

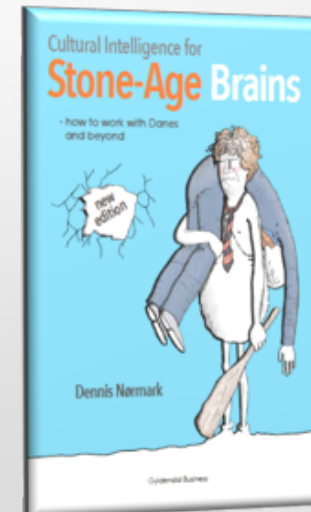


Why are the Danes so weird...?

- Dennis Nørmark -

About me

- Dennis Nørmark, MSc, anthropology
- Writer of several books on Danish Culture and on cultural understanding in business and organizations
- Lecturer, board member, commentator, columnist, independent consultant



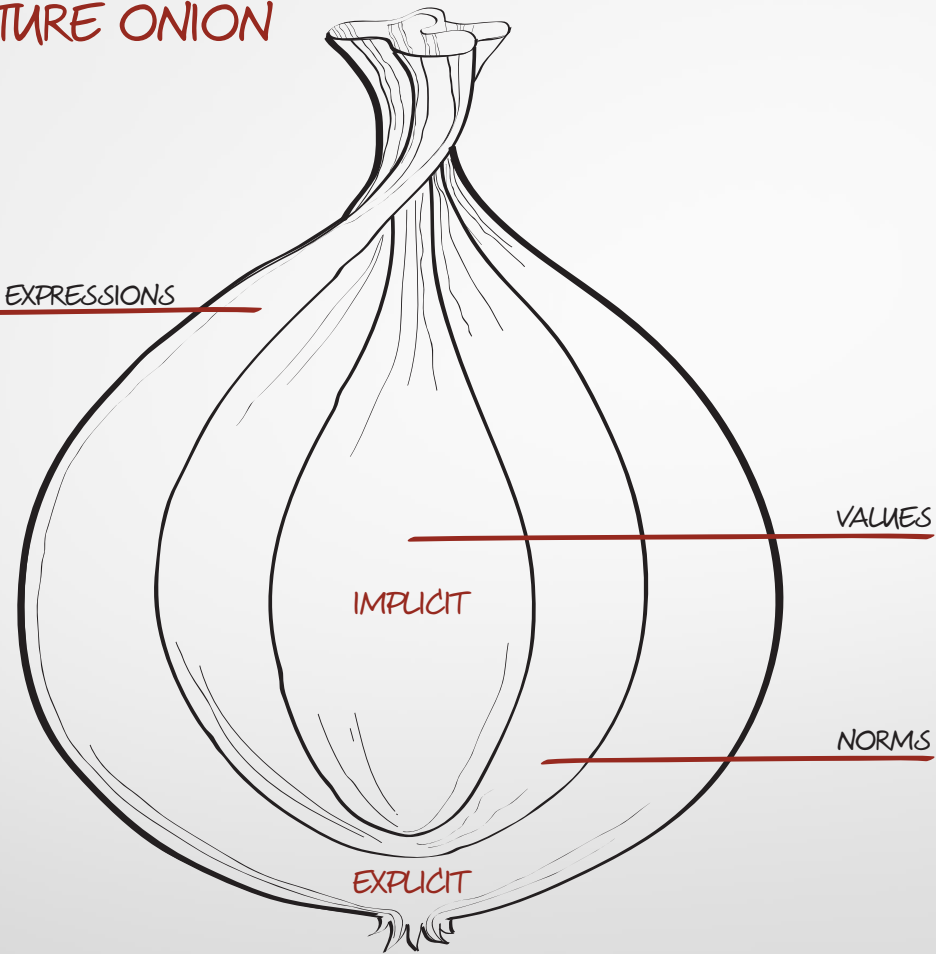
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Culture – A definition

- Culture is an *interpretive community*. It guides the members of a certain group and it forms the expectations to behaviour and norms of others. It is a *network of meaning* structured by some central values regarded as **significant, true** and even **self-evident** by the members of this community. Values that have proven to be useful and constructive in the community's involvement with their social and ecological reality.
- Cultural Intelligence for Stone-Age Brains

THE CULTURE ONION

OBJECTS AND EXPRESSIONS



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How to get to know all the implicit

