



BREXIT:

Unheard Voices

Views from stakeholders across Scotland on leaving the EU.



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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Foreword



When I launched the Brexit stakeholder fund last year I said that I wanted it to be a megaphone for under-represented groups and organisations across Scotland. The aim was to ensure a full range of voices were heard, not just those with specialist staff and big budgets. I wanted to hear from as many individuals and groups as possible about how Brexit might impact them. Looking at this report I think it's fair to say we have managed to cover a wide range of groups and issues: from young and old, to rural and urban to agriculture and culture, as well as those grappling with the crucial issue of citizens' rights.

My colleagues and I have met with many people who participated in these projects over the last year and the same concerns have been raised time and time again: People are worried about losing the right to live, work and study where they want across Europe; they are deeply concerned about the possibility of food and or medicine shortages; and while many are concerned about the economic impacts on the workforce due to a loss of EU staff, they also feel that we will lose so much more in terms of cultural collaboration and exchange.

From the outset I was particularly keen to hear from children and young people, given that they will feel the effects of Brexit for much longer than any other groups and compounded by the fact those born after 1998 were unable to vote in the referendum. I was able to meet with The Children and Young People's Panel on Europe several times in the past year, including when they presented their findings to the First Minister's Standing Council on Europe. These impressive young people are the future of our country, they give me hope, and their voices need to be heard.

In 2016, Scotland voted to remain in the EU, but since then the Scottish Government has tried to put forward compromise solutions to mitigate some of the devastating impacts of Brexit. On every occasion these have been ignored by the UK Government. What these projects show on a micro level is that Brexit is complex and its impacts wide ranging. This has also been apparent throughout the negotiations and is why the only option, short of revoking Article 50 if we are facing a no-deal outcome, is to enable the people as a whole to have their say, based on what we now know about the realities of Brexit.

Our work doesn't end with the publication of this report – I know my colleagues across government are continuing to engage with their stakeholders to ensure that the voices of ordinary people living and working in Scotland are heard in the Brexit process.

This initiative has been about much more than gathering data, however important that may be. It is about hearing the unheard voices. It is by involving and listening to all our citizens that we can ensure a better future for everyone who lives here.

Michael Russell MSP
**Cabinet Secretary for Government
 Business and Constitutional Relations**

About the Brexit Stakeholder Engagement Fund



On Europe day 9 May 2018, the Cabinet Secretary for Government Business and Constitutional Relations, Michael Russell MSP, launched the Brexit Stakeholder Engagement Fund. The fund was set up to support a range of voices from communities and smaller organisations across Scotland to be heard and to inform the Scottish Government position from a greater understanding of the implications anticipated in relation to the UK leaving the EU.

As communities and organisations have faced the consequences of Brexit, the Scottish Government used the fund to:

- ★ Support organisations and communities to have constructive discussions and ensure that communities are able to have a voice in regards to Brexit;
- ★ Help organisations and communities who are themselves thinking about the effects of Brexit on their own future and to help them plan ahead and prepare;
- ★ To support information exchange and publication of evidence; and
- ★ To inform this report for the Scottish Government, to capture and distil the evidence base.

The fund supported a broad range of projects and activities across Scotland and views were sought regardless of how people voted. What was important was to understand the issues that arise from the UK's decision to leave the EU.

Many more engagement activities have and continue to take place with stakeholders across Scotland, to ensure that the Scottish Government is well placed to understand issues and views in relation to leaving the EU.

Factual details of projects funded can be found at Annex A.

Key findings from the organisations



Across Scotland people have told us that:

- ★ They are deeply worried about losing the right to live, work and study where they want across Europe;
- ★ They are concerned about being able to access food and medicines when needed after leaving the EU;
- ★ They worry about their ability to continue living in safe, strong and inclusive communities;
- ★ Organisations operating in Scotland are losing out on vital funding for research, infrastructure and business contracts;
- ★ Many organisations are deeply concerned about the ability to attract and especially retain workers with the right skills in every industry;
- ★ European Citizens from outside the UK are already feeling vulnerable, but voiced a stronger feeling of being welcome in Scotland, noting the First Minister's reassuring words after the referendum;
- ★ Rural areas are in particular concerned about losing people and Brexit being the final straw on already fragile and vulnerable communities;
- ★ Children and young people will have to live with the consequences for longer than other age groups and feel a strong sense of loss in relation to the opportunities that they were expecting to enjoy. Young people want to protect environmental, health and work place standards; and

- ★ Older people raised the prospect of pensions and savings being affected, but there were also broader fears that austerity may be intensified leading to those with less opportunities being affected most.

