

2024/2025



CORPO
EUROPEU
DE SOLIDARIEDADE

REGENERATE ODEMIRA III

1 Year ESC Volunteer experience



Odemira
MUNICÍPIO

Dates: **01/10/2024 - 30/09/2025 (12 months)**

Location: **Odemira – Portugal**

Lead Organisation: **Municipality of Odemira**

Hosting Organisations: **GAIA Alentejo, Project Earth, Rota Vicentina**

Deadline to apply: **14th July 2024**

ESC VOLUNTEERING PROJECT

“REGENERATE ODEMIRA III”

2023-2-PT02-ESC51-VTJ-000174235

Are you searching for long-term volunteering in a natural environment in the South of Portugal?

We have 6 ESC positions contributing to the ecological and social sustainability of rural communities, supporting the work of local organisations.

The project “Regenerate Odemira III” is coordinated by the Municipality of Odemira (Portugal) in cooperation with associations active in our territory. From October 2024 until September 2025 (12 months) each of the following association will host 2 international volunteers:

- **GAIA ALENTEJO** - RURAL REGENERATIVE EXPERIENCE | Volunteers support activities of local partners in the village of São Luis - traditional community organisations and newly established agro-ecological initiatives - and develop a personal project that contributes to the community.
- **PROJECT EARTH** - ART, ECOLOGY AND COMMUNITY | Volunteers support the multidisciplinary regenerative practices led by the association and local partners, including artistic residency programs and monthly cultural events and fairs. Village of Santa Clara-a-Velha.
- **ROTA VICENTINA** - RESPONSIBLE TOURISM | Volunteering positions for nature lovers interested in reflecting about the relation between tourism and rural communities, integrating the Rota Vicentina program of activities (walking trails maintenance, communication campaigns, touristic offer). Village of Odemira.

Volunteering in “Regenerate Odemira III” means taking part of the European Solidarity Corps.

https://youth.europa.eu/solidarity/young-people/volunteering_en

INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLY

- Fill-in the online application form:
https://www.cm-odemira.pt/p/longterm_volunteering
- Be specific about which position you’re applying for! You can apply to more than one position.
- Prepare a short video of max. 2 minutes, presenting your personal profile & history.
- Prepare your CV in English.
- Submit your application form until the 14th of July 2024.

If you have any question, write us an email: juventude@cm-odemira.pt

Rural Regenerative Experience

Dates: **01/10/2024 - 30/09/2025 (12 months)**

Venue: **São Luís - Portugal**

Hosting organisation: **GAIA Alentejo**

Facebook | <https://www.facebook.com/gaiaalentejo>

Instagram | https://www.instagram.com/gaia_ecologistas/ | https://www.instagram.com/centro_co.re/

Centro Co.Re | <https://www.co-re.info>

Map | <https://goo.gl/maps/Ku5G2MyJ8iZ1VLkC8>

HOSTING ORGANISATION

GAIA is a Portuguese Environmental NGO that promotes agroecology and regeneration through non-formal education activities. GAIA is mainly active in the rural village of São Luís (Odemira).

GAIA focusses its activities on:

NON-FORMAL LEARNING

Implement the ESC project "Regenerar Odemira" with the Municipality of Odemira

Organise training courses in São Luís with the Co.Re Center & Erasmus +

"Escola da comunidade" host regular activities with our local & regional partners

YOUTH PARTICIPATION

- EMPURRA - Youth Participation Activity, generate a Youth Forum
- Activities with the regional schools
- Regenerative Entrepreneurship training for rural youth

AGROECOLOGY

- Implement practical ecological activities in the "Learner's Agroforest"
- Support local producers and promote AgroEcological consumption with Espaço Nativa
- Networking with regional partners

GAIA has been active in the Erasmus +, Youth in Action and EVS/CES since 200, promoting international volunteering opportunities for young people for more than 15 years

We have large experience in working with youth from rural areas and youth with fewer opportunities, which are target groups of the activities described in this accreditation.

DESCRIPTION OF ESC VOLUNTEERING PROJECT

ESC in São Luís consists of developing a Rural Regenerative Experience. This long-term volunteering experience is targeted at young people aged 18-30 who are aware of global environmental challenges and wish to develop competences on how to be part of the solution. We are looking for participants who are open and ready to be an active member of the local rural area of Odemira.

