

Scottish Youth Parliament's External Affairs, UK and International Relations Committee presents:
Brexit Advocacy Toolkit





Table of Contents

Convener's Note	2
Introduction	3
Young People's Opinions on Britain leaving the EU	4-10
Who responded?	4
How did you respond? What does the EU do/offer that you appreciate the most?	4-5
Describe Brexit in one word?	5
Strengths and Weaknesses of UK staying within the European Union	6
Is Brexit a loss for young people?	7-8
What should our politicians in Scotland be calling for in relation to Brexit?	8-9
What rights or opportunities would you like to see maintained in the UK's relationship with the EU after Brexit?	10
Things to Raise with Decision-Makers	13-14
SYP's Brexit Manifesto: Rights Outright	13-14
Scottish Declaration on Human Rights	13-14
Questions to Address Decision-Makers	15
How to address Decision-Makers?	16-17
Jack's Experience	16
Here's what YOU can do when meeting a Decision-Maker	16-17
Conclusion	17
Contact	17
Template Letter for MSYPs	18
Template Letter for Young People	20

Convener Note

As the Convener of the External Affairs, UK and International Relations (EXA) Committee until 8th June 2018, I am delighted to be launching this advocacy toolkit to all of our Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs) and our supporters from all over Scotland. I hope that this toolkit will be able to be presented to decision-makers allowing them to truly understand young people's views in light of the Brexit referendum June 2016.



As part of our *Right Here Right Now* national campaign on young people's rights, SYP felt that it was essential to have an objective to defend young people's rights during the Brexit negotiations as part of its "Advocacy" theme: to influence law, policy and practice in order to strengthen the protection of young people's rights. Therefore, in addition to my Committee's toolkit, there is also work looking specifically at Brexit and rights as part of this Brexit side-line campaign.

In this advocacy toolkit, my Committee will explain the clear aims and objectives of this toolkit and what we hope to achieve from these. It will also include the analysis from the data that has been drawn from the consultation we conducted before our 64th National Sitting at the Scottish Parliament in October 2017, as well as the questions that we will put forward to our decision-makers based on our findings.

The EXA Committee hopes that through this advocacy toolkit, we accurately represent a snapshot of the views of Scotland's young people during what we believe is a period of uncertainty. This advocacy toolkit would not have been possible without the help of many individuals, particularly towards Ms Maria Fletcher from the University of Glasgow and director of the Scottish Universities Legal Network on Europe (SULNE) who I worked alongside with in constructing the consultation for young people in their views surrounding the uncertainties of Brexit. I also like to thank Ms Laura Pasternak also for her advice. I want to thank Mr Euan McFadzean, MSYP for Scouts Scotland and Miss Orla McDevitt, MSYP for Motherwell and Wishaw for contributing to the graphic design of this toolkit.

Wing Yan Ng

Introduction

Who are we?

The External Affairs, UK and International Relations Committee is one out of ten of the Subject Committees at SYP. Our Committee primarily focuses on UK and European legislation, relationships with Europe and the rest of the world, reserved matters and issues with a global impact.

At the beginning of the year, the Committee voted to work on Brexit, particularly looking at the uncertainty around it. It has been almost two years since it was announced that UK will leave the European Union. Most of our Members joined the Committee as they wanted to find out more what can be done to further inform our constituents from across Scotland and hope to provide some guidance towards their peers and local community.

Why?

Our advocacy toolkit is looking to help bring forward the voice of the young people to decision makers in the country. As a committee, we have collected the opinions of young people all across Scotland on Brexit and have conducted the key findings from that data, it includes views as to why some young people think that Brexit is unsuccessful.

This toolkit shall be presented to decision-makers from inside and outside the Scottish Parliament to aid them during this difficult time by providing them with the important opinions of young people in Scotland.

The Scottish Youth Parliament's campaign "Right Here, Right Now" advocates for Young People's Rights. It contains three main components - Advocacy, Action and Awareness. Within the Action theme, we seek to strengthen and enhance the status of MSYPs at a local level and within national voluntary organisations, and improve the links SYP has with other institutions, such as the Scottish Parliament.

We believe that this toolkit is a great way to do this by working together with our partners at the Scottish Parliament.

