



## Problems Through The Eyes Of Young People In The EU's Neighbouring Countries

*Reporting by Tornike Kakalashvili*

Youngsters from Russia, Turkey, Ukraine and Azerbaijan are talking about the problems which concerns them the most.

### Russia



Maxim Ivanov, 25, is Marketing Alumni from Veliky-Novgorod, north-east city in Russia. He complains about compulsory military service. "Each men in my country has to be a soldier for one year. It's really horrible for youngsters. We do not want to do it. We want to be free." -He says.

Lots of young people go to the university to avoid military service even though they are not interested in getting higher education at all. "In Russia we have limited places for students at the universities so those guys who do not want to go to army are taking places of those people who really wants to study."

As in Hungary in Russia as well young and old generation have different opinion about everything, even on politics. "We, youngsters, want changes, but older ones do not let us to do it. Old people should give a place to youngsters for some fresh ideas" - Maxim thinks.

"We do not have young people in government. All of our politicians are 50+ years old. Lots of young people go abroad because they want to change something in their country but they are unable to do it. They are saying 'we can't change our country, but we can change our place of living'".

### Turkey

Hilal Zerk, 26 is an energy system's engineer from Kayseri and his friend, Baser Dilli, 27, is a Mechanical engineer from Adana. For them one of the problematic issue is education system in schools or universities.

"The University education is not enough. For me it's level is equal to the a high school education. Nothing new, nothing different. At the university we are learning just from books, we don't have practice and that's too bad" - Hilal says.

After graduating from university many Turkish youngsters face difficulty to find a job.

"In Turkey there are so many universities. Each city has it's own one. Consequently, so many people graduates, but problem is that there are no enough working places" -She adds.

Due to high rate of unemployment, youngsters are trying to build their future abroad. The most common destinations for them are Germany, and Netherlands.

Baser says that another problem facing Turkey today is a migration.

“We have 2 million migrant from Syria. That’s too much” -He says.

Due to mass migration Hilal does not feel at home anymore.

“Now I am not feeling I am living in Turkey anymore. Those Syrian migrants are opening their own shops and they write things outside the building in Arabic not in Turkish. I don’t like it. They even do not want to learn some Turkish. And the Problem is that it’s legal for them to write all the things in Arabic. Our government supports them financially. If they have child they take more money from our budget. They have other privileges as well. Some of them are even doing some criminal things, like stealing.”



They are pointing out about some ecological problems. “We do not have any trees in big cities. We cut them and are building some things”

Both of them are talking about the differences which exist between old and young generations. Youngsters are liberal and open-minded unlike older ones, which are quite socially and culturally conservative.

“We have conservative, traditionalist and very religious government. They are promoting such kind of stuff that if you are not wearing hijab, it automatically means that you are not real Muslim.” -Hilal says.

Baser believes that additional grave problem is that politicians are use religion just for the political purposes. “It is a political Islam. We do not like it” -He concludes.

## Ukraine



Katherine Danilova is 20 years old high school student from Kharkov and 23 years old Yaroslav Kovalov comes from the same city and he is a PhD Student of the international law.

Katherine says it is really difficult to study and work simultaneously in Ukraine.

“Young people need to study and at the same time they need some money of course, but unfortunately doing part-time job doesn’t give us enough money. That’s why we are facing dilemma: what is priority for us studying or working. So people who concentrate on working their study performance is not good because they miss classes, they do not have enough time for

studying and so on. Both studying and working can be done together but it is really difficult. I know some of my friends who are studying and working at the same time. But they are not putting enough effort to study because they are tired after job"-She says.

Katherine thinks that young Ukrainians are not interested in politics at all. "Even me, I do not participate in elections."

From Yaroslav's point of view main problems of young people are low level of unemployment and drug-dependence, especially weed is popular among the Ukrainians youngsters. In addition, there are some gangs operating in major Ukrainian cities. As Yaroslav says in his city there are two big gangs, which have names of the particular streets: "Rominskaya" and "Balmanskaya."

"Sometimes even school students are members of these gangs. Those are guys who wants to be a 'cool'. Usually they trade some drugs, also they are a lot of foreigners in my city who are studying at the university and it's frequent when they are stopped by those gang-members and asking for money. Police mostly covers them. The rule of law unfortunately is under threat in my country."-He says.

## Azerbaijan



Dashgin Savalanli, 26, is a Movie director from Sumgait, while Gulay Abbasli, 23, is working as a project assistant in one of the local NGOs in Nakhchivan.

Both of them are unsatisfied with education system of their country.

"At school you never learn something that will be useful in the future"-Dashgin says.

In Azerbaijan finding a job is not easy and salaries are not enough, according to them.

"Finding job is too difficult. I am a movie director but nobody cares about my educational background. The University degree does not matter in my country. Finding jobs is not easy. And if you find some job salaries are not enough. When you are living alone you can't afford to pay rent or utility bills with your salary."

Like in Russia, there is a compulsory military service in Azerbaijan too, which is a problematic issue for the most of the young people.

"When you graduate from the University, you have to go to the army for a year. But if you are not getting higher education and you just studied at the high school compulsory military service is a bit longer. In this case you have to serve in the army for one year and six month"

Immigration of some Azerbaijani youth to abroad is a serious challenge for Gulay. She does not like when her compatriots immigrate into different countries.

"Some of young people think that they can't develop themselves in Azerbaijan. They are saying that they are having a capacity and they can't use it in their country, I can use it abroad. I don't like such a brain drain"-She thinks.