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## What is the Buddy Program?

Welcome to the Buddy program at Aid Ukraine Denmark! We are glad to have you join us and excited to connect you with one of our wonderful volunteers.

Our Buddy program is open to anyone with a Ukrainian background, who fled the war and is seeking support and assistance in adjusting to life in Denmark. Our volunteers are kind, compassionate people who want to support you and your family and build meaningful connections. As part of Aid Ukraine Denmark, they are committed to assisting those who have fled the war in Ukraine.

Together, you and your Buddy can decide when, where, and how often you meet, and what activities you do together. It could be as simple as getting together for a cup of coffee, or you may choose to share meals and experiences. Your Buddy can also help you achieve important goals to integrate into Danish society, such as improving your Danish skills, preparing for education or training, or finding a job.

We want to assure you that our volunteers are bound by confidentiality agreements, so you can feel comfortable discussing private and confidential matters with them. And don't worry - if you receive financial support from the municipality, you will continue to receive the same amount even if you have a volunteer Buddy.

We hope this program brings you joy, support, and new connections. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us if you have any questions or need assistance.

# What can Buddies help you with?

At Aid Ukraine Denmark, we understand that Ukrainians may face a variety of challenges as they adjust to life in Denmark. Our volunteer Buddies are here to provide support and assistance to help ease this process.

The scope of partnership and involvement between you and your Buddy will be determined during your initial meetings. Based on this agreement, your Buddy can assist you with a range of tasks. For example, if you are new to Denmark, your Buddy can help you navigate practical tasks such as understanding letters from the municipality, using NemID/MitID, or communicating with your child's kindergarten or school. If you have been in Denmark for a while, your Buddy can assist you in finding a job or internship by helping you write a resume, preparing for an interview, and even keeping an eye out for job openings in your local area.

In addition to practical support, your Buddy can also help you learn more about Danish society and traditions, such as by inviting you to a traditional party like Christmas or a birthday celebration. You can also share your own traditions with your Buddy and learn more about your local community through clubs and associations like football clubs and music groups.

Overall, our Buddy program is designed to provide Ukrainians with the support, guidance, and connections needed to thrive in Denmark.

## Getting started with a Buddy

Meeting your Buddy for the first time can be a bit nerve-wracking, as you don't know each other yet. But don't worry - it's a great opportunity to get to know one another and start building a strong partnership.

A good way to begin is by sharing your reasons for wanting a volunteer Buddy and what you hope to gain from the relationship. Your Buddy can also share their motivations for volunteering. This will help you both understand one another's expectations and goals.

Next, you can discuss how often you'd like to meet. Many pairs choose to meet 2-4 times a month, but it's important to find a schedule that works for both of you. It's also a good idea to make firm commitments and try to stick to your plan.

As you spend time together, remember to treat each other as equals and friends. You can decide together what you'd like to do and be open to each other's suggestions and ideas. Your relationship should be a collaborative and mutual one, where you both feel comfortable and supported.

## Explain why you would like a volunteer buddy

As you begin your journey with your volunteer Buddy, it's important to share your motivations and goals for the relationship. This will help you both understand what you hope to gain from your meetings and ensure that you are on the same page.

Remember, your volunteer Buddy is there to support you and help you feel connected and supported. By openly communicating and working together, you can build a strong and meaningful relationship.

## Where will you meet up?

Where will you and your Buddy meet up? The possibilities are endless! You can choose to meet at either of your homes, or you can explore your community together by visiting the library, playground, or volunteer center. Going for a walk together is also a great option.

The most important thing is that you both feel involved in deciding what to do together. This will help make your meetings enjoyable and meaningful for both of you. So don't be afraid to share your ideas and be open to your Buddy's suggestions. The sky's the limit!

## How will you keep in touch?

It's important to find a way to stay in touch that works for both of you. Here are some things to consider when deciding how to communicate:

- Is it okay to call each other regularly?
- Is it okay to call in the evenings, on weekends, or during working hours?
- Is it easier to communicate via text messages or is it hard to write in Danish?

Remember, it's important that both of you take the initiative to arrange meetups. When only one person initiates contact, it can create an unequal balance in the partnership. By working together and staying in touch, you'll be able to maintain a strong, supportive relationship.