Aim and Objectives

- ✓ For decision-makers to fully understand young people's opinions on Brexit.
- ✓ Call for decision makers to acknowledge and to act on the basis of young people's views and concerns.
- ✓ For this toolkit to be used for SYP for campaigning purposes.
- ✓ For this toolkit to provide essential information for young people situated in Scotland to understand the complexities around Brexit.

Young People's Opinions on Britain Leaving the EU

Who Responded?

The views in this toolkit have been gathered from our Subject Committee meeting at the 64th National Sitting of SYP at the Scottish Parliament on 28th October 2017, as well as a pre-Sitting Survey which was communicated to members around two weeks before the Sitting. Therefore, it is a snapshot of the views of our 17 members, and their constituents'. For more information on the demographics of SYP's current membership, please see here.

EXA's pre-SYP64 Brexit Survey was conducted online and aimed at young people aged 12-25 on issues surrounding Brexit. This survey received 48 responses, from 13 of all 32 Local Authorities across Scotland. The gender balance of responses was as follows: 45.83% female, 47.92% male, and 6.25% who identify with another gender. Responses came from young people currently in school, college, university, full-time or part-time work, training and 'other'. 57.45% of responses came from young people in school.

The EXA Convener consulted with Maria Fletcher on the development of the survey and Subject Committee meeting plan for SYP64. MSYPs consulted with the young people they represent in their constituencies using the survey questions before the workshop, using their unique democratic mandate to ensure they represented a snapshot of the views of as wide a group of young people as possible.

Therefore, EXA's comments are fundamentally shaped by the genuine views of young people. However, as our membership represents young people aged 12-25, SYP's response is not representative of children below the age of 12. Furthermore, the survey was subject to relatively strict time constraints which limited the overall quantity of responses.

How did you respond? What does the EU do/offer that you appreciate the most?

Overall, our responses reflected a high level of appreciation of what the EU offers to young people. Young people are clearly split between understanding the importance of the economic and territorial security that the European Union provides as well as its means of access to free trade and travel. Under half of all respondents referred to free movement in their answer in various forms.

However, there is also the problem of political autonomy within our state that is arguably infringed upon by EU sanctions. Thus, we are provided with the everpressing problem; what was the right decision? If the first question in our Brexit survey has provided the committee with anything, it's that we need to do more to ensure young people are acting in the discussions about our divorce agreement to ensure that views of young people are valued and seen to be just as relevant as those of our older, "wiser" counterparts.

"Older people won't be here in the next 15/20 years, but it will be the younger ones who would suffer."

"Young people aren't included within certain prospects when the young are the future."

"The older generation grew up in a completely different world to the one we are in now and their world is the only one that they often still see"

"We will be the generation dealing with the debt of the leaving fines, the inevitable recession that is to follow our exit as businesses leave our country. It is probable that there will be a decline in mental health alongside those issues and we are the generation that will be dealing with it."

"I feel cut off/restricted by Brexit, it traps us."

In conclusion, there were many differing arguments for why the EU was a positive force in Britain. This varied and informed response shows that our new relationship with the European Union must be as fruitful as our former identity as a member state in order to meet the demands of Scotland's Youth, which includes negotiating jobs for all Britain's citizens.

Describe Brexit in One Word?

We asked our respondents to describe what they thought of the UK leaving the EU in one word. The result was incredibly varied and extremely useful. This is particularly the case for decision-makers as it will allow them to focus on the wider perspective when negotiating the Brexit deal and we hope that these words will allow them to understand the young people's true views towards Brexit.



Strengths and Weaknesses of UK staying within the European Union

Some respondents said...

"The EU only serves to maintain the dominance of capital by force. It has decimated the Greek economy and did not lift a finger when austerity was being spread across the continent"

"Stability"

"The money given by the EU to develop our infrastructure for example EU funding was used for lots of road expansion in the highlands, making the roads main roads instead of single track road with passing places, this helps connect Scotland in terms of commuting/tourism as it makes the highlands more accessible."

"Strong affairs and local leadership"

"Corruption"

"Keep us united as a power"

"Being a member of the international community"

"We can't take on the whole world alone!"

