



## INTRODUCTION TO ELIX

### **Mission**

ELIX -Conservation Volunteers Greece is a non-governmental, not-for-profit organization promoting, since 1987, voluntary service and education. The main goal of ELIX is the personal development of individuals as citizens of the world, through active participation. Environmental protection, cultural heritage conservation, culture promotion and social service are the main thematic fields of ELIX's voluntary projects.

### **Aims**

ELIX aims in bringing together people from different cultural, social and ethnic backgrounds, willing to live, learn and work together as a team, through their participation in voluntary projects of environmental, cultural, social interest. ELIX projects promote intercultural exchanges and offer young people the opportunity to participate actively in the every day life of a hosting community.

### **Activities**

ELIX organizes two or three weeks' workcamps mainly in the summer; participants learn traditional restoration craft and techniques, offer voluntary work to the hosting community, organise and participate in cultural and fun activities, share ideas and cultures. ELIX's work camps give to communities and small villages of Greece the opportunity to meet and host young people from all over the world and, with their contribution, to implement important projects for the local community.

ELIX organises training seminars for youth workers and camp leaders and a lot of activities addressed to volunteers, throughout the year, such as weekend and one-day excursions, environmental, cultural and fun activities, regular volunteers' meetings.

Finally, ELIX realises at present two hosting projects within the frame of the European Voluntary Service of the Youth in Action Program and each year sends a large number of E.V.S. volunteers abroad.

### **Sources of Income**

ELIX income comes mainly from volunteers' participation fees, National and Local Bodies, such as the Greek General Secretariat for Youth, the Hellenic Ministry for the Environment, Physical Planning and Public Works, private institutions or foundations, donations, the youth in action programmes and other European projects (Leonardo Da Vinci, etc).

**SINCE 1987, WHEN ELIX - C.V.G. WAS FOUNDED,**

**284 workcamps** were organized all over Greece

**4.890 volunteers** from all over the world participated in workcamps in Greece

**107 communities** in Greece benefited from volunteer work

**1805 Greek volunteers** participated in voluntary projects abroad

**478 camp leaders** from ELIX coordinated the projects

## GENERAL INFORMATION

International workcamps in Greece are organised in co-operation with ministries, local authorities, forestry departments, cultural associations, etc. Their duration varies from 2 to 3 weeks and they are mainly realised in summer. Each group of volunteers numbers approximately 15 volunteers and two camp-leaders responsible for them. ELIX always appoints a stand by coordinator for each program, who is in constant communication with the group leaders and the hosts. Most of the projects are addressed to adult volunteers except from projects addressed to teenagers. If volunteers under 18 years old wish to participate in one of ELIX's project, they should send their application along with an approval letter signed by their parents or guardians.

### **work**

Each host decides on the priorities and takes up the guidance concerning work. The host in cooperation with ELIX defines and organizes work long before the beginning of the workcamp, but sleazy factors might occur; ELIX is not responsible for any last moment changes, concerning work, by the host and always tries to inform the group of volunteers thoroughly and in time. Participants work 5-6 hours/day, 5 days/week, on a voluntary basis, along with their camp-leaders and, if needed, a skilled technician appointed by the host. Volunteers must be committed to their choice to offer voluntary work; consequently, they there are expected to be responsible and receptive.

### **accommodation**

ELIX, in cooperation with the hosts, makes up rooms for the board and lodging of the volunteers. Volunteers are usually hosted in schools, youth centres, hospices, guesthouses, etc., with the basic facilities (showers, toilets). Each day, two volunteers from the group are assigned to cook for the group and clean their "home".

### **language**

The majority of ELIX 's camps have English as communication language; there are cases of French speaking camps, but that is always specified in the workcamps' descriptions. In any case, participants are expected to be able to communicate with the rest of the groups' volunteers and the camp-leaders.

### **insurance**

During each workcamp, volunteers are insured against accidents. First aid is provided on site.

### **free time**

Free time activities depend on the possibilities for recreation existing in each area, as well as the interest and needs of each group. Free time expenses are not covered by ELIX.

### **expenses**

ELIX and each host cover the expenses for the board and lodging of the volunteers, but volunteers have to cover their travel expenses, as well as the expenses for the free time during the workcamp.

### **extra fee**

Unfortunately, ELIX is forced to charge volunteers with extra fee due to financial problems that come from the decrease of financial support to voluntary projects from the local authorities. In order to maintain quality standards and continue offering the best we can to the volunteers who choose to come and offer voluntary work in Greece, we are obliged to add extra fee in our work camps, the amount of which depends on the project and the support ELIX has received for its realisation. Fortunately, this year, we could keep in our ordinary camps, the extra fee like other years (30€ for Alliance members & partners, 100€ for Greek volunteers and volunteers coming out of the alliance network) and is indicated at the end of each project's description. The sending organisations are obliged to inform their volunteers on the extra fee and ELIX is obliged to indicate the extra fee in the projects' descriptions and infosheets. Volunteers should pay the extra fee with a bank transfer to ELIX before the beginning of the workcamp or otherwise in cash on the field.