

**together**

Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights



# Listen to us

A report on Brexit by the  
Children and Young People's  
Panel on Europe

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Children in Scotland is a charity registered in Scotland (SC003527) and a company limited by guarantee (SC083383).

Registered office: Level 1, Rosebery House, 9 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 5EZ

Website: [www.childreninscotland.org.uk](http://www.childreninscotland.org.uk)

Email: [info@childreninscotland.org.uk](mailto:info@childreninscotland.org.uk)

Telephone: 0131 313 2322

Twitter @cisweb

Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) is a charity registered in Scotland (SC029403) and a company limited by guarantee (SC199725).

Registered office: Level 1, Rosebery House, 9 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh, EH12 5EZ

Website: [www.togetherscotland.org.uk](http://www.togetherscotland.org.uk)

Email: [info@togetherscotland.org.uk](mailto:info@togetherscotland.org.uk)

Telephone: 0131 337 9015

Twitter: @together\_sacr

# December 2018 Foreword



Meet the Panel

**We are the Children and Young People's Panel on Europe. In August 2018 we met for the first time. We have been coming together to learn and share our views on Brexit. We started this journey feeling frustrated and like we were not being listened to. By being involved we have learnt a lot and have had the chance to be heard by lots of adult decision makers.**

We want other children and young people in Scotland to feel like they understand what is happening around them and feel empowered to speak up and be heard by those in power. We wanted to challenge the uncertainty and lack of information available to children and young people.

We are proud to present our report, and we hope you find it a useful tool to understand how exiting the EU might impact on children and young people. We want it to be used to start

discussions and help other children and young people understand the issues.

In the report you can track our journey as members of the Panel. You will find out how we came to agree on areas we felt were important, namely EU funding and opportunities; the economy, trade and jobs; as well as protecting our rights.

It will also tell you about our recommendations for the Scottish and UK Governments in the areas we talked about and the process we used to form them. We come from a range of perspectives on the political spectrum, and from a diverse range of ages and locations; these recommendations reflect that. They are our collective agreement on what we think are the most important issues for children and young people as the United Kingdom leaves the EU.

Enjoy, and please get in touch to let us know your thoughts on our report!

***Children and Young People's Panel on Europe***

# 1. Introduction

**On 23rd June 2016, adults in the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union (EU) in a referendum. The process of exiting the EU has become known as “Brexit”. Only people aged 18 years old and above were allowed to vote in the referendum. In all Scottish elections the voting age is now 16; this meant lots of young people who could vote in Scottish elections did not get to vote in the EU referendum. The UK and Scottish Governments did very little to talk with children and young people about Brexit and find out what they thought.**

A referendum is a vote where people are asked their opinion on a particular question. In the 2016 EU referendum, people aged 18 and up in the UK were asked if they thought the UK should stay in the EU or leave it. Not all people over 18 living in the UK were eligible to vote. For example, many EU citizens living in the UK were not entitled to a vote.

Since the United Kingdom voted to leave the EU, the UK Government has been in discussions with the EU about how we leave and what our relationship with the EU will be like in the future. The Scottish Government also has an important role in this. Its job is to talk to the UK Government about what it wants to happen and what it thinks is needed to get the best result for Scotland.

Children in Scotland and Together (Scottish Alliance for Children’s Rights) wanted to make sure that children and young people were heard in this process. We applied for funding from the Scottish Government in June 2018 to set up an independent panel that would make recommendations to the Scottish and UK Governments about what children and young people feel is most important to them as we leave the EU.

This panel has become known as the Children and Young People's Panel on Europe. It is made up of 19 children and young people, aged 8-19, from across Scotland including Orkney, Aviemore, Linlithgow, Edinburgh and Glasgow.

This report is based on what the members of the Children and Young People's Panel on Europe have told us and the recommendations they have made. The Panel has not focused on identifying a preferred outcome for the negotiations or the deal between the UK and the EU. Instead they provide decisionmakers with knowledge about what is important to children and young people. Decision makers and negotiators should use this information to inform the positions that they take.

The report is intended to be accessible to all and has been written with support from members of the Children and Young People's Panel on Europe. **The Panel wants this report to be used as a tool by politicians in power when advocating for children and young people's rights and interests in exiting the EU.**

## The Panel

Recruitment for the project started in July 2018 and the Panel was formally set up in August 2018. Children in Scotland and Together asked people to send in applications to join the Panel by responding to three simple questions;

- Why do I want to be involved?
- What makes me who I am?
- What do I think about Brexit

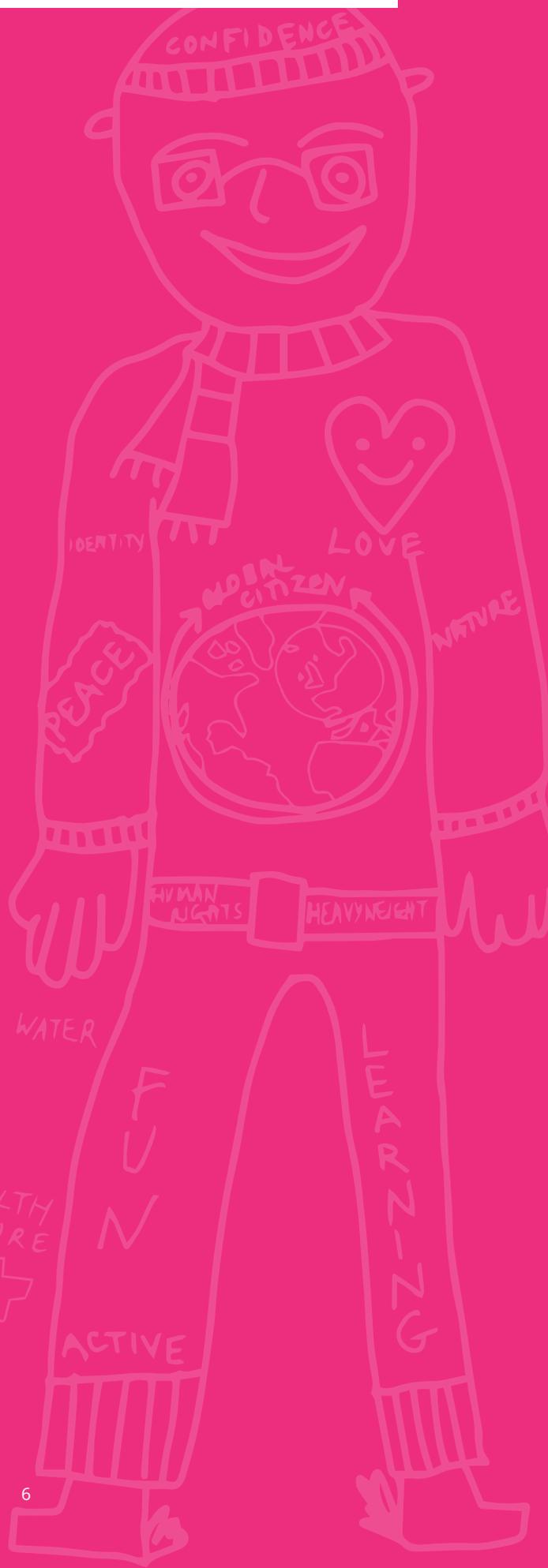
We wanted to make sure that we involved children and young people from across Scotland and heard from children and young people from a range of backgrounds, from both rural and urban populations. We wanted to make sure that all children and young people had an equal opportunity to take part. We also wanted to make sure that we involved children and young people with a range of views on Brexit.

The group has had four formal Panel meetings and also met on other occasions when new opportunities became available.

