


GAIA

ESC volunteering teams in high priority areas

 9 March - 9 April 2026

 Hopeland eco-community in Argolida, Greece

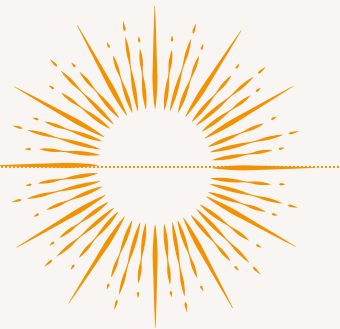




Join GAiA and be a hopelander!

Live for a **month** at Hopeland, an educational eco-community in southern Greece. Join 15 volunteers from across Europe and get the full Hopeland experience, **guided** and supported by the crew. Roll up your sleeves, unleash your **creativity**, and dive into **hands-on work** to enhance the space, improve sustainability practices, and contribute to the growth of the project. Experience living and working together in a **communal setting**, embracing the challenges and opportunities that come with it. All while picking up new skills, making meaningful connections, and finding **joy** along the way!





About Hopeland

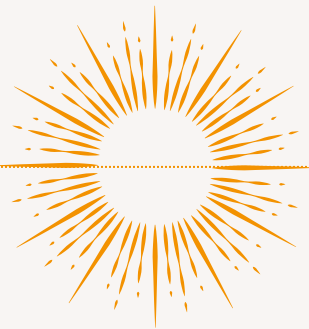
Hopeland **educational eco-community** is located in a rural remote area in the south part of Greece. The venture is built with lots of **love** and mainly **natural materials** from volunteers, visitors and staff members who have stayed with us throughout the last 13 years.

Our **mission** is to provide a space where people **explore, create** and **learn** from each other and **nature**. A space in which our actions and interactions are based on our core values of **sustainability, accountability, synergy**, and of course.. **hope!**

Hopeland is offering various **experiential learning experiences** through the **Erasmus+** and **ESC** programs, mainly on the topics of personal growth, community and environment.

We are welcoming **young people and youth workers** to join forces with us and together contribute towards our wider **vision** of a society with **deep community spirit** and **involvement** in personal, social and environmental growth.





The bigger picture



The **GAiA project** is a 3-year Volunteering Teams in High Priority Areas project unfolding across 4 European countries. At its core is the commitment to integrating **permaculture ethics** into non-formal education, particularly supporting youth with fewer opportunities and marginalized communities.

This year's focus, **Use and Value diversity**, focuses on the permaculture principle of valuing diversity. Here, the project extends to Greece and Bulgaria, where activities are designed to generate sustainable living and inclusion through actively exercising and promoting cultural traditions in the project areas through hands-on activities in open spaces and creative work with the community.

Over its duration, the GAiA project will implement 6 volunteering teams, involving 90 volunteers, 77 from **fewer opportunity backgrounds**, who will experiment with **sustainable practices** and contribute to the **well-being** of marginalized rural communities.



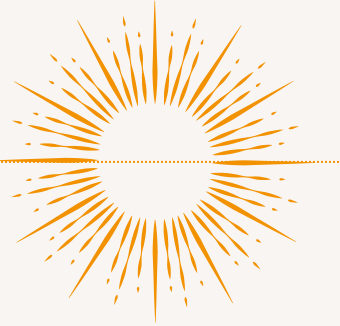
Our main focus: Hands-on activities



At Hopeland, **hands-on activities** are at the heart of the experience, focusing on improving the space and its sustainability. As a volunteer, you'll take part in maintaining existing structures, and enhancing overall infrastructure through gardening, eco-building, landscaping, woodworking, and more. Alongside these, the community shares **practical daily tasks** such as cooking, cleaning, shopping, managing social media, watering the gardens, and caring for animals.

Tasks shift with the seasons, guided by both immediate needs and Hopeland's long-term vision. Throughout your stay, you'll **rotate** through different activities, getting a feel for everything. If something sparks your interest, there's space to **dive deeper** and develop your skills.

Apart from the set ongoing projects proposed by Hopeland's crew, if you feel inspired, you can also **take the initiative** to propose your own project, draft a plan, bring it to the crew and if you get green light, bring it to life.



