



ESC PROJECT INFO PACK

# SUSTAINABILITY RULES 2024

KURKI ECOVILLAGE, FINLAND



# THE ESC PROJECT "SUSTAINABILITY RULES"

The project is run by **Kurki Association**.

Its main goals are to encourage sustainable and eco-friendly practices, create a diverse and multicultural environment, support youngsters with fewer opportunities, promote tolerance and solidarity.

We have been hosting volunteers from different European countries since 2013 and we can say that throughout the years all these youngsters have been fundamental for the development of the community and surrounding area as we know it today.

The volunteers bring their own talents, cultures, points of view, questions and ideas which always enriches everyone's lives by sharing and learning from each other.



# KURKI ECOVILLAGE

The project takes place at Kurki Ecovillage in Vesilahti, Finland.

At the moment there are 10 families living in this community. Each family has their own house and there are also communal buildings and spaces (sauna, community house, barns, grilling area, gardens, yard, etc).





The main purpose of the people in the community is to live in a more sustainable way by committing to build with eco-friendly materials and techniques, use only biodegradable products (shampoos, detergents, etc), compost their waste and recycle appropriately, use eco-friendly toilets (such as dry-toilets), try to eat as organic and sustainable as possible, car sharing, etc.

Being part of a community also means being there for each other, spending time together and support one another when needed.



# THE VOLUNTEERS

Every year we host 6 volunteers from different countries.

No specific skills are required to be part of the project but we do appreciate volunteers that are:

- Open-minded, responsible, tolerant and respectful to others
- Willing to learn new things
- Motivated for the project
- Able to adapt and to live in community
- Someone who can take initiative and work independently



# WORK TASKS / ACTIVITIES

These are some of the main tasks and activities of the project:

- **Community lunch** – Planning, shopping and cooking healthy, balanced and sustainable lunches for the community. This also includes tasks like cleaning, organizing, recycling, calculating budgets, etc
- **Caretaker** – Take care of dry-toilets, compost maintenance, heating the sauna, etc
- **Gardening** – Planning/designing, planting seeds, preparing the soil, take care of our small food gardens
- **Seasonal nature work** – picking berries, wild herbs and mushrooms according to the seasons and use different ways of conservation
- **Building** – at the moment we are renovating an old barn that will become a community center.

- **Individual Projects** – each volunteer will have the opportunity to research/develop/implement project(s) of their own interest.
- **Collaborating with the local schools and youth centers** by doing activities with the youngsters
- **Collaborating with local organizations and associations** (Red Cross, etc)
- **Assisting on the implementation of artistic and cultural activities/events** (summer cafeteria, workshops, concerts, etc)
- **Upload content on our social media** to promote the project, ESC and Erasmus+ programmes

**All these tasks are rotative and shared between the six volunteers. The working times are from Tuesday to Saturday (9:00 to 16:00). Sundays and Mondays are free days.**

# LIVING CONDITIONS

The volunteers have their own building where they sleep. This is a small wooden house with two floors (3 beds per floor) and a small kitchen space. In the bedrooms we use some furniture to divide the space.

There is a dry-toilet located just outside the house.

There is no conventional shower - volunteers will wash themselves in the sauna/washing room where the water is heated every day.

In the same building there is a laundry room with a washing machine.

The volunteers can use the kitchen of the community house for their own purpose. The community house is also a place where they can hang out and spend time.



## THINGS TO CONSIDER

We want volunteers to have a realistic idea of the place and the project before they make their decision to join in this adventure. These are some factors we'd like you to be aware of:

Kurki Ecovillage is located 4km away from Vesilahti, a small town. There are bus connections to the towns nearby and the city of Tampere. In Vesilahti there are basic supermarkets, pharmacy, schools, youth center, sports field, gym and library. Still it's quite a small place.

Considering this, volunteers should prepare to be independent and take initiative in finding ways to spend their free time and arrange activities during the project. The surroundings offer great possibilities for outdoor activities e.g. canoeing in the summer, skiing in the winter, walking, biking, running etc. However, we encourage volunteers to join the project with a good sense of hobbies and interests they would like to pursue during their stay.

## THINGS TO CONSIDER

The living conditions are modest and simple. The volunteers should be able to live with others in a respectful way. Everyone is responsible for cleaning after themselves and keep the common spaces tidy after using them.

Some of the work can be quite physical, we hope you are ready for that.

Volunteers might experience cultural shocks while living in Finland (the culture is significantly different than in the southern countries).

During some seasons the weather is cold and dark (with snow included) which can affect people's mood – it can feel slow or boring sometimes.

Kurki is a child-friendly community and we want to create a safe space for everyone so alcohol abuse is not allowed. Illegal drugs are forbidden overall.

# OUTCOMES

This project is an opportunity for developing social skills, learning to live more sustainably, practicing gardening, cooking, artistic expressions...

It's a great chance to get to know a new country and its traditions, be in contact with nature, make meaningful connections, implement your own ideas and projects, take time to reflect on the world and yourself, get out of your comfort zone and experience new adventures! :)



FIND MORE INFO ABOUT THE ESC  
ACTIVITIES IN OUR INSTAGRAM  
ACCOUNT!

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