Conclusion

- ★ The fund has successfully enabled organisations and community groups to look deeper into the impact of Brexit on them. It has helped the Scottish Government to understand what gaps need to be addressed in helping organisations and community groups to better prepare for Brexit;
- ★ This process has also highlighted the stark truth of the negative impact that Scotland as a whole faces due to the uncertainty surrounding Brexit and Brexit itself. No amount of preparation will make this go away; and
- ★ The Scottish Government continues to prepare for all exit possibilities, and is strongly committed to safeguarding as far as we are able to do so, the interests of businesses, communities and individuals, including EU nationals in Scotland.

Children and Young People



Children and Young people overwhelmingly showed a keen interest in understanding the impact of Brexit on them. With support from the three organisations that were successful in gaining funding, they delivered research on various aspects of how the UK's exit from the EU is likely to impact children and young people and those who work with them.

Three projects were funded to consider the impact of Brexit on children and young people.

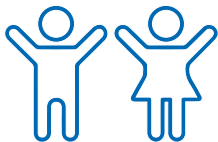
- ★ Children in Scotland's Children and Young People's Panel on Europe;
- ★ Youth Link Scotland's Hear.EU analysis report into the effects of Brexit on youth work in Scotland; and
- ★ My Life My Say Brexit Cafes hosted in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PANEL ON EUROPE

Children in Scotland, in Partnership with Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights), delivered the Children and Young People's Panel on Europe. The panel investigated the various aspects of Brexit that are likely to affect them, and what solutions they feel should be looked at. The panel met with the First Minister's Standing Council, were interviewed on BBC Radio 5 live, and met with a cross-party group at the Scottish Parliament, where they discussed their work and findings.

“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 decision makers with knowledge about what is important to children and young people.”

Children and Young People



Key points from the panel are that:

- o Children and young people are politically aware and their views should be heard, a right under article 12 of the UN Convention on Rights of the Child;
 - o There should be a continuation of the Erasmus+ programme;
 - o There should be continuation of EU funding for vital sectors such as agriculture and scientific research;
 - o There are serious security concerns in regards to leaving the European Union;
 - o Opportunities to work, study and travel in Europe are important and should be protected;
 - o Children and young people want to protect environmental, health and work place standards; and
 - o When new trade deals are being negotiated this should be conducted publicly.
- ★ Recommendations in the report stress the importance of EU funding programmes and continuing participation within them;
 - ★ The panel were concerned about future restrictions and increased cost which would make it more difficult to work, study and travel in Europe. They were particularly concerned about the risk of visas being required to travel in Europe and made a number of recommendations about the desirability of visa free travel as well as addressing cost and bureaucracy of visas, which could stop young people from travelling and working in Europe;
 - ★ European funded projects have supported a wide range of activity in Scotland, including work with young people, such as the Imagine's PUSH project. EU support has helped organisations and individuals to develop closer links with counterparts in the rest of the EU, helping them to learn from each other and develop their work in new and interesting ways; and



- ★ Throughout the report the importance of exchange and collaboration between people from different countries is highlighted. This is particularly important for artists and others looking to develop careers in the culture sector.

MY LIFE MY SAY AND SOCIAL BITE

Having been successful in delivering Brexit discussion cafes in England, Wales and other European countries, My Life My Say partnered up with Social Bite in Scotland to deliver this project that was aimed at college and university aged students and under 25 young professionals. The aim of these cafes was to create open dialogue between young people with different views on Brexit and to look at raising awareness in regards to their opinions. The Scottish cafés also fed into the overall report that was produced by the London School of Economics. Many of the same concerns were raised around rights

The following high-level points arose at the Brexit cafes in Scotland:

- ★ The difficulties leaving the EU will cause for young people seeking to work and study in European Union countries;
- ★ A deep concern in regards to the negative impact that Northern Ireland would face if there was to be a hard border;
- ★ There was a call for more clarity around protection on rights for young people in the United Kingdom and young European citizens;
- ★ The impact of Brexit on a divided UK, and how this is affecting young people; and
- ★ Serious concerns about racism, and the rise in xenophobia.