## Are you unable to keep your commitment?

If something comes up and you're unable to keep your commitment to meet with your Buddy, don't worry! Just be sure to let them know so that you can make other arrangements.

We understand that life can be unpredictable and things may come up that prevent us from sticking to our plans. So if you need to reschedule or cancel a meeting, just let your Buddy know as soon as possible. They will be understanding and together you can find a new time that works for both of you.

Remember, your Buddy is there to support you and make your transition to a new country a little easier. So don't hesitate to reach out and communicate with them if you need to make any changes to your plans.

## When there's something you don't quite understand

If you ever come across something that surprises you or that you don't quite understand, don't be afraid to reach out to your volunteer Buddy and ask questions.

They are here to support you and are happy to help you navigate your new life in Denmark. Be curious and take advantage of this opportunity to learn and grow together.

## What can you do together?

Spending time together as families is a wonderful way to bond and create lasting memories.

Here are a few ideas for activities you can enjoy with your Buddy:

- **Grocery shopping and eating together:** Bond over the joys of grocery shopping and sharing meals is a great way to connect and can be especially fun if there are children in your families.
- **Leisure activities:** Take a leisurely stroll through your neighbourhood, visit a museum, or go for a hike in the woods.
- **Playing games:** Choose a game that everyone can participate in, no matter their age or Danish language skills. You can even teach your Buddy a game from your home country!
- **Practical support:** Tackle practical tasks like reading official letters, paying bills, creating a budget, or applying for a job.
- **Watching Danish television or reading a newspaper together:** This is a great opportunity to learn about Denmark and the world, and to share your own insights and experiences.
- **Sharing traditions:** Volunteers love to learn about the traditions of other cultures, so don't be shy about sharing yours with your Buddy.
- **Activities in the local community:** Explore your local community and join clubs or associations to participate in events like concerts and lectures.

Remember, the most important thing is to have fun and enjoy each other's company. By coming together and sharing experiences, you can strengthen your bonds and create lasting memories that will bring you joy for years to come.

## The Danish language

Learning a new language can be challenging, but it's also an exciting and rewarding experience. If you're working to improve your Danish, your Buddy is here to help!

They know how important it is to be able to speak the language and are happy to lend their support. Together, you can find ways to practice that work for both of you, whether it's through language courses, homework help, or simply chatting while taking a walk in the park.

Don't forget, every conversation counts and can help you improve your skills. You can also explore resources like library books to continue your language learning journey. Your buddy can even help you get a library card if you don't already have one. So don't be afraid to ask for help and keep practising - you'll be speaking Danish fluently in no time!

Here are some fun and effective ways to practice Danish:

- Listen to the radio and watch Danish films with Danish subtitles to immerse yourself in the language.
- Use language learning apps like Duolingo and Google Translate to enhance your skills on the go.
- Play games and engage in activities with others to make learning more interactive.
- Read the newspaper, books, and letters from the municipality together to expand your vocabulary and understanding of Danish culture.
- Listen to Danish music and sing along to further improve your pronunciation and have a great time doing it!

## Tools for training Danish

A variety of tools are available to assist in the process of learning the Danish language. Here are some suggestions:

- **translate.google.com** – online translation, where you can quickly look up words and whole sentences when speaking or doing homework. Or download it as an app
- **danskherognu.dk** – free online course in Danish for beginners
- **dansk-paa-arbejde.dk** – free online material with a focus on Danish in the workplace
- **sproget.dk** – various conversation topics and exercises
- **dansk.tjek.net** – tasks in spelling (grades 7-9)
- **dansksiderne.dk** – Danish materials (gymnasium)
- **sprogland.dk** – an online language training offer in the Red Cross
- **Duolingo** – free language learning app
- **Kitab's books on 1001 words in several languages** - can be borrowed from the library

## How long will you stay in touch?

There is no set timeline for how long you and your buddy should remain in contact. Some partnerships naturally come to an end when one person finds a job, finishes their education, or feels more comfortable speaking Danish. Others turn into lifelong friendships.

It's completely up to you and your Buddy to decide how often you want to stay in touch. If you feel that you no longer want to meet up with your volunteer buddy or friendship family, it's important to let the person who matched you know. This way, you have the option to find a new buddy or friendship family if you'd like.