



19 July 2021

Press Release: Realization of the participatory dialogue on the subject of 'Accessibility to mountain sports and activities'.

The NGO Active Zone Outdoor organized on Saturday, July 17 2021, the participatory dialogue under the title 'Accessibility to mountain sports and activities' which is within the framework of the Erasmus+ Programme funded project 'Mountains are calling for YOUth'. The dialogue was conducted at the unique natural place, Petra ton Hasampoulion, in Diarizos valley, in Pafos, in an effort of the organization to promote the reconnection of the youth with the natural habitat.

Taking into consideration the low levels of participation of youth in the democratic process and also the low involvement in mountain sports and activities despite the mountainous nature of Cyprus covering the largest part of the island, the dialogue attempted to enhance the active participation and the constructive interaction of youth between the ages 13-30 in an open dialogue with the decision makers in order to commonly suggest measures and proposals for the encouragement of youth to get involved with mountain sports and activities and the facilitation of access to them.

With their esteemed presence and contribution to the dialogue honoured us, among others, Pavlos Georgiades, President of the Cyprus Mountaineering Climbing and Orienteering Federation (C.M.C.O.F), Giorgos Andreou, Technical Consultant of Mountaineering and Rock-Climbing Instructor at CMCOF, Konstantinos Karseras, member of the House of Youth Representatives in the Environmental Committee and representative of the Cyprus Scouts Association, Dimitris Arheos, General Manager of the IT department of McDonald's restaurants, journalists, teachers, youth workers, athletes and youth from all around Cyprus.

After locating the factors that deter the participation and engagement of the youth with mountain sports and activities, the participants compiled a series of 42 proposals, related with the economic, educational, social and political sphere in order to facilitate the accessibility of young people to these sports and activities. In particular, the most important suggestions that resulted from a vote are the following:

1. Organize open days by municipalities/schools/parents' associations and sports bodies for an introduction with the mountain sports and activities through the participation of children with their parents
2. Establishment of a Deputy Ministry of Sports
3. Funding for sports activities by companies within the framework of Corporate Social Responsibility
4. Organize mountain sports festival



5. Provision of sponsorships to active amateur clubs and not just those who are active on a competitive or Olympic level
6. Establishment of a Management Youth Board in CMCOF
7. Utilization of training camps for kids and young people including a programme of mountain sports and activities.

With the completion of the dialogue, Active Zone Outdoor in cooperation with CMCOF organized a night rock climbing activity under the supervision of Giorgos Andreou, Climbing Instructor (certified by the International Climbing and Mountaineering Federation, UIAA) introducing the participants to the sport of rock climbing in a night setting with the use of headlamps. The activity was concluded with a live Greek music performance by members of the NGO and a presentation of a documentary projected on the rocks.

The next three dialogues of the project 'Mountains are calling for YOUth' will discuss topics regarding the encouragement of participation of girls and women in mountain sports and activities, the development of a culture of safe engagement of youth with mountain sports and activities and locating the characteristics of role-model athletes and guides in the mountain sports. It is worth noting that the cultivation of environmental awareness for the protection and respect towards the mountains will be a subject during all the dialogues of this project. As a result of the participatory dialogues, a Policy Paper will be created which is expected to be utilized as a proposal map for decision making on a local, national and international level.

Supporter of the project is the Cyprus Mountaineering Climbing & Orienteering Federation, CMCOF.

Sponsors of this project are Mountain Sports & Rescue CY and the company Petzl which offered the equipment needed to carry out the sport activities of the project.



UIAA



