



Youth at the Top, 3rd edition: Sharing an Experience in the Mountains July 11th 2017

PRESS RELEASE

Chambéry, May 11th 2017

On July 11th 2017, several groups of young people will gather in different places all over the Alps and the Carpathians to share a collective experience in the mountains

Back to Nature in the Mountains

When was the last time you watched the stars in an unpolluted sky, lying on the grass of a mountain valley or summit, with the sound of the wind blowing through the trees and of a river flowing?

A lot of young people may have no answer to this question, because they have never had such an experience. Nowadays, young people are overwhelmed by the need for technologies in a fast-paced society and they hardly ever have the chance to live an authentic experience in a natural environment. Their relationship with nature and the mountains, which is important for their personal growth and fulfilment, is being weakened. The mountains need young people to be preserved as much as young people need the mountains to rebuild or strengthen that connection with nature.

The international project Youth at the Top aims at improving the connection between young people and nature by bringing them to the mountains to spend a day together and sleep there overnight. For this reason, Youth at the Top is a unique opportunity for young people to experience close contact with the mountain environment, rediscover the power of being a group and the values of active citizenship and solidarity on a common annual date. Youth at the Top is a collective activity with a strong symbolic and imaginative approach.

Youth at the Top 2017

The **3rd edition of Youth at the Top** will be held on Tuesday **11th July 2017** – Wednesday **12th July 2017**. We have received registration forms for **more than 50 events** that will take place simultaneously in different locations. These local events will be set up by protected areas, youth workers, associations, refuges, communities and other mountain actors with the participation of local professionals.

Transnational, cross-border and unifying

The events planned will take place in **6 countries in the Alps** (Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Slovenia, Switzerland) and **3 countries in the Carpathians** (Poland, Romania, Slovakia) in a common framework that still leaves plenty of room for local partners to develop their own initiative and creativity. The **simultaneity** of the events and the common framework will help to create in the young participants not only a **sense of belonging to the mountains**, but also a sense of being part of a large community with no borders.

Innovation: The Alps in my backpack

As we are constantly looking for innovation this year all the partners involved in the initiative will receive **the “The Alps in my backpack” teaching tool**. The tool has been designed and developed by the ALPARC Educational Working group on “Mountain-Oriented Education”. For the educators it will be a powerful tool to further promote the international approach of the initiative, foster the sense of community and raise awareness of the natural and cultural Alpine heritage.



Continuity with Youth at the Top 2016

In 2016 many young people experienced authentic contact with nature by taking part in the 2nd edition of “Youth at the Top”. For the occasion protected areas, associations, mountain actors and other organizations set up more than **40 events in 8 different countries** in the Alps and the Carpathians. Their effort in the field of education and in engaging young generations was rewarded with the participation of **more than 500 young people** who enjoyed different activities in the mountains such as fauna & flora observation, rock painting, land art, writing, wood carving, light painting, storytelling, treasure hunting, stargazing, climbing, solidarity actions and meetings with mountain players.

Young participants from Youth at the Top 2016 are the **best testimonials** to prove that striking up or renewing the **relationship of youngsters with nature** is not just necessary and possible, but it is also **great fun!**

For this reason, we invite you to check out [the video of YAT 2016](#) to have a taste of what the previous edition was for them!

Have a look at [the postcards collection](#) to have an overview of their impressions.



Watch [YAT 2016 – Best of!](#)

Find us on our website:

www.youth-at-the-top.org

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