



## EUROPEAN VOLUNTARY SERVICE

**GAT- Lisbon, Portugal**

[http://europa.eu/youth/vp/organisation/937443794\\_en](http://europa.eu/youth/vp/organisation/937443794_en) )

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## 1. Project Environment

The volunteers will mostly work in two neighborhoods of Lisbon, the capital city: Mouraria and Príncipe Real, both considered as being part of the big city center of Lisbon.

Lisbon, one of the oldest cities in Western Europe, is the largest city in Portugal with a population of around 550.000 inhabitants, while the Lisbon Metropolitan Area has a total of more than 2 million inhabitants. The city is the wealthiest region of Portugal- it produces 45% of the Portuguese GDP and it is the political, financial and cultural center of the country. Lisbon has a good transportation network system, mainly with the Metro and Buses, but also trams and trains, and it is easy and safe to walk around in the city, even in late hours. The social and cultural life in Lisbon is very active and lately the city has become one of the most visited European cities, due to its excellent geographical location and good climate, rich historical heritage and lively night life. There are lots of activities to do everyday, from museums, to concerts, and live performances, several thematic gatherings and of the sort. At night and mainly during Spring and Summer there are many outdoor music and cinema festivals and the beach is 30 minutes away. Nowadays in the streets of Lisbon, and particularly in the city center, you can hear different languages and meet people from many different countries – tourists, students and foreign workers.

Mouraria has existed since the medieval ages and owes its name to the fact that after the Christian conquest of the city from the Muslims (“Mouros”/ “Moors”), they remained as a majority in this area of the city. Mouraria is a central area in the city because it connects many other historical neighborhoods to each other (like Alfama and Graça). Currently there are 5824 inhabitants in Mouraria, many of whom are from immigrant and non-european origin (mostly people from ex portuguese African colonies, like Cape Verde, Guiné-Bissau and Angola, or from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and China). Mouraria is considered to be one of the poorest areas of the city, including for its portuguese population. But it is probably the most lifefull and certainly the most multicultural area of Lisbon where people from so many different places come together everyday. This area has high levels of social exclusion (drug use, sex work, homelessness). However in the last years, the Municipality has taken strong measures to stop Mouraria from becoming an excluded area of the city and nowadays it has a lot of cultural and commercial dynamism. It is becoming increasingly attractive and both Portuguese and tourists come here to enjoy the area and its ethnic restaurants. It is no longer considered a dangerous area of Lisbon as was before. Mouraria is also the mother of Fado.

Príncipe Real, the extension of Bairro Alto (the most known going out district in Lisbon) on the very contrary is one of the fanciest, richest and most expensive neighborhoods of Lisbon. There you can find unique shops and parisian-style caffés. There you can find palaces, antique shops, beautiful viewpoints and gardens. Its history as a neighborhood goes back to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century when it became an aristocratic area. Another characteristic of Príncipe Real is its large male homosexual community. There are many gay clubs, bars and saunas for different sub groups of gay men. For this reason it is one of the areas in Lisbon where it is possible to do outreach work and health promotion among men who have sex with men.

## 2. Description of the Organization

**GAT - Portuguese Activist Group for HIV/AIDS Treatment**, founded in 2001, is a structure of individual membership of people affected by HIV. It's a non-profit NGO, with IPSS (Private Institution of Social Solidarity on Health) status, based in Portugal, in Lisbon. GAT is the Portuguese member of the European Civil Society Forum a Think Tank on HIV/AIDS of the European Commission and recognised by WHO-Europe, ECDC, EMCDDA and UNAIDS. Our target group are the people infected by HIV or in risk of it (migrants, prisoners, sex workers, drug users, gay men...) in the area of Lisbon.

### Mission:

GAT advocates and works (including participation in action/research) with other stakeholders for legal/political changes that will positively affect the health, rights and quality of life of people living with HIV associated diseases and from the most vulnerable groups. GAT considers that without universal access to prevention, test, treatments and care, there can be no control of the pandemic.