## Children and Young People's Right to be Heard

Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child sets out the right of every child to have their views listened to and considered in relation to decisions that affect them. As children and young people were not allowed to vote in the referendum, it is even more important that politicians speak to children and young people about their views and take them into account in the decisions that they make. In Scotland, there is a law (Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014) which says that politicians should consider the views of children and young people in every decision that they make. This report will help politicians in Scotland to follow this law. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has written a 'General Comment' which explains how children and young people's Article 12 rights should be taken forward. This includes making sure that processes that help children and young people to have their voice heard (such as the Panel) are informative, voluntary, respectful, relevant, child-friendly, inclusive, supported by training, safe, sensitive to risk and accountable. These principles have been taken into account throughout the recruitment and the activities of the Panel to ensure its work is strongly based in children and young people's rights. By providing this example, we hope that politicians will continue to work with children and young people in a rights-based and respectful manner as negotiations continue to decide Scotland's place in Europe.

## 2. Methodology



**Children in Scotland and Together wanted to make sure that the children and young people involved in the Panel were informed and supported to learn about relevant topics before creating recommendations on them.**

We also wanted to make sure that the Panel was as child and young person led as possible. You can find out about our full methodology at the end of this report [on page 28](#).

We carried out an initial literature review to find out what children and young people had already said about exiting the EU. Panel members discussed these findings and had the opportunity to highlight new areas that they thought had not been given enough attention. The Panel then chose five topics to focus on based on these discussions. The chosen topics were:

- EU funding
- Opportunities to work, study and travel
- The economy, trade and jobs
- Rights
- Tackling uncertainty.

Before each meeting, an information sheet was prepared for Panel members which introduced them to the topic they were going to be discussing. This also included some questions to think about before the meeting. At each meeting, the Panel members heard from an expert on that topic. All sessions led by experts were participative, discussion based and delivered in a way that was inclusive of all the children and young people in the group, regardless of their age.

To make sure these topics were relevant, we created children and young people “characters” and identified all the things that would be important to them and that they would need to keep them happy, healthy and safe.

The Panel then suggested what the Scottish Government, UK Government and the EU could do to ensure that children and young people are still able to access the things they need or do the things they want to do after we leave the EU.

Panel members then voted on the recommendations that they had made. Recommendations had to be supported by 60% of Panel members in order to “pass”. You can find out about the process of agreeing the recommendations in the flowchart below.

### Brainstorming at Group Session (Week 1)



- Panel members are given an **information sheet** introducing the topic.
- Visit by **expert** on the topic who leads an activity-based presentation.
- **Discussion, activities and questions** from the Panel.
- Panel members **brainstorm** ideas for recommendations at the end of the session.

### Building the Recommendations (Weeks 2-4)



- Ideas for recommendations from the group session are collated by staff and **shared with panel members via an online survey**.
- There are then 2-3 weeks for **anonymous review** by Panel members where they can let us know if the recommendations are understandable, add comments, suggest changes and suggest new recommendations.
- Panel members can ask staff for support with this if needed.
- Staff then produce a ballot paper with an **edited list of draft recommendations** ready for voting.

### Voting (Week 5)

- At the start of the next group session, Panel members vote on the **draft recommendations** by putting a tick or cross in the box.
- Panel members can add comments explaining why they agree or disagree if they want.
- Recommendations which get **60% approval** or more are passed and become final ‘Panel recommendations’.
- Recommendations which fall short of 60% do not become ‘Panel recommendations’ but are included in this report for context and to reflect the diverse views of Panel members.

### 3. What has the Panel been doing?

**'Fantastic contributions from our very impressive young people this morning. Thank you for sharing your work with us.'**  
*(Scottish Leaders Forum)*

**'Really good exchange of views that left me with lots to think about – thanks to those panel members who were there and to the supporting organisations. I hope to meet the full panel in the New Year and I want its valuable work to continue.'**  
*(Cabinet Secretary for Government Business and Constitutional Relations)*

As well as the four main Panel meetings, members of the Children and Young People's Panel on Europe have done lots of other things to promote their work. In this section we describe all the activities and meetings the Panel has been involved in by order of date.

#### Panel Training Day – 18/8/18

The training day was an opportunity for the Panel to learn about children's rights and the powers of the Scottish and UK Governments, and to begin to discuss how exiting the EU may impact children and young people. Following the meeting the Panel voted on the topics they felt it was most important to focus on. These were;

- EU Funding
- Opportunities to Work, Study and Travel
- The Economy, Trade and Jobs
- Rights
- Uncertainty.

### **Standing Council on Europe – 18/9/18**

Members of the Panel had the opportunity to meet with the Scottish Government Standing Council on Europe. The Standing Council is a group of experts who advise the Scottish Government on Brexit.

The meeting with the Standing Council gave the Panel the chance to raise their priority areas and get feedback on these. They also heard about different opportunities they could have to make a difference.

### **My Life My Say Brexit Cafes – 19/9/19 and 26/9/18**

Some Panel members attended Brexit Cafes organised by My Life My Say in Edinburgh and Glasgow. My Life My Say is an organisation that is also working to speak to young people about Brexit. Brexit Cafes are an informal way to chat about the topic.

The Panel members were among the youngest participants at the Brexit Cafes. At the events they discussed their views on Brexit and how it may impact on them as children and young people.

### **Panel Meeting 1 – EU Funding and Opportunities to Work, Study and Travel – 22/9/18**

At the first Panel meeting, members identified the things that are most important to them as children and young people. They were encouraged to think about what they need to be happy, healthy and safe. Their ideas were then used in all following sessions to frame how exiting the EU could impact their lives and the things that are important to them. This exercise helped Panel members to think about what sort of recommendations are needed to make sure that the things that are important to them are protected after Brexit.

At the first meeting, Panel members heard from Emily Beever who works for YouthLink Scotland. She spoke about EU funding and how it links to opportunities such as Erasmus+ and other youth services. Erasmus+ is a programme that helps young people to volunteer and study abroad.

The group then discussed what might happen to EU funding after Brexit. They considered what losing access to EU funding might mean for them. The Panel then made recommendations on this topic. You can read these [on page 12](#).

### **BBC Radio 5 Live Interview – 21/9/18**

One member of the Panel was interviewed on BBC Radio 5 Live. The interview included children and young people from England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland. It gave them the opportunity to discuss a range of issues about how exiting the EU could impact on children and young people.

Beccie was the only young woman to participate in the interview and also the youngest person to be interviewed as part of the discussion.

### **Scottish Parliament Festival of Politics – 13/10/18**

Panel Members participated in an event at the Scottish Parliament about Brexit and Young People. Panel members had the opportunity to pose questions as part of a debate. They also conducted some short interviews with speakers, which helped identify resources required for future Panel meetings.

## Panel Meeting 2 – Economy, Trade and Jobs – 20/10/18

At the second Panel meeting we discussed the economy, trade and jobs. Panel members heard from Helen Martin, Scottish Trade Union Congress, about the role of the single market and how it impacts the UK economy. Members also learned about how trade works within the single market and the related effects on jobs and workers' rights under EU law (You can find out more about this on the briefing provided on the topic).

The Panel then discussed how these issues linked to the things that they need to be happy, healthy and safe. You can read the recommendations [on page 16](#).

## Cross-Party Group on Children and Young People – 25/10/18

Members of the Panel were invited to present at the Scottish Parliament Cross-Party Group on Children and Young People. A Cross-Party Group is a meeting of politicians and other organisations to discuss particular issues. This meeting was attended by three MSPs: Alex Cole-Hamilton, Kezia Dugdale and Maree Todd, Minister for Children and Young People.

