**DENMARK BEST COUNTRY IN EUROPE FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP – OR IS IT?**

BY [LISA MALLNER](https://nordicstartupnews.com/author/lisamallner/) JANUARY 15, 2016



**According to the 2016**[**Global Entrepreneurship Index**](http://thegedi.org/global-entrepreneurship-and-development-index/)**, Denmark ranks as the highest country in Europe and is number four worldwide, after the United States, Canada, and Australia.**

This means Denmark is in the top 5 performing countries globally, moving 2 places up from 2015.  But what is Denmark is doing better than other countries?

**Education is the way forward**

The [GEI report](http://thegedi.org/global-entrepreneurship-and-development-index/) suggests that the especially high level of education in Denmark is a big part of what makes Danes good entrepreneurs.  High levels of education across the general population form a strong basis for absorbing new technologies, starting businesses, and creating competition. Simultaneously, Denmark has worked hard to create a better overall framework for the development of new ideas and businesses.

The Danish government has prioritized developing a regulatory framework that encourages new businesses.  Critically, the government has streamlined the startup process to encompass [only four procedures](http://www.doingbusiness.org/data/exploreeconomies/denmark#starting-a-business)at minimal costs.

Denmark has also worked to promote entrepreneurship within society.  For example, the popular television series  [Løven’s Hule](https://www.dr.dk/tv/se/loevens-hule/loevens-hule-1-8%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank), (the Lion’s Den) and [Global Entrepreneurship Week](http://dk.gew.co/users/global-entrepreneurship-week-denmark) have helped make entrepreneurship part of popular culture.

[…]

**What holds Denmark back?**

The Compass Ecosystem Survey specifically measures startups, and it is here that some of Denmark’s bigger disadvantages come to light.  Funding and VC investment for startups is largely relegated to the small-scale early stages,  despite recent success stories like [Vivino](https://nordicstartupnews.com/2016/01/13/vivino-yet-another-nordic-success-story/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank).  And Startup Skills, which Denmark also scored lower on in the GEI report, are lacking.

Studies show that having veteran startup founders and mentors is highly correlated with startup success, and many Danish startups are new to the game.  Even serial entrepreneurs have mostly had success in the smaller Nordic markets.  It is rare to find founders who have reached high-level success, scaled internationally, and returned to start up again in the Danish ecosystem.

And that leads to the most significant barrier: Internationalization, and by extension, market reach.

At face value, this evaluation doesn’t make sense.  Denmark is a small country, so most companies are thinking globally from early on.  Many startups look abroad to get large investments.  Not to mention that Danes are [the best non-native English speakers](http://www.thelocal.dk/20141112/danes-the-best-non-native-english-speakers-in-the-world) in the world.  So what’s the problem?

The problem, the researchers say, is cultural.

[The average Dane is risk averse.](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=698444)

**Changing mindsets**

Danes are risk-averse, and are often traditional when spotting new business opportunities.  This carries over to all aspects of entrepreneurship – from taking the plunge to starting a business, to investors deciding what to do with their money (hint: it’s not investing in startups).  And this hesitancy affects Denmark’s ability to make high-growth, global businesses.

But this is not an insurmountable problem. Risk aversion is best tackled by reaching out to the next generation of entrepreneurs.  Therefore, it is important that concepts such as innovation and entrepreneurship find their way into schools, so that young people become aware of the possibilities – and perhaps gain more courage to take the plunge. And Denmark must also encourage the next generation of bankers and investors to dare to invest in small, early-stage startups.

A commitment to innovation does happen overnight, and Denmark should stay positive.

**Positive feelings to positive action**

[…]

As much as 96 percent of Danes have a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship, while the European average is extremely low at 72 percent. In Denmark, the figure is rose from 90 percent in 2014 to 96 percent in 2015.

Professor [Kim Klyver](http://www.sdu.dk/ansat/kkl) from the [University of Southern Denmark](http://www.sdu.dk/), an expert on entrepreneurship, says that while “Danes have a steadily rising positive impression of entrepreneurship, fear holds them back from participating in entrepreneurship.”

**Fear of failure**

Professor Kim Klyver’s contention is also supported by the [Amway Entrepreneurial Spirit Index](https://www.amwayentrepreneurshipreport.tum.de/)(AESI), which indicates that fear of bankruptcy holds the Danes back.  The social pressure against failure can be stifling.

“It is interesting to see that Danish positivity towards entrepreneurship is so much higher than the rest of Europe and that there is a huge untapped entrepreneurial potential at home. Particularly in light of the fact that start-ups can help drive further growth in the Danish economy and increasing exports,” he says.

“But the study also shows that one may not have been aware enough of how much of an obstacle an entrepreneur’s own family and networks can be for the entrepreneur to realize their start-up dreams. There we have a cultural challenge. ”

[Denmark best country in Europe for entrepreneurship - or is it? - Nordic Startup News](https://nordicstartupnews.com/denmark-best-country-in-europe-for-entrepreneurship-or-is-it/)

10 Success Tips for Young and Aspiring Entrepreneurs

November 23, 2020



In the digital age, entrepreneurship is more accessible than ever. That doesn’t mean it’s a cakewalk, though. Here are 10 tips for success.