"A controlling, unregulated leviathan" "Furthermore, it prevents any difficulty in exchanging the British pound for multiple currencies, all of which hold varying exchange rates. Secondly, the EU provides stable, profitable trade deals with Britain, particularly with the car manufacturing industry. This allows our nation to sustain the output of these industries, as well as maintain profit. Thirdly, the EU offers a sense of security and unity between countries. Staying within this union allows nations to maintain a sense of comfort and relatability, and to create effective solutions to international problems, such as overcrowding from immigration."

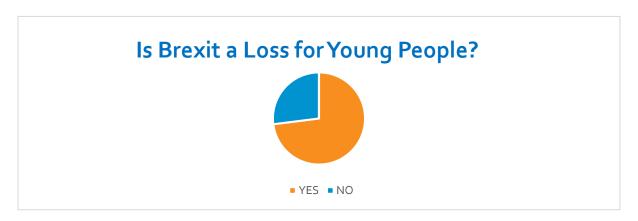
"Too much of the power, with none of the responsibility"

> "Worker's rights, human rights, health and safety standards"

When looking at some of the negative responses to our initial question, we found one of the biggest concerns over the EU - how much influence it has with the internal affairs of the UK Government. National security, terrorism and economic problems were also listed among things that some young people believe the EU impacts upon negatively.

Overall, the response exemplified how young people are articulate in their interest in the issue of the UK leaving the EU.

By allowing young people a platform to voice their concerns and questions, we have contributed to the process of participation for Scotland's youth since sadly, only those over the age of 18 were allowed to vote in the referendum.



Is Brexit a loss for young people?

The response here was largely made up of young people's worries about our decreased ability to participate globally as citizens of the world, i.e. travelling freely throughout Europe, easy work permits and access to programs that allow us to study in European Universities.

"Because in order to do a year abroad in Europe with a university, the funding for this comes from a sum of money in the EU's budget. Due to Brexit, there is a huge uncertainty towards whether this will be able to continue which would be a great loss to all students."

The majority of responses also reflected how little we know so far about the deal that will be struck between the EU and the UK Government.

"I think being in the EU is beneficial. And leaving the EU has no benefits whatsoever. I don't see the point in leaving."



Additionally, people commented on the knock we may take economically as trade deals all have to be reshuffled, the security situation that arises from not being part of a wider international organisation and an acknowledgment that the majority of people who want to leave are from older generations that perhaps aren't as interested in the benefits of being within the European Union.



"I'd much rather be a part of a union of strong, stable allies in these difficult times where we see our society's most valued services cut again and again. I am not and will not ever be convinced by the current British Government that we're safe from destruction. To add, the older generation has taken away our future."

People described their initial and subsequent responses to the outcome of the referendum as feeling "isolated" or "trapped" by no longer being part of a leading nation in the EU. Ultimately, the young people we asked fear having less political influence and importance on the world stage.

"We will be the generation dealing with the debt of the leaving fines, the inevitable recession that is to follow our exit as businesses leave our country. There will be a decline in mental health alongside those issues and we are the generation that will be dealing with it."

And while SYP maintains its neutrality on the overarching political issues, it's plain to see that many young people disagree with and are concerned about the direction currently being taken with the Brexit negotiations.

What should our politicians in Scotland be calling for in relation to Brexit?

As a devolved nation, we believe that Scotland should have a say in every step of the way in the Brexit negotiations. Discourse between and within political parties has made it very difficult to know where the most effort is being made to make sure Scotland is involved in the discussions and the eventual deal.

"I don't support Brexit but am unsure what Scottish politicians should be calling for. I doubt a second referendum would resolve anything and I feel that MPs opposing Brexit would be similarly useless. Before Brexit, I would not be in favour of Scottish independence but perhaps independence provides Scotland with the chance of remaining in the EU. Whether this would be better than remaining in the UK is hard to know."

"A sensible Brexit agreement that ensures freedom of movement and ensuring we keep the human rights laws"

"Politicians in Scotland should be calling for united Brexit talks, with representatives from all parliaments, both devolved and reserved, in the Brexit negotiations"



Following the trend of answers, our survey shows that there is a large amount of general concern stemming from simply not knowing where our future will look like outside of the EU. However, the young people that took part in our questionnaire was very clear that any response by a Scottish politician to the Brexit deal must be a strong one, to make sure our needs are met along with those of the rest of the UK.