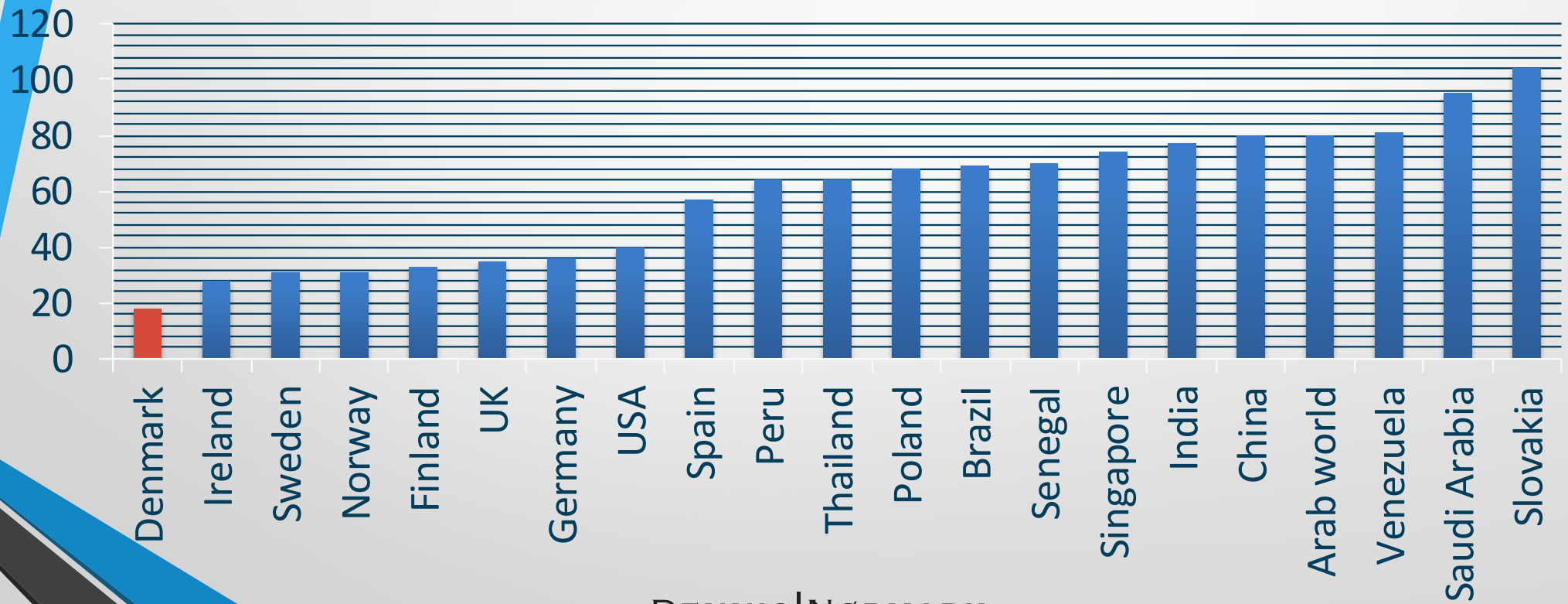
Ask questions about behaviour,
but not "why"

- Ask
 - "what are you doing",
 - "when are you doing it",
 - "what happens if" etc.