At the meeting, Panel members spoke about the work they had done so far and the recommendations they had agreed. They also asked the adults in the room to share the work of the Panel with the people they work with.

The Panel asked MSPs how they could support the Panel's work. Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP agreed to ask a question in the Scottish Parliament focusing on how the Scottish Government will use the Panel's final recommendations. Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP has also agreed to a second meeting with the group to discuss how else he can work with them.

## Meeting with the UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights – 9/11/18

Two members of the Panel were asked to participate in an engagement session with the UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights. The Rapporteur is an expert who works for the United Nations. His job is to come to find out how well countries are doing around poverty and human rights. As part of his visit he wanted to hear directly from children and young people.

The members of the Panel spoke about how exiting the EU may impact on poverty in the UK and Scotland. They worked with other children and young people from Glasgow to discuss potential solutions to poverty.

The Panel members were later involved in a conversation with the UN Special Rapporteur and lots of adults who work for organisations that support children, young people and their families.

The Panel members discussed their recommendations and how we need to make sure that children and young people who experience poverty and protected from any economic impacts of Brexit.

## Meeting with Cabinet Secretary for Government Business and Constitutional Relations – 17/11/18

Members of the Panel met with the Cabinet Secretary for Government Business and Constitutional Relations, Michael Russell, to update him on their work and recommendations agreed so far. The Cabinet Secretary is responsible for talking to the UK Government about what the Scottish Government wants to happen and what it thinks is needed to get the best results for Scotland.

### Panel Meeting 3 – Rights – 24/11/18

At the third Panel meeting, the group focused on human rights and how leaving the EU may impact the enjoyment of these. The Panel heard from Juliet Harris from Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) and Bruce Adamson, the Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland.

The Panel learned about their rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Members then heard about the role the EU plays in protecting and promoting children's rights, and human rights more generally.

The Panel made recommendations to the Scottish Government setting out how children and young people's rights could be better protected after Brexit. They also made some suggestions about the sorts of policies that would uphold their rights. You can see these [on page 20](#).

The Panel also talked about how children and young people could be made to feel less uncertain about big political decisions in the future. This included discussions about the type of information they want and how they want this information to be communicated to children and young people.

### Scottish Leaders Forum – 12/1//18

Four members of the Panel spoke at a meeting of the Scottish Leaders Forum. The Scottish Leaders Forum is a meeting of adults in leadership positions across Scotland. This includes heads of charities, people who work for the Scottish Government, for local authorities and leaders of other organisations.

The topic of the meeting was on how exiting the EU might impact on children and young people. The Panel were asked to present on the work they had been doing and what they wanted to happen next.

Panel members chose topics from the previous meetings and presented on these. They also discussed why listening to children and young people was so important and outlined the recommendations agreed on by the Panel.

Panel members asked the adults present to think about how they could take the work of the Panel forward to help make sure the needs of children and young people are met after Brexit.



## 4. What did the Panel say?

The Panel has made a range of recommendations to the EU, Scottish and UK Governments within each of its five chosen areas. Panel members want negotiators and politicians on all sides to focus on these recommendations to ensure positive outcomes for children and young people after Brexit. This section lays out the Panel's views, including areas where there were differences of opinion between Panel members. Panel members had a diverse range of views and opinions about Brexit and we hope to reflect this in our report.

### 4.1 EU Funding and opportunities to work, study and travel in other countries



#### 4.1.1 EU funding

The Panel discussed how EU funding could be affected by leaving the EU. They learnt about projects that are supported by EU funding, such as Erasmus+, breakfast clubs in schools, education and youth training programmes. They also discussed other work supported by EU funding, such as health and scientific research.

##### *Erasmus+*

The Panel learnt that it is not essential to be part of the EU for a country to take part in Erasmus+. There are some countries outside of the EU that are members of Erasmus+, such as Israel, Canada, Norway and Switzerland. The Panel learnt that the UK and/or Scottish Government could decide to stay part of Erasmus+ but that they would have to continue to contribute money towards the programme in order to do so.

The Panel suggested that programmes like Erasmus+ had a big role to play. They identified

that these programmes give young people the chance to experience new cultures and ways of life and to meet new people. They felt that opportunities like this are really important as it gives them the chance to learn new languages and have new experiences. They also felt that learning about new cultures helps to tackle and prevent racism and intolerance.

However, some members suggested that sometimes it felt like these opportunities were only open to children and young people who went to university and that it can be hard for children and young people from more disadvantaged backgrounds to access them. They felt that we needed to make it clearer that these opportunities were for all children and young people and provide more targeted resources to support this. They also felt that younger children didn't always have access to these opportunities and that this was an area where improvements could be made.

### **Recommendations on EU funding (Erasmus+)**

**The UK Government and the Scottish Government should continue to contribute to Erasmus+.** This will allow young people to study, volunteer and participate in youth work projects in Europe and allow young people from other EU countries to study, volunteer and participate in youth work projects in the UK.

**Give more money to young people who are participating in Erasmus+ to make it easier to participate.** Increasing the amount of money available to young people will encourage young people from more deprived backgrounds to apply.

**Create an extra grant fund for young people from certain backgrounds to give them access to extra money to participate in Erasmus+.** Giving money based on need will support young people from more deprived backgrounds to access extra money to support them to take part.

**Make it easier to find out information about the youth work and volunteering opportunities young people can access through Erasmus+.** These opportunities support young people who are not in university to work, travel and live in other countries.

**Create programmes for younger children and young people who are currently in school similar to Erasmus+ to allow them to go abroad.** These opportunities must be available to all children and young people not just those who are 'doing well'. This will provide opportunities to all to experience other countries, cultures and their education.

**Create funding to allow children and young people to access leisure and sport opportunities while abroad.** Sport and leisure are important to children and young people. There should be chances for them to go abroad to take part in these activities.

## Youth Services

The Panel also heard about a range of youth services that receive funding from the EU.

They felt that these services are really important to children and young people as they give them chances to spend time with other children and young people and to have fun.

They said these opportunities help children and young people's mental health as they stop them being bored or lonely. They were also clear that they were very important for supporting children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and for other groups, like young carers, who sometimes need extra help and support.

The Panel was clear that the youth services that currently receive EU funding must continue to be funded after we leave the EU. Panel members understood that such funding would have to come from other sources, such as the Scottish Government. Members were clear that replacing funding for previously EU-funded projects must not have a negative impact on youth services currently funded by the Scottish Government.

### *Recommendations on EU funding (youth services)*

**Make sure all youth projects and services that currently receive funding from the EU continue to receive funding.** Whatever the outcome of negotiations the services that support children and young people must continue to receive funding.

**If the UK government has to fund projects that currently receive EU funding after Brexit, this money must not be taken from other services that children and young people use.** Funding for EU projects must not come at the expense of other services that are vital for children and young people; all must be protected.

## Science and Health Research

The Panel also discussed the importance of funding for science and health research. Members felt this was important to support future opportunities at UK-based universities and also to ensure that children and young people are able to enjoy the **best available standard of health as reflected in Article 24 of the UNCRC**. Panel members want to make sure that science and health research continues to receive funding after we leave the EU.

### *Recommendations on EU Funding (Science and health research)*

**Science and health research must continue to receive the same amount of funding as currently provided by the EU.** Research in science and health is vital for supporting healthcare and developing new technology. Whatever the outcome of negotiations, these research areas must continue to receive at least the same amount of funding as they currently receive.

### 4.1.2 Opportunities to work, study and travel



The Panel was clear that opportunities to work, study and travel in Europe are important. They discussed how Brexit might affect both their opportunities to go to other countries and their family and friends' opportunities to live in the UK. They also discussed how limiting the opportunities of others to come and work in the UK might impact services such as the NHS.

