

# **Working in the Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Industry in Norway**

Veera Haavisto



<b>Author</b> Veera Haavisto	
<b>Degree programme</b> Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management	
<b>Thesis title</b> Working in the Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Industry in Norway	<b>Number of pages and appendix pages</b> 64 + 8
<p>The purpose of this bachelor's thesis is to study what are the factors that make Norway an appealing work place, why Finnish people have left there for work and how they have adapted to the Norwegian working culture. Thus, the aim of the thesis is to present Norway as an optional work place for Finnish hotel, restaurant and tourism employees.</p> <p>The intention of the theoretical framework is to provide the reader an overview of the Norwegian labour market, economic situation and working culture. The theory is divided into two chapters. The first one includes key figures of the Finnish and Norwegian economies as well as an overview of their hotel, restaurant and tourism industries. Further, it covers for example the labour laws and regulations in Norway. The second theory chapter includes a comparison of the Norwegian and Finnish working cultures and discusses various culture theories, mostly focusing on Hofstede's theory on cultural dimensions.</p> <p>The empirical part of the thesis presents the used methodology and the results of the study. The qualitative research case study was made by interviewing 11 Finnish participants that work or have worked in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry in Norway. The main reason for using a qualitative research method was to be able to get thorough answers that contain feelings and attitudes. The interviews were mainly conducted on Skype.</p> <p>The results of the study show that better salary, new culture, beautiful nature and better work possibilities make Norway an appealing place to work. The biggest reasons why the respondents have left for Norway for work have been that they have wanted new experiences, due to a relationship or that they have found work more easily from Norway. The adaptation to the Norwegian working culture has been rather easy for the respondents. However, the new language and the relaxed attitude in the Norwegian working culture have been the biggest challenges in the adaptation process.</p> <p>The international work experience in Norway has benefited the respondents by them learning a new language and becoming more open and confident. They wish to see more balance of work and free time and more team meetings in the working life in Finland.</p> <p>Suggestions for further research could be using quantitative research methods for examining the attraction factors and the biggest reasons for going to Norway for work. Another idea could be to conduct a similar study in a single organization to see whether the answers would reflect the results of this study.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> Norway, working culture, hotel, restaurant and tourism industry, attractive labour market, adaptation	

## Table of contents

1	Introduction .....	1
2	Facts and comparison of the Finnish and Norwegian labour markets.....	5
2.1	Nordic labour markets.....	5
2.2	Finland.....	5
2.3	Norway .....	6
2.4	The economic situation in Finland and in Norway .....	7
2.5	Hotel, restaurant and tourism industry in Finland and in Norway.....	8
2.6	Working in Norway.....	12
2.7	Labour laws and regulations .....	13
3	Working culture .....	16
3.1	Culture and organizational culture.....	16
3.2	Comparing Norwegian and Finnish working culture .....	17
3.3	Adapting to a new culture.....	21
3.4	Geert Hofstede's cultural dimensions.....	21
3.4.1	Finnish and Norwegian working culture.....	24
3.5	Culture theories by Trompenaars, Hampden-Turner, Schein and Lewis .....	26
3.6	Conclusion .....	30
4	Finnish employees' perceptions of the Norwegian labour market and working culture.	31
4.1	The purpose and the objective of my study .....	31
4.2	The chosen research method.....	32
4.3	Carrying out the study.....	34
4.4	Data collection method and analysis .....	35
4.5	Results.....	36
4.5.1	The participants .....	36
4.5.2	Language.....	36
4.5.3	The biggest reasons for working in Norway.....	37
4.5.4	Working culture .....	38
4.5.5	Hofstede's cultural dimensions.....	40
4.5.6	The benefit of international work experience .....	41
4.6	Summary .....	42
5	Discussion.....	44
5.1	Introduction to the background.....	44
5.2	Analysing method .....	44
5.3	Analysis of the results .....	44
5.3.1	Validity based on my sampling and research methods.....	44
5.3.2	Language.....	45
5.3.3	The biggest reasons for working in Norway.....	46

5.3.4	Working culture .....	47
5.3.5	Hofstede's cultural dimensions.....	50
5.3.6	The benefit of international work experience .....	51
5.4	Development ideas and suggestions for further research.....	52
5.5	Benefit for the commissioner and the industry.....	53
5.6	My own learning during the thesis process.....	54
6	References.....	56
	Appendix 1. Haastattelukysymykset .....	65
	Appendix 2. Interview questions.....	68
	Appendix 3. Tool for the Commissioning Party.....	71

# 1 Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to present Norway as an optional work place for Finnish hotel, restaurant and tourism employees. More specifically, the purpose is to study what makes the Norwegian labour market attractive, why Finnish people have left there for work and how they have adapted to the Norwegian working culture. As both are Nordic countries, Finland and Norway have a similar culture and I wish to see if it is rather easy for a Finn to adapt there. Further, since Finnish people can already speak one Scandinavian language, Swedish, they have a better chance finding work in Norway. I wish Finnish people would realize their potential to achieve international work experience in Norway and through that also improve Nordic cooperation.

Furthermore, even though this subject is very recent, it hasn't been studied that much. At the moment there is discussion about the Norwegian labour market and Finnish people going to work in Norway which can be seen in different articles written by the Finnish Hospitality Association MaRa, Helsingin Sanomat, Kauppalehti and Hufvudstadsbladet.

In May 2015 MaRa discussed the employment in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry noting that in Finland the sales and the number of workers have gone down. MaRa claims that there would be a chance for 30 000 new jobs by 2025 but it would require lowering taxes and therefore improving the domestic purchasing power and the price competitiveness. MaRa also points out that in the other Nordic countries the hotel, restaurant and tourism industries are growing at a record high speed and that for example Sweden has offered 52 000 more jobs since 2006. New jobs in the industry in Finland would decrease the growing youth unemployment. Thus, one third of the employees in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry are less than 26 years old. (MaRa 2015b.) This article states clearly the good work opportunities in the other Nordic countries' hotel, restaurant and tourism industries. Since Finland is struggling at the moment with sales and number of workers going down, there are other options available for confident and language skilled employees.

Also, the appeal of the Norwegian labour market has been discussed in numerous articles in Kauppalehti and Helsingin Sanomat. It was for example pointed out that it is easier to find work from this growing economy and that the young unemployed people in Finland should be interested in the better pay in Norway. (Valtavaara 2014.) In addition, it was noted that especially manufacturing, construction, electronics, fishing and the public sector pulls more and more workers. Thus, Norway also wants Finnish know-how. (Semkina

2015.) In short, the better salaries and the better situation on the labour market makes Norway an attractive place to work.

Further, there has been discussion about obligatory Swedish in Finland. When considering working in Norway, knowing Swedish language is a great asset, since most Norwegians understand it well. Consequently, once knowing Swedish it will most probably be easier to learn Norwegian as well. Based on the interviews with different professionals involved in the Finnish-Norwegian cooperation Kauppalehti points out that there is a concern about the discussion of obligatory Swedish at schools. It also underlines the importance of Nordic cooperation and claims that learning Swedish is inevitable. Additionally, it is noted that language has a big role in networking. There would be a chance for a common Scandinavian language, that Swedes, Danes, Norwegians and Finns could all use, but there is a concern that Finns might fall by the wayside. (Himanen 2015.) All in all, the discussion about obligatory Swedish is unfortunate since knowing the language opens up a lot of doors for Finnish people. When considering working in Norway it may very well be the reason someone gets hired.

In 2015, also Holmström discussed the importance of knowing Swedish language when wanting to work in Norway. It is mentioned that there is a lot of work available in Norway for Finnish people. However, many Norwegian business executives are disappointed in Finns' Swedish skills. A Norwegian recruitment agency was looking for Finnish nursing staff only through Finnish-Swedish newspaper Hufvudstadsbladet. They justified this by saying that English is not enough as a working language if the work is being done in a group or with customers. (Holmström 2015.) This can be applied directly to the hotel, restaurant and tourism jobs that are completely based on customer service. Nina Hjort, the Finnish honorary consul in Tromsø, points out that as neighbours we have a lot to learn from each other, yet our similar cultures helps us to cooperate. She also says that with better Swedish language skills there would be a chance for better cooperation. It is also noted in the article that in the recent decades Norway has concentrated mostly on academic education, which has led to the lack of engineers and other professionals. (Holmström 2015.)

The discussions mentioned above are good examples of why I wanted to study this subject. They show how current the subject really is and also speak out the language issues related to it. Since the work languages for official Nordic cooperation are Swedish, Norwegian and Danish it is very important for Finnish people to know the Swedish language to keep up with their Nordic neighbours. Even though the meetings in the Nordic Council are translated also to Finnish and Icelandic it is definitely an asset to be able to communicate

in one of these three official work languages. (The Nordic Council; The Nordic Council of Ministers b.) It is also mentioned in the articles that Norway wants Swedish speaking Finnish employees and that there really are jobs available for Finns in Norway.

The commissioning party for my thesis is Haaga-Helia's International Office. The International Office is in contact with its partner schools in Norway and besides student exchange, helps organize also work placements abroad for students. Whether it is about a student exchange or a work placement in Norway, Haaga-Helia's versatile Swedish language education is also highly linked to my subject. Thus, it is possible to communicate in Swedish in Norway. This thesis is meant for helping the cooperation between Haaga-Helia and its Norwegian partner schools and work placements. The purpose in general is to help the commissioner to understand the cultural differences between Finland and Norway. This is important since understanding another culture improves the cooperation and communication between Haaga-Helia and its Norwegian contacts. Further, once Haaga-Helia is more aware of these cultural similarities and differences it is able to forward this information to the students that are planning either a student-exchange or work placement in Norway. From the perspective of the commissioner the purpose of the thesis is also to find out how the international work experience in Norway benefits an individual and how he or she could later on use this experience in the Finnish hotel, restaurant and tourism industry. The commissioner asked for a short document that contains the main results and conclusions of my study. In addition, it summarizes the benefits my study has for the commissioning party. The document is found in the Appendix of my thesis.

In addition to having a commissioner for my thesis I think my study will benefit the industry in general. It is an interesting question why Finnish hotel, restaurant and tourism employees find Norway more appealing than Finland. Furthermore, I think presenting Norway as an optional work place for Finnish hotel, restaurant and tourism employees offers them more job opportunities and a chance to achieve international work experience. This thesis can also lead to further study and analysis.

The purpose of my thesis is to study what makes Norway an attractive place to work and what are the biggest motives for Finnish people to have left there for work. Additionally, the purpose is to study how they have adapted to the Norwegian working culture. What comes to the adaptation, I want to examine what have been the biggest challenges they have faced, but also report the things that have been easy to cope with. Based on my own student-exchange experiences in Norway and a study about Finns' adaptation in the country (Mäkäläinen 2013, 2) my hypothesis is that it is rather easy for a Finn to adapt to the Norwegian working culture. Yet, it will be interesting to see whether the results of my

study will reflect my own experiences. As mentioned, another purpose of the thesis is to find out how the international work experience has benefited the individual and whether the person could use his or her acquired knowledge in Finland.

To reach these goals I conducted a qualitative research case study since it suits the best for my objectives to get more thorough answers with attitudes and feelings about these matters. I interviewed 11 Finnish people, both men and women that have either worked or are currently working in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry in Norway. I found the participants either by using personal contacts or by asking around in different Facebook groups meant for Finnish people living and working in Norway. Since most of the interviewees live in Norway I conducted my interviews by using Skype.

The introduction of the thesis is followed by theoretical framework, which covers the theory related to my subject. The theory involves facts about Finland and Norway and compares their economic situations and the hotel, restaurant and tourism industries. Additionally, it goes through issues related to job seeking and the labour laws and regulations in Norway. The second chapter concentrates on defining Finnish and Norwegian working culture. It also contains an analysis of a few different culture theories, mostly focusing on Geert Hofstede's theory on cultural dimensions. On the fourth chapter I will explain in more detail the chosen research method and ways of conducting the study. This is followed by the discussion that includes my analysis on these matters. Moreover, I present my conclusions and suggestions for further research and analyse my own learning during the thesis process. Finally, I list all the resources and appendixes used.

The number of the respondents in my study is rather small. Therefore, I won't be making ground breaking results for example on why Finnish people have left for Norway for work and cannot generalize the results. Thus, I am mostly interested in their feelings and attitudes. With the definition hotel, restaurant and tourism industry I mean in general all sectors within this industry like accommodation, food and beverage, transportation and other cultural and recreational services. What comes to the culture issues, I will concentrate on working culture rather than the overall cultural experience. Moreover, the answers might differ greatly based on the variation between the examined Norwegian work places. Yet, the fact that the respondents work in different jobs within the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry gives a wider perspective on the matters and it is interesting to see if the results reflect common themes. Even though I have decided to use more than one culture theory in my thesis I still concentrate on Hofstede's research since it serves best the purposes of my own study. Overall, I am interested to see whether the results of my study will reflect the issues covered in the theoretical framework.



