

# Youth and Brexit – University of Warwick



Meeting 15.00-16.00, 9th October 2017 in: The Oculus

## Student Laboratory on Brexit, Youth and Politics

The History Department's European History Research Centre, with members of the Department of Sociology, PAIS, the Schools of Law and of Modern Languages, and the Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies, has developed a project to bring together students within the University to reflect upon the result of the referendum on European membership and the Brexit process, and to consider the involvement of young people in subsequent events. Drawing on students from across departments in the arts and social sciences faculties we have created a forum for research and discussion to help articulate the voices of young people on the causes of Brexit, the rhetoric of the campaigns, the options before the country, the likely impact on the younger generation, and the wider involvement of young people in the political process.

This 'student laboratory' engaged a group of Warwick students over the summer to work on an independent research project on various aspects of Brexiting Britain, and these will contribute to a series of blogs that will be published in late October and will then be expanded throughout the year.

Project leaders are Ian Caistor-Parker and Isabelle Riepe and can be reached through the link below or via e-mail at [I.Caistor-Parker@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:I.Caistor-Parker@warwick.ac.uk) and [I.Riepe@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:I.Riepe@warwick.ac.uk)

Age Group	Median Age	Remain	Leave	Life Expectancy	Average number of years they have to live with the decision
18-24	21	64%	24%	90	69
25-49	37	45%	39%	89	52
50-64	57	35%	49%	88	31
65+	73	33%	58%	89	16

Polling Data = YouGov. 1652 people. 17-19th June 2016  
Life Expectancy based on ONS pension planner life expectancy estimator  
Average 65+ year old was estimated to be 73 using ONS age distribution data  
Those who were undecided or wouldn't say have been excluded

Those who must live with result of the EU referendum the longest want to remain.

See <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/video/2016/jun/24/what-do-young-people-think-about-brexit-video>

and <http://www.referendumanalysis.eu/>

### **Being Young in a Brexiting Britain: Why it matters**

We know that Remain support was high among 18-35 year olds who voted, but the turnout of that group was very low, and systematically low turnout and disaffection with politics has been a feature of recent British elections. Even if opinion among this generation is more divided than the poll results suggest, we know that they face and will continue to face a range of problems that the working out of Brexit may exacerbate – paying for their education, getting on the housing market, carrying an aging population, and supporting a health and social care system in the country that is at crisis point in many parts of the United Kingdom, while facing much less secure economic prospects and a more unstable international climate than did their predecessors. Young people also make up the main body of European migrants to Britain and of longer distance migrants attempting to get into the Europe. And the future status of students from Europe and more globally and of those who have moved to Britain over the last 10-20 years is now unclear. One possible result of a 'hard Brexit' is an economic slump that will fuel a cocktail of disempowerment, dissatisfaction, and increasing conflict within and between generations. That conflict will be exacerbated as the proportion of the ageing in the population increases and upcoming generations are asked to carry more and more of the burden of supporting their predecessors.

These are just some of the issues that face this country in the negotiations over Brexit and in the deals that are made. It is our view that these are matters that need to be addressed *with* this generation. Warwick has extensive academic expertise in History, Politics, Sociology, and more widely but, while academic work can inform discussion, responding to the issues and thinking through the possibilities is something that must be developed collaboratively with this generation. After all, it is their experience and their futures that matter and they might rightly feel that they have had enough of the post-war boomers putting their own interests first.