

Facts about the Fehmarnbelt Fixed Link

The fixed link across the Fehmarnbelt will be built to improve the infrastructure linking Scandinavia, Germany and the rest of Europe. The link will also help regional development on both sides of the belt.

Actual construction of the link is expected to start in 2013 and be completed in 2018.

The link from shore to shore will be approximately 19 km long.

Since 1963, ferries have sailed between Rødby and Puttgarden – known locally as the "Crow Flies" route because it is almost a straight line between Hamburg and Copenhagen.

The planned fixed link will consist of a so-called 4 + 2 solution – a four-lane motorway and a double-track rail line.

A number of different technical solutions are being looked into, but no decision has yet been taken about final design of the link.

A cable-stayed bridge is the preferred solution, whereas a buried undersea tunnel is the best alternative. Both options are currently being investigated.

The precise location and layout of the bridge have not yet been finalised. Femern A/S is investigating a broad corridor spanning the current ferry route. The precise location and layout will be finalised once the project has been approved by Germany and Denmark at the end of 2012.

The construction costs for a cable-stayed bridge have already been calculated at EUR 4.5 billion (2008 prices) whereas a buried undersea tunnel is estimated to cost around EUR 5.5 billion (2008 prices). The exact costs will only be able to be fixed once the design, position and layout have been agreed.

The link across the Fehmarnbelt will be financed by loans. The loans will ultimately be paid back by the users of the link – motorists and railway operators.

The Danish government will act as guarantor of the loan which the company will take out. This means that the company will be able to borrow money at the same conditions as the Danish government itself, something which gives the lowest possible interest rates.

The EU has already agreed to give EUR 339 million in subsidies for the fixed link for 2007-2013. That is equivalent to around a quarter of the expected costs of the project until 2013.

The cost of crossing the fixed link will be based on what a ferry ticket between Rødby and Puttgarden cost in 2007.

Initial calculations show that the fixed link, including the construction on land in Denmark, will be able to be paid back over a period of around 30 years.

Femern A/S is tasked with designing and planning of a fixed link between Denmark and Germany across the Fehmarnbelt. Femern A/S is a subsidiary of the Danish, state-owned Sund & Bælt Holding A/S, which has experience from the construction of the fixed links across the Great Belt and the Øresund.

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Denmark and Germany have also agreed that each country will be responsible for building and financing their own respective parts of the link which are on land, such as approach road viaducts.

Traffic across the Fehmarnbelt is expected to reach approximately 10,000 vehicles per day a few years after opening. The projections for rail traffic are for 3,800 train passengers per day.

The fixed link will shorten the journey time between Copenhagen and Hamburg by around an hour, so that a train journey between the two cities will take only 3 ½ hours.