Another recurring theme within this question's responses is the popularity of a second Scottish Independence referendum to be held as a result of the leave vote.

"Scottish independence in order to re-join the European Union."

However, responses shown that there was not a comment on the opposition of Brexit.

"Nothing, Brexit means Brexit and we need to go along with the will of the BRITISH people."

Unity and stability for the future of the UK both economically, politically and socially should be the Scottish Government's goal. But they can only achieve this through further direct consultation with the people who will be most affected by the changes that will occur post Brexit.

"More or less the same opportunities that we were given before the Brexit referendum happened."

Respondents also discussed the necessity of a fair deal being agreed and that more transparency is practiced as negotiations continue.

"Scottish politicians should be working with the UK government to ensure a good deal for Scotland."

Overall, young people want their politicians to be vocal when acting in favour of their constituents' interests and attentive to what those needs actually are.

"Our voices should be heard more so than anything at this point, why are we given the opportunity to vote if our votes are never listened to or heard."



What rights or opportunities would you like to see maintained in the UK's relationship with the EU after Brexit?

On one hand, the majority of the respondents discussed the same reoccurring themes when answering this question, mainly focussing on the Freedom of Movement in regard to travelling, working (visa related issues) and studying (Erasmus Programme), and human rights.

"I feel each and every one of the rights in place are present for our own protection - any amendments concern me as I do not trust the government with regard to finances. It's like all small businesses, profits and pay packets are all that really seem to matter - as well as the maintenance of a "strong and stable" international reputation which can be broadcast by foreign media sources."

"Secure and fair trade deals should be maintained between Britain and EU, for the benefit of Britain's economy (i.e. production and profits) and future employment rates. However, the British and European politicians feel regarding Brexit, a degree of rationality and awareness should be maintained to prevent the accumulation of ill feelings and inefficiency between nations of the EU and Britain"



"Scotland should stay completely with the EU"

"Workers' rights, human rights, Health and Safety Standards"

"Single Market, Free/Easy Movement"

"Single market access, immigration (it runs both ways, we get to take advantage of freedom of movement in order to find jobs and opportunities in continental Europe and we rely on immigrants to work for our NHS to give the best quality of care and labour-intensive industries like factories which couldn't operate at all without foreign workers, and if they couldn't function, there'd be less jobs for other scots, Erasmus - encourages cultural exchange which is extremely important for this country's future prosperity, and scientific agreements which our research relies on in order to jeep this country at the cutting edge of technology, which relies on talent and people with different perspectives from other countries and the funding we currently get from the EU."





While, on the other hand, some do not wish to maintain to keep the current rights and opportunities that we have at the moment.

"None, we're leaving to get rid of these rights and opportunities."

Things to Raise with Decision Makers

The Scottish Youth Parliament has conducted a manifesto specifically targeted on Brexit. The <u>"Rights Outright: SYP's Brexit Manifesto"</u> has been developed as a part of the Scottish Youth Parliament's national campaign on young people's rights, *Right Here, Right Now.* SYP are campaigning for young people's rights to be defended during the

Brexit negotiations. The five statements in the manifesto were identified as priorities and calls to action for Scottish and UK decision markets by 495 young people aged 12-25, who were consulted by Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs) across Scotland between December 2017 and January 2018. Of the respondents, 90% were aged 17 or under, and therefore did not have the right to vote in the EU Referendum.

In the manifesto, it lists the five priority calls to action.

The Scottish Youth Parliament believes:

1. Workplace Rights

The rights of young people in the workplace should be a priority for the Scottish and UK Governments in the Brexit negotiations, and these rights should be respected and upheld as a key part of Brexit.

2. Participation

Young people should have a far more official, meaningful voice and representative place in the Brexit negotiations now and throughout the process. Their right to participation under Article 12 of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child must be met by both the Scottish and UK decision makers.



3. Equalities and Rights Protection

The UK and Scottish Governments need to ensure children and young people's equalities and rights protection is prioritised, enhanced and not weakened throughout the Brexit process. We call for the full incorporation of the UNCRC into Scots law and the strengthening of social and economic rights during Brexit.