## **2 Facts and comparison of the Finnish and Norwegian labour markets**

The theoretical framework is divided into two different chapters. In the first chapter the focus is on introducing both Finland and Norway and the economic key figures of both countries. The purpose is to present the current economic situation both in Finland and in Norway. More specifically, this chapter includes statistics within Finland and Norway's hotel, restaurant and tourism industries creating a good overview of these matters and making it easier to compare these two countries. Moreover, this chapter covers issues related to language, labour laws and regulations and job seeking in Norway. This is all relevant information for a Finnish individual looking for work in Norway.

### **2.1 Nordic labour markets**

There are many common characteristics in the Nordic labour markets. In most cases collective bargaining agreements regulate Nordic salaries and working conditions. Employers and unions are involved in legislation, especially the one concerning the labour market. Characteristics of the Nordic labour market are high degree of equality, consensus and security. Thus, it is often referred to as the Nordic welfare society. When considering international standards, a very high proportion of the adult population in the Nordic countries is either employed or seeking employment. This involves both men and women. (Haagen- sen 2014, 81.)

### **2.2 Finland**

The population of Finland is around 5.5 million, of which about one million people live in and around the capital Helsinki (The Nordic Council; The Nordic Council of Ministers a). The country has two official languages, Finnish and Swedish. About 89% of the population speak Finnish as their native tongue, whereas about 5% speak Swedish. However, everyone learns both Swedish and Finnish at school in order to be able to communicate also in the second official language. The minority language Sami is the mother tongue of around 1900 people that live mostly in the Northern Lapland. (Finland Promotion Board 2015.)

Finland is a republic and the president is directly elected by the people. Since March 2012 the head of state has been Sauli Niinistö. He has power in foreign affairs, major military decisions and EU policies. However, in other matters, the country's highest authority is the

parliament. Finland is a member in the EU, but not in NATO. The main religion in Finland is Evangelical Lutheran. (City of Helsinki 2014.) The currency is euro.

Totally 13 893 people emigrated from Finland during 2013 (Haagensen 2014, 39). The number of people moving to Norway has increased yearly starting from 2012 when the number was 504. The following year, 574 Finns moved to Norway. The number increased slightly again in 2014, when it was 631. (Nordic Statistics 2015.) The increase shows more interest towards Norway compared to the previous two years. For example the interest in working abroad is growing in the globalizing world. However, the figure doesn't tell whether these Finnish people moved to Norway permanently or came back later on.

### **2.3 Norway**

Norway consists of big mountain-, forest- and highland. The country is divided to 431 municipalities and 19 counties. There are about 5.1 million inhabitants, of which over a million people live in the capital Oslo and its surroundings. (The Nordic Council; The Nordic Council of Ministers c.) Other big cities are Bergen, Trondheim and Stavanger (Worldatlas 2016). Norway shares its international borders with Sweden, Russia and Finland (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2015).

Norway is a constitutional monarchy. However, the King Harald V doesn't have actual political power and the highest authority is the parliament and District Court (*Stortinget*). Norway is not a member of the EU but it participates in Europe's economic cooperation through Eta agreements. The country is a member of NATO defence accord. The main religion in Norway is Evangelical Lutheran and the currency is Norwegian krone. (National Geographic 2005.)

Norway has three official written languages. The biggest two are called Bokmål and Nynorsk. Bokmål is based on written Danish and it is more commonly used in Oslo and larger towns. Nynorsk is a combination of mostly West-Norwegian regional dialects and it is used mostly on the west coast by 10-15% of the population. Even though these languages have been accorded equal status, many government documents, public broadcasting and church services are written in Nynorsk. Bokmål and Nynorsk are not very far from each other but do reflect big regional differences. When understanding one of these languages, it is usually fairly easy to understand also the other. Sami is the third official language in Norway. It is used by the indigenous Sami people and it is the mother tongue of about 20 000 people in Norway. Sami is mostly used in Northern Norway, in the regions

of Troms and Finnmark. (The Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education 2007.) Besides these official languages there are many different dialects that differ from the official languages. Different dialects are usually characteristic for specific geographical areas. (Venås & Skjekkeland 2016.)

## **2.4 The economic situation in Finland and in Norway**

The gross domestic product in Finland in 2014 was 272.22 billion US dollars. This value represented 0.44% of the world economy. (Trading economics 2016a.) However, in Norway the gross domestic product of 499.82 US dollars in 2014 represented 0.81% of the world economy (Trading Economics 2016b). As seen in the numbers, the Finnish GDP is only about a half of the Norwegian one. Since GDP is an indicator of a country's economic health and standard of living, it is clear that Norway's overall economic situation at the moment is more positive than Finland's (Investopedia 2016).

The biggest income in Finland comes from the forestry, technology and metal industries (The Nordic Council; The Nordic Council of Ministers a). The manufacturing sector employs about 15% of the work force and accounts for 15.6% of the GDP. The electronic industry was dominated by Nokia until it sold its mobile operations to Microsoft in 2013. The collapse in the electronics and paper industries has cost more than 80 000 jobs in manufacturing. Yet, the chemical and metal sectors have stayed more resilient. (Euromonitor International 2015a.) The hotel, restaurant and tourism sector brings in 5.2 billion euros of tax income per year and in 2014 it contributed totally 6.5% of the GDP (European Commission 2014, 4; World Travel and Tourism Council 2015a, 12).

On the contrary, the biggest income for Norway is oil and natural gas. These sectors account for two thirds of all exports, 80% of the country's income and about 20% of the GDP. Also the metal industry, seafaring and tourism are important to its economy. Manufacturing employs only 9.7% of the work force. (The Nordic Council; The Nordic Council of Ministers c.) However, due to the drop in oil prices, oil producers and service companies have needed to cut thousands of jobs. In a long perspective, Norway should try to change its oil-dependent growth model. This would mean shifting to other tradable sectors or exporting oil-related goods and services. However, the banking system remains strong and profitable. (Euromonitor International 2015b.) In 2014 the hotel, restaurant and tourism sector contributed totally 7.1% of the GDP (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2015b, 12). The industry employs one in fifteen people in Norway (Innovation Norway 2015, 6).

Unemployment in Finland in 2014 was 8.7% and rose to about 9% in 2015. Labour costs have gone up by at least 20% over the past ten years, which exceeds the gains in productivity. Consequently, this is wearing out Finland's competitiveness. A rapidly ageing population is yet another challenge and requires more effective work incentives. Finland's economy grew just about 0.3% in 2015. Domestic demand is weak and there is a high tax burden. The country's exports and tourism suffers from the struggling Russian economy. (Euromonitor International 2015a.)

Contrastingly, unemployment rate in Norway in 2014 was 3.5%. It increased to 4.2% in 2015. Still, this is only about a half of the Finnish percentage. However, slow growth of wages and deceleration in productivity gains create problems also in Norway. Generous social benefits have made it possible for a high degree of underemployment. (Euromonitor International 2015b.)

As seen in these economic figures, both countries have needed to cut jobs in the recent years. However, Norway's bigger gross domestic product and lower unemployment rate shows that it is a stronger economy than Finland at the moment and accordingly seems to offer a better labour market.

## **2.5 Hotel, restaurant and tourism industry in Finland and in Norway**

Hotel, restaurant and tourism industry in Finland supported directly 57 500 jobs in 2013, which accounted for 2.3% of total employment. However, when considering also jobs that the industry supports indirectly, the total number exceeds 179 000 employees. This accounts for about 7% of the total employment. (European commission 2014, 3.) 30% of the employees are under 26 years old. (MaRa 2015a.) The forecast for 2024 shows the increase of jobs to 229 000, which would account for 9% of total employment (European Commission 2014, 4).

Hotel, restaurant and tourism industry in Norway supported directly 133 000 jobs in 2014, which was 5% of total employment. However, the total contribution of the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry – also jobs that are indirectly supported by the industry - was 266 500 jobs. This accounts for about 10% of the total employment, whereas the number in Finland is about 7%. At the moment, Norway offers roughly 90 000 more jobs in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry than Finland. The proportion of these jobs of total employment in Norway was expected to rise 0.2% in 2015 and after decrease by 0.1% per year until 2025, when it would stand for 9.7% of total employment. (World Travel and Tourism Council 2015b, 5.) Since the Finnish forecast for hotel, restaurant and tourism jobs in

2024 will account for 9% of total employment it seems that the difference in the number of jobs between Finland and Norway will diminish in about ten years.

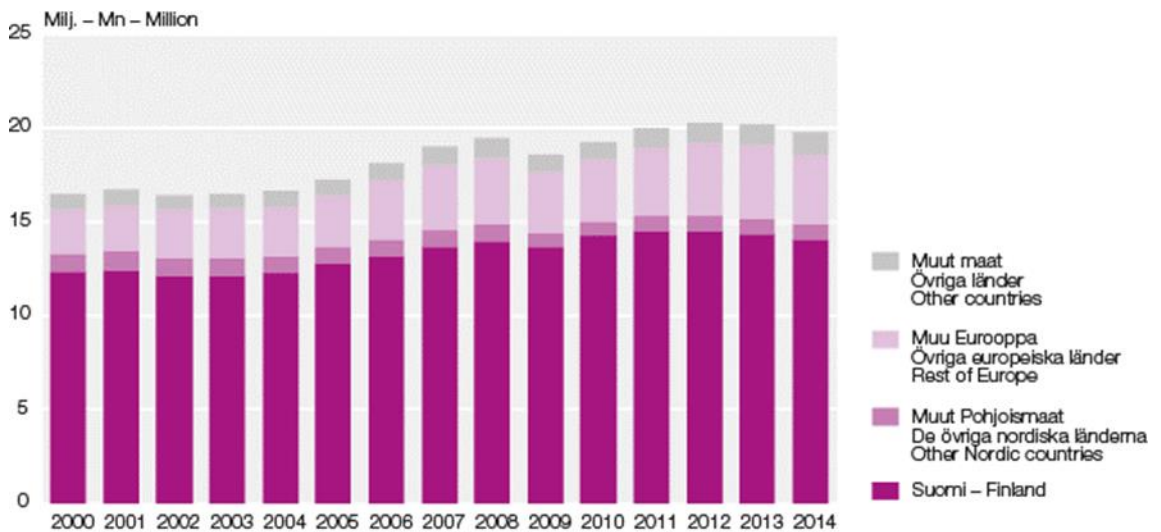


Figure 1. Guest nights in accommodation establishments in Finland during 2000-2014 (Statistics Finland, 2015)

As presented in figure 1, the total foreign guest nights spent in accommodation establishments in Finland in 2012 and 2013 was over 20 000 000. However, in 2014 the number decreased to about 19 785 000 guest nights. (Statistics Finland 2015.) The same result can be seen in the number of domestic guest nights. When considering domestic leisure and business trips in total, the number in 2012 was 10 524 000 guest nights. In 2013 the number decreased slightly to 10 505 000 and continued decreasing in 2014, when the total number of domestic guest nights was 9 529 000. (OSF: Statistics Finland 2015.) The decrease in the number of guest nights shows clearly that the Finnish accommodation industry has been struggling in the last couple of years.

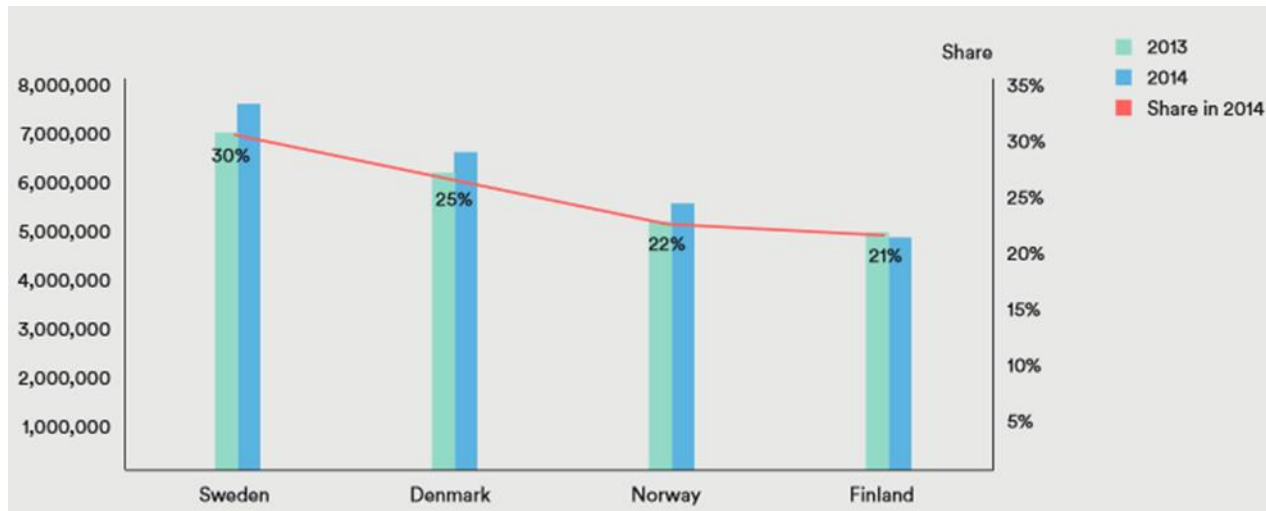


Figure 2. The change in foreign hotel guest nights presented in Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland between years 2013 and 2014 (Innovation Norway 2015, 25)

Currently the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry in Norway is experiencing challenges in many areas due to the economic crises that hit a few years ago. This created hesitation among tourists and consequently there were fewer bookings in advance and more impulsivity, which made it difficult to predict and plan ahead. However, as seen in the figure 2, there was an increase of 5.5% in foreign guest nights in Norway between years 2013 and 2014. The increase in the foreign and domestic guest nights in total was 3.2%. (Nav 2015, 1.) As already mentioned, the number of foreign guest nights in Finland declined about 2 per cent in 2014 (Innovation Norway 2015, 25).