The Panel discussed the importance of experiencing new cultures. They suggested that travel gave them the chance to do this and helped build an appreciation of, and respect for, other ways of life. They also felt that travelling helped them to build their own confidence. They wanted to make sure it would still be easy to travel after Brexit and

stressed that the UK and Scottish Governments need to find new ways to help children and young people to experience travel opportunities in Europe.

The Panel also felt that having opportunities to work in other countries is important. They felt that the UK Government should try to create a work visa to make it easier for people to travel for work. They also wanted to try to make it easier for lots of different types of work opportunities in other countries to be supported.

The Panel was concerned about travel becoming increasingly expensive. They discussed the cost of visas and increased costs of flights. Panel members identified that this may have a disproportionate impact on children and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds who may struggle to meet these increased costs.

The Panel was particularly worried about how, if it became more difficult to travel, they might struggle to see family and friends in other countries. The Panel knows how important seeing family and friends is to their development and did not want new rules and costs to get in the way of this.

They were also concerned about how difficult it might be to get visas after Brexit, if these were to be introduced. The Panel wanted to make sure that there was clear information about any changes to visa requirements and that there were lots of ways to apply for a visa. They also wanted the UK Government to look at a special visa for young people, so they could easily work in other countries.

The Panel also identified that if it became harder to work in the UK this might impact on services such as the NHS, which rely on staff from other countries. They felt this could have a negative impact on their health and wellbeing.

It was suggested, however, that leaving the EU might lead to an increase in opportunities to work, study and travel in countries outside of the EU.

### **Recommendations on opportunities to work, study and travel services)**

**Visas should not be required for travel inside the European Union; this must be supported by continued co-operation on security to ensure that we are safe from crime.** It is important to make sure children, young people and their families can still travel inside the EU if we leave. However, this should not mean we are less safe.

**If visas are introduced for travel inside the European Union they should be cheap so that everyone can afford them.** It is important that all children, young people and families have the opportunity to travel in the EU; no-one should be priced out of purchasing a visa.

**If visas are introduced for travel inside the EU, there should be a fast-track visa application process for people with families in EU countries.** It is important that families who live across two countries can get quick visa access to ensure they are not separated.

**If visas are introduced for travel inside the EU, the application should be easy with a choice of ways to submit it (e.g. in the post, online).** Visa applications need to be made as easy as possible, a range of methods to apply would make this easier.

**If visas are introduced for travel inside the EU then the EU, UK and Scottish Governments should develop special work visas to make it easier for people who work in EU countries a lot.** It is important that those who travel for work can do so if a visa system is created.

**If the UK leaves the EU then the UK Government and the Scottish Government should create a new interrailing/ travel pass that makes travel between EU countries cheaper.** It is important that all children and young people have opportunities to travel and experience other cultures. Cheap travel cards will support them to do this.

**If there are going to be changes to travel rules, the UK and Scottish Governments must publish clear and simple information about what these are so that children and young people know what's happening.** Children and young people need to have clear information about what changes there will be to travel.

**If there are changes to rules for working in EU countries then the EU, UK and Scottish Governments should create a new system to allow people from the UK to work in other EU countries.** It is important to be able to work in other countries and experience other cultures; a working visa system similar to that in Australia should be considered to support this.

**The UK and Scottish Governments should create a strategy to help children and young people from more deprived backgrounds access experiences and opportunities in Europe.** Opportunities to work and travel can be difficult to access for those from more deprived backgrounds, it is vital to support these groups to access opportunities.

## 4.2 The Economy, trade and jobs



The Panel discussed how being part of the EU affects the UK and Scottish economies. They learnt that the UK pays more to the EU than the EU gives it back (e.g. in EU funding). However, they also learnt that there are other ways in which being part of the EU affects the UK economy – such trading with EU countries and having access to EU workers. The Panel felt that having a strong economy was important to make sure that children and young people were happy and healthy. For example, they said it was important that the people caring for them could earn enough money to support them.

### *Trade*

Panel members discussed the differences between trading with EU countries and trading with countries outside of the EU. They learnt that being part of the EU's trade system (the 'Single Market') means that UK companies can sell easily to lots of customers in other EU countries and buy easily from EU companies. However, they also heard that being part of this EU's system means the UK can't make its own trade deals with countries outside of the EU (like the USA or China for example).

The Panel felt that trade was an important part of making sure the UK and Scotland had strong economies after Brexit. However, there was a distinction between members who thought that the UK should focus on keeping strong trade links with the EU and those members who thought the UK should instead be focusing on creating new trade deals of our own with countries outside the EU. Voting showed that a majority of the Panel prioritised a close future trade relationship with the EU over the UK being able to make its own trade deals with countries outside of the EU.

The Panel also talked about how trade deals are reached and learnt that negotiations often happen in private between the EU and the UK Government. The majority of Panel members thought these negotiations should be public and there should be a role for the Scottish Government in any new trade deal negotiations after Brexit, even though trade is a reserved matter (something only the UK Government can make decisions on).

### **Recommendations on trade (trade relations)**

**Scotland (and the rest of the UK) should retain strong trade links with the EU.** The EU has 200 million consumers living in it and the Panel thinks it is important that the UK can still sell its products to the EU easily and buy things from the EU easily.

**There should be a role for the Scottish Government when the UK is negotiating new trade deals after Brexit.** This could help make sure that new trade deals reflect what people in Scotland want and what they value.

**When new trade deals are being negotiated this should be public.** The Panel thinks it is important that the public have non-biased and clear information about the content of new trade deals so they can see what it will mean for their lives.

The Panel discussed food standards and product safety for items we buy from other countries. They learnt about EU rules which try to make sure that things are safe for people to eat and use.

The Panel felt it was important to make sure that leaving the EU does not expose them to unsafe food or toys which could negatively affect their health. Members were worried that trade deals in the future might mean lower standards for food quality or for the sorts of products that come into the country. The Panel were clear that any future trade deals should ensure high standards for food and product safety.

### **Recommendations on trading standards**

**The UK Government should make sure that all future trade deals ensure high food quality standards.** The Children and Young People's Panel on Europe does not want food to be able to be treated with chemicals while it is being transported as this can make it unsafe.

**The UK Government should make sure that food and products are safe before they are allowed to be sold.** The Panel thinks it is important that all foods and products (like toys) are safe before they can be sold to people.

The Panel also discussed how future trade deals could affect things like human rights, animal welfare and the environment. These issues were very important to members of the Panel.

Panel members were worried about the safety of farm animals and wanted to make sure that countries we make trade deals with in the future treat them well. Some members were also worried about human rights standards in other countries. They felt it was important that before any new trade deals were made, the UK should be sure that the rights of workers in these countries will be respected and protected and that people won't be exploited to allow UK consumers to enjoy cheaper prices. Panel members also want to make sure that trade deals take account of and protect the environment.

### **Recommendations on trade (protecting rights)**

**The UK Government should make sure all future trade deals respect the human rights of workers.** The Panel thinks that future trade deals should only be made with countries that respect the human rights of people who live there. This should include good health and safety rules and fair pay.

**The UK Government should make sure that all future trade deals should promote animal welfare.** The Panel thinks it is important that our trade deals with countries ensure animals are treated well.

**The UK Government should make sure that all new trade deals respect the environment.** Trading with countries far away means products need to travel longer distances to get to shops. It also could also mean trade with countries that have low environmental standards and so damage the environment when making products. The Panel wants to make sure that all trade deals take this into account and respect the environment.

### ***Farming and Fishing***

Panel members from rural areas were particularly concerned about the impact of exiting the EU on farming and fishing.

