



## **Report from an open debate about young Serbs traveling in European countries**

**From Aleksandar Arandjelovic  
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The actuality of this topic is now bigger than ever here in Serbia, because we finally after all this years have got an opportunity to travel without problem manifested through necessity of visa. That problem has, during this period, bad influenced possibilities of traveling abroad, even in EU countries. In debate that I have organized we had 4 active participants, and audience also could include in argue, in specific parts. Participants have been selected for this debate by accomplishing some criteria, such as they have never traveled beyond borders of Serbia, or that they traveled in more than two EU countries...

We discussed possibilities that we have now got, but also what can be problem for young people traveling abroad. Opinions of course were divided, because one part thought that traveling abroad brings with itself lots of complicated situations, but mostly audience agreed with attitude that all "troubles" that can be created in this kind of journeys are negligible if we just think about all new things that we can learn. Standpoint is that traveling in developed countries, such as EU countries can bring very positive experience and help in ascertainment existent knowledge. Not to mention new things, ideas and a priori new people who will introduce us with its culture and customs, from which we can learn and later implement in our area of living.

We also discussed facts; that negligible percentage of young Serbs has seen some EU country, but also that numbers are growing if the question is reformulated in "Will you travel in EU countries starting January 1, 2010. when visa-free travel will be granted". In that case percentage of people who want to travel is in permanent growth. Conclusion can be that the main reason why Serbs didn't travel in EU countries so far is poverty and difficulties in getting Visa. But, we firm believe that this situation will progress in near future, and that Serbs will finally overcome all obstacles, and that they will be able to travel much, meet new cultures, people and to learn about democracy and values of modern society.

Marina Bulatovic GEA assistant in Kragujevac

## Young people's opinions about travelling abroad

I was spending a couple of days at my aunt's in Nis and one day I decided to run a little survey among young people on the streets together with some friends. These are some of the most interesting answers we got.

*"I like travelling, meeting new people, exploring new cultures and trying new national dishes. I've been to several European countries till now."*

Jelena, 23

*"Each year I visit my grandparents in Germany. People are nice over there. But my friends still can't get used of me paying for their drinks. :)"*

Ivan, 18

*"Actually I don't have a passport yet. But I'm thinking of getting it soon."*

Natasha, 21

*"I would like to go abroad but my parents say it's not that safe for us Serbs."*

Darko, 16

*"Of course I would like to visit some European country. But Europe is expensive and right now I can't afford that."*

Ivan, 21

*"I've been only to Greece and Bulgaria. People like Serbs over there and that's what's important for me."*

Tanja, 18

*"I get really frustrated when UK, Sweden and Spanish girls run away from me and my friends at the moment we say where are we from. Europe still thinks of us as savages."*

Aleksandar, 19

*"I travel a lot actually. My passport is as fat as the last J. K. Rowling's book. 😊 It's so colorful and with many visas but I like it that way. Though I will have to get a new one soon."*

Marija, 24

*"Looking forward to visa liberalization. I'm bored with all that paper work. I mean, Serbia is Europe."*

Dejan, 24

*"My boyfriend and I went to Italy last year. It's so beautiful there, especially Venice, so romantic. We are saving money for Paris next year."*

*Ana, 21 and Milan, 23*

*"I think Europe is too hard on us. Give us a break. We are people too."*

*Milan, 25*

*"To travel abroad? Why should I? Serbia is big enough for me. Why don't they come visit me?"*

*Danijel, 18*

*"We are really looking forward to our senior trip next year. We can't wait to do some shopping in Italy."*

*Aleksandra 17, Jelena and Tamara, 18*

*"This year I'm going to celebrate New Year's Eve like never before. Really looking forward for visa liberalization."*

*Aleksandar, GEA in Serbia ( me), 18*

And the most interesting one 😊

*"You don't look bad. Why are you even bothering with all this stuff? Get yourself a girlfriend."*

*Two girls with sunglasses*

Survey was run by Aleksandar GEA in Serbia and Kristina, Vlada and Natasha