

# WHAT IS HEAR.EU?

Hear.EU is a study into the impact of leaving the EU on youth work in Scotland



YouthLink Scotland and Youth Scotland were funded by the Scottish Government to research and report on the impact of Brexit on youth work in Scotland—this infographic summarises the main findings and next steps.

## Key questions we asked:

- What is the impact of leaving the EU on the youth work sector?
- What is the experience of youth workers in discussing political issues, such as Brexit, with young people? How can this be supported?

168 youth work practitioners from all over Scotland were asked about their views through a combination of workshops (60 participants) and an online survey (108 respondents). The workshops used Youth Scotland's Creative Consultation methodology.



## Key Findings

**18%** Youth workers did not feel informed about Brexit, with **18% FEELING 'VERY UNINFORMED'**

**THE MAJORITY OF RESPONDENTS** were unsure of the financial impact of Brexit on youth work, although their perception was that it would negatively affect future funding

Respondents were divided between **THOSE WHO HAD (42%) AND THOSE WHO HAD NOT (42%)** provided information at any time during the EU referendum and negotiation period



**HALF OF RESPONDENTS HAD OBSERVED THAT COMMUNITY RELATIONS HAD BEEN NEGATIVELY IMPACTED SINCE THE EU REFERENDUM.**

Youth Workers reported a variety of impact including: young people feeling excluded from democracy, emboldened intolerance on social media, divided communities, and a loss of public trust in information



**LACK OF CONFIDENCE** was a reason many youth workers in our research did not discuss Brexit

Youth work in Scotland reaches 380,000 young people each week. The youth work sector workforce is comprised of 80,000 practitioners, of whom 70,000 are volunteers. Between them, YouthLink Scotland, the national agency for youth work, and Youth Scotland, the network for community based youth work, support member groups in urban, rural and island communities across Scotland.

Hear.EU was research project funded from December 2018 to January 2019 by the Scottish Government Brexit Stakeholder Engagement Fund.



**“Until politicians are able to stop using lots of jargon and say things in the same way as the rest of us, youth work will always be the jargon busting, thought provoking, group that young people can go to find out what’s going on.”**  
 Rachael, Vice-Chair of Highland Youth Parliament and #iwill Ambassador

**“I think young people are disillusioned by Brexit; the constant, and conflicting, media coverage and the fact that it’s still ongoing... I’m not sure if Brexit is a good example of democracy—young people were not able to vote in the EU referendum and so I’m not surprised that they feel frustrated and/or disengaged from it all.”**  
 Youth Worker, Survey Respondent

**“I am not confident myself as I have not become too engaged in the whole matter—it is too fluid.”**  
 Youth Worker, Workshop

**“The region I’m working in very significantly benefits from EU structural and other EU funding—and there is currently no guarantee that national government will maintain current levels of funding in future. This will impact on virtually every part of our lives.”**  
 Youth Worker, Survey Respondent

**“Youth work is needed to help rebuild a vibrant, participatory democracy where there are places to think, challenge and hold accountable for shaping our collective future.”**  
 Dave Beck, Lecturer in Community Development, University of Glasgow



The findings of the research shows a workforce who are almost in equal proportion providing and not-providing opportunities for young people to engage in discussion and dialogue about Brexit. We are empathetic to the workforce who do not feel confident, informed, or empowered to facilitate this dialogue; but we are concerned that a small proportion of youth workers do not think that it is youth works ‘place’ to do this; or who are prohibited from delivering youth work of this nature.

**What happens next?**

YouthLink Scotland and Youth Scotland will commit to the following next steps:

 Advocate for **SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENT** in youth work

 Prioritise **POLITICAL LITERACY** within sector strategy

 Develop and deliver **HIGH QUALITY TRAINING** to the youth work sector

 Work in partnership to support young people to **CHALLENGE RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA** and build positive community relations