

**COUNTRY: THE KINGDOM OF DENMARK CONSISTING OF DENMARK (EUMEMBER), GREENLAND (AUTONOMOUS AND NON-EU-MEMBER) AND FAROE ISLANDS (AUTONOMOUS AND NON-EU-MEMBER)**

#### **FACTS:**

Area: Denmark (43.098 km<sup>2</sup>), Greenland (2.166.086 km<sup>2</sup>), Faroe Islands (1.393 km<sup>2</sup>)

Population: Denmark (5.822.763), Greenland (56.000), Faroe Islands (50.000)

Government: Parliament with prime minister, at the moment a social democratic government and prime minister

Language: Danish, which can be used also in Greenland (Greenlandic) and Faroe Islands (Faroese)

Religion: 75 % are members of the Danish protestant Christian state church, 6 % muslims, 19 % jews/baptists/catholics/atheists. However, 50 % of the population define themselves as "non-religious"

Currency: Danish crowns (DKK)

Time difference from CET: (GMT +1 hour Denmark), Greenland (GMT -3 hours), Faroe Islands (GMT)

Climate: Denmark and Faroe Islands have tempered climate, Greenland has arctic climate

Capital: Copenhagen (Denmark), Nuuk (Greenland), Torshavn (Faroe Islands)

National Day: The 5th of June

#### **TIME:**

#### **HOLIDAYS AND VACATION:**

The general holidays around Christmas, New Year, Easter, etc. July is in general the month for summer vacation.

#### **OFFICE HOURS:**

8-16

#### **MANNERS AND CUSTOMS:**

#### **COURTESY:**

Normal politeness will be enough, not too much small talk at the first meeting, as time is precious (and expensive). Be precise to show that you are serious (start meeting at the planned time and finish meeting at the planned time). Later when people get to know each other there are no special rules.

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#### DRESS:

In general Danes are quite relaxed and informal so dressing may be informal, especially for women, for men maybe a jacket and shirt without tie for the first meeting when it concerns private companies.

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#### BODY LANGUAGE:

Relaxed and not so important, but be sure that you pay attention to your meeting partners to show that you are serious.

#### NEGOTIATION:

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#### BUSINESS MEETING:

You must be very structured not to waste time. Say yes to have the coffee, which is normally offered to you. Very little small talk. Lunch and dinner meetings are not very common in Denmark, as most meetings are in the office with a cup of coffee. Equality is important in Denmark, so be polite to everyone, and be aware that you cannot always from the beginning of the meeting spot the hierarchy among the Danish meeting participants.

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#### NEGOTIATION SKILLS:

Be well prepared with your offer and prices, and make it clear if you can take decisions on the meeting or not. It is OK that you cannot take decisions at the meeting, but then you must make it clear from the beginning. Not always, but often the Danish partner is prepared to make a decision at the meeting if things seem to fit together. Speaking English is a must, as using interpreter is not considered serious.

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#### INVISIBLE CODES:

Be on time and finish on time, people may be annoyed if you are late and if you exceed the agreed length for a meeting.

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#### ETHICS:

Denmark is in general a "non-religious" society, and in general there are no extreme political views among the population. We consider ourselves to be liberal in relation to alcohol, sexuality, religion, politics, freedom of speech, human rights etc. If you behave in a slightly different manner Danes will probably excuse you because you are a foreigner.

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#### COMMUNICATION:

All Danes speak and write English, but in a lot of companies/organizations German is also working. All Danes can read Norwegian/Swedish, and most Danes understand Norwegian/Swedish if the meeting partner speaks a little bit slow. Mail, skype, etc. is working.

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#### GIFTS:

It is welcomed, but not expected that you give gifts to each other, and do not expect gifts from the Danish meeting partner. If you meet public partners avoid gifts as it may be misunderstood, as corruption is absolutely and totally unacceptable in Denmark, and any proposal with the smallest touch of corruption will probably shot down all business talks.

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#### REPRESENTATION:

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##### AT A RESTAURANT:

If you meet in a restaurant you probably know each other already and there will be more room for small talk and it is general not expected that decisions shall be taken/ business shall be settled during meetings at a restaurant.

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##### IN THE HOME:

You are in general only invited to the private home if you know each other quite well - bring a gift (flowers or a bottle of wine).

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#### OTHER:

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##### COUNTRY AND PEOPLE:

A small and very flat country with good infrastructure (roads, trains, flights). It is in general not complicated to do business in Denmark, but as Denmark is a very regulated country with relatively tight control by authorities everything is in general done by the rules - also in business. We have differences in income, but no clear dividing social classes. There are different accents across the country, but that will in general not reveal the income level of a Dane. Denmark consider itself as a country with a high degree of welfare, and social pensions are relatively high, e.g. unemployed people receive app. EUR 2,100 per month in two years.

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##### CHALLENGES:

Humor is an important part of Danish social life and communication - in some situations part of the Danish humor is irony - which is often not understood by the foreign counterpart, so do not feel offended or get scared if you are exposed to Danish humor, which may sometimes be a bit difficult to translate/understand.

It is often not very transparent who is the actual decision maker, so at meetings with a few persons it is important not to ignore anyone, but always communicate and have contact with all Danish participants.

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#### WHAT IS THE WORST THAT CAN HAPPEN:

If you behave with normal politeness and are serious “the worst thing” will probably not occur to you. No one will shout at you or throw you out of the office. The worst thing that can happen is that the Danish counterpart says (at the meeting or later in an e-mail) that they are not interested in further talks.

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#### WHEN IT WORKS WELL - WHAT HAS TO BE IN PLACE:

Be well prepared and be serious. The Danish approach to doing business in Denmark is about creating a win-win situation, otherwise we all know that the relation will not last long.

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#### INFORMATION AND/OR KNOWLEDGE AND/OR SKILLS:

Information, knowledge and skills are essential in relation to business. No special information, knowledge and skills is expected or requested in relation to the culture, country, the Danes etc. unless it is important in relation to business.

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#### WHAT MAKES THE INFORMATION AND/OR KNOWLEDGE AND/OR SKILLS IMPORTANT:

Information, knowledge and skills are essential in relation to business is important to show that you are serious and wasting peoples time, which is very unpopular in Denmark as time is precious and expensive.

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#### SITUATION - BEHAVIOUR - RESULT:

Adapt to the situation, be yourself and act according to “normal” European rules for social behavior and doing business - then things will probably go well.