

It's Our Brexit Too:

Children's Rights, Children's Voices

Conference Report, 10th November 2017







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FOREWORD



The news which greeted all of us across Ireland and the UK on 24th June 2016, following the Brexit vote was unexpected with the full implications unknown. However, what was clear was that today's children will be the first generation, to live with the full impact of the UK having left the EU.

Both of us as Commissioner and Ombudsman are tasked by our governments to make sure that children and young people have their rights respected which means that they:

- must have their voices heard and
- must have their best interests taken into consideration when decisions are being made which will affect them

This applies to all processes that will impact on their lives and includes Brexit, which will generate major changes in the lives of everyone living on these islands. Children and young people under the age of 18 did not get an opportunity to vote on this most vital decision. As has become apparent the impact on children, young people and their families living across the island of Ireland was not fully considered. Yet it is these young people on both sides of the Irish border who will live most closely with the huge consequences, positive and negative, of this momentous vote.

Thus, our two Offices came together to offer the young people on both sides of this island a chance to articulate their ideas and have them considered by decision makers across the relevant legislative bodies (Westminster, Dail Eireann, European Parliament). Our offices supported a group of young people from both sides of the border to plan this event which enabled them to voice their views, their hopes and their fears in relation to Brexit.

They planned and ran the whole event and we were able to secure participation from Tánaiste Simon Coveney (via a video message), Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for NI, Chloe Smyth MP, Mairead McGuinness MEP, Jim Nicholson MEP, Dr Fergal Lynch (Secretary General of Department of Children and Youth Affairs in Republic of Ireland) and Paul Brush (Head of EU Future Relations, TEO).

We were also pleased that a number of political and civic leaders attended to listen to and engage with the young people. However, the most important contributions came from the 120 young people from all over the island who spent the day discussing issues such as Education, Child Protection, Freedom of Movement and Health.



This event was all about sending a message that no votes doesn't mean no say.

Therefore this report is the synopsis of that fantastic day in which young people led, discussed, debated and recorded their issues concerning Brexit. They very insightfully identified areas where their rights could be under threat from Brexit decisions. They were not suggesting that political leaders disregarded their issues, or wanted the systems that are working to break down.

However, they were concerned that, among the range of matters needing to be agreed through the Brexit negotiations and the transition period, issues that were central to their lives and future opportunities could be unintentionally impacted. For many, the decision-makers seemed very far away from understanding the reality of their lives and how decisions about the Common Travel Area, hard-soft border discussions or the loss

of EU-funding programmes could have a very real impact on their lives now and far into the future.

This report outlines the views the young people expressed on the day. We hope that it will be a valuable contribution to the planning and processing around Brexit and that all the key players, both in the UK and in the "European 27" will take on board the voices of this most important cohort when determining the final look of a post Brexit world.

Niall Muldoon
Ombudsman for Children

Koulla Viacouma

Koulla Yiasouma NI Commissioner for Children and Young People

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Ombudsman for Children and the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People would like to acknowledge the invaluable contributions from the entire youth steering group who worked tirelessly to prepare for and facilitate this conference. Thank you all.

Alex Moore Alice Blease Arón Hughes Ciara Fanning Clíodhna McCafferty Conor Kelly Darragh McBrearty Diarmuid Geever Ella Conlon John Ewing Karina Tropman Mary Vrinceanu Matthew Robinson Niamh Tubridy Nora-May Pearman Howard Oscar Despard Pearse Smith Roisin Costello Ross Fennell Tom Sharkey Tadhg Murphy

We also thank our partners in this project for their support:



National Youth Council of Ireland



Children's Law Centre



Foróige Ireland



Northern Ireland Youth Forum

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Key messages from the young participants

- Brexit will have particular, profound implications for people in Ireland, North and South, and these should be given special consideration during the negotiation process
- Brexit will impact on children and young people more than any other group, as we will have to live with the implications for longest. So talk to us about it and listen to our views.
- We have come too far from the violence and divisions of the past. We don't want to see regression to a hard border and conflict.
- Protect all aspects of the Good Friday
 Agreement throughout the Brexit process
 and protect the right of young people in
 Northern Ireland to consider ourselves
 British, Irish or both.
- 5. Promote diversity and prevent deepening divisions, particularly in relation to hostility towards migrants.

- Ensure that the EU/UK border on the island of Ireland is a soft border. Protect our freedom of movement across the border.
- We are very concerned that Brexit could limit our opportunities in the future for work, travel and study. Protect these opportunities and support us to avail of potential new opportunities through Brexit.
- 8. Maintain equivalence of standards and cooperative agreements across the island of Ireland in relation to key areas such as health care, education, policing, safety and child protection.
- Allow children, young people and their families to continue to access services and facilities on either side of border, for example in relation to health, education, sports and cultural activities. The UK government should also commit to continuing membership of the EEA to ensure retention of the EHIC card.
- 10. The money that the UK government previously paid to the EU should be used to fund improved health services and compensate for the loss of EU funding previously provided to Northern Ireland.



Recommendations

Freedom of movement

- A hard border must be avoided and freedom of movement maintained across the border. It is critical for disruption to be minimised as young people do not want to go back to the border of the past. Government should look at other examples of soft borders, and there may be technological solutions to allow for easy travel, such as special forms of ID cards / passes or number plate checks on the border.
- Ease of travel on public transport across the border must be maintained and data roaming charges should not be reintroduced between the two parts of the island.

Health and disability

- Governments must ensure that Ireland-wide cooperation in relation to the provision of healthcare services is maintained post-Brexit. People should continue to be able to access health services closest to home, irrespective of whether this is on the other side of the border. Specialist services should continue to be planned and delivered on an allisland basis where this delivers the best outcomes for patients.
- Far from accepting that Brexit will limit cooperation and access to healthcare services, governments should seek cooperative arrangements with other countries.
- The UK should stay in the EEA to allow the EHIC arrangements to continue in place. In the absence of the EHIC arrangement continuing, a similar arrangement should be put in place for the island of Ireland.

- Ambulances must not be delayed when needing to cross the border and should be able to bring patients to the closest hospital, irrespective of what side of the border it is on.
- Any changes to immigration policies must ensure that healthcare workers from other countries can continue to work in the UK and that there is continued recognition of their professional qualifications.
- The NHS should receive more resources as promised during the Brexit referendum campaign.
- Governments must assess and mitigate the potential impacts of Brexit on young people with disabilities.

Education

- Maintain cooperative arrangements to ensure continued access for children and young people to schools on a cross-border basis. No child should have to move school because of Brexit.
- Protect children and young people's freedom of movement across the border so that they attend school unhindered, including continuing to provide school buses across the border. When other decisions are being made in relation to Brexit, particularly in relation to the border, negotiators must consider the impact on children and young people's access to education to prevent unintended negative consequences.
- Continue to support cooperation between schools in Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland.
- Access to Further Education colleges and Universities on a cross-border basis should not be restricted and an arrangement put in place to prevent tuition fees being increased for cross-border students.

- Young people in Northern Ireland should continue to be able to avail of the opportunities provided by the Erasmus + programme post-Brexit.
- Recognition must be given to the particular circumstances of people on the island of Ireland to take up opportunities for placements and work either side of the border.
- There should be no change in the crossborder recognition of academic and vocational qualifications.
- The UK government should seek agreement with the EU to ensure that, post-Brexit, young people from Northern Ireland can continue to travel to EU countries for study visits and have the freedom to live, study and/or work in other EU countries.
- A review of the level of EU funds provided for education in Northern Ireland should be undertaken and the UK government should replace this funding during the transition from the EU.
- The UK government should either seek to reach agreement that UK universities can apply for EU research funding or should replace these funding sources.

Child protection

- It is vital that the issue of maintaining cross border and EU cooperation in relation to child protection isn't overlooked in favour of more prominent issues such as trade, agriculture or the economy.
- Given the EU's role in child protection and anti-trafficking, Brexit negotiators must consider how they will minimise major changes to child protection. Relevant structures must be in place to ensure child protection services are fit for purpose before leaving the EU and that subsequently there will be regulatory equivalence to maintain these arrangements.
- Maintaining relevant agreements in relation to matters such as data sharing and the European Arrest Warrant will be important. The UK and Irish Governments must continue with existing police co-ordination structures (such as Europol and Eurojust).
- When determining how the regulation of movement across the border is addressed, the UK and Irish governments must ensure that robust systems are in place to prevent child trafficking and to ensure that traffickers may be more easily apprehended by law enforcement agencies.
- The transition period should be used to review the current cross-border and EU child protection systems so as to maintain what is working well and improve this where possible.

Standard of living

Some of the £350 million per week that pro-Brexit campaigners claimed the EU cost the UK should be used to replace farm subsidies and the various funding programmes currently provided by the EU to Northern Ireland.

Identity and non-discrimination

- The Good Friday Agreement guarantees equivalence of rights North and South of the border. Governments must ensure that this principle is protected during and after Brexit.
- A hard border should be avoided to maintain good relationships between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Equality guidelines across UK and Ireland should be standardised.
- In addition to considering the impact of Brexit on nationality, it will be important to consider how people of different ethnicities may be affected.
- ▶ A specific strategy should be developed to deal with discrimination in Northern Ireland and legislation brought forward to protect: women, ethnic minorities, LGBTQ people and to allow immigrants to report crimes without fear of deportation. There also were suggestions for more progressive legislation in relation to recognising the rights of intersex people.
- Governments should run campaigns and fund public awareness programmes on diversity and non-discrimination. The media should promote diversity and provide information on issues relating to discrimination.

- Minorities should be 'given a platform' to address discrimination and personalise the issues through telling real stories. People who have experienced discrimination should be involved in educating others about inequality. There needs to be a balance between freedom of speech and the importance of avoiding hate speech so as to avoid the promotion of bigotry, racism and homo/trans phobia.
- Education on discrimination and diversity should be rolled out across society. This should include education for young people in schools and education delivered by young people to the older generation. The police were also identified as an important group to be educated in relation to discrimination and diversity.

