

Children take to the streets of Raab's constituency to "fight for their future in Europe"

Children and young people will be taking to the streets in Dominic Raab's constituency on Sunday, October 27, to tell the Foreign Secretary that their voice must be heard.

"I'm fed up of adults in suits making bad decisions about Brexit when it is my generation that will miss out on the opportunity to work and shape what happens in my continent", said Thomas Herran, 14. "Whether I decide to work in technology, tourism, science or business, Brexit will make that harder. To me, Brexit feels like the opportunities my parents had are being taken away from my generation."

Roughly 1.4m young people, who are now of voting age, were not old enough to vote in the 2016 referendum.

Raab's constituency of Esher and Walton voted 60% Remain in the 2016 referendum but is represented by Leave-supporting MP. The children, who will be arriving on a special "For Our Future" coach, will be gathering with other young people from across the area to reinforce their message.

According to Hope Arvanitakis, 10, "Greta Thurnberg proves that young people really can change the world, but on the really important things like climate change we have to be working together. A third of my life has been eaten up by Brexit. I don't believe the politicians when they say Brexit will end just by voting for a deal. The only way to stop this going on and on and hearing people on TV arguing about it every night, is to forget Brexit all together".



Henry Nolan-Pasantos-, Zaqira Cajee and Cato Vermeiren-Sas, outside Parliament

Henry Nolan-Pasantos, 14, says: "I work hard at school. I'm ambitious. When I leave school, I want to be able to study abroad and exploit all the opportunities Europe offers, just like the young people in other EU countries can. If we leave, then British kids will be at a disadvantage – we will lose out to young people from other countries."

Cato Vermeiren-Sas, 16, whose parents are Belgian, has lived in the UK all her life. She says: "I don't know what will happen to me. No clue at all. I don't know if I'll be able to stay, study, work and contribute to the UK economy like my parents have".

According to polls and surveys, between 70%-75% of people under 24 voted to remain in the 2016 referendum. An equivalent proportion of the over 65s, who won't be as affected by the changes, voted leave.

According to The Mix, an organisation which provides mental health support for the under 25s "Brexit will change pretty much everything. Whether we're aware of it or not, the government plays a sort of parental role in our sense of safety, well-being and security. This is under threat at the moment, so lots of us feel scared... the loss of faith in our leaders, and democracy, is hard to shake. It can make us feel out of control and hopeless".

Some of the specific issues facing young people are:

- Hundreds of laws and treaties will have to be re-written. Human rights and environmental protections, a topic that children and young people feel especially concerned about, will be weakened.
- Freedom of movement will end which will limit work opportunities for younger people.
- Young people from the EU and those without British passports will have to apply for pre-settled or settled status to continue legally living, working or studying in the UK.
- EU schemes that directly benefit young people, Like Erasmus, which gives young people opportunities to study abroad and boost future employability, may be scrapped.
- Some young people who wish to remain in the EU are experiencing difficult family relationships with other family members who voted to Leave. Accepting these differences can be painful and long-lasting.
- Brexit will affect our economy, and worst-case scenarios suggest there might be food and medication shortages, and increased prices. All this insecurity and uncertainty could lead to another economic recession at a time when young people are starting out on their careers.
- Many local councils report an increase in incidents of xenophobic hate crime since the referendum that has particularly impacted children of European heritage.
- Local schools may also be hit by Brexit. A fall in pupil numbers could lead to teacher redundancies and if food prices go up after Brexit, as many predict, this would have an impact on food choice, school catering contracts and school budgets.

Notes to editors:

Guidance for young people who want to get settled status from the Greater London Authority: <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/communities/migrants-and-refugees/guidance-young-londoners-citizenship-residence>

Help! I'm worried about Brexit from The Mix: https://www.themix.org.uk/mental-health/looking-after-yourself/help-im-worried-about-brexit-31286.html?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIInbfxz_Wv5QIViZntCh10yw4ZEAAYAAEgJJ6PD_BwE

For press enquiries contact:

Stephen Cowan 07973 253 631

Candida Jones 07775 754 763, candidaj@hotmail.com