



Problems Through The Eyes Of Young People In The EU

Reporting by Tornike Kakalashvili

Youngsters from France, Italy, Spain and Hungary are talking about the problems which concerns them the most.

France

Emeline Imari, 21, comes from Nantes and is volunteering on her gap year in Leszno for Fundacja CAT. She speaks about the problems facing young people in France.

"I am a Psychology student but I don't know if I find a job at the end of my studies because the each employer requires previous work experience and the big problem is that there is no lots of Internship opportunities in my field and not only in mine. People have just finished their university, how can they have an experience? If we are applying for the job and just because we don't have the previous experience, we would be ignored from the all the employers."

She names racism as the second serious difficulty facing France today. Emeline thinks that this problem comes from the lack of education. "If you do not educate your child to be tolerant and open-minded, they could become racists"- she says.



According to Emeline her fellow French youngsters are interested in just problems of France not outside it. For her it's a serious trouble. "They can feel sad just because their charger does not work, but most of them are quite indifferent about much bigger problems of our world. They just see France, France and nothing else"-She adds.

Michel Buffeteau, 22, is from Pouzauges commune of the west-central France. He was studying wood construction. He thinks that the biggest problem for young people in his country is unshapen orientation. "For example when you are 18 years old, it's hard to know what you want to do in your life". As Michel says many young people stop their studies before the graduation because they do not like them. And after that it's hard to redirect.

Michel agrees with Emeline's opinion in terms of racism and he says that it is a still unsolved problem in France. "Many people are afraid of foreigners. Mostly those fears come from the media"-He concludes.

Italy

Federica Mari Bergonzi is 26 years old gastronomy student from Pavone Canavese, a comune in the Metropolitan City of Turin in the Italian region Piedmont. She thinks that the main problem of Italy is that it's a place for old people not for the youngsters.

"Italy is not a suitable place for young people in terms of work. If you are youngster and if you are trying to apply for the job, the employer prefers to conduct an interview with the oldest one. It's like if you are older it

automatically means that you have more working experience. But if they do not give the opportunity to the young people to have this experience, how can I succeed?"-She complains.

As Federica says that's why lot of Italians prefer to immigrate abroad, mainly within European Union to find a job. "We call this problem "Fuga di cervelli", which means Brain drain in English".

She is pretty sure to not spend her future in Italy. "We do not have enough opportunities. The government don't invest money to be created new companies".

Another grave issue in her country is bureaucracy. As she says you can spend one year in waiting for the paper, which is required to start your new job. "It is not normal"- She adds.

An additional difficulty in Italy is inequality between south and north parts of the country and internal migration. "We have the best universities in the Northern Italy and that's why many people from the South comes to study here. North is Economical power and consequently there are main industries, business, companies so many southern Italians prefer to move to North for working. I suppose the principal problem of the Southern Italians is that they do not believe in the potential of the South".



"We have a lot of immigrants and it is true that EU doesn't help us too much. If we are union, if we are all together, so why we can't split this problem between each country?"- She asks.

Due to political correctness many Italians have to say that migration from diverse countries to Italy is not a problem at all. But she is sure that it is a problem for them as well. "Country can't be too much political correct. It is bad for country"- Federica says.

Most of the young Italians are leftists. Left side is very active. In these days if you are in a right-wing the people will not look at you so well.

"If you say I am from right side, people would say 'Oh, probably your father is rich, you are selfish, you do not care others'. And something like that"-She explains.

Federica believes that one of the major problems of Italy are the Italians themselves. "We always complain ourselves. After going abroad you can understand, Italy is not so bad as we think and also other countries have similar problems, but normally classic Italian complains about almost everything"-She adds.

In Italy another difficulty is that there is a strong feeling of community, which mostly sees outsiders as a threat.

"If a foreigner or even Italian, for instance, from Rome, goes to the village where there are 3000 inhabitants, the locals are afraid. They would look you so badly, because you are not part of their community. We create such kind of communities, especially in countryside"-Federica explains.

Spain

Pablo Broch Sebastià, 24, lives in Borriana, Eastern Spain. He studied Economics in the University of Valencia and now he is planning to continue his master studies abroad. When he was asked about what are the major problems of Spain, he answered that it depends on the person to whom you ask it. For some people it's radical feminism, Political attitude, the way that economic goes or climate change, but for him it's a polarization of his society.

"Right now politics are quite polarized in Spain. We don't have center influence. I mean political parties are overrepresented. There are lots of electorate who has neither right nor left-wing political affiliation, but just centrism ideas. But issue is that they do not find political representation of center-wing politics. Consequently,

ideas about everything: the way how to manage the public funds, the methods how to educate children or to introduce economic system, the way to deal with climate change, feminism or inequality between poor and rich people, all of these main ideas or problems are separated into far-left or far-right ideas"-He says.