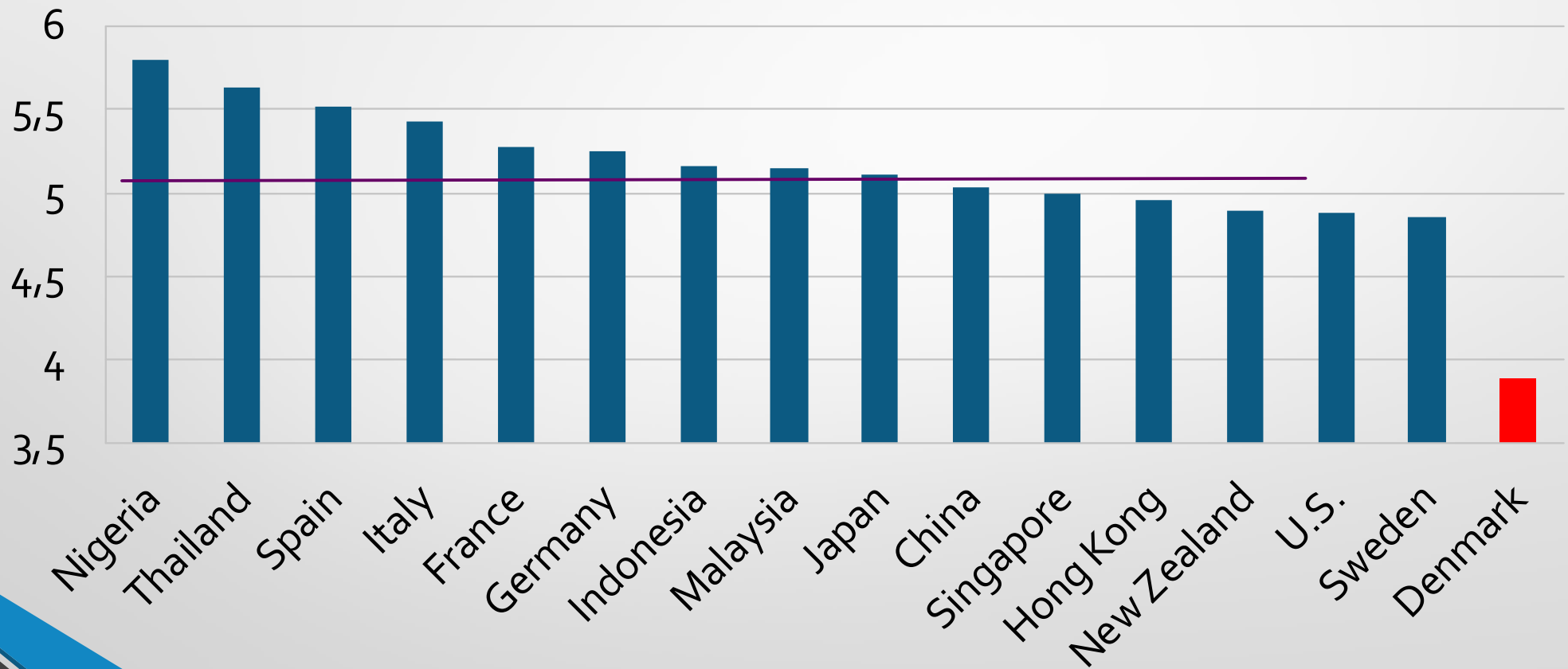
Values – Power Distance

Source: Gert Hofstede



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Power Distance: Society Practice