Panel members felt that farming and fishing are big parts of the Scottish economy and create lots of jobs, particularly in more rural areas. They felt that the Scottish Government needs to protect those working in these industries. However, the Panel was also clear that there was a need to balance the needs of the economy and environmental/conservation concerns, calling for realistic standards on how many fish can be caught.

**Farmers and the fishing industry in the UK must continue to receive the same amount of funding currently provided by the EU.** Whatever the outcome of negotiations farming and the fishing industry must continue to receive the same amount they currently receive from the EU to protect jobs.

**If the UK leaves the EU then the Scottish Government and the UK Government must ensure high but realistic standards on how much fish can be caught.** The Panel thinks it is important to ensure that we do not over-fish but also do not contribute to job losses in the fishing industry.

### ***Jobs***

The Panel learnt about the rules that the EU has to protect workers' rights. These include rules about safety in the workplace and a limit on how many hours you can be made to work in a week. The Panel felt that these rights were very important and should be kept after the UK leaves the EU. The Panel wanted to make sure that Scotland is a world leader in human rights.

In particular, Panel members were clear that people should have a healthy and safe work environment. They wanted health and safety rules for workplaces to be kept and expanded upon.

The Panel also felt that the UK Government should keep rules which protect people from being made to work too many hours in a week. The Panel felt it was important to get breaks and for people to be able to have time to rest and socialise. They also said this was particularly important for children and young people, as it allowed them to spend quality time with their parents and/or carers.

### ***Recommendations on jobs (worker's rights)***

**The UK Government should keep all workers' rights that the EU gives to workers.** The Children and Young People's Panel on Europe thinks it is important for people to be happy, healthy and safe at work. The Panel wants Scotland to be a world leader in the way workers are treated.

**The UK Government should maintain and improve rules on health and safety at work that come from the EU.** There are EU laws which protect workers' rights to a safe workplace. It is important that people are able to be safe at work and are not exposed to lots of risks.

**The UK Government should keep EU rules which prevent people from being forced to work long hours.** The Panel thinks it is important that we keep the rules that give workers the right to breaks and to refuse to work more than 48 hours a week. It is important that hours aren't too long so that workers have time to rest, relax, socialise and so parents can spend time with their children.

### **Wages**

The Panel heard about work-related areas where the EU has hasn't introduced many or any rules. Panel members thought these might provide opportunities for the UK and/or Scottish Government to take these issues forward after Brexit and make things better. A big topic covered was how much people are paid.

Panel members spoke about the minimum wage, the lower minimum wage for 16-24 year olds compared to adults and also the rules about paying apprentices. The EU does not set rules for the UK in these areas. Panel members also discussed the payment of adults who are working temporarily in the UK but have come from other EU countries.

The Panel discussed how the Scottish and the UK Governments could tackle some of these issues after we leave the EU to improve things for workers of all ages and anyone who depends on them for support. The Panel felt that the Scottish and UK Governments should review the pay of 16-24 year old workers and do research to find out what the impact would be of increasing this to the same level as older adults. Some Panel members said they wanted the UK and Scottish Government to create a law that says 16-24 year olds have to be paid the same as older workers. This was an area of disagreement among Panel

members. Some members thought that older adults might need the money more. After discussion the Panel did agree to recommend a change to the law on the minimum wage. The Panel also wanted the EU to make a rule stopping the age discrimination against 16-24 year old workers.

The Panel want the UK and Scottish Government to make sure everyone is able to have a satisfactory standard of living after we leave the EU. They felt it was important to raise the minimum wage for all workers and to make the pay for apprentices higher.

The Panel also want the EU to change the rules for 'posted workers'. 'Posted workers' are people who have come to work in the UK temporarily from other EU country, for example construction workers coming to build a school in the UK. The EU allows companies to pay these workers the minimum wage from their home country, which could be lower than the UK minimum wage. The Panel felt this must be changed.

### **Recommendations on jobs (wages)**

**The UK Government should have a review of how much employers need to pay 16-24 year old workers.** The Panel thinks it is important to have a review to allow the UK Government to understand what the impact of increasing the minimum wage for 16-24 would be.

**The UK Government should make the minimum wage for 16-24 year olds the same as for adults.** The Panel thinks it is important to make sure that younger workers are not discriminated against on account of their age and can afford things they need to live.

**The EU needs to create a rule which says 16-24 year old workers cannot be paid less because of their age.** The Panel thinks it is important that if we retain links with the EU that it makes a rule to make sure young workers are not discriminated against on account of their age and can afford things they need to live.

**The UK Government should make the minimum wage higher for everyone older than 16.** The Panel thinks it is important that everyone should earn enough to enjoy a satisfactory standard of living and be able to afford the things they need.

**The UK Government and Scottish Government should increase the level of pay for apprentices.** The Panel thinks it is important apprentices do not get discriminated against and have enough money to afford the things they need to live. They also think the low level of pay puts people off doing apprenticeships.

**The EU and UK Government should make sure 'posted workers' are paid the same as UK workers.** The Panel thinks it is important that everyone who works here is paid a fair amount of money and that wages in the UK are not undercut.

### ***Maternity and paternity leave***

The Panel felt that it was important for the rights of new parents to be both protected and extended after Brexit. The Panel wanted the UK Government to make sure they continued all the current financial support for new parents. They felt that new parents should not experience a loss in the amount of time they could take off work when they have a baby because of leaving the EU.

The Panel also thought that parents should have more options to share their time off work. At the moment new mothers get more time off than new fathers. The Panel felt more should be done to make this equal. The Panel also recommended that new systems should be put in place to reduce the impact of parental leave and pay on individual employers and that the UK Government should do more to cover this.

**The UK Government should maintain all current maternity and paternity pay and leave.** It is important new parents and babies don't lose money.

**The EU and UK Governments should increase the time off and the money that companies have to give to all employees who have a baby and they should create a new system to cover some of the increased cost to reduce the impact on employers.** The Panel think it is important that parents have enough money to support new-born children when they have to take time off work. They also think it is important that the system makes it easier for parents to split this time and spend some time with the child and some time at work.

## **4.3 Rights**

### ***Protecting children and young people's rights***

The Panel learnt about their rights as children and young people under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This is an international document that sets out 42 specific rights that apply to everyone under the age of 18. Its aim is to make sure that all children and young people grow up happy, healthy, safe and included.

The Panel learnt about EU laws that protect their rights as children and young people. For example, they talked about the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. This document repeats some of the rights of children and young people included in the UNCRC and makes them part of EU law.

The Panel heard that the UK Government will not be keeping the EU Charter after Brexit but that the UNCRC will still apply because the UK has signed up to it through the United Nations. Although the UK is signed up to the UNCRC as international law, the Panel learnt that there are things the Scottish and UK Governments could be doing to make sure that children and young people's rights under the UNCRC are protected in UK and Scots law more strongly after Brexit.

The Panel thought that children and young people should not lose any rights as a result of leaving the EU. The members felt that the Scottish and UK Government should make sure that all rights that are part of EU law are still promoted, protected and respected after we leave the EU. They also believed that there was an opportunity for the UK and Scotland to go even further and become world leaders in protecting children and young people's human rights.

