

The Platon Youth Forum will be held again this summer from 28th July to 3rd August, 2013, in Obertrum, near Salzburg, Austria. They are waiting for the applications of young (15-20 year-old) interested and motivated people.

The Platon Youth Forum (Platon Jugendforum) is a one-week international summer camp in the vicinity of Salzburg, organised jointly by the ECHA Österreich and the Department of Pedagogy of the Salzburg University. The role and goal of the Forum is to introduce 50 talented students from all over Europe to the diversity of Europe and to let them experience that it is possible to find similarities despite the differences and to help them develop a European citizen's consciousness. The Forum is named after Plato, whose philosophy and methods of education form the basis of the programme. The VaKe (Values and Knowledge Education) model, created by professor Jean-Luc Patry, head of the Pedagogy Department of the Salzburg University, follows the teaching philosophy of Plato, so learning through dialogue, construction of reasoning systems, acquisition of advanced-level discussion techniques and opinion formation are the main strategies for acquiring new knowledge, so learning does not mean the passive absorption of information, but the active examination of new knowledge contents. The method strengthens the decision-making capacity of the participants, capacity through which young people can represent their own interests efficiently and, beyond the personal level, become capable of deciding on the economic, political and scientific issues of their country and place and judge such critical issues in the European context.

The programme offers its participants the followings:

- interdisciplinary exchange of ideas and communication of young talents specialised in different areas
- cross-national cooperation of young persons of outstanding abilities and professional knowledge
- familiarisation with discussion methods based on different knowledge bases
- active exchange of opinions on the freedom of values in research
- participation in the development of the common European value and know.

The event is aiming at a comprehensive discussion about the values of the European community of states, focusing on a particular topic/dilemma that is discussed from various different points of view. Of course, there is also free time to do sports and to get to know each other.

Entry to the programme is not regulated very strictly: applicants must be motivated and open as far as the proposed topics are concerned; they are expected to command the skills needed for independent research and information processing, as well as the skills of debating based on reasoning. Students must complete pre-defined assignments as a condition of participation, to show that they are ready to study during the school holidays, ledge community matching a multicultural Europe. The official working language of the Camp is German – because of the host country –, the second one is English, used for team work at seminars, for the presentations and the morning briefings, as needed. The third language, of course, is the mother tongue of the participant, unless that is identical with one of the first two.

The one-week Camp has been organised at the same venue for 7 years, in the Youth and Family Guesthouse of the village of Obertrum (Jugend- und Familiengästehaus Obertrum), not far from

Salzburg, dedicated precisely to boarding school and camping activities. The location and especially the layout and amenities of this building complex make it an excellent choice.

More info: <http://platon.vake.eu>