

Rome Summit Questionnaire

Below is an overview of key points arising from the UK questionnaire which will feed into the Rome Summit.

Introduction:

Young delegates to the Rome Summit pre-meeting in January were disappointed with the lack of notice given by the Commission about this requested consultation as well as the limited resources. Given these obstacles the UK consultation has taken the form of an online questionnaire which was disseminated by partner organizations of the British Youth Council with support from the Scottish Youth Parliament, the UK Youth Parliament and Funky Dragon. The questionnaire has, to date, run for 2 weeks and will continue to run up until the beginning of the Rome Youth Summit on the 23rd of March. To date, March the 9th, there have been 40 responses to the below EU-based questionnaire and 165 responses to 1 mini-poll question.

Methodology:

This questionnaire was made available to 12 -25 year olds from across the UK. Young people within the British Youth Council felt the guiding questions provided by the Rome Summit / YFJ were unrealistic and un-inclusive, the decision was therefore taken to develop a more balanced questionnaire which would enable young people from diverse backgrounds to consider and answer increasingly focused questions around their perspective on issues such as 'youth and education' and the 'EU in a globalizing world'. Key comments made by the young people have been included in the detailed breakdown pgs 2-4, they represent less than 30% of the total number of comments made nevertheless they cover the broad themes touched upon under each heading.

Key emerging themes:

- *Only a few of the young people (8.3%) who took part in this questionnaire had ever been involved in European consultation.*
- *91.7% of the respondents felt young people in the UK did not know a lot about the European Union. Young people in the UK feel they should have access to a wider range of information about the EU especially through their schools.*
- *Although many of the young respondents felt they had received information from a negatively biased media 88.9% felt that the UK should be a member of the European Union with many pointing towards an enhanced economy and culture as being the benefits of being a member of the EU. Concerns were also expressed about membership leading to more illegal immigration and the erosion of local and national democracy.*
- *The largest percentage of respondents felt that any country sharing the EU's values should be allowed to become a member state.*
- *A large majority of respondents (88.9%) felt that young people should be involved in deciding on the future of the EU. Many felt the UK government should involve them more in EU issues and some were unaware of the existence of a European youth parliament.*
- *The majority of respondents (58.3%) felt that countries should decide for themselves on issues such as whether to send troops to Iraq and should not adopt a common European position. The UN was referenced as another option for adopting resolutions on foreign policy.*
- *75% of respondents felt that Europe should adopt a common policy on the following issues: child protection, human rights, fair trade, recycling, climate change and pollution*
- *The majority of young people (66.7%) felt that the EU does have a role to play in young people's education with exchange programmes and providing information on Europe the two most areas.*
- *The mini-poll question was responded to by 165 young people. 56.3% of respondents felt that the generation gap was definitely getting wider, whilst only 14.5 % felt the generation gap was definitely not getting wider.*

Conclusion:

Young people expressed the need for more information about the European Union through being consulted, educated and involved more by the European Union and the UK government. Many young people felt they did not know how they could be heard at the European level. Despite this the respondents expressed clear and considered positions on issues such as advocating UK membership of the EU, rejecting a common EU foreign policy, advocating a policy common on issues such as child protection, human rights, fair trade, recycling and climate change.

Responses in greater detail:

Q1.	Do you think young people (12-25 years old) in the UK know a lot about the European Union?	
	Yes	0.0%
	Maybe	8.3%
	No	91.7%
	Don't know	0.0%

Key comments:

Is it even in the national curriculum? I mean i have been told about it at school but not in depth or about the aspects that concern me.

I have never heard of it before and sure many young people haven't.

I don't think most of the country aswell as the 12-25s know about the EU.

Q2.	Where have you heard about the European Union before? (tick all that apply)	
	At school	66.7%
	On the web	55.6%
	At home	52.8%
	In the media	86.1%
	From friends or family	30.6%
	Other (please state):	

Q3.a)	Have you ever been involved in a consultation about Europe before?	
	Yes	8.3%
	No	91.7%

Q4.	The UK is a member of the European Union. Do you think that the UK should be a member of the European Union?	
	Yes	88.9%
	No	8.3%

Key comments:

As a small and basically entirely english-speaking nation, i feel the UK will loose out economically and culturally to larger countries and members of the EU if we pull out.