The Panel felt that the UNCRC should be key to the UK and Scottish Governments' approaches to protecting children and young people's rights after Brexit. The UK and Scotland are members of the UNCRC and their governments have said they will pay attention to it. However, at the moment there is no way for children and young people to make sure their rights are respected and nothing to hold adults to account if their rights are violated. The Panel felt this needed to change. Members said that the Scottish and UK Governments should fully incorporate the UNCRC into law. Fully incorporating the UNCRC would mean that children and young people's rights would have to be respected by everyone, including judges, politicians, teachers, doctors and social workers. It would also mean that every law would have to comply with the UNCRC and children and young people would be able to go to court if the government breached their rights. The Panel felt that moving towards incorporation was really important as leaving the EU could have a big impact on children and young people's rights. In their opinion, incorporating the UNCRC would help make sure that children and young people's needs were met, and their rights respected, after we leave the EU.

The Panel learnt that the Scottish Government has committed to incorporating the principles of the UNCRC into domestic law. Members welcomed this and felt that it was really important for the Scottish Government to tell children and young people what things to expect when the UNCRC is incorporated in Scotland.

The Panel felt that the Scottish Government should lay out how it will promote, protect and respect the different rights in the UNCRC and how it will achieve the best outcomes for children and young people in each of these areas. The Panel discussed some ideas for the sort of things they want to see after UNCRC incorporation in Scotland. These are in the following sections.

**The UK Government and Scottish Government should fully incorporate the UNCRC as soon as possible.** The Panel thinks that full incorporation of the UNCRC will hold adults to account and ensure the needs of children and young people are met after we leave the EU.

**The Scottish Government should tell children and young people what sort of policies and outcomes they can expect from incorporating the UNCRC.** The Panel think it is important that the UNCRC is seen as a baseline for the rights of children and young people and that the Government should show how they will go further to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people.

**The UK Government should remain an active member of human rights organisations such as the United Nations and the Council of Europe.** The Panel think it is important that the UK remains a world leader in human rights and sets an example for other countries.

**The UK Government and Scottish Government should make sure that all other human rights protections that we currently have as a member of the EU should be retained after we leave the European Union.** The Panel thinks it is important that children and young people do not experience fewer rights, or lower protection of existing rights, because we are leaving the EU.

### ***The Right to Identity***

The Panel was concerned about how leaving the EU might impact on their ability to learn about other cultures. The Panel wanted the Scottish Government to do more to allow children and young people to discuss their identity and explore other cultures after we leave the EU.

The Panel also raised concerns about how their political identities in discussions about issues like Brexit could impact on their lives. They said that they knew of friends falling out when they disagreed with each other about Brexit and that debates often were not respectful. The Panel wanted the Scottish Government to fund programmes that allowed children and young people to discuss politics and learn how to do this respectfully.

**The Scottish Government needs to make sure that all children and young people are able to express their identity and learn about other identities.** The Panel think multiculturalism is important and leaving the EU could threaten this.

**The Scottish Government needs to fund different programmes that help children and young people to have respectful political debates with people who disagree with them.** The Panel has raised concerns about how identity can become an issue when discussing political views and want to make sure all children and young people are able to hold respectful political discussions even when they disagree with people.

### ***The Right to Health***

The Panel had lots of ideas of ideas about how the Scottish Government could meet their right to health. Good health is something they felt was really important to all children and young people. The Panel felt the Government needed to make sure children experienced positive health and wellbeing to help them do the things they enjoyed.

The Panel spoke about the importance of their mental health and wellbeing. They spoke about the importance of services like CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), which help people who need specialist help with their mental health, and also the need for support for everyone when they are feeling down, upset or lonely. The Panel felt anyone might need help with their mental health at some point, but in some areas of the country this was harder to access because there was less support available. The Panel felt the Scottish Government needed to make sure that leaving the EU did not impact on funding for mental health support, no matter the impact on the economy. The Panel said that the Government needs to make sure everyone has access to support with their mental health, regardless of where they live.

The Panel also felt it was really important for the NHS to get enough money when we leave the EU to make sure people experienced good health. The Panel felt that this was needed to ensure short waiting times and making sure people could get appointments when they need them.

**The Scottish Government needs to uphold children and young people's right to health by funding mental health support after we leave the EU.** The Panel thinks it is important that children and young people have access to mental health support when they need it, regardless of where they live in a manner that is private.

**The Scottish Government needs to ensure continued funding for the NHS after we leave the EU.** The Panel thinks it is important to reduce waiting times and to get appointments quickly.

## The Right to Education

The Panel wanted children's rights to be at the heart of Scottish education. They felt that children should be able to influence decisions about their education and that education should promote and respect their rights. Younger members, for example, wanted schools to respect their rights to play and education by offering chances to learn through play in school.

The Panel felt that the Scottish Government should make sure that all children and young people, regardless of their needs and where they live, are able to experience the best possible education. The Panel was worried about pupils with additional support needs not having their needs met. They wanted the Scottish Government to make sure that additional support for learning received enough funding after we leave the EU.

The Panel was also concerned about how pupils in rural areas could miss out on education because of a lack of teachers to teach certain subjects. The Panel wanted the Scottish Government to commit extra money to education to get new teachers in rural and island schools or to find new solutions to this problem.

The Panel also said it was really important that they could talk to their teachers about politics in school. They felt that discussing big issues like Brexit with adults could help them make informed decisions. They wanted the Scottish Government to make sure all children and young people could learn about politics in Scotland's schools in an unbiased way.

**The Scottish Government should make sure that children and young people's rights are at the heart of Scottish education.** The Panel thinks it is important that they are able to influence decisions about their education to ensure it meets their needs. They also think it is important that their right to play is upheld by the facilities and the curriculum.

**The Scottish Government should make sure that all children and young people can learn about politics in their school so they feel informed about issues like Brexit.**

The Panel thinks it is important that pupils have the chance to talk about politics with their teachers to help them make informed decisions.

**The Scottish Government needs to commit extra money after we leave the EU to make sure that pupils from rural communities can access all aspects of the curriculum.** The Panel think it is important that all children and young people can do the subjects they want to do.

**The Scottish Government needs to make sure that Additional Support for Learning receives enough funding after we leave the EU to ensure that all pupils' right to education is upheld.** The Panel think it is important all pupils regardless of their needs must be able to be involved in school and access learning.

## Tackling uncertainty

The Panel wanted all children, young people and their families to be able to learn about children's rights. They felt it was very important for everyone to know about rights as this means they can protect them. They wanted the Scottish Government to develop programmes to help everyone learn about children's rights.

The Panel also wanted the Scottish Government to help children and young people learn about big political issues like Brexit. They said children and young people needed child-friendly resources in order to make informed choices. They also identified that parents have a key role to play in supporting children and young people to understand issues like Brexit.

The Panel said that the Scottish Government should make an online hub for children and young people to learn about politics and current affairs. This could help point them in the right direction to learn about issues. Members of the Panel also wanted the Scottish Government to create a hub for parents so they can access information to discuss big issues with their children. However, there were mixed views on these points. Some members emphasised the need for such information to be unbiased and independent.

**The Scottish Government needs to ensure that all children, young people and families can learn about the UNCRC so that everyone knows about rights as we leave the EU.** The Panel thinks knowing about your rights is really important and that everyone needs to understand children's rights.

**The Scottish Government needs to develop online hubs for children and young people to learn about politics to help inform them about big issues like Brexit.** The Panel thinks it is important that children and young people can learn about politics and more resources need to be developed to support this.

**The Scottish Government needs to create a parenting hub to help them learn about politics and to help them talk to their children about it.** The Panel thinks adults have a key role to play in supporting them to understand issues like Brexit. The Government needs to help families by providing them with child-friendly information.



**Presenting our work to the Cross-Party Group on Children and Young People**



**Presenting our work to the First Minister's Standing Council on Europe**



**Presenting our work at the Scottish Leaders Forum**

## Final thoughts and responses on the Panel experience

### Jack:

“My favourite part about being involved was meeting like-minded young people with whom I could comfortably discuss my views, and I feel that being involved was important for me as I feel empowered to speak out about these issues, and since we have influenced the Scottish Government and Parliament, I am of the opinion that we have been able to give the nation's young people a voice.”

