

# UK pound plunges as results point to EU exit

Associated Press

LONDON — The British pound plunged to a 31-year low Friday as results in the country's European Union referendum gave the "leave" side a small but growing lead.

The figures delivered a deep shock to financial markets, overturning earlier anticipation of a narrow victory for "remain."

The pound initially soared as polls closed and two opinion surveys put "remain" ahead and two leading supporters of the "leave" campaign said it appeared the pro-EU side had won. But it then suffered one of its biggest one-day falls in history, plummeting more than 10 percent in six hours, from about \$1.50 to below \$1.35 as results suggested a strong possibility the U.K. would vote to quit the bloc.

"The dawn is breaking on an independent United Kingdom," U.K. Independence Party leader Nigel Farage said to loud cheers at a "leave" campaign party.

"Let June 23 go down in our history as our independence day!"

As results poured in, a picture emerged of a sharply divided nation: Strong pro-EU votes in the economic and cultural powerhouse of London and semi-autonomous Scotland were countered by sweeping anti-Establishment sentiment for an exit across the rest of England, from southern seaside towns to rust-belt former industrial powerhouses in the north.

"A lot of people's grievances are coming out and we have got to start listening to them," said deputy Labour Party leader John McDonnell.

The "leave" campaign had a lead over "remain" with about 70 percent of voting districts reporting. Turnout was above 70 percent — higher than the 66 percent in last year's general election.

"Few 'remain' strongholds are doing better than expected," said John Curtice, a University of Strathclyde political scientist and BBC election analyst. "There are



Leave supporters celebrate a count result as it is shown on a screen at the "Leave.EU" organization party for the British European Union membership referendum in London, Friday.

far more places where 'leave' are doing better than expected."

"It may be possible that the experts are going to have egg on their face later on tonight," he said.

A vote to leave the EU would destabilize the 28-nation trading bloc, created from the ashes of World War II to keep the peace in Europe. A "remain" vote would nonetheless leave Britain divided and the EU scrambling to reform.

The Betfair market predicted an 81 percent chance of Britain leaving the EU, and bookies made Brexit the favorite outcome for the first time.

The first results, from England's working-class northeast, were a smaller-than-expected "remain" win in Newcastle and a bigger-than-expected "leave" vote in nearby Sunderland. The "leave" side also outperformed expectations in other areas of England, though "remain"

was ahead in early Scottish results.

There was better news in London, where many areas had strong "remain" majorities.

As polls closed Thursday, pollster Ipsos MORI said a survey conducted on Wednesday and Thursday suggested the "remain" side would win Britain's EU referendum by a margin of 54 percent to 46 percent.

Earlier Thursday, the firm had released a poll that indicated a 52-48 victory for "remain." That phone poll of 1,592 people had a margin of error of plus or minus three percentage points. But the firm's chief executive, Ben Page, said continued polling on Thursday suggested a bigger swing to "remain" that gave the 54-46 result.

As polls closed, Farage set a downbeat tone for the supporters of a British exit — or Brexit — from the EU, telling Sky News television

"it looks like 'remain' will edge it" in the referendum, sending the pound to a 2016 peak of \$1.50.

But he walked back those comments later, telling reporters at a "leave" party in central London that "maybe just under half, maybe just over half of the country" had voted to pull Britain out of the EU. And by early morning he was declaring the dawn of a new era.

The high turnout had been expected to boost the "remain" vote, because "leave" supporters are thought to be more motivated. But high turnout in working-class areas that typically have lower tallies could also boost the "leave" vote.

"I think it is going to be really close," said photographer Antony Crolla, 49, outside a London polling station.

That was certainly the case in Newcastle, a city which had been

expected to deliver a resounding victory for "remain." Instead, the pro-Europe side squeaked by with 50.7 percent of the vote. In Sunderland, 61 percent of voters chose "leave," a bigger-than expected margin.

Polls had for months suggested a close battle, although the past few days have seen some indication of momentum swinging toward the "remain" side. But torrential rains, especially in the "remain" stronghold of London, raised fears of diminished turnout. London's Fire Brigade took 550 weather-related calls as the capital was hit by heavy precipitation, thunderstorms and lightning strikes. Some polling stations were forced to close because of flooding.

Prime Minister David Cameron, who called the referendum and led the "remain" campaign, faces an uncertain future whichever side wins. Almost half the lawmakers from his Conservative Party backed an EU exit, and the "leave" campaign was led by potential leadership rivals, including former London Mayor Boris Johnson.

If "leave" wins, he may have no choice but to resign.

"If the prime minister loses this I don't see how he can survive as prime minister," said Scottish National Party lawmaker Alex Salmond. "Talk about lame ducks. This would be a duck with no legs and no stability whatsoever."

At a referendum night party at the London School of Economics, Kevin Featherstone, the head of the European Institute, said that whichever way things went, the vote should serve as a wakeup call to politicians across the continent.

"One of the deeper headlines from tomorrow, of a narrow victory either way, is that wider Europe has got to learn the lesson about how to re-engage with ordinary publics," he said. "We can see across Europe countries which have been ... far bigger supporters of the European Union for a number of years starting to have serious doubts."

## BRIEFLY

### After Capitol all-nighter, Democrats push on for gun control

WASHINGTON (AP) — Exhausted but exuberant, House Democrats vowed to fight on for gun control Thursday as they ended their high-drama House floor sit-in with songs, prayers and defiant predictions of success. Republicans offered a dose of political reality, denying House Democratic demands and holding a Senate vote designed to show a bipartisan gun compromise can't pass.