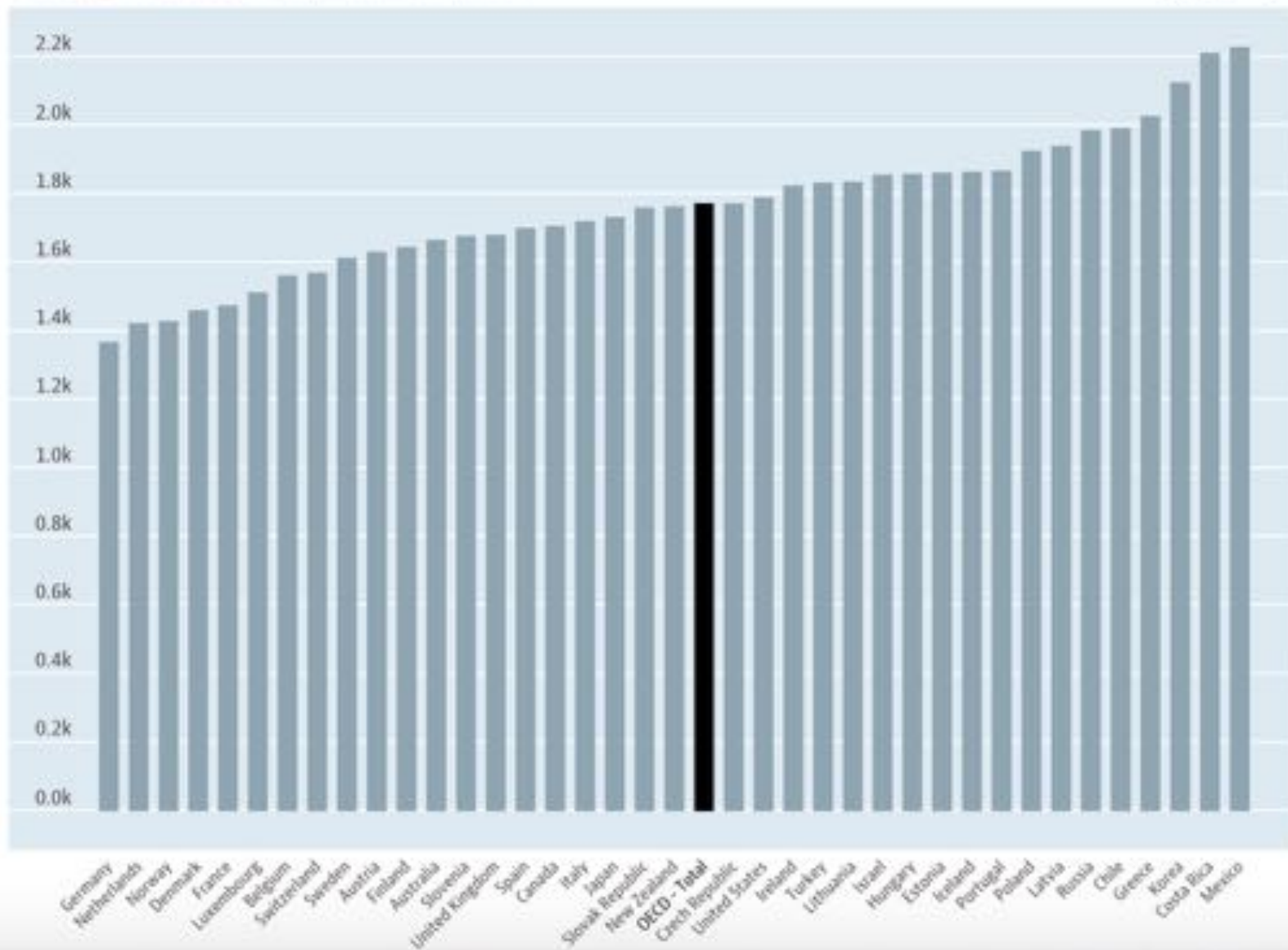
The Danish Key Values

- TRUST
- EGALITARIANISM
- COLLECTIVISM
- RATIONALITY/PRAGMATICS
- FREEDOM

- High employee retention rate
- People will leave for lower salary and lower status if they like another job more than the one they have...





Hours worked Total, Hours/worker, 2014



But how about
productivity?

2016 Rank	2017 Rank	Country	Annual GDP per capita	Annual Hours Worked	Productivity Per Person Per Hour	Productivity Per Person Per Day	Productivity Per Person Per Week
1	1	Luxembourg	£78,320.90	1512	£51.80	£301.23	1506.17
2	2	Norway	£56,556.80	1424	£39.72	£217.53	1087.63
4	3	Switzerland	£60,249.00	1590	£37.89	£231.73	1158.63
7	4	Denmark	£40,710.51	1410	£28.87	£156.68	782.89
15	5	Iceland	£52,028.94	1883	£27.63	£200.11	1000.56
8	6	United States	£45,898.98	1783	£25.74	£176.53	882.67
3	7	Australia	£42,515.76	1669	£25.47	£163.52	817.61
9	8	Ireland	£47,805.77	1879	£25.44	£183.87	919.34
5	9	Netherlands	£34,383.76	1430	£24.04	£132.25	661.23
10	10	Sweden	£38,364.73	1621	£23.67	£147.56	737.78

- 
- Keeping Danes in the job is possible as long as they
 - Find the work/life balance respected
 - Find the work personally challenging and meaningful
 - The job makes them grow
 - A large amount of autonomy and freedom

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- A man with a beard, wearing a dark blue or black long-sleeved shirt and a dark tie, is sitting at a light-colored, reflective table. His hands are clasped together on the table. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. A semi-transparent text box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing a bulleted list.
- Danes expect consensus over top-down decision
 - and involvement
 - Danish leaders can seem less decisive and weak
 - Danish managers are sometimes “top administrators”