The number of domestic holiday trips in Norway in 2014 was 19.1 million. This figure didn't change from 2013. Even though the number of domestic holidays remained same from 2013, the number of domestic guest nights increased by three percent. The trend of going for longer domestic holidays is seen especially during the summer season. (Innovation Norway 2014, 45.) Compared to Finland where the domestic guest nights have decreased slightly the domestic tourism in Norway seems to be have a more positive impact on the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry. Thus, the amount of domestic tourism for the industry is crucial since it creates more jobs, especially during the summer time.

It is predicted that more Norwegians and foreign tourists will spend their vacation in Norway in the near future. This is due to three main reasons. Firstly, adventure tourism that Norway offers great opportunities for is the fastest growing sector within hotel, restaurant and tourism industry. (Nav 2015.) Adventure tourism can be defined as mostly an outdoor activity that takes place in an unusual or wilderness destination and involves a high level

of activity (Thompson Rivers University 2016). Secondly, the Norwegian economy is expected to be more stable compared to other countries' economies. The third reason is mentioned to be the positive development in availability, for example due to affordable air travel. (Nav 2015, 1.)

Also the growth in the Finnish hotel, restaurant and tourism industry is seen positive in the long run. The number of tourists will most likely keep on increasing since it has already almost doubled during the 2000's. In 2014 there were 7.6 million travellers in Finland. Russians are the biggest tourist group, but their number is fading. Yet, there are more and more Asian travellers (MaRa 2015). In addition, the government is planning to channel their resources to tourism in consideration of creating a year-round appeal (Euromonitor International 2015a).

The average monthly salaries in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry in Finland are listed below (Sanomamedia Finland Oy 2015).

-Hotel receptionist	2270 e/month
-Waiter	2140 e/month
-Bartender	2500 e/month
-Travel agency worker	2755 e/month
-Hotel Manager	3720 e/month

The average salary for hotel and restaurant jobs in Norway in 2014 was 29 200 Norwegian kroner per month, which accounts for about 3100 euros. For full time workers the average pay was 31 800 NOK (3400 euros) and for part-time workers 24 600 (2600 euros). (Statistics Norway 2015; Forex Bank 2016.) The average monthly salary for tourism jobs, for example a travel agency worker, is about 26 700 NOK (2900 euros) (Dagens Næringsliv 2008).

As seen in the numbers above Norway has higher salary than Finland. This is for sure one of the biggest attraction factors in the Norwegian labour market. Especially in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry where the salary levels aren't that high in general, the chance for a better income level can be very tempting. Nevertheless, there is some discrimination in the salary structures in general both in Finland and in Norway. Thus, in Finland women earn 20% less than men. The same figure in Norway is around 10-15%. (World Trade Press 2010a, 24; World Trade Press 2010b, 24.)

However, it is also important to remember that Norway has higher price level than Finland. As stated in Statistics Finland in 2013 Norway is the most expensive country in Europe

what comes to food, drinks and cigarettes. Food and non-alcoholic drinks in Norway are about 90% more expensive compared to the average price level in the EU. The prices of alcoholic drinks and cigarettes in Norway are about three times as much as the EU's average prices. Finland is the 6<sup>th</sup> most expensive country in Europe and has about 20% higher prices compared to the average price level in the EU. (Tilastokeskus 2013.) Thus, both countries can be said to have high prices compared to the average prices in the EU. Harri Kananoja from Statistics Finland notes that Switzerland and Norway are in their own league what comes to price levels. He adds, however, that these countries have also high salaries compared to many other European countries which makes sure that also the purchasing power stays good. (Liesimaa 2015.)

Purchasing power is defined as the extent to which a person, firm or group has available funds to make purchases (WebFinance Inc. 2016).

A nation's GDP at purchasing power parity (PPP) exchange rates is the sum value of all goods and services produced in the country valued at prices prevailing in the United States. This is the measure most economists prefer when looking at per-capita welfare and when comparing living conditions or use of resources across countries. (IndexMundi 2015.)

In 2014 the average PPP in Finland was about 40 700 US dollars whereas in Norway it was 65 600 US dollars (The World Bank Group 2016). Accordingly, it can be said that the purchasing power, thus, the funds one has to make purchases are bigger in Norway than in Finland. In short, it can be concluded that Norwegians have more money to spend than Finnish people.

## **2.6 Working in Norway**

Besides Norwegians also other Nordic citizens like Finns, Swedes, Danes and Icelanders can freely live and work in Norway without work- or residence permits. In other words, Finnish people moving to Norway don't need to register at the police station when they arrive to Norway. However, all Nordic citizens need to follow the rules in Norway's civil registry. This means that if a person stays less than six months in Norway, it is not necessary for him or her to register to the civil registry. However, if a person is planning to stay more than six months in Norway, he or she needs to notify the civil registry officials not later than 8 days after the arrival day. (The Nordic Council; The Nordic Council of Ministers e.)

Job seeking in Norway works the same way as in Finland. Job announcements are published on the Internet and on newspapers. There is also a possibility to get work through a



recruitment agency or by sending an open application directly to the employer. The largest database for vacancies is found at the web page of the Work and the Well-Being Administration NAV (*Arbeids- og velferdsforvaltningen*). Additionally, this web page contains tips for job seeking and lists other channels for open vacancies. Also Work in Norway –portal held by Norwegian authorities offers tips on finding work and shares useful information about living and working in Norway. (The Nordic Council; The Nordic Council of Ministers d.)

## **2.7 Labour laws and regulations**

One of the attraction factors for Finnish people in Norway could be the similarity of the labour laws and regulations. Accordingly, these similarities make it is easier for Finnish people to adapt to the Norwegian working culture. For an individual seeking for a job in Norway, the following laws and regulations are good to know.

Everyone has a right, but they are not obligated to be a member of a trade union. The purpose of the trade union is to safeguard the employee's interests in relation to its employer. (Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority, 2007, 5.) For example the Norwegian United Federation of Trade Unions (*Fellesforbundet*) is a trade union for workers in industry, construction, farming, hotels, restaurants and graphical sector. It has also members outside Norway. The objective of Fellesforbundet, like all trade unions, is to support employees by promoting their salaries and working conditions. The trade union has about 147 000 members. (Fellesforbundet 2015.)

Working conditions in Norway are regulated by legislation and agreements. Like in Finland, agreements state for example minimum pay and working conditions. Collective pay agreement is the most important of these agreements and it is concluded between the central confederations of employees and employers. Additionally, there are agreements that apply to individual work places and are conducted between the employees' representatives and the employer. Legislation that applies to all employees regulates the working conditions. Two of the most important Acts are the Working Environment Act and the Holidays Act. (Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority 2007, 7.)

The Norwegian Working Environment Act states that all kind of discrimination based on an employee's race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion, political views, sexual orientation or functional disability is forbidden (Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority, 2007, 8). This applies also in Finland (Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö 2015, 14).

Further, when a person is appointed to a job he or she is entitled for a written contract of employment. It should include a description of the work, the starting date of the employment, the duration of the employment if it is temporary and regulations related to pay, working hours and right for holiday. (Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority, 2007, 8.) The same central issues are covered also in the Finnish employment contract (Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö 2015, 6).

What comes to working hours in Norway, they shouldn't exceed 40 hours in seven days. There is a possibility for flexible working hours if there is a weighty reason and it can be arranged without major inconvenience to the employer. Everything that exceeds 9 hours per 24 hours or 40 hours per seven days is considered overtime and it must be compensated with at least 40% more than normal pay. In general, over time shouldn't exceed 200 hours per year. (Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority 2007, 10.) According to section 6 of Työaikalaki (9.2.1996/605) the normal working time in Finland can also be maximum 40 hours per week. Moreover, section 22 of the same law states that over time work needs to be compensated with extra pay (Työaikalaki 9.2.1996/605).

In Norway, when a work day is longer than five and a half hours, an employee is entitled for a rest break. When a shift lasts 8 hours or more, the rest break should be at least half an hour. Normally, there should be at least an 11-hour continuous time off between shifts. Per week, an employee is entitled for a 36-hour continuous time off. (Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority 2007, 11.) As stated in section 29 of Työaikalaki (9.2.1996/605) the minimum rest time between shifts in Finland has to be 7 hours. However, in most cases it is 9 or 11 hours. (Työaikalaki 9.2.1996/605.)

When working on a Sunday or a public holiday in Norway, a person is usually entitled for a day off on the next Sunday or a public holiday. However, the 24-hour off time needs to fall on these days at least every third week. (Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority 2007, 12.)

Salary in Norway is determined either by the collective pay agreement or the contract of employment and it will be paid on the employee's bank account every 14 days or once per month (Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority 2007, 12).

Other issues that are mentioned in the Working Environment Act are for example issues related to night work, different kind of leaves, absences for example due to pregnancy and child birth and the termination of employment (Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority 2007).

The Holiday's Act states that every employee is entitled for an annual holiday of 25 days. During the holiday, the employee receives holiday pay from the employer. (Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority 2007, 21.)

All mentioned laws and regulations are very similar to the ones used in Finland. Therefore, it should be easy for a Finnish employee to start working in Norway knowing that the same kind of labour legislation prevails. However, based on my own work experience in the Finnish hotel, restaurant and tourism industry, the regulations might often work more as guidelines. For example, there might not always be a chance for an half an hour break on a busy day, even though that is how it is stated in law. Yet, these are only my own experiences in the matter and it will be interesting to see whether the results of my study reflect these issues.

### **3 Working culture**

This chapter concentrates on culture and its dimensions, mainly focusing on working culture. It is linked to the research question, "How do Finnish people adapt to the Norwegian working culture?" The chapter begins with different definitions of culture and working culture. Additionally, it states and compares the major characteristics of Finnish and Norwegian working culture. It covers also issues related to adapting to a new culture. A few different culture theories have been used for the analysis, but the focus is mainly on Geert Hofstede's theory on cultural dimensions. The reason for introducing multiple culture theories is to give a wider and more thorough perspective on culture.

#### **3.1 Culture and organizational culture**

Culture can generally be defined as, "The sum of attitudes, customs, and beliefs that distinguishes one group of people from another. Culture is transmitted, through language, material objects, ritual, institutions, and art, from one generation to the next." (Hirsch, Kett & Trefil 2002.) Also according to Erez and Earley (1993, 38) the most important and universal aspect of being a human is to share a number of characteristics like religion, political views, lifestyle patterns and certain approaches to work. They say that in order to understand organizational behaviour we must first fully define the concept of culture. "The essential element of such conceptualization is the fact that people vary in the ways that they build their lives but the variation is predictable within and across groups of people. This variability is descriptive dimension of what is termed culture." (Erez & Earley 1993, 38.) Another definition of culture, according to Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997, 6) is the way in which a group of people solve a problem or a dilemma.

There are also many definitions for organizational culture. According to Alversson (2002, 1) the cultural dimension is central in all aspects of organizational life. He states that how people in a company think, feel, value and act are guided by ideas, meanings and beliefs of a socially shared cultural nature. He indicates that even if the corporate culture is not unique it does not reduce the significance of culture. Alversson adds that there are always senior organizational members that somehow manage the culture; meaning that they highlight what is important and what is not and frame how the corporate world should be understood. In conjunction with Alversson, Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997, 7) define organizational culture simply in the way attitudes are expressed within a specific organization.

Furthermore, organizational culture has visible components like how do the businesses look and how do the employees dress. Mostly, however, it is about the attitudes, the communication and the setting of values. Each business owner defines and creates its own business culture. In addition, management style is an important part of organizational culture. In some cases the employees have a lot of flexibility and in others there is a tighter hierarchy at the work place. There can be values or goals like honesty, customer satisfaction, hard work, safety or integrity. (Hearst Newspapers 2016.) Organizational culture can be considered as national, but obviously there can be big differences within different companies in the same country.

To conclude, every culture has its own attitudes, beliefs and customs. Organizational culture, however, can be defined more specifically in the ways of how people in a company think, feel and act according to that culture's ideas and beliefs. Attitudes, communication and values are also an essential part of organizational culture.