Non-EU children needing extra protection

- ▶ The UK government must take action to address intolerance towards migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, including through education, raising awareness through the media, legislation and a post-Brexit agency to monitor and protect the rights of migrants. A 'Charter' to enshrine and protect their rights should be considered.
- Throughout the Brexit negotiations, political representatives must keep in mind the rights and best interests of non-EU children, in addition to EU and UK children.
- Children's right to family life must be protected after Brexit – this includes refugee, asylum seeking and migrant children. Separated children must continue to be reunified with their families through the EU, or alternative, procedures.



PART 1: HEARING FROM YOUNG PEOPLE

Youth Café discussions Freedom of movement

Participants were provided with an information pack containing case studies exploring how children and young people may be affected by Brexit (see Appendix 2) and were invited to engage in 'youth café' style discussions on these themes. They started by choosing to sit at a table at which one of the themes was discussed and were encouraged to record key points on paper sheets covering the tables. After 20 minutes they moved to a new table and a new theme, adding their points to those already recorded on the paper sheets from earlier discussions. They were able to participate in five youth café discussions in total, each on a different theme. The following is a summary of the views recorded on each of the seven themes.

When discussing freedom of movement participants reflected on how they currently move across the border for a range of reasons, some doing this on a daily basis, and others less frequently. They cross the border to spend time with family and friends, to go to school, college or sometimes on placements. On occasion they cross the border to access health services and depend on emergency services being able to cross the border. They also participate in social and sporting activities and go shopping or on day trips on the other side of the border. The parents of some young people cross the border for work.

They were concerned at the potential impact of Brexit on their freedom to move across the border unhindered, particularly for those living close to the border who may need to do this several times a day. Many young people worried that it could become very inconvenient and that they would face queues and considerable delays for short journeys, for example, to and from school.

The young people also expressed concern that people whose work required them to travel across the border, such as taxi drivers, could be particularly badly impacted.

Participants queried whether they would have to constantly carry a form of ID, and some said this could be problematic as many young people may not have an up to date form of ID. Would they have to carry their passport on a daily basis?

Those with family and friends on the other side of the border felt that a hard border would impact on their family life or could isolate them from their friends and social activities.

'In sports, it would be harder to travel for games and games would be avoided if there was a hard border.'

'If you have family / relations on the other side of the border it would be very difficult to be going often if you have to be stopped and checked at every border.'

Many thought that a hard border could limit their opportunities in the future, as they may be limited to pursuing work or study on one side of the border only. Indeed, some felt that their opportunities would be further limited as it would be harder to move abroad to other European countries after the UK leaves the EU.

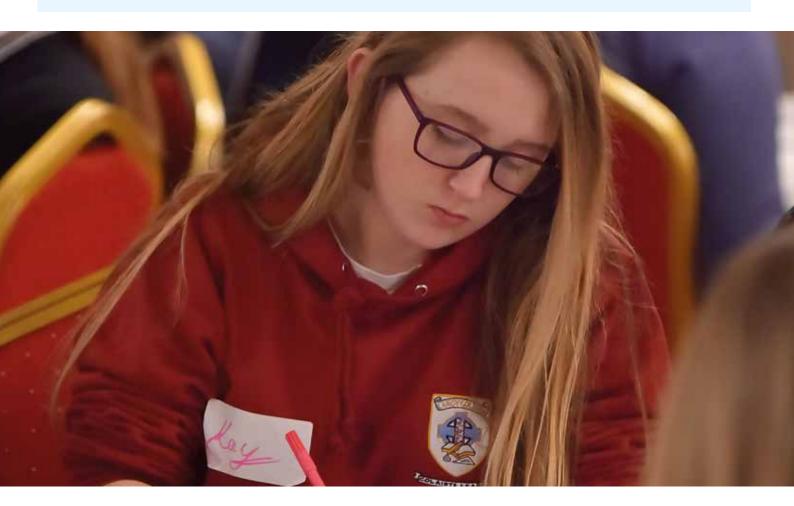
A number of young people queried how Brexit might affect the Good Friday Agreement and whether a hard border would lead to heightened conflict and violence in Northern Ireland.

Concerns about the potential for data roaming charges to be reintroduced were also raised, as were concerns about the impact on cross-border trade.

Finally, some young people identified Traveller communities, being nomadic or migrant by nature, as being disproportionately negatively impacted by a hard border.

Recommendations

- A hard border must be avoided and freedom of movement maintained across the border. It is critical for disruption to be minimised as young people do not want to go back to the border of the past. Government should look at other examples of soft borders and there may be technological solutions to allow for easy travel, such as special forms of ID cards / passes or number plate checks on the border.
- ▶ Ease of travel on public transport across the border must be maintained and data roaming charges should not be reintroduced between the two parts of the island.



Health and Disability



Access to health services across the border

A range of issues were raised by participants about how children and young people's access to health services might be affected by Brexit, with much discussion focussing on the importance of continuing cooperation across the island in the planning and delivery of these services.

Currently children and young people are able to access health treatment, for example in their closest hospital, irrespective of whether this is situated across the border. Young people gave the example of children in Donegal being able to go to hospital in Derry for treatment.

There was a great deal of concern that this cooperation might not continue post-Brexit and that services within each jurisdiction would struggle to meet healthcare needs. More resources may be needed to duplicate services on either side of the border, otherwise people in some communities may have to travel very long journeys to access these in their own jurisdiction.

Planning and delivery of specialist health services on an all-island basis

Another aspect of cooperation in relation to health discussed was the planning and provision of specialist health services to children and young people on an island-wide basis. Where the number of children needing treatment for a particular condition is low, some services are delivered only in one location due to need to have 'critical numbers' to ensure expertise. An example of this is operations and treatment for children with congenital heart conditions.

If a child receives specialist treatment outside their own jurisdiction, for example a young person from Northern Ireland accessing services in the Republic of Ireland, it is not clear how that would be affected and funded after Brexit. Some young people noted that a hard border could impact on the ease by which they could access treatment over the border, for example, people from Donegal travelling to Derry regularly to access a course of cancer treatment.

Children at special schools over the border

The situation of a child attending their nearest special school, over the border, and who may need to access healthcare services at the school, was also raised. Will this be able continue after Brexit? Will healthcare and education professionals still be able to liaise with each other to ensure the child receives the services they need, or will the child have to move to another special school on the same side of the border, potentially resulting a much longer journey to school?

European Health Insurance Card and accessing health services in other countries

The young people raised concerns about British nationals living in the Republic of Ireland and accessing health treatment there, and people of Irish nationality from the Republic of Ireland living in Northern Ireland are accessing treatment there. Will they be entitled to the same health treatment and cost in each case? This is further complicated by the fact that two people of Irish nationality may be living in the same area but be born either side of the border – will they have the same rights?

They discussed the European Health Insurance Card and how this can be used to access free or cheap medical treatment when in another EEA country and Switzerland on the same basis as a resident of that country, and vice versa. Many participants were very concerned at the potential loss of this arrangement for UK citizens and the impact that this could have on people on one side of the Irish border accessing healthcare on the other side. The young people also worried about EU citizens in Northern Ireland being presented with 'sky high' bills following emergency health treatment. They felt that the cost of travel insurance would rise considerably.

Emergency services in border areas

Many participants raised the issue of emergency services crossing the border to reach patients or to bring them to the nearest hospital: how would their access be affected after Brexit? Would they be delayed when crossing the border? Would they be allowed to go to pick up people in life threatening situations on the other side of the border? An example was given of the quickest route an ambulance would take to travel between Cavan and Monaghan, which would involve crossing the border into Northern Ireland and back.

'Emergency services being called (around) the border – clarity on which side of border would be called.'

Immigration status of healthcare workers

Recognising how dependent the health service is on workers from other countries, participants raised the issue of the potential loss of medical staff in the UK due to immigration changes after Brexit. Moreover, would medical qualifications awarded in other countries continue to be recognised in the UK? The loss of these healthcare workers, including those from the Republic of Ireland, could have a severe impact on the provision of healthcare services in Northern Ireland.

Equivalence of healthcare standards

While it was understood that the UK will incorporate EU regulations into its domestic legislation on leaving the EU, young people were worried about the implications of divergence from these standards over time, as either the UK or EU make changes. Some believed that the removal of EU bureaucracy would be a positive thing and allow the UK to make its own rules. However in the context of healthcare on the island of Ireland, this could be very problematic.

Recognising the fact that it would be a positive thing for people to continue to be able to access healthcare as required, if necessary crossing the border to do so, some queried what would happen if the two health systems start to diverge in relation to permissible drugs and medical treatments. Could an individual be prescribed drugs on one side of the border that are not permitted on the other side?

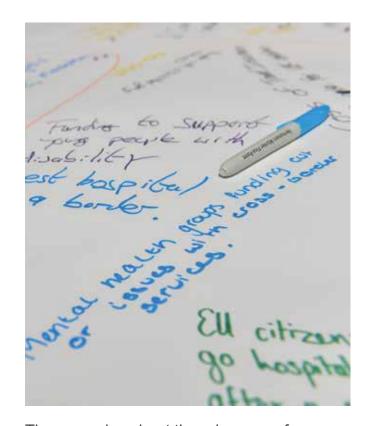
Concerns were also raised about medical researchers in Northern Ireland no longer being able to participate in EU funded research, and whether healthcare would become more expensive due to the introduction of import taxes on drugs or medical equipment.

Adequacy of resources for the NHS

A frequent topic for discussion was whether the £350 million that pro-Brexit campaigners had claimed was being paid by the UK government to the EU every week, and the claim that this could be spent instead on the NHS. While many felt dubious about the truth behind this claim, there was agreement that the UK government should indeed allocate money previously paid to the EU to the NHS after Brexit. They felt that it needed more investment to improve healthcare services.

