



Education and Culture DG

'Youth in Action' Programme



YOUTH UNDERSTANDING POLITICS

The international youth exchange YOUTH UNDERSTANDING POLITICS takes place from 2nd to 12th August in Brussels, Belgium and is gathering 36 youngsters originating from Belgium, Germany, Slovenia, Moldova, Romania and the Ukraine.



Fact Check

Name: Youth Understanding Politics

Kind: International Youth Exchange [Action 3.1, YiA Program]

Date: 2nd to 12th August 2010

Venue: Brussels, Belgium

Participants: 36 participants aged 15 to 17 years old; originating from

- ✓ Belgium
- ✓ Germany
- ✓ Moldova
- ✓ Ukraine
- ✓ Romania
- ✓ Slovenia

Costs: All participants are required to pay 50 Euro as a participation fee!
Other costs such as accommodation, travel, etc. are free of charge!

Description: YUP is a youth exchange bringing together youngsters from six different European countries in order to shape them to more politically active citizens. Therefore the exchange contains training sessions on debating and a simulation of the European Parliament.

Participation: All interested youngsters are welcomed and asked to submit the application available at the website to their national counselors until the 1st May.

Cooperative Partner: The *Young European Federalists* [JEF] is a youth movement bringing together young people from all over Europe. The Belgium organization supports YUP, by acting as the cooperating partner organization.

Funded by: Youth Understanding Politics receives funding through the Youth in Action Program of the European Commission. Additionally some American Embassies are going to support the project.

W
W
W
-
Y
-
O
-
E
-
T
-
H
-
E
-
N
-
D
-
E
-
I
-
S
-
R
-
O
-
P
-
O
-
I
-
I
-
T
-
I
-
C
-
O
-
S
-
O
-
R
-
G

Background

In July 2009 a first project carrying the name Youth Understanding Politics was implemented in Murska Sobota, Slovenia. Last year's training course brought together about 22 youngsters originating from Belgium, Germany, Moldova, Romania, Slovenia and the Ukraine. They gathered for 9 days experiencing a diverse program. They did not only get training in the field of the World School Debate Style, but also had the opportunity within a simulation of the European Parliament to serve on different committees, sharpening their discussion skills and deepening their knowledge about the European Union. Next to these daily sessions they had the space to live in a multicultural group, while promoting tolerance and mutual understanding as prior rules of living. They learned about each others cultures, shared valuable experiences and built up strong bridges, bonding the European continent beyond its countries' borders and peoples.

Successfully ending the first project in 2009 the team of YUP agreed on making YUP an annual project. Therefore **Youth Understanding Politics 2010** was planned and is from now on, until the 1st May open for applications from YOU!

The Team

The team organizing and implementing YUP is international and consists of young adults themselves. They are aged between 18 and 20 years originating from the participating countries as well as the United States of America. Currently enrolled in freshman year of university or ending High School they are working voluntarily and on non-profit bases for this project.

The teamers themselves got the opportunity to participate in various programs and are all active –in the political and social field – in their home countries. Driven by the will to pass on knowledge they gained and the joy a multicultural project brings along out of their perspective, they are looking forward to spend another 11 days with youngsters from all over Europe in Belgium.

Youth Understanding Politics 2010

YUP 2010 is focusing on three major topics

- Debate
- European Union
- Active Citizenship

Debate

As in the following program outlined, contains YUP several sessions on debate. Within those the participants, who should have no or just little previous debate experience, are being taught the basics of debate.

Debate is the one “art” performing discussions on a non-insulting level and in the following enabling people to express their opinion, exchange views, discuss pre- and disadvantages without getting personal or offensive.

The organizers of YUP regard debate as a perfect tool to settle arguments peacefully and reaching compromises easily, while both sides would have been considered equally. During a debate you will learn to defend a view, you don’t necessarily hold your own, teaching you to think further and having an open-mind. The team is convinced that more people capable of debate, help advancing our societies as they are making decisions after reasonably discussing the arguments and not due to personal preferences.

European Union

The European Union is one of the most significant political systems worldwide and it is still unique. There is no comparable system bringing together and uniting as many states, while securing their sovereignty, as the EU does. Even though it’s in the field of international politics appointed a high level of power and impact, most EU and non-EU citizens cannot fully capture the EU nor are able to understand its demand.

The aim of YUP is to personalize the European Union, explain its functions and impacts and decrease the fear one has of its complexity. The method of simplifying the EU is making YOU all experiencing it. On the one hand you should understand the political system by the *Model of the European Parliament* scheduled, but also by simply living its motto “United in Diversity” in the multicultural, multiethnic and multicultural group YUP is gathering.

Active Citizenship

The phrase might be used often, but we and you are the generation of tomorrow, the people voting on future parliaments, deciding on our countries' political developments and are the ones' able to change and shape the future.

The team of YUP is convinced that already young people – such as us and you – have the chance to change and improve, as long as they make their voices being heard.

Therefore YUP wants to motivate and encourage you to take over your role in the society. A few sessions are providing you with the basic knowledge how own project ideas can be turned into reality and the brain storm with your fellow participants surely will motivate you to start your own project right away! Belgium Alumni participants of YUP 2009 – joining the group for one evening and now carrying out their own project as well – will gladly share their experiences with you.

