



# Volunteering in **ALBANIA**

*What do you  
need to know?*





# BEYOND BARRIERS ASSOCIATION (BBA)

## Who are we?

Beyond Barriers Association was created in June 2004 in Tirana, Albania with the initiative of a group of youngsters with and without disability. BBA is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that defends the rights and the interests of the young people. The mission of BBA is to empower young people in Albania by promoting active participation, inclusion, equal chances and better quality of life.

Through civic education and qualitative youth work for young people and local communities, BBA supports the foundations of building a better society for the present and the future generations. Our moto is: **We believe in what we do!**

## Our Activities...

BBA staff is organizing a variety of activities in local, national, regional and European level such as Advocacy and Youth Policy Intervention, Research and publications, technical assistance as the Contact point of E+Youth and ESC in Albania, Capacity building activities, Community Development activities, Networking, Art and Creativity, Culture and Sport activities etc.

## Our Target Group

The focus of the association's work remains on young people with fewer opportunities, with the scope to offer them a chance for empowerment and to be active citizens of the community where they live. Target groups: youngster with social disadvantages, youngsters with disabilities, youngsters from Roma communities, LGBT+ community and other young people in Albania. Special focus is on special target group which are young people with disabilities (all type of disabilities).





## Our History with ESC

Volunteering and solidarity with youngsters in need is one of the main pillars of BBA work since its creation and volunteers itself either local or international has been a great asset for development of organisation. BBA was involved in previous EVS program, since 2006 and since then we have hosted in Albania around 150 volunteers from EU organizations in short- and long-term projects.

Also, we have sent more than 130 young people from Albania in diverse projects in European organizations being one of the first pioneer of European volunteer program in Albania.

Throughout participation in European volunteer programs, BBA offered to hundred youngsters opportunity for development in personal, social and professional level.





## What activities will you do?

The philosophy of our work is that the volunteer becomes part of the team and as such, they should be integrated in most (if not all) of the projects that the team is currently working with, even if this means assisting with small tasks or taking up a more important role (if they would like to get out of their comfort zone).

*Nevertheless, the main activities that the volunteers will perform are:*

### 1. Social animation with children and youngsters with intellectual disabilities, at the special school “Luigj Gurakuqi” in Tirana

Once per week you will work with children and youngsters (6-18 years old) with intellectual disability (autism, dawn syndrome, delayed intellectual development...). You will be trained by our specialized staff before starting this project and all the time you will be assisting the specialized teachers at the school. Together with the other ESC volunteers you will design and implement extra-curricular (artistic, cultural, sports) activities in order to socialize with the children and help them develop some important life skills.





## 2. Gardening & Greenhouse

In the premises of the school BBA has built a greenhouse, aiming to help the children learn about horticulture and gain a profession that can be valuable for their future, taking into consideration that the employment opportunities for people with intellectual disability in Albania are very low. The main aim of this activity is to create a friendly learning environment for children and youngsters with intellectual disabilities, which in addition to plant cultivation, will also help them build skills for life and the labor market. Our goal is not simply to teach agricultural skills but also empower children and youngsters with intellectual disabilities, enhance their mental and physical well-being and promote inclusion and volunteering for this target group. While taking care of the vegetables and flower that are planted in the greenhouse, the children will interact, communicate and socialize with the volunteers, as well as their motor skills will be improved.

\*Also, greenhouse volunteers will help with tasks such as potting; plant propagation; care and maintenance of plants. They will help to maintain plants from weeds and dried leaves; breeding; reorganization; tillage of the land and planting plants in or around the greenhouse, and other similar tasks.





### 3. Other Youth Led Activities

Youth-led activities are a category of activities which aim to give volunteers the opportunity to raise their capacities to organize, plan, create and implement workshops, seminars, coffee-talks, info sessions, promotional campaigns, language courses for children, educational activities for youngsters, organizing activities for international days etc. These types of activities will be organized not only in the premises of BBA's office, but also in school for disabled children, public spaces, libraries, institutions (city hall, schools, museums, cultural centers, etc.). They will be implemented by the volunteers, always with the assistance of our qualified staff. Invited as participants will be young people, activists, our local volunteers but also important stakeholders in our community (depending on the topic of the activity), in order to create a communication bridge between local actors and our international volunteers and ensure intercultural exchange.





## People you will work with at BBA

At the office of Beyond Barriers you will usually find around **Ana Mullanji** (*Executive Director*), **Silvia Dervishi** (*Programme Manager and Supervisor of ESC*), **Jon Kola** (*Policy Officer and Project Coordinator*), **Denisa Merkohitoj** (*Project Coordinator and Coordinator for Social Inclusion*), **Ina Topi** (*Financial Manager*), **Rafaela Mborja** (*Coordinator of Volunteers and ESC Coordinator*).

