



RUSU supports the People's Vote Campaign

Reading University Students' Union should support the campaign for a People's Vote on the deal for UK to exit the European Union, with remaining in the EU as an option on the ballot.

The 2016 EU Referendum set the UK on a course to exit the European Union, based on a narrow majority of 51.9% in favour (37.4% of the overall electorate). Since the referendum, some economic forecasts suggest that the benefits of leaving promised in the referendum are not real, and that all options for leaving the EU will harm the UK economy(1).

Young people's prospects and the academic sector will be impacted significantly. Leaving the EU with the deal currently proposed by the government, or a potentially more damaging 'no-deal', could(2):

- Remove reciprocal agreements on access to study and funding between UK and Europe.
- Remove access to EU research funding (10% of Russell Group research funding).
- Remove access to the Erasmus programme.
- Remove the right to live and work in EU countries, and create administrative and financial barriers to travel.

Many other university student unions formally support the People's Vote campaign, including Oxford, UCL and Leeds. This is the biggest political and social issue facing our nation, and we should not be silent.

The 2016 decision to Leave does not reflect our demographic:

- 73% of 18-24 year olds voted to Remain in the EU
- 58% of voters in the Reading area voted to Remain in the EU.
- A high proportion of our undergraduate population were unable to vote due to their age. They deserve an opportunity to vote on this decision that will impact their lives.

Leaving is not final until the UK actually leaves, which could be on 29 March 2019 but looks likely to be delayed for a range of reasons. The People's Vote campaign is demanding a final say for the population based on the real options now facing us, with an option to remain in the EU on the ballot paper.

RUSU should publicly state its support for a People's Vote, engage union members in the issue and actively support to the campaign.

(1) Institute of Government Nov 18, "The vast majority of economic projections suggest that Brexit will harm UK economic growth"
<https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/Economic%20impact%20of%20Brexit%20summary.pdf>

(2) Independent Fact Checking by fullfact.org > <https://fullfact.org/europe/what-does-leaving-eu-mean-higher-education/> The Government have proposed replacing some of this with UK tax payer funds, but collaboration opportunities within shared programmes will still be harmed.

Officer Responsible: President

Note from President: This affects students as students due to the potential impact of Brexit on Erasmus students, University research funding and the general impact on the Higher Education sector. This is on top of the projected impact on young people in general.

Expires: March 2021