

# UK workers and youth speak out against war and NATO

Our reporters  
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Campaign teams from the Socialist Equality Party have been speaking to workers across the UK who want to record their opposition to Russia's war in Ukraine and plans by the NATO powers to utilize a conflict they deliberately provoked to bring about regime change in Moscow that could end in a direct conflict between nuclear powers.

**Karen**, a student at the University of East London, said, "What's going on is very scary. I don't think we get the truth. The news is positioned towards many things that we can't know about for sure, so it's difficult to get the truth and the wider picture. There are definitely political agendas in the background. Yemen doesn't get spoken about. I think people have to look for independent sources of news and not look at the mainstream too much and stand up for what you believe in. All the main parties are out of touch with the majority."

**Megan**, a student at Leeds University, said, "Many people think it's not going to affect us because it's not directly in our country. They think they don't have to do anything. As one person we can't maybe do a lot, but even just speaking up about stuff it gets more conversations going and more people interested and aware of what's going on around them."

"I am concerned because it's not our voices being heard. The Conservative government is for one set of people with one mindset, making all these decisions and not telling us the truth about what is going on. It's about power and money at the end of the day. When something happens like this war, it shouldn't be down to just one party. It affects everyone."

**Adam**, a student studying law at Bradford university, said, "I think the US and UK are hypocritical in their support for war in Ukraine."

"The UK would not allow Russia to come over to

Scotland and take Scotland the same way the UK and America had gone and taken over Ukraine. I think the UK and America should just stay out of it because I think they could cause a lot more trouble in the long run.

"It's just double standards and something should be done about the way the UK and US are behaving. They haven't got a great history: they have carpet bombed whole countries calling it pre-emptive strikes. Ukraine is getting loads of coverage while Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine get no coverage. So it seems as though there is some agenda particularly with the press in the UK. They are trying to make the deaths in Ukraine the responsibility of Russia to make Russia look really bad."

**Daniel**, 19, a Business Studies student at Bradford University, said, "There is a lot of misinformation. If you use social media as a teenager, TikTok, Twitter, the thing is you see one video which looks correct, but then you see about another 10 where there are just lies and it's hard to develop a correct view. I think with this war a lot of people have concerns based on what they've seen, but it's not always correct."

"In the past young people's thoughts on world issues weren't as focused as they are now, so even though there is that misinformation around young people are still interested in wanting to know what's happening."

"It's like a scary thought right, because everybody's idea is that as soon as that one person, or that one country releases a nuke there's going to be a massive response globally, even if you're an unrelated country. No matter where you are, you're going to have that fear of, OK, where's my country going to stand on this? And especially the UK because as soon as anything happens it's going to directly impact here."

"I think another issue is the dependence on Russian

gas. An average person going to work, driving however many miles, their petrol price has just gone up through no fault of their own. I think in Ukraine and Russia they grow one third or 30 percent of global wheat production. If you think about the poorest of the poor that's going to directly impact them because as the price goes up, for them it's going to be a massive impact on their daily life."

**Joe, Mercy** and **Khyati** are university graduates working for a project advising young people how to manage financially.

**Joe** said, "They're both [Russia, America] as bad as each other. Anyone who hoards nuclear weapons is evil. It'll be us that pays for the war. I've got a Karl Marx poster at home. I'd join a revolution if there was one. I'd overthrow capitalism."

**Mercy**, 24, said, "What you're doing here is very important, informing people."

**Khyati**, 24 from Salford, said, "I don't think it's fair about the war. We have more important issues to deal with, like climate change. As soon as the pandemic is over, war is waiting to happen."

Manchester taxi driver **Abdur Rashid** said, "I oppose war. If petrol goes up, everything goes up. Why should we pay for the rising fuel prices? The government said 15 years ago, we have reserve fuel. Then why are they putting prices up? If there's no war, I don't pay higher prices. We send troops, who pays? Our tax money pays."

"I have to work an extra 10 hours a week. I now work every day, nine hours, 10 hours. The government says you don't need to worry. I am worried. If I don't pay my mortgage for two or three months, they'll take my house."

**Stanley** from Sheffield said, "I have been following the conflict in Ukraine, but am not watching the destruction of life and properties unnecessarily. I have been a soldier myself. I understand what making war means, and its implications for society. It's imperialism by the Americans, their desire to bring down the Putin regime and bring Western influence into Russia. The Americans would want to get rid of Russia and control the world."

**Yazanani**, a social researcher from South London, said, "I think to only look at this war in Ukraine not only vilifies Russia but also erases how its territory has slowly been encroached upon by NATO. Russia isn't the first super-power to violate international law, but it

seems to be the first to be denounced. As a society we should denounce those who enabled the scourge of war through acquisition of military weapons and such power plays. It's caused unnecessary loss of life and destruction of life chances for other reasons.

"The US and UK aren't seeking de-escalation but considering how to advance and defend their interests in a situation involving nuclear and other weapons!"



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