### **3.2 Comparing Norwegian and Finnish working culture**

According to Juel (2013) Finland seems to have the most masculine business culture within the Nordic countries. This means for example that Finland has higher hierarchy level than its Nordic neighbours. Finnish people also work hard when they have the right motivation. (Juel 2013.) On the contrary, Norway is found to have a low power distance and the most feminine values compared to the other Nordic countries (Pohjasniemi 2014, 3).

What comes to management style there are some differences between Finland and Norway. Finnish managers value effectiveness and order and Finnish top executives have the reputation of being decisive at crucial times. (CDA Media 2013c; Lewis 2004, 93.) Well-organized systems are important and initiative is more useful in the research and development and design sides of business. Furthermore, modesty and ironic self-depreciation are respected in Finland and people don't like to show off. Managers have a subtle approach to management. Rather than motivating employees with positive feedback sessions managers are more likely to delegate by setting tangible tasks and defining standards by which the results can be quantifiably and non-emotionally measured. After the delegation of the tasks the managers would not expect or to be expected to examine the progress more closely. (CDA Media 2013c.) Traits that are most commonly attributed to Finnish leaders are for instance directness, honesty, rationality, task orientation, modesty, the use of silence, good listening and planning. Moreover, favouring action over words is a valuable Finnish quality. (Lewis 2004, 95, 97.)

On the contrary, according to Rolv Petter Amdam, a Professor in the BI Norwegian Business School, Norway has a very flat, egalitarian and participatory work culture (Sæther 2015). This means that bosses are seen more as coaches than as authoritarian figures. They are expected to act as equals with the other employees and their job is to encourage and motivate the workers and make sure the company resources are allocated effectively. (CDA Media 2013g.)

Finnpro Nordic Export Centre's leader Markku Mäenpää pointed out that Finns might run into cultural differences and misunderstandings in Norway. He noted that it is very important for Norwegians to know their business partner and there might even be a few meetings before starting to discuss anything concrete. Finnish people might misunderstand this and think that Norwegians are not interested. However, this is only due to the fact that Norway is extremely democratic and involves everyone in decision-making, which makes the process time-consuming. Mäenpää adds that Norwegians value highly their free time. Thus, there is no point in having a meeting on a Friday afternoon since people are most likely on their way home. (Salmi 2004.)

As mentioned, Norwegians want to hear everybody's opinion and seek consensus in the decision-making process. It is important to hear everybody's point of view and discuss all options. After, a management team together makes a decision and sticks with it. (The Norwegian School of Economics 2008.) Decision-making in the Finnish working culture is a bit different since it is not necessary to have a consensus when reaching important decisions. However, this doesn't mean that Finns would be very non-consultative. Rather, it is very important for them to precisely know their responsibilities and expect that they can make decisions within those responsibilities. The business structure works in a way that everyone knows what is expected from them and the organization can trust that their employees have enough skill to perform their tasks. In larger companies in Finland, a team of senior executives is more likely to make major decisions. This process might be slow and challenging, since Finns have a history of conservatism and change happens only by a deep consideration of all parties involved. (CDA Media 2013a.)

When greeting business associates in Norway a firm hand shake is appropriate. It is also important to stand up when being introduced. Titles are seldom used and after the first meetings it is even normal to use first names. These rules apply also in the Finnish greeting culture (World Trade Press 2010a, 2; World Trade Press 2010b, 2).

In both countries punctuality is very important and arriving late is considered impolite. If a person is late he or she should inform and explain it to the business contact. In Finland

people are expected to arrive not just on time but even a bit earlier to meetings. Accordingly, meetings begin and end on time and deadlines and targets are met with efficiency. (World Trade Press 2010a, 23; World Trade Press 2010b, 23.)

It is important to be well-prepared for business meetings both in Norway and in Finland (The Norwegian Trade Portal 2013a; Passport to Trade 2014). As mentioned, Norway's business culture is very consensus-oriented (Sæther 2015). Therefore, meetings can take time and involve a lot of open debate. Since everyone's opinion is important and to be considered, meetings sometimes seem to have a lack in drive and urgency. Opinions are also expected to be brought out with empirical evidence and details, which again might add the length of a meeting. (CDA Media 2013h.) Communication is direct and straightforward. It is okay and also expected to present disagreeing arguments when needed. Being objective and honest in discussions is also respected. There is no need to fill in a silence in a conversation and it is often used as thinking time. (CDA Media 2013f.) On the contrary, Finns like to go straight to the point and meetings are often quite short and efficient. Finnish communication is very direct. It is extremely important to keep promises and stay in agreed schedule. This creates trust that is essential for a good business relationship. (Passport to Trade 2014.) In both meeting cultures people are expected to speak one at a time and interrupting is considered as rude. Especially in Finland people are not expected to speak unless they have something concrete to contribute. Thus, silence is a big part of the Finnish communication. (CDA Media 2013b; CDA Media 2013d; CDA Media 2013f.) Furthermore, Finns don't expect people to respond immediately or spontaneously. Change is accepted as long as it is not imposed. (Lewis 2004, 83.) "In conversation with Finns, one should listen very carefully to what they say, as they tend not to repeat themselves unless to requested to do so" (Lewis 2004, 83).

As in Finland, body language in Norway is very limited and over-expressiveness can be seen as suspicious. Therefore, it is better to understate than overstate your case. Nonetheless, the minor visible or verbal reactions both in Finland and in Norway should not be confused with disinterest or lack of comprehension. In Finland a person's worthiness is based on his or her words and actions. Finns make an opinion of a person over a period of time. However, when they decide on somebody's favour, it means a relationship for life. (CDA Media 2013b; CDA Media 2013f.)

What comes to small talk, it is often quite limited in both of these goal-oriented business cultures (Sæther 2015; Uderingsministeriet 2012). Subjects that are often used for small talk in Norway are for example the weather and the interest and knowledge in winter

sports (The Norwegian Trade Portal 2013b). In Finland good topics are often general discussion on travel, sports, hobbies or politics. However, topics like money should be avoided. (Gesteland 2012, 347.)

Finnish people use humour quite a lot in business, even though it might not be completely understood by other nationalities. The humour is usually very brief and self-deprecatory. Finns joke about themselves more than any other nation. (CDA Media 2013b.) Also in Norway humour is quite acceptable in business situations (Gesteland 2012, 336).

Based on a research about business culture differences in the Nordic countries it is self-evident for Norwegians that group work can be effective (Juel 2014). However, a good team doesn't mean a group of individuals reporting to a strong leader. Instead, a well-functioning team has a team leader that offers continuous consultation and helps to develop the ongoing process. Team members are expected to perform their individual tasks with the minimum of supervision. (CDA Media 2013i.) According to Lewis (2004, 88) Finns generally work well in teams but frequently demonstrate individual lateral thinking and inventiveness. Like in Norway, the team leader in Finland is expected to give guidance and define the roles and goals for the team, after which letting the team to work out their individual tasks. In both countries too much interference from the team leader might be seen as criticism or doubt on the individual's competencies. (CDA Media 2013e; CDA Media 2013i.)

Dress code in Norwegian business is casual and business suits are more common within higher officials. People tend to dress for comfort, even in a bit sporty way. In offices, many men wear sweaters instead of jackets and ties. Also women dress informally. (Thompson 2006, 78.) Business dress-code is casual and informal also in Finland (Lewis 2004, 140).

What comes to women in business, both Norway and Finland have very gender-equal practices in the working life and culture. "Norway has one of the highest proportions of working women in the world, with about 69% of women employed compared to 74 percent of men." (World Trade Press 2010b, 24.) Norway ranks second on the gender-related development index and has some of the best gender-equal practices in the world. Women have all the same legal rights as men and for example all job advertisements are gender-neutral. Even though there are equal opportunities for men and women, Norwegian women still prefer traditional industries and work often in hotels and restaurants, education, social services and finance. (World Trade Press 2010b, 24.) Like in Norway, equality between men and women in Finland exists both in law and in practice. More than 40% of



Finnish women work in the public sector, which is also common in Norway. (World Trade Press 2010a, 24.)

### **3.3 Adapting to a new culture**

“Finally, cultures and nations are not synonymous, even though many scholars treat them as such” (Erez & Earley 1993, 38). Thus, even though Norwegian culture might not differ so greatly from the Finnish culture, it is still unavoidable to face challenges and obstacles while adapting to a new culture.

According to Adler (Pedersen 1995, 3) there are five stages for culture shock experience. This approach describes culture shock in a neutral manner mentioning both negative and positive consequences. The first stage is said to be the “Honeymoon Stage”. This is the initial contact where the newly arrived person experiences curiosity and excitement like a tourist. However this person’s identity is still rooted in the back-home setting. The second stage involves fragmentation of the old familiar circumstances. Moreover, the new culture’s requirements overwhelm the individual. When facing difficulties the individual typically experiences self-blame and sense of personal inadequacy. The third stage involves an increased ability to function in a new culture through reintegration to the new circumstances. Emotions associated with this stage are often anger and resentment towards the new culture that has caused difficulties and being less suitable than the old familiar one. It is difficult to help people in this stage of culture shock due to the outer-directed anger. The process of reintegration toward a gradual autonomy continues on the fourth stage. Now the individual is able to see good and bad elements in both the old and the new culture. Accordingly, a more balanced perspective helps the person to understand both the previous home and the new host culture. The fifth stage is called a mutual interdependence. In this phase the person has come fluently comfortable in both the old and the new culture and ideally achieved biculturalism. However, there is controversy about whether a person can achieve this stage of multiculturalism or whether it is an unreachable ideal. (Pedersen 1995, 3.)

### **3.4 Geert Hofstede’s cultural dimensions**

In the early 1970’s Dutch social psychologist Geert Hofstede and his colleagues conducted a major comprehensive study of work-related attitudes in more than 70 countries. The questionnaire survey was repeated after four years and the stable results showed the continual cultural nature of the differences found. (Hickson & Pugh 2012, 92.) Because of

his thorough study and the known cultural dimensions I decided to use this theory as a part of my study. Thus, it was interesting to see whether the results of my study would reflect his research results. Since I am using Hofstede's cultural dimensions in my study I think it is important to define the dimensions clearly and thoroughly.

Hofstede determined four basic dimensions in the differences between the national cultures. The four dimensions are power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity and uncertainty avoidance. Some years later Hofstede added a fifth dimension: long term versus short term orientation. (Hickson & Pugh 2012, 92, 94.) In 2010 a sixth dimension, indulgence versus restraint, was added to Hofstede's model (Communicaid Group Limited 2016).

As stated by Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010, 61) the first dimension, power distance, can be defined as the degree to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions in a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. Institutions mean different elements of a society like family, the community and school whereas organizations mean work places. As mentioned, this dimension is based on the values of the less powerful members. In countries where employees are not seen as afraid and bosses are not autocratic, employees often prefer a consultative decision making style. In these cases managers usually consult with subordinates before making decisions. On the contrary, the countries that have a big power distance, employees are often afraid to argue with their autocratic bosses. These employees are more likely to prefer an autocratic boss to a consultative one. (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov 2010, 60-61.)

The second dimension, individualism versus collectivism, is defined below.

Individualism pertains to societies in which the ties between individuals are loose: Everyone is expected to look after him- or herself and his or her immediate family. Collectivism as its opposite pertains to societies in which people from birth onward are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov 2010, 92.)

As quoted, the emphasis in the individualist cultures is on personal initiative and achievement. Everyone has a right for opinion and private life. In collectivist cultures there is a tighter social framework, where people are members of extended families in exchange for their loyalty. What comes to careers, the emphasis in the collective cultures is to belong and be a good member whereas the ideal in individualist cultures is to be a good leader. (Hickson & Pugh 2012, 93.)

The third dimension is masculinity versus femininity. When a society is masculine it means that emotional gender roles are clearly distinct; men are supposed to be tough, assertive and focused on material success, while women are supposed to be tender, modest and concerned with the quality of life. However, a society is feminine when emotional gender roles overlap and both genders are supposed to be tender, modest and concerned with the quality of life. Masculine values at work include an opportunity for high earnings and higher-level jobs, getting recognition when it is deserved and having a challenging work. Feminine values, however, are for example having a good relationship and cooperation with colleagues and having a secured job. (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov 2010, 139-140.)

Uncertainty avoidance can be defined as the degree to which the members of a culture feel threatened of unknown or ambiguous situations. This is expressed through nervousness, stress and the need for predictability. Therefore, cultures that have very strong uncertainty avoidance need a lot of written and unwritten rules. (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov 2010, 191.) At work this is coped with hard work, intolerance of deviancy and career stability. Employees feel that the company rules must be followed and they are prepared to work for the same company until retirement. On the contrary, in weak uncertainty avoidance cultures ambiguous and unknown situations are more easily accepted and situations are taken as they come. There is a very logical view on existing rules. Employees are not expected to work in a company all the way until retirement. (Hickson & Pugh 2012, 93.)