"They're staging protests. They're trying to get on TV. They're sending out fundraising solicitations," House Speaker Paul Ryan complained in an angry denunciation of the Democrats' 25-hour occupation of the Capitol chamber. "If this is not a political stunt, then why are they trying to raise money off of this, off of a tragedy?"

Ryan said the House would not be giving in to Democrats' calls for votes on legislation expanding background checks for gun buyers and keeping people on the no-fly list from getting guns in the wake of the Orlando shooting. And in the Senate, GOP leaders scheduled a vote on a bipartisan compromise by moderate Republican Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, but only to show the "no-fly" legislation does not command the 60 votes needed to pass.

A visibly deflated Collins suggested Senate leaders were draining support from her bill by allowing a GOP alternative to also come to a vote.

"Let us not miss an opportunity to get something done," she pleaded on the Senate floor prior to the 52-46 vote. But Republican leaders, unmoved, were ready to move on.

"I think we need to be engaged in something more constructive that would have actually stopped shooters like the Orlando shooter," said the No. 2 Senate Republican, John Cornyn of Texas.

Yet while they may have lost the legislative battles at hand, Democrats on both sides of the Capitol were congratulating themselves on a remarkable success in gaining attention for their demands for action to curb the widespread availability of firearms, first by a 15-hour Senate filibuster last week and then with their extraordinary occupation of the House floor.

### Pipeline spews crude in Calif., but none reaches beach

VENTURA, Calif. (AP) — An underground pipeline spewed thousands of gallons of crude oil Thursday near the Southern California coast but the foul-smelling goo was contained in a lengthy stretch of ravine and never reached nearby beaches.

About 29,000 gallons of oil spilled and flowed at least a quarter-mile in the canyon near Ventura, fire authorities said.

Resident Kirk Atwater said he called 911 after smelling and hearing the flowing crude.

"We started getting this horrendous smell and I knew right away what it was," he said.

Atwater, 56, said he found the oil gushing from an above-ground box that he surmised covers equipment.

He said he found a posted phone number and reported the leak to the pipeline company.

Fire crews responded and a pump house operating the line was shut down. Firefighters built a dam of dirt to keep the oil from moving farther.

The oil left a black stain down the brush- and tree-filled arroyo.

## 'No' to immigration plans, Supreme Court says

By MARK SHERMAN  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A short-handed and deeply divided Supreme Court deadlocked Thursday on President Barack Obama's immigration plan to help millions living in the U.S. illegally, effectively killing the plan for the rest of his presidency and raising the stakes even further for the November elections.

The hotly debated direction of America's national immigration policy as well as the balance of power on the high court now will be determined in large part by the presidential and congressional elections. Immigration and the court vacancy created by Justice Antonin Scalia's death in February already were featuring prominently in the campaign.

Scalia's vote likely would have meant an outright ruling against Obama's immigration expansion rather than the 4-4 tie, a much more significant defeat for the president and immigrant advocates.

Democrat Hillary Clinton declared that as president she would work to restore the programs and go further. Republican Donald Trump said he would make sure Obama's "unconstitutional actions" never came back.

In another major case affected by Scalia's absence, the court delivered a surprisingly strong defense of affirmative action in higher education in a dispute over admissions policies at the University of Texas.

Justice Anthony Kennedy's majority opinion in the 4-3 decision upheld the Texas admissions plan and reaffirmed that colleges can take account of race in admissions in pursuit of a diverse student body. Scalia, long an opponent of affirmative action, had suggested during arguments in December that some black

### "(This ruling) takes us further from the country we aspire to be,"

— President Barack Obama,

After Supreme Court deadlocked on his immigration plans

students would benefit from being at a "slower-track school," instead of Texas' flagship campus in Austin.

Justice Elena Kagan did not take part in the case because she worked on it while at the Justice Department.

On immigration, the tie is not likely to lead to an increase in deportations since the president retains ample discretion to decide whom to deport. But the ruling stymies his effort to bring people "out from the shadows" by giving them the right to work legally in the U.S.

One of the Obama programs would have protected the parents of children who are in the country legally. The other was an expansion of a program that benefits people who were brought to the U.S. as children. Obama decided to move forward on his own after Republicans won control of the Senate in 2014 and the chances for an immigration overhaul, already remote, were further damaged.

Obama said Thursday's impasse "takes us further from the country we aspire to be."

The candidates vying to replace him split as plainly as the justices.

Clinton, the presumptive Democratic nominee, said that if she is elected she will defend the Obama programs "and do everything possible under the law to go further to protect families."

Republican Trump, on the other hand, said the court outcome "blocked one of the most unconstitutional actions ever undertaken by a president" and the split decision "makes clear what's at stake in November."

And the people directly affected?

Mexican immigrant Cristina Molina of New York City, said she was frustrated and upset. "I feel like I'm in limbo," Molina, 48, said through an interpreter. She has lived in the United States for 23 years and said she would have been eligible for one of the programs Obama announced in 2014.

A Supreme Court tie sets no national precedent but leaves in place a ruling by a lower court. The justices issued a one-sentence opinion, with no further comment.

A full nine-justice court agreed to hear the case in January, but by the time of the arguments in late April, Scalia had died. That left eight justices to decide the case, and the court presumably split along liberal-conservative lines, although no breakdown was announced.

The federal appeals court in New Orleans had said the Obama administration lacked the authority to shield up to 4 million immigrants from deportation and make them eligible for work permits without approval from Congress. That ruling now remains in place.

Texas had led 26 Republican-dominated states in challenging the Obama initiatives in court. The lawsuit was heard by U.S. District Judge Andrew Hanen in Brownsville, Texas.

Hanen previously had criticized the administration for lax immigration enforcement.

Hanen sided with the states, blocking the programs from taking effect. The 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals agreed, and the Justice



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