

Not Your Soldier!

Youth Exchange | 10-17 August 2022 | Vienna, Austria

What is this project about?

No war anywhere! The current war in Ukraine has changed Europe and the world massively in the past months. More than 6.6 million people have fled war and the Russian invasion of Ukraine since 24 February, 8 million more are displaced within the country. Our governments respond to this in many different ways: Accepting refugees and trying to further diplomacy, introducing sanctions against Russia, raising military budgets and joining NATO (or discussing it).

How can we respond to this as young people? What can we do to bring about longlasting peace in Europe? How can we stand up against war and militarism? How can we support refugees and show our solidarity with Ukrainians? How do we feel about military conscription?

An antimilitarist youth exchange in Vienna. We invite young people living in Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Greece, Kosovo and Switzerland to come together from 10-17 August 2022 to discuss with and learn from each other about war and militarism. We will also explore the city a bit together and enjoy the sun.

We will discuss military conscription. In all of our countries, it is obligatory for young men (or what the government perceives to be "men") to do military service or an alternative service or our governments are discussing about introducing it. The context in our countries is very different. What does it mean for our societies that half of the young population is obligated to join the military? What experiences have we personally made around this?

We will spread the word. In this youth exchange, we will also create online materials to spread in social media educating about and discussing war, militarism and military conscription. We want to invite people around us to discuss these things too. We will also organise a webinar about the topic during the exchange.

Logistics and financial conditions

Simple life: The project will take place in a scouts center with simple living conditions. We will sleep in shared bedrooms.

Vienna is close, but also not. The venue is in the outskirts of Vienna. The next subway station from our venue is 25 minutes by bus, so it is not a central location. We will have a free afternoon with the option of a city tour in the program and might make small trips to the city. Please be aware that if you want to properly explore the city, you will need to stay a few days before or after the project.

Money, money, money: We can cover all essential costs of the program (including food, travel costs up to a maximum amount per country, visa costs, accommodation and content)

through a European project grant by Erasmus+.

Sustainable food: The food we provide will be vegan with vegetarian options. This is a practical decision and also a political decision because of the impact of animal agriculture on the climate and the planet. Please tell us in the application form if you have specific foods, tolerances, diets or allergies that you would like to communicate.

Sustainable travels?: We ask you to come to this project through more sustainable means of transport rather than flying (e.g. train/bus), if somehow possible. We will give you more support on how you can reach the venue once you are accepted to the project.

Who can participate?

Living in Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Greece, Kosovo or Switzerland and be between 18 and 30. We unfortunately cannot make exceptions due to our funding. The “group leader” from each country can also be above 30 years old.

Young people with fewer opportunities prioritized. We will prioritize applications by people with disabilities and chronic health conditions, migrants, people of color, LGBTQIA+ people and working-class youth. We will do our best to make the project a safer space and take the individual needs of the participants into account. Unfortunately, the accommodation is not accessible by wheelchair.

No previous experience with the topic needed. You are welcome in this exchange even if you have no experience discussing war or militarism with people around you.

Vaccinated or recovered ideally. At the moment, there are no entrance rules around COVID-19 anymore for Austria. But due to the constantly changing situation, this might change and then we would inform you.

Be able to participate in the whole period 10-17 August 2022! Due to our funding, we cannot reimburse you for your travels or other expenses if you arrive late to the project or leave early.

How can I apply?

You can find the [application form here](#). Please fill it out by **25 June 2022**.

If you have questions, please reach out to your sending organisation:

- **Austria:** t.schallhart@gmail.com
- **Cyprus:** info@yeucyprus.org
- **Finland:** jarmo.pykala@sadankomitea.fi
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