

Children and Young people in Wales: “We’re frustrated and concerned about our futures after Brexit”

Earlier this year, the Welsh Government commissioned Children in Wales to identify children and young people’s views on Brexit.

Information was gathered through workshops in primary and secondary schools, youth clubs and forums, alongside online and social media surveys.

Over 700 children and young people aged between 8 and 21 participated in 39 workshops held across Wales, while young people attended a Young Wales Question Time event held in the Senedd on 24th October 2018.

The study found:

- Key issues for children who took part in primary schools were the future of the environment, their community, the Welsh language and the financial impact of Brexit;
- Secondary school students included were concerned about the environment; opportunities to study and travel abroad, the future of human rights and health and well-being;
- In the youth settings involved, the priority issues were education, the NHS, freedom of movement across Europe and engaging young people in political discussions. Support for farmers was a priority for Young Farmers and young people from North Wales.

Brexit has prompted young people to take an increased interest in politics, seeking a better understanding and more opportunities to be engaged. Many of the young people that responded felt frustrated at being denied a say in the Brexit referendum and felt that their votes could have made a difference to the outcome of the referendum.

The study concludes that the children and young people who engaged with the work showed a significant awareness of issues in this area and were keen to be involved in discussions on Brexit.

Minister for Children, Huw Irranca-Davies said:

“In Wales, children and young people have a right to have their say on issues that affect them. Brexit is perhaps the most significant political issue of our time. The outcome of the Brexit process will have a profound impact on the next generation, so it’s only right they have their views known and listened to.

“The message from this important piece of work is very clear. Young people are frustrated they have not been given a say. They’re concerned about their own futures, and the future of the country as

a whole.

“Brexit has prompted young people to take an increased interest in politics, seeking a better understanding and more opportunities to be engaged. The clear message from young people in Wales is that they want to be informed and involved, but they also want to be educated about how decisions are made and how they can use democratic processes to have their voice heard.

“The Welsh Government is firmly committed to ensuring our country’s interests are fully protected as the UK leaves the EU – and that includes the futures of the next generation.”