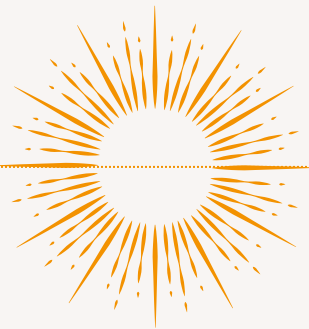
Connecting & expanding

Hopeland is also a space for **collaboration** and **exchange**.

We invite our friends from **Liveloula**, a nearby eco-community, to share their expertise in gardening and permaculture. Beyond our own projects, we seek to connect with the **local community** and nearby initiatives, whether by supporting local farmers, visiting eco-communities, organizing clean-up efforts, organising blood-donation initiatives, or collaborating with local businesses.

Our goal is to create **meaningful exchanges** where we contribute to the places we engage with while gaining valuable learning experiences on both an individual and group level. As a volunteer, you'll be encouraged to play a **vital part** in these efforts by actively participating in the proposed events and also bringing your own ideas to the table.





Beyond work



The **fun** at Hopeland doesn't stop when the work day ends.

Beyond the 7 working hours each weekday, you'll have plenty of time to **enjoy** your stay here at Hopeland. Cozy evenings by the fire (when it's still fire season), reading under the oak tree, swimming in Nafplio, hiking through the natural surroundings, or visiting nearby villages and cultural sites. How you spend your free time is up to you, whether it's **recharging, discovering**, or simply **relaxing**.

During your free time, there's also the opportunity for **skill-sharing**, where anyone can offer workshops or activities based on their own interests. It's entirely up to you whether you want to join in.

There's always something going on at Hopeland, as long as someone is ready to **make it happen**.

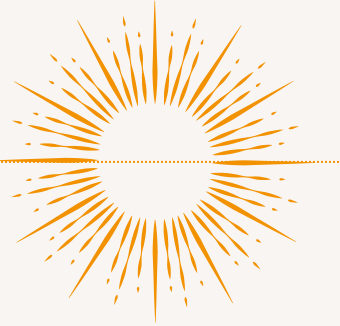


Hopeland's crew



Hopeland is run by a small, international community of long-term residents who live and work together, known as the **Hopeland crew**. Each crew member brings their unique expertise, contributing to the daily life and sustainability of the place. The crew is also here to **support** and **guide** you, enhancing your volunteering experience. Whether it's cleaning, cooking, gardening, taking care of the animals or building, there's always someone ready to help. Beyond practical guidance, the Hopeland crew is dedicated to **sharing** their knowledge, answering your questions, and helping you settle into the rhythm of community life.

As a short-term volunteer, you'll also have a **mentor** whose primary focus is your well-being and personal growth throughout your stay. Your mentor will support you with your daily tasks and development, help you navigate group dynamics, and guide you through **reflection sessions**, where you can process your experiences and make the most out of your time at Hopeland.

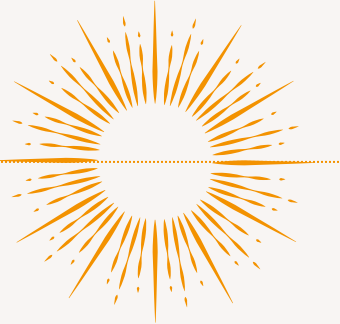


Volunteer's profile

We are offering this opportunity to **15 participants** to ensure the intercultural dimension of the project. There are several requirements from the programme itself and a profile that we would like to focus on.



- **18-30 years old** (not older than 31 on the first day of the project)
- Legal **residents** of one of the Erasmus+ programme countries with no visa needed to enter Greece
- Ready to live in a rural environment with **basic conditions**
- Eager to **be challenged** into aligning together with people from different cultures and open to sharing space, responsibilities, and decision-making with others in a **communal setting**
- **Enthusiastic** with hands-on activities and practical tasks like gardening, building, cooking, cleaning
- Eager to show **commitment**, take **initiatives** and create **opportunities** for themselves and society
- **Priority** will be given to those that are facing or faced any kind of troubles in life
- We are also looking for a couple of volunteers with **media skills** such as photography and filmmaking for documenting this whole experience for everyone but also support Hopeland activities, digital marketing and promotions. Some volunteers will also contribute to create a **handbook** documenting the project outcomes.



