

11th European Research Conference on Homelessness – Site Visits

Projekt UDEFOR (Thursday 22 September, 16:00 – 18:00)

Through outreach, projekt UDEFOR is constantly working on improving the conditions of homeless people and, at the same time, working to generate awareness and to reduce the factors which exclude them from society. Therefore, the daily work of the organization has two focuses: street-based work and collection of knowledge, communication and activities creating debate. As such, all projects and activities launched by projekt UDEFOR include both specific and practical street-based initiatives as well as a dimension of knowledge and communication.

This visit will focus on night counts of homeless people and can accommodate 15 people.

Kofoed's Skole (Thursday 22 September, 16:00 – 18:00)

Kofoed's Skole (School) in Copenhagen is a non-governmental non-profit institution carrying out empowering social work for marginalised groups. The school is a place of self-help and of learning. Those who frequent the school are called 'students' in order to include them in normal language. Kofoed's Skole builds on a holistic understanding of help to excluded groups. The school combines humanitarian assistance and emergency initiatives with basic social work, counselling, training and education for social inclusion. The services are provided based on the condition of the excluded groups and their ability to absorb it. The school prioritises spending time with the students, having human resources and being flexible and able find individual solutions adapted to individual opportunities. Annually the school offers 400 activities: 300 educational courses, workshop training, free clothes and furniture, emergency assistance and food, accommodation for homeless, legal and psychological counselling, dental services and leisure time activities.

This visit can accommodate up to 50 people.

Skæve Huse (Thursday 22 September, 16:00 – 18:00)

The Skæve Huse translates from Danish into something like the 'crooked houses' or the 'slanted houses' - or simply means the opposite of straight. The title alludes to a group of houses different from regular straight housing, where the inhabitants are also 'different' or 'crooked', but have their own house nonetheless.

Originally the first group of Skæve Huse in Copenhagen were built in 2000. The idea was to have small communities of individual houses where people who have lived a chaotic lifestyle for many years could have a place of their own. Our target group were people living on and off in the streets and in shelters, those with substance abuse, broken relationships, poor mental health etc. This group often finds it difficult to function in an institutional setting, and the Skæve Huse is an attempt to meet their needs while offering them a form of independence.

The Skæve Huse concept predates any talk about Housing First or the ACT-method in Denmark. This wasn't an issue in Denmark until the National Homeless Strategy in 2010. The idea is nevertheless the same in many ways, and the Skæve Huse functions within the parameters of the regular providers in the Copenhagen municipality.

Today we have around 450 Skæve Huse in Denmark, with around 55 people placed in 5 groups in Copenhagen.

This visit is a chance to see one of those groups of Skæve Huse. The visit includes a walk through those houses and a talk with the main social worker in the area, as well as the Director. We ask that only a group of 10 come to visit and you respect that this is an area where people have their home, and not everyone may wish to talk or be observed.

