

Report from Embassy Visit to Copenhagen May 2013



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Standard CPH cycle track, one-way 1.5–2m wide, 5cm above carriageway, 5cm below footway



Basic one-way cycle track protected by car parking



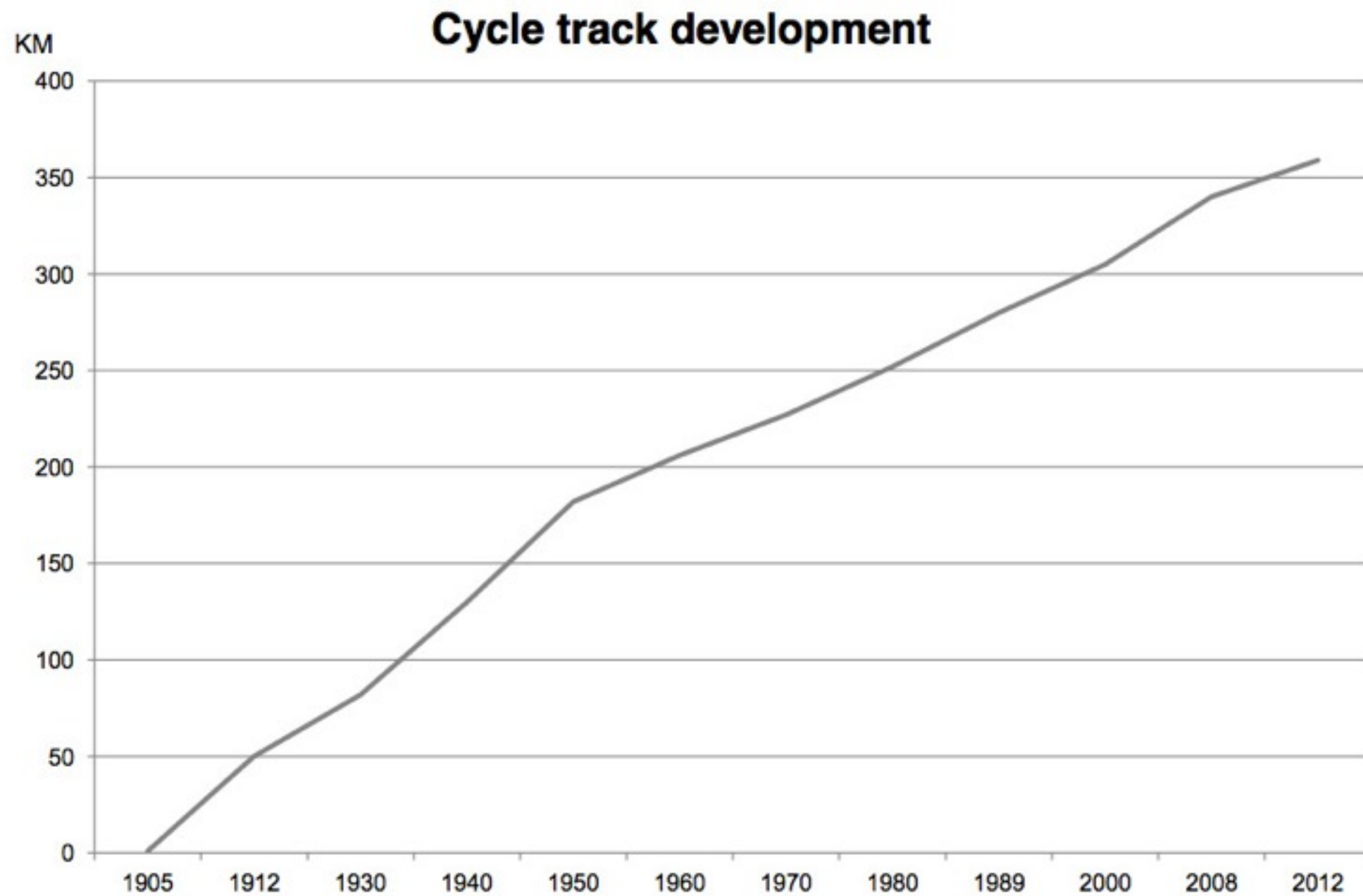
Commuting on Nørrebrogade



Nørrebrogade Bridge: one-way 5m cycle tracks both sides



A more shared-space design of street with one-way tracks still defined (right of studs)



