

# EVERYDAY MOBILE PRACTICES AND UNDERSTANDINGS IN CO-LIVING COMMUNITIES

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# AGENDA

- Research question and focus of the research
- Methods
- Co-living communities
- What is a community?
- Community is mobile
- Flexibility in work: Blurring borders between work and private life
- "We are looking for the type of person that is very driven": Community as ambition
- "I want to see what I can do in life": Relocating for work
- "We are a place where people come to grow": Community as inspiration
- Conclusions
- Questions/discussion

# RESEARCH QUESTION AND OVERALL FOCUS

- Overall interest in how aspects of mobilities and community are interconnected and what the role of community is in a world defined by mobility
- Research question:  
How are aspects of mobilities expressed through everyday practices and understandings within co-living communities?

# METHODS

- Semi-structured qualitative interviews with inhabitants in co-living communities in Copenhagen, Denmark and Munich, Germany
- Participant observation at different events within the co-living communities
- Expert interviews with founders and staff at co-living firms

# CO-LIVING COMMUNITIES

- A form of living aimed at young professionals and expats in bigger cities
- Focus on making daily life and community easy, flexible and accessible
- Speaks to a mobile lifestyle
- Often focus on creating living spaces that support an ambitious working life

# Common is creating better living through convenience and community.

We keep the good parts of shared housing while removing the annoyances. Common members know their neighbors, meet new people, and save money. Being a Common member means never having to worry about cleaning, moving furniture, or splitting the bills.



## Is coliving for me?

Coliving is for people who value a community alongside individuality.

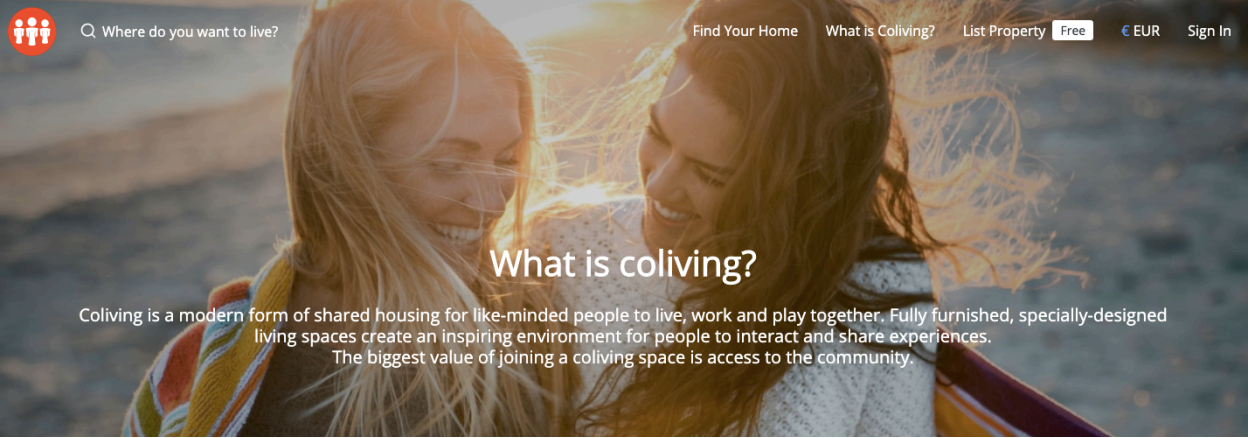
Residents unite around a common interest of wanting to learn and grow from the people they surround themselves with. They also value the positive environmental impact of sharing resources and costs to reduce waste.

Coliving is perfect for those relocating for a new job, studying for a degree, working remotely, starting a new company, or getting to know a new city.

Young professionals, entrepreneurs, artists, interns, students, travelers, remote workers and many more benefit from a flexible and furnished lifestyle ripe with advantages for themselves, their community and the planet.

## Community

Living at Common means you're always invited and never obligated



Photos: coliving.com, common.com





# WHAT IS A COMMUNITY?

“It feels good: whatever the word ‘community’ may mean, it is good ‘to have a community’, ‘to be in a community’.” (Bauman, 2001:1).