For everything formal regarding your ESC project you need to direct to Silvia or Rafaela. For technical issues upon arrival or anything connected with accommodation, Rafaela will be available to help you. Reimbursement of cost and allowances (food money and pocket money) will be given by Silvia upon receiving your signature on proper documents.

BBA has also many local volunteer, and some of the most active ones you will meet during these months, such as: Kamila (F), Nini (M), Klara (F), Klaudio (M), Sindi (F) Enea (M). They will also be your mentors around Tirana during the day or for night gatherings, whenever you will need their assistance.

You will get to know with Beyond Barriers work, staff and volunteers during the first week and the welcome evening :)

## More about us:



<https://beyondbarriers.org/>



<https://www.facebook.com/PertejBarrierave>



<https://www.instagram.com/beyondbarriersngo/>



## Practical arrangements

### Where will you live?

You will live and work in Tirana, the heart and capital of Albania, which like all other European metropolises has never-ending movement and energy. Tirana is the capital of Albania and also the main economic, social and cultural center of the country. With its clubs, bars, cafes, and taverns, the city is worth discovering by day and night. The hospitality of Albanians is something that will mark your journey not only in Tirana but also all over the country :)

Your apartment is situated near BBA office, in the area called Don Bosko in Tirana, located approximately 15 min by foot from the main square “Sheshi Skenderbe”. You will be living in one apartment equipped with all the necessary living conditions. You will share your room with another volunteer (female or male, depending on your gender). Anyway, we recommend that you bring one more towel for yourself and maybe a beach towel also :D.

The area is very lively, so you will be able to find many markets, shops, bars, banks, exchange offices in the neighborhood.







## Local transport

The staff will provide a monthly pass for volunteers so they can use public transport (bus lines). The public service in the city of Tirana is reliable and widespread. Tirana is a very busy city, and has more than 20 bus lines. All bus stations are located around Tirana Center, easy to spot and reach. You can find public bus from 6 AM-11 PM. It takes from 3-10 minutes to wait in bus stops for next bus.



## Transfer from the airport to the apartment

We will collect your flight information beforehand and we will arrange to pick you up from “Mother Theresa Airport” of Tirana and bring you to the apartment. When you arrive please check at the exit door, for someone with the tag “BEYOND BARRIERS ASSOCIATION” on an A4 paper.

For any emergency case, send an SMS to Rafaela on this number +355 67 64 51 057 :)

## Internet & Telephone

You will have free internet access at the office of BBA and at the house but you need to bring your own laptop! We cannot provide the access to international phone calls. Calling from Albania to any other country in the world would be very expensive for you if you use your number, as roaming is a very expensive service in our country. This is why we suggest that once you are in Tirana, you buy a local sim card (Vodafone or One) that costs from 500 Leke to 1000 Leke.



## Food

You will find different possibilities of food in Tirana, but also you will notice the Italian cuisine influence, which you will actually find almost everywhere in Tirana. If you decide to cook at home during the months, you will be shown all markets where you can buy fresh vegetables, meat, and everything you need. Of course, you are welcome to try out some Albanian traditional food :)



## Allowances

You will get the money for food and pocket money at the beginning of every month, quantified on the basis of the amount necessary to live in dignity in our country. You will need to sign a form for receiving the money. The way you spend it it's up to you and we do not need any bills for your own expenses.

## Currency

Albanian currency is called LEKË (ALL) but you can also pay in Euros at some places. Anyway, we recommend that you use Lekë.

You can bring Euros with you and exchange them in Tirana Airport or in the city when you are here. **1 Euro = 116.85 Lekë** (it varies from day to day).

You can check the exchange rate here :

[https://www.bankofalbania.org/Tregjet/Kursi\\_zyrtar\\_i\\_kembimit/](https://www.bankofalbania.org/Tregjet/Kursi_zyrtar_i_kembimit/)





## Albanian Language

During your mobility project in Tirana you will have the chance to learn the basics of the Albanian language. It is a very unique language, since it forms a separate branch of Indo-European Family and cannot be closely connected with any other Indo-European language.

We have prepared this mini-dictionary for you, just to get you started ;)



Hello! - **Çkemi!**

How are you? - **Si je?**

I don't speak Albanian -

**Nuk flas shqip**

Yes! - **Po!**

Please! - **Të lutem!**

No! - **Jo!**

Thank you! - **Faleminderit!**

I'm sorry! - **Më fal!**

Good morning! - **Mirëmëngjes!**

Good afternoon! - **Mirëdita!**

Good evening! - **Mirëmbërëma!**

Good night! - **Natën e mirë!**

Goodbye! - **Mirupafshim!**

\*I love you! - **Të dua!**





## Application

Please find the application form in the link below:



<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1aMsa-OWuMOHGmhcK8azamy5JGRgFX98WEeTdTnsgn5w/edit>



*For additional information please write to:*

[rmborja@uet.edu.al](mailto:rmborja@uet.edu.al)

*or text to*

**+355 67 64 51 057**

*Looking forward to  
welcoming you in our team!*