### Julia:

“My favourite part about being involved was the ability to express my views and opinions in a safe and welcoming environment with people who were also just as involved and interested to hear what others like them had to say. Being involved was important for me because young people deserve a voice, and this way we can make sure that they aren't forgotten and what they have to say means something.”

### Beccie:

“My favourite part of being involved was the fact that I felt like my voice as a young person was being taken into consideration and valued. I also really enjoyed meeting other young people and sharing my views with them and hearing their own views.

“Being involved was important to me as I was helping to ensure that young people's voices and opinions are heard and not overlooked. It also helped me grow in confidence, doing a live interview on BBC Radio 5 Live was something I never would have thought I would have the chance, or the confidence to do, but with the help and support of the Panel, both adults and young people, I was able to. Being involved is important as it shows that young people's voices do matter and deserve to be heard and valued.”

### Soroush:

“Young people have to experience Brexit first-hand. Nowhere near enough information was given to young people about what Brexit would mean for us.

“Brexit will heavily alter Scotland's future, whether it's for the better or worse. The youngest generation, who will be the first to grow up in Scotland outside the EU, will be the first people to experience the consequences of Brexit. It is us who will grow up to be the electricians, the engineers, the entrepreneurs of tomorrow. It is our future, decided by adults – so far without the inclusion of our voice.”

### Oscar:

“One of our rights is to be heard and respected and we want to exercise that!”



Learning about our rights with Bruce Adamson and Juliet Harris

## 5. Conclusion

**“Young people have to experience Brexit first hand. Nowhere near enough information was given to young people about what Brexit would mean for us. Many young people are worried that they will have few opportunities, and this affects their future more than other groups.” (Panel member)**

The Children and Young People’s Panel on Europe was set up to make recommendations to the Scottish and UK Governments about what children and young people feel is most important to them as we leave the EU.

Through a process of discovery, discussion and decision making they have, over the last five months agreed recommendations in the following areas:

- EU funding
- Opportunities to work, study and travel in other countries
- The economy, trade and jobs
- Rights
- Tackling uncertainty.

They have spoken at lots of different events and meetings about these topics and have let important adult decision makers know what they think and what they want to happen next. They have developed their own knowledge about Brexit and their skills in speaking in public, to the media and presenting to others.

### What should happen next

#### Conversations with children and young people about Brexit

It is really important that adults take the recommendations of the Panel onboard and continue to ask children and young people about them, and what they think about issues that affect their lives. It is also really important that adults act on what children and young people tell

them and let children and young people know where and how their views have influenced their decisions. Feedback from adults is an essential part of engaging children and young people in a way that is meaningful.

This report provides a way to start talking to children and young people about the issues. It shows the sort of topics that children and young people have already spoken about. Adults can ask whether children agree or if they would do things differently. If they do agree, adults could ask children about how they want these recommendations to be implemented.

We have created a companion document alongside this report, that contains all the resources we have used with the Panel. We hope that this resource will help adults have conversations with children and young people about Brexit. We want to make sure that children and young people are involved in all discussions about Brexit, from local ones about how to tackle issues it creates in communities, to big decisions about how to ensure the economy supports good outcomes for children and young people.

### **Influencing the Scottish Government, UK Government and EU**

The Panel is interested in continuing to be involved in discussions about Brexit and would like to keep working with the Scottish and UK Governments and EU to ensure their recommendations are taken into account and acted on.

Children in Scotland and Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) will use the recommendations published in this report to push for change where there are opportunities, and we would encourage others to ask their elected officials to respond to these calls, and push for children and young people's voices to be heard in their own work. Children and young people may not have had a vote in the 2016 EU Referendum, but this does not mean they cannot have a say in what happens next.



**My Life, My Say Brexit Café, Edinburgh**

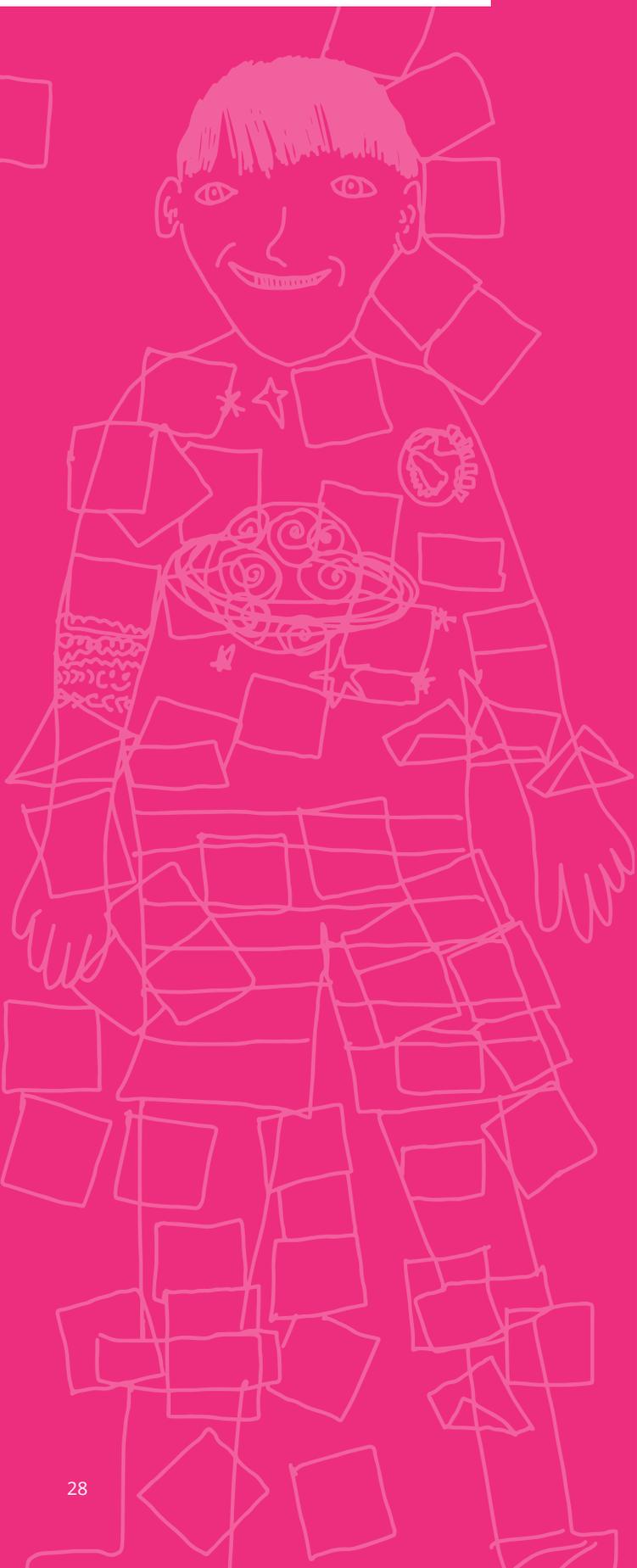


**Sharing our recommendations with Michael Russell MSP**



**Identifying where our rights are upheld**

# APPENDIX ONE: Full Methodology



**Children in Scotland and Together (Scottish Alliance for Children’s Rights) wanted to make sure that the Panel’s sessions and activities were designed and led in a way that fully respected children and young people’s right to participate and have their voices heard. To do this, we paid attention to a document from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child called “General Comment 12”. This sets out good examples of how adults should engage with children and young people in order to hear their views. We wanted to make sure that Panel members were supported to learn about the topics before creating recommendations on them. We also wanted to make sure that the Panel was as child and young person led as possible.**

## **Initial Literature Review**

As already mentioned, 16 and 17 year olds were not allowed to vote in the EU referendum. There was also little discussion in the parliamentary debates and media coverage that looked at how leaving the EU would impact on children and young people. However, lots of organisations that work with children and young people have asked children and young people what they think about leaving the EU and written reports about this.