An important note

At Hopeland, we want to make sure the experience is a **good fit** for everyone.

The work here can be **physically demanding**. Tasks like gardening, eco-building, and other hands-on activities require a certain level of fitness so check if you are ready for it. We also ask for **personal responsibility**, this means taking care of yourself, being mindful of your time, and doing your part as an **active** member of the team.

This is not a vacation. It's a chance for **personal growth** through physical work and shared experiences, so be prepared to engage fully. We want everyone to have a **fulfilling** and **enjoyable** experience, please think about these points when deciding if this is the right fit for you.



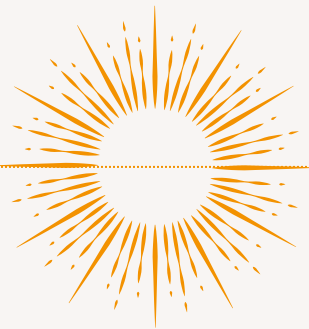


The location



Hopeland is situated **on a hill** near the **Malandreni village** and located 130km (approximately 2h) south of Athens. The nearest town is **Argos** which is 12km away where you can find anything from small shops to supermarkets, banks, post offices, and bus stations. Closer to Hopeland and 4km away you can find **small shops for shopping and coffee**. Shops there are limited and unfortunately, it's not in walking distance so smart and **sustainable planning of supplies is needed**.

Hopeland center/estate, is located in a **7.7-acre piece of land**, with old olive trees, almond and other trees, native herbs and it is surrounded by a forest and bushes, 5 oak trees protected by the local Forest Protection Service, out of which, one of them is estimated to be **400 years old** and it came to be the **landmark of Hopeland**.



The facilities

Facilities in Hopeland are basic, yet made with lots of **love** and effort by previous Hopelanders, giving the place its own **special charm**. You're encouraged to see it as your **home**, take care of it and add your own touch to help make it even better.

- Accommodation is happening in the **Guest House**, a two-storey building built with the strawbale eco-building technique. The ground floor serves as a common gathering area and upstairs there are **16 beds for guests**. It has 2 indoor toilets and an indoor shower.
- The whole venture runs in **solar panels**, therefore, **electricity is limited** and on rainy days or days with strong consumption of electricity, we can run out of electric power. Due to that fact, there is no possibility of using devices that consume a lot of energy like hair dryers, hair straighteners etc and washing of clothes can only be done in the traditional way.
- Hopeland is a **vegetarian, no-drugs venture**. We believe that human beings can reach the utmost of their potential without the consumption of substances. Alcohol is prohibited during work hours, and we encourage minimal consumption overall.
- There is a separate **kitchen** building and a roofed dining area with all the necessary equipment. During the working week, we are **cooking and eating our meals communally**.
- There is **wifi** in specific area which you can use if needed.





The practicals

Pocket money

- You will receive 7€/day for your personal expenses

Food money

- Your food budget will be added to the communal fund, as we manage grocery shopping collectively.

Reimbursement

- Your travel costs will be reimbursed according to the distance between your home and Hopeland.

Insurance

- Besides the European Health insurance card you are going to be offered a private insurance too

Youthpass

- You are entitled to receive a YouthPass certificate where you are expected to self-assess your own learning