[…]

**1. Plan, plan, plan… and plan some more.**

There is no substitute for a solid business plan. If you think you’ve planned your business and market strategy out enough, you’re probably wrong. Analysis of your target demographic and competitors is especially important. Also, prepare yourself for any eventuality. Analyze any possible thing that can go wrong with your game plan, and then prepare an apt response. That way, when anything does happen, you’re ready. Keep track of your skills and weaknesses, what you offer, how said product or service is unique, and how you plan on growing your offering once you’ve entered the market.

**2. Find a Mentor**

Look, you don’t have to have an Obi-Wan or a Gandalf, but going at the entrepreneurial game alone is a Deathwish. Whether it’s a community of like-minded investors and entrepreneurs or a close friend or business associate who is more experienced in the market, having someone to learn from and bounce ideas off of is paramount to success. Learn from their mistakes and successes, so you can minimize the former and maximize the latter in your own endeavors.

That said, always trust your gut. If you’re following a shadow for your entire career, you’re never going to really break out and make it big.

**3. Keep Your Marketing Tight**



By that we mean tight budget. Marketing your business is extremely important, but it shouldn’t cost an arm and a leg. Remember, social media is your friend. Creating your business page on Facebook and founding social accounts on Twitter and Instagram for your business is free, and will also help your SEO. Submitting your website URL to search engines like Google and Bing is another free way to boost your visibility.

We don’t mean you need to be a stinge, but good marketing should work smarter, not harder. Hit the right demographic (there we go with the planning again) and you won’t have to invest in complex or costly paid media campaigns. Strong, targeted email and social media campaigns are much cheaper and more effective.

**4. Build a Strong Team**

Don’t get the wrong idea, we don’t mean hiring a bunch of overpaid “experts.” Just surround yourself with people who share your vision, folks who you vibe with. Everyone knows that starting a business with your friends typically goes wrong, but you do want to have stuff in common with the folks you work with, at least from an outlook perspective. Also, be open to new opinions and suggestions. You don’t want a bunch of mindless drones, you want a team of individual, critical thinkers.

**5. Be Ready for Financial Challenges**



Almost every startup hits the ground because of one factor: COST. Duh. Running a business is expensive. So be ready to operate on the cheap, and be ready for every eventuality. Deal with cash flow hits by saving a month’s worth of expenses ahead of time, or by getting creative with how you lower your overheads. As part of your business plan, be sure to give yourself an adequate runway for success. Things like SEO take time. You can’t expect to be turning a profit with an online business three months out, at least not if you’re starting a site from scratch. If you don’t have the cash to survive, there’s no point starting out. And at all costs, avoid DEBT.

**6. Take Care of Yourself**

Entrepreneurship is a lifestyle, but don’t work yourself senseless. When you’re running your own business, it’s really easy to forget to clock out. The days of 9-5 are long gone for you (if you’re successful), but remember to separate work and play. Don’t let your business take over your life. You may have to put in a extra hours at the beginning to get your endeavor off the ground, but in the long run, be sure to watch your time management so you can have time to keep LIVING.

**7. Read Case Studies**

As an entrepreneur, you’ll be focusing on your business 24/7. So, when you get home and have some leisure time, you might be tempted to play video games, read fiction, or watch TV to relax. Read case studies instead. Read biographies of successful entrepreneurs. Just do as much reading as you can about those who came before you, what they did right and what they did wrong. It’ll pay off in the end, trust us.

**8. Take Risks**

Humans are generally risk-averse, but part of being an entrepreneur is being willing to take risks (and knowing which risks are viable and which aren’t). Learn which risks will benefit your business and which won’t, and learn to go for it. Entrepreneurial endeavors aren’t like calculus equations. There is no guaranteed right answer. Sometimes you have to analyze the market and take a leap of faith. Everyone, and we mean EVERYONE, who has ever achieved real success has taken a risk.

**9. NETWORK**



There is no such thing as too much networking. Never stop networking, even during your free time. Don’t be one of those irritating people who never stops talking about their business, of course, but make connections at all times. You never know where your next lead will come from. You might find a new connection while grabbing a beer at your local bar, on a flight to visit your folks for Thanksgiving, or on a street corner. You might meet your next business partner in an elevator or a laundromat.

This doesn’t mean being annoying and constantly pitching your ideas to everyone. Just be human. Be organic. Connect, relate, talk with, and get to know people.

**10. Never Stop Learning**

This is critical to success. The market is constantly changing. You should be, too. Starting your own business is a constant process of growth and learning. Teach yourself new skills, from SEO to writing to design to management and presentation. The more you know, the less you’ll have to pay others to do stuff for you, and the more you can understand the inner workings of the market. If you want to get into the entrepreneurial game, you need to be ready to go 110%, and that means signing up for a never-ending learning process.

10 Success Tips for Young and Aspiring Entrepreneurs - The European Business Review