The fifth dimension is called long-term versus short-term orientation. Long-term orientated societies foster virtues that are oriented toward future rewards. Persistence, saving and thrift are important. On the other hand, short-term orientated societies foster virtues that are related to past and present. Respect for tradition, fulfilling social obligations and preserving one's face are important. (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov 2010, 239.) Additionally, abstract rationality, universal guidelines of what is good and evil, importance of this year's profits and the work values like leisure time, freedom, rights and thinking for oneself are characteristics of a short-term orientated ways of thinking. On the contrary, common sense, defining good and evil based on circumstances, importance of profits ten years from now, and main work values like learning, honesty, adaptiveness and self-discipline describe the long-term oriented dimension. (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov 2010, 251.)

The sixth dimension is indulgence versus restraint. According to Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010, 281), "Indulgency stands for a tendency to allow relatively free gratification of basic and natural human desires related to enjoying life and having fun." Its opposite

concept, restraint, reflects a conviction that these kinds of fulfilment needs should be controlled and regulated by strict social norms. More closely, fulfilment needs stand specifically for having fun and enjoying life, not fulfilling human desires in general. It is common in indulgent societies to have a higher importance of leisure and friends, a loose society, less moral discipline and higher optimism whereas restrained societies are more likely to have lower importance of leisure and friends, a tight society, moral discipline, cynicism and pessimism. (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov 2010, 281, 291.)

These six dimensions are a good basis for comparing different working cultures. Since Hofstede's study was conducted also in Finland and in Norway and each dimension has clear characteristics it is also easy to apply to my own study. Correspondingly, the next subchapter defines Finnish and Norwegian working culture according to these dimensions.

### 3.4.1 Finnish and Norwegian working culture

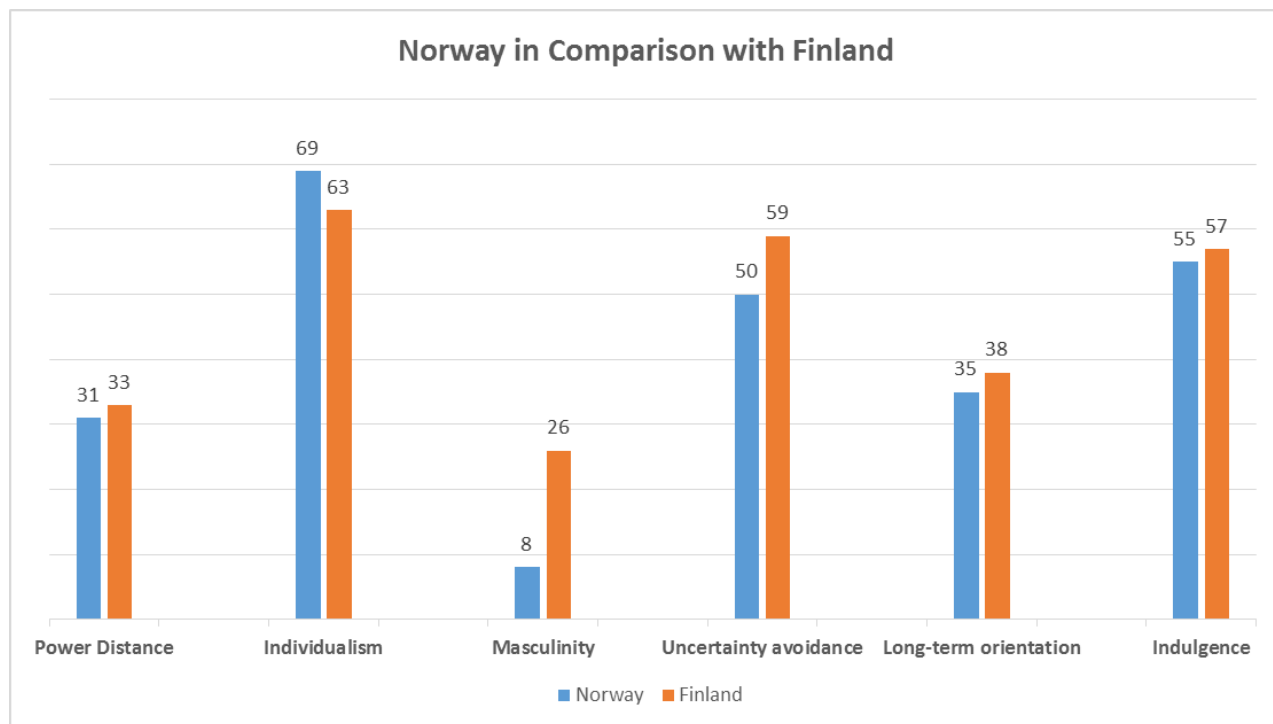


Figure 3. Norway in comparison with Finland based on Geert Hofstede's cultural dimensions (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov 2010, 59, 103, 143, 193, 194, 257, 283)

I have gathered the scores for the different cultural dimensions between Finland and Norway in figure 3 (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov 2010). The purpose of defining both Finnish and Norwegian working culture by these cultural dimensions enables me to see whether my study will reflect similar results. The meaning of figure 3 is to clarify how the Finnish

and Norwegian scores differ from each other. The scale where each country is scored is from 0 to 100. As seen in figure 3, there are generally not that big differences in the cultural dimension scores between Finland and Norway, except for the dimension of masculinity where Finland scores clearly higher than Norway. Hofstede Centre online has made a country specific analysis based on Hofstede's research and therefore offers more precise information on each individual country.

As stated in Hofstede Centre, Finland has a bit higher score in the first dimension of power distance. It means that Finland, with its score of 33, is considered to have a slightly bigger power distance than Norway with a score of 31. However, according to Hofstede Centre (2016a; 2016b) it is typical for both countries to have equal rights, direct and participative communication and decentralized power.

In individualism Norway scores 69 and Finland 63. Even though Norway has a bit higher score both societies are considered as individualists. This means that individual and personal opinions are important and valued. Also privacy is respected and there is a clear line between work and free time. Employer and employee relationship is based on mutual advantage and hiring and promoting is done only based on a person's merits. (Hofstede Centre 2016a; Hofstede Centre 2016b.)

The biggest difference between Finland and Norway can be seen in the dimension of masculinity versus femininity, where Norway has a score of 8 and Finland 26. Based on Hofstede's research Norway is the second most feminine society after Sweden. Softer aspects of culture are valued and for example taking care of others and the environment is important. Free time and flexibility are in high value. An effective manager is supportive and decision making is involving. Although, Finland has a higher masculinity score than Norway, it is still considered as a feminine society. Well-being is important and people don't show their status. Conflicts are solved by negotiation and compromising. (Hofstede Centre 2016a; Hofstede Centre 2016b.) However, compared to Norway Finland has more masculine characteristics.

On the fourth dimension, uncertainty avoidance, Finland has a bit higher score of 59 whereas Norway scores 50. Since Norway stands in the middle of the scale it doesn't indicate a clear preference in this dimension. However, Finland scores higher and thus has higher preference for avoiding uncertainty. It means that there is a bigger emotional need for rules and norms, people have an urge to work hard and punctuality is important. Innovation might be resisted. (Hofstede Centre 2016a; Hofstede Centre 2016b.)

On time orientation, Norway has quite a low score of 35. People are normative in their thinking and they want the absolute truth. Traditions are respected and the focus is to get quick results. Also Finland has generally speaking a low score of 38. However, compared to Norway it can be considered a bit more long-term oriented society. (Hofstede Centre 2016a; Hofstede Centre 2016b.)

What comes to indulgence, Norway has a medium score of 55. Finland's score, 57, is slightly higher. It can still be said that in both countries people feel like they can enjoy life and have fun. People have a tendency to optimism and leisure time is considered important. (Hofstede Centre 2016a; Hofstede Centre 2016b.)

### **3.5 Culture theories by Trompenaars, Hampden-Turner, Schein and Lewis**

There are also other good culture theories. The reason why I wanted to use a few different examples of these in my theoretical framework was to be able to offer a versatile entity of culture. Even though Hofstede's theory suited the best for my purposes I think it is important to present different theories in order to get a wider perspective on the matters and also being able to compare them.

According to Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997, 6) culture comes in layers and in order to understand it, it has to be peeled layer by layer. Based on their ideas, the outer layers of culture are different kind of products like skyscrapers or streets. These reflect the values and norms that are not clearly visible in a society, like material success and status. However, the real layers of the values are deeper and harder to identify. The core consists of unquestioned reality, it is the absolute presupposition about life. (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 1997, 6-7.)

Along with Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, a social psychologist, Edward Schein has a similar theory of culture with 3 different layers. According to him the first level of culture is called artifacts. These mean all visible organizational structures and processes. Simply, they are everything a person can hear, see and feel when being in an unfamiliar culture. The next layer is called espoused beliefs and values. It includes beliefs and values and reflects a person's assumptions on what is right or wrong. It is a sense of what should be, however, something that is distinct from what really is. They are adopted justifications and philosophies. The third and the deepest layer of culture according to Schein is underlying assumptions. It means unconscious feelings, beliefs, perceptions and thoughts that are taken for granted. It can be defined as the ultimate source of action and values. These

basic assumptions are often undebatable and extremely difficult to change. (Schein 2004, 25-31.)

These theories can be directly applied to a case where a Finnish person goes to work in Norway. Over time he or she will see and learn to understand all of these layers of culture. When starting the work in a new culture, the person will first notice the visible aspects of the work place. This is followed by the values and norms that are a bit hidden under the artifacts. Since the underlying assumptions are really difficult to change, the Finn most likely holds on to his or hers old assumptions. However, the person will supposedly learn at least how to understand these ultimate and unconscious beliefs and philosophies.

Like Geert Hofstede, also Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997) have a theory of cultural dimensions. The 7 cultural dimensions based on their model are

- universalism versus particularism
- individualism versus communitarianism
- specific versus diffuse
- neutral versus emotional
- achievement versus ascription
- sequential time versus synchronous time
- internal direction versus outer direction.

The first dimension, universalism versus particularism, can also be called rules versus relationships. This dimension shows how people judge other people's behaviour. Universalist means rule-based behaviour. It is often connected to equality so people falling under the same rule should be treated the same way. Scandinavian countries are typical universalist societies. In particularism relationships are more important than rules. The judgement is based more on circumstances than rules and people's behaviour might change depending on the situation. Businesswise, in universalist cultures agreements are more binding and the only truth is what has been agreed to. However, in particularistic cultures agreements are easily modified and there are a variety of perspectives to reality. (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 1997, 31, 48.)

Individualism versus communitarianism resembles a lot like Hofstede's dimension on individualism versus collectivism. Thus, individualism values freedom and making individual decisions whereas in communitarianism group is more important than the individual. (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 1997, 52.)

The dimension specific versus diffuse stands for how far people get involved. People in specific cultures keep work and personal life separate. Even though good relationships

are important people don't think they have a big impact on business objectives. People in diffuse cultures mix work and personal life and good relationships are essential for work objectives. Even outside work people spend time with colleagues and clients. (Mind Tools Ltd. 2016.) According to Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (2000, 140), "Diffuse thinking tends to stress the aesthetics, the harmony, and the closeness of relationships. Relationships of *amae* ("indulgent care") between seniors and juniors are especially prized."

The fourth cultural dimension, neutral versus emotional, describes how people express their feelings. Characteristics for a neutral culture are that people control their feelings and base their actions more on reason. In emotional cultures expressing one's feelings spontaneously is welcomed and accepted. (Mind Tools Ltd. 2016.) This dimension reminds a bit of Hofstede's dimension on indulgence, where in indulgent societies having fun and enjoying life is acceptable (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov 2010). However, the rather neutral Nordic countries are also quite indulgent societies.

The fifth dimension is called achievement versus ascription. Achievement cultures have a high emphasis on reputation and what one has accomplished. A person's worth is based on a person's abilities and success. On the contrary, ascribed status is often based on a person's origin, family or admiration. (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 2000, 189.) Position, power and title are important (Mind Tools Ltd. 2016). Both achievement and ascription cultures emphasize similar features that are considered masculine in Hofstede's research.

The sixth dimension, sequential time versus synchronous time, is about how people emphasize past, present and future. As stated by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2000, 295) sequential time is continuous and when it is gone it is lost forever. It is important to be punctual and keep to deadlines. Time is considered as "money". (Mind Tools Ltd. 2016.) The opposite is the synchronous time, which is circular or cyclical. Events and opportunities repeat themselves and past, present and future are knitted together. (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 2000, 295; Mind Tools Ltd. 2016.) This means that people are allowed to be flexible in projects and commitments (Mind Tools Ltd. 2016). This dimension scrutinizes time from another angle than Hofstede's dimension that concentrates on long and short-term orientation.

The seventh dimension by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner is internal direction versus outer direction. "While inner-directed cultures believe that "deep-down" we know what is right, that we have a soul or inner core of purity and integrity, outer directed cultures bid their members to emulate Nature – its beauty, majesty, force, seasonality, and ecology."



(Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 2000, 235.) In other words, people in inner-directed cultures believe that they can control the nature to achieve goals while in outer-directed cultures people believe that nature controls them. Consequently, one needs to work with nature to achieve goals. (Mind Tools Ltd. 2016.)