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

Children and Young People



The focus groups asked about what young people expected the potential impact of Brexit to be on their lives. Focus group participants were asked ‘how will Brexit affect you and other young people in the next ten years?’ This question was explicitly framed in an open-ended and neutral way in order to allow for positive, negative and neutral responses. Participants involved in the Brexit cafes overwhelmingly thought the impact of Brexit on young people would have negative consequences, though a much smaller number of participants envisioned the impact of Brexit optimistically.

“Many young people are worried that they will have fewer opportunities, and this affects their future more than other groups.”

HEAR.EU REPORT

Youth Scotland (the network for community based youth work) and YouthLink Scotland (the national agency for youth work) collaborated to investigate the impact of Brexit on the youth work sector in Scotland and to support youth workers in their work with young people on Brexit. Youth workers are on the front line when it comes to dealing with challenging questions and debates from young people. The report shows that 380,000 young people access youth work in Scotland each week, so there are many opportunities to inform and support young people to learn about the decisions that affect them.

Highlights from the report included:

- ★ 39% of respondents to the survey thought there would be a negative financial impact on their youth work organisation. Funding was a recurring concern;
- ★ A respondent stated “it will damage years of working together with our partners in the rest of Europe;” and
- ★ Youth workers did not feel confident speaking to young people about leaving the EU.



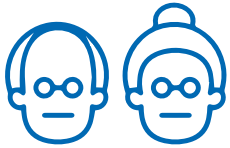
Organisations are worried that youth work will have less overall funding as a direct impact of Brexit because of the loss of specific EU programmes and project funds such as Leader, Erasmus+, and ESF. Loss of these funds will affect organisations ability to develop international cooperation, and will disproportionately impact organisations in rural areas and those working on youth employment priorities. There is also a negative impact on staff learning and development, and for young people to experience new places, culture, and volunteer, work or study in Europe. It is expected that Scotland will be a more inward looking place, with less diversity and increased isolation from those who have been partners of the youth work sector as decisions in regards to youth work are being made further away from communities.

“I am of the opinion that we have been able to give the nation’s young people a voice!”

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE ISSUES RAISED

The rights of children and young people are a key priority for the Scottish Government. We are working hard to create an inclusive Scotland that protects, respects, promotes and fulfils these rights. Children and young people have a right to be heard about the issues that affect them. Leaving the EU will have a huge impact on children and young people, and they will have to live with the consequences for longer. The Cabinet Secretary for Government Business and Constitutional Relations, Michael Russell MSP made a strong commitment to supporting the children and young people in Scotland, and to support them to have a voice in regards to Brexit. The Scottish Government will continue to make the case for the importance of free movement, and will urge the UK Government to take the specific needs of the sector into account in its negotiations with the EU. Scottish Government wrote to UK Government Minister Stephen Barclay MP, Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union on behalf of the Children’s Panel who requested a meeting to share their report.

Older People



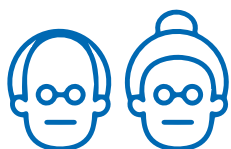
Older people in Scotland voiced their worries around availability of medicines and the continuation of various EU funded support networks. Alongside this there are serious concerns about the retention of EU Nationals who play a vital role in the delivery of health and social care for older people. The Health and Social Care Alliance looked into the effects faced by older people in Scotland. Using sessions in town halls they were able to hear and record what many older people in Scotland are thinking about in regards to Brexit.

Following on from various Health and Social Care Alliance run Town Hall conversations at the beginning of 2018 with the general public, the Alliance conducted further primary research to specifically explore the potential impact of Brexit on older people in Scotland. Collaborating with the International Foundation for Integrated Care and Scottish Care, this second strand of the consultation sought to gain a deeper understanding of older people's views. The following key themes from the research emerged:

- ★ Health and Social Care impacts;
- ★ Rights and Regulation;
- ★ Finance and Funding;
- ★ Identity; and
- ★ Young People.

A feeling of deep uncertainty crept into every discussion, regardless of the question that had been asked, echoing comments from the Health and Social Care Alliance's earlier Town Hall Conversation events. People who engaged with the consultation said that they were very unsure how older people in Scotland would be affected by Brexit, specifically raising fears about the health and social care impacts faced by the older people community.

“I worry that pensions will be badly affected.”



