

Monday, 19 september 2011

The 12th University on Youth and Development started today in Mollina, Spain

- The focus of this edition will be volunteering
- More than 300 young people from the five continents will be exchanging their volunteering experiences for a week
- New partnerships and long-term projects are coming up

The University is an event organised by different organisations. They converge for a week in the Euro-Latin-American Youth Centre (CEULAJ) , a youth facility in Mollina, a little village out of Malaga (Spain). The main goal is to give a contribution towards the development of the regions of the world: “We work for a global youth partnership not just in Europe, not just in the Ceulaj, but in a larger framework”, says Marcos Andrade, coordinator of the Youth programmes in the North South Centre of the Council of Europe, in the opening ceremony

Ana Maria Almario, the secretary of the Latinamerican Youth Forum (FLAJ) described the University like a “little world, a world where you can find partnership, but also friendship. When you are concerned about the others' problems, action starts. This is a transforming University”.

Rui Duarte, Board member of the European Youth Forum (YFJ) delivered a message pointing the same direction” We have to raise up the world we live in and put volunteering on the global agenda”.

Ricardo Ibarra, president of the Spanish Youth Council (CJE) pointed out the difficulties that youth organisations have to face to fulfill this goal. He specially underlined his worries about current reduction of public investment in youth policies. “Budget cuts are putting Welfare State on danger. So we have to make an effort to remember that youth policies are not expenditure, they are investment”.

The University doesn't give in to despair. Gabriel Alconchel, general director of the Spanish Youth Institute declared: “Resignation is not the action”.

After the official opening act, seminars and other activities have started.

ADYNE (African Diaspora Youth Network in Europe) will debate about the role of African Diaspora on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. IFM-SEI will be finalising the last details for a large-scale volunteering project and a documentary film. Eurogaming 2010 is a long term project with the aim to increase the level of participation of young people from disadvantaged groups, especially young people with disabilities. There will be also a conference about environment policies, especially focused on the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, known as “Rio+20”, which will take place in Brazil in 2012.

The University is jointly organised in the framework of the European Year of Volunteering 2011 and the UN International Year of Volunteers +10.

Additional information

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