

Silkeborg, 7. januar 2023

Study trips at Silkeborg Højskole Information for partners

Dear collaborating partner,

Thank you so much for considering working with us on our study trips at Silkeborg Højskole. We are extremely grateful that we can benefit from your knowledge and insights to give our students a unique perspective on the topic of their study trip.

In this information package we have collected most of the basic information in relation to our study trip to Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia. The information covers a bit on our academy, teachers, students and the purpose of the trip. Hopefully this information will help you understand why we are embarking on the study trip in the first place and help you prepare for your meeting with us.

What is Silkeborg Højskole?

Silkeborg Højskole is a school belonging to a tradition within the Danish educational system referred to as "*the Danish folk high school movement*". It is very difficult to translate and explain, but it is an informal educational institutional movement, first founded in 1844 (5 years prior to the first Danish democratic constitution). The idea was to enable regular Danes to become citizens. To empower them to understand and engage in democratic institutions and ultimately prepare them to become "a people" with a common historical and cultural identity.

Danish Folk High Schools are *informal* insofar as **we have no exams** at the schools, but rather students learn for the joy of learning: they learn for life. A common catch phrase used to describe students at the Danish folk high schools is: "*they don't know what they've learned, but they'll never forget it*". This enigmatic saying very much sums up the spirit and purpose of the Folk High Schools in Denmark. We do not tell our students what they must get out of their stay with us, but we'll make sure it's unforgettable.

Since then, hundreds of thousands of young Danes from all strands of life have walked through one of the many Danish folk high schools, and while the schools changed along with society, the purpose remains very much the same. **To empower youth.**

There are currently 72 Danish Folk High Schools attended by some 6000+ Danish students per year.



Silkeborg Højskole
Platanvej 12
8600 Silkeborg
Tel. +45 86 82 29 33
info@silkeborghojskole.dk
www.silkeborghojskole.dk



Silkeborg Højskole is one of the highest profiled Danish folk high schools with a long proud tradition for community based informal education with a wide array of subjects ranging from Music, Politics & Debate, Arts & Crafts to Outdoor life and sports.



Who are our students?

Most of our students are between 18-25 years old. The majority of them are in between high school and university or other educational options. The students usually use their stay at Silkeborg Højskole to get clarification on what they want for their future (educationally, personally and socially) or simply wish to take a break from the rigours, rush and pressure of the formal education system. At Silkeborg Højskole they can relax while learning. Learning for themselves while caring for others.

Students at Danish folk high schools pay an individual tuition fee while at the same time being subsidised by the Danish government, which makes Danish folk high schools a unique kind of educational institutions in the World.

Our students, at Silkeborg Højskole, are extremely accomplished individuals, understand the necessity and power of community to overcome the great challenges of our time, while also caring very much for the thematic focus of the study trip.

We have 120-130 students attending the school for the duration of a semester (5-6 months). Joining us on this trip will be **approximately 40 students**.

Who are our teachers?

Our teachers are professionals who are committed to our educational programme and excellent at providing young people with knowledge, courage and skills. Accompanying our group of students will be:

Claus Staal, Principal of Silkeborg Højskole
Lise Lindholm Mikkelsen, teacher of politics & debate
August Due Bisgaard, intern

Why are we travelling to Balkan?

The school arrange several study trips to various destinations including Canada, Ghana, Norway, Nepal, Colombia, Kenya, Israel/Palestine, USA, etc. The study trips are considered a vital part of our students' learning experience in realising that the world holds treasures and horrors we must experience to truly understand how we became what we became.

The bloody conflict in Yugoslavia following the fall of the wall and the cold war is unfortunately one of the forgotten conflicts in European

history, which nonetheless has had a huge impact on the continent and not least on Danish history. The Balkan war was the first conflict that saw Danish soldiers participate in a UN military coalition task force and as a direct consequence Denmark received a great number of refugees fleeing the conflict. We believe it to be an important part of the students historical knowledge and memorisation of the past to obtain knowledge of this conflict - not least in a time that seen renewed armed conflict on the European continent.



The study trip to Bosnia-Hercegovina and Serbia has several strands:

- a) **understanding** the roots and causes of the conflict
- b) **meeting** the people engulfed by the conflict
- c) **examining** the cultural differences and overlaps
- d) **realising** that there's hope after despair even for a divided people.

Meeting up with you is an integral part of this study trip.

Contact and questions

Questions in relation to the study trip should be forwarded to:

Anđelka Matijevic at andja.matijevic@gmail.com

Claus Staal at cs@silkeborghøjskole.dk

While questions in relation to the school can be directed to:

Claus Staal at cs@silkeborghøjskole.dk

Links

If you would like to know more about Silkeborg Højskole, you can find everything you need to know here: www.silkeborghøjskole.dk

For more information about the Danish folk high schools in general there's a thorough guide here: <https://danishfolkhighschools.com/about-folk-high-schools/what-is-a-folk-high-school>

Med venlig hilsen
Silkeborg Højskole

Claus Staal
Principal