4. Right to Remain

EU nationals already living, working and studying in the UK need concrete assurances that they and their families will have the right to remain in the UK, with streamlined routes to permanent residency and naturalisation.

5. Right to Health

To ensure young people's right to health, the EU (withdrawal) Bill should be amended to include a statutory duty for the UK Government to undertake an independent evaluation with wide consultation of the impact of the Act and Brexit upon the health and social care sector across the UK.

The Scottish Declaration on Human Rights

It was launched in February 2018 and currently has 138 signatories across Scotland, including some of our National Voluntary Organisation members: Who Cares? Scotland, Carers Trust, and many of our partner organisations. This has been developed by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the Scottish Human Rights Commission, the Human Rights Consortium Scotland and the Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations.

The Declaration calls on Holyrood, Westminster and Brussels to ensure that human rights are protected, promoted and not regressed during the Brexit process. Its 4 principles are:

- 1. No Going Back
- 2. Progression
- 3. Transparency
- 4. Participation

The first principle is particularly important for us when asking for support for Withdrawal Bill Amendments, as since the EU Withdrawal Bill is simply meant to carry across EU law, it makes no sense that it is changing law around rights, particularly without consultation and participation which is, in of itself, a human rights principle.



Questions to Address Decision Makers

Can more information be released surrounding Brexit on certain areas that are of particular importance to young people? If so, how? Have any questions to add of your own?
Is there a guarantee or could there be a guarantee that the opportunities we used to have will remain the same? Have any questions to add of your own?
s there a possibility that our rights would be guaranteed surrounding jobs and worker place rights, participation, rights protection, the right to remain and health and social care? Have any questions to add of your own?
Will there be a guarantee that the Erasmus Plus programme will be maintained? Have any questions to add of your own?

If you have any suggestions or want to show us your questions, tweet it to us @OfficialSYP

How to address decision makers?

There are several approaches to this either:

- ✓ Use the template letter provided below to engage with your local decision makers
- ✓ Engage your local decision makers in a creative way such as contacting them on Twitter, email, or Facebook.
- ✓ If you are not an MSYP, perhaps you can look for your MSYP and ask them to put forward your views. You can find your local MSYP here.
- ✓ Whether you are a MSYP or not, you could also use this toolkit to inspire you to think of more questions that should be addressed to decision makers.

Jack's Experience

Jack Norquoy, MSYP for Orkney Islands, Trustee with portfolio for UK & International Affairs recently went down to London to further promote the "Right Here, Right Now" Rights Outright: SYP's Brexit Manifesto during the 18th-21st February 2018. This was in order to defend young people's rights during the Brexit process.

Jack went with four objectives and he managed to complete it all:

- Presenting the *Rights Outright: SYP's Brexit Manifesto* to MPs.
- Lobby peers to support the Withdrawal Bill Amendment to ensure the UK government sets out a strategy for seeking to retain UK membership of Erasmus+ on existing terms after Brexit.
- Lobby peers to support the Withdrawal Bill **Amendment** to a include a duty on the Secretary of State to arrange an independent evaluation of the impact of the European Union (Withdrawal) legislation and of Brexit on the **health and social care** sectors across the UK.
- Asking MPs to sign the Right Here, Right Now decision-makers pledge.

Tip from Jack: "I learned from my trip was to always be prepared to adapt your meeting agenda!"

Here's what YOU can do when meeting a Decision Maker:

- ✓ Introduce them to SYP
 - Mention the data MSYPs completed in the Census.
 - Mention that our *Lead the Way* manifesto which got 72,744 responses.



✓ Briefly outline Right Here, Right Now Campaign, See here for more info.

Using the manifesto and outline the five calls for action and mention the advocacy objective - to defend young people's rights during the Brexit negotiations - e.g. "The five statements in the final Manifesto have been identified as priorities and calls to action for Scottish and UK decision-makers by 495 young people you consulted with across Scotland, aged 12-25, between December 2017 and January 2018. Of the respondents, 90% were aged 17 or under, and therefore did not have the right to vote in the EU Referendum."

✓ Decision Maker's Pledge

 Ask if they can sign the pledge for Right Here, Right Now and share a photo with it, or of the pledge itself?