Increased individualisation creates a huge burden for the individual in managing everyday life, but through a community, some everyday life discussions and decisions can be made and thus displace some responsibility from the individual (Freudendal-Pedersen, Hartmann-Petersen, & Nielsen, 2010:28)



# FLEXIBILITY IN WORK: BLURRING BORDERS BETWEEN WORK AND PRIVATE LIFE

“Sometimes it’s not easy, like, to do it like on fixed time, you just have to wait until you get ideas, right? So I need this kind of freedom in my work day.” (Mathias, interviewee)

“But mostly, I’m a startup guy. So, I don’t have a daily routine or something.” (Robert, interviewee)

“People try to connect their work with their.. Not connecting their work with the private life.. But they don’t want to see their work as their work, they want to do what they love, everyday, right? Ehm, so I think this is the dream of everybody, that you don’t really feel it’s working, right?” (Mathias, interviewee)

# “WE ARE LOOKING FOR THE TYPE OF PERSON THAT IS VERY DRIVEN”: COMMUNITY AS AMBITION

“It's generally very driven people. People who don't necessarily connect perfectly with normal society. There are people who will eventually be happy, getting married, having kids, buying a house, but the large majority of people who have too much need to keep going for that. A lot of people who are more happy, having ad hoc friends, they're not tied to their kindergarten friends. They're the people who want to meet people with new ideas, who are constantly pushing themselves, who are always looking for the next adventure, in some ways.” (Peter, interviewee)

„People here are more ambitious and passionate and, well, the conversations here are at a higher level than what I see other places. Because there is a general ambition that we have to achieve some things in life.” (Hannah, interviewee)

“That means that we all have dreams and ambitions and we want to build something and do something interesting work-wise. Everyone they have, they are on the journey. I mean, people spend their work time building something. It's not those kind of people who are, “Yes, I've been there. I'm settled. I'm enjoying life from day-to-day.” I think everyone has dreams in here and ambitions.” (Dennis, interviewee)

# ”I WANT TO SEE WHAT I CAN DO IN LIFE”: RELOCATING FOR WORK

“I want to see, what can I do in life, I want to.. I don’t know, push my limits a bit more. And also I had a great opportunity that’s really good for my career, so, and I’m currently at the position where, like, I just finished up university, like, I don’t know have any big responsibilities, basically I can go wherever I want, ehm, I don’t have a girlfriend also, so nothing ties me back to my home, so I figured this is the perfect moment for me to go somewhere else, to see will I like it, and if I don’t like it, I can also get back for my home so, like, no damage there. So I don’t find this particularly.. Particularly for now, like, such a big deal. It’s just to see what’s happening and if it’s not working, okay I will go back home and that’s it.” (Johannes, interviewee)

“I realized that I was tired of living with my folks and missing out on some aspects of life. I gave up other parts that I really loved in order to move around the world, see Europe and live in Copenhagen and take a normal person job for a while. I moved here for another games company, they brought me around the world and now I'm making games for them for a while and we'll see. I've always got that itch to keep making stuff, so it's not a forever thing.” (Peter, interviewee)

“I wouldn't say I moved to Germany because of work, but it was work which enabled me to move to Germany. But primarily, I was in Amsterdam for a two months project but then I just wanted to try living in Europe, that's it. I would say a job was a way to get it but I didn't move because of the job. If I could have a job in India, where I could work remotely and earn enough money, yes, I would do that.” (Sanjan, interviewee)

# “WE ARE A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE COME TO GROW”: COMMUNITY AS INSPIRATION

„Everyone tries to inspire each other, right? You are the average of the 5 people you spend the most time with, right? And that’s what I’m trying.. The last couple of years I have tried to surround myself with people who are actually better than me or in other ways, so that I can get better and not just be stuck in trivial conversations that don’t matter.“ (Hannah, interviewee)

“The people inspire you. If you see these two people are really work-oholics, for example, it kind of inspires you, right? So it’s like an indirect help even for your everyday life that you just don’t feel or just don’t measure, but I think it helps a lot. I think it changed me quite a lot the last two years. Before I was a bit more.. I was not so organized, I was not so structured, so the co-living house really gives you structure because you see all the people what they are doing, they achieved this goal in this month, and then you also wanted to.. You also want to achieve this goal. Everyday at lunch or dinner people ask you what did you do, so you really want to.. To proceed. And this is like an indirect influence from the people to your everyday life, so yeah.. So in some helps you a lot to work in a co-living space, at least for me.” (Mathias, interviewee)

“We want people who actively choose to become part of a community, who want this community to help grow them. If you've got somebody who's just happy sitting back every day, go to work, come home, have that glass of wine, read that book and never do anything else out of that strict routine, they're not someone who's looking to expand their minds. They're not someone who's driven and they're not someone who therefore is necessarily giving back and we are a place where people come to grow. It's a place where people show up because they want to be better and it's a good opportunity for them to help others become better. Whatever it is, inspire them.” (Peter, interviewee)

# COMMUNITY IS MOBILE

- Understanding the concept of community within the context of contemporary society, where communities are not only place-based but also shifting and mobile as is the world and our understanding of it
- Community within co-living communities is understood as something flexible, convenient and easily accessible, which fits into the mobile everyday life of the inhabitants
- The ways in which aspects of mobility are present in the understandings and practices of the inhabitants show an understanding of community and mobility as interconnected aspects of everyday life

Thank you for listening!

Questions?

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