Volunteers are hosted in São Luís by pairs and during the program GAIA Alentejo organises activities together with the network of local partners for the volunteers to contribute to the local rural development. GAIA Alentejo is working with youth through the Co.Re Learning Center and visiting schools in the municipality of Odemira. GAIA also organises training courses within the Erasmus + programme. The local partners are a combination of traditional community organisations in São Luís and newly established agro-ecological initiatives. Throughout the volunteering, the volunteers are encouraged to experience a variety of working realities, then gradually focus on individual learning goals and in which initiatives they can develop themselves, moving towards a final personal project that contributes to the community. For this process GAIA Alentejo puts in practice a strong mentorship program. Their role is designed so that young people have an enriching life and learning experience in the area of the project, through a well defined set of tasks, integrating their ideas and supporting creativity,

experience and autonomy. Volunteers' needs and learning expectations are taken into consideration. The focus is the learning experience in a way to contribute to the local environment and/or community. Volunteering is driven by the will to contribute to a collective purpose and to experience solidarity.

Volunteers will be living in the village, in a rural context. São Luís community has 2000 inhabitants, is located in the Alentejo region and has many natural sites, including the natural park of Costa Vicentina. The village is quite isolated as public transports are scarce. Volunteers go through an initial process of integration in the local community, which includes learning Portuguese language and attending cultural initiatives, which is helpful for their stay in São Luís. GAIA Alentejo implements this activity in consortium with other hosting partners, so that volunteers are included in a group of volunteers that act as supporting group for each other.

GAIA Alentejo is very experienced in hosting and coordinating international volunteers.

ESC POSITIONS

Position 1 | Rural Regenerative Experience: Agroecology

The volunteer will have the opportunity to experience different activities during the year, led by GAIA association as well as our local partners. The tasks of the volunteer will be built in a yearly calendar, according to seasonal needs, and the volunteer should be available to perform different kinds of tasks, responding to the needs of the working groups, such as:

- To support hands-on activities: vegetable garden, food forest, construction of ecological systems, tree nursery, plantations, confection of handmade cosmetics, food preservation etc;
- To support in the dynamization & logistics of activities led by GAIA and held at the Centro Co.Re Learning Center
- To support and learn from an agroecological grocery & kitchen - Espaço Nativa
- To support the conception, preparation, implementation and documentation of events (debates, films, presentations, workshops, walks...) held by GAIA Alentejo and local partners;
- To support implementing networking activities.

Position 2 | Rural Regenerative Experience: Communication

Together with the volunteer in Position 1, this volunteer will have the opportunity to experience different projects, led by our local partners. The tasks of the volunteer include hands-on activities to experience and learn by doing, as well as the implementation of communication activities. Tasks include:

- To support hands-on activities: vegetable garden, food forest, construction of ecological systems, tree nursery, plantations, confection of handmade cosmetics, food preservation etc;
- To support in the dynamization & logistics of activities held at the Centro Co.Re Learning hub
- To support the communication strategy of GAIA Alentejo, the photo and video documentation of our initiatives and the maintenance of social networks;
- To develop creative communication events to strengthen the local/ regional network and to reach new audiences.

PROFILE

The Rural Regenerative Experience is looking for young people aged 18-30 who are aware of global environmental challenges and wish to develop competences on regeneration. We are looking for participants who are open, flexible and ready to be an active member of the local rural area of Odemira.

Young people should express:

- Clear interest in agroecological lifestyles and in reflecting on society, thinking global and acting local;
- Specific motivation to live one year in a rural community (2000 inhabitants);
- Language skills and clear motivation to learn Portuguese language, curiosity for local rural culture;
- Being active in his/her local community and having experience in associations or other social movements;
- Clear interest in developing one or more of the following competences: methodologies of self-organisation at community level and techniques of participation; practical experience in permaculture/

agroecology; knowledge on ecology and regeneration.

For the Position 2 the profile further includes:

- Experience and enjoyment in using social digital media, photography and video, writing or other communication techniques;
- Clear interest in developing communication skills for social movements;
- It's appreciated that the volunteer brings his/her personal equipment, in particular a computer. If you don't have one, please mention it while filling in the application form.

Motivation is the main selection criteria. GAIA makes no distinction regarding gender, sexual orientation, nor prior formal education. Priority will be given to candidates with less opportunities (for example coming from rural background, geographic isolation or with economic obstacles). Gender balance is considered while selecting volunteers.

ACCOMMODATION

Volunteers are hosted in the village of São Luís in Centro Co.Re where they share a rented house. The house will be completely furnished and equipped, allowing each participant to have her/his own room and a shared kitchen and bathroom. The house is located inside the village, in walking distance to grocery, vegetable and fish market, bakery, cafes, restaurants and bank.

GAIA provides bikes for local transportation in the village and surroundings.

Volunteers get a monthly fee for food and prepare their own meals.