These seven cultural dimensions remind slightly Hofstede's six cultural dimensions. However, both theories have their own characteristics and examine culture from different angles. Therefore, I think presenting both models is important and gives a more versatile image of the different aspects of culture.

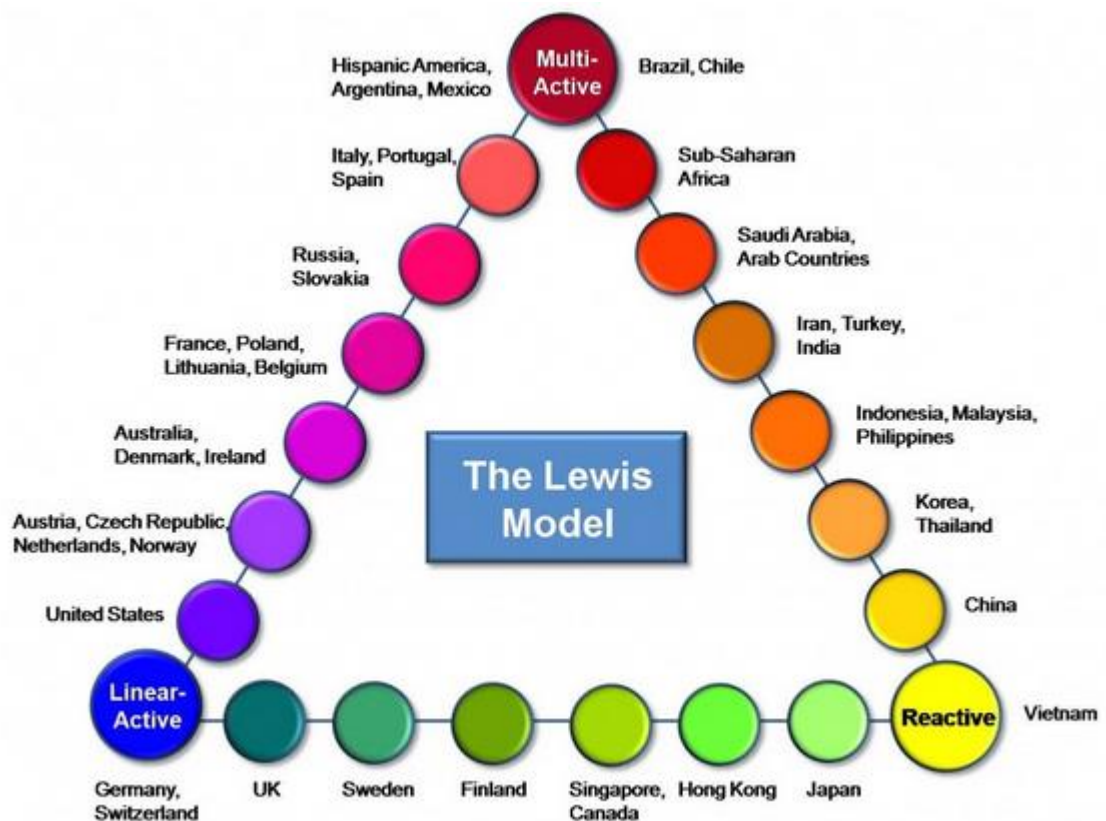


Figure 4. Edward Lewis' culture model of multi-active, reactive and linear-active cultures (Gerlach 2015)

Moreover, Edward Lewis has a culture model that puts culture to three different categories; to multi-active, reactive and linear-active cultures. People in linear-active cultures are described as polite but direct. They do one thing at a time and plan and organize things well. People are job and result-oriented and they have a moderate body language. In business, written word is important. As seen in figure 4, typical linear-active societies are Germany and Switzerland. However, both Finland and Norway are placed close to this category. (Gerlach 2015.)

Multi-active cultures are emotional cultures where feelings and people are more important than facts. People in these cultures talk a lot and use extensive body language. Only grand outlines are planned. In business, spoken word is important. This category includes Latin American countries such as Mexico, Brazil and Chile. (Gerlach 2015.) This culture group is very much like Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner's cultural dimension about emotional cultures that express their feelings openly.

Reactive cultures value respect and listening. These cultures are harmony-oriented, polite and indirect. These very people-oriented cultures respect face-to-face contact, especially in business situations. However, they mostly listen and have a subtle body language. Typical reactive cultures are Vietnam, China and Japan. (Gerlach 2015.)

Like mentioned, both Finland and Norway stand close to the linear-active category. Nonetheless, Norway is placed a bit towards multi-active whereas Finland is expressed to have more reactive culture features. Accordingly, Finnish people can be seen as not so talkative, yet good listeners with a subtle body language. In contrast, Norway seems to have a bit more people-oriented and emotional cultural characteristics.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

Defining culture and organizational culture is essential for my thesis topic. As discussed in this chapter there are various definitions and multiple theories about culture. Yet, it is most often the values, attitudes, beliefs and customs that separate one culture from another.

Culture can also be examined with different dimensions as it was presented not only by Hofstede but also by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner. These dimensions present various cultural features in order for different cultures to be compared. Moreover, a culture theory with different layers was presented by Schein alongside with Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner.

As discussed, Finnish and Norwegian working culture are not very different from one another. Although, they have their own cultural characteristics. Accordingly, I am interested to see whether my study will bring out these similarities and differences presented in this chapter.

## **4 Finnish employees' perceptions of the Norwegian labour market and working culture**

I chose to conduct my study by using a qualitative research method because I wished to acquire thorough information containing attitudes and feelings. In short, it suited the best for my objectives. I conducted my study by interviewing the participants and afterwards transcribing and analysing the data. This chapter includes the target and the objectives of my study as well as a discussion of the chosen research methods in more detail. It also covers how I made the analysis of the data and summarizes the results of my study.

### **4.1 The purpose and the objective of my study**

The purpose of my study is to find out what makes Norway an appealing place to work and what are the biggest motives for Finnish people to work in the Norwegian hotel, restaurant and tourism industry. Related to this, I want to study their adaptation to the Norwegian working culture. I intend to find out what has been the easiest and what have been the biggest challenges they have faced while working in Norway. When considering the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry in general, I think it is very interesting to find out why Finnish employees want to work in Norway instead of their own country. This means that I want to reveal the factors that make Norway an appealing work place. What comes to my commissioner, Haaga-Helia's International Office, I think the biggest relevance comes from the partnership and cooperation that the school has with its exchange schools and work placements in Norway. Also, the Swedish language education in Haaga-Helia is highly linked to my subject. Moreover, I want to study how the international work experience in Norway benefits an individual and how that person could later on use his or her acquired knowledge in Finland. In my opinion, this subject is very relevant for both the commissioner and the industry in general. Yet, this current subject hasn't been studied that much. The study can also be used for further study and analysis.

As mentioned, the main objective of the study is to answer the following three research questions I have set for my study:

- What are the factors that make Norway an appealing place to work?
- What are the biggest reasons for Finnish employees to have started working in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry in Norway?
- How do Finnish people adapt to the Norwegian working culture?

## 4.2 The chosen research method

There are many different research methods I could have considered for my study. However, I knew from the beginning that I wanted to not only get results but also to examine feelings and attitudes within those results. Since a quantitative research concentrates on measurable results and a big sampling I knew that it wasn't a research method that would suit my purposes. Instead, I wanted to have a smaller sampling in order to be able to concentrate more thoroughly on individual answers. To reach these goals, I chose to conduct a qualitative research. According to Saldana, Leavy and Beretvas (2011, 3) qualitative research is a term for a wide range of approaches and methods for studying natural social life. They state that the data in a qualitative research is primarily nonquantitative by character and it consists of textual materials like interview transcripts, field notes or video recordings that document different human experiences. (Saldana, Leavy & Beretvas 2011, 3-4.)

The goals of qualitative research are also multiple, depending on the purpose of the particular project. Outcomes are most often composed of essential representations and presentations of salient findings from the analytical synthesis of data and can include: documentation of cultural observations, new insights and understandings about individual and social complexity, evaluation of the effectiveness of programs or policies, artistic renderings of human meanings, and/or the critique of existing social orders and the initiation of social justice. (Saldana & al. 2011, 4.)

The reasons that I felt qualitative research is the best research method for my study was that it enables more in-depth information that takes into consideration the interviewee's personal feelings and attitudes. I think that it was essential for my study to involve the participants' feelings, opinions and attitudes in order to understand their experiences in Norway better. Instead of focusing on quantitative results like statistical explanations or summary characterizations qualitative research concentrates on hidden meanings, non-obvious features and complex descriptions. (Ten Have 2004, 5.) However, since my study is not very extensive I am not concentrating to such deep matters and as mentioned rather focus on the attitudes and feelings of the participants.

I had various options on how I wanted to conduct the qualitative study like using phenomenology, a grounded theory, ethnography, a narrative research or a case study (Merriam 2014, 21-22). Since most of the participants live in Norway, for example methods like observation on the spot would have been challenging. Therefore, after familiarizing myself to these different methods I decided that conducting a case study by interviewing the participants was the best option. "The case study approach allows in-depth, multifaceted explorations of complex issues in their real-life settings" (Crowe & al. 2011, 1). According to Saldana & al. (2011, 8) a case study is focusing on a single unit, like one person, group,

event or organization in its analysis. Instead of researching a large number of participants or settings to achieve a more representable range of perspectives, a case study enables in-depth examination. Nonetheless, even a single setting has diverse participants with different experiences and perspectives. (Saldana & al. 2011, 8-9.)

What comes to my study, the case can be considered as the Finnish people that have worked or are currently working in the Norwegian hotel, restaurant and tourism industry. However, as mentioned, even a single case can have a lot of different perspectives. Therefore, it is important to remember that it is not possible to make big generalizations based on my case study. Also according to May (2002, 211) no single interview can reveal more than a limited insight into general social processes. For the significance of them to be understood, a comparison of a series of interviews need to be made. (May 2002, 211.)

Even though my qualitative study is mainly a case study it also has slight characteristics of a mixed methods research. This means that a research combines both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis in order to get stronger support on the findings or to reveal complementary outcomes. (Saldana & al. 2011, 11.) The mixed methods in my study can be seen in the questions that ask the interviewees to rate their attitudes on a certain issue. I had 6 questions in total that required the participants to rate their answers either on a scale from 1 to 5 or by choosing an answer between given answer options. These questions were about language issues, salary and Hofstede's cultural dimensions. The reason I chose to have these type of questions was to be able to count an average of these answers and compare them quantifiably. Even though the number of participants is not enough for quantitative conclusions I am still able to make more versatile analysis based on these results.

Besides a case study and a mixed methods research it is also possible to find ethnographic characteristics in my qualitative research. This is due to the fact that ethnography usually concentrates on human society and culture. "Although culture has been variously defined, it essentially refers to the beliefs, values, and attitudes that structure the behaviour patterns of a specific group of people." (Merriam 2014, 27.) As mentioned before, the purpose of my study was to reveal the participants' feelings and attitudes related to Norwegian working culture.

Even though my qualitative research has ethnographic features and characteristics of a mixed methods research it is still clearly a case study that focuses on a certain group of people and the purpose of which is to find different experiences and perspectives. The

participants in my study can be seen as one case where I study those Finnish people's work experiences in Norway.

### **4.3 Carrying out the study**

I found the participants for my study through personal contacts and different Facebook groups meant for Finnish people living and working in Norway. I had been in contact with three of the participants before and during my exchange studies in Norway and knew that these people had also experience in working in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry. In addition, I looked for participants in Facebook groups by posting information about my study and the way of conducting it. I understand that choosing the participants among volunteer people might have a risk of having an impact on the answers. However, I think this is not really a problem since the purpose of the study is to give an overview of the industry and see whether the results reflect my theoretical framework. Consequently, the purpose was to get as wide range of different kind of workers within the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry as possible. Also, I tried to balance the number of men and women and younger and older participants.

After writing the theory part of my thesis I came up with the interview questions. All the questions were considered based on the theoretical framework and chosen since they are relevant for the chosen topic. The purpose with these questions was to see whether the results of my study would reflect these theories and if there would be certain matters that rise above others. For example some of the attraction factors in Norway are already visible in my theory part. I had 21 main questions that additionally included 16 sub questions. I divided my questions into three categories. The first category included basic questions about a person like age, home city, education, language skills and work experience. In this part I concentrated on the language questions since I feel that language issues are very relevant for my subject. The questions in the second category concentrated on Norway as a more appealing labour market. The focus was to find out why the Finnish people started working in the Norwegian hotel, restaurant and tourism industry. The questions in the third category were about similarities and differences between Finnish and Norwegian working culture and about adapting to the new culture. It also had a question based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions. In the end, I had two questions about the benefits of having international work experience from Norway. All my interview questions can be found in the Appendix of the thesis.

