigns are well-financed. The ‘out’ campaign has much more initial momentum than the ‘in’ campaign. However, it is also split into two separate groups and the issue of immigration may lead to a disunited campaign.

Opinion polls have shown immigration to be the single most important issue for UK voters. However, the issue is nuanced; Nigel Farage is not against taking in Christian refugees from Syria and skilled migrants. The CBI is not against controls on immigration, although it argues that statistical caps will prevent UK firms from recruiting on the international jobs market.

Conservatives on both sides of the debate appear to have grasped the importance of the referendum and early campaigning faster than Labour, which has been embroiled in its leadership election. Ukip MP Douglas Carswell has chosen the Vote Leave campaign while Ukip party leader Nigel Farage has announced his support for both exit campaigns.

The Scottish National Party are officially backing continued membership. However, in the event of an ‘in’ vote in Scotland and an ‘out’ vote in the rest of the UK, a second independence referendum would be justified. In Northern Ireland Republicans will vote to stay in the EU but Unionists face a dilemma, particularly if the rest of the UK vote to leave. The impact of an ‘out’ vote on the make-up of the United Kingdom will play a part in the strategy of the ‘in’ campaign.

While the UK’s national newspapers have not explicitly stated their position, the Guardian is expected to campaign for ‘in’ while The Mail and The Express will probably campaign for ‘out’. The Daily Telegraph had exclusive rights to publish Business for Britain’s book, indicating a strong sympathy for exit. The stance of the main newspapers, particularly The Sun, will likely have an effect on the outcome of the referendum.