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Youth/Fourth International

Youth camp: La rivoluzione sarÃ mondiale !

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The Fourth International organised the international youth camp for the 27th time. From the 24th to 31st of July almost 500 youth met in Perugia to discuss experiences from activities and struggles, educate themselves and to party together!

Participants came from many countries, from Greece to Portugal, over France, Germany, Belgium or Poland, but also from outside Europe: Mexico, Philippines and South Korea.

Something remarkable about the camp is its self-organisation. Participants are responsible for the functioning of the camp, on the practical level (bar, cleaning etc.) and politically (workshops and plenaries). It demands a good daily coordination which is guaranteed by representatives from each national delegation.

Do you want a glass of beer? Then you'll have to pay with your "che-money"! Because the camp has its own currency. The exchange rate is fixed according to the buying power of different countries. An excellent example of solidarity in practice.

From Denmark 28 youth participated, a majority whom of are not members of the SAP, the Danish section of the FI.

Annika is one of them. She's an active member of SUF (Socialist Youth Front) and came to the camp for the first time. Socialistisk Information asked her to tell about her experiences.

– My boyfriend is a SAP-member and I'm pretty sure that I'm not going to join SAP. But I've worked with SAP-members in SUF and we tend to agree so I thought it would be a good way to understand their political background and get some education in international conditions.

And you achieved this?

– Yes, and in general it was positive. It was really interesting to go into depth with subjects you don't work with normally. During the week there was an extensive programme with many offers where everybody could find something according to interest.

Was there anything that was different from your expectations?

– Not really, because we were well prepared and had met to talk about what to expect.

The camp is organised by the Fourth International and many participants are members of organisations linked to the FI. How is it to participate as someone who is not?

– I didn't experience it as a problem. Of course there were some contributions to the programme prepared by SAP but the Danish delegation worked very democratic where everybody could take part in organising our participation. If there were any dividing lines it was more between those with a lot of political experience and those comrades with less.

Really, one of the most interesting aspects of the camp, was the organisation of direct democracy. At least once every day we had a meeting in the Danish delegation where we discussed who would participate in what activities and who would be our representatives in the camp coordination etc.

The Danish delegation was super cool. Everybody was very active.

Were there any of the meetings that you found of special interest?

– I achieved a lot from the LGBT space. I'm normally not so involved in this area so it was cool to get a deeper understanding politically and also on the LGBT struggle is organised in different countries.

Was there anything that could have been better?

– The educational consisted of very long speeches with one-way communication and the translation wasn't so good. So I didn't achieve so much from that. In fact I only went to one of the educational. We were warned in advance that it was likely to be that way. Maybe it reflects a different culture for meetings in other countries but it doesn't seem very pedagogic.

Did you get to speak with someone from other countries and did you learn something new?

– Certainly. When our delegation from Denmark had meetings with other delegations. I learned a lot from the meetings with Poland and Philippines and then the debates at the LGBT space was very interesting.

Do you want to go again?

– Definitely. Next year it'll be in France and that seems attractive. I like French food! There is room for improvement. We had enough pasta with tomato sauce this year!

Translated from Danish by Thomas Eisler for International Viewpoint.