Connecting Lives, Sharing Cultures

HANDBOOK

for AFS participants at Ranum Efterskole College 1-month intensive programs 2019



AFS Interkultur, Denmark

Welcome / Velkommen

Dear AFS student

AFS Interkultur Denmark would like to give you a warm welcome! As a student at Ranum Efterskole College you will really have the opportunity to learn about Denmark, and there is a lot to learn for those who are interested in a new way of life.

This booklet includes practical information about Denmark, safety advice along with ideas about what to bring plus an introduction to AFS Interkultur and the rules you must follow as an AFS student in Denmark. Read all this carefully!

We hope you will enjoy the reading and look forward to meeting you when you come.

We welcome you into the worldwide AFS family and hope that you may have a rewarding and challenging AFS experience.

Warm regards,

AFS Interkultur & Ranum Efterskole College

PARTICIPATION IS THE NAME OF THE GAME

Each one of you will have a different experience in Denmark even though you all will live and study at the same school - Ranum Efterskole College. For many of you this will be a new experience that you can learn from, because you will meet new activities, ideas, challenges, and new ways of day-to-day living.

The first step towards learning about a country and its people is to let go of the "tourist" attitude, which means that you only move on the surface of a culture. A tourist type is the taking and watching type. A non-tourist type does not think of her/himself as the center of attention. The "non-tourist" is the giving and receiving type and is therefore able to know the culture and the traditions of the country on a deeper level.

All this might sound obvious but it is not that simple. By participating you may find out that you possess a creativity you did not know you had, or that you are more mature than you thought. If you come to Denmark with an open mind and participate while you are here, your AFS experience could very well be the best time of your life!

BEING A CULTURAL AMBASSADOR

As a participant in the AFS Program you are a cultural ambassador. A cultural ambassador represents his/her country 24 hours a day. It is not enough to give a speech about your country or to tell people around you about it. Everything you do and say determines what other people think about your country. You have to be aware of this responsibility and think of it in your doings and acts in everyday life.

During the stay you will be expected to explain about your country, both to your host family and to your schoolmates and in class. This is an important aspect of your stay in the same way as each AFS student is an important part of the intercultural work of AFS. That is a big responsibility, but also a lot of fun!

So try to acquire a general knowledge of your home country concerning population, geography, history, agriculture, industry, sports activities etc. before you arrive, so that you can tell people in Denmark about your country and culture. You can also bring brochures with pictures about your country and perhaps recipes from your country. You should also be prepared to talk about your everyday life, your home, family, school and community. Bring picture books, photos, slides, etc as they often say more than words.



Ranum Efterskole College is situated in northern Jutland in Denmark

YOUR ARRIVAL

AFS students for the programs at Ranum usually arrive at Aalborg Airport.

On your arrival to the airport in Denmark, you will be picked up by your hosting school Ranum Efterskole College.

ABOUT THE DANISH "EFTERSKOLE" SYSTEM

The Efterskole is a unique Danish independent residential school for students between 14 and 18 years who can choose to spend one, two or three years to finish their primary education.

Each Efterskole is a self-governing independent institution and they all deal with both the educational and personal development of the students. They embrace a common educational focus on enlightenment for life, general education and democratic citizenship.

The first Efterskole's were founded about 150 years ago. The schools were closely related to the Danish Folk High School and the educational ideas of N.F.S. Grundtvig (1789-1872) who wanted schools to provide enlightenment for life rather than formal

vocational training. The Danish Efterskole is base on the idea of combining academic learning with that of general “life- learning” as a preparatory tool for all aspects of life as well as facilitation an understanding of the “Individual in a community”. Solidarity, Community, Unity are key concepts within the Danish Efterskole.

Compared to public schools the Efterskole has substantial freedom in terms of eg. choice of subjects, teaching methods and educational approach. These vary in accordance with the school’s political, religious or pedagogical orientation.

One of the things that are unique about the Efterskole is the teacher-student relationship. The teacher is responsible for both teaching and supervision outside of school hours. This means that teachers and students are together all day from the time the students wake up until they go to bed. This often engenders a close, personal and non-formal relationship between students and teachers. Most Efterskole’s offer the same subjects and final examinations as the public schools, but many focus on special subjects like physical education, music or theatre, or offer various kinds of special education.