History of cycle track development, Copenhagen Municipality



Protest c1980

Cycle track priority plan

**338 kms of cycle tracks
+ 50 kms planned**

18 kms of cycle lanes – none planned

0 1 km



- Existing
- Planned
- Actual project

Green cycle route plan



**40 kms of green cycle routes
+ 70 kms planned**

- Existing
- Planned
- Other municipality

Critical features of Copenhagen cycle system

- Segregation on almost all busy roads (I estimate 90–95%)
- Design of car parking to protect segregated cycle tracks
- Simple junctions, nearly always simple signalised cross-roads, with consistent methods of working which are expected and understood
- Roundabouts with cycle tracks on which cyclists are given priority, in the Dutch manner, with surfacing that supports correct behaviour
- General separation of cyclists from buses (again at least 90% of the time)
- Invariable provision for cyclists to protect them from the effects of road works (even if it means considerable space compromise for all categories of road-user).



Bus stop on main street



Bus and bike only section of Nørrebrogade



Loading outside (actually partly on) cycle track



Maintenance of cycle space through temporary works



Pinch point, cycle tracks unaffected by carriageway narrowing at island



Two-way track on one side of road (no side roads on left)



Track at grade but separated by kerbstones



Side road treatment: very clear priority to footway



Bus stop outside track. No bus boarder in this case.



Green wave (small lights in the track give speed for passing through signals on green)



Route marked across junction. Blue is not used elsewhere.



Suburban crossroads



Right turn vehicle lane merges with cycle track



Merging right turn



Video of the 2-stage left manoeuvre being carried out at major junction ([on YouTube](#))



Pedestrian zone, no bikes most of the time



Old centre: no entry from this direction for motors, cycle lanes both ways. Some parking.



Shared space treatment in almost traffic-free road. Mostly for placemaking/pedestrian benefit, not a main bike route, not fast



Green route (a red one)



Green route (pedestrian path to right)



Green route crosses main road



Green route bridge over motorway



Green route crosses motorway



Green route bridge over railway



Suburban cycle track



Bus stop on main suburban distributor. Line-segregated cycle track is due for improvement, separation from footpath



Not a great facility, but staggered so she *can* get through



Suburban route, bridge over motorway



Suburban town centre roundabout



Roundabout works for the fast road cyclists



Track on rural main road not always well-separated from carriageway



Superhighway 2 approaching motorway junction



Superhighway 2 passes under arm of motorway intersection



Intersection on Superhighway 2



Unusual case of bus route without cycle tracks



Bike parking is generally front wheel holders. Unusual for people to lock bikes to fixed objects



Unusual sight



You can't always cycle on paths in parks



Track and pavement capacity may be insufficient particularly during works

Differences from the Dutch system

- Lower width standards for tracks
- Build standard slightly lower
- Less separation at route level, more at road level
- Half-height system of tracks gives lower subjective safety but saves space: could be vulnerable to parking pressure in UK cities
- Junctions rely on correct behaviour more than separation in time using signals. Merging of right motor turn with cycle track avoided in Netherlands.

Lessons in summary

- Even at a level of quality somewhat lower than the Dutch, a network of tracks works for a big demographic if it is consistent, with understood, comprehensible, standardised designs, large enough, and in the right places (direct main roads)
- Filtered permeability and shared space are only minor elements of Copenhagen model
- Network must extend from the inner city to outer suburbs at consistent quality
- The lower quality of Danish junctions compared to Dutch seems to limit the demographic: not so many primary-age children seen cycling on their own

Further discussion

[Copenhagen Municipality's bike pages](#)

[Copenhagenize.com](#)

[Voleospeed.co.uk](#)