

Youth at the Top 2021 36 events across 9 countries for a special 7th Edition



The 7th edition of the “Youth at the Top” project took place from 8 to 9 July 2021. For this international event, coordinated by ALPARC, about 500 young people meet every year for a two days hike and an overnight in the mountains. The local events are organized simultaneously in numerous protected areas across the Alps and Carpathians. The project offers young people between the ages of 5 and 25 the opportunity to reconnect with their natural and cultural heritage. It is also an opportunity to remind them of the bond that they share with their neighboring countries and of the importance of protecting the sensitive mountainous region that they inhabit.

Despite the restrictions imposed by Covid 19, the 2021 edition was a real success with 36 local events in 9 different countries. On July 8th and 9th, many young people from France, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Poland, Slovakia and Romania took part in a mountain hike, followed by a night in a tent, in a hut or even -for most groups- under the stars.

For this edition, the organizers were invited to schedule various activities on the **theme of "Local Food "**. That theme was particularly well received by the young people: milking the goats, visiting a cheese factory, blind tasting, outdoor cooking... the activities around this common theme were numerous and diverse. Although the local dishes were very well received, this topic was above all an opportunity to draw the attention of young people to current issues: the decline of biodiversity and climate change are closely linked to Western consumption and production patterns: intensive agriculture, excessive packaging and transport lead to poor air quality, excessive pesticide use and waste problems. Ironically, we depend on the same nature and environment to feed ourselves. The decrease in pollinators is a living proof of this. Some of these impacts and threats have been addressed by the organizers through pedagogical activities, that should remind the youngsters of the importance of protecting and preserving our nature. Each group was also invited to illustrate a local specialty and an international recipe book with the drawings of the young people is currently under preparation.

Despite bad weather conditions in some part of the Alps, the event was -once again- a real success, and the young people and the organizers are already looking forward to the 2022 edition!

More information:

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