There are more than 280 Efterskole’s spread across Denmark, mostly in rural areas or near provincial towns. At present approximately 28.500 students attend the schools. Schools vary in size from 25 to 500 students but must have a minimum of approx. 80-100 students. The number of students has increased considerably within the last 25 years.

RANUM EFTERSKOLE COLLEGE

At Ranum Efterskole College there are 425 students. It is currently the third largest Efterskole in Denmark. Ranum Efterskole College is – like mentioned above – based on the thoughts of N.F.S. Grundtvig. This means that the school values democratic thinking and learning for life, but at the same time it is also a very modern school. The students are approximately 14-17 years old and receive the same sort of tuition as in the public schools in subjects such as Danish, Maths, English, German/French, Social science, Biology etc. In addition they also have the possibility of participating in e.g. diving classes, sailing classes (our school is located near the big inlet in the North of Denmark), music, horseback riding, dance, martial arts and many more.

At our school all students travel abroad three times a year. We have visited a lot of different countries and cities such as London, Spain, Germany, the Netherlands, New York, Nepal, Egypt, Norway, India, Ghana and Greece. We finance a small school for young children in Nepal and aim at having an international outlook in most of our activities. When you come to Ranum Efterskole College you will be a part of the international class RIC (Ranum International Class) where the students are being taught in English a lot of the time. Also they are taught in many international topics, e.g. climate, international politics, the UN. When you attend the class the most important topic will be intercultural communication.

At Ranum Efterskole College the students live together in rooms of 2-6 people. A big part of the learning experience of an “Efterskole-stay” is the social competences that students acquire from living closely together. Be prepared to participate in the fellowship with your room mates, ask questions and try to learn something about life on

an “Efterskole”. If you feel insecure about practical matters concerning boarding (e.g. bathing facilities or washing machines) please ask your fellow Danish students or your contact person at Ranum Efterskole College.

At Ranum Efterskole College you will be part of the international class and your classmates will help you in case you have any questions and also to introduce you to the social life at the school. One of the things that you will definitely need your classmates to help you with is finding your way around the school and understanding the schedule. On such a big boarding school there is a basic “day-rhythm” and your personal schedule on top of this. You will receive your schedule when you arrive. You are encouraged to ask your contact teacher and classmates a lot of questions on practical, social and personal matters.



Ranum Efterskole College

ABOUT DANISH CULTURE

The Danes relate to one another in a casual, informal way. Shyness can therefore be to your disadvantage. If you do not speak up for yourself, chances are you might not be asked for your opinion. Disagreement with others or asking questions is not generally seen as a sign of disrespect. Although Danes relate casually to one another, there is usually little physical contact between friends and/or relatives in public. Men in particular keep their distance from one another. This is, however, changing, and the Danes are loosening up a little.

Danes have a sense of humor similar to the English. Be aware that Danes use a lot of irony when they interact.

Danish youth culture

You may find that young people in Denmark go to a lot of parties either organized by the school or privately. Alcohol will often be served at these parties. It is very common that you find people under the age of 18 years drinking, and it is socially acceptable in many families. In Denmark you are not allowed to buy alcoholic beverages in shops till the age of 16 years. In bars or restaurants you can't order alcoholic beverages if you are under 18 years of age. If you are invited to a party or any other event where alcohol is served, and you are not sure what to do, either ask your school or your buddy for advice. At Ranum Efterskole College drinking and smoking is strictly prohibited also on journeys to and from the school.

Some young people in Denmark may be sexually active. Remember cultures differ in their views of what is the appropriate sexual behavior and practices of young people. Often clarification of attitudes may be necessary, and here, again, the advice of people you have come to know and trust is very valuable.

Knowledge about the people you socialize with is important, and this is best acquired through increasing knowledge of the culture. In societies where some young people are sexually active, there are also many who are not. You should not compromise your own personal values and beliefs regarding sexual behavior. If you feel that you get offended by hearing your room mates talk about sex, try to tell them about your concerns. It will also be a learning experience for the Danish students that not everybody thinks and acts the same.

Remember that it is forbidden to use illegal drugs and substances. Violation of this rule is reason for early return to you home country. Similarly, excessive abuse of alcohol is also reason for early return to your home country. It is also illegal to get tattoos under the age of 18 years.

Making friends

It takes time to make friends in Denmark and is a two– way-street. You have to give as much as you get. You are supposed to take a lot of initiative. If somebody invites you to do something together with them it is a good idea to return the invitation before long, by suggesting to do something else together.



