



Volunteer
with the European Solidarity Corps
for Activities in Portugal with Ecological Sense

Project financed by the Programa LIFE (LIFE17 ESC/PT/003)



LIFE VOLUNTEER ESCAPES

Project **LIFE Volunteer ESCAPES - Volunteer with European Solidarity Corps for Activities in Portugal with Ecological Sense (LIFE17 ESC/PT/00003)** is one of the four LIFE preparatory projects approved to explore the potential of **using volunteers of the European Solidarity Corps for environmental protection activities**. It is a LIFE Preparatory project, which means that it is intended to generate information and knowledge that can be used, after its conclusion, for wider application, both in the national context and in other member states.

The project gathers a **wide partnership of organizations** which have previous work in deployment and management of volunteers, for different kinds of nature and biodiversity conservation works, as well as organizations that have been promoting complementary works on environmental protection and sustainable development. The project's coordination is ensured by **MONTIS - Associação de Conservação da Natureza**, a nature conservation NGO that specifically focuses on private land conservation and land stewardship, in close cooperation with a set of other partners:

- national and local public administrations (**Agência Portuguesa do Ambiente, I.P.** the national agency in charge of environmental policies, and **Município de Torres Vedras**, a coastal municipality in central Portugal);
- nature conservation NGO's of local and national scope that rely on volunteering to undertake conservation works (**SPEA - Sociedade Portuguesa para o Estudo das Aves, Plantar uma Árvore – Associação, MARCA – Associação de Desenvolvimento Local**);
- other non-profit bodies that, on their activities and with their members, are active promoters of sustainable practices in economic activity (**BCSD Portugal - Conselho Empresarial para o Desenvolvimento Sustentável**, the national branch of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and **ROTA VICENTINA - Associação para a Promoção do Turismo de Natureza na Costa Alentejana e Vicentina**, an association dealing with sustainable tourism on the Vicentina Southwest Coast Natural Park);
- one SME working on environmental communication, which support the overall project needs on these issues, **PLAYSOLUTIONS - Audiovisuais**.

Overall, it is expected that **from June 2018 until the end of the project**, the project will allow, among other things, **more than 175 volunteers to carry out volunteer activities useful for nature conservation and biodiversity in the field and/or in offices**, covering mainly Natura 2000 areas and/or species and habitats protected by European policies such as the Birds and Habitats Directives.

To ensure this and other objectives - including the development and implementation of a joint, rotating volunteer program that allows volunteers to contact with more than one organization - **each partner will host volunteers, for various periods and for different types of activities, through the European Solidarity Corps**.

The intervention and reception places are diverse and include volunteer offers in several regions and municipalities, such as the **Azores, Algarve and Madeira, Montemor-o-Novo, Sesimbra, Torres Vedras, Vila Pouca de Aguiar and Vouzela**.

The offers will be communicated and disclosed as soon as they are available, among others, directly by each partner through their networks and also in the Facebook page of the project (<https://www.facebook.com/volunteer.escapes/>). There is also a project specific web page, which is currently under construction For more information do not hesitate to contact Montis or any of the partners.



Agência Portuguesa do Ambiente (APA)

The **Agência Portuguesa do Ambiente, I.P. (APA)** is a public institution that strives to develop and monitor the integrated management of environmental and sustainable development policies. APA seeks to integrate this comprehensive management into other policy areas and collaborate with public and private entities, targeting a high standard of protection and promotion of the environment, as well as the provision of high quality services to citizens.

The administration of the hydrographic region of Algarve (ARH Algarve) is a department of this institution. The activities of ARH Algarve focus on the different aspects of water resource management.

A Administração da Região Hidrográfica do Algarve (ARH Algarve) é um departamento deste instituto público, cuja atividade está centrada na intervenção nas diferentes vertentes da gestão dos recursos hídricos.

Since 2009, APA-ARH has been promoting the “Voluntariado Ambiental para a Água” project, involving a wide range of partners and volunteers. It is in this context that APA-ARH participates in the **LIFE VOLUNTEER ESCAPES** project. The objective is to extend the actions that APA-ARH has developed in a number of municipalities of Algarve to the entire region, with a particular emphasis on ERPVA (“Estrutura Regional de Promoção e Valorização Ambiental do Algarve”).

The volunteering schemes offered by APA-ARH, which run for up to **one year**, include **monitoring activities of ecosystems** through bio-indicators (such as seagrass, benthic macroinvertebrates and aquatic macroinvertebrates); **monitoring activities of marine litter and micro plastics**; **volunteering activities**: removal of invasive species, cleaning initiatives in coastal areas and streams, **planting of native species**, **volunteering camps**, **environmental education activities** in schools, and **participation in dissemination activities** during thematic weeks.

To find out more information about these volunteering schemes, please get in touch with the Algarve APA-ARH team, by writing to the following email: life.volunteer@apambiente.pt.