Pablo tells us that polarization is noticeable even in terms of the football. "The football is the metaphor of the Spanish society: You are fan of 'Real Madrid' or 'Barça'. And after declaration of your opinion you have to hate the other. Generally, the Spanish people hate the rival. They hate other ideas"-He concludes.

The unemployment is a structural problem in Spain. Still there are huge amount of people who are unable to find a job. Mostly, it affects the people over 40 years old and people like Pablo, under 30.



Pablo is unsatisfied with the education system in his country. "I have graduated from the university and I have to say that I am not proud what I have learnt so far"- he admits and blames Spanish universities to be too focused on old ideas. "They do not live in a real world and they do not teach us things that are relevant for me to work in a real job. They teach me how to be a manager of "Amazon", but probably I won't be a manager of it. So, It is better to change the system and to teach me how to deal with much smaller companies in a private sector". He expresses disaffection concerning the English teaching at schools. Pablo claims that they have quite unqualified English teachers in Spain that's why it's almost impossible to learn that particular language at public school.

When it comes to the healthcare, he says it's quite good, but not perfect one. "It's free to have an access to the healthcare, but it takes a lot of time. Some time ago, I broke my hip and I had to wait for three years to have a surgery. If there is a something urgent you do not have to wait so long, but if you have a health problems that you can endure, you just have to wait for an uncertain period"

Here's what Pablo thinks as regards to the separatist sentiments in Catalonia:

"We worry about Catalonia. Our family, friends are living there. In Catalonia there are a number of beautiful towns, magnificent food, great football teams... We are sad that people are fighting each other. It's another example of polarization in Spain whether on which side you stand: you are pro-independent or pro-unity supporter. And you have to fight against the other"

For him a further big issue in his country is a feminism. According to Pablo, for some reasons there are laws in Spain that benefits just women.

"We have a gender law which states that if there is an attack against woman from a man, it is considered as a penal crime and penalty is higher for him. But for example, if woman did same and attacked man it's regarded as a domestic violence, subsequently penalty is much lower. It is a problem of course. It is not equality rights"- He says.

Pablo told us that when there is an assault against women, it becomes a news of the day in all mainstream media, but if woman is violent towards man, it is not as sensational news as in previous case.

Another difficulty he points out is the idea of Spain's deputy prime-minister, Carmen Calvo who has proposed to sign special blank before each sexual intercourse by both parties as they accept to have a sex. "It is a crazy idea for me. How you can make sure I have not forced my partner or she has not forced me to sign that document?!- He asks.

Hungary

András Kőrösi, 19, from Budapest has recently graduated from a High school and now having a gap year and preparing for getting the university education. He names "huge corruption" as his country's number one problem.

He says that because of that country can't develop. András blames all political parties for "stealing a lot of money." He assesses it as "a big unfair game".

"Due to the corruption and the "feudal" system, you can't really start an enterprise. Of course officially you can, but in reality it is really hard. The anti-business economic policy is a common thing. So the government unofficially does not support and protect the proprietorships. These are the reasons why some companies and entrepreneurs from different countries do not want to go to Hungary for a business."- He says.

Another difficulty that young people face in Hungary is that there are no start-up opportunities for them.

In addition, András is quite unsatisfied in terms of the medical system in Hungary. "Maybe the problem is not as big as in other countries from the east, but it is still unsolved".

As he says generally the hospitals don't have enough machines to work with. "In addition the paramedics do not put high-quality medicines in the ambulance car, because it's expensive (about 350-360 Euros). So they use the cheaper ones (about 50-60 Euros) as a result those medicines have side effects and it can't solve the pain instantly"-He adds.



Doctors in Hungary have low salaries. "The payment is based on a doctor's qualification and specialization, but mostly they earn 1000 Euro per month, which is really low in comparison with Germany for instance. There it's 5000-6000 Euro per month. That's why many doctors are leaving the country. Additionally, the doctors are overworked and stressed"-He emphasized.

The education system is another topic which András worries about. The government plans to impose regulation which requires all students to have B2 level knowledge in a particular foreign language to be enrolled at the university. "It is a big problem for young people because nearly 40% have no B2 level knowledge"-He stressed.

Apart from it, teachers have really low salaries. As András says, teachers' salaries are growing but really slightly, so they have to do other jobs alongside with teaching to earn some living.

One of the major problems in Hungary is that the new generation thinks absolutely differently about almost everything from the older one. The issue of migration isn't an exception too. "The people of the old generation says that we should not open the door of our country to the migrants. According to them, most of them are quite rude and not suitable for our country. They are saying that our culture, way of life will change due to migration, in addition their argument is that there would be the problem of integration. And young people think completely differently from them about this topic. They are much more liberal and open-minded."- András says.

The ruling FIDESZ party is not popular among the youngsters. In 2017 a new political party "Momentum Movement" was created and it became quite attractive among the Hungarian youth. But as András says, it has not too much influence on the recent political agenda.