**Denmark**

### ABOUT THE COUNTRY COMPARISON

We define culture as the collective mental programming of the human mind distinguishing one group of people from another. This programming influences patterns of thinking which are reflected in the meaning people attach to various aspects of life and which become crystallised in the institutions of a society.  
  
Culture does not imply that everyone in a given society is programmed in the same way; differences among the values of individuals in one country tend to be bigger than the value differences between countries. Nevertheless, we can still use such country scores based on the law of the big numbers, and on the fact, most of us are strongly influenced by social control. Please realise that statements about countries are generalisations and should be interpreted relative to other countries. Only with comparison a country score is meaningful.

BEMÆRK: HVIS MAN TILGÅR HOFSTEDES HJEMMESIDE DIREKTE KAN MAN UDOVER AT FINDE DISSE TEKSTER OGSÅ FÅ ADGANG TIL GRAFER SOM KAN VISE OG SAMMENLIGNE KULTUR I FORSKELLIGE LANDE (HERUNDER DANMARK, TYSKLAND, FRANKRIG, SPANIEN OG KINA): [Country comparison tool (hofstede-insights.com)](https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison-tool)

#### **POWER DISTANCE**

18

This dimension deals with the fact that all individuals in societies are not equal - it expresses the attitude of the culture towards these inequalities amongst us. Power Distance is defined as the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organisations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally.

With a score of 18 points, Denmark is at the very low end of this dimension compared to other countries. This matches perfectly with what many foreigners in Denmark express: Danes do not lead, they coach and employee autonomy is required. In fact, Denmark ranks highest amongst the EU27 countries in terms of employee autonomy. With a very egalitarian mind-set the Danes believe in independency, equal rights, accessible superiors and that management facilitates and empowers. Power is decentralized and managers count on the experience of their team members. Respect among the Danes is something, which you earn by proving your hands-on expertise. Workplaces have a very informal atmosphere with direct and involving communication and works on a first name basis. Employees expect to be consulted.

#### **INDIVIDUALISM**

74

The fundamental issue addressed by this dimension is the degree of interdependence a society maintains among its members. It has to do with whether people's self-image is defined in terms of "I" or "We". In Individualist societies people are supposed to look after themselves and their direct family only. In Collectivist societies people belong to 'in groups' that take care of them in exchange for loyalty.

Denmark, with a score of 74 is an Individualist society. This means there is a high preference for a loosely-knit social framework in which individuals are expected to take care of themselves and their immediate families only. It is relatively easy to start doing business with the Danes. Small talk is kept at a minimum and you do not need to create relationships first. Danes are also known for using a very direct form of communication.

#### **MASCULINITY**

16

A high score (Masculine) on this dimension indicates that the society will be driven by competition, achievement and success, with success being defined by the winner / best in field - a value system that starts in school and continues throughout organisational life. A low score (Feminine) on the dimension means that the dominant values in society are caring for others and quality of life. A Feminine society is one where quality of life is the sign of success and standing out from the crowd is not admirable. The fundamental issue here is what motivates people, wanting to be the best (Masculine) or liking what you do (Feminine).

Denmark scores 16 on this dimension and is therefore considered a Feminine society. In Feminine countries, it is important to keep the life/work balance and you make sure that all are included. An effective manager is supportive to his/her people, and decision making is achieved through involvement. Managers strive for consensus and people value equality, solidarity and quality in their working lives. Conflicts are resolved by compromise and negotiation and Danes are known for their long discussions until consensus has been reached. Incentives such as free time and flexible work hours and place are favoured.

#### **UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE**

23

The dimension Uncertainty Avoidance has to do with the way that a society deals with the fact that the future can never be known: should we try to control the future or just let it happen? This ambiguity brings with it anxiety and different cultures have learnt to deal with this anxiety in different ways. The extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations and have created beliefs and institutions that try to avoid these is reflected in the score on Uncertainty Avoidance.

With a score of 23 Denmark scores low on this dimension. This means that that Danes do not need a lot of structure and predictability in their work life. Plans can change overnight, new things pop up and the Danes are fine with it. It is a natural part of their work life. Curiosity is natural and is encouraged from a very young age. This combination of a highly Individualist and curious nation is also the driving force for Denmark’s reputation within innovation and design. What is different is attractive! This also emerges throughout the society in both its humour, heavy consumerism for new and innovative products and the fast highly creative industries it thrives in – advertising, marketing, financial engineering.

At the workplace, the low score on Uncertainty Avoidance is also reflected in the fact that the Danes tell you if you are in doubt or do not know something. It is ok to say “I do not know” and the Danes are comfortable in ambiguous situations in the workplace.

#### **LONG TERM ORIENTATION**

35

This dimension describes how every society has to maintain some links with its own past while dealing with the challenges of the present and future, and societies prioritise these two existential goals differently. Normative societies. which score low on this dimension, for example, prefer to maintain time-honoured traditions and norms while viewing societal change with suspicion. Those with a culture which scores high, on the other hand, take a more pragmatic approach: they encourage thrift and efforts in modern education as a way to prepare for the future.

A low score of 35 indicates that Danish culture is normative. People in such societies have a strong concern with establishing the absolute Truth; they are normative in their thinking. They exhibit great respect for traditions, a relatively small propensity to save for the future, and a focus on achieving quick results.

#### **INDULGENCE**

70

One challenge that confronts humanity, now and in the past, is the degree to which small children are socialized. Without socialization we do not become "human". This dimension is defined as the extent to which people try to control their desires and impulses, based on the way they were raised. Relatively weak control is called "Indulgence" and relatively strong control is called "Restraint". Cultures can, therefore, be described as Indulgent or Restrained.

Denmark has a high score of 70 in this dimension, meaning that Denmark is an Indulgent country. People in societies classified by a high score in Indulgence generally exhibit a willingness to realise their impulses and desires with regard to enjoying life and having fun. They possess a positive attitude and have a tendency towards optimism. In addition, they place a higher degree of importance on leisure time, act as they please and spend money as they wish.

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