The report raises vital issues, and some of the following points emerged:

- ★ Access generally to health and social care, particularly in rural areas;
- ★ Concerns about recruitment and retention of staff in the Health and Social Care sector;
- ★ “We need to know what the UK’s position is;” and
- ★ “Employment rights could potentially be further eroded. Losing the working time directive could have a huge impact on our professional life.”

“People with long-term conditions will struggle as a result of reduced funding.”

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE ISSUES RAISED

The Scottish Government shares the concerns about the effects of the UK exiting the EU on recruitment and retention of staff in the health and care sector that older people have raised. While the long-term implications of Brexit cannot be predicted precisely, very real and stark impacts have already been felt, with the Nursing and Midwifery Council reporting a massive decline in the number of registration applications from nurses and midwives from the European Economic Area and Switzerland over the years immediately following the EU referendum. Around 13,000 citizens from other EU nations currently work in health and social care in Scotland. We greatly value EU citizens and their wider contribution to our society, and we are working to ensure their rights and place in our nation are protected.

Non-UK EU Citizens



The UK's decision to leave the EU will lead to fundamental changes to the rights of every citizen. For UK citizens that means loss of the freedom to live, work and study in any of the other 27 countries that make up the EU. For people living in Scotland from other parts of the EU it has meant having to live with the uncertainty of not knowing if they will be able to remain when the UK leaves the EU.

EU CITIZENS' RIGHTS PROJECT

The project enabled engagement with EU citizens from the other 27 member states in Scotland in the lead up to leaving the EU. There were a number of strands to the work including:

- ★ A research project identifying needs and concerns of EU27 citizens in Scotland that showed the impact already being felt by EU citizens in Scotland;
- ★ Provision of a multi-lingual website providing information on citizens' rights;
- ★ Networking and capacity-building activities for EU27 citizens' organisations in Scotland; and

- ★ Outreach work to assist local community organisations in organising local events to provide information on citizens' rights for EU27 citizens in Scotland.

The summary report received shows the reach of the overall project and good media coverage including:

- ★ 34,327 unique visits on the website;
- ★ 21,018 post reach on Facebook;
- ★ 2,025 followers on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram;
- ★ 1,107 tickets booked for free public events;
- ★ 400 contributors to the research on EU citizens' needs; and
- ★ 11 events held across Scotland.



Some qualitative findings from the research project were that:

- ★ Emotional and practical Brexit impacts were already being felt by EU Citizens;
- ★ Losing rights has caused a lot of worry and stress for EU citizens;
- ★ Settlement scheme necessitates further support for EU citizens, particularly among groups with more complex needs;
- ★ Calls for wide scale awareness raising of the settlement scheme; and
- ★ Noted that there was a positive difference in the official stance on migration in Scotland compared to other areas in the UK.

“I think about it [Brexit] every day. Every day.”

SCDI EVENT: *PREPARING FOR BREXIT: SCOTLAND AND THE FUTURE OF MIGRATION POLICY*

In order to assist in preparations for Brexit and future growth, the summit facilitated discussions between a range of Scottish stakeholders from business, higher education, and third sector leaders. They were asked to consider and raise issues that need worked through as the UK prepares to leave the EU.

Key issues arising from the UK Government's proposals for a new post-Brexit immigration system included:

- ★ The ability to continue to attract workers and their families, investors, visitors and students to Scotland; and
- ★ How the Scottish Government's proposals for a differentiated system within the UK framework, including a potential residency-based 'Scottish visa', would support our economic and demographic needs.

Non-UK EU Citizens



SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE ISSUES RAISED

Scotland is a welcoming and progressive country, and values the contribution of all those who choose to make Scotland their home. The contribution of EU citizens to our economy is vital. This means we need to retain our ability to recruit staff from inside and outside the EU, with cross-border mobility and freedom of movement being essential components. However, contributing to our economy is only a small part of the benefits EU citizens bring to our country. They are a vital part of our communities and society. They are our colleagues, our neighbours, our family and our friends.

We are absolutely committed to supporting EU nationals to continue to live and work in Scotland and recently launched our Stay in Scotland campaign to provide practical information and support to help EU citizens through the settled status process. The Scottish Government has been clear from the outset that the rights of EU citizens who have chosen to make Scotland their home are of paramount importance. In the midst of the uncertainty and chaos of Brexit, the Stakeholder Engagement Fund has allowed community groups to help people to understand how leaving the EU will affect their rights and opportunities.

