

Memorial sites III/DR 2005

00:00:00:00

## **The Øresund Bridge – a bridge connecting two countries**

Narration and synchs

Time codes  
for next narration  
or synch

00:02:39:13

00:02:44:22

### **Narrator:**

The old dream of a bridge between Denmark and Sweden came true in summer 2000.

00:02:45:21

00:02:50:11

The Øresund Bridge is a link 16 kilometres long; one of the longest bridges in the world.

00:02:51:16

00:02:56:07

It crosses the Øresund: the strait separating Denmark and Sweden.

00:03:03:04

00:03:09:21

In Southern Sweden Eskil is running about. He holds dual nationality: Danish and Swedish. And lives in what is known as the Øresund Region.

00:03:14:05

00:03:18:15

On the other side of the sound, across the bridge, Eskil's Danish granny lives.

00:03:19:10

00:03:21:16

### **Narrator:**

That's where Copenhagen is to be found: the capital of Denmark.

00:03:30:07

00:03:36:15

After five years of construction the King of Sweden and the Queen of Denmark were finally able to open the new link together.

00:03:37:13  
00:03:45:01

**Queen Margrethe of Denmark:**

There it stands: the Øresund Bridge,  
a supple S—shaped link tying us all  
together.

00:03:45:05  
00:03:51:24

Danes and Swedes,  
Sjællanders and Skånings,  
Copenhageners and Malmoites.

00:03:53:08  
00:04:00:03

Time and road alike have acquired a new  
dimension. Today a dream has come true.

00:04:14:11  
00:04:19:14

**Narrator:**

The link consists of a four  
kilometre immersed tunnel —

00:04:22:02  
00:04:23:24

— an artificial island —

00:04:25:15  
00:04:28:08

— and a cable stayed bridge eight  
kilometres long.

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00:04:34:02

The bridge is in two  
storeys with the railway below and  
the motorway above.

00:04:51:13  
00:04:55:03

The Øresund no  
longer divides the two countries. But  
this hasn't always been the case.

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00:05:01:17

Hundreds of years ago the  
waves of Øresund saw many a battle and  
war between Sweden and Denmark.

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The point of contention was present—day  
Southern Sweden.

00:05:09:23

From ancient times  
this area was a natural part of  
the Kingdom of Denmark. But then the  
wars came: and in the 17th century  
Denmark lost the area forever — to Sweden.

00:05:10:02

00:05:18:24

Near the opposite end of the bridge  
on Danish territory: the town of  
Dragør, a beachhead in the Øresund.  
Home to Frede Olsen. His family has  
resided in the town since 1640. and  
even then the Swedes found ways to  
cross the Sound.

00:05:35:04

00:05:49:09

### **Fred Olsen, retired butcher:**

During the Swedish Wars in the 17th  
century the Skånings spoke half  
Danish; they were persecuted over  
there. They were not allowed to  
sit in the front pews in church.

00:05:51:07

00:06:02:07

They had to stand at the back. And  
they were punished by whipping and  
much else besides if they spoke too  
much for the Danish cause.  
So quite a few Swedes emigrated to  
their old country.

00:06:02:11

00:06:16:17

And that is why in Dragør we have  
Swedish names like Jans, Palm, Malm  
and Lundquist. They're Swedish names  
that turned up time and time again.

00:06:18:01

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00:06:56:15

**Narrator:**

The fish of the Øresund have been important sources of income on both sides of the sound. In the middle ages it was said that the herring shoals were so dense and thick that you hardly needed tackle to fish; you could just scoop them up in your bare hands.

00:07:02:02  
00:07:06:00

Frede Olsen from Dragør is from an old seafaring and fishing family.

00:07:06:13  
00:07:22:19

Frede Olsen, retired butcher  
I was actually the first ever to go ashore — I became a butcher. because all the others had been men of the sea, cooks, seamen, mates. And that was what people lived off in this town in those days.

00:07:31:01  
00:07:37:01

**Narrator:**

Today there are only four full—time fishermen left in Dragør. The harbour is used almost exclusively by pleasure craft.

00:07:51:22  
00:07:54:21

**Narrator:**

So close — and yet so far away.

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00:08:09:08

The Øresund has divided the countries. The physical and cultural boundary defined by the sound has been reinforced by national legislation — and of course the ability of sport to intensify the feeling of two national identities.

00:08:11:06  
00:08:16:16

But the dream of closer physical and

cultural ties across the sound has always existed.