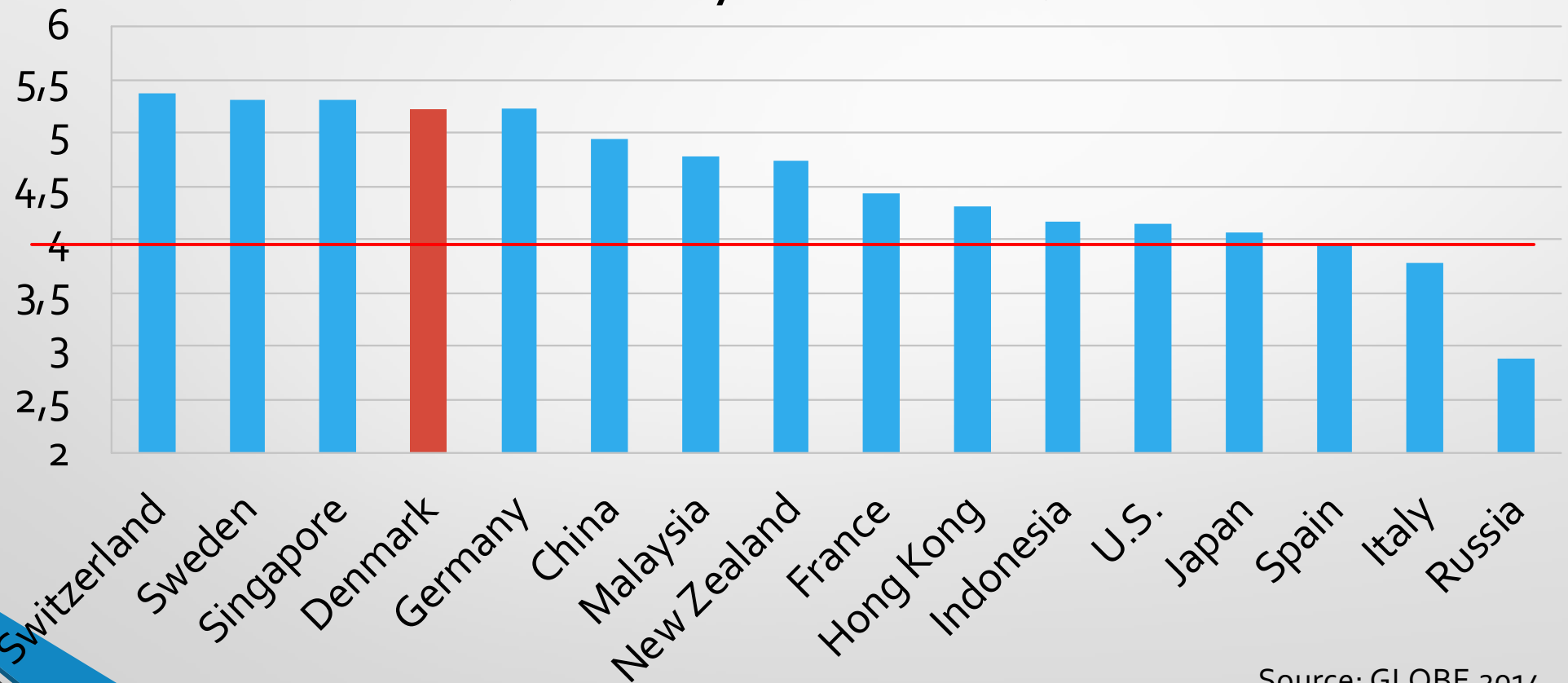
- If employees know that what the boss suggest wouldn't work – they disagree and challenge
- Openly admit their shortcomings and weaknesses and their reliance on you
- Leave employees alone and expect to hear from them, when they need input
- Are involved only when absolutely necessary
- Less, bling and less privileges




In an organization

- Everyone affected by a decision should ideally be heard
- Danes are more likely to follow the consensus of a team than the explicit orders from a manager
- Managers view this as more efficient since they “can’t be everywhere” - so autonomy of teams is encouraged
- Soft power is used – so sometimes an order doesn’t sound like an order....

