



Volunteering team project

Elf Start!

5.9-26.9.2024



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Volunteering team project, Kokkola 5.9-26.9.2024

Welcome to Villa Elba!

Elf Start! is a volunteering team project that gathers 10 volunteers to Kokkola 5.9-26.9.2024. During the project, the volunteers help to prepare Villa Elba's magical Christmas project by collecting nature materials and building elves for decorations around the area.

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Youth Centre Villa Elba

Villa Elba is a National Youth Centre supported and observed by the Ministry of Education. We are specialised in youth work and our function is to develop the methods used in the field of youth work. We work under the Finnish law covering youth work and by the Ministry of Education.

Our goal is to offer youngsters the possibilities of learning in multicultural environment and finding their own strengths and abilities through international activity.

Our work consists of international camps and programs, education, practical training and voluntary work for young people, information and guidance about international programmes, projects and coordination of volunteering projects.



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Profile of participants:

Participants are young people seeking new possibilities to their lives. Volunteers can be unemployed, face educational, economic, social or physical challenges or have low language skills. We wish that the volunteers are interested in organizing events for local communities. There is no need of previous experiences just an interest to try it out and learn more!

We offer the volunteers:

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- a chance to live in a new culture
 - possibility to do volunteer work for the local community
 - a chance for intercultural learning
 - a project where you can use your creativity and do practical work
 - opportunity to meet other international volunteers and make friends
 - development of skills and abilities

Volunteers should be prepared for:

- outdoor work
- changes
- mosquitos
- adventures
- new experiences

We expect from volunteers:

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- flexibility
 - respect
 - ability to follow the rules and schedule



Work tasks:

The work is very concrete and includes mostly working outdoors:

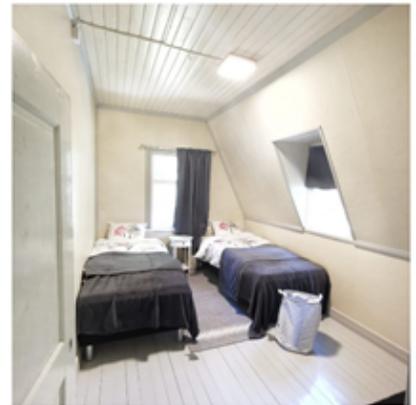
- collect branches from forest areas for materials
- cut branches to prepare the elfs
- build branch elves
- clean the routes in the forest before the snow comes
- prepare Christmas lanterns and lights
- painting work and building materials

We encourage participants to bring in their own ideas and competences when planning and realizing the content of the different events and activities organized during the project. During the project, volunteers will learn how to work in international team and to collaborate with different people.



Accommodation

Accommodation is organised in Youth Centre Villa Elba in beautiful summer house Villa Marina by the sea. It is a simple house with no modern comforts: there are not indoor toilets, no indoor shower or running water in the house. Water is available from the well outside and there is an outdoor shower and sauna tent. House is heated with the help of the fireplace and electric radiators. Therefore, it requires patience and flexibility, as volunteers must adapt to a modest living environment and sharing accommodation with other people. On the other hand, the Villa has a beautiful environment and offers participants a unique chance to try out traditional Finnish summer cottage lifestyle.



Working hours :

The volunteer will work 5 days a week, approximately 35 hours. The working hours are usually from 8-15 including lunch break, but sometimes work times can vary a bit depending on logistics and weather conditions. The volunteers earn 1 holiday during the project.



Meals:

During orientation day and on-arrival training volunteers will get breakfast, lunch, dinner from our kitchen.

After that, lunch is provided at Villa Elba during working days and volunteers get food money to prepare other meals themselves.



Orientation day and On-arrival training

First 2 days of the project will be orientation and on-arrival training in Youth Centre Villa Elba. The aim of is to get to know the other participants and learn about the volunteering program. We will also tell about the aim of the project, intercultural learning and about volunteer's rights and responsibilities.

Also during on-arrival training you will get to know better other volunteers, think about your goals and motivation for the project.