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00:08:34:15

**Narrator:**

Today the bridge is a natural part of everyday life for many Danes and Southern Swedes.

For Jakob Bruntse, too. He lives in central Copenhagen.

Every morning he leaves his home, and catches the train across the bridge to get to work — in Sweden.

00:08:36:12  
00:08:43:03

**Jakob Bruntse, project manager:**

When I set out in the morning it takes me 50 minutes from door to door, home to office.

00:08:49:17  
00:08:58:06

To me and many others who commute it is just like another part of the same town — a little farther away, that's all.

00:09:00:08  
00:09:06:05

**Narrator:**

When Jakob boards the train and heads for Sweden, exactly the same thing is happening on the other side of the sound.

00:09:08:12  
00:09:15:02

Every day thousands of Danes and Swedes set off from their homes in Sweden and make for Denmark, where they work.

00:09:17:01  
00:09:29:19

Since the bridge was opened Danish emigration to Sweden has mushroomed. The bridge is what made this possible. Plus cheap housing and

access to the Swedish countryside,  
which also attract Danes across the  
Øresund.

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00:09:52:02

In a house close to the bridge, on  
the Swedish side, Eskil and his mum  
and dad live. Turi is Danish, Anders  
Swedish.

00:09:52:22

00:10:07:19

**Anders Ramäng, department manager:**

We decided to move here as a bit of a  
compromise. it is very close to  
Turi's home town, where she grew up,  
but it is in my country. so at first  
it was a compromise, but we are both  
very pleased with it.

00:10:08:15

00:10:25:12

**Turi Høiler Ramäng, student:**

The way things are now, people are  
fired by faith in the future in a  
positive way. More and more Danes are  
realizing that you can live cheaply  
here and still get to work in  
Copenhagen — and the other way  
round.

00:10:36:07

00:10:49:19

**Narrator:**

Jakob is the only Danish employee of  
the company he works for in Sweden.  
It isn't a problem; not  
Language-wise, either. Because  
although Danish and Swedish are two  
different languages, it is possible  
to work together and understand each  
other irrespective of national  
boundaries.

00:10:50:19

00:11:03:11

**Jakob Bruntse, project manager:**

There wasn't much cooperation across the sound. But because of the Øresund Bridge the situation today is such that people do work together: people are quietly beginning to turn to face one another again. And there is a lot of response to that today.

00:11:04:01  
00:11:09:02

**Jakob:**

I was thinking of going for a stroll round town to see that the pamphlets have been distributed everywhere ...

00:11:09:06  
00:11:09:16

**Colleague:**

Yes.

00:11:09:20  
00:11:15:19

**Jakob:**

They are meant to be available at cafes and supermarkets ... all kinds of places.

00:11:15:23  
00:11:25:24

**Jakob Bruntse, project manager:**

There isn't the same barrier bisecting the sound as there used to be. The sound used to divide the two countries. It doesn't do so any longer because we've got the bridge now.

00:11:43:04  
00:11:51:08

**Narrator:**

Dragør — the centre of the Øresund Region — has always been a natural crossing point to Southern Sweden; in the middle ages just as much as

today.

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00:12:09:08

During the war when Denmark was under German occupation, the proximity of Sweden saved the lives of thousands of Danes who fled from the Germans to neutral Sweden.

00:12:11:08  
00:12:28:11

**Historical voice over:**

Indignation at the persecution of the Jews was great in all circles; from countless sides support was forthcoming for the enormous effort to help the Jews. Courageous fishermen carried the Jews to Sweden — and many thousands were saved.

00:12:29:08  
00:12:42:10

**Narrator:**

In October 1943 more than 7000 Danish Jews were sailed to safety in Sweden. Their flight took place at night in local fishing boats. a brief but perilous crossing.

00:12:46:16  
00:12:53:17

**Frede Olsen, retired butcher:**

My father was a fisherman, of course, and before the war he had been a fishmonger for 6 or 7 years in the 1930s.

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00:13:05:10

He pulled a cart around supplying fish to Dragør Fort. But then the war came and the Germans entered Dragør Fort, so he returned to fishing.

00:13:18:04  
00:13:23:13

**Narrator:**

But casting their net in the Øresund had become a dangerous occupation; the Germans had mined the bottom.

00:13:25:02  
00:13:35:09

By 1943 the war had intensified. And Frede's father and other fishermen had started smuggling saboteurs and Jews across the sound to safety. But that too had become too dangerous.