'We want the £350m promised to the NHS'

There were particular concerns about the adequacy of mental health services in Northern Ireland post-Brexit. Many felt that mental health services were poorly funded, and this was particularly the case for child and adolescent mental health services. Some worried that Brexit, and the potential of the conflict 'resurfacing' could increase stress and mental ill-health, thereby requiring more funding for services.



These worries about the adequacy of healthcare in the future in Northern Ireland resulted in the suggestion that people may have to depend more on private healthcare, which would widen the divide between rich and poor. A number of young people reflected that, up to this point, they had not heard about any ramifications of Brexit for health services and wondered had the public had known about this, would they have voted the same way?

Impacts of Brexit on provision for young people with disabilities

Issues relating to children and young people with disabilities were raised in the discussions on health. Participants wondered how Brexit might affect young people with disabilities, with some expressing deep concern at the likely loss of EU funding for specialised wheelchairs for young people.

The young people raised concerns about the current compliance with disability access, particularly when travelling. It was suggested that Britain was already ignoring targets set on disability access to public transport.

Recommendations

- ▶ Governments must ensure that Ireland-wide cooperation in relation to the provision of healthcare services is maintained post-Brexit. People should continue to be able to access health services closest to home, irrespective of whether this is on the other side of the border. Specialist services should continue to be planned and delivered on an all-island basis where this delivers the best outcomes for patients.
- ► Far from accepting that Brexit will limit cooperation and access to healthcare services, governments should seek cooperative arrangements with other countries.
- ▶ The UK should stay in the EEA to allow the EHIC arrangements in place to continue. In the absence of the EHIC arrangement continuing, a similar arrangement should be put in place for the island of Ireland.
- Ambulances must not be delayed when needing to cross the border and should be able to bring patients to the closest hospital, irrespective of what side of the border it is on.
- Any changes to immigration must ensure that healthcare workers from other countries can continue to work in the UK and that there is continued recognition of their professional qualifications.
- ► The NHS should receive more resources as promised during the Brexit referendum campaign.
- ▶ Governments must assess and mitigate the potential impacts of Brexit on young people with disabilities.

Education

Accessing schools across the border

Many participants talked of their concerns for children who travel across the border to school. Many children and young people living in Northern Ireland travel to school in the Republic of Ireland and vice versa. They felt it wasn't clear if this arrangement would be able to continue and if fees would be introduced for cross border education.

'If someone lived up North but wanted to go to school in the South would they be affected?'

If the current arrangements do not continue, this could result in children having to change schools. This would be problematic if the two education systems are not compatible. This would also limit the choice of schools for children and young people living around the border, for example, if they wish to attend a school aligned with their Catholic or Protestant faith.

They also felt it would restrict collaboration between schools in the North and South and may make it difficult to go on school trips across the border

One of the biggest issues recognised by many was that daily travel for children and young people to school could be significantly affected by border restrictions, particularly if there is a hard border. This could affect travel time and pupils' attendance in schools. Would school buses still run across the border?

Accessing Further Education colleges and universities across the border

Participants also expressed concerns about how access to colleges and universities across the border would be affected for young people. While this would affect young people from either side of the border, there was particular concern about Republic of Ireland students as there are currently 11,000 studying in UK universities. The young people felt that there were not enough college or university places in the Republic of Ireland to meet demand and that the range of courses is also limited. If Brexit affected the opportunities for young people from the Republic of Ireland to study in the UK, this could put considerable pressure on the Irish Further and Higher Education systems and would greatly limit young people's options. They worried that it would be harder to get into college and university courses in the Republic of Ireland due to increased demand. Would current students have to try to claim UK citizenship (if they are eligible) to complete their course? Would there be any difficulty graduating for current students?

Many young people felt that there were risks that the cost of attending Further or Higher Education across the border would increase after Brexit, particularly in relation to tuition fees. They wondered whether they would be considered to be international students and therefore charged accordingly. Would young people living in Northern Ireland who have an Irish passport be treated differently to those with a UK passport, or to students from the Republic of Ireland with Irish passports?

Erasmus and future opportunities

Participants expressed concern at whether Northern Irish students would continue to be able to avail of the opportunities provided by the Erasmus + programme after leaving the EU. This programme was seen as a very valuable one, and participants emphasised how important it was to remain within it.

Indeed, many young people from both sides of the border spoke of being worried that their future opportunities could be negatively affected by Brexit. Any restriction on their freedom of movement and freedom to live, study and work on either side of the border would limit their opportunities. For those living in Northern Ireland these restrictions are likely to be more extensive, curtailing their ability to study, live, travel or work in other EU countries. Young people felt that it could become hard to organise school trips to EU countries and foreign exchanges for language students may become more difficult to organise and expensive.

If learning a European Language will foreign exchanges become more difficult and more expensive?

Queries were also raised in relation to the equivalence of qualifications. For example, will the Leaving Cert from the Republic of Ireland still be recognised in Northern Ireland and will degrees be recognised on either side of the border?

Some participants reported that teachers were already suggesting that they don't seek placements, apprenticeships or study on the other side of the border. Others talked about how a lack of opportunity would impact on young people, on their life chances and their mental health.

Loss of EU funding for education in NI

Another issue that was discussed was the potential for the loss of EU funds to impact negatively on education in Northern Ireland. Young people spoke about their understanding that EU funds were used in some education settings and in youth clubs to provide informal education. Some programmes are in place to support the education of particular groups of children and young people such as refugees and young mothers.

EU funds are also provided to Northern Irish universities, particularly to fund research programmes. If universities are not able to

avail of this funding this may impact on the range of courses available and restrict the opportunities for research students. This may also result in fewer international students applying to UK universities.

Other education issues

A range of other issues were also touched on in the discussions, including:

- Whether EU citizens would find it more difficult to study in UK universities;
- Whether the rights of refugee children to education would be affected;
- How the Middletown Centre for Autism, which provides services for young people with autism across the island of Ireland, would be affected;
- Whether there will be a lowering of construction standards for new schools in Northern Ireland if the UK deviates from current European Regulations;
- Whether access to the Gaeltacht for children and young people in Northern Ireland will be restricted, for example, through increasing prices.

When asked about positive things that may result from Brexit, some participants said that it was important to remember that the future can still be bright. They suggested that education could potentially improve after Brexit and that opportunities with other countries could open up. In general, though, participants felt that it was very unclear how Brexit would impact on the education of children and young people across the island of Ireland and that there had not been sufficient discussion on this in schools and in the media to date. They identified a number of ways that their education could be significantly negatively affected and urged government to address these issues without delay.

Recommendations

- Maintain cooperative arrangements to ensure continued access for children and young people to schools on a cross-border basis. No child should have to move school because of Brexit.
- Protect children and young people's freedom of movement across the border so that they attend school unhindered, including continuing to provide school buses across the border. When other decisions are being made in relation to Brexit, particularly in relation to the border, negotiators must consider the impact on children and young people's access to education to prevent unintended negative consequences.
- ► Continue to support cooperation between schools in Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland.
- Access to Further Education colleges and Universities on a cross-border basis should not be restricted and an arrangement put in place to prevent tuition fees being increased for cross-border students.
- Young people in Northern Ireland should continue to be able to avail of the opportunities provided by the Erasmus + programme post-Brexit.
- Recognition must be given to the particular circumstances of people on the island of Ireland to take up opportunities for placements and work either side of the border.
- There should be no change in the cross-border recognition of academic and vocational qualifications.
- The UK government should seek agreement with the EU to ensure that, post-Brexit, young people from Northern Ireland can continue to travel to EU countries for study visits and have the freedom to live, study and/or work in other EU countries.
- ▶ A review of the level of EU funds provided for education in Northern Ireland should be undertaken and the UK government should replace this funding during the transition from the EU.
- ▶ The UK government should either seek to reach agreement that UK universities can apply for EU research funding, or should replace these funding sources.

Child protection



Many young people expressed worries about difficulties for police, social services and others in ensuring children and families at risk got help and were protected on a cross-border basis post-Brexit.

They were particularly concerned about the impact on information sharing between the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and An Garda Siochána, and the broader collaboration between police in the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and Great Britain, as well as co-operation across Europol and Eurojust. If it was negatively affected, this could leave vulnerable children at risk of abuse and exploitation and delay investigations and prosecutions across different countries.

Some raised queries around a child from one side of the border being abused, kidnapped, abducted or killed on the other side. How would this be investigated? How would extradition be managed? Would the European Arrest Warrant still apply? Collaboration may become more difficult if Brexit results in a hard border.

'Will legislation have to change about child protection because of Brexit? And sharing of data?'

Regulation relating to child protection could become increasingly different in the UK and the EU over time. Even if the UK tried to match EU legislation any delays would be likely to cause difficulties. Concerns were expressed over regulatory equivalence post-Brexit for pre-employment checks for childcare, youth workers or educational roles. There may be delays in vetting if there is no agreement in relation to data sharing.

Participants identified particular risks of children, including children from overseas, being trafficked over the border and were concerned about their safety. Would anti-trafficking operations still work on an EU-wide basis?

Young people discussed a range of ways children can be exploited, including labour exploitation, and expressed concerns that protections against these would be affected post-Brexit if UK laws were not the same as EU laws.

However, some pointed out that it was not inevitable that things would get worse. It is possible that liaison with EU systems will be maintained by the UK. Alternatively, the UK could potentially develop better processes for international liaison in relation to child protection and tackling human trafficking.

Many young people commented on the lack of public debate on how child protection could be affected by Brexit or what needs to be put in place to ensure safeguards remain robust. They felt that this wasn't being talked about enough, particularly with children and young people.

