

United against loneliness in Denmark

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Volunteer Centres and Self-Help Denmark

National organization with 80 members and approx. 7,000 local civil society member associations in the volunteer centers.

We support and develop our members and voluntary associations and communities throughout Denmark.

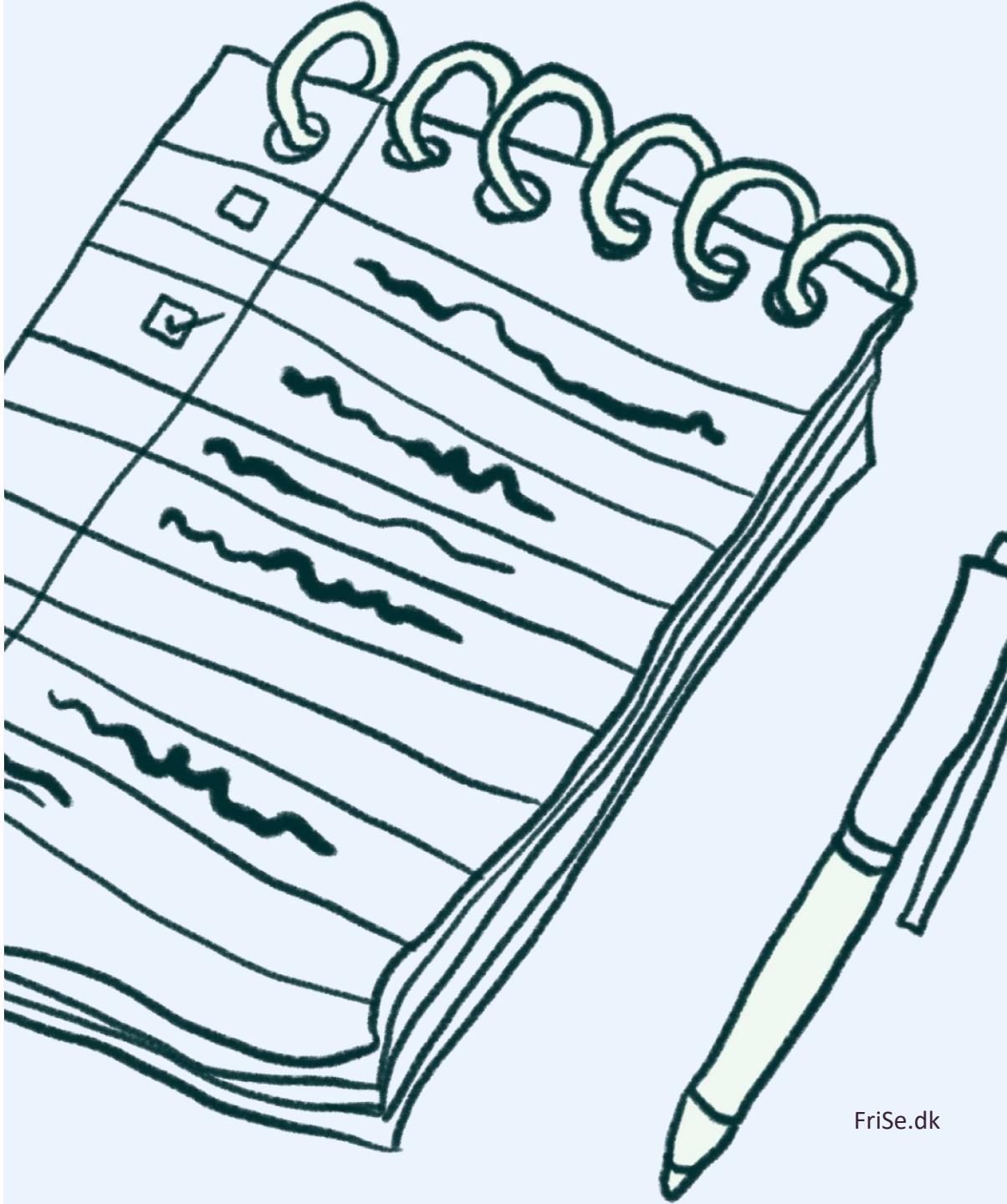
We support people finding help and support, to participle in activities with others or becoming a volunteer.

We collaborate with associations, municipalities and other key stakeholders across sectors to develop civil society.

We run two national online platforms where people can find a volunteer job or find a community in their local area.

What will I be covering?

- The national alliance United Against Loneliness.
- The national strategy against loneliness in Denmark which is the foundation of the alliance.
- Bridge to community and belonging to combat loneliness.



United Against Loneliness

- A network of organisations working to combat loneliness in Denmark.
- **Formed in 2014** because more organizations was working with loneliness and needed a place for networking, sharing knowledge and joint activities.
- **Consists of almost 100 organisations** – civil society organisations, municipalities, schools, churches and companies.
- Funded by membership organisations until two years ago where we also received state funding.
- Organised with 3 staff members, a board, and various working groups amongst members when needed.