Yes, because of trade and ending hostilities permanantly

I believe that the way that our EU membership makes it so easy for illegal immigrants to enter on false passports is a perfectly good reason not to remain a part of the EU.

I am quite aware of the dangers/concerns - centralisation of power, top-down directives, erosion of local democracy

Q5.	Who do you think should be in the EU?	
	Current countries	25.0%
	Current countries without the UK	8.3%
	Only countries with the Euro	11.1%
	Any country which shares the EU's values	47.2%
	Any country who wants to be a member	5.6%
	Nobody	0.0%

Q6.	Do you think young people and youth organisations should be involved in deciding on the future of Europe?	
	Yes	88.9%
	No	8.3%

Key Comments:

We are the next generation of European citizens, and need not only a knowledge of what Europe can do for us but also the confidence that it will work.

I don't feel they should define all policy involving young people as although young people feel what they believe is just and the best solution they are often not well enough informed for it to be so.

Q7. How do you think young people could be involved in deciding the future of Europe? (tick all that apply)

Through being consulted by the UK government	83.3%
Through attending European conferences	75.0%
Through meeting Members of the European Parliament	75.0%
Through questionnaires	72.2%

Key comments

Questionnaires are effective in obtaining a large amount of views quickly but they are vague and impersonal.

We should be consulted by European institutions like a Youth European Parliament.

Q8. Do you think the European Union countries should decide on a common 'European' position on issues like whether to send troops to the Iraq war or should each country decide for itself?

Each country should decide for itself	58.3%
European countries should agree on common foreign policies	36.1%

Key comments:

I don't know because the EU was set up to make countries inter-dependent so that there wouldn't be a repeat of the war (1939-1945) so in that sense a common foreign policy would probably be good however lots of people/countries believe in self determination but also want to be part of the EU economic community so in this sense it should be left up to individual countries.

If they tried to agree on everything, the EU will fall apart

I believe that large scale foreign policy initiatives should be undertaken within a collaborative framework and with majority backing in the UN.

Q9. Do you think the European Union countries should have a common 'European' position on any of the issues below? Please tick the ones that should have a common position, and leave blank if you feel each country should decide for itself.

19.4%	Alcohol policy	25.0%	Less countries
55.6%	Animal welfare	38.9%	Minimum wage
83.3%	Child protection	25.0%	More countries
77.8%	Climate change	58.3%	Peacekeeping
36.1%	Education	16.7%	Pensions
36.1%	Employment law	86.1%	Pollution
38.9%	European army	77.8%	Recycling
55.6%	European space programme	47.2%	Scientific research
58.3%	European sports competitions	36.1%	Security
80.6%	Fair trade	36.1%	Single currency
47.2%	Foreign exchange	8.3%	Taxes
27.8%	Healthcare	55.6%	Trade
25.0%	Hunting	25.0%	Transport
75.0%	Human rights	61.1%	Voting age
69.4%	International aid	38.9%	Welfare state
55.6%	Immigration/border control		

Q10.a) Do you think the European Union should be involved in young people's education?

Yes	66.7%
No	33.3%

Key comments:

b)	How? (<i>tick all that apply</i>)	
	By encouraging member states to design their education curriculum together	54.2%
	By promoting education in Europe	62.5%
	By encouraging youth and teacher exchanges	66.7%
	Other (please state):	12.5%

Key comments:

Promoting education on Europe and youth teacher exchanges are excellent ways for young people to learn about how the EU affects other countries.

I think there should be information that all schools are obliged to give to all young people about Europe but i don't think the EU should write a European international curriculum for example.

They should only be involved in so much as they could run initiatives to promote knowledge of the union amongst young people. I feel that the educational policies of a country should be independent because the EU countries vary so widely in their situation.