Recommendations

- It is vital that the issue of maintaining cross border and EU cooperation in relation to child protection isn't overlooked in favour of more prominent issues such as trade, agriculture or the economy.
- Given the EU's role in child protection and anti-trafficking, Brexit negotiators must consider how they will minimise major changes to child protection. Relevant structures must be in place to ensure child protection services are fit for purpose before leaving the EU and that subsequently there will be regulatory equivalence to maintain these arrangements.
- Maintaining relevant agreements in relation to matters such as data sharing and the European Arrest Warrant will be important. The UK and Irish Governments must continue with existing police co-ordination structures (such as Europol and Eurojust).
- When determining how the regulation of movement across the border is addressed, the UK and Irish governments must ensure that robust systems are in place to prevent child trafficking and to ensure that traffickers may be more easily apprehended by law enforcement agencies.
- ▶ The transition period should be used to review the current cross-border and EU child protection systems so as to maintain what is working well and improve this where possible.

Standard of Living



Loss of EU funding to Northern Ireland

A key concern of young people participating in discussions on how the standard of living might be affected by Brexit was the loss of EU funding to Northern Ireland. This included Structural Funds provided for projects to improve community infrastructure such as roads, bridges and measures to prevent flooding. They discussed the importance of European Social Fund and PEACE money to fund youth work in disadvantaged areas. cross-community work, sports and arts projects and facilities and projects helping people gain employment skills. Some funding in the Republic of Ireland could also be under threat. For example, funding to cross border projects such as The Peace Link in Clones, Co. Monaghan may be lost. The participants again raised their worries at the potential for young people in Northern Ireland to lose access to the Erasmus+ programme after Brexit.

Participants felt that the loss of these funds could have major impacts on children and young people, their communities and their future opportunities. Many programmes for young people, already experiencing cut backs due to the recession, would be lost, including sports and music activities and youth clubs.

It was suggested that, without anything else to do, many young people would fall back on less constructive and risky activities. This could potentially result in communities seeing a rise in anti-social activities and harmful outcomes for the young people themselves. Some suggested that this could lead to more mental ill-health.

The loss of PEACE funding would impact on cross community relationships and divisions could once more become more entrenched. Where cross-border funding is lost, greater separation of friends and families may result. Where programmes supporting people to gain skills for employment are lost, participants felt that this would result in higher levels of poverty and entrench disadvantage.

Participants also worried about the loss of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) subsidies to farms in the North of Ireland as this makes up a significant proportion of farming incomes. It is unclear if these will be replaced. The movement of animals and crops is likely to be complicated post-Brexit in farms straddling the border, and current cooperation, for example in relation to the distribution of livestock across the border, may be severely limited.

'Child poverty levels will / may rise if EU CAP subsidies are lost!'

Some young people talked about the current situation in Northern Ireland where welfare reforms have resulted in cuts to incomes for low income families. They worried that Brexit would bring further hardships and increasing levels of child poverty, particularly for rural families and those living around the border.

Working and trading across the border

Cross border working more generally is likely to be negatively impacted for those who travel across the border to their workplace and those whose work involves travel across the border. Migrant workers, and businesses dependent on them, may be adversely affected, as will nomadic communities of Travellers. Moving goods across the border is also likely to become more difficult and more expensive and will depend on trade arrangements being agreed between the UK and the EU. Transport companies carrying goods across both parts of the island are likely to find any border changes very detrimental to their work.

'Impact on transporting goods

- lorries etc. across borders affects jobs - income - standard
of living.'

It is not yet clear what export opportunities more generally there may be in the future for UK businesses and whether these will be more extensive or more limited than what is currently in place. Some UK (including Northern Ireland) companies may move to locate themselves within the EU to continue to avail of EU trading arrangements. Some of these may relocate to the Republic of Ireland, providing new employment opportunities for young people and a boost to the economy there. At the same time, jobs, income and opportunities may be lost in Northern Ireland.

Young people also questioned whether the quality and/or cost of food in Northern Ireland would suffer due to loss of subsidies, increasing tariffs and a rejection of high EU food standards post-Brexit. Potential impacts on energy supplies were also raised.

Some young people queried whether leaving the EU might allow the UK to focus more on what its citizens need, for example designing a more UK-focused agriculture policy, rather than being part of a plan for the wider EU. 'a chance to start again and focus on what our society cares about'

Recommendations

Some of the £350 million per week that pro-Brexit campaigners claimed the EU cost the UK should be used to replace farm subsidies and the various funding programmes currently provided by the EU to Northern Ireland.

Identity and non-discrimination



The conversations around identity and non-discrimination focussed on three main themes: the potential for Brexit to heighten divisions between those identifying as British and those identifying as Irish; increased discrimination against minority ethnic groups or those perceived as immigrants; and concerns about the loss of EU protections for minority groups.

The impact of Brexit on national identities and the peace process

A number of participants talked about how Brexit has served to emphasise differences and divide communities. This is particularly the case in relation to reintroducing tensions between British and Irish identities, working against the Good Friday Agreement's recognition of the right of individuals in Northern Ireland to identify as British, Irish or both.

'Brexit campaign was "British Exit" and didn't address Northern Irish issues.'

Some spoke about their worries over a return to conflict if Brexit results in a hard border.

'Scared of something like the Troubles happening again if a hard border is put up.'

Many young people questioned the implications of Brexit for children and young people living in Northern Ireland who identified as Irish. Irish passport holders in Northern Ireland will continue to be EU citizens after Brexit, but will there be differences between a Northern Irish – Irish person and a Republic of Ireland– Irish person and their rights on either side of the border?



How will this affect young people with family from Northern Ireland and also from the Republic of Ireland? Decisions around a hard or soft border will have profound implications for conflicting identities on the island.

Concerns about impacts on rights of minorities

Discussions during the day also focussed on reported statistics and anecdotal evidence of increased discrimination and hostility towards ethnic minorities and migrants in Northern Ireland. Concern was expressed over whether a racial equality strategy would be prioritised in Northern Ireland post-Brexit, and the importance of tackling discrimination against minority groups was emphasised

'People are afraid of what they don't understand. Tell stories – don't talk in hypotheticals. Normalise difference.' Many participants believed that the EU, through regulations and funding programmes, had a critical role in protecting the rights of minorities or vulnerable groups, including newcomers, LGBTQ people, non-gender binary people, women, children and young people. Participants worried that these, albeit limited, protections would be lost and the rights of minorities would 'further roll back' after Brexit. It was noted that Brexit had not created this discrimination, but that it had exacerbated it.

'EU is a protective shield for minority groups. Post Brexit could see a reversal of rights and enable discrimination.'

An example of this was funding that is currently provided by the EU to domestic violence support projects in Northern Ireland. Unless this is replaced post-Brexit, the loss of this funding will disproportionately affect women and children.

Recommendations

- ► The Good Friday Agreement guarantees equivalence of rights North and South of the border. Governments must ensure that this principle is protected during and after Brexit.
- A hard border should be avoided to maintain good relationships between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Equality guidelines across UK and Ireland should be standardised.
- In addition to considering the impact of Brexit on nationality, it will be important to consider how people of different ethnicities may be affected.
- A specific strategy should be developed to deal with discrimination in Northern Ireland and legislation brought forward to protect: women, ethnic minorities, LGBTQ people and to allow immigrants to report crimes without fear of deportation. There also were suggestions for more progressive legislation in relation to recognising the rights of intersex people.
- Governments should run campaigns and fund public awareness programmes on diversity and non-discrimination. The media should promote diversity and provide information on issues relating to discrimination.
- Minorities should be 'given a platform' to address discrimination and personalise the issues through telling real stories. People who have experienced discrimination should be involved in educating others about inequality. There needs to be a balance between freedom of speech and the importance of avoiding hate speech so as to avoid the promotion of bigotry, racism, and homo/trans phobia.
- Education on discrimination and diversity should be rolled out across society. This should include education for young people in schools and education delivered by young people to the older generation. The police were also identified as an important group to be educated in relation to discrimination and diversity.

Non-EU Children needing extra protection



Non-EU Children needing extra protection

The discussions in relation to non-EU children needing extra protection were dominated by participants' concerns about how migrants, asylum seekers and refugees are treated and worries about increasing prejudice towards them.

Many young people talked about how we needed to be accepting of refugees and immigrants and treat them as human beings. They felt that everyone should be treated equally, whether born in the UK / Northern Ireland, the wider EU or non EU countries, and that we need to avoid labelling people by their nationality or immigration status.

'Everyone is a person and we should all be equal'

A number felt that anti-refugee or racist opinions had been validated by the Brexit vote, and were worried that refugee children may not feel welcome and accepted in the UK after this. Indeed, they felt that there were risks that refugees and migrants may be increasingly unsafe in post-Brexit Britain. Many talked about having a duty of care to help everyone, regardless of Brexit, and some felt that Brexit didn't necessarily make things worse for migrant or refugee children who were already in Northern Ireland. However, there were concerns that migrant children were not treated equally to British/ Irish children and there was a hierarchy of rights in this regard.

Some participants talked about Brexit being an opportunity to improve the immigration system. While generally participants spoke about the importance of acceptance for everyone in society regardless of their nationality, some talked about needing limits on immigration and precautions. They felt that immigration needed to be regulated and in some cases suggested that it was important to help people in need in our own society before helping refugees. It was suggested that the number of refugees should be determined by the economy's ability to provide them with a comfortable living standard. Others expressed concern at current poor standards of provision for refugees in the UK.

'Refugees should be given resources to get back on their feet and not just enough to stay alive.'

A number of participants spoke of the importance of refugees being integrated into society. Rather than being put into centres, such as Direct Provision in the Republic of Ireland, they should have their own homes in communities and equality of opportunity with others in society. They felt this was particularly important for children. The potential for refugees and migrants to

contribute to society should be recognised and a more diverse culture valued.