√ Vote of Thanks

 Express your sincerity, try to encourage future meetings for future meetings, building a good foundational relationship with your councillor, MSP, MP or MEP!

Conclusion

From the analysis, there is evidently a lot of uncertainty among the young people EXA asked towards the Brexit negotiations. In addition, it is causing doubt and detrimental effects in young people, including isolation and fear. Young people do not feel as though they have been fully informed from before the referendum until now. There is a strong sense within our Committee that politicians need to start taking into account the views and opinions of young people. Although the analysis from the consultation is divided in terms of those in favour or not of the Brexit outcome, it was clear that young people want their voices to be heard in the process and to have their concerns and ideas listened to.

Contact

Find Your MSYP Search here

Check out SYP's website here.

Twitter: @OfficialSYP

Email us at: hello@syp.org.uk



Template Letter for MSYPs

RIGHT HERE.

<Recipient's name>
<Recipient's address>

<Your name>

c/o Gordon Lamb House 3 Jackson's Close Edinburgh EH8 8JP T. 0131 557 0452 E. <Your email address>

<Insert date here>

Dear<Recipient's name>,

Right Here, Right Now - The Scottish Youth Parliament's National Campaign

I am writing to introduce myself as a member of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYP) representing <constituency/vol org>, and to request a meeting with you to discuss Brexit's impact on young people, using the External Affairs, UK & International Relations Committee's Brexit advocacy toolkit, and *Rights Outright:* SYP's Brexit Manifesto.

MSYPs have a unique mandate as the democratically elected voice of all young people aged between 12 and 25 in Scotland. SYP's vision for Scotland is of a nation that actively listens to and values the meaningful participation of its children and young people. SYP is grounded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), particularly Article 12, which lays out young people's right to be listened to on the issues that affect them, and for their views to be given weight.

Every year, SYP delivers a national campaign, which focuses on an issue that young people have told us is of particular importance for us to work on during the year. This year, after consultation with over 5,000 young people, MSYPs voted for young people's rights to be the focus of our next national campaign.

This campaign, *Right Here*, *Right Now*, launched in October 2017. By the end of this campaign, SYP wants:

- Scotland's young people to be aware of and understand their own rights and be empowered to take action to defend their own rights and those of others.
- Scotland's decision-makers to take a human rights-based approach to all policy-making, service provision, and planning, ensuring young people's voices are at the heart of decisions affecting them.

I would be grateful for the opportunity to meet with you on <insert suggestions for dates, times, locations> to discuss Brexit generally, as well as our specific aim to defend young people's rights during Brexit, in order to deliver the best future for children and young people in <constituency>. If this would be of interest to you, please contact me at <MSYP email address>.

Yours sincerely,

- <Your name> MSYP
- <Your Constituency>

Template Letter for Young People

<Your name>
<Your address>
E. <Your email address>

<Recipient's name> <Recipient's address>

<Insert date here>

Dear<Recipient's name>,

Right Here, Right Now - The Scottish Youth Parliament's National Campaign

I am writing to introduce myself as <name> from <constituency>, and to request a meeting with you to discuss Brexit's impact on young people, using the External Affairs, UK & International Relations Committee's Brexit advocacy toolkit, and Rights Outright: SYP's Brexit Manifesto.

MSYPs have a unique mandate as the democratically elected voice of all young people aged between 12 and 25 in Scotland. SYP's vision for Scotland is of a nation that actively listens to and values the meaningful participation of its children and young people. SYP is grounded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), particularly Article 12, which lays out young people's right to be listened to on the issues that affect them, and for their views to be given weight.

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- Scotland's decision-makers to take a human rights-based approach to all policy-making, service provision, and planning, ensuring young people's voices are at the heart of decisions affecting them.

I have a few questions that I'd like to raise hoping that you may be able to provide me with some answers with.

<STATE OUESTIONS>

I would be grateful for the opportunity to meet with you on <insert suggestions for dates, times, locations> to discuss Brexit generally, as well as SYP's specific aim to defend young people's rights during Brexit. If this would be of interest to you, please contact me at <email address>.

Your sincerely,
<Your name>
<Your Constituency>