I conducted my study by having interviews through Skype. I used a semi-structured interview type which means that I asked the same questions in the same order from all the

participants. Although, there was room for some supplementary questions in case it felt appropriate and needed. In addition, most of the questions were open and the time used for each interview was approximately the same. (Gillham 2005, 70.) Gathering the data with interviews through Skype was the best and easiest option for my study, considering that most of the participants live in Norway. Interviewing is also less restrictive and standardized than using quantitative research. (Ten Have 2004, 5.) I liked the fact that there could be more discussion between the questions.

I had in total 11 interviewees that I had found either through personal contacts or Facebook groups meant for Finnish people living and working in Norway. All the participants were Finnish people that have either worked or are currently working the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry in Norway. Two of these participants wished to answer the questions in writing because of lack of time or possibility to use Skype. Due to this, I decided to send the interview questions beforehand to all participants. This way they all had a chance to prepare themselves before answering.

After my first interview I made slight changes to the interview questions and to the way of conducting it. Firstly, I noticed that explaining Hofstede's cultural dimensions myself wasn't the best way from the perspective of the participant. I felt like the participant didn't really understand the dimensions and forgot the main points quickly when listening. Thus, I needed to repeat them several times. Therefore, I decided to write a summary of Hofstede's cultural dimensions and let the participants read it themselves. Already on the second interview I noticed this method worked a lot better. I also made one change in the question 10. In the first interview I asked, "On a scale from 1-5, how much did the better salary level in Norway affect your choice?" but afterwards changed the word "choice" to "leaving" since it was a bit unclear for the participant and I wanted to make the question univocal. Both of these improvements were made to streamline the study and make it more convenient for me and the participants.

#### **4.4 Data collection method and analysis**

I recorded all the interviews and transcribed the data as soon as I could after conducting them. When transcribing the recordings I chose to concentrate on the contents of the answers rather than the repetition or hesitant words of the participants. In short, I didn't transcribe every single word or sign of hesitation like the multiple "umm" expressions. Yet, I didn't leave out anything of the actual content. After I was finished with all transcriptions I printed them and started the analysing process.

I started the analysis of the data by reading carefully all the transcriptions and colour coding them based on different themes. I also made remarks with a pencil and for example circled all numbers and answers that were somehow rated on a scale to find the answers more conveniently and quickly. After, I sketched a summary of the answers in order to see the matters more clearly. I organized all the main findings based on different themes like “reasons for working in Norway” or “cultural differences” before writing down the results. I also counted the average results for all the answers that the participants needed to answer with a number.

## **4.5 Results**

### **4.5.1 The participants**

As mentioned I had in total 11 participants. Seven of these were women and four were men. The age range of the participants was from 24 to 56 years. About a half of the participants (5) were from the northern part of Norway. However, the spread of the participants based on their place of domicile was quite big and there were also 2 participants from the south, one participant from the east and 3 participants from the west parts of Norway. More specifically, the participants have lived or live in Oslo and its surroundings, Trysil, Stavanger, Geiranger, Tromsø, Kirkenes, Alta and Nordkapp. All of the participants had an education within hotels, restaurants, tourism or international business. 8 of them had an education from a university of applied sciences and 3 from a vocational school. 4 of the participants had more than one degree.

All the participants have either worked or are currently working in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry in Norway in different positions as a waitress, assistant restaurant manager, receptionist, sales manager, tourism information worker, nature tourism worker, tour guide, chef or in other managerial positions. For three of the participants this was their first or only work experience in Norway’s hotel, restaurant and tourism industry.

### **4.5.2 Language**

The participants’ were asked to rate their Swedish skills when they arrived to Norway on a scale of moderate, satisfactory, good and very good. One person said to have had very good skills in Swedish. The majority, however, said that their skills were either good (5 of the participants) or satisfactory (4 of the participants). Only one participant answered this question with the option moderate. When asking on a scale from 1-5 how important it was to know Swedish to get a job in Norway the average of all the answers was 4, meaning



that it was important. As comments many of the participants said that one does not get a job in Norway without knowing Swedish or Norwegian. Also, the average rate to a question, "How much has knowing Swedish language benefited you when learning Norwegian language?" was 4. Thus, knowing Swedish has benefited them quite a lot. Yet, two of the participants also said that knowing Swedish has been confusing because it easily mixes with Norwegian. Consequently, it was mentioned that for a Swedish-speaking person, learning pure Norwegian would more likely be harder than for someone who doesn't speak Swedish as their native language.

When asked to rate their current Norwegian language skills on scale of moderate, satisfactory, good and very good, four participants answered to have very good skills. The biggest part of the interviewees (5) rated their skills as good. One participant rated the Norwegian skills satisfactory and one moderate. I also asked the participants how they have contributed to learning Norwegian. Six of the participants had taken part on a Norwegian course. However, all the participants said that they had mostly learned the language by doing. This means that they had studied it themselves by for example having Norwegian friends, talking a lot, writing, reading, watching TV-shows with Norwegian subtitles, going to hobbies and deciding not to use English language.

#### **4.5.3 The biggest reasons for working in Norway**

Clear themes rose around the question of what made Norway an attractive place to work before going there. The most important attraction factor based on my study is that Norway offers better salary than Finland. Furthermore, a new and interesting culture, beautiful nature and different free-time activities it offers were things that made Norway appealing for Finns. Moreover, better possibilities to find work from one's own field was mentioned. I also asked more specifically how much did the better pay level affect the person's decision to leave to Norway. On scale from 1-5 the average of all the participants' answers was 3. Thus, the salary had a rather big impact and it was the biggest attraction factor but it was never the main reason for the people to start working in Norway. When I asked the question related to the salary in Norway a few participants mentioned that they feel like they have achieved a better income level in Norway than they would have in the same job in Finland.

Based on my study I can name three main reasons why these Finnish people moved to Norway for work. Firstly, the people wanted to experience something new. They wanted to explore a new culture, get international work experience and learn a new language. Secondly, they found a partner and decided to live in Norway since it was more convenient

that way. Thirdly, it was simply due to the fact that they didn't find enough work from Finland and were able to get a job or more work from their own field in Norway. These three reasons came up clearly in the interviews. In addition, other reasons were for example staying in Norway after a student exchange period or leaving there after having heard good things from an acquaintance.

The majority of the participants thought that the bigger unemployment rate in Finland is encouraging Finnish people to work in hotel, restaurant and tourism industry in Norway. Six of the participants said that it will definitely encourage Finnish people and four participants said that it will encourage them to somewhat extent. What was common for these answers, however, was that the biggest obstacle for Finnish people to go to Norway was said to be the new language and the shyness of using it. Only one participant said that the bigger unemployment rate in Finland doesn't encourage Finnish people to work in Norway, due to the fact that it is not as easy to find work there as it was before.

#### **4.5.4 Working culture**

The biggest similarities in the Norwegian and Finnish working culture based on my interviews were the similar mind-set and values as both are Nordic countries, equality, labour legislation and the fact that employees can be themselves and speak directly about anything. In both working cultures people were seen as honest and they were said to follow the law and regulations.

On the contrary, the biggest difference between these working cultures based on my study was that Norway has a more relaxed working culture and that they don't take work as seriously as Finnish people. This relaxedness in the Norwegian working culture was described as employees not using their full potential by for example not prioritizing deadlines or taking responsibility. In addition, it was said that the amount of work done per day in Norway is less than what is expected in Finland. However, there were two exceptions. Two of the participants mentioned that people in their work place had been working very hard due to either seasonality or the fact that the business they had been working in was family-owned and therefore included more responsibility. It also came up in many interviews that Norway is a very family-oriented society where free-time is highly valued. In addition, Norway was mentioned to have lower hierarchy level than Finland. On the other hand, Finnish people were described as more hardworking and the Finnish working culture was said to be more efficient. With efficiency the participants meant for example that deadlines are always met on time, meetings are brief and go straight to the point and that employees get clear instructions and responsibilities. Moreover, there was mentioned to

be a more direct communication and better work orientation in Finland whereas Norwegians were said to be not as direct and employees were expected to learn their work more independently.

Based on my interviews, adaptation to the Norwegian working culture was easy for the Finnish people. Norwegians were seen as friendly, amenable and tolerant and there was already a multicultural work force in the Norwegian hotel, restaurant and tourism industry. Also the similar legislation and open work culture made the transition easier. What created problems in the adaptation was mainly the language and its many dialects. Some participants also mentioned that not being as open as their Norwegian colleagues was a challenge. In general, the Finnish people were annoyed by the fact that Norwegians don't always take things seriously or are not ready to take responsibility in the working life.

The participants said that the relaxed atmosphere at work was both a pro and a con. They liked the attitude that work is only a place where you earn your money and that it is not considered as the most important thing in life. On the other hand, the inefficiency and not doing things all the way was also annoying for the respondents, especially since they worked hard themselves. The participants felt that Norwegians also take days off and have holidays more than Finnish people. Also in these cases they had a feeling that everything stops and it is hard to get things done. On the contrary, it was seen as positive that people have proper breaks and always leave work on time. In addition, good salary and common meetings and gatherings between the employees were aspects that Finnish people liked in the Norwegian working culture.

The biggest things that came as a surprise to the Finnish people were the overall relaxed attitude and the less direct communication in Norway. It was for example mentioned that responsibilities and directions aren't stated as clearly in Norway as they are in Finland. Another thing that was unexpected for the participants was that there are so many different nationalities working in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry in Norway. A couple of participants said that they didn't really have surprises when entering to the Norwegian working culture.

Nine of the 11 participants said that finding work was easy. For example the Work and the Well-Being Administration NAV (*Arbeids- og velferdsforvaltningen*) and other employment agencies were mentioned as channels for finding work. The participants that said that finding work in the beginning was hard found a job after getting in to the culture and making local contacts.

Valued attributes among job seekers were mentioned to be mainly the same than in Finland like diligence, honesty and having initiative. Furthermore, it was considered important to be open, positive and have the right education and work experience. Many participants said that language skills are essential, especially what comes to knowing either Swedish or Norwegian language. Accordingly, there was a consensus about the fact that it is rather easy for a Finn to find work from the Norwegian hotel, restaurant and tourism industry if he or she has the acquired language skills. Considering that there are so many foreigners working in the industry in general, it makes it easier for Finns as well to find work there. However, two participants mentioned that it is no longer as easy to find work from Norway as it was before. There are a lot of Swedish people willing to work in the industry and they have a language asset over Finns. Thus, there is also competition among people coming from the Baltic countries. The participants thought that Norwegians perceive Finnish workers as hard working and diligent but also serious and shy. In general, they feel that Finnish employees are respected and that they have a good reputation in the working life in Norway.

#### 4.5.5 Hofstede's cultural dimensions

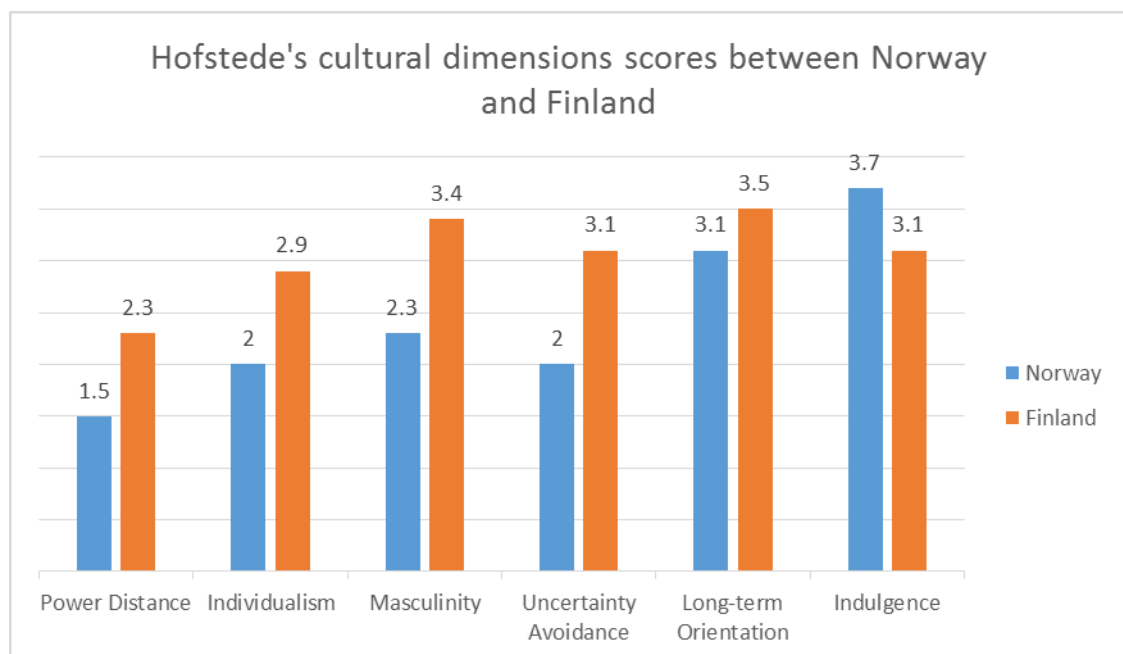


Figure 5. Hofstede's cultural dimensions scores on a scale from 1-5 between Norway and Finland based on my study

Above in figure 5 I have collected the average results of the question that asked the participants to rate Norwegian and Finnish working culture based on Geert Hofstede's cul-

tural dimensions. The scale the participants used was from 1-5. I chose to present the figures with one decimal since this gives more precise answers and rounding up the figures would have hidden some slight differences. As seen in the figure, there are not big differences in the scores of different dimensions between Finland and Norway. However, the minor variations tell about the cultural differences between these two countries. I didn't require additional comments besides the rating from the participants but I still got some reflections upon the matters.