YOUR SCHOOL LIFE

We emphasize that the AFS program is a school program. This means that we expect you to take the lessons and the school work seriously.

The teaching methods used in the Danish educational system are based on debate and discussion which means that the students are expected to participate in the class in a manner different from what you may be used to. You may also find the relationship between students and teachers very informal. This does not mean that there is no respect, but that the school expects a high degree of maturity, independence and a sense of responsibility. Be ready to accept that things will be different in your new school from what you are used to and that it will take time for you to settle down in the school. Remember you can always ask your contact teacher at the school for help and guidance.

The contents of your program in Denmark – including your subjects at the school and other activities organized - have been arranged with AFS in your home country prior to your arrival.



YOUR HOST FAMILY STAY

AFS students participating in most of the 1-month intensive programs at Ranum Efterskole College will spend some days in a Danish host family. The summer school in July does not include a home stay.

Your Danish family will be like all other families. They will have times of joy, times of conflict and times of just being together. Be alert to the way your family does things, and try to do things that way too. Use your eyes and ears to observe how things are done in your host family. Accept that you will have to fit in with a life style of a family different from your own. It may be hard but it is an essential part of your host family stay. Be open and honest in relations with your family. Ask the family to be honest with you. Your family may be hesitant to do so at first, because they are afraid of hurting your feelings or embarrassing you, but it is important that you cross that barrier and talk straight and honestly together in order to get a good host family stay.

It is important to follow the rules in your host family. These rules will differ from family to family, but in most Danish families the members take an interest in each other's activities and help each other with the daily chores.

If there is something you do not understand, talk to your host family straight away. Let them know how you feel if something is bothering you. It is normal in a Danish family to share feelings and problems - therefore try to be as open as you can and involve your host family; they will be more than happy to help you solve the issue. This will help avoid misunderstandings and problems in the host family.

Usually Danish family members are very busy and have their week planned with work or different spare time activities. Because of this you cannot expect them to take you on trips etc all the time. You will need to learn to take initiative and plan your own spare time activities.
Always tell your host family of your plans in advance and obtain their permission before going anywhere.

Your host family wants to know what you are doing and where you are. This will make them feel you are a part of their life and they a part of yours.

Do not stay alone in your room for very long periods instead of being in the living room with the rest of the family.

Your family has opened their home to you because they believe in the AFS program. They are not being paid for it. It will mean a lot to them if you show your appreciation.

House chores
In most families everybody is expected to take a part of the housework. Some common chores you may have to do are: setting the table, washing and drying the dishes, washing your own clothes and helping in preparing dinner. In general you are expected to make your own bed each morning and see to it that your room is tidy. If you are unsure about how to do any household tasks, ask your host family.

Bathing
You should be aware that hot water is expensive in Denmark. Danes usually shower once a day. Water on the floor does not dry quickly, so do not splash around too much. After bathing you are expected to clean the bathtub and mop up the water on the floor.

Snacking from the fridge
Danes tend to eat meals rather than snack from the refrigerator. Food in the fridge is not necessarily available for general consumption. If you want a snack, always check whether it is all right for you to eat something from the fridge.

Punctuality
Be punctual – Danes consider it very important to keep ones appointments and be on time – both in school and privately. If you are constantly 5-10 minutes late, it might be considered rude and seen as disrespectful to the person you are meeting.

… and remember!
Ask questions if there is something about the Danish culture you do not understand and remember not to criticize Denmark or the Danes too much; it may be considered rude.

YOUR CONTACT PERSONS WHILE IN DENMARK

You will have a contact person at the “efterskole” whom you can always talk to in case you have any problems or questions. You will get the details of this contact person after your arrival at the school.

You will also have a staff member in the AFS office whom you can contact for advice. The staff member is Annette Bauer whom you can contact on telephone 38 32 23 03 or email annette.bauer@afs.org.

If you need to get in touch with AFS Denmark urgently, you can always contact our Duty Officer on tel. (+45) 24 21 34 36. You can contact the Duty officer 24 hours a day.

WHAT TO BRING

Glasses/contact lenses
If you wear glasses or contact lenses, do bring an extra pair just in case - AFS does not cover expenses for lost or damaged glasses/contact lenses.

Laptop
If possible, please bring a laptop as this is useful in many of the lessons.

Camera
Pictures are a good way to take home memories and they will be helpful when you tell about your experiences in Denmark.

