

Emily Aune
Aune.emily@gmail.com
Summer 2013
Independent Study

I became interested in studying the practice of cohousing for my Master's thesis. Cohousing began in Denmark and many communities are located there, so it was a perfect spot for my studies. Because of the shorter length of the summer independent study, I did not need to secure a visa.

Fellow (UW) students who had been to Denmark recently through Scan|Design were a great help to me. I was able to buy a bike from one such student, as she was leaving when I arrived (and I definitely recommend acquiring a bike!).

I was able to find housing through AirBnB. I stayed in a shared apartment with a Danish housemate who was very friendly and helpful in getting me settled. I traveled to Denmark with my boyfriend, so we were able to split the cost of rent, making it much more affordable; otherwise living expenses would have been very high. We split a cost of ~\$1600 for the single month I was there. I spent very little money on transportation inside Copenhagen, after purchasing a bike (for about \$80). I did spend money to visit many areas around Copenhagen for my research, but that may be an atypical expense. Because I paid half of the rent, my personal expenses (food, transportation, rent) probably came to about \$1200/mo.

I never felt unsafe and had nothing stolen from me. I also never used any medical facilities.

I visited many cohousing communities and met Danes that way. They were all very nice and understanding that I didn't speak Danish ("Why would you learn Danish?" one of them sweetly asked). Living with a Danish housemate was also great--we had many conversations about cultural differences. I did not encounter any uncomfortable situations regarding cultural differences.

The Architecture Department held a meeting to provide information on the various possible methods of studying in Scandinavia through the department. The Scan|Design fellowship sounded perfect for my desire to do an independent study in Denmark. The staff on campus were very helpful during my time preparing to go. I had no encounters with staff in Denmark, because the summer program is very new and small, but that was fine because I was often traveling for my research.

My expectations were exceeded--it was a wonderful experience. I am extremely grateful to Scan|Design for believing in my research proposal and granting me the freedom to pursue it as I wished. I couldn't recommend it enough. (And the summer is a really fabulous time to be in Copenhagen, with the sun setting at 11:30!)