The US is Still an Attractive Market for Danish Businesses

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Despite continued uncertainty related to trade policy, tariffs and inflation, the American economy enters 2026 with projected growth. According to Dansk Industri, United States GDP growth is expected to be around 2.4%, while interest rates are generally expected to decline.[1] In a broad sense, there is a stable foundation for long-term business planning in the U.S.

However, factors for what may drive future economic growth in the U.S. differ from what was seen in the past. Thomas Høgh Henriksen, Dansk Industri's Managing Director in the United States, explains that, "Markedet bevæger sig ind i en ny fase, hvor kvalitet, differentiering og lokal tilstedeværelse vejer tungere end tidligere." [The market is moving into a new phase, where quality, differentiation and local presence carry more weight than before.][2] Henriksen emphasizes the importance of structural investments in strategic locations and specific industries. Rather than deciding whether to integrate based on broader, national demand, it is well worth considering the individual economic field and locality of where investment will be taking place.[3]

Specialization and Relevance Pays Off

Danish businesses are already extremely competitive in many sectors of the U.S. economy that are poised for growth. Such sectors include that of artificial intelligence, energy production and defense. Danish companies within those industries already maintain strong track records in terms of quality and credibility. With proper strategy

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[1] Hansen, Uffe. "Ny dynamik baner vejen for eksportsucces til USA." DI Business, 2 Jan. 2026, https://www.danskindustri.dk/di-business/arkiv/nyheder/2026/1/ny-dynamik-baner-vejen-for-eksportsucces-til-usa/.

[2] *Id.*

[3] *Id.*

and presence in key localities, Danish businesses can enjoy numerous integration opportunities. The key is to determine where this investment takes place.

California as a Case Study

By way of example, the state of California serves as an important illustration as to how intentional planning can lead to business development. On August 22, 2025, California and Denmark jointly signed a Memorandum of Understanding, which supports cooperation on green economy resilience, technology and innovation.[4] The agreement furthers shared leadership on carbon neutrality, policy collaboration on digital and cyber resilience, public-private collaboration regarding innovation ecosystems, as well as an overall facilitation of dialogues, delegations, trade promotions, projects and partnerships.[5] The targets supported by California and Denmark underscore strengths already possessed by many Danish companies.

To further the goals and anticipated outcomes of California's renewable energy and artificial intelligence goals, we have already observed substantial public and private investment across the entire state of California, spanning from Silicon Valley to Southern California. The high demand for technologies supporting artificial intelligence, clean energy and innovation we are witnessing now will only increase in the coming years. California offers Danish businesses a concentrated and specific entry point into U.S. markets.

Interestingly, "Californien er, hvis det var et land, verdens 4. største økonomi, men kun Danmarks 27. største eksportmarked."[6] [California, if it were a country, is the fourth

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[4] California Governor's Office. "California and Denmark Sign New Partnership on Climate, Technology Efforts." CA.gov, 22 Aug. 2025, https://www.gov.ca.gov/2025/08/22/california-and-denmark-sign-new-partnership-on-climate-technology-efforts/.

[5] *Id.*

[6] Dansk Industri. "Trods toldmur satser danske virksomheder på Californien." Dansk Industri, 22 Aug. 2025, https://www.danskindustri.dk/om-di/kontakt-os/presse/arkiv/pressemeddelelser/2025/8/trods-toldmur-satser-danske-virksomheder-pa-californien/.

largest economy in the world, but only Denmark's 27th largest export market.] This highlights the immense possibility a state like California presents itself to companies seeking to capitalize on a favorable business landscape. With shares values demonstrated by the collaboration agreement between Denmark and California, Danish businesses are strongly poised to position themselves in localities like the state of California within fields they already excel in back home.

Decisions on where to invest may be better made on a state-by-state basis, as this enables a company to integrate into localities that support and value its specific industry and business model. Rather than focusing on the entire U.S. market, selecting a state-by-state approach as to where business models can succeed is worth considering.

Turning Market Opportunity into Sustainable U.S. Integration

Identifying the right U.S. market or sector is only the first step. In 2026, successful market entry increasingly depends on how well Danish companies integrate into local U.S. commercial, regulatory, and operational ecosystems. As the U.S. market typically places greater weight on local presence, proven value, and operational credibility, companies that invest early in integration are better positioned to compete and maintain success.

Market integration goes beyond just establishing a legal foothold. It requires aligning with U.S. market norms, while preserving the governance, control, and strategic objectives of the Danish parent. Businesses that approach integration deliberately are better equipped to handle shifting trade policies and regulatory conditions.

Martensen Wright PC supports Danish businesses in this phase by helping translate U.S. market complexity into practical operating structures. The goal is not simply market access, but lasting participation in the U.S. economy. Danish companies that choose to invest in their U.S. foundation now, and specifically in localities that align with their operational model and growth strategy, will be best positioned to grow when demand, capital, and partnership opportunities broadly expand in the future.

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