Recipes
In many Danish homes the entire family shares the daily chores, including cooking, so bring some of your favorite recipes typical of your country. Your host family will love the taste of foreign food. Also there will be a farewell party at Ranum Efterskole College where you will cook some of your national recipes together with the chef of the school – he will be happy to receive inspiration!

Presents
It is very difficult to give any advice about presents, but try to bring small personal gifts for your host family. For instance, you could bring something made by yourself or something that is typical of your country.

CLOTHING

If your stay in Denmark is between October and April - REMEMBER TO PACK WARM CLOTHING AND FOOT-WEAR .That means warm underwear, sweaters, a warm coat or jacket, and warm boots. Mittens, scarves and hats will also be needed.

Clothing should in general not be a problem, as Danish young people dress very casually. Both boys and girls normally wear jeans with shirts, T-shirts and sweaters. If you are in contact with your Danish buddy before you leave home, it is a good idea to ask them for suggestions.

For Special Occasions

Girls should bring a dress or a pair of smart trousers and a blouse for special occasions. Boys should also bring a nice outfit, but a suit is not necessary. If you have a national costume, do bring it along.

For School

There is no school uniform, but you will have to bring sportswear to wear in P.E.

MONEY

For personal spending money we recommend that you bring a minimum of 225 US$ per month. Be aware that traveler's checks are expensive to cash in.

Many things are very expensive in Denmark compared to other countries. For instance it can easily cost 3 US$ for half a liter of Coca Cola. Also cinemas, transportation and telephone calls are rather expensive.

The units of the Danish currency are "kroner" and "øre" - 1 kroner = 100 øre.

INSURANCE

As you take part in an official AFS-program AFS has taken out an insurance covering medical expenses and emergencies as well as third party liability outside the host family. However, this insurance does not cover lost property and third party liability in connection with accidents within the host family.

Please check your own family's insurance coverage.

AFS participants are subject to the laws of their hosting country. Neither AFS Interkultur nor the national government of the participant's home country have the ability to protect the participant from punishment for legal offenses.

MEDICAL EXPENSES

The AFS insurance will cover medical expenses incurred while the participant is in Denmark, except for the cost of dental or eye care, preventive medicine, immunizations, and treatment of pre-existing conditions. Nor does the insurance pay for over-the-counter medicine.

Any medical expenses covered by the AFS insurance will be reimbursed to the participant through AFS Denmark upon receipt of documentation.

On arrival to Denmark you will receive a 24-hour emergency insurance card from AFS Denmark which we recommend always to have on you.

TELEPHONE INFORMATION

In general making telephone calls is very expensive in Denmark, and you are expected to pay for the international phone calls you make from your host family's phone.

Emergencies: dial 112 (this is always free of charge).

For international calls – dial "00" followed by the country code and telephone number.

For international telephone calls, we advise you to buy a Phone card e.g. at the Post Office.

SAFETY IN DENMARK AND YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

In general Denmark is a very safe country. There is no big difference between boys and girls when it comes to safety. But like any other country, you should be cautious and use common sense. There may be places in the local community that you should avoid going to. Please consult and take advice from your school and host-family as they know the most about their community and is best prepared to give you advice. Do not hesitate to ask your school and host family what they recommend to help you feel more personally secure.

In general you should try to avoid being alone in the train stations late at night unless you have to. If walking alone late at night or early mornings you should try to walk in streets that are well lit and that have people walking in them.

Public transportation in Denmark is perfectly safe to use. You should just make sure you know the time of the latest bus or train, so you can plan for an alternative if you need to return home late at night.

In Denmark traffic keeps to the right, remember this when you cross the street or ride a bicycle. A lot of Danes, and especially students, ride bicycles. During winter you will need lights on your bike and wear reflectors on your clothes.

AFS RULES

In a large organization like the AFS it is necessary to have a set of rules to ensure that the participants and their parents have faith in the organization. This way parents can be fully assured about the welfare of their children we have set up the following rules:

1. Driving:
You are not allowed to drive a car or any other vehicle requiring a license. You are not allowed to initiate actions in order to acquire a license. Failure to comply is cause for termination of the program and early return to the home country!

2. Drugs:
POSSESSION OR USE OF DRUGS IS PROHIBITED! (Unless prescribed by a doctor.) Violation of this rule will lead to immediate termination of the program and early return to the home country.