During the implementation of training courses, alternative hosting conditions will be designed together with participants. (expected 4 weeks during the year)

PROJECT EARTH

Art, Ecology and Community

Dates: **01/10/2024 - 30/09/2025 (12 months meses)**

Venue: **Santa Clara-a-Velha – Portugal**

Hosting organisation: **Project Earth**

Instagram | <https://www.instagram.com/projectearth.odemira/> | https://www.instagram.com/guardioes_do_mira | https://www.instagram.com/aldeias_a_vista | https://www.instagram.com/sos_rio_mira

Facebook | <https://www.facebook.com/projectearth.odemira>

HOSTING ORGANISATION

Project Earth is a non-profit association, founded in 2017, based in Sabóia in the interior of the Municipality of Odemira, south of Portugal. It promotes multidisciplinary regenerative practices, which encourage collaboration and the involvement of the community, focused on the potential of place, that contribute to more solidary communities and healthier ecosystems. Develops and collaborates in different local projects such as the Guardiões of Mira (education, art, science, ecology and community), Aldeias à Vista (monthly cultural events), Global Field 2.000m2 - Odemira (food education and space of dialog), CLARA - Center for Rural Future (regenerative lab) and the activist group SOS Rio Mira, giving support to other local projects that value the territory, that offer diversity and new opportunities for everyone.

LOCAL CONTEXT

Project Earth activities are mainly developed in the interior of the municipality of Odemira between the parishes of Sabóia (921 residents), Luzianes (372 residents) and Santa Clara-a-Velha (632 residents). This beautiful rural region with friendly people, plenty of sunshine, clean air and picturesque villages, is our territory of intervention. It can easily be reached by train from Lisbon or Faro and is surrounded by a plethora of attractions to explore, including the spectacular Santa Clara dam part of Mira river, the amazing beaches of Costa Vicentina, archaeological landmarks, the Serra de Monchique, mountain biking and hiking paths to explore the beautiful Alentejo landscape. As many other rural regions in Europe it has been suffering from depopulation and aging of its population but in opposition has been attracting several foreign communities looking for alternative ways of living in closer contact with nature. Water scarcity is the main local challenge due to climate change, deforestation and local intensive farming practices.

DESCRIPTION OF ESC VOLUNTEERING PROJECT

Volunteers will be integrated into Project Earth's working groups, participating in the various ongoing projects. They will have the opportunity to establish contact with a diversity of disciplines, from arts to design, from agriculture to ecological regeneration and activism in a practical learning-by-doing process, developing their personal skills and exploring their individual potential for better self-knowledge. They will learn portuguese, have contact with the local culture and with sustainable ways of life and will support the social solidarity activities included in the various projects. A life-changing experience and an opportunity to develop their skills and personal projects.

ESC POSITIONS

Position 1 + 2 | Earth volunteers

We care for each other and for our ecosystems and we expect volunteers to be part of our community of care. Profile of the Volunteers: Volunteers should be empathic and motivated to learn and to experience rural living. We integrate all independently of gender, race, religion, graduation or any other difference. We value diversity and also diversity of knowledge and skills. We want to reveal the volunteer's potential so we need them to be autonomous, adaptable and generous like we try to be.

Tasks and expected learning outcomes: Volunteers will do what we do, learn with us as we shall learn

with them, experiencing:

- to develop new projects or manage and operate ongoing ones,
- to communicate them,
- to apply for funding,
- to contact partners, artists, farmers or others,
- to develop digital tools,
- to register information and organize it,
- to visit other projects, to learn new skills and expressions,
- to work with a team and to collaborate,
- to support the community and be part of it.

We want volunteers to have unforgettable memories and if they decide to stay at the end, we keep caring.

ACCOMMODATION

The two volunteers will be accommodated in the centre of Santa Clara-a-Velha, sharing a house, with wifi internet, two individual bedrooms, one shared bathroom, a living room and an equipped kitchen where they can prepare their own meals. They will receive and manage a monthly allowance for food costs. For mobility within the scope of volunteering, transportation will be provided by the association. The remaining trips will be provided by the local public transport network.

ROTA VICENTINA

Responsible tourism in SW Portugal

Dates: **01/10/2024 - 30/09/2025 (12 months)**

Venue: **Odemira (and the region between Santiago do Cacém and Lagos) Portugal**

Hosting organisation: **Rota Vicentina Association**

Website | rotavicentina.com

Facebook | <https://www.facebook.com/rotavicentina/>

Instagram | <https://www.instagram.com/rotavicentina/>

Video about Rota Vicentina | <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=us6uA8DnJC8>

HOSTING ORGANIZATION

The Association

Rota Vicentina – Association for the Promotion of Nature Tourism in Alentejo and Vicentina Coast was created in 2013 with the purpose of managing the network of trails and strengthening the potential of this territory as an area for dynamic and sustainable tourism with regenerative capacity.

With about 100 founding members, today it has more than 200, mostly local companies, but also individuals, some public entities, more than 40 tour operators from 11 different countries and a network of 200 volunteers, which have supported and enabled the project at various levels.

