

SUMMARY ACCOUNT OF ISSUES RAISED BY BRITISH CITIZENS IN THE NETHERLANDS DURING SECOND ROUND OF OPEN FORUMS

We held a second series of open forums with British citizens across the Netherlands in October to discuss the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union. Much like the first series, the forums were well attended and there was a high level of engagement from participants. These are the main themes of the discussions:

Will there be a deal and when?

Many asked when there will be clarity on an agreement between the United Kingdom and the European Union. If there is no overall deal between the UK and the EU, would there be a standalone agreement on citizens' rights? Some were also concerned about uncertainty having a potential negative impact on (prospective) employers' willingness to hire British nationals.

What will any transition period entail?

What happens to British nationals during the transition period? What will the cut off date be in order for people to live in the UK or in Europe to be considered part of the agreement?

Onward movement

Many were concerned about the ability to move to or do business in another EU member state after the UK leaves the EU. There were also questions about whether qualifications will continue to be recognised. We explained that the UK is pushing hard for these important rights to be included.

Higher Education

Students were worried about access to higher education and which fees students will pay after March 2019, especially if a course is started before that date.

Voting rights and representation

There was still frustration that British nationals lose their right to vote in the UK after having lived abroad for 15 years. Many felt it was unfair that not only were they not able to vote in British elections, leaving the EU will mean losing the right to vote in local Dutch elections. The question was asked who in the UK represents British citizens overseas.

Other subjects raised included:

Pensions and healthcare, family reunification after a deal is done, and Dutch residency requirements. There was great interest in the announcement by the Dutch government that the criteria for obtaining dual citizenship would be relaxed.

Future engagement

These forums have been instrumental in gathering the views of British nationals living in the Netherlands. These have been communicated to London and to the Dutch government. But to reach the thousands of British nationals who were unable to attend we need to focus in future on digital engagement. Be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), and drop us a line if you want to be added to our mailing list. You can also follow progress in the citizens' rights strand of the EU/UK negotiations by viewing the joint EU/UK grid setting out progress in detail [here](#). And please help us spread the word by passing on these links to others.