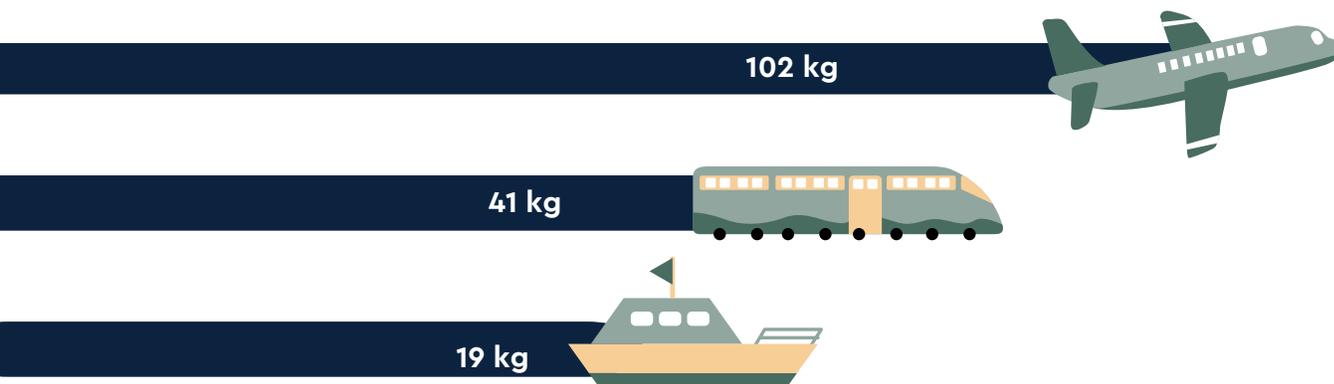


Travelling to Kokkola:

How to get to Kokkola:

We encourage volunteers to use green means of transportation, for example with Interrail ticket (more information: <https://www.interrail.eu/en>), but we understand that it might be difficult for some people. If you have to fly to Helsinki, please remember about our planet and pay fee for CO2 emissions.

CO2 EMISSIONS IN COMPARISON *



TRAVELLING BY TRAIN/FERRY WILL LOWER YOUR CO2 EMISSIONS BY MORE THAN HALF
* PER 1000 KILOMETERS

From Helsinki Airport the most convenient and green way to travel to Kokkola is by train. You can find tickets here: <https://www.vr.fi/en>. There is also very cheap bus connection <http://www.onnibus.com/en/>, but the ride is very long (approx. 7 hours).

If you are taking train from Helsinki Airport, then on your way there will be one short transfer at Tikkurila station. Please, be very careful and check all the information: train track number etc. in order not to miss your next train.

Please note that the student discount on Finnish trains is applicable only if you are studying in Finland or have international student card ISIC.

We recommend to buy all the tickets in advance because prices are increasing dramatically closer to departure day.

You are not allowed to arrive to Villa Elba earlier 5.9. and depart later 26.9.

Financial issues:

Travel grants

Travel grants are paid after the project according to the funding rules of Erasmus+: Travel grants depend on the length of the journey and for measurement of the journey we use Erasmus+ distance band calculator: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/distance-calculator_en

Villa Elba will arrange pick up volunteers from the airport or train station, costs for transport are deducted from the travel compensation. We try to organize common rides to keep costs as low as possible. In case of early morning or late night arrival - we have to order a taxi and deduct that price from the travel costs (around 20-40€ from the train station, around 60-90€ from the airport).

Non-green travel:

10 – 99 km	23 €
100 – 499 km	180 €
500 –1999 km	275 €
2000 – 2999 km	360 €
3000 – 3999 km	530 €
4000 – 7999 km	820 €
8000 -> km	1500 €

Green travel:

100 – 499 km	210 €
500 –1999 km	320 €
2000 – 2999 km	410 €
3000 – 3999 km	610 €
4000 – 7999 km	820 €
8000 -> km	1500 €

Pocket money

The pocket money is 7€ / day which will be paid in parts in cash during the project.



Travelling to Kokkola:



What to bring along:

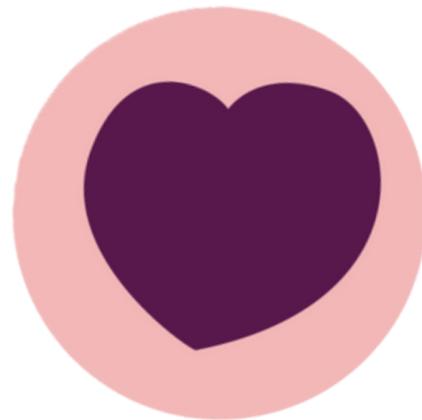
- In September weather can be very unpredictable - anything from -10 to +25. So take light clothes with you (t-shirts, shorts, sneakers) as well as something warm (waterproof jacke, weather, wool socks). It would be useful if you could bring outdoor clothes and shoes since you will have work outside.
- **European health card (very important, you will need it if you need to go to health center/hospital!)**
- Personal medication and hygiene products
- Swimming suits if you want to wear them in sauna or want to go to swim
- Something typical from your country to present your culture during international evening (music, songs, dances, something to eat etc.)





Support measures:

Extra support is available for volunteers 24/7 during the whole project. The support persons help with everyday issues (cooking, cleaning, shopping), to get familiar with local community and culture, help in difficult situations and support the volunteers to reflect on their learning outcomes. There will be organized mentor meetings weekly and volunteers are entitled to take part in the mentoring meetings.



Hopefully, this infopack helped you to get to know more about the project. You are about to start an amazing adventure! We have a very supportive staff, in case you have any kind of questions - you are more than welcome to ask.

See you at Villa Elba!

www.villaelba.fi

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