# 10-Dec-16 World View — EU agrees to grant visa-free travel to people of Ukraine and Georgia

## Description

This morning's key headlines from GenerationalDynamics.com

- Ukraine still on track to host Eurovision song contest in 2017
- Ukraine war: fighting just to carry on fighting
- EU agrees to grant visa-free travel to people of Ukraine and Georgia

## Ukraine still on track to host Eurovision song contest in 2017

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*Jamala, after winning the 2016 Eurovision Song Contest (DPA)*

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The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) announced on Thursday announced, "Contrary to media reports, we can confirm there are no plans to move the 2017 Eurovision Song Contest to Moscow."

Ukraine won the 2016 Eurovision contest in May, and according to rules, will be the host of the 2017 contest. However, Russia is objecting that Ukraine is too financially strapped to be able to host the multinational spectacle. Russia is also objecting that Ukraine is threatening to forbid attendance by anyone who supported Russia's invasion and annexation of Ukraine's Crimea peninsula.

The core of the dispute is that the Ukraine singer Jamala (actual name Susana Jamaladinova) won the contest in May with an extremely emotional song called "1944" that appeared to allude to Russia's 1944 deportation of 240,000 ethnic Tatars from Crimea to Siberia and Central Asia. Jamala herself is an ethnic Tatar, whose great-grandmother was deported, along with five children.

Thursday's announcement by the EBU is intended to reassure the public that the issues have been resolved, and that the 2017 contest will be held in Ukraine. Deutsche Welle and Telegraph (London, 11-May-2016) and Youtube – Jamala's performance at Eurovision

## Ukraine war: fighting just to carry on fighting

According to France 24's Ukraine correspondent Gulliver Cragg, there is no sign that the war in Ukraine is ending, but it's not going anywhere either. The two sides are just fighting because of the political benefits that they gain as long as the war continues.

In 2014, Russia invaded Ukraine, with troops and equipment to support separatists who wanted to break off the entire eastern portion of Ukraine and annex it to Russia. That hasn't happened, but Russia also invaded Ukraine's Crimea peninsula and annexed it made it part of the Russian federation.

However, the war in eastern Ukraine between the Ukrainian army, supported by the government in Kiev, and the Russian separatists, supported by Russian troops and equipment. The following

interview excerpts occurred on RFI (my transcription):

> "I don't see very many signs of things changing in any major way in the near future in the east. It's important to stress this war is very much ongoing. People are being killed everyday pretty much.
>
> It pales in comparison to what's going on in Syria – the death toll is far far lower, thankfully, and civilians are bearing less of the brunt of it than they were in 2014-15. The casualties tend to be military casualties on both sides.
>
> And there's no clear sign of what people are trying to do. There's no evident attempt to take more territory by either side. It seems like, in a lot of ways, and I think there's quite a lot of evidence for this, they are mostly just carrying on fighting in order to carry on fighting.
>
> The separatists need an excuse as to why life in the areas they control is so bad – why they aren't managing to build these pseudo states properly, and the easy thing to do is to blame the Ukrainians "who keep bombing us."
>
> The Ukrainians find the war — this is perhaps a cynical analysis — but I think that there is an extent to which it's true — the Ukrainians — although and I would always stress that they did not start this war — but now there's a situation where the more it goes on, they don't have to face the impossible task of applying the Minsk peace agreement which was signed in February 2015, which is actually basically impossible for Ukraine to comply with. They could never get the vote in parliament needed to pass the measures that they promised Russia they would pass. So as long as the fighting goes on, they don't have to do that."

RFI video

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## EU agrees to grant visa-free travel to people of Ukraine and Georgia

France 24 Ukraine correspondent Gulliver Cragg went on to say that what the Ukrainian government wants most of all from the EU is visa-free travel for Ukrainians throughout the Schengen zone. (This is the same issue as with Turkey, which wants visa-free travel for Turkish citizens throughout the Schengen zone.)

In fact, the European Parliament on Thursday reached an agreement to grant visa-free travel to the people of Ukraine and Georgia. Under the terms of the agreement, visa-free travel can be quickly terminated after an investigation following a request by an EU nation. The deal still needs to be

officially approved by the entire European Parliament, which is expected next week.

However, Cragg adds that visa-free travel won't be of much use to Ukrainians:

> "That's the one small piece of good news — that they're gonna get this visa-free travel, but it's not really gonna impact that many Ukrainians because they can't really afford to travel to Europe most of them. So there are those who will find it a bit easier to go to Europe and work illegally on short term temporary contracts, in Poland and Italy and things like that – that will make their lives a bit easier — but they're still gonna be working illegally, because this visa-free access doesn't allow them to work."

If approved, then Ukraine and Georgia will join the United States, Canada, Australia, Brazil, Israel, and Japan as countries having visa-free travel. Foreign Policy and European Parliament

***KEYS:*** Generational Dynamics, Ukraine, Eurovision, Russia, Crimea, Jamala, Susana Jamaladinova, 1944, Tatars, France24, Gulliver Cragg, Georgia
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