Serving the interest of its Associates, Rota Vicentina follows the route of public interest, managing a network of trails as public infrastructure and the brand Rota Vicentina as private capital for the economic stimulation of the network of partner companies, which in turn invest in a joint model of sustainable commitment in the region. Because of its innovative model, Rota Vicentina has been a reference for many similar projects, whilst it has itself continued seeking inspiration in other places in Portugal and the world.

Volunteering in Rota Vicentina

Rota Vicentina is much more than trails with its diverse and unique offers. It is a living network that connects people, territory and heritage, contributing to the sustainability of the rural areas of this special region.

There are different ways of contributing and collaborating behind the scenes of the development and preservation of Rota Vicentina and its region, one of them is volunteering. Being a volunteer is an act of love. And in Rota Vicentina we want to receive those who dedicate themselves to the same cause as we do. Long term volunteering is the perfect way to help the Association.

Local context

The current ESC activity takes place essentially in the town of Odemira, which is also the county seat, in Baixo Alentejo region. This municipality is the largest in the country, in terms of territory area, with a marked population dispersion. It has rural characteristics, especially in the interior areas. The coastal strip has many beaches with a strong tourist activity in summer.

Odemira currently has about 3200 inhabitants, a primary school and two kindergartens, two pharmacies, a library, a day care center and a home to support the elderly, a long term care unit, a recreational society, medical center, banks, mini-markets and a traditional market, gas stations, several cafes and restaurants, other small local commerce initiatives. It is a region with a marked rural exodus, with a tendency for the population with higher academic qualifications to move to the cities.

ESC POSITIONS

Positions 1 + 2 | Volunteering in Rota Vicentina

The volunteers will be welcomed by the Rota Vicentina Association for 12 months, with the aim of integrating the Rota Vicentina team, in a transversal program of activities, promoting responsible tourism with various audiences: local, national and international.

The objective of this volunteering is to contribute to a sustainable and responsible tourism offer, from

its creation to its promotion.

Tasks includes:

area 1 - Maintenance of the Rota Vicentina trails Video about maintenance in Rota Vicentina

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RBKKHFZd4-o&list=PLXuQK_E-D9mtID4zVbf5Ke8BpCaVFqxA1&index=2

- . to participate in community trail maintenance actions
- . to participate in nature conservation activities
- . to participate in regular maintenance of the walking and cycling trails

area 2 - Communication and marketing

- . to create innovative contents (photos, videos and articles)
- . to contribute to publicity campaigns (Agenda Rota Vicentina, Rota Vicentina social networks)
- . to co-manage the Tik Tok Rota Vicentina account with short videos about maintenance and operation of the RV (<https://www.tiktok.com/@rotavicentina>)
- . to contribute to the development of materials for the future Rota Vicentina's Reception and Interpretation Center

area 3 - Local identity and culture

- . to interview people from local community members about cultural aspects
- . to produce a map points of interest (landscape, natural, cultural, heritage, etc.)

VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Interests:

- Passion for the rural world and for living in small environments (one year living in a rural community)
- Interest in the areas of nature tourism, responsible tourism and sustainable development
- Conservation
- Photography and / or video
- Travel writing
- Outdoor sports - trekking, cycling
- Social networks and communication
- Mastering communication and information technologies
- Language skills and clear motivation to learn Portuguese language
- Personal skills:
- Responsibility, autonomy, dynamism and creativity
- Organization and proactivity
- Good communicator and excellent interpersonal skills
- Teamwork
- Proficiency in spoken and written English and/or Portuguese
- Native language and English traduction
- Flexibility to work at weekend
- Interest and technical knowledge for creating and publishing digital media files - audio, video, photo and other graphic materials (flyers, posters), design and communication
- How to work in the associative environment
- Graphic Design
- Photography and/or Vídeo
- Storytelling and copywriting
- Having a driving license is recommended.

It's necessary that the volunteer brings his/her personal equipment, in particular a computer. If you don't have one, please mention it in the motivation letter.

Expected learning outcomes

- How to work in the associative environment
- To work with a team and to collaborate
- To develop/manage projects

- To communicate online
- To contact partners and local community
- To register information and organize it
- To visit other projects and to learn from them
- To support the community and be part of it.
- To turn a descriptive content in a promotion content

ACCOMMODATION / FOOD / TRANSPORT

The volunteer will be accommodated in Odemira in a shared apartment (together with another volunteer), in which she/he will have a single room. The house will be fully equipped, with a common room and kitchen where they can prepare their meals.

All meals will be the responsibility of the volunteer, guaranteed through a budget delivered to the volunteer on a monthly basis.

For travel within the scope of Volunteering, transportation will be provided by the Association. The remaining trips will be provided by the local transport network.

The **ESC volunteering project REGENERATE ODEMIRA III**
is supported by the European Solidarity Corps, European Union.

For further information: https://youth.europa.eu/home_en



INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEERING WHY NOT?

application
form

