

Emne	Speech at the official opening of the Danish Pavillon in Paris at the Olympic Games
Dato	Thursday, July 25th, 2024
Længde	5 min.

Speaker: Jesper Nygård, CEO, Realdania
Durance: 5 minutes

Speakers at the event:

- Katja Moesgaard, CEO, VisitDenmark
- Jesper Nygård, CEO, Realdania
- Michael Starbæk Christensen, the Danish ambassador in France

Der er ikke nogen vært, så Katja giver ordet til dig og du giver ordet til Michael. Dog er der den mulighed, at I, i Paris, aftaler, at Katja er vært. Pt. ingen vært.

Efter talerne åbner HMK pavillonen ved et snoreklip

Your Majesties. Mr. ambassador. Ladies and gentlemen.

The Olympic Games are always a very special event. Right now, the whole world is coming to-gether here in the city of light. That's a big deal! And it gives me great pleasure to participate in the opening of the Danish pavilion.

CEO

My name is Jesper Nygård. I am the director of the philanthropic organisation, Realdania. Real-dania works to promote quality of life through the built environment and improve the physical framework for everyday life in Denmark. Where we live. Where we work. Where we go to school and get an education. And not least, where we spend our free time.

Spare

Many of us spend our free time being active in one or more of the associations and clubs that are such a characteristic feature Danish culture. Yes, in Denmark we often talk about having a culture of associations. And that's something to be proud of.

The world is characterised by increasing polarisation. Therefore, the social cohesion of society is more important than ever – and gathering around common interests can really make a difference.

A broad range of associations add a communal experience to the daily life of many Danes. With many of these associations being about exercise, athletics, or sports – exactly what also brings us together here in Paris.

For many people, being a member of an association makes a difference to their quality of life. In an association, you experience community. Meeting up with others to share a common interest makes a difference to how you feel and flourish in life. It matters – not just physically, but also mentally and socially.

Perhaps this culture of associations is part of the reason for the generally high level of quality of life in Denmark. At least that's what some researchers find. Either way, Denmark is one of the happiest countries in the world.

Personally I believe that this culture has a lot to do with the high level of trust in our small society. We have a lot to learn from the rest of the world. That's why we have 2 ^{eyes} ~~eyes~~

and 2 ears - but only one mouth. But I think that the level of trust is a thing that could be good

for the rest of the world to be inspired from. And meeting people, talking to people. And to open our house to share experiences with others

Through almost 100 cases, the exhibition in the Danish pavilion focuses on how Denmark is one of the "world champions" in creating quality of life and securing the good life. Realdania is re-sponsible for some of the cases presented, including those that deal with housing as well as the green transition and recycling through the built environment. For example, our efforts to create a new type of housing community for seniors is presented. A type of housing that is in high de-mand at a time when there are more and more of us with grey hair – or just a little hair.

is a important part of that.

or in fact no hair!

A special feature of the exhibition is that it is actually in itself an example of recycling through the built environment. The chairs on display are made from industrial plastic waste and wood. They were designed by the Danish architectural firm, Lendager Group. Originally, the chairs were intended to be part of the Danish pavilion at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Unfortunately, COVID-19 prevented this and the chairs never made it to Japan. Instead, we're using some of them here. The rest of the chairs have found their way to Milan Design Week, the famous Roskilde Festival and to the student halls in the Danish Student House here in Paris.

You'll have the opportunity to take a closer look at the chairs, the senior cohousing projects and much more a little later.

On a final note, I would like to thank VisitDenmark, the Ministry of Industry, Business and Financial Affairs, the Danish Industry Foundation and everyone at the House of Denmark in Paris for excellent cooperation in connection with the Danish pavilion, the exhibition and the recycled chairs. *Made of recycled plastic.*

With these words, I wish everyone a great time with the pavilion and the exhibition.

Thank you for your attention.

Michael Steinhilber Christensen

*The Danish Ambassador
to France!*

Realdania