Several young people queried whether the withdrawal of EU funding could impact negatively on the support provided to migrants to Northern Ireland. Would there be a gap in the funding of this support post-Brexit? Others were concerned about asylum seeking, refugee and migrant young people's access to college and university education.

Some participants also raised concerns over UK immigration policies after Brexit and their impact on children's right to family life. They asked about children of non-EU parents on work visas: will they be protected post-Brexit? For separated children who are entitled to family reunification through EU procedures, will this remain? Will families with parents of different nationalities be affected?

It was also suggested that immigration processes are already being affected in some cases, causing delays and uncertainty for many. Refugees who are not able to reach the safety of the UK may still be living in unsafe circumstances.

Recommendations

- ▶ The UK government must take action to address intolerance towards migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, including through education, raising awareness through the media, legislation and a post-Brexit agency to monitor and protect the rights of migrants. A 'Charter' to enshrine and protect their rights should be considered.
- ▶ Throughout the Brexit negotiations, political representatives must keep in mind the rights and best interests of non-EU children, in addition to EU and UK children.
- Children's right to family life must be protected after Brexit this includes refugee, asylum seeking and migrant children. Separated children must continue to be reunified with their families through the EU, or alternative, procedures.

Key messages from the young participants

- 1. Brexit will have particular, profound implications for people in Ireland, North and South, and these should be given special consideration during the negotiation process
- 2. Brexit will impact on children and young people more than any other group, as we will have to live with the implications for longest. So talk to us about it and listen to our views.
- 3. We have come too far from the violence and divisions of the past. We don't want to see regression to a hard border and conflict.
- 4. Protect all aspects of the Good Friday Agreement throughout the Brexit process and protect the right of young people in Northern Ireland to consider ourselves British, Irish or both.
- 5. Promote diversity and prevent deepening divisions, particularly in relation to hostility towards migrants.
- 6. Ensure that the EU/UK border on the island of Ireland is a soft border. Protect our freedom of movement across the border.
- 7. We are very concerned that Brexit could limit our opportunities in the future for work, travel, and study. Protect these opportunities and support us to avail of potential new opportunities through Brexit.
- 8. Maintain equivalence of standards and cooperative agreements across the island of Ireland in relation to key areas such as health care, education, policing, safety and child protection.
- 9. Allow children, young people and their families to continue to access services and facilities on either side of border, for example in relation to health, education, sports and cultural activities. The UK government should also commit to continuing membership of the EEA to ensure retention of the EHIC card.
- 10. The money that the UK government previously paid to the EU should be used to fund improved health services and compensate for the loss of EU funding previously provided to Northern Ireland.



PART 2: PRESENTATIONS BY GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES

Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Simon Coveney TD Government of Ireland.



The Tánaiste was unable to attend the conference due to a prior commitment but provided a video message to the conference that was shown at the start of the event.

In his message the Tánaiste said:

"This is a very important conference, reminding that Brexit is about young people, more than anyone else, because it is your future that is being decided."

"The statement that you are making today - that this is your Brexit too, and that young people's voices matter in this process - is hugely important."

"As a cohort, young people voting in the UK referendum were not as supportive of Brexit. Now, we have to make the best of a difficult situation and make sure that your voices, your concerns, and your dreams for the future, are reflected in how Brexit is approached, and in finding solutions to the challenges we face."

"From my perspective, in the Irish Government, we are hearing what you are saying and there is an obligation on all with responsibilities, to try to respond to that in a positive way."

"Brexit presents undoubted difficulties for the island of Ireland. We must ensure that the progress that has been achieved with the Good Friday Agreement and the Peace Process is protected, including for communities in Northern Ireland that are living and working together, and for relationships between North and South and between Ireland and Britain."

"I look forward to hearing the outcomes of the discussions and debates from your conference today. The one thing I would say to you is: insist on your voices being heard, because it is your future."

"We will try, as policy makers in the middle of this process, to respond to your concerns as best we can. I will be listening to the outcomes of the conference, and I thank you for taking the time to be there".

Minister Chloe Smith, Parliamentary Under Secretary, Northern Ireland Office



Minister Chloe Smith addressed the conference to acknowledge fears and concerns about what Brexit will mean for young people and their families and highlight some of the opportunities arising for young people. The following is a summary of her speech.

Thank you very much for inviting me to attend this excellent event today. You've made it clear to me that there are worries about Brexit, about what it will mean for your families and for your future, and I want you to just take a moment to hear a different

perspective. I want to tell you about the opportunity of Brexit, about what it can mean for the economy, for jobs, for your university experience and for your future as the next leaders and involved citizens of Northern Ireland.

I want to stress that in discussions about the future of the relationship between Northern Ireland and Ireland, we have agreed that the Belfast Agreement should be protected in full. That means that if the people here want Northern Ireland to remain within the United Kingdom, that will continue to be the case.

We are committed to securing a deal with the EU that works for the whole of the United Kingdom, including Northern Ireland.

At the moment, you can travel from the UK to Ireland without a visa and without a passport. For many decades we've had a system called the Common Travel Area. We want this to continue after Brexit and the EU agrees with us on this.

We want to uphold the Belfast Agreement in all its parts, avoiding what some people call a 'hard border' when goods cross from one country to another. We want to work North-South with Ireland and we want Ireland to work with the UK East-West too. It's a great relationship at the moment and we want that to continue.

We have also made excellent progress discussing the citizenship and identity rights provided for in the Belfast Agreement and scoping the North-South cooperation that currently takes place under the Agreement. We want there to be free movement of goods, and we want to ensure local businesses that your families may work in here in Newry and across Northern Ireland can continue to trade freely across the border.

Trade and immigration are two issues that are often seen to go hand in hand. The UK has benefited from immigration, bringing new cultures, skills and ideas to the UK economy. We will continue to welcome people to the UK. We need skilled migrants to work across our industries to ensure we have the right people in the right jobs to provide maximum benefit to our economy. This is what EU exit allows us to do: to have our own immigration policy. One tailored to the different needs of the economy. One that is flexible and can react when we need more people, and equally when we need fewer.

Obviously, the border down the road from here in Newry is the only actual land border the UK has with an EU country, in this case Ireland. This does present some challenges, but there's also an opportunity in that Northern Ireland can act as a bridge between the UK and the EU.

Northern Ireland's position will mean a slightly different set of rules will apply to ensure the open border continues as it does now. Is anyone's dad or mum a farmer? You will know that animal health is really important, and its important standards are kept right across the UK and Ireland to make sure our food is safe and our farms are safe. We're working to make that happen.

So it's clear we need specific solutions to the unique circumstances of Northern Ireland and Ireland, and that is what we are working towards every day.

I'm really encouraged by what I've heard today. It's clear everyone here really cares about Northern Ireland, about the EU and about the future. It's clear many of you wouldn't have voted for Brexit, but what I want to assure you that there are hundreds of people in the UK government working really hard every day to make sure we get the best possible Brexit, so when we leave, when you're a bit older and when you hopefully go to university or into training or a job you will know we have done our very best for you, for your families, and for everyone in this country.

Panel Discussion



The steering committee identified a number of key officials from both side of the border who they felt could answer some of their concerns about Brexit. Conference participants listed questions and then prioritised their top questions to be put to the panel. A more detailed list of questions raised can be found in Appendix 3.

The panel discussion was chaired by Jillian Van Turnhout, Vice Chair, European Movement Ireland.

Panel

- Mairead McGuinness, MEP, Republic of Ireland
- Jim Nicholson, MEP, Northern Ireland
- Fergal Lynch, Secretary General,
 Department of Children and Youth Affairs,
 Republic of Ireland
- Paul Brush, Head of EU Future Relations, Executive Office, Northern Ireland

Q1. If someone hurts a child on one side of border and moves to other side, how will that be affected by Brexit?

Fergal Lynch – We can continue to cooperate across the border regardless of whether we are in the EU or not. This is an issue regarding police co-operation, working with Tusla – The Child and Family Agency in the Republic of Ireland and the equivalent in Northern Ireland. Legislation should replace what is lost by leaving the EU.

Mairead McGuinness – Everything is possible but it will rely on good political will, which may be more difficult when not in the EU. We need to prepare now and make it work.

Q2. Can the panel give examples of a positive thing that may come about as a result of leaving the EU?

Jim Nicholson – Bureaucracy and red tape, particularly for the Agriculture sector, might be made easier. Some decisions at EU level are very frustrating. The UK is one of the top countries in implementing EU regulations. I believe very strongly that Northern Ireland has a different attitude to the EU than Great Britain. Northern Ireland had benefitted from more than £2 billion in Peace funding from the EU. All systems are not perfect, but the EU worked guite well when we were in it.

Paul Brush – Northern Ireland could potentially be a bridge between the UK and EU and perhaps this will allow us opportunities to provide a link between the two.

Mairead McGuinness – The only good thing about Brexit is gatherings like this one, talking about Europe, where participants are inclined to say 'don't let it fall apart'. Gatherings like this are vital to ensure the EU's future.

Q3. Will access to cross border hospitals be impeded post Brexit?

Mairead McGuinness – The pharmaceutical sector is only now learning what Brexit might mean for supply, manufacturing and regulation of medicines. This is an urgent issue to address, as is movement of medical professionals across the island of Ireland. In emergency situations we hope medical ethics would prevail.

Jim Nicholson – The British Medical Association is very active in Brussels, putting forward concerns about what Brexit might mean. Significant co-operation in health, for example, between Altnagelvin in Derry/Londonderry and Daisy Hill in Newry and health services in the Republic of Ireland, might be affected. In practical terms the North and/or South don't have the expertise in all areas on their own and have to co-operate. Northern Ireland is currently massively disadvantaged as there is no Assembly or Executive.

Paul Brush – All North/South health co-operation areas are currently being mapped out so we will know better then what we are talking about, including what elements (if any) might be at risk as a result of leaving EU, and what we need to do to retain them. Most agreements in health co-operation have evolved in the wake of the Good Friday Agreement and are not contingent on membership of the EU. All parties have committed to protecting the Good Friday Agreement in all its parts.