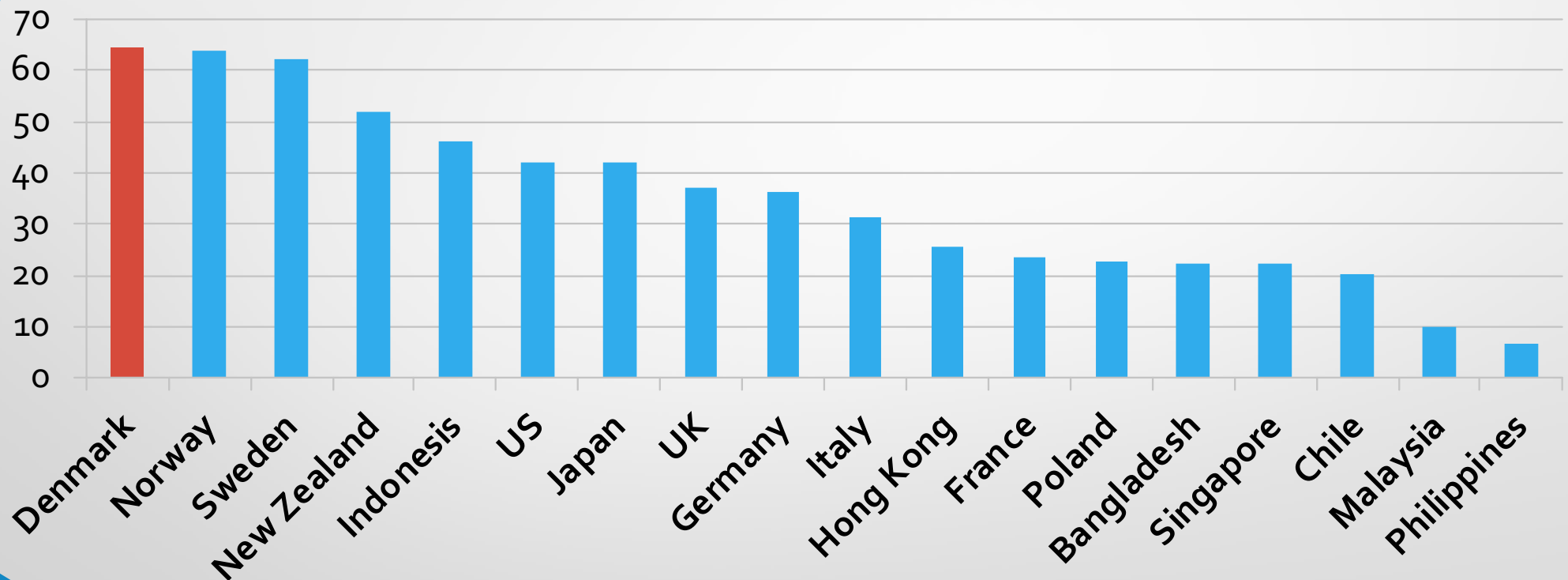
Uncertainty Avoidance: (Society Practices)



Source: GLOBE 2014


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- Danes like to plan and create processes for everything...
 - Live in a very safe society
 - Like rules that protect people from their own stupidity...
 - And follow them...

General Trust



A pro-active society

- Speak up! – if you want to get heard
- Ask for help! – if you need help
- Invite! – if you want to get invited anywhere
- Ask for feedback – if that is what you need
- For a Dane no news is good news, silence means things are okay....

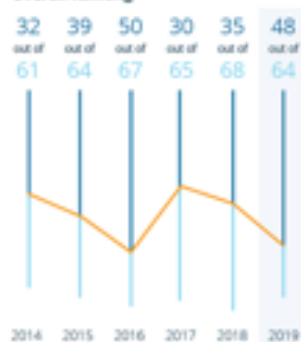
- 
- The result is managers who:
 - Might not wrap in critique, but trust that you can separate yourself from the issue at hand
 - Are not very concerned with saving face and create an “illusion” of being an equal to the rest
 - See micro-management as the sure way to failure
 - Making subordinates feeling ignored sometimes
 - Believe that doing a proper job and feeling proud about that is a reward in itself!

Country Report

Denmark



Overall Ranking



Quality of Life Index

25 out of 64

- 6 Digital Life
- 62 Leisure Options
- 13 Health & Well-Being
- 13 Safety & Security
- 63 Personal Happiness
- 20 Travel & Transportation



Ease of Settling In Index

63 out of 64

- 62 Feeling at Home
- 64 Finding Friends
- 63 Friendliness
- 53 Language



Personal Finance Index

51 out of 64



Family Life Index

10 out of 36

- 15 Family Well-Being
- 14 Availability of Childcare & Education
- 4 Costs of Childcare & Education
- 24 Quality of Education
- 3 Childcare Options
- 21 Options for Children's Education



Working Abroad Index

21 out of 64

- 57 Career Prospects & Satisfaction
- 23 Economy & Job Security
- 3 Work & Leisure



Cost of Living Index

63 out of 64

Working Hours

62% Global

81% Denmark

Socializing & Leisure Activities

19% Global

34% Denmark

Satisfaction Level

75% Global

65% Denmark


Source: The Expat Insider Survey Report, 2019

Humour

- Danes value
 - Self irony
 - Deescalate conflicts with irony and humour
 - Mild critique through sarcasm
 - Have less sensitivity about race, religion, gender etc.



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- What Danes expect from people who work for them:
 - Independent thinking and initiative
 - Participation in decision making
 - Honesty
 - “If you just do as you are told you are not doing enough”
 - Hard work
 - Trust
 - Knowledge-sharing
 - That they solve the task in accordance with their conscience and professionalism not (only) their orders
 - That employees take pride in their work, and are passionate about it more than seek motivation through praise and other rewards that will single them out from their group