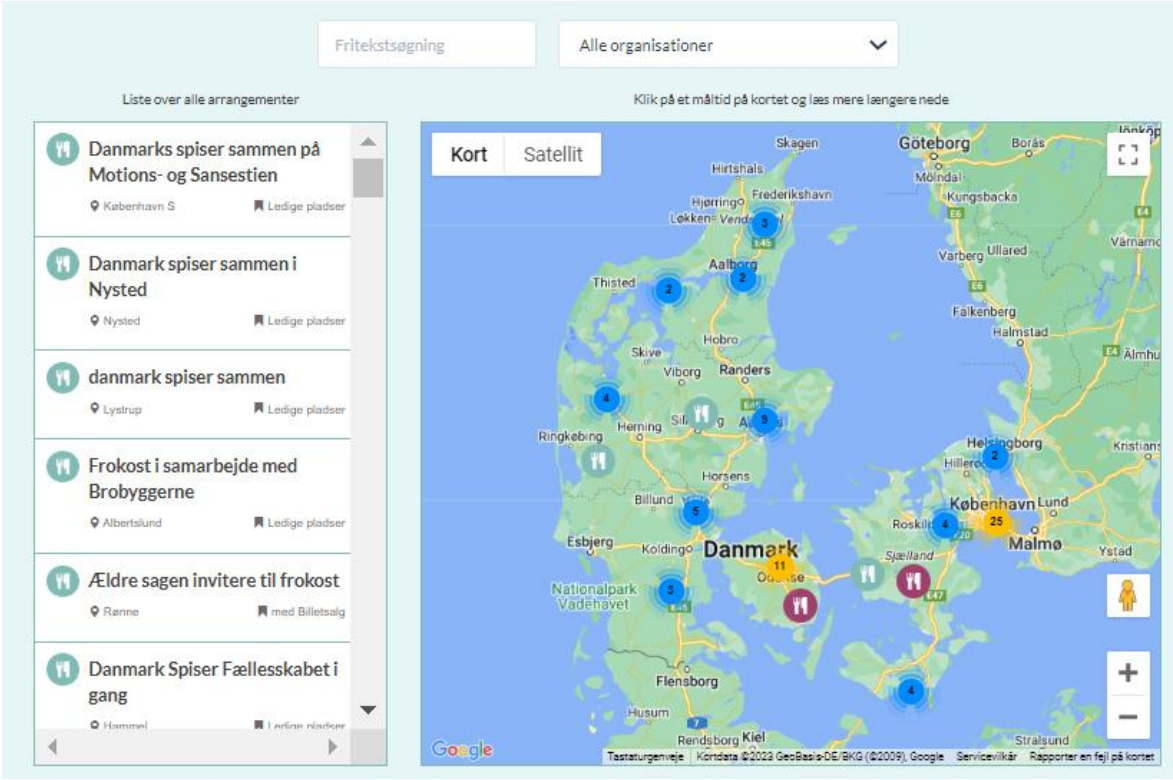


”Denmark dines together”



- Week 17 (April) and 45 (Nov)
- Everybody can initiate a communal dining activity (about 30,000 participate each year during these weeks)
- A “happy” campaign addressing a “serious” subject (loneliness)

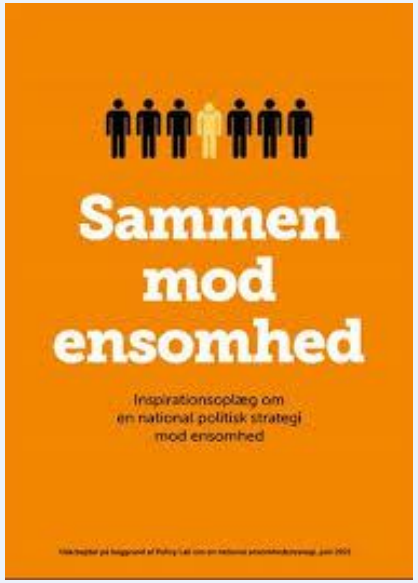
A communal dining activity has a focus on that we should all feel safe, seen and heard. And leave with a time and date for a new meeting, maybe with a stranger?



Other activities

- Knowledge sharing and joint learning across member organisations
- Advocacy by ensuring political awareness of loneliness and being a unified voice
- Gather and start activities to combat loneliness with member organisations
- Support members in their own work with loneliness
- Host an annual conference on loneliness for members and other organisations

Many different activities amongst members: They all work with different initiatives in the national strategy for Reducing Loneliness in Denmark which is the foundation of United Against Loneliness.