We carried out a review of what had already been said by children and young people about Brexit. This review told us the issues that children and young people had already said were important. The list of topics does not reflect all the areas of EU policy that affect the lives of children and young people, just those that had already been talked about by children and young people in earlier studies. We used these areas to prompt discussion between Panel members, also giving them the opportunity to highlight new areas they did not think had been given enough attention.

## Training Day and Topic Selection

After holding a selection day to choose who was going to be on the Panel, we held a training day that gave the Panel members an introduction to children's rights, Brexit, and also gave an opportunity for the group to get to know each other.

At this training day we also introduced the Panel to the topics that the Scottish Government has powers over, and which topics only the UK Government can make decisions on (devolved/reserved matters).

We then discussed some of the issues that had been raised by other children and young people in the review. We used visual prompt cards to discuss the topics that had been raised by other children and young people, each card came with brief accompanying information about how it linked to the EU.

Panel members chose cards and discussed why they chose this topic and why it might be important to children and young people. This allowed the Panel to start to talk about how exiting the EU might impact on them and on other children and young people.

This exercise highlighted the diverse range of views held by Panel members, some of which contradicted the views of others. This provided an opportunity to talk about the importance of respecting others opinions and being able to voice them freely. This formed one of the core parts of the Panel's 'Group Agreement' which the members created at the training day and returned to at the beginning of each following session.

After the training day the group voted on which of these issues they wanted the panel to focus on. Each Panel member had three votes. Five topics were taken forward by the group;

- EU funding
- Opportunities to work, study and travel in other countries
- The economy, trade and jobs
- Rights
- Tackling uncertainty.

These topics were explored across three meetings. Some were discussed on their own and some were compiled into groups.

## Knowledge and Expertise

It is important that children and young people have access to clear information about a topic so that they can learn about it and form their own opinion before giving their views. Prior to each meeting, Panel members were provided with a briefing about the issues we would be covering. A briefing is a short booklet of information about the issues the Panel were talking about (copies of the briefings are available along with this report).

At each meeting Panel members also got to speak to relevant experts. These experts provided an introduction to the topics and how they related to children and young people. The experts the Panel heard from were;

- Maria Doyle, Legal Research Officer, Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights)
- Emily Beever, Senior Development Officer, YouthLink Scotland
- Helen Martin, Assistant General Secretary, Scottish Trades Union Congress
- Juliet Harris, Director, Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights)
- Bruce Adamson, Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland

These sessions were all participative and activity/discussion-based as we think this is the best way to help all children and young people get involved. All the experts led a discussion and activity so that all Panel members were able to participate. These activities were particularly useful for explaining complicated topics. For example, a tug of war activity was used to explain the power balance in trade negotiations, and helium balloons were used to explain how governments could bring rights 'within reach' of children and young people (incorporation).



Using characters to explore our needs



Charlie the Human Rights Heavyweight



Discussing how accessible our rights are

## Making Topics Relevant

The process of exiting the EU and the ways that this impacts on children and young people are complex. To support Panel members to think about how it might impact their lives, we used a characterisation exercise.

We drew around a Panel member and explored the topics that were important to all children and young people. These issues were added by post it note, written or drawn on to the characters. This was important as the Panel members had different levels of knowledge and understanding about the EU but they are all children and young people, so they all know the things that are important to them and their peers.

The characters were used throughout the project as a way of making the topics discussed relevant to children and young people. They allowed Panel members to draw on their knowledge, skills and lived experiences as children and young people, and identify why these topics might be important for them. For example, when the group talked about the economy, trade and jobs, they thought about how exiting the EU might impact on their ability to get a job, or the ability of their parents or carers to earn enough money to support them.

## Additional Opportunities

Panel members also had the opportunity to take part in additional activities, such as meetings with the Cabinet Secretary for Government Business and Constitutional Relations, a BBC Radio 5 Live interview and a meeting of the Scottish Parliament's Cross-Party Group on Children and Young People. Panel members were free to choose which events, if any, they wished to take part in. Where spaces were limited, staff tried to make sure that places were allocated fairly so that everyone had an equal chance to take part in these additional events.

## Making Recommendations

The Panel made a series of recommendations for the Scottish, UK Government and the EU covering each of their five topic areas. These were developed and agreed by the Panel members as follows:

Following the expert's presentation and activities, the group explored how what they had heard

linked to the issues that they said were important to children and young people. They then thought about solutions to any problems that they thought might arise.

The Panel then suggested what the Scottish Government, UK Government and the EU could do to ensure that children and young people are still able to access the things they need, or do the things they want to do, after we leave the EU. The Panel did not always agree about what should be done. There were often clear differences of opinion, and these differences have been highlighted in the report.

Many suggestions involve making sure protections or rights that we hold as a member of the EU are not lost. However, many also call on decision makers in Scotland and the UK to advance on what is currently provided by the EU.

Children in Scotland and Together staff typed up the suggested recommendations alongside context of why the Panel felt this was important. Panel members were able to let us know whether these were understandable and if they had any comments on the recommendations. The recommendations were finally voted on (anonymously) at the next meeting. This means that no-one else knew what people voted for. (see [flowchart to the right](#))

For the recommendations to be included in this report, 60% of the Panel members (who voted) had to agree to them. This means that all recommendations have the support of the majority of the children and young people involved. Some recommendations that were proposed didn't pass, this does not mean the views they contained are not important. To ensure people know about the range of opinions that Panel members had we have spoken about the different views in the main body of this report.

### Feedback

Alongside monthly meetings the Panel kept in touch on a dedicated Basecamp page. There were weekly updates from Children in Scotland and Together staff on Basecamp focusing on specific tasks for the group to engage with including participating in additional opportunities

outwith panel meetings and voting on their recommendations. Throughout this process we received letters from Michael Russell MSP with feedback on the Panel's work.

### Brainstorming at Group Session (Week 1)

- Panel members are given an **information sheet** introducing the topic.
- Visit by **expert** on the topic who leads an activity-based presentation.
- **Discussion, activities and questions** from the Panel.
- Panel members **brainstorm** ideas for recommendations at the end of the session.



### Building the Recommendations (Weeks 2-4)

- Ideas for recommendations from the group session are collated by staff and **shared with panel members via an online survey**.
- There are then 2-3 weeks for **anonymous review** by Panel members where they can let us know if the recommendations are understandable, add comments, suggest changes and suggest new recommendations.
- Panel members can ask staff for support with this if needed.
- Staff then produce a ballot paper with an **edited list of draft recommendations** ready for voting.



### Voting (Week 5)

- At the start of the next group session, Panel members vote on the **draft recommendations** by putting a tick or cross in the box.
- Panel members can add comments explaining why they agree or disagree if they want.
- Recommendations which get **60% approval** or more are passed and become final 'Panel recommendations'.
- Recommendations which fall short of 60% do not become 'Panel recommendations' but are included in this report for context and to reflect the diverse views of Panel members.



**together**

Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights

[www.togetherscotland.org.uk](http://www.togetherscotland.org.uk)



**Children  
in Scotland**

[www.childreninscotland.org.uk](http://www.childreninscotland.org.uk)



## **Listen to us**

A report on Brexit by the  
Children and Young People's  
Panel on Europe