The Scottish Government will continue to engage with SCDI and delegates from the event to ensure their views and concerns are raised with the UK Government, as well as feeding into policy development on a differentiated approach for Scotland. Scottish Government have been consistently clear that free movement, and all the advantages it brings, should be allowed to continue in Scotland.

“The positive take of the Scottish Government on migration is greatly reassuring.”

Inclusion



THIRD SECTOR ORGANISATIONS ARE EXTREMELY CONCERNED ABOUT THE POTENTIAL WORKLOAD THAT A NO-DEAL EXIT WOULD CREATE ON AN ALREADY OVERBURDENED SECTOR.

VOLUNTARY ACTION SOUTH LANARKSHIRE – SOUTH LANARKSHIRE’S THIRD SECTOR RESPONSE TO BREXIT

Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire (VASLan) were provided funding in order to run and resource facilitated workshops, online surveys and conversations with third sector organisations in the South Lanarkshire area to be able to demonstrate the impact the UK’s exit from the European Union will have on these organisations, the services they provide and the clients and communities they work with. The workshops also allowed groups that are supported by VASLan to express their views on the UK’s withdrawal from Europe.

Some of the themes that emerged from the activity carried out by VASLan seeking the views of their stakeholders were:

- ★ Concerns of increasing demand on voluntary organisations in South Lanarkshire impacting on service delivery;
- ★ Impacts on future funding;
- ★ Stockpiling and cost of food; reduced access to food within foodbanks and community organisations;
- ★ Impact on EU Nationals within South Lanarkshire’s third sector; and
- ★ Increasing uncertainty around the whole process of leaving the EU.

One of the recommendations to come from VASLan’s work is that the views of organisations within South Lanarkshire on the decision to leave the EU need to be conveyed to government organisations. VASLan have already taken the step to engage with the Lanarkshire Local Resilience Plan working group, which contains a number of local and national government organisations, in order to communicate the views and findings from their consultations.

“Demand for Third Sector services may increase.”

Inclusion



MIDLOTHIAN FINANCIAL INCLUSION NETWORK – ACTION PLANNING FOR FOOD SECURITY POST BREXIT

Midlothian Financial Inclusion Network (MFIN) explored food affordability and availability with local communities, and looked at how organisations dealing with financial inclusion and food can respond. The report noted that the UK imports around 31% (by value) of all its food from other EU countries and continued access to food is a key uncertainty surrounding leaving the EU.

The work delivered a programme of community consultation events and in-depth discussions with partner organisations. These activities highlighted the implications for food security, price and availability in the area, and MFIN focused on the ability and capacity for a wider range of partners to work together to ensure that their stakeholders can still access quality affordable food, should the UK leave the EU.

ISSUES HIGHLIGHTED

- ★ Concerns over food security have significantly increased over the last 8 years, with an acceleration since the EU referendum; there has been a 40% rise in food bank use with austerity and changes in welfare payments cited as causes;
- ★ The chief cause of this increase in concern over food security is in relation to the UK's decision to leave the EU;
- ★ Citizens in Midlothian are almost fully dependent on supermarkets as a source of food with very little arable land in the area providing fresh food locally; and
- ★ Concerns around food security was found to be a proxy indicator to wider personal, social and environmental issues in the community e.g. financial security, long-term illness, isolation and access to resources.



The report made the following key recommendations:

- ★ Look at different approach to land use in Midlothian. A lot of good arable land being used for housing and there is an opportunity to rethink and develop a new approach to land use;
- ★ Finding ways to increase accessibility to fresh fruit and veg grown locally; additional effects would be to increase community empowerment, self-reliance, combat climate change and improve health and wellbeing; and
- ★ In the longer-term there is a need for increased collaboration with communities, non-governmental organisations, businesses and local government to improve food security.

“ I probably would’ve been in a much less secure situation if I wasn’t working right now or was working for another employer who was not so supportive.”

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE ISSUES RAISED

The Scottish Government will continue with its no-deal preparations to ensure that people will still have access to food and medicines in the event of the UK crashing out of the EU without an agreement in place. Communities across Scotland have identified concerns with food security and how Brexit might affect access to affordable, high quality food as access to tariff free markets is lost, increasing food prices and forcing more people to access foodbank services.