The timeline

Arrival

9 March 2026

Program starts

10 March 2026

Program ends

8 April 2026

Departure

9 April 2026

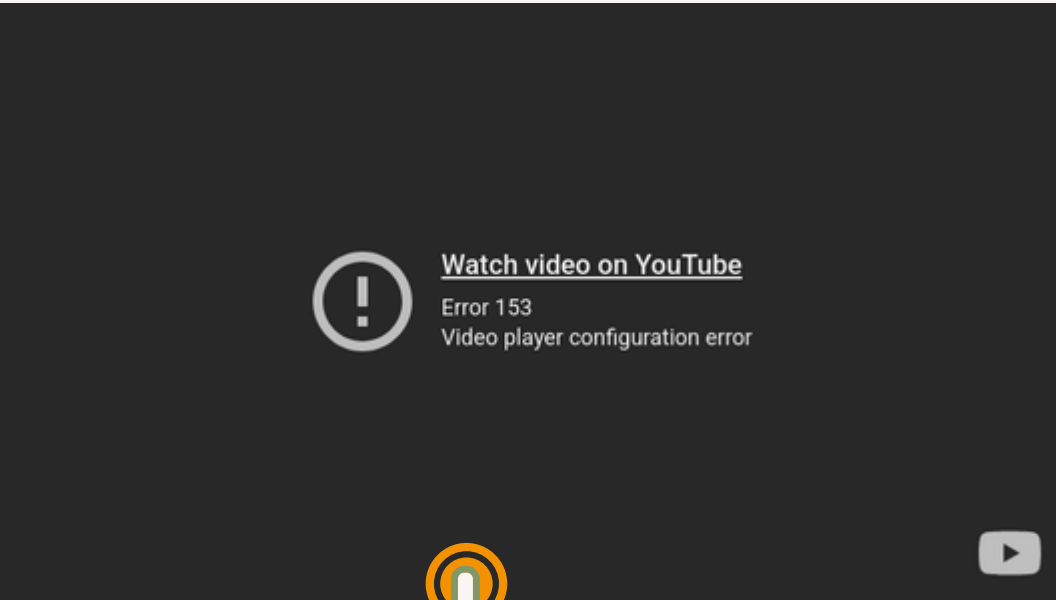


You have 7 extra days to explore Greece before or after the project, with accommodation and food expenses covered by you. Late arrivals or early departures aren't possible. **Travelling green** (bus/train) is highly encouraged and in tune with our eco-friendly spirit.