GAT also advocates for rapid access to medical products, to testing and to means of diagnosis that prevents or treats HIV infection or that enhance the quality of life of people who live with or are particularly vulnerable to HIV infection. GAT also deals with other illness associated to HIV and with medical conditions that increase HIV infection risk.

### Objectives:

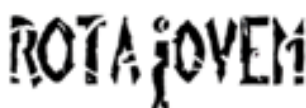
- Develop the capacity of people infected or affected by HIV to influence directly the development, testing and approval of treatments for HIV as well as diagnostic tests that prevent, treat infection or improve the quality of life of people living with HIV.
- Encourage best practices in health care and treatment for all;
- Allow quick access to treatment;
- Promote the availability of accurate information about treatments for people living with HIV, for healthcare providers and health policy-makers in this area ;
- Advocate for changes in patent laws in order to promote the availability of HIV treatment at lower costs;
- Advocate for legal and policy changes that affect the health, rights and quality of life of people living with HIV or in risk of it.;
- Actively seek members among groups in vulnerability to HIV infection. Migrants, ethnic minorities, sex workers, drug users , women in general and women twice vulnerable because they belong to these previous groups , prisoners, and men who have sex with men .

### **Main Areas of Intervention**

1. Partnership in research on HIV;
2. Illnesses frequently associated with people with HIV;
3. Use of substances, risk reduction and drug policy reform;
4. Legal, human and health rights of groups more vulnerable to HIV.

### **Regular Activities**

1. Distributing informative material on HIV and its treatment and prevention;
2. Trainings on adherence to treatments and on innovation in treatments
3. Research in cooperation with different institutes and organizations (at the moment gat cooperates with Portuguese "Instituto de Higiene e Medicina Tropical" and with two other



European-supported projects – SIALON and COBA Test)

4. National Activism (HIV National Forum; representation on the Health Committee in Parliament as a working group; representation in the Ethics Committee for Clinical Research and others;)
5. International Activism (representation in and cooperation with international organizations such as *EATG, AIDS Action Europe, INPUD and European Civil Society Forum on HIV*);
6. Community intervention with vulnerable population:
  - a) CheckPointLX “Men who have sex with men” (rapid testing on HIV and sexually transmitted infections)
  - b) IN-Mouraria “People who use drugs” (legal, social and medical support and syringe exchange)
  - c) In-Mouraria “Migrants” (screening of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections”)
  - d) IN-Mouraria “Sex workers” (medical and social support)
7. Others: Center for Anti-Discrimination (legal support for people who suffer discrimination; trainings on discrimination and stigma)

### 3. Involvement of Volunteers

The volunteers will be integrated into the technical staff of GAT and will receive appropriate training and support and will be integrated into the activities of the center.

In GAT's projects the EVS volunteers will have the privileged opportunity of getting to know realities that are most of the times hidden or unknown.

Through an evidence-based approach, GAT works on disease prevention and treatment but also on de-stigmatizing certain populations or behaviors that are still targets of discrimination and therefore act as a barrier to these populations' access to basic services (health, employment, education, etc.).

The EVS volunteers will be able to play an active role in this process, deepening their knowledge on HIV/STI related issues and harm reduction for drug users, developing a more tolerant approach towards the target populations. Therefore the volunteers become more aware of their own behaviors and beliefs about HIV, which will be of added-value to overcome prejudice and develop a more open understanding of social realities and behaviors. They will also share their experiences and visions in their home countries, not only on Portuguese culture issues but, most importantly, on what HIV represents to society and what should still be overcome, becoming thus more aware of societal and structural realities of the country.

On the other hand the integration of EVS volunteers in GAT activities could have several positive effects in the organization. On the one hand it provides the clients with the opportunity to interact with people from other countries, with other perspectives. The EVS volunteers can develop more informal contacts with the clients, have conversations not necessarily work related and develop occupational activities. That social interaction between the staff and the clients is not always possible because most of the time has to be dedicated to technical interventions. The volunteers could also bring other dynamics to the projects since they would be available to organize cultural, musical, artistic activities that are very necessary.