Brexit – and particularly the prospect of a no-deal outcome – poses a significant threat to Scotland’s third sector. It is disappointing that the UK Government still has not provided any detail on future funding arrangements. We share the concerns of Scotland’s third sector that the loss of structural funds without a clear replacement is a grave concern.

A toolkit for the third sector was developed by the Scottish Government, together with members of the Voluntary Sector Resilience Partnership, and published on 11 March 2019. It supplements other EU Exit resources on mygov.scot and prepareforbrexit.scot

Rural Communities and their residents



Brexit, and in particular a no-deal exit from the EU would mean that rural communities will face a number of significant and serious challenges. Rural communities tend to be at the end of supply chains and therefore face higher costs of living. Many rural communities have businesses which received support through European rural development spending and there are concerns that this support will not be replaced. The decision to leave the EU will undoubtedly exacerbate already existing issues within rural communities and could lead to further problems with population stability.

SCOTTISH RURAL ACTION – WHAT DOES BREXIT MEAN FOR YOU?

This project aimed to open a dialogue between people in rural communities – particularly those living in the more remote rural parts of Scotland, and those in rural areas who are less well heard in policy and decision-making at present about the implications of leaving the EU. Scottish Rural Action wanted to support this dialogue by encouraging people in rural communities to consider the wider implications of leaving the EU, what they want to say to people making decisions about matters affecting them, and coordinate responses from rural communities to decision-makers.

Scottish Rural Action wanted to pay particular attention to those voices that are not heard as often in rural Scotland. They were interested in hearing from people living in the remotest parts of Scotland, young people, crofters and smallholders, women and rural homeless persons.

Scottish Rural Action held 17 events in rural Scotland engaging the biennial meeting of the Rural Parliament in November 2018 and had 1,500 people participating online and 284 people having face-to-face discussions.



Key findings that emerged from the report were:

- ★ Depopulation: a fear that the loss of freedom of movement will result in some communities becoming unviable;
- ★ Future of rural funding: expectations are low within rural communities that existing funding will be replaced post-Brexit by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund;
- ★ The democratic deficit: frustration that Scotland is being forced to leave when a majority of the people in Scotland voted to remain in the EU; and
- ★ Policy post-2020 in rural Scotland: fear that rural communities needs will not be met in recognising the long history of support from the EU for peripheral rural and island areas.

The report concluded that overall there was grave concern within the rural communities in Scotland, that leaving the EU would be the final straw for the already fragile communities. There is a call for strong leadership to provide clarity over the decision to leave the EU and that the UK Government should commit to working with devolved governments to enable a smooth transition. Fundamentally rural communities want assurances that their voices are being heard and that the impact of Brexit on already fragile communities will be recognised and addressed.

SCOTTISH ISLANDS FEDERATION – ISLAND COMMUNITIES AND BREXIT

Scottish Islands Federation used their funding to better help ensure that island communities have the opportunity to contribute their views to influence future policy and developments around the UK's exit from the EU and to help understanding around the long-term implications faced by these communities

The funding enabled the Scottish Island Federation to bring island community groups together to openly discuss, research and present the implications of Brexit, for island communities and for the Scottish Island Federation as their representative body. In particular, their membership and chairmanship of the European Small Islands Federation (ESIN) and the EU Clean Energy EU Islands programme which was recently launched to facilitate the transition to a low carbon economy was felt to be relevant.

Through their consultation work the Scottish Islands Federation identified a number of key concerns;

- ★ Concern that less funding will be available and is becoming more centralised therefore less distribution to island communities;
- ★ Increases in the cost of living; and
- ★ Impact on tourism through increased costs to travel to island communities.

“ How do we replace our European Workforce? ”

Rural Communities and their residents



Island communities working together to accelerate sustainable development, empowerment and innovation underpins the goals and objectives of Scottish Island Federation. The discussions, consultation and reporting that the Scottish Government funding has enabled has formed firm foundations to some of their work in the longer-term including:

- ★ Better understanding the implications of Brexit on island communities in Scotland;
- ★ Developing a collective and more effective island voice to inform and influence policy developments and in particular promoting the need for a replacement European Territorial Cohesion policy; and
- ★ Finding a successful model that will enable the Scottish Government to continue to strengthen collaboration with our European partners and play a role in island-specific policy, research and investment.