Q4. What will Brexit mean for people who currently cross the border every day for trips and/or education?

Fergal Lynch – I can confidently say 'I don't know'. One of many areas we don't know yet and have to work out.

Jim Nicholson – I don't know anyone who wants a hard border. No-one knows the answer to this question. By July 2018 we will have a fair idea where it's going. At the moment we have a negotiating stand off and it's focussing on money. We could get to the position where we have a 'smugglers paradise' at the border. We have to ensure we don't go back to queues at the border. If you live in a border area, it's a big problem. Brexit is trying to change Europe from outside rather than within and the Irish border has not been given enough consideration.

Mairead McGuinness – If the UK leaves the Customs Union, how can we avoid a border or some form of checking? To avoid a border we ideally need the UK to stay in the Customs Union, even though this is not the UK position. There is work to do to bridge the gap between EU and UK.

Q5. Will people from Northern Ireland still be entitled to EU citizens rights?

Fergal Lynch – Access to third level education, freedom of movement, employment, citizenship, trade are all issues affected by this question and we cannot answer all of them at the moment.

Paul Brush – The Northern Ireland Civil Service is working to ensure all concerns are heard by negotiators in all areas. I will bring back the points raised during discussions today. I would also encourage people in the room to take Chloe Smith up on her offer to answer any further questions which are sent in to her office.

Jim Nicholson – In 20 years as an MEP I thought I'd seen it all before but not now. One responsibility I have as an MEP is to get the best deal for Northern Ireland by September/October 2018. Whether there is an agreement or not it has to go to EU Parliament then.

Mairead McGuinness – Pre-Brexit the nationality question was less important, now it is an issue again. There is a real danger of discrimination – the voices of those without a voice need to be heard in this debate. I'm delighted to be contacted by young people. You have an opportunity to shape the future.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Conference programme

Canal Court Hotel, Friday 10th November 2017

11.30	Welcome and Introduction, Koulla Yiasouma Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People
11.35	Video Message from Minister Simon Coveney Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Republic of Ireland
11.40	Presentation of Key Themes by Conference Steering Group
12.05	Youth Café Discussions: Rounds 1 - 3
1.10	Lunch
2.00	Youth Café Sessions: Rounds 4 - 5
2.35	Key Messages from Youth Cafe
2.45	Sli.do vote on questions for the panel
3.00	Feedback from Minister Chloe Smith Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Northern Ireland
3.20	 Panel Question and Answer session Mairead McGuinness, MEP, Republic of Ireland Jim Nicholson, MEP, Northern Ireland Fergal Lynch, Secretary General, Department of Youth and Children's Affairs Republic of Ireland Paul Brush, Head of EU Future Relations, Executive Office, Northern Ireland
3.55	Closing Comments, Dr Niall Muldoon, Ombudsman for Children
4.00	Finish

Appendix 2: Background information on discussion themes

Participants were provided with an information pack to help them to consider how Brexit might affect young people and to inform the discussions.

Overarching themes

Article 1 – All children and young people have rights.

Article 3 – If a decision is being made about you then your **best interests** must be considered when making the final decision.

Article 12 – You have the right to speak up and have your opinions listened to, and taken seriously, by adults on things that affect you.

Article 13 – You have **freedom of expression**, or the right to say whatever you believe as long as it does not harm other people.

Article 41 – If your country's own laws or international laws give children more than the Convention requires, then your country should meet the higher standards in those laws.

Youth Café discussions will focus on the following seven themes identified by the steering group. Under each theme, you will find information on rights potentially affected and some scenarios outlining how children and young people might be affected:

Identity and Non-Discrimination

- Family Life, Nationality and Travel
- Child Protection
- ▶ Non-EU children needing extra protection
- ▶ Health and Disability
- Education
- Standard of Living

(Articles 2, 14, 30)

(Articles 7, 8, 9, 10, 15)

(Articles 11, 19, 32, 34, 36)

(Article 22, 35)

(Article 23, 24)

(Articles 17, 28, 29, 31)

(Articles 18, 26, 27)

Theme 1: Identity and Non-Discrimination

Article 2 - The rights in the Convention apply to everyone under the age of 18, no matter who you are, whether you are a boy, girl or other, what your religion is, whether you have a disability, or what type of family you come from. You shouldn't be treated badly because you are (or seem) different.

Article 14 – You have the freedom to have your own thoughts and beliefs and to choose your own religion.

Article 30 – You have the **right to enjoy your own culture**, use your own language and practice your own religion.

Identity and non-discrimination case study: Intersex young person

Background

Jamie is an intersex* individual residing in Northern Ireland. They have faced discrimination and abuse from the medical establishment from birth, including but not limited to unnecessary medical interventions without informed consent.

Help Available Now

Recently, there has been progress made on an EU-wide basis relating to the rights of intersex people as a result of lobbying at an EU level. Jamie and others are concerned that if an EU directive is adopted post-Brexit, partially as a result of pre-Brexit lobbying, the rights of intersex people in the EU will improve but those in the UK will be left behind, and lobbying efforts will need to be restarted.

In 2013, the EU adopted the "Guidelines to Promote and Protect the Enjoyment of All Human Rights by Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) persons", the first EU policy document explicitly referring to intersex people.

Issues for consideration

The recognition afforded to intersex people as a result of these guidelines need to be replicated in the UK post-Brexit.

Identity and non-discrimination case-study: Xenophobia

Background

Amena, a young Syrian girl, arrived with her family three weeks before the Brexit referendum was held. When she arrived the local community erected 'welcome' signs to welcome her, her families and other Syrian families.

Whenever the Brexit vote happened, however, Amena discovered a strict change in tone. The families were told to 'go back where they came from' and 'get out of our country'. She and her family now find themselves in a very hostile atmosphere.

Hate crime increased dramatically in the few weeks after the referendum (figures showed a 46% increase in the week after the referendum in comparison to the previous year) and that high rate has not yet decreased. Families like Amena's feel that they are no longer welcome within their communities, and fear for their safety.

Help Available Now

Amena's family can report hate crimes to the police, but don't feel that this is likely to help them. Even if they moved, would things be any better? Ultimately, they want to be able to get on with their lives in peace, and recover from the trauma they have experienced in Syria. Alongside the hostility they have experienced, they also have been offered support from neighbours, and from a local community group.

Issues for consideration

How will government agencies protect children and young people like Amena, and their families, from hate crime in the wake of the Brexit vote? Refugees have been affected, and other migrants to Northern Ireland, as well as minority ethnic people who may have been born in Northern Ireland and lived there their entire lives.

Theme 2: Family Life, Nationality and Travel

Article 7 – You have the right to a name at birth and the right to be a citizen of your country. You also have the right to be cared for by your parents, as far as possible.

Article 8 – You have a **right to an identity** and to know who you are-official records must be kept.

Article 9 - You should not be separated from your parents unless it is for your own good; for example, if a parent is mistreating you or neglecting you. If your parents have separated, you have the right to stay in contact with both parents unless this is not in your best interests.

Article 10 - If you and your parents live in different countries, you have the right to **stay in touch** or get back together as a family.

Article 15 – You have a right to **freedom of association** (to join and form groups and make friends) and to **freedom of assembly** (to meet together with others) as long as this does not harm other people. In exercising your right, you should respect the rights of others.

Impact of Border on Family Life case study

Background

Graham is 17 and goes to school in Newry. His parents are divorced. He spends most of his time living with his father in Dundalk but he travels regularly between his Mum's house in Newry and his Dad's house. To take a bus it usually takes 30 minutes but the journey is possible in 15 or 20 minutes by car. Graham is concerned about ease of travel between his parents houses post Brexit.

Help Available Now

Currently the UK is in a Customs Union with the EU and free movement across the border is possible due to the Common Travel Area across the islands of Ireland and the UK, and the fact that the two states are part of the EU. People can therefore travel across the border without having to go through Immigration control.

Issues for consideration

It seems likely that there will have to be immigration control of some kind between the Republic of Ireland and the UK post-Brexit. The UK and EU have both said that they want a 'soft border' between Northern Ireland and the Republic however neither has given any detailed information on what this will look like. If there is 'no deal' it is likely that it will revert to a 'hard border' It is important to protect children and young people's rights to family life and to be cared for by both parents. We ask decision makers to act quickly to agree what the border will look like and to make sure that there is ease of movement between jurisdictions.

Theme 3: Child Protection

Article 11 - The Government must make sure you are protected from being kidnapped or taken out of the country when you shouldn't be. In the UK and Ireland, babies must have their own passports with pictures.

Article 19 – You must be kept safe from harm and protected against violence and abuse. You must be given proper care by those looking after you.

Article 32 – The Government must protect you from doing dangerous work, or work that could harm your health or interfere with your education

Article 34 – You should be **protected from sexual exploitation**.

Article 35 – You have the right to be **protected from being abducted, trafficked or sold**.

Article 36 – You have a right to be protected from all other forms of exploitation which can damage your welfare or development.

Child Protection case study: Child Trafficking

Background

Peter is a 14-year old boy from Slovakia who has been a victim of child trafficking. He was born with clubfoot, a condition that makes it difficult for him to walk. Peter's family is very poor and he has experienced domestic abuse throughout his childhood.

Peter's family agreed to sell him to an organised crime group and he was brought to Northern Ireland. His ID was taken from him and he was forced to work long hours without enough food and no pay.

The UK has benefitted from EU efforts to tackle human trafficking. Brexit could affect UK police forces' ability to deal with human trafficking making it harder to protect victims. The loss of EU regulations, funding and the jurisdiction of the European Court of Justice could undo decades of work with European partners in addressing human trafficking.

The Current Situation

Article 35 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) specifically requires all states to take appropriate measures to prevent the abduction, sale or traffic of children.

