**Hoolekandeteenused Karula unit**

**Introduction**

AS Hoolekandeteenused Karula Home in Estonian provides 24h home-like living conditions and full support in daily activities for approximately 84 adults with special needs. Clients are provided with recreation, professional social and healthcare services. The majority of the clients have profound multiple disabilities, mental and physical, many use medical supportive devices, such as wheelchairs etc. As the majority of the clients do not have close family ties, they are happy to be able to meet and spend time with people from outside the Home ( i.e. volunteers)..

Workers are there for clients 24/7, day and night. Workers help clients to do daily basic things - such as hygiene, eating; sending them to doctors, shop, work, field trips, parties, theatres etc; do hand activities, playing all sorts of games.

The staff number is about 55 and has received special training, is well experienced and many have worked for more than 10 years.

ESC would be an enriching learning opportunity for both the volunteer, staff and the clients. Each volunteer brings new energy, ideas, and experience with him/her. It's a lesson in different languages, cultures and working habits. Volunteers tend to make the clients happier.

**Location**

Karula Home is situated in a naturally beautiful area within a nature reserve on the shore of lake Karula in Southern Estonia in Karula village. The clients are accommodated in modern 1-story family-type houses surrounded by gardens and green areas. The clients live in small contemporary family units, 10-12 people per house.

Lively and beautiful Viljandi Town (ca 19 000 inhabitants) is just 3 km from Karula and

Viljandi is a kind of capital of culture in Estonia - there is Viljandi Culture Academy that provides higher education in Estonian national culture, dance and music and is a very important part of the community. The medieval capital of Estonia, Tallinn, is about 185 km from Viljandi (2,5 h by public transportation - bus or train).

**Benefits for the volunteer**

* Experience in communicating and working with people with special needs (physical, mental)
* Experience in team-work (as a team member of the staff, but also settings his/her own goals and showing initiative)
* Experience as a group leader for the clients (recreational activities)

**Work tasks and proposed activities**

* Doing hand activities with the clients (coloring, cutting, drawing, making some crafts)
* Playing ballgames and other games (board games, cards, puzzles, memos etc)
* Doing morning gymnastic with clients, walking with them outside
* Helping to get dressed
* Accompanying clients to work and back; to the field trips and events
* Decorating the houses for holidays
* Teaching English to some clients

**Requirements for the volunteer**

* Willing and wanting to work with people with special needs
* Empathetic
* Active
* Friendly and warm-hearted
* Motivated to be with the clients – talk, play, be around them
* Willing to learn Estonian as it’s very important to understand the basic needs of the clients

If the volunteer has some kind of special skills (playing some instrument, singing etc), it can be uses in everyday life (they just love singing lessons and dancing).