



## **Survey finds young people under 18 overwhelmingly wanted to stay in the EU and worried about the future**

(15.11.16) A Jack Petchey Foundation [survey](#) of those too young to vote in the EU referendum found over 75% wanted to remain in. Over 3,000 young people aged 11-17 from London and Essex finally got a chance to have their say. The online survey carried out in October 2016 revealed many of the views of young people are in stark contrast to adults.

Asked what the most important issues were for them in the referendum respondents chose education opportunities (57%) and a strong economy (54%) as the most popular choices. However when asked what the main issues presented by politicians were 'Reducing immigration' was the top answer with 73% picking this. Whilst only 19% of young people felt this was important to them.

At the same time 65% of young people felt Britain's reputation around the world has been damaged by the referendum result and only 13% thought it had been improved. Their sense of belonging to Europe has also been reduced with over 62% feeling a lesser sense of belonging to Europe since the referendum whilst their sense of belonging to their local community remains high at over 70%.

Overall young people felt worried about the future with 62% feeling very or fairly negative about Britain's future and 31% very or fairly positive. They also felt their opportunities to study, work or travel in a different country were reduced following the referendum.

However opinion was more evenly split when asked about their own future. Over 42% felt very or fairly positive and over 40% said they were very or fairly negative. Half thought the opportunity to get a good income in the future was either the same or greater. Nearly 70% felt the opportunity to grow up in a safe country was 'about the same' or better.

Following the rise in reported hate crimes we also wanted to find out the experiences of young people. Asked if they or anyone they knew had heard hateful comments since the referendum a worryingly high 64% had. Nearly a third had heard hateful comments from other young people they knew and over a third heard them from adults they did not know.

**Trudy Kilcullen, CEO of the Jack Petchey Foundation** said "Amongst all the discussion about the EU referendum we have heard nothing about what those too young to vote thought. That's why we conducted our survey and the number of 11-17 year olds who took part shows they are very interested in this debate. It's their future!

It is encouraging that many are positive about their own future but a large number are concerned and worry they will not have the same opportunities. The Jack Petchey Foundation exists to motivate and inspire young people and we want to see politicians from all sides of the debate and youth leaders come together to show young people they can still achieve great things.

The large number of young people who have heard hateful comments is also concerning. However the fact young people have such a great sense of belonging to their local communities shows there is an opportunity to bring people together and address these issues.”

**Joseph, aged 16 said** “The EU referendum was the biggest political decision taken in my lifetime. It will affect the future of my whole generation. But just like everyone else under 18 I didn’t get any say. The Jack Petchey Foundation’s survey was the first chance we got to tell people what we think.

I found it worrying 45% of young people said they are thinking of leaving the UK. Politicians need to take our views on board when they negotiate Brexit because everyone has a stake in our country. Please don’t ignore a whole generation.”

**ENDS**

**NOTES FOR EDITORS:**

1. The survey was conducted online between 12th and 20<sup>th</sup> October 2016. We wanted to find out what those too young to have voted in the EU referendum thought so only those aged 11 to 17 were allowed to take part. Only those living in London or Essex could join in as these are the areas we operate in. Any young person in those areas could take part and the respondents were therefore self-selecting.

In total 3,234 respondents took part. Of those 2,487 answered most questions. The full survey results are available upon request. As a reward for the young people’s time filling in the survey an iPad Mini 2 was offered and a name will be picked at random from the respondents to receive this.

2. The Jack Petchey Foundation does not support either side of the EU referendum campaign and takes a neutral position.
3. Sir Jack Petchey CBE founded the Jack Petchey Foundation in 1999 to recognise the positive contributions young people make to society and to support them in achieving their potential. Since then it has provided support to a wide range of 2,000 initiatives supporting young people across London and Essex and has invested over £100m doing this.
4. Our major programme, the Achievement Awards is a peer recognition scheme and includes grass roots youth clubs, youth organisations, secondary schools and uniformed organisations throughout London and Essex. Nominations are made by young people as well as teachers, parents, and supporting adults. The young award winners choose how best to spend their award money to the benefit of their club or school. Over 150,000 Achievement Awards have been given out. From 2016 the individual value of each award has increased to £250.

5. The Jack Petchey Foundation also funds other programmes that celebrate positive contributions of young people in society. For example the Jack Petchey Speak Out Challenge is the world's largest public speaking competition for young people. Step into Dance provides opportunities for dance in over 150 schools.
6. The Individual Grants for Volunteers Fund supports young people who are giving up their time for the benefit of another community.
7. To find out more about our work and the range of projects we support go to [www.jackpetcheyfoundation.org.uk](http://www.jackpetcheyfoundation.org.uk). Follow us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/JackPetcheyFoundation](https://www.facebook.com/JackPetcheyFoundation) and Twitter [@JPFoundation](https://twitter.com/JPFoundation).