



Erasmus+ volunteering with GAIA in KOSOVO 2021/22 - Bozevce permaculture program

The project starts around August/September 2021 and lasts 12 months. It is part of the Erasmus+ program “European Voluntary Service (EVS)”. More info about the EVS program you find [here](#).

Description of the organization

GAIA was founded in 2010 in Plemetina, a village situated next to Kosovo's coal power plants. It registered as a non-governmental organization in June 2010 in Prishtina, Kosovo. In 2014 GAIA became the official branch of Service Civil International, one of the oldest peace organizations, which organizes diverse volunteer programs all around the world. Since then, together with different local partners, more than 30 international volunteer workcamps have been organized in which more than 300 international and local volunteers participated. Besides workcamps, GAIA has been organizing campaigns, educational events (trainings, workshops, seminars) and youth exchanges on the topic of nature conservation, climate change, reconciliation, rights of minorities, national identity and permaculture.

GAIA is dedicated to the culture of peace, social and environmental justice and sustainable living. The main activities of GAIA are international volunteer programs, non-formal education and permanent community building programs, in places which are facing different social or environmental challenges.

In 2021 GAIA operates within 4 programs:

1. Permaculture program in Bozevce
2. Educational program in Gracanica's Roma mahalla, called “Imaginatorium”
3. Peace-building program in Mitrovica
4. Climate change program

BOZEVCE PERMACULTURE PROGRAM

Since Spring 2017, few volunteers from GAIA got involved in renovation of an old house in abandoned property which was give to us for use.

The general idea is to create a sustainable place where we will organize different educational and volunteering programs and ideally inspire people to move there to live, create, enjoy and to keep the village and tradition alive.

Due to the pandemic, this year will be very much about food production and natural building. We will be building a straw-bale house for food production, an outdoor classroom, and few other smaller objects. Most probably there will be no or 2-3 groups of volunteers, so the summer period will be calmer than usual. The volunteer should be flexible to changes and in particularly limited movement due to health measures and government restrictions.

LIFESTYLE

In the organization, but especially in project related to environmental issues, nature conservation and sustainable living, we practice and respect principles of sustainability that we agreed upon. In Boževce, we respect the following principles and values:

- buying local as much as possible
- eating seasonal, organic and vegetarian
- avoiding products from multinational corporations such as coca-cola, nestle, etc...
- traveling with environmental friendly way

Since Spring until Autumn volunteers work on various tasks which follow the change of seasons.

In Autumn the work is mostly related to preparation of winter:

- collecting and preserving fruits and mushroom
- lots of gardening
- preserving food for winter
- wood working

In Winter, most of the time is used for planing, learning and reflecting:

- Learning the local language
- Visitng neighbours and events
- Preparing plans for garden, volunteer groups and educational events
- Taking care of animals

In Spring, volunteers will work on:

- building summer classroom, renovating an old hay loft
- prepare garden and help with the maintenance
- welcome activities on the property such as workshops, introduction to permaculture
- collecting herbs around the village

In Summer the work might be earlier due to hot weather, especially in the garden.

- gardening (sowing, harvesting)
- support coordination of international workcamp groups (possibly in other locations)
- construction (straw bale insulation)
- herb (collecting and storing medicinal herbs)

Nature of work in Bozevce is changeable and flexible, what depends on the weather, priorities and unexpected situations. Also it is the first time after few years that people will live on the property and welcoming international volunteers. This means that most of the tasks will be around construction (physical work) and building. Therefore, we expect that volunteers are also flexible and ready for unexpected situations and changes in the working plan. Besides above mentioned, all volunteers participate in everyday household activities.

LEARNING POSSIBILITIES

The volunteer will have plenty of opportunities for learning, through everyday life activities, organized workshops and course, and taking over certain responsibilities. The volunteer will learn about:

- basics of permaculture and natural building
- living simply, with seasons and in an international community
- animal care
- gardening and edible plants

- using of different tools
- local languages and customs
- group dynamic, intercultural learning, facilitation and conflict management
- and much more...

CONDITIONS

- To be between 18 and 30
- Open and honest in communication
- Willing to live simply and in an international group
- Share values of SCI, and GAIA
- Not be afraid of animals
- Nature and permaculture enthusiast
- Willing to work
- Flexible with tasks
- Reliable

What is included:

- Accommodation
- Food
- Insurance
- Visa
- Pocket Money
- Travel grant

The practical and logistic matters will be handled by GAIA. SCI Switzerland will organize all administrative matters like insurance.

Please write to evs@scich.org if you are interested in becoming an Erasmus+ volunteer. Please note that you can only apply if you are between 18-30 years old and if you have not volunteered through the Erasmus+ before.

Send your application via email to evs@scich.org with the subject **Application GAIA Kosovo**, and include all the following documents in English:

- CV, Curriculum Vitae
- Specific motivation letter for the project

Deadline for the application is the **as fast as possible**.

More details about GAIA and our activities can be found at <http://gaiakosovo.org/>



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