



Final week.

As we come to the final week of campaigning, things look very close in the EU referendum. While this might be due to the TV debates that have begun in the past week, it is actually more a result of the continuing inability of either side to produce an argument that has really cut through all the noise. The TV debates, for example, have been notable more for the personal attacks made by both sides than for any informed discussion of the issues.

One complication has been the problems of voter registration: the website that does this crashed hours before the deadline (the UK has moved in recent years to an opt-in system, whereby voters have to register beforehand), leaving some tens of thousands without the ability to file their paperwork. Since it was very hard for either side in a referendum to say that people who wanted to vote shouldn't be allowed to, the extension to the deadline was unsurprising. These late registrations might benefit Remain, as they were mainly younger voters, but their numbers were still small enough that they will not have much impact on the final vote.

Then there was the big cover page of the SUN that was massively tweeted and commented upon. The SUN's endorsement of Leave was not a surprise, but it reflects the strong preference of its readership. Whether it changes any minds is doubtful, but it does increase the impression that it is Leave who have been setting the agenda in the last campaigning period.

The final irony in all of this is that the British public remains one of the least knowledgeable about the EU. Recent polling suggested little sense of the actual operation of the EU, the UK's contributions to it, or the volume of immigration to the UK. Whatever the outcome on the 23rd, don't be surprised if the UK continues to be a country that doesn't seem to know what it wants.

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