

NEWSREEL WORLD

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Programmanus av Steve Hankey

ALANNA LESLIE: Hi, I'm Alanna Leslie and welcome to the first Newsreel World of 2022...

Today we're off to Ireland, Nigeria and Cameroon...

But first, Canada...

Around the world, most people can't vote in elections until they're at least eighteen years old. The last big change to the voting age came in the 1970s when many countries lowered it from twenty one to eighteen.

Now, young people across the world want it to be lowered again.

Canada is one of the places where a legal fight to do this is currently underway, as Shyloe Fagan reports...

Amelia Penny Crooker: "I think, you know, our current political system is representing a generation that's fading away and as much as it's important that older people can vote for what is important to them now. Young people also are here now, and they also have an investment stake in the future."

Shyloe Fagan: That was Amelia Penny Crooker. She's one of the thirteen youth from across Canada who are trying to make history with their fight to lower the voting age in Canada.

The group of young Canadians aged thirteen to eighteen have filed an application with the Superior Court of Ontario to challenge the voting age.

Currently, the Elections Canada Act prevents citizens under eighteen from voting. These youth say the minimum voting age is unconstitutional and in violation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.



Jacob Colatosti says climate change was one of the main reasons he got involved in the case.

Jacob Colatosti: “Climate change is something that's going to be affecting our generation most of all, and not the generations that are currently the ones that are voting. So having that opportunity to vote and to impact climate change and to impact how education is going to be run, especially during the COVID 19 pandemic, and to also deal with mental health, which is becoming a real priority among the youth right now, those were really some prior issues that really motivated me to want to vote, especially.”

Shyloe Fagan: The youth have not stipulated a specific age yet.

But, they did identify other countries that have lowered the voting age to 16 such as Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Scotland and Wales.

Here's Amelia again.

Amelia Penny Crooker: ”We picked this arbitrary age of eighteen in Canada and everywhere around the world picks that age, but obviously there's no magic switch that happens when you're eighteen. It's all just a process of growing up.”

Shyloe Fagan: This wouldn't be the first time the voting age was lowered in Canada. In 1970 it went from twenty one to eighteen.

In fact, there have been several changes made to voter eligibility throughout the country's history. I spoke with Emily Chan, a lawyer, on the case about some of that history.

Emily Chan: “There has been a number of changes over the years, so part of what we want to show is that this voting age is not static. It's also to show the discriminatory effect it's had over the years, starting with the: you had to be a man over the age of twenty one and own property to vote. And then there were a number of other changes that impacted Asian born Canadians, as well as women and Status Indians under the Indian Act of Canada. So it has changed over time. This is another step.”



Shyloe Fagan: Youth aged thirteen to eighteen make up about ten percent of the population and have the potential to shift politics in the country if they get the vote.

Shyloe Fagan: Amelia thinks this would benefit progressive politicians and policies.

Amelia Penny Crooker: “A lot of the pushback to this idea comes from people who are a little more conservative in their political views because they know that young people are less inclined to vote for them. So I think a lot of progressive politicians are very much for it because they know that their ideas appeal to young people a lot more.”

Shyloe Fagan: This is Shyloe Fagan reporting for Newsreel World from Toronto in Canada.

ALANNA LESLIE: Thanks Shyloe.

ALANNA LESLIE: You may remember back in September last year we told you about the Nigerian government banning Twitter from the country.

Well that ban has been lifted but only after Twitter agreed to several conditions which means the social media platform is more strictly regulated in Nigeria than in other countries.

The laws include Twitter paying a six percent tax rate in Nigeria and obeying take-down orders and data demands from the government.

It remains to be seen whether the Nigerian government will enforce these rules to restrict how Nigerians use the platform.

ALANNA LESLIE: The coronavirus pandemic has made the world's wealthiest much richer but has also led to more people living in poverty.

A report from the charity Oxfam suggests that the world's ten richest men have more than doubled their wealth since the pandemic started in March 2020.

