



Generation Z was born between 2000 and the present day. This is the first generation in the post-Soviet space and beyond born and raised in a digital environment. We have used smartphones from an early age and cannot imagine a world without the internet.

In large cities such as Kiev, Moscow, and Minsk people have started to talk about New Ethics, Cancel Culture, and Gender-neutral words. In small towns, no one is interested in this. People here have other issues: they focus on survival, including the youngest generation. Zoomers here are not as affected by smartphones and the Internet; in cities frozen in the 90s, the events that influenced the generation are also frozen. Ideals in such cities, therefore, are built on the experience of previous generations rather than by the rapid digitalization of information. The main goal for young people here is to move to a bigger city, whether that means through study, work or luck. For some of them this path is successful, but most go back or try to build their future following the example of their parents in their hometown.

What the Z's in the capital cities and the provinces have in common is that we were all born in the era of Putin's rule. His presidency has shaped us, his policies have influenced Generation Z in all the countries of the former Soviet Union, some places more, some places less. In the big towns we try to oppose it, in the small ones we become apolitical, because we believe that the change of power will not affect us in any way - there was ruin and there will be ruin.



The Putin Era has not only produced a socio-phobic generation of girls and boys living online but also a grandiose generational conflict. Society in its ostentatious sanctimony continues to insist: we have no sex, no homoeroticism and even images of the female body, we cannot express ourselves through clothes if they are too revealing, we cannot complain about problems because then you are a whiner or a failure, and going to a psychologist means you have nothing to do. But neither the law nor public opinion stops us. Deep down, we yearn for change and a reboot of society, just like any other generation in their younger years, although as we grow older we realise that changes in politics or society in the post-Soviet Union countries will probably not solve any of our problems, it is certainly worth a try.



Artist Bio

Toma Gerzha [b.2003, Russia] grew up in Moscow, Kolchugino, Lukhovitsy, and still speaks Russian language. Her family moved to the Netherlands in 2009.

She has successfully completed her Photography Studies at the Dutch Academy for Visual Creation in 2019. Gerzha first gained public notice on the Internet with her project ".ru" (2023), which included photographic work created using artificial intelligence. Toma has become widely known for her animation-based reels. Currently she studies Art History at the University of Amsterdam.

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