00:13:37:08  
00:13:48:03

**Frede Olsen, retired butcher:**

Finally it got too hot for them, and they had to escape to Sweden. And my mother and I had to flee to Sweden soon after, and to be transported northwards from there.

00:13:48:07  
00:13:55:22

We thought we were the only ones who'd be on it; but it turned out when we went below decks to the bottom of the ship that there were 18 people who'd been sailed all the way from the other side of Kullen.

00:13:56:06  
00:14:04:10

In the darkness he signalled to the coast of Sweden and a big fishing boat came out — and we all went aboard her. And that was how we got across.

00:14:06:24  
00:14:19:05

And we spent a year in Sweden. It was like living in Dragør. Because you made friends right away, and I went to a Swedish school.

00:14:20:01  
00:14:21:14

My father went fishing —

They had brought their own boats from Dragør and they painted Swedish numbers onto them. After all, when they were fishing almost in international waters —

00:14:21:18  
00:14:31:00

— German torpedo boats and patrol boats might pull them up, and if they spoke Danish on board it would not be too good, and so there was always a Swede on board, preferably, who could speak Swedish.

00:14:31:04  
00:14:44:22

That shows you how much we worked together over there.

00:14:45:01  
00:14:48:18

### **Narrator:**

Frede Olsen was 10 when he and his parents fled to Sweden. They went home after liberation in 1945.

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00:15:00:12

After the war ferry traffic between Sweden and Denmark multiplied and the ferries became a pronounced feature of the Øresund ports.

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00:15:29:04

In the 1950s it was decided that travellers between the Nordic countries no longer needed to show their passports. The result was a boom in ferry routes across the sound.

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00:15:39:03

Most of the boats were floating restaurants. During the crossing food and beverages were served at favourable prices and there was dancing to live bands.

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00:15:54:20

00:16:05:14  
00:16:12:13

Alcohol flowed in unprecedented volumes: it was cheap and duty free as the ferries plied international waters.

00:16:21:19  
00:16:27:08

Along the coast the boats sailed back and forth. Ferries sailed from Dragør to Sweden too.

00:16:31:13  
00:16:45:02

**Frede Olsen, retired butcher:**

Lots of people just stayed on board once they sailed from here. They'd booked tables and stayed at them for the return journey. So they got a two—way trip to enjoy themselves in.

00:16:45:21  
00:16:52:21

The crossing took 55 minutes, during which they could have a couple of nice open sandwiches, a couple of Schnapps and a couple of bottles of beer, and have fun.

00:16:53:14  
00:16:58:09

Lots of people loved the ferries. But that's all in the past now.

00:17:08:14  
00:17:16:06

**Narrator:**

People had more and more money in their pockets and demand grew for more routes and bigger vessels to carry all the cars they could now afford.

00:17:21:20  
00:17:29:04

Birgitte Rinhart was once the mayoress of Dragør. She definitely did not appreciate the

traffic that streamed through the town when the ferries docked.

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00:17:34:24

**Birgitte Rinhart, former mayoress:**

The heavy traffic passed right through the old preserved town, the schools, old people's homes and nurseries.

00:17:35:03  
00:17:43:11

It is not a good idea to have HGVs and lots of cars driving through such a relatively small community as ours.

00:17:52:02  
00:17:57:03

**Narrator:**

The population of Dragør tripled five times a day when the Swedes came ashore.

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00:18:09:06

**Birgitte Rinhart, former mayoress:**

When the ferries docked the locals looked at their watches. And they did not go shopping when the ferry traffic was at its worst because the queues were very long, especially in the supermarkets.

00:18:13:10  
00:18:17:16

**Narrator:**

For Frede Olsen, the butcher, the Swedes were good business.

00:18:18:19  
00:18:25:08

**Frede Olsen, retired butcher:**

In the really hectic years from 1961

to 1972 —

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00:18:32:05

— there were days when we hardly had time for lunch. They just queued and queued.

00:18:34:07

00:18:35:11

Hello, Frede ...

00:18:35:15

00:18:40:13

Hello. What lovely weather today! A long time since it's been this nice!

00:18:40:17

00:18:43:15

She's lying very nicely there.  
The Elisabeth.

00:18:43:19

00:18:49:02

**Frede Olsen, retired butcher:**

But there is no doubt that the new marina out there is a pay off from the Swedes, you might say.

00:18:49:06

00:18:55:24

The ferries came here and the town was able to afford to build a new marina and to make all the improvements to the harbour.