Back then their collective wealth was around seven hundred billion dollars. By November 2021 that figure was 1.5 trillion dollars.



ALANNA LESLIE: At the other end of the scale, Oxfam’s report also says that 160 million people have been pushed below the World Bank’s “poverty line” since the pandemic.

This means 160 million more people have to survive with less than five dollars and fifty cents a day.

All Around the World by Naomi Achu.

ALANNA LESLIE: That’s All Around the World by Cameroonian singer Naomi Achu.

She’s from a region in Northern Cameroon called Bamenda, the only part of the country which is English-speaking. The rest of Cameroon has French as its official language.

Naomi is also the daughter of a diplomat which, as she told the BBC, gave her an international perspective that’s reflected in her music:

Naomi Achu: “There’s a lot of people in Africa that are not able to see the outside world. So just being able to be in a classroom with people from like India, people from Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, Australia, New Zealand, America, that was so amazing.”

ALANNA LESLIE: A social project in the city of Cork in the south of Ireland is giving young people with less access to opportunities the chance to express themselves creatively in musical genres you wouldn’t expect to come from the island.

Bairbre Flood reports from Cork to tell us more...

Bairbre Flood: Nestled in the heart of Cork city is a vibrant community hub for young rappers, writers, singers, musicians and podcasters.

‘The Kabin’ is a building brightly covered in graffiti on the outside, and inside, with art pop pictures of the Beastie Boys and other bands and artists.



Gary McCarthy, a hip hop producer, aka GMC Beats, set up the place ten years ago...

Gary McCarthy: “It’s a place where young people can come to express themselves, write music, record music, make beats, and just have another place where they can go just to be themselves and just get away from things that might be stressing them out at home...so it’s half youth space, half creative community space.”

Bairbre Flood: Over thirty young people regularly come to their weekly workshops and throughout the year they also run once-off projects and events as well as outreach workshops and live gigs.

Sophie McCarthy is one of the young people involved with their ‘Hapnin’ podcast, and who writes and records music:

Sophie: “I like the Kabin because it’s a place where I can be myself and even not just, like, with my own personality. I can be myself creatively too and it’s not, like, restricted or anything.”

Bairbre Flood: Along with the music and music videos, the collaborations with young people in Palestine and Lebanon, the Kabin has also produced a film which was released last year. ‘Throwing Shapes’ features some of the rappers and poets they work with.

The film gave a moving and beautiful account of what many would see as a stereotypically ‘disadvantaged area’ of Cork city:

Gary: “I’m not too sure what to make of the term. I think if an area is labelled as disadvantaged it can affect people’s sense of pride.

When people come to The Kabin, we don’t look at them as being disadvantaged, or anything like that, we look at them as having potential to be really creative and that they might not have the same opportunities - maybe the term lack of opportunities might be a better term.”



Bairbre Flood: A sense of pride, and of being grounded in the community is one that's important to Sophie...

Sophie: "It's a lot more community based than you'd think."

Bairbre Flood: Cara Cullen, also works on their 'Hapnin Podcast', and she tells me how The Kabin offers young people ownership of the space, and a sense of belonging.

Cara: "When you're here everyone's just chilling, everyone's vibing out.

It's just like everyone's working together, everyone's doing something, everyone's being creative and working together and it's just a great environment."

Bairbre Flood: The Kabin recently started a new initiative called 'Musical Neighbourhoods' which offers community music education to all adults in the area.

Cara: "It brings out a lot of confidence and you don't get judged here. Everyone can express themselves through music and through creativity and it's just a really nice place to be."

Bairbre Flood: If you want to check out the latest films, music and podcasts from The Kabin - follow them on Instagram and all the usual places, @thekabinstudio

This is Bairbre Flood for Newsreel World in Cork, Ireland.

ALANNA LESLIE: Thanks Bairbre. That's all from me today. Speak to you soon, bye!