The EU has taken a leading role in coordinating and funding anti-trafficking efforts across Europe, for instance through instituting an Anti-Trafficking Coordinator and the creation of an EU Civil Society Platform against Trafficking in Human Beings. There are a number of EU bodies in place such as Europol, Eurojust, CEPOL and Frontex which work to address human trafficking.

Post-Brexit UK organisations and public bodies may lose access to these agencies and EU funding streams. There is currently no provision to allow access to Europol's databases to non-EU member states.

The rights of victims to support and assistance are enshrined in the 2011 EU Trafficking Directive. If this is not transposed into UK law, victims of human trafficking may lose their right to support.

Key Messages

Child trafficking is one of the most egregious abuses of children's rights imaginable. In light of obligations under the UNCRC, it is vital that the UK retains its ties with EU bodies such as Europol. By remaining part of Europol, the UK would be obliged to abide by decisions of the European Court of Justice, the European Parliament and Europol member states. This would prevent control of children's lives being handed to the merciless traffickers who exploit them for profit.

Child Protection case study: Protection from exploitation

Background

Henry's is 15 years old and British. His family moved from England to Northern Ireland and lived very close to the border. Henry went to school in the Republic of Ireland and his father worked there too. Shortly after they arrived Henry's father was seriously injured in an accident with a tractor and had to quit his job as a farmer. Because of their lack of income the family lost their home and are now homeless.

Henry had to leave school as his family could not pay the costs of his education. He has to work 8 hours a day, seven days a week, to support his family. He is doing this so his family have some form of income. Henry feels he has to continue working long and unreasonable hours, while being exposed to dangerous farm animals and machinery. He struggles on and comes (home) most days with cuts, blisters and bruises and with little pay.

Henry's rights to education, to be protected from harm and exploitation and his right to help if harmed are being denied.

The Current Situation

Because Henry was enrolled in an Irish school, Túsla, the Child and Family Agency must follow it's guidelines regarding school attendance and alternative education if a student drops out of school. This applies even if the child lives in Northern Ireland. If Túsla investigate Henry's situation it may help to bring it to the attention of agencies in the North.

The British National Crime Agency (NCA) in the UK is responsible for investigating modern slavery, including the exploitation of children. They work with An Garda Síochána and the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). Ireland and Great Britain's membership of Europol helps this co-operation. The fact that we have no physical border also helps, as it is easier for officers to cross the border and share information. Túsla can share information with the police from both sides of the border thanks to the fact that Henry was enrolled in school as a British National.

Key Messages

The Irish and British government should set up more cross border committees and agencies to tackle issues effectively and with greater security than at the present.

The Irish and British governments should increase the amount of information, statistics and manpower going through the border. Post Brexit, Britain should remain in the ECRIS and EUROPOL, regardless of EU protocols.

Theme 4: Non-EU children needing extra protection

Article 22 – If you are a refugee you have a right to special help and to be allowed to live somewhere that is safe, particularly if you have been separated from your parents.

Article 35 – You have the right to be protected from being abducted, trafficked or sold.

Non-EU Children in Need of Special Protection case study

Background

Ahmed is 12 years old. He was born in Damascus, Syria but has been forced to flee from the civil war with his family. Ahmed and his family made it to Europe and were allocated to Northern Ireland. They are waiting to travel there.

The Current Situation

The EU quota system was agreed in September 2015 as a way of sharing responsibility across member states for dealing with the increasing refugee crisis. Under the EU quota system, the UK has agreed to accommodate 20,000 refugees with Northern Ireland taking 2,000. However, the UK may no longer have to adhere to the EU quotas post Brexit. This means that children like Ahmed might be refused asylum in the North.

Ahmed and his family may experience racism and discrimination once relocated. The European Council on Tolerance and Reconciliation is a group of experts who have developed a *Model National Statute for the Promotion of Tolerance*. It is planned that this model law will be adopted across all EU member states with the purpose of promoting tolerance between different societies, eliminating hate crimes, condemning any intolerance based on bias, bigotry and prejudice and taking concrete action to combat intolerance.

The UK will still be bound by international conventions such as the 1951 Refugee Convention and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child – but will it adopt the model law on tolerance post Brexit?

Key Messages

All children have a right to safety and protection from war. What will Britain's commitment to refugees look like post Brexit? Children like Ahmed should not have to experience discrimination or intolerance in host countries. The UK should seek to maintain standards set out for tolerance and anti-discrimination by the EU to combat hostility directed towards forced migrants and asylum seekers that may have been heightened by the Brexit vote.

Non-EU Children in Need of Special Protection case study

Background

Aysha is a 15-year-old refugee from Syria who arrived at Dublin Port alone. She was referred to the Child and Family Agency, Tusla and assessed by a social worker from the Separated Children Seeking Asylum Team. Her social worker discovered that Aysha had left Syria with her older brother who is 22. They became separated on the journey and he has since been located in an EROC centre in Northern Ireland. Aysha is worried that she will never see him again.

Aysha wants to be reunited with her brother in Northern Ireland. Under EU regulations, known as Dublin III, Aysha has a legal right to be reunited with a family member in the UK. However, this will no longer apply when the UK leaves the EU. Instead unaccompanied children will have to rely on the UK's own immigration rules which allow children to be reunited with their parents but not with other family members. This means that unaccompanied children like Aysha might be permanently separated from their family post Brexit.

The Current Situation

Article 22 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) also says that state parties should help refugee children reunite with their families.

Dublin III regulations allow unaccompanied children in Europe to be reunited with family members in other member states. This includes adult siblings and other family members like aunts, uncles and grandparents.

The concept of family is protected by international law. Both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights provide that a family should be respected and protected as a fundamental unit in society. This is also reflected by the European Social Charter in Recital 16.

Key Messages

Children like Aysha need protections available under Dublin III so that they can be reunited with family members quickly and safely. It is essential that Brexit does not affect children's rights, particularly children fleeing wars and persecution. The right to family life is a basic minimum standard which all children are entitled to under the UNCRC unless they are at risk. Family life is crucial for the healthy development and happiness of a child and so this basic need should not be denied.

Theme 5: Health and Disability

Article 23 – If you have any kind of **disability** you have a **right to special help** to make sure you can live a full life and join in with things in your community. Money should not be a barrier to this.

Article 24 – You have a right to be as healthy as possible, and if you are ill, you must be given **good healthcare services**. You have the right to live in a safe, healthy environment with good food and clean drinking water. The Government must make sure that anyone having a baby is given good healthcare, and parents are supported to keep their children healthy.

Health care case study: All-Island services for children and young people case study

Background

Michael is two years old and has been diagnosed with a congenital heart disease (aortic stenosis) since birth. The condition has deteriorated and it is likely that he will require surgery or so. Michael lives in Cookstown, with his parents and older sister who is four.

Help Available Now

Michael's condition means that his treatment will be undertaken through the Congenital Heart Disease Network for which £42m was announced by governments, North and South, in July 2016. Michael has been receiving outpatient treatment in the Royal Victoria Hospital for Sick Children in Belfast but as he will need surgery this is likely to be carried out at Our Lady's Children's Centre, Dublin over the next couple of years once he is strong enough. As with other children, he will receive pre and post operative care in Belfast.

These arrangements have been set up as it has been recognised that, for particularly rare and complex treatments, there needs to be a 'critical mass' of patients treated to allow for expertise to be developed. Otherwise the outcomes aren't as good as they could be for the children in question. This can be achieved across the island of Ireland, but not for a population the size of northern Ireland on its own.

Issues for consideration

How will Brexit affect the All-island Congenital Heart Disease Network? Will it still be possible for an EU country and a non-EU country to have such arrangements? If not, how will this affect the provision of such specialist health services to children and young people?

Health Care case study: Cross Border Treatment Scheme

Background

Emma is 14 years old. She lives in Mayo in the Republic of Ireland and has lived there all her life with her parents.

Emma needs to have orthodontic treatment. Her teeth are badly misaligned and affect her speech. This affects her confidence. She is embarrassed by her teeth, has been teased at school for a long time and doesn't engage in many social activities. She is now old enough to have the braces she needs. She has been on a public waiting list for treatment for two years. Because of the numbers on this waiting list she is unlikely to have treatment before she is 16. Emma's orthodontist has said that the development of her jaw may be affected by this wait. However, her parents cannot afford private treatment in the South. Neither Emma nor her parents want to wait another two years for treatment.

The Current Situation

Emma's parents have applied to have her treatment under the Cross Border Treatment Scheme. This is an EU scheme that allows people waiting for treatment to have this in another EU state and reclaim all or some of the costs. Emma's parents have decided to take her to an orthodontist in Belfast. This means that Emma won't have to wait another 2 years for treatment.

The Cross Border Treatment Scheme is just one EU scheme that allows children and young people to have treatment in another EU country. If the treatment children and young people need is essential and not provided in Ireland, their parents or guardians can apply to the Treatment Abroad Scheme to have this treatment in another EU member state. In many cases this treatment is life changing.

Key Messages

Children and young people's right to timely and necessary healthcare should not be negatively impacted by Brexit. Many children and young people who avail of these schemes travel between Ireland and the UK for treatment.

The UK should agree to remain part of the current EU health schemes. This is possible if it remains as a member of the European Economic Area (EEA). EEA countries (Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Switzerland) are a part of these schemes. We would like clarity on whether the UK will remain in the FEA

If this is not the case, schemes should be negotiated by the Irish and UK government.

Health Care Case Study: European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)

Background

Emma Jones is a fit and healthy 13 year old. She lives in Crumlin, North of Ireland with her two parents and her two brothers. Emma and her family were on a family holiday in Bulgaria over the summer break. As one of the day outs on their holiday they attended a water park where Emma wanted to experience high-thrill water rides. Unfortunately she broke her right shin bone on one of these rides. Emma was rushed to hospital where she was examined and treated for free as she had a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC).