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**Narrator:**

At the end of the 1960s the "flying boats" appeared. They were modern vessels which crossed the sound at express speed in just 30 minutes.

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00:19:35:14

Now it was not only cold beer and

sandwiches but the rapid crossing times that attracted passengers.

00:19:36:16  
00:19:44:07

**Jakob Bruntse, project manager:**

When I was a child I really liked them. To go on a flying boat that flew across the water ...

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00:19:47:24

The fact that they didn't really fly much was a bit of a disappointment.

00:19:48:03  
00:19:53:13

But it was still a great experience. It was very much a journey to be made.

00:19:53:22  
00:19:56:18

And it was most fascinating that there was a country right next to yours —

00:19:56:22  
00:19:59:00

— that you could just travel across to like that.

00:19:59:04  
00:20:02:09

But it wasn't anything we did very often. It was an outing.

00:20:03:12  
00:20:21:14

**Anders Ramäng, department manager:**

Before the bridge came, when we used to take the ferry, the journey was part of the experience when you went to Denmark. Now the journey per se is not an experience, now it's just something to get out of the way to get to Denmark or Sweden where the real experience is.

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00:20:48:15

**Narrator:**

The Øresund has always been a difficult barrier to the transport of passengers and goods from Sweden to Denmark and onwards to Europe.

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00:21:01:11

Several proposals for a permanent link between Denmark and Sweden had been made; the first was in 1936. But these plans never got further than the drawing board.

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00:21:15:04

In the mid 1980s the Swedish CEO of Volvo, Per Gyllenhammar, and other powerful industrialists formed a lobby organization they called Scanlink.

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The primary purpose of Scanlink was to get the Danish and Swedish governments to decide to build the Øresund link. This link would ensure that Scandinavia did not become cut off from the rest of Europe.

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The governments read the reports by Scan link and used them as a basis for their work.

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Meanwhile the government of Sweden entered into several agreements with Volvo.

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00:21:43:12

With promises of more jobs, Volvo managed to force some of industry's wishes through.

00:21:45:21

00:21:53:12

And the treaty for a permanent link across the Øresund was signed by the two governments in 1991.

00:21:54:08  
00:22:06:00

**Kaj Ikast, former minister of transport, Denmark:**

The link will tie us more closely.  
Not only our two countries, but the  
whole of Europe and Scandinavia will  
benefit from the link we are  
establishing.

00:22:07:01  
00:22:10:07

**Narrator:**

But in Sweden and Denmark opposition  
was growing.

00:22:10:24  
00:22:18:21

**Jakob Bruntse, project manager:**

The decision came very quickly: suddenly they decided we  
were going to have an Øresund bridge.  
I certainly wasn't enthusiastic about the bridge to start with.  
There were several reasons, I suppose.

00:22:19:00  
00:22:26:10

Growth: why did we want more growth?  
What was the benefit of that? And the  
ferries were so cosy.

00:22:28:05  
00:22:31:03

People were afraid it would damage  
the environment, too.

00:22:31:07  
00:22:35:24

In general people tend to be critical  
of anything new.

00:22:36:21  
00:22:38:24

At any rate those were some of the  
arguments.

00:22:52:12  
00:23:04:10

**Narrator:**

Environmental groups, left wing factions and the man in the street demonstrated their dissatisfaction with the project and not least the influence industry had exerted on the political decision—making process.

00:23:06:24  
00:23:11:10

This is what one young protestor said back in the 1990s:

00:23:12:15  
00:23:20:24

**Janne Tynell, student (archive footage):**

I definitely don't think that it's a perfect democracy. The establishment of the Øresund Link is itself a breach of the law.

00:23:21:03  
00:23:28:18

They sidelined democracy in the sense that the whole large group of people who opposed the project were not properly consulted.

00:23:47:09  
00:23:57:18

**Narrator:**

There were petitions and events, too: like the world's longest table of coffee and cake put up in the allotment gardens the motorway would cut through.

00:24:05:03  
00:24:21:13

Although many people in Dragør had been displeased by the noise and traffic through their town caused by the ferries, the plan for a bridge was not acceptable either. Many feared the unique countryside in the area would be destroyed by the construction process.

00:24:22:05  
00:24:28:19

**Birgitte Rinhart, ex mayoress:**

I was mayoress when parliament decided to build the bridge. It caused a lot of concern out here, —

00:24:28:23  
00:24:47:10

— and when our trade and commerce, fishermen and residents rise in protest, we politicians do likewise; after all, we are residents ourselves. And as many experts said that they were also profoundly worried, this did not reduce our own concern. On the contrary, it increased it.