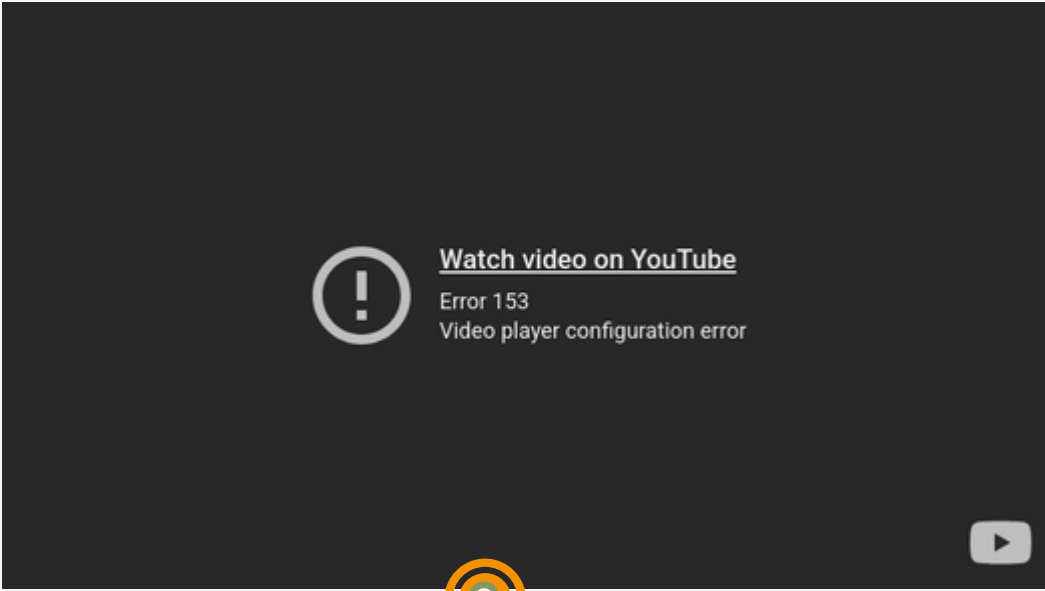


Get a glimpse of life in Hopeland

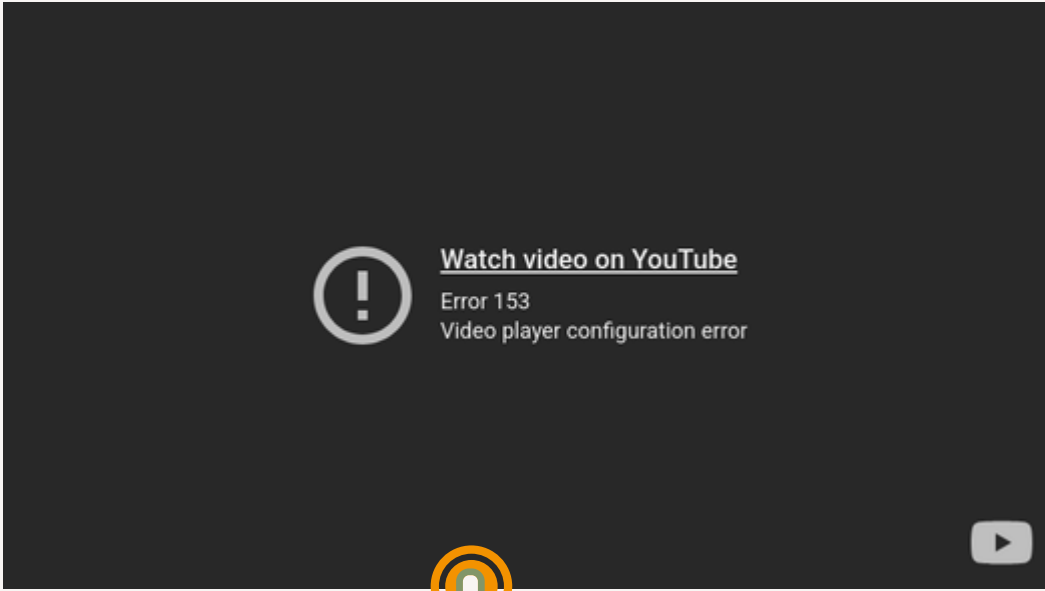
A day in Hopeland



GAIA Volunteering team 2025



Volunteering teams 2024





Instead of conclusion



At Hopeland, **sustainability is at the core of our journey**. We are continuously exploring ways to care for the environment, nurture a **regenerative** economy, and cultivate meaningful connections with those around us. Our aim is to find **greener**, more mindful ways of living, embracing both the challenges and possibilities that come with it.

We have taken steps like living off-grid, using eco-friendly building practices, and choosing a vegetarian lifestyle. At the same time, we recognize that sustainability is an **ongoing process**, full of learning and adaptation. Rather than striving for perfection, we focus on **intentional steps forward**, growing through experience and shared knowledge.

We invite you to **come along in this journey**. Bring your energy, ideas, and hands-on involvement as we continue shaping a more sustainable and inclusive world **together**.



Ready to join GAiA?

If what you've read so far **resonates** with you and you are ready to join Hopeland and GAiA project, then **take the first step** and...

[Apply here!](#) ➔

We are forming the group as applications come in. If your profile is a **good fit**, we'll invite you to a **video call** with the mentor to meet each other and see if it's a mutual match. If selected, you'll receive a detailed email with all the next steps. Everyone who applies will hear back from us by the end of March at the latest.





Partner organisations



Hopeland

Greece

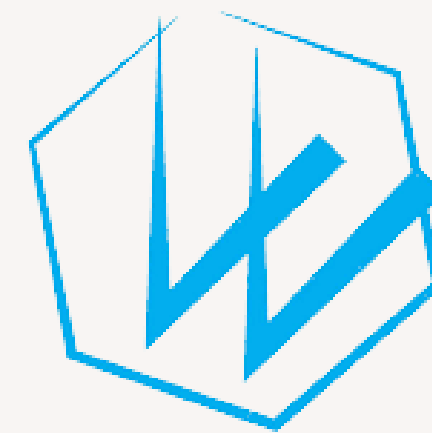
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Synergy Bulgaria

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New Wellness Education

Italy

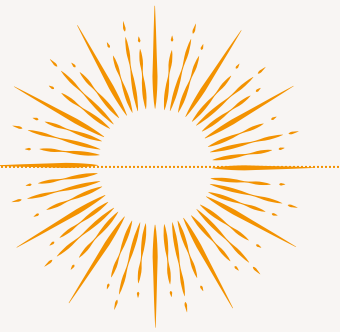
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Stay in touch



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