



PRESS RELEASE

Chambéry and Gap, 30th August 2016

“Youth at the Top 2016”: a beautiful experience and some unforgettable memories!

**On 12th and 13th July, throughout the Alps and the Carpathians,
more than 500 young people reached the summit**

A reminder- What is "Youth at the Top"?

It's a project which every year mobilises groups of young people from different countries in the Alps and the Carpathians on a common date, in an active, civic process, with an imaginative approach. The operation proposes a collective framework, while leaving plenty of room for local initiatives.



"Youth at the Top" : what an adventure!

On 12th and 13th July, for the second edition of the operation, **almost 700 participants (more than 500 young people and about 150 adults) from 8 countries of the Alps and the Carpathians** together saw what it was like to live as a group and share exciting moments in the mountains: an event that will long remain in their memories.

In all, 37 events took place in the Alpine Arc and 4 in the Carpathians. Initially more than 50 events were planned, but some organisers were forced to cancel or postpone their project because of thunderstorms. Despite this constraint, most events were held at the date scheduled. In very cool temperatures, walking in the rain and at times even facing snow, the youngsters reached their summit and spent the night there. In refuges, bivouacking or in tents.

Pictures: ©,from the top down and from left to right: Parc naturel du Queyras Christophe Gerrer/Naturpark Diemtigtal/ UNESCO Géoparc de Haute Provence, Marie-Jo Soncini/Fug'en Cimes, Christophe Delahaye/Parc national du Mercantour Alba Treadwell,



Young people: we like to be at the Top!

During the event young people took part in an artistic activity which took on different and varied forms. Some groups watched the stars, others did light painting; some painted rocks and even cows, or explored Alpine fauna and flora in an innovative way.

This year, for the first time, they all wrote a postcard addressed symbolically to the other participants, where they expressed themselves freely by drawings or texts. Several of them highlighted their new-found or re-discovered love of the mountains: (see the testimonials below).

The local organisers spontaneously said how much they had enjoyed leading this project and how happy they felt to see young people blossoming during their stay in the mountains!

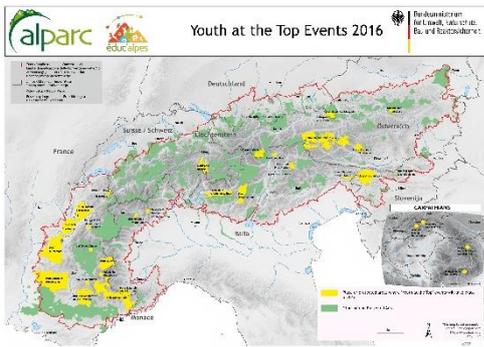


Pictures ©Parco naturale Mont Avic/ PNR_Queyras

A collective operation to get young people (back) into contact with nature

"Youth at the Top" has a growing number of partners and young participants, the latter having almost doubled since the first test-edition in 2015.

This initiative aims to heighten young people's awareness of mountains and their natural and cultural environment; to help them to feel connected to mountains through feeling, observing, playing, encountering, imagining, dreaming or self-expression. The project has great symbolic value as it runs simultaneously throughout the Alps and the Carpathians. It enables youngsters to get to know their mountain heritage better and strengthen their feeling of belonging to the Alps or to the Carpathians, as well as to Europe itself, for it brings together young people from France, Italy, Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Slovenia, and as far as Slovakia and Romania!



Post-event follow-up

To participate virtually in the young people's adventures, visit the [project's official page](#) and the [Facebook page](#).

The retrospective video of the 2016 edition of Youth at the Top will be available this autumn. Meanwhile, we suggest that you watch the videos on [ALPARC's YouTube channel](#) and the video of the 2015 edition of Youth at the Top 2015.

Our thanks go to all our partners and to the young participants for making this edition a success!

And if you are wondering what it means to be "always at the top", there's only one answer.....take part in "Youth at the Top" in 2017!



International Event Coordination • Contacts



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für Umwelt, Naturschutz,
Bau und Reaktorsicherheit

This collective project emanates from the "Mountain Environment Education in the Alpine Protected Areas" working group, whose driving aim is to develop links between young people and mountains.

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2016 Edition Organising Partners



For this action Educ'Alpes is supported



Talking about that!

• The youngsters

Those who climb higher, see further, and those who see further dream better! Orobie
Valtellinesi Park, Italy

It was a magnificent experience. Come to the mountains with us! Piatra
Craiului, Romania

It was great! At first I told myself that there wouldn't be anything new as I'd already been on hikes, but I was wrong. We were in a group and we learned things, we did new activities. I said to myself that being on your own or in a group is completely different. My thanks to the mountain leaders who gave me the opportunity to have such an experience and I also thank Youth at the Top." Jeanne
Piotr, Mercantour National Park, France

This experience has made me see a different way to enjoy outings in the mountains.....