3. School attendance:
You must attend school and you must be involved in classes. You have to take on course work responsibilities in accordance with the guidelines of your hosting school. Lack of involvement and disregard or violation of these responsibilities and requirements may be cause for termination from the program and an early return to your home country.

CONTACT TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS BACK HOME

We are aware the internet and the mobile phone are very easy ways for you to stay in touch with your family and friends, BUT too much contact with your home country can make it more difficult for you to get a full and rich AFS experience. Try to focus on your life in Denmark, rather than holding on to your life at home.

It is easy for you to ask your natural parents at home for advice, but their advice may be cultural inappropriate. Instead you should rely on yourself as well as your school, friends and local AFS-volunteers to help you adjust to your new life.

Keep phone calls to a minimum - it is expensive.

One of the key problems with chatting on the internet a lot is the false feeling of company, when in fact you are sitting alone in front of the computer. Our advice is you should limit your use of MSN, Skype or other application, including online games and similar. When feeling alone try to interact with the people around you or contact your new friends or classmates.

VISIT FROM FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Visits from relatives and friends are not recommended and will usually not be allowed.

Many years of experience has proven that visits by natural family (including relatives) and friends during the AFS program can have a bad effect on a your AFS experience.

If family (including relatives and friends) wants to visit they must obtain official consent from AFS Denmark through your home country's office at least a month before the visit.

YOUR DEPARTURE

At the end of your program Ranum Efterskole College will take you by bus to Aalborg Airport where you will catch the flight back home.

Prior to your AFS group's departure Ranum Efterskole College will make an end-of-stay evaluation for you all.

At the end-of-stay you will receive an official "AFS Participation Certificate" confirming your participation in the program.

A FEW FACTS ABOUT DENMARK

RELIGION

The National Church is the Evangelical Lutheran Church, but even if 92 per cent of the population are members of the National Church, only around 4-5 per cent are going to church on a regular basis.

MEALS AND FOOD

The meals are usually eaten during the following intervals:

Breakfast:	7:00 am	-	8:00 am
Lunch:	11:30 am	-	1:00 pm
Dinner:	5:30 pm	-	7:30 pm

The evening meal is usually the main meal of the day and is often a time when the whole family is together. These are the typical meals:

Breakfast:	Cereal or bread with cheese or jam.
Lunch:	Dark bread with meat, tomato, egg and cheese.
Dinner:	Pork, beef or poultry, potatoes, rice or pasta, vegetables and sometimes dessert.

Danish families often sit down for dinner in the evening; it is a time for the family to share their experiences of the day. In general you talk about what has happened during the day and talk about plans in the near future. It is important you try to participate in these conversations. Danes keep their knife in the right hand and fork in the left hand while eating.

SEASONS & CLIMATE

In Denmark we have four seasons and the climate varies a lot.

Spring

Spring begins in March, the days are getting longer and the temperature is rising

Summer

In summer the average temperature is about 15 °C/60 °F, but it does occasionally reach 32° C/95° F. During summer the days are long. When they are longest we have 18 hours sunlight.

Autumn

The autumn starts in September. The temperature drops and the days get shorter.

Winter

Winter and the cold weather begin in November/December. Winter in Denmark is often characterized by windy and rainy weather, occasionally snow, with average temperatures approximately 0° C/32° F. The winter is very dark with not much sunlight, but it is also the time when a lot of particular Danish traditions unfold within the families like preparation for Christmas.

ELECTRIC CURRENT

220 Volt AC (50 Hz.).
Note that Danish plugs have only two legs/holes.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

From metric specifications

1 kilo (kg)	=	2.205 lbs.
1 liter (l)	=	approx. 1.76 pints / 0.22 imp. Gallons / 1 US quart
1 kilometer	=	0.621 mile
1 centimeter	=	0.39 inch

To metric specifications

1 pound (lb.)	=	0.454 kilo
1 imp. Pint	=	0.56 liter
1 imp. Gallon	=	4.546 liters
1 US gallon	=	3.785 litres
1 mile	=	1.61 kilometers
1 yard	=	0.9144 meter
1 foot	=	0.3048 meter
1 inch	=	2.54 centimeter

BUSINESS HOURS

General Banking hours

Monday-Friday:	10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Thursday:	10:00 am - 6:00 pm

If you bring a Visa credit card you can find cash dispensers in most towns.