National Strategy for Reducing Loneliness in Denmark

Main goal: 40 precent less loneliness in the population (+16 years) by 2040

Develop in a broad collaboration, signed by 115 organisations and supported by almost every parties in Parliament

Sammen mod ensomhed

Følgende organisationer bakker op om strategien:



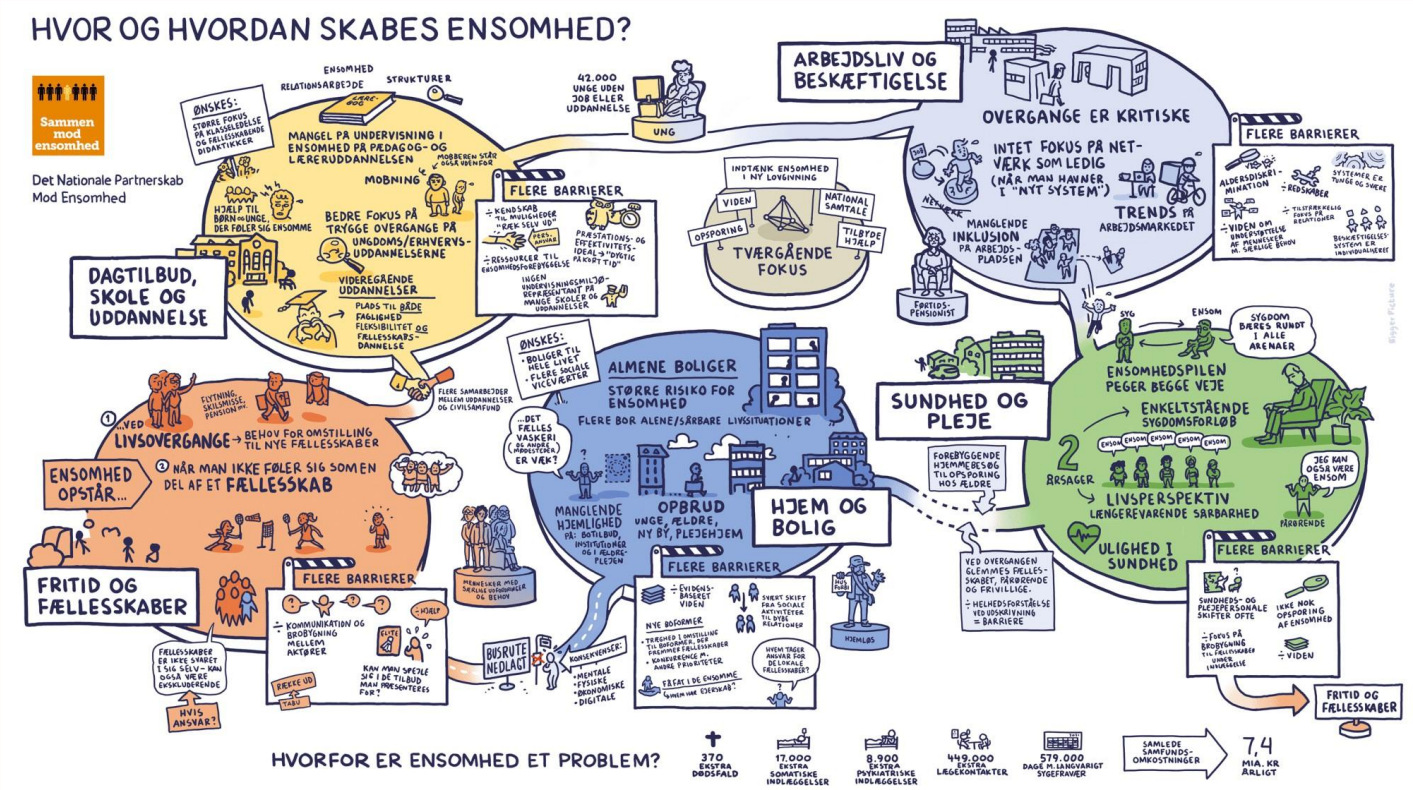




Structure

Based on five areas where loneliness can occur and must be prevented or reduced within:

- Home and residence Day care
- School and education
- Leisure and communities
- Working life and employment
- Health and care



It describes <u>75 concrete initiatives</u> within the different life arenas.

- Better overview of activities and communities
- More activities aimed at lonely people
- Strengthen funding for voluntary organisations
- Strengthen access to communities
- Strengthen the organisations hosting and how to welcome new participants
- Make volunteer organisations and communities more inclusive
- Better cooperation and link between municipal activities and civil society

Recommendations across the arenas regarding civil society

Bridge to community and belonging to combat loneliness

Supporting people becoming part of a valuable and meaningful community.

Reduce barriers that prevent them from becoming part of a community.

Bridging between communities – e.g. between municipal services and associations or between associations.

Community Guides

Knowledge

Overview as the foundation for finding the community that best matches the individual's wishes, needs and resources

Fellowship

Conversation(s) to support the individual and match with a community – and support on the way to the community

Hosting

A good and warm welcome to ensure that new participants feel seen and welcomed and more easily can become part of the community

Community

Belonging and being part of the community on their own terms – in a mutual, valuable interaction with others

Referrers – persons in contact with lonely people

Host

Community Guides

- Overview and knowledge of communities and opportunities
- Conversations with participants and matches with relevant communities and activities
- Coordinates with associations and contributes to a good start-up
- Fellowship themselves or arrange personal companionship if necessary
- Follow up



Some last points

Create awareness of how big a problem loneliness is

We need to talk much more about loneliness to make it a normal part of our conversation, so we have the courage to talk about our loneliness or to ask others about their loneliness.

We need a lot more offers or activities aimed at the lonely

We need to bridge-building to voluntary communities and to work with reel inclusion.

And not least, for us to come together and collaborate across organisations, across civil society and the public sector – also on local level.