Help Available Now

The European Health Insurance Card (or EHIC) is issued free of charge to anyone who usually resides in the EU. It can be used in any EU member state and the member states of the European Economic Area. It can be issued to anyone who is insured or covered by a government social security scheme or their dependants.

An EHIC means that you can receive necessary medical treatment free or at a reduced cost if you become ill or have an accident during a visit to another country in Europe. You can also get treatment during a visit abroad with your EHIC if you have a long term care need such as kidney dialysis. The EHIC allowed Emma to get the medical treatment she needed for free in this case.

Issues for consideration

Will the EHIC card still be valid once the UK leaves the European Union? Will the EHIC card be still viable if the UK stays within the European Economic Area (EEA)? Will the health treatment arrangements between Ireland and the UK be retained?

Theme 6: Education

Article 17 – You have the **right to access information** which is important to your wellbeing., for example from websites, TV, social media etc.

Article 28 - You have the **right to primary and secondary education**, and government should make sure all young people have an equal opportunity to get to college or university. Schools should respect your rights and treat you with dignity when it comes to discipline in the school.

Article 29 - Your education should help you develop your skills and personality fully, teach you about your own and other people's rights and prepare you for adult life. Your education should help you to develop respect for your parents, for your own cultural background and national values. Education should promote equality and help you to develop understanding and tolerance for others, and respect for the natural environment.

Education case study: Erasmus+

Background

Ciara is 14 and lives in Belfast with her family. She is about to start studying for her GCSEs. Ciara is very interested in Modern Languages and is studying French and German for GCSE and would like to keep languages up for Higher Education. Her school has been involved in youth exchanges with partner schools in France and Germany for the past number of years and this has helped students with language learning.

Help Available Now

Article 165 of the Treaty for the Functioning of the European Union says that member states will contribute to the development of quality education between member states.

Erasmus+ is the European Union programme for education, training, youth and sport. It aims to modernise education, training and youth work across Europe. It offers exciting opportunities for UK and Irish participants to then study, work, volunteer, teach and train abroad in Europe.

It runs for seven years, from 2014 to 2020. The programme has now reached the halfway mark in the UK with 500 million euro allocated to projects and activities since 2014.

Issues for consideration

Children and young people's right to education and also that education will fully develop their skills, talents and abilities should be protected post-Brexit.

The UK Government has confirmed that the Treasury will underwrite grant agreements for Erasmus+ signed while the UK is still an EU Member State, but what will happen after Brexit? Will young people still be able to avail of the Erasmus+ programme?

Education case study: Cross Border Education

Background

Emily is 12 years old and lives in Donegal, close to the border with Derry/Londonderry. She attends her local primary school in Donegal and will be starting secondary school next year.

Emily's parents would like her to attend school in Derry/Londonderry. There are lots of reasons for this:

- ▶ The school is close to Altnagelvin Hospital where Emily attended CHOICE, a diabetes support programme for children and young people. EU funding allowed this programme to be offered to all children and young people across eligible areas of Northern Ireland and the border counties in the Republic of Ireland. Emily made a lot of friends on this programme and wants to go to the same secondary school as them. Her parents also want her to be able to continue to access support from the programme.
- ▶ The family lives on the border and it is the closest school to their house.
- ▶ Emily wants to go to the school.

Emily's parents have enrolled her in a school in Derry/Londonderry. However, they are very uncertain about how her access to school in the North will be affected by Brexit. Will she still be able to access education in Northern Ireland? How will her daily journey across the border be affected by any new border controls?

The Situation at the Moment

At the moment many children from the Republic of Ireland attend school in the North and vice versa. Although schools must offer places to children from their own part of the Ireland first, there are no other obstacles to going to school on the opposite side of the border. There is no hard border or border controls so travel to and from school is not affected.

Key Messages

Both the UK and Irish government should work to make sure that children and young people can continue to attend school across the border.

Theme 7: Standard of Living

Article 18 – Government should make it clear that both parents share responsibility to raise you, and should always consider what is best for you. Government should **help your parents care for you properly**, including helping them find childcare when working.

Article 26 – You have the right to **social security benefits** from the government if you need them. This could mean money for housing or living costs.

Article 27 – You have the right to an **adequate standard of living** for your physical, mental and social development. Your parents have the main responsibility to make sure you are provided for but, when necessary, Government should also help, particularly in relation to meeting your basic needs including a place to live, food and clothing.

Standard of living case study: farming family

Background

John is 10 years old. He lives on his family farm outside Enniskillen with his parents, two older brother and baby sister. He dreams of growing up to be a farmer like his Dad.

John's Dad was originally in favour of Brexit, despite a large proportion of the income for the farm coming from EU subsidies. He had found the bureaucratic 'red tape' frustrating, and understood that the money that was being paid to the EU could replace the subsidies for farmers. However, since the referendum, he has become very worried about the future of his farm, and his ability to provide for his family. He upgraded his milking equipment two years ago and is in considerable debt. He feels he has few options in terms of work in the future, as all he knows is farming.

Help Available Now

Farming subsidies: The Department of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (DEARA) in NI have stated that a significant proportion of farming income in Northern Ireland comes from the EU. This equates to around €300 million of EU money. There have been no commitments for the UK government to replace the subsidies in the long term.

Single market: Currently John's Dad can work with other farmers across the border as if there was no border (a quarter of all milk produced in NI is exported to the Republic of Ireland). No tariffs are applied when he sells his milk over the border. (A 'tariff' is a payment that is normally required when selling products outside your own country). The NI Food and Drink Association estimates that these tariffs would lead to price increases of 47% and 58% for butter and cheese if selling into the EU (including Republic of Ireland).

UK farmers have also had to meet high EU standards for the treatment of animals and food production. After Brexit farmers may have to start to compete with dairy products from other countries that don't have the same ethical/food safety standards, and are therefore much cheaper.

Issues for consideration

While issues of trade, subsidies, and tariffs seem very far away from children's rights, for many thousands of children in Northern Ireland, these matters may have a very significant impact on their families and on whether their families can maintain their standard of living in the future.

Children and young people have a right to a decent standard of living, and governments must support parents to provide for their children. John has a right to not live in poverty, and to have his basic needs for food, home, clothing, etc met.

The agri-food sector in Northern Ireland contributes around £4.6 Billion to the Northern Ireland economy, and people are employed in small or large agri-food businesses in every village and town across Northern Ireland. The future of the agri-food sector affects the future income for families across Northern Ireland, but particularly in rural areas.

The UK government should recognise the unique situation of the agri-food sector in Northern Ireland, and seek to ensure that businesses (including farmers) are able to continue to work with farmers across the island of Ireland, and to trade over the border without having to pay tariffs. It should seek to maintain EU food safety and ethical standards, and not allow inferior products from other countries to be imported and sold in Northern Ireland at cheaper prices.

The UK government must also consider how to replace the tariff payments, so that there are no 'cliff edges' for farmers with subsidy payments suddenly ending.

Standard of Living case study: EU Funding

Background

Sarah is a 15 year old girl living in a disadvantaged area of Derry. She is planning to leave school next year, and go to Belfast Met (Further Education) – to study Business and Finance.

Help available now

Her community has been very run-down, but there are plans to invest in the development of new community facilities – Health Centre, Employment Hub, Family Support centre, Youth Facilities. It's not clear this is going to happen now – was dependent on European funding.

There's not much for children and young people to do in her community – and what was happening (eg youth work activities) was dependent on European Peace Funding. The workers have explained that the previous Peace funding had run out which meant that things had to be cut back, and now it is not clear whether the funding will be continued after the UK leaves the EU.

Issues for consideration

She has also been hearing about the impact that Brexit may have on the economy and really worries about what opportunities there will be for her when she finishes her course.

Appendix 3: Questions from young participants for the panel

During the conference, participants were asked to submit questions in relation to Brexit using the SLIDO app. The most common questions were then put to a vote on SLIDO and the top five put to the panel members. The most commonly asked questions and the number of votes they received from the participants are shown below.

Question	Score
If somebody hurts a child on one side of the border and moves to the other, how will that be affected with Brexit?	56
Will access to cross border hospitals be impeded in life threatening A&E situations?	54
What is the single most positive thing about leaving the EU?	54
Will people from the north with Irish citizenship and Irish passports still be entitled to the rights of EU citizens after Brexit (for example, the EHIC, freedom of movement)?	42
What way will Brexit affect students living in the North but studying in the South with dual citizenship?	41
Can James McClean still play for Ireland even though he's from the North?	39
Will Northern Ireland citizens still be entitled to both a British and Irish passport?	35
What can be done to protect those that are commonly discriminated against being affected due to Brexit? Do you see any solutions to it?	33
There have been talks of a rise in paramilitaries due to Brexit. Do you believe that there will be a higher threat of paramilitaries?	32
Can we look to any non EU countries that work with the EU such as Norway for inspiration?	25
Will some of the money saved by the UK treasury from EU membership fees be dedicated locally to raise NI's standard of living? For example, disability services / flooding?	25
Is the government working on any transition period strategy on the issue of agricultural subsidies?	23

Notes	





ItsOurBrexitToo



Ombudsman for Children's Office

Millennium House 52-56 Great Strand Street Dublin 1, D01 F5P8, Ireland

T: 01 865 6800 **E:** oco@oco.ie

Ceisteanna as Gaeilge:

ombudsmandoleanai@oco.ie

W: www.oco.ie

Twitter: @OCO ireland

A summary version of the report has also been produced, please contact the offices for a copy of this or view it on their websites.



Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People

Equality House
7-9 Shaftesbury Square

Belfast BT2 7DP
T: 028 9031 1616
E: info@niccy.org
W: www.niccy.org

Twitter: @nichildcom

Facebook: www.facebook.com/

nichildrenscommissioner **Instagram:** niccy yp