

New report shows young Europeans fear war spreading across Europe and call on EU countries to spend more on defence

Survey of 7,367 young Europeans highlights their perspective on Ukraine war

Brussels, 12 May 2022 – As war continues to rage in Ukraine, a new survey has found that nearly two thirds of young people in Europe fear that the conflict could spread within the EU.

Over 60% of respondents think that EU countries should spend more on their military, and almost half support the creation of an EU army. While a majority are not keen on EU countries taking military action in Ukraine if it risked nuclear conflict with Russia, there is a sizable minority, at 44%, who would support this course of action.

With EU leaders continuing to debate further sanctions and possible bans on Russian energy imports, over three quarters of those surveyed said they supported strong economic sanctions against Russia, while three quarters of those who expressed an opinion said the EU should speed up the transition to renewable energy to rely less on energy from outside the EU.

The findings are contained in a report called *Builders of Progress: Europe's NextGen "The War in Ukraine Through the Eyes of Youth"*, conducted by the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) and ThinkYoung. Between 25 March and 7 April, the survey questioned 7,367 young Europeans aged 18 to 38 from France, Germany, the UK, Italy, Spain, Poland and Romania.

Commenting on the findings, László Andor, Secretary-General of the Foundation of European Progressives studies said:

"While Ukrainian resistance to the Russian invasion of Ukraine continues and the war's outcome remains uncertain, the lives of millions of Ukrainians have been permanently affected. Our FEPS policy brief explores the opinions of young European citizens who have not experienced war first-hand and reveals their deep concerns that the war in Ukraine could spread to the rest of Europe. It also shows that young Europeans want the European Union to provide strong humanitarian and military support to Ukraine and that large segments of the young population in Europe are ready to welcome and support refugees from the conflict region."

Adding to this, Andrea Gerosa, Founder of ThinkYoung, stated:

"The war in Ukraine is a tragedy of immense proportions. Our report reveals that young people are alive to the threat this war represents to the values they hold dear and highlights their expectation that their governments will respond accordingly. They want the EU to stand on its own feet and play a stronger role on the world stage. We hope EU leaders will take the initiative and deliver meaningful results that meet the high expectations of Europe's younger generations."

Other key findings of the report include:

- 74% of young Europeans believe the EU should let in more refugees from Ukraine.
- 70% want larger amounts of money sent to help Ukrainian refugees enter and settle in Europe safely.
- Nearly 60% of young people were in favour of European countries further uniting and cooperating, with the sentiment strongest in Romania, Poland and Spain.

For more insights, download the full report here: <https://www.thinkyoung.eu/ukraine>

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Notes to Editor

The Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) is the think tank of the progressive political family at EU level. Its mission is to develop innovative research, policy advice, training and debates to inspire and inform socialist and social democratic politics and policies across Europe.

ThinkYoung is the first think tank of its kind with a focus on young people and the issues important to them. Founded in 2009, it has offices in Brussels, Geneva, Nairobi and Hong Kong.

Since its creation, ThinkYoung has reached more than 800,000 young people through its research and initiatives.

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