Rebecca, Alpi Marittime Natural Park, Italy

Youth at the Top was for us a really brilliant opportunity to discover the Alps! Students of the Dominikus-Zimmermann Lycée, Landberg am Lech (D) in the Ötztal Nature Park, Austria (D)

Initially I thought it would have been boring, but in the end was amazing !
France, Mountain Riders, Lilou et Kilian

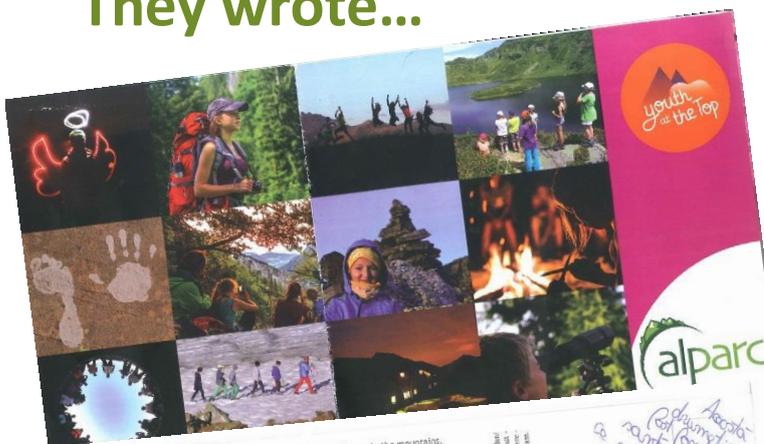


• The local organisers

It was a pure challenge for the children which they won, together with their fears. They discovered new places, amazing landscapes, fauna and flora. They know how it's like to be in a refuge and sleep in a dormitory, etc... but the most important was the shared experience with other youth all along the Alps, amazing !
UNESCO Géoparc de Haute Provence,
Marie-Jo Soncini

It's a triple satisfaction: 1/ Get them to know the mountain nature thanks to an original event (walk in the night and observe the sun rise) 2/ the pleasure to hear them talking about this experience, their feedback was a gift 3/ the pleasure to experience all this with them ! Fug'en Cimes,
Christophe Delahaye

They wrote...



Youth at the top: a physical, human, cultural and artistic collective experience in the mountains.
www.youth-at-the-top.org

*An am o experientă unică cu aspecte oceanice
A fost una dintre cele mai frumoase experiențe
pe care am participat-o cu drag la această activitate!*

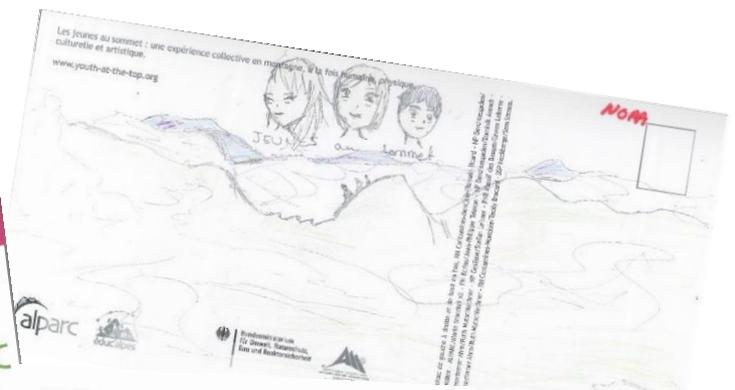
*A fost o experiență frumoasă. Hai cu noi pe munte!
Mi-a plăcut această idee. A.D.
Mi-a făcut plăcere să particip la această
activitate.*

*Mi-a plăcut drumurile!
Tuturor Pietrii Craiului!*

*Acceptați o experiență
cu noi în
ce mai repede
G.B.G.*

*Patru Craiului National Park
Romania =*

*Am avut o experiență unică și frumoasă în cadrul
activității. Am învățat multe lucruri noi și am
câștigat prietenii. Am fost foarte mulțumit de
organizatori și de liderii de grup. Am avut
o experiență foarte frumoasă și am învățat
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Jeux!
*We are leaving with new informations about mountains.
The day was great. It rained in the first dinner and
in the camp. The day was very sunny and in morning
it was raining. We are happy because we were
here. We are waiting for your mail.*

*Guiding from thinking was sending for you: flower drawings
flower drawings flower drawings flower drawings*

friso *rose* *rose* *rose* *rose* *rose* *rose* *rose* *rose* *rose*

alparc *Géoparc de Haute-Provence*

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