

**2023**

# **YOUTH STUDY ARMENIA (IN)DEPENDENCE GENERATION**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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The “(In)dependence generation: Armenia – 2023” research reveals important aspects of the dispositions, opinions, perceptions and expectations of the country’s youth. The results show the current lifestyles and attitudes of Armenian youth after political crises and the war indicate conflicting values and social contradictions. Within the framework of this research, the issues of education, employment, political participation, concerns, identity aspirations, religion, tolerance, family life, entertainment and the lifestyle of young people in Armenia were addressed. The main research findings are as follows:

- Armenian youth tend to rate their socio-economic situation as good compared to others both in their community and in the country. At the same time, female participants rated their socio-economic situation worse compared to other groups. This is in contrast to male representatives.
- Only 1/3 of youth has personal income; 1/4 is dependent upon parents, and even 1/4 of those employed is financially dependent on some other person (usually the parents of their spouse).
- Females and rural residents among the youth are the most financially dependent.
- Urban youth are more often enrolled in an educational institution than those in rural areas.
- About half of the surveyed young people are employed, and male representatives are more engaged in the labour market.
- The majority of those not enrolled in school and not employed are female, from rural areas and married.
- Only 16% of young people have done any kind of volunteer work in the last year.
- More than half of the Armenian youth are generally not interested in politics. Moreover, 18-29-year-old females from Yerevan with a pre-university education are not interested in politics at all.
- Among the problems facing the country, young people singled out the conflict with neighbouring countries, territorial integration and foreign political tensions as most important. They placed a secondary emphasis on socio-economic problems such as unemployment and increasingly rising prices.
- The majority of young people prefer Armenia stand close to and in solidarity with the West; no one has emphasised such a position unequivocally towards Russia.
- The vast majority of young people consider Armenia to be a European country, having a perception of Europe more as a positive and/or abstract than a negative phenomenon.
- The negative connotation of Europe in the perceptions of young people is mainly connected with the collision of what is considered “Europeanness” with traditional values.
- From the point of view of Armenia’s national security and Armenia’s economic development, young people believe that cooperation should be first of all with Russia and secondly with the USA.

- Armenian youth tend to think that military structures, such as NATO and CSTO, play a more negative role for Armenia, and international financial and civil structures play a more positive role.
- Younger and female participants tend to emphasise the more positive role of the European Union and international organisations like the UN, CSTO and NATO for Armenia.
- The overwhelming majority of Armenian youth emphasise citizenship of the Republic of Armenia as an important part of their self-identity; ethnic and religious aspects of their identity were also well represented.
- The vast majority of young people in Armenia are not inclined to self-identify as Europeans. At the same time, young men with a high level of education, and those of older age, tend to consider themselves as RA citizens, and so do not generally consider themselves as Europeans.
- In the hierarchical value system of Armenian youth, the values emphasising personal characteristics and virtues come first, and family values second. At the same time, the values of civic participation and/or involvement are barely emphasised.
- Among the values of young people, personal dignity, respect, loyalty and fighting spirit are considered of greatest value, and the least important is an innovative spirit. Among the values given less importance are altruism, sense of humour and decency.
- The youth see the army, the church and the police as the most reliable institutional structures, while the most unreliable ones are the political parties, the mass media and the current president.
- Military, church, police, courts and trade unions are more likely to be trusted by the least educated, male, younger, rural youth.
- Armenian youth mostly live with their parents or spouse and mostly have good relations with their parents.
- Males, especially younger ones, have good relations with their parents, while females, although they do not have specific issues in their relations with their parents, have disagreements more often.
- Almost half of young people view the collapse of the Soviet Union as a bad phenomenon.
- Younger males are more likely to go abroad for education and/or work.
- Young women living in Yerevan prefer to go to the USA, while slightly older young men from Marzes prefer to go to Russia.
- Armenian youth mostly tend to think that climate change is a global threat, and when hearing about climate change and efforts to reduce it, young people mostly feel anger, helplessness, indifference and fear; few cited hope and confidence.

- The majority of Armenian youth are more inclined to think that there will be a resumption of the Karabakh war within the next five years. Meanwhile, the importance of proximity to Russia is more pronounced among young people who consider that there is a high possibility of another Karabakh war within the next five years.
- Despite this, the majority of young people are more optimistic about the future, believing that their family's living conditions will be better in five years.

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