General Shopping hours
In general, shops are open as follows:

Monday-Thursday:	10:00 am - 5:30/8:00 pm
Friday:	10:00 am - 7:00/8:00 pm
Saturday:	10:00 am - 2:00/5:00 pm
Sunday:	Closed

Some bakeries and florists are open on Sundays, and some petrol station shops and newsstands are open in the late evenings. Most supermarkets open at 9:00 am. Also, specially authorized tourist shops may be open Sundays during the summer. In holiday resorts shops stay open on Sundays during summer

AFS INTERKULTUR - DENMARK

AFS Interkultur was founded in 1957 as the American Field Service in Denmark, by Danish returnees from the year program. Our current members (approximately 2400) are returnees, host parents and other people interested in the ideas of the AFS. We have a national Board of Directors, and on the local level we have 30 AFS Chapters throughout Denmark, Greenland and The Faroe Islands.

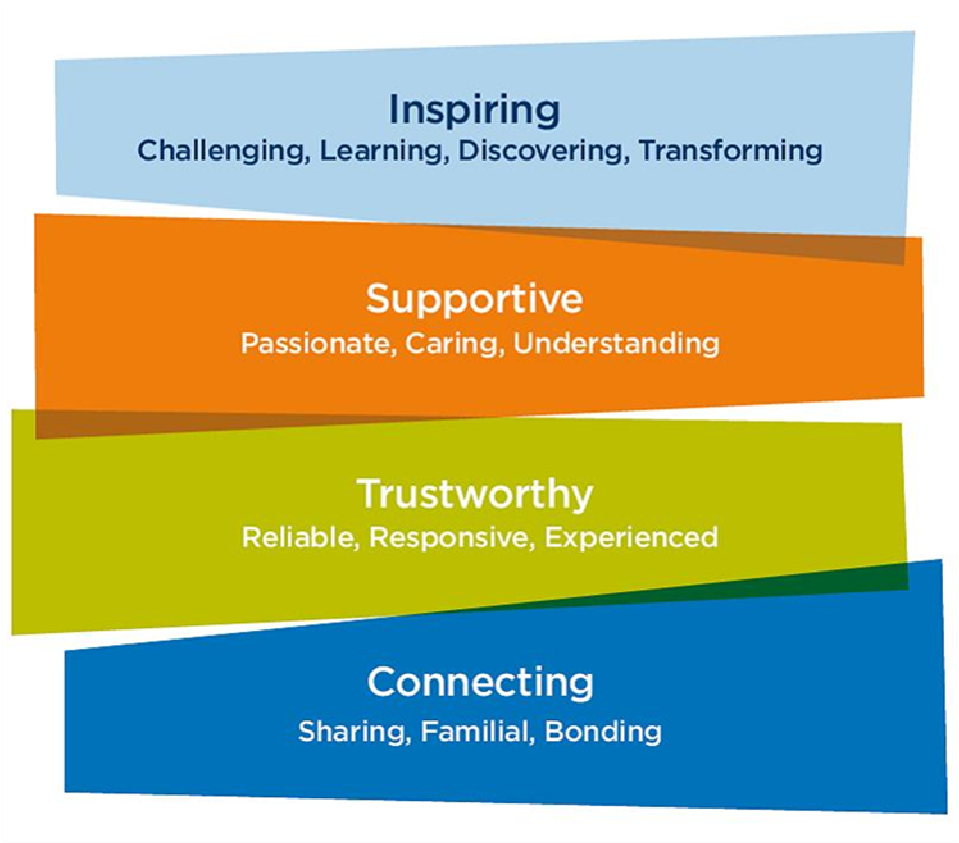
AFS Interkultur puts its efforts into the following three exchange programs:

- School Program – this may be either the full year program, the trimester program or the short program which you have applied for
- European Voluntary Service - An exchange program for young people in the European countries. Participants are skilled/semi-skilled workers from 18 - 25 years old. The program consists of a course in Danish language and culture, work experience with a Danish company and a stay with a host family. The program is funded by the European Union
- Community Service Program - A program to Africa, Asia, Australia and Latin America for participants from 18 - 28 years old. The program consists of a course in language and culture, a stay with a host family and a community service project. Some programs include a University course. In the community service projects participants work in local organizations in the fields of social work, health, or community development.

The office
The AFS Interkultur national office is located in Copenhagen and is open Monday to Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. You can write or call the office for your program, with any questions or concerns during your stay.

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Wishing you a safe and successful stay in Denmark!



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