

# THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD ?

## – TOWARDS ENTREPRENEURIAL INTERNATIONALISATION THROUGH NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE EXPERIENCES

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### **Abstract**

Do we need to fail before we can really succeed? Does failure prepare us to take into consideration the challenges in the competition better than success? Can success make us blinded from difficulties and too trusting to the continuation of that success? Rather than to require companies to make mistakes and fail before they can really obtain sustainable success, we could bring into the foreground the process of learning. Learning by doing and experiencing can turn mistakes to success and failures to strength. This learning process can be particularly useful in the case of entrepreneurial internationalisation of small and medium-sized enterprises, which is filled with risk-taking, opportunity seizing and entering unknown territories. So far main stream entrepreneurship and international business research has focused on studying success stories, where entrepreneurs establish firms, innovate and create new combinations, as well as companies expand their operations across national borders. However, several studies and popular press articles have highlighted the important educative role and meaning of mistakes and failures. Success is often taken for granted afterwards, whereas failures are often treated with more analysis and scrutiny to find out what really went wrong and why. This gives a good starting point for research combining entrepreneurial internationalisation, opportunities, failures and mistakes, and learning in the process. The results of the study are directed to entrepreneurs, small business managers and the academia.

### **Keywords**

Entrepreneurship, Internationalisation, Learning, Opportunity, Failure, Mistake