00:24:53:07  
00:25:00:22

**Narrator:**

In 1996 a number of protesters occupied the artificial island of Peberholmen to delay construction work.

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00:25:06:20

The occupation lasted five hours before the police broke up the demonstration.

00:25:07:15  
00:25:10:19

This marked the end of the opposition efforts.

00:25:11:04  
00:25:15:13

None of the battles fought succeeded in changing the decision by the powers that be.

00:25:23:08  
00:25:30:06

The link was completed by Danish and Swedish contractors and funded by the treasuries of Denmark and Sweden.

00:25:31:23  
00:25:38:15

It cost 3 billion Euros, money to be repaid by tolls over a thirty year period.

00:25:45:01  
00:25:48:19

The Øresund bridge is the longest of its kind in the world.

00:25:48:23  
00:25:54:21

During construction 5000 people were employed on the site from ten different countries.

00:26:05:00  
00:26:06:10

Back to Dragør:

00:26:06:14  
00:26:19:10

Frede Olsen has a lovely view of the bridge. He is standing at the deserted ferry dock. Because the last ferry gave up in 1999.

00:26:20:03  
00:26:22:21

But it hasn't meant the death of the town.

00:26:23:00  
00:26:31:13

**Frede Olsen, retired butcher:**

There are Swedes in town every day. They still shop here. But not at all as much as in the old days.

00:26:33:09  
00:26:40:19

**Birgitte Rinhart, ex mayoress:**

We have not lost any income from the Swedes at all. On the contrary. Now they come over in big vehicles and fill them.

00:26:40:23  
00:26:43:10

Perhaps they don't come as often, but they come.

00:26:43:14  
00:26:45:12

They fill them up and of course they still visit our restaurants.

00:26:58:16  
00:27:05:21

**Narrator:**

The bridge links the two countries; a region has been created and with it a vision of a new European powerhouse.

00:27:08:20  
00:27:22:12

With 3.5 million inhabitants the Øresund region is the largest, most densely populated urban area in Scandinavia. The population is highly qualified and the economy is strong. And there is a rich and varied cultural life.

00:27:32:24  
00:27:35:23

**Jakob Bruntse, project manager:**

The bridge is helping to enhance the area.

00:27:36:02  
00:27:46:02

There is access to the countryside and to the metropolis. There is equality of the sexes. And there is openness towards minorities.

00:27:46:06  
00:27:52:01

And on all these points we are well up the scale in world terms. That's a fact.

00:27:57:21  
00:28:02:02

**Narrator:**

Today the region is one of the most dynamic in Europe.

00:28:02:06  
00:28:07:08

It's a growth centre in what the economists and planners are calling "the Europe of the Regions".

00:28:10:14  
00:28:14:14

**Anders Ramäng, department manager:**

I think the state is losing its importance.

00:28:14:18  
00:28:21:03

I think that in the Europe of the future the regions will be of greater importance. Definitely.

00:28:21:07  
00:28:27:01

I think we'll feel we belong to our region, primarily, more than our nation.

00:28:34:24  
00:28:42:05

**Narrator:**

Sweden and Denmark share a long history, a language, and a cultural heritage. And now a permanent link.

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00:28:50:13

But even though it's only 16 kilometres from coast to coast small national and regional differences do exist ...

00:28:58:10  
00:29:13:22

**Jakob Bruntse, project manager:**

When Danes come to Sweden they are often surprised when they find that there are things that work completely differently here. I think many foreigners would not immediately spot any differences between Danes and Swedes, or the way we have organized society, but we can see them clearly.

00:29:14:09  
00:29:19:06

**Anders Ramäng, department manager:**

A funny little thing between Denmark and Sweden is the way we put our toilet rolls.

00:29:19:10  
00:29:28:05

In Sweden you put them like this if you have a holder, while in Denmark

you put them this way round.

00:29:36:00

00:29:40:02

**Reportage, synch, the Ramäng family:**

Anders: What do cows go?

Eskil: Moo!

00:29:41:01

00:30:04:19

**Anders Ramäng, department manager:**

Our young son is both Danish and Swedish. He has dual nationality, so Denmark and Sweden both regard him as their citizen. He will speak Danish and Swedish, too, I am sure of it, but our goal is to make him feel both Danish and Swedish — or as someone who belongs to this region.

00:30:06:12

00:30:26:14

Credits

00:30:26:24

00:30:29:16

EBU