Because of their young age they could promote HIV testing in nightlife settings/youth festival or gatherings in a more effective way. The volunteers would disseminate relevant information about key issues (HIV, STI, Harm Reduction) that could better reach young audiences.

## 4. Tasks of the Volunteers

The volunteers will be integrated into the technical staff of GAT and will receive appropriate training and support and will be integrated into the activities of the center.

The volunteers do not substitute a paid worker and that's why they should behave and should be treated as volunteer and have responsibilities according to their position. The volunteers in GAT will act mainly as "social actors", which means their main role is to welcome the people coming to the association and making sure they get all the things they need in order to have a better life.

### The main tasks of the volunteer are:

- Participate in the activities of the Drop-In with Drug Users: provide coffee, clothes, condoms, information material in a welcoming, non judgmental environment;
- Participate in the implementation of activities: workshops on health issues, cinema sessions, etc (in articulation with the staff);
- Promote HIV testing and HIV awareness in different settings (health services, migrant and drug users associations, community centers, gay discos and bars, events, etc) together with other volunteers;
- Prepare culturally adapted information materials related to HIV and viral hepatitis (in articulation with the staff);
- Document GAT's activities (video, photography);
- Prepare a manual (HIV, Viral Hepatitis, Harm Reduction, Prevention of HIV/STI Sexual Transmission) for other EVS volunteers (from other projects);
- Taking part in events: World AIDS Day, Condom Day, Overdose Day, Queer Movie Festival, Lisbon LGBT Pride, HIV Conferences, etc.
- Organize different events/activities/printed material in order to inform other EVS volunteers or peers about HIV, sexual transmitted infections and harm reduction
- Developing an own project, according to the interests of the volunteer with follow-up and evaluation.

### The volunteer would do activities in the following projects:

- In-Mouraria for people who use drugs:  
This is a low threshold harm reduction service for problem drug users. It offers social and health services and a drop-in (centre) for people to do activities, socialize, tell their needs, receive clothes and receive syringes/needles, pipes and condoms. This centre is located in Mouraria and opens from Monday to Friday (5pm-8pm).
- In-Mouraria for Migrants  
This project promotes HIV/STI testing and counselling among migrant populations. Interventions are adapted to specific cultural and language needs of some target populations. Testing is performed in the centre and also in Migrants associations, cultural or religious venues, etc. The project opens from Monday to Friday (2pm-4pm) and it is located in Mouraria.

## - CheckpointLX

CheckpointLX is a community based HIV/Sexually Transmitted Infections testing centre. It offers rapid testing for men who have sex with men in a community setting. The tests are performed by peers (gay/bisexual men). Opening hours are Monday to Friday (12am-8pm) and Saturday (2pm-6pm). The centre is located in Príncipe Real (the main gay district in Lisbon).

## 5. Volunteer's Profile

GAT is oriented by the principle of non-discrimination and therefore all candidates applying will be considered regardless of their nationality, ethnical groups, religion, sexual orientation or political opinion. We are also open to volunteers who live with HIV or hepatitis B/C.

### General selection criteria involved:

- Enthusiasm and motivation to work with vulnerable groups (migrants, people who use drugs and men who have sex with men);
- Flexibility to work with different teams and target groups, that have different procedures, methodologies and needs;
- Openness to deal with highly stigmatized behaviors or issues such as HIV, using illicit drugs, homosexual/bisexual behavior;
- Respect for the different target groups with whom the volunteers are working with. GAT supports their clients and target populations, but does not want to "save" or change them; this principle applies to prostitution/sex work, drug use and bisexual/homosexual behaviors.
- Initiative and willingness to develop new projects in the hosting organization, since a part of the process will be left open to the volunteer's interest and skills;
- Motivation to learn Portuguese in order to communicate with the clients and staff from In-Mouraria and CheckpointLX;
- Valued (but not required) candidates who have knowledge or skills in media and communication, arts and crafts, video/music editing.
- Willingness to share a house/room with other people and live in an intercultural environment.