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE ISSUES RAISED

The Scottish Government recognises the importance of our rural communities and the value they add to our society, not only economically but culturally. Given the potential negative consequences posed by exit from the EU, it is important that crofters, farmers and rural businesses have a continued period of stability and certainty and are allowed a period to adjust to future agricultural policies. The Scottish Government has put robust contingencies in place to ensure that there is a legal basis for CAP payments to continue to be made post-EU exit and will bring forward a Scottish Rural Financial Support Bill to implement the proposals set out in its “Stability and Simplicity” consultation.

Conclusion



This work reflects that the UK's decision to leave the EU is a significant concern and has already affected organisations and people across Scotland who voted decisively to remain in the EU.

We've heard that people are concerned about food and medicine shortages, the impact on trade and the economy and losing the right to live, work and study where they want across Europe. This is also true of those EU citizens that are a critical part of Scotland's workforce, those who have chosen to work and make their life here, reversing our trend towards a declining aging population. EU nationals will always be welcome in Scotland. We value the significant contribution that they make.

What is clear is that three years after the UK's decision to leave, the people across Scotland are still seeking clarity about leaving the EU and the future relationship that we will have with our European neighbours. But no future relationship can replace the benefits that we now have as a member. The Scottish Government will continue to ensure that the voice of Scotland is heard in the ongoing Brexit debate and we will take all opportunities to respect Scotland's wishes – whether this is a second referendum with the option to remain in the EU or revoking article 50 altogether.

“ Rural Scotland has benefited from numerous EU funding streams for many years. I doubt replacement funding of a similar value will flow from Westminster post Brexit.”

Next Steps



With thanks to the organisations that participated in the project, the Scottish Government will now:

- ★ Carefully consider the views from stakeholders in developing future policies;
 - ★ Continue to make the positive case for membership of the EU;
 - ★ Use these views to inform ongoing discussions with the UK Government, and other devolved administrations, about the Brexit process and the future relationship with the EU;
 - ★ Consider these views in sustaining and developing future bilateral relationships with the EU and its member states;
 - ★ Ensure that people who live in Scotland are able to exert their democratic right to be heard;
 - ★ Progress the Citizen's Assembly to create a structure for informed and balanced debate about the future of Scotland; and
 - ★ Seek to ensure unheard voices continue to be heard.
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Annex A: Brexit Stakeholder Engagement Fund – Detail of funded projects

Launched on 9 May 2018, the Brexit Stakeholder Engagement Fund supported a broad range of projects and activities that enabled local community-based organisations across Scotland to plan ahead, facilitate dialogue, and inform policy development on the impacts of the UK's exit from the EU.

Organisation	Details of funded project
Scottish Rural Action	To facilitate an open dialogue between people in rural communities – particularly those living in the more remote rural parts of Scotland – hearing their views on Brexit: £25,000
Children in Scotland	Setting up a Children and Young Person's panel on Europe to ensure that their voices are heard as part of the negotiations between the UK and EU: £24,850
My Life My Say	To host Brexit cafés in Scotland to allow young people to express their views on the UK's decision to leave the EU: £8,940
Midlothian Voluntary Action	Engagement on food security and affordability in light of Brexit in a local community context: £11,289
Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire	Host workshops to look at the effect on the third sector to provide services to the community: £1,500
Citizens' Rights Project	Engagement with EU-27 citizens in Scotland on the lead up to Brexit: £24,000¹
YouthLink Scotland	To engage with youth workers, in particular part-time/sessional and voluntary youth workers to hear their views about leaving the EU: £8,963
ALLIANCE	Explore the implications of Brexit on the lives of older people in Scotland and those who care for them: £12,567
Royal Scottish National Orchestra	A consultation to gather the opinions and concerns regarding Brexit of RSNO's musicians, staff and supporters: £5,142
Scottish Islands Federation	Ensure that island communities have the opportunity to contribute to, and influence policy and development around Brexit: £2,828
Perth and Kinross Action Voluntary Service	Undertake work to explore the issues relating to Brexit which are most important to the minority communities in Perth and Kinross: £6,553
SCVO	<i>The Gathering</i> conference to bring groups together and launch the Children and Young Person's Panel on Europe. £2,000
SCDI	Support for <i>Preparing for Brexit: Scotland and the Future of Migration Policy</i> conference: £2,679

¹ EU Citizen's Rights Project was given a further £5,000 to maintain the website past the ending of the project.

With thanks to:







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