

STRING

## A modern transport system between Öresund and Hamburg

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STRING is the political cross-border partnership between Hamburg and Schleswig- Holstein in Germany, the Capital Region of Denmark and Region Zealand in Denmark, and Region Skåne in Sweden.

Our vision is that the STRING region will be the driver behind a North European green growth corridor consisting of the STRING region in a functional partnership with our neighboring regions. The corridor will be a green European powerhouse; a strong strategic axis contributing to knowledge, growth, welfare, and sustainability in Northern Europe, including the Baltic Sea Region. In order to achieve this vision, the existence of an accessible and modern infrastructure network is crucial, improving the physical ties in the region and aiding integration.

As such, the STRING partners are pleased to note that Denmark and Germany are in the process of realising the largest ever modernisation of the infrastructure system between Scandinavia and Central Europe to date. The Fehmarn Belt Fixed Link and its connected land works is a central component in the realisation and implementation of the EU vision of a cohesive Trans-European Transport Network. However, the STRING partners believe it is necessary to review the cost estimate and take a closer look at the cost benefit relationship.

These large-scale infrastructure investments, amounting to a total of approximately 10 billion EURO (tunnel, upgrading of the rail connections and construction work on Danish side), are also an important precondition for assuring that environmentally friendly rail transport achieves a competitive advantage in relation to more environmentally straining transport systems for travel and freight, such as air and road. The investment is thus an essential contribution to meeting regional, national and European climate goals, as set out in the EU 2020 Strategy.

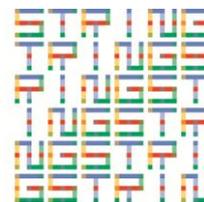
A modern and well functioning transport system is also a necessary foundation on which to bring the North European people, industries, culture and economies closer together. Such a development will also contribute to generating enhanced quality of life and innovation; both which are essential to the STRING vision of creating a North European green growth engine.

However, the STRING partners still see the need for further improvements to the quality of the existing plans in order to achieve the best possible regional integration, and to strengthen the competitiveness of environmentally friendly transport systems between the Öresund region and Hamburg.

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### **The Swedish, Danish and German governments must do more**

We therefore encourage the Swedish, German and Danish governments to generate a common understanding and support for the need of an efficient, environmentally friendly transport system connecting the three nations. It is incremental to the existing infrastructure investments that Denmark, Germany and Sweden are seen as part of a cohesive corridor with uniform standards and quality.

### **2, 5 hours between Öresund and Hamburg**

The STRING partners recommend a common consensus around the aim that the time for travelling between Copenhagen and Hamburg, should not be longer than 2, 5 hours once the Fehmarn Belt Fixed Link opens in 2021.

The aim of the proposal from the STRING partners is to reduce the transport time between Copenhagen and Hamburg as far as possible. The vision is two and a half hours between Copenhagen and Hamburg instead of the planned three hours and 40 minutes that will be the estimated transport time when the Fixed Link across Fehmarn Belt is established. The rail transport time must be shorter in order to be competitive with air traffic and to fulfill the climate protection goals of the European Union.

The new Storestrøm link will contribute to this goal.

The expansion of the regional traffic systems between Lübeck and Hamburg, the so called S4 solution, must be completed in order to release the necessary capacity required to run high-speed trains between Oslo, Stockholm, Copenhagen and Hamburg.

### **Joint discussions with railway operators in the three countries**

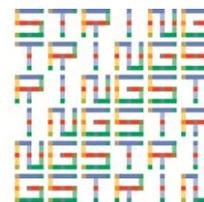
The way in which the customers see the infrastructure depend on the quality of the trains running, and the operating timetables. Therefore, STRING encourages the railway operators in Sweden, Germany and Denmark to establish a close cooperation regarding future levels of service, relating to comfort and the frequency of train departures.

The collective transport solution between Öresund and Hamburg will result in the strengthening of the entire western Baltic, and should be seen as an integral part of the future high-speed rail

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network between Oslo, Stockholm, Copenhagen and Hamburg, and on to Berlin and other European metropolises. In this context it is important that the international airports in the region are connected to the rail network.

### **A new Öresund Crossing and a new Femernsound Link are next in line**

Looking further into the future, the need for a new fixed link over Öresund between Helsingborg and Elsinore is very important, along with the need for a new fixed link over the Fehmern sound in order to safeguard the capacity, quality and mobility of the North European transport system.

### **Need for the EU to provide maximum financial support for large scale infrastructure projects**

STRING welcomes the EU's large scale plans for the expansion of the North European transport corridors, and of the EU's role as a contributor to assure that national and regional expansions of infrastructure corridors correlates with these. We therefore see a clear need for the EU to provide maximal financial support for both the Fehmarn Belt Fixed Link, as well as the necessary expansion of the associated land infrastructure in Denmark, Germany and Sweden.

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