## 6. Volunteer's Conditions and Logistics

### 1) Language course and cultural programme

In the first month and half, more or less, the volunteer has an 40 hours language course and a small cultural programme which includes some visits to important historical places in the area of Lisbon. During this time they are free to discover the city and get used to their new EVS life. They will visit the project, get to know the people but will only start really working after the end of the language course.

Volunteers will have a local mentor at GAT and also a coordinating mentor at Rota Jovem, both committed to make this project a valuable learning opportunity and enriching personal experience.



## 2) Working hours and Days off

The volunteers will work Monday to Friday from 2 pm to 8 pm or from 12 am to 6 pm. (depending on the specific activity). If some activities take place on weekends, the volunteers will have the equivalent free time the next week days. The volunteers will not work more than 35 hours a week/ 7 hours a day including language classes. According to EVS rules, volunteers will be entitled to 2 holiday-days for each month (24 days as a whole) of volunteering and they can choose when to take their holidays in cooperation with the hosting organization.

## 3) Food, transport and pocket money

The volunteer receives an individual monthly allowance for their food. Each month they will get transportation and pocket money. The money is given in cash in the beginning of the month and it is the responsibility of the volunteer to manage it well.

## 4) Lodgement

The volunteer will share an apartment in the center of Lisbon with other EVS volunteers/students. The house is fully equipped and the location is near to metro and bus station, supermarkets, pharmacy and shops. By metro it takes 7 minutes to the city center, by walking 20 minutes. Most volunteers will share a double room.

## 7. Applying for the Project

**ROTA JOVEM** ([www.rotajovem.com](http://www.rotajovem.com)) is the coordinating organization (CO) and **GAT** the host organization (HO). Volunteers applying for this project will not work in Rota Jovem at all, but will always be able to join the activities of the coordinating organization whenever they want. As CO Rota Jovem is responsible for all the administrative process regarding your application, as well as the implementation of the project and its management. The final selection of the volunteers is done together by Rota Jovem and GAT.

If you wish to apply for this project please read very carefully its description, the requested profile of the volunteers, and why you would like to join it. Think critically why this project might interest you, what it can bring to you and what you give in return. Do not choose a project just because you like the country or the city where it takes place! And most of all be aware that you will be developing your activities in a youth association, which requires high social skills and also lots of patience to deal with many different young people. Other important factors to take into consideration are that some periods of the year are more active than others and that many activities have to be changed because of some unexpected reason. But in the end it will show you a whole new world and new people and help you find out a bit more about yourself (hopefully!!!!) Are you ready for this challenge?

Application deadline: **10<sup>th</sup> April 2015.**



## IN ORDER TO APPLY FOR THE PROJECT YOU HAVE TO :

1. **FILL IN AN APPLICATION FORM** (click [here](#)) and send it to [ricardo.fuertes@gatportugal.org](mailto:ricardo.fuertes@gatportugal.org)
2. **Fill in the google form:** (click [here](#))

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

1-If you have never heard about EVS in your life, please check the following website from the European Commission for more information about it: [http://europa.eu/youth/eu/article/46/73\\_en](http://europa.eu/youth/eu/article/46/73_en)

2- If you don't have yet an accredited **Sending Organisation** (you can't apply individually to EVS and therefore you need an EVS organization in your home country ) contact the National Agency in your home country (if it is a Programme Country, mostly EU countries):

[http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/national-agencies\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/national-agencies_en.htm) or if you come from South East Europe, Eastern Europe and Caucasus please contact the Salto Resource Center of your area : <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/>

## CONTACTS

### GAT(Host Organization)

Contact Person: Ricardo Fuertes ([ricardo.fuertes@gatportugal.org](mailto:ricardo.fuertes@gatportugal.org) )

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Webiste: <http://www.gatportugal.org>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GATPortugal?fref=ts>

### Rota Jovem (Coordinating Organization)

Contact Person: Teresa Silva ([evs.host@rotajovem.com](mailto:evs.host@rotajovem.com))

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