In the first dimension of power distance, the participants rated Finland a bit higher than Norway. This means that they felt like there is more hierarchy in the Finnish working culture. However, as in many of the other dimensions the participants said that the answer depends greatly on the specific work place. All in all, it was mentioned that the power distance is very similar in both countries.

Further, Finland was rated to be have more individualist working culture than Norway. As comments the participants enhanced the fact that Norway is a very family-oriented country. The biggest differences between the countries, however, can be seen between the scores of masculinity and uncertainty avoidance. The reason the participants described Norway as more feminine was that the quality of life is considered as the most important thing whereas in Finland for example hard work is very highly valued. Moreover, the participants thought that uncertainty avoidance is bigger in Finland. Even though both countries were said to have many rules, Finnish people were said to follow them more precisely while Norwegians don't like to stress too much. Norway was also rated to have a slightly shorter time orientation but there was no additional comments about this dimension.

What comes to the dimension of indulgence, the participants thought that Finland has a more restrictive culture and it is for example more discreet to show that one is doing well financially. In Norway, however, free time was said to be very important. Furthermore, people were mentioned to have more money to spend on different activities. Yet, the participants think that people are able to spend money freely and have fun in both countries.

#### **4.5.6 The benefit of international work experience**

The participants think that their work experience in Norway will benefit them in many ways in the future. Firstly, they emphasized the new language skills and the international work experience that also employers appreciate. As individuals they have developed by becoming more confident, daring and open. In addition, they put a high value for having friends

from different cultures. Also opening one's doors to Nordic cooperation was mentioned. Overall, they consider having a more broad-minded perspective on life.

In the Finnish hotel, restaurant and tourism industry the participants wish to see more relaxed ways of working instead of being so stiff and official. With this they mean for example balancing the work and free time. Another thing they would like to see more in the Finnish working culture are team meetings where all the employees can participate.

#### **4.6 Summary**

The purpose of my study was to find out what makes Norway an appealing place to work, what are the biggest reasons for Finnish people to have started working in the Norwegian hotel, restaurant and tourism industry and how they have adapted to the Norwegian working culture. As mentioned, I conducted a qualitative research case study in order to acquire thorough information. I chose the participants among employees from different positions within the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry in order to get a wider perspective on the studied themes. I conducted my study by interviewing the participants through Skype and afterwards transcribing and analysing the data.

All participants underlined the importance of knowing either Swedish or Norwegian language in order to find work in Norway. Consequently, knowing Swedish language has benefited them quite a lot while searching for a job and working in Norway. Most of the interviewees said that they had learned Norwegian language simply by doing; speaking, reading and otherwise using the language actively.

The biggest factor that made Norway attractive for the participants before going there was the better salary level. Also the new and interesting culture, beautiful nature and more possibilities in the labour market were mentioned as appealing factors. The main reasons for the Finnish people to work in Norway were that they wanted to develop themselves and get new experiences, they decided to settle in Norway due to a relationship or they had a better chance finding work from their own field in Norway than in Finland.

The biggest similarities in the Norwegian and Finnish working cultures were found to be the similar mind-set and values as both are Nordic countries. In addition, the labour laws and regulations were said to be quite alike. The participants also said that employees both in Finland and in Norway are considered as equals and everyone can be themselves and speak directly about anything. Based on the interviews, the biggest differences in these working cultures were that Norwegians' attitude towards work is more relaxed and that

they don't take it as seriously as Finns. In addition, there perceived to be lower hierarchy level in Norway. Finns were considered as more hardworking and efficient individuals who have a more direct way of communicating.

The adaptation to the Norwegian working culture was said to be easy for the Finnish people. What made it easy was the multiculturalism among the workforce and the openness and tolerance of the Norwegian people. The biggest challenges seemed to be the language and its dialects and getting annoyed by the fact that Norwegians were too relaxed in the working life and therefore didn't use their full potential. Consequently, this relaxedness was felt both as positive and negative. The Finnish people liked the fact that work was not the most important thing in a person's life and that things like free time and family were highly valued. Yet, the relaxedness was also seen as inefficiency and laziness.

There was a consensus that it is rather easy for a Finn to find work from Norway as long as he or she knows Swedish or Norwegian. As individuals, these participants have developed by learning a new language and becoming more open and confident. In Finland they wish to see a more relaxed attitude in the working life and more team meetings among employees.

## **5 Discussion**

This chapter begins with a short introduction to the background of my thesis process. Further, it goes more in detail to the results of my study and contains analysis and reflection on for example their usefulness and validity. I will present conclusions based on the results of the study and introduce improvement ideas and suggestions for further research. In the end of this chapter I evaluate the whole thesis process and my own learning.

### **5.1 Introduction to the background**

I chose this subject since it is very interesting for me. I did my student exchange in Norway and have visited the country many times. Therefore, I already had a good idea of the Norwegian culture and was interested to find out whether the results of this study would reflect my own experiences. Also, the fact that I will most likely move to Norway and work there in the future makes this study very beneficial for me. Moreover, I feel like this subject is very current but hasn't been studied that much yet. As mentioned before, it is also possible to use this thesis for further study and analysis.

### **5.2 Analysing method**

For analysing the data I have used both content analysis and discourse analysis. Mostly, however, I concentrate on content analysis since it is a good method for examining recorded content and classifying and transcribing it into categories. Moreover, reliability is one of the most characteristic attributes in this methodology. In short, this method suits well for analysing qualitative data. (Wang 2011, 2.) Discourse analysis is able to recognize and interpret non-literal meanings like assumptions and attitudes. However, this method requires first a theoretical analysis in order to give more accurate interpretations. (Sayago 2015, 3.) To conclude, I have made most of my analysis using content analysis, yet sometimes applying also the discourse analysis what comes to interpreting the feelings and attitudes within the results.

### **5.3 Analysis of the results**

#### **5.3.1 Validity based on my sampling and research methods**

When considering the trustworthiness of my study there are a few things that might affect the validity of my results. First of all, the number of men and women participants wasn't completely in balance and having more women participants might have an impact on the



answers. However, the point of my study was not to separate the results based on gender but to rather give an overview on the matters. What comes to the age of the participants I think I managed to find a good sampling since the participants were both young and a bit older differing on a scale from 24 to 56 years old. I think the older participants had more experience in working in Norway and for example talked more about Norway's economic situation and the labour market. Therefore, getting both a young and a bit older perspective on these matters was important. Moreover, I got more versatile results due to the fact that I had participants from all over Norway and not just from a certain area. In addition, the participants have experience from different positions within the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry which gives a wider perspective on the matters. Also the fact that the respondents have different educations shows that there are many different paths to similar jobs in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry which again adds the comprehensiveness of my sampling.

Two of the participants answered the questions in writing due to lack of time or problems with Skype. Accordingly, the answers of these two participants were shorter than the answers of the participants I interviewed. However, they answered all the questions clearly and I was able to examine their answers as well as the other participants' answers. Consequently, I don't think that there was a risk of misinterpretation of the answers of these two participants.

For some of the questions I offered answer options like a scale from 1-5 or options between moderate, satisfactory, good and very good. The reason I decided to use these was that I wanted to make it more clear for both the participants and for myself. This enabled the participants to answer only with one word or number which again made it a lot easier for me when analysing the results. Additionally, the ready answer options enabled me to count the average figures of these answers and to compare them more easily. I think it also adds the validity of the results since the participants needed to answer some questions in a certain way and could not wander from the subject.

### **5.3.2 Language**

Based on the results to the language questions in my study it seems necessary to know either Swedish or Norwegian when looking for a job in Norway. Finnish people have an asset in this matter since they all learn Swedish at school. Yet, it seems like getting used to the many different dialects in Norway will take a while. However, based on the results learning Norwegian does not seem too challenging for a Finn and is adopted best by us-

ing the language actively in different situations. Besides getting a job the Swedish language skills have benefited the respondents by learning Norwegian language more easily and in general adapting to the culture. Obviously, it helps to know one Scandinavian language when learning another. In conclusion, it can be said that Swedish language skills are a great asset for a Finnish individual seeking for a job in Norway.

### **5.3.3 The biggest reasons for working in Norway**

Based on my study the biggest attraction factors in Norway were better salary, new and interesting culture, beautiful nature and better possibilities to find work. However, the main reasons why Finnish people have left for Norway for work was wanting to experience something new, due to a relationship that worked more conveniently in Norway or not finding enough work from their own field in Finland. Even though the participants rated the importance of better salary for leaving to Norway as 3 on average it means that it is important but was never the main reason for these people to start working in Norway. Yet, a few of the participants discussed the issue that Norway has a better salary than Finland. They said that even though Norway has higher price level they still feel like they have more money to spend on things than they would have in Finland. This reflects to what I wrote about salaries and purchasing power in the theoretical framework. It seems that it is possible to achieve a better income level when working in the same job in Norway than in Finland.

Both the attraction factors and the main reasons for going to Norway came up repeatedly and clearly in my study and I could easily define the few most important themes around these results. However, these would be good subjects for further investigation and very suitable for quantitative research methods. It would be interesting to see whether a quantitative research with a larger sampling would reflect similar answers. Nevertheless, the biggest attraction factors like better salary, different culture and better economic situation on the labour market are also themes that were covered in the theoretical framework.

The majority of the participants thought that the bigger unemployment rate in Finland is encouraging Finnish people to work in Norway. Nevertheless, the biggest obstacle for Finns to leave to Norway was said to be the new language and the timidity of using it. One participant said that the bigger unemployment rate in Finland doesn't encourage Finnish people to work in Norway since it is not as easy to find work there as it was before. This is due to the drop in the oil prices and the increased unemployment rate as was discussed in the theory part of my thesis. Although, the majority of the participants still felt that there

are work possibilities available in Norway and they hope Finns to realize that.

#### **5.3.4 Working culture**

Having spent time in Norway myself I can agree with the results about cultural similarities and differences between Finland and Norway. The issue that Norwegians are more relaxed in the working life and that there is less stress than in Finland came up in 10 of the 11 interviews. Thus, the repeatability of these answers adds their validity. The relaxedness was also one of the first things the participants mentioned when being asked about cultural differences. I think it was interesting how it rose above anything else and was visible between the lines too. This matter seemed to bring out a lot of feelings and attitudes among the participants.

Another answer I got repeatedly was that even though there are some differences in these working cultures it is still easy for a Finn to adapt to the Norwegian working culture. Thus, both countries were said to have similar mind-set and values. What made the adaptation easy was that there was already a multicultural work force in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry and that Norwegians were seen as open, friendly and tolerant. The respondents also feel like they are able to speak freely about anything and be themselves the same way as in Finland. In addition, it was easy for the Finns to adapt to the similar labour legislation as it was already discussed in the theory part of my thesis. Moreover, the fact that the adaptation was easy came up also in the bachelor's thesis of Teressa Mäkäläinen who studied Finnish people's work experiences in Norway (2013, 2). It also makes sense that adapting to this rather similar working culture would be easy for a Finnish person.

The biggest challenge in the adaptation process was said to be the new language and its many dialects. This result was apparent also in the study of Mäkäläinen (2013, 2). This repeatability of the results adds their validity. Another challenge in the adaptation process was said to be the relaxedness in the Norwegian working culture. There was irritation around the issue that Norwegians don't always take things seriously or are not ready to take responsibility in the working life. These annoyed feelings were visible throughout all the interviews. Yet, the relaxedness and not taking work too seriously was also seen as one of the most positive things in the Norwegian working culture. Furthermore, I could once again see the results of my study reflecting the theory of my thesis. For example the similar labour laws and the many dialects used in Norway were things that were discussed in the theoretical framework.

I wrote about culture shock experience in my theoretical framework. Only one participant mentioned culture shock when talking about his experiences when adapting to Norwegian culture. He mentioned that the culture shock took about three months and was mostly due to the new language. Even though he had good Swedish skills when arriving to Norway it was challenging for him to adapt to the Norwegian language and its dialects. For sure all the participants have experienced even a slight culture shock experience in Norway. Maybe they are not just able to define the different stages of the culture shock as they didn't find it that difficult or they dealt with it rather fast.

The relaxed atmosphere at work was said to be both positive and negative. The positive side of it was that in Norway work is only seen as a place where a person earns his or her money and it is not taken as seriously as in Finland. However, what Finnish people didn't like about the relaxedness was the inefficiency that it causes. This was annoying for the respondents who worked hard and put effort on their work all the time. Like already mentioned in the discussion, this theme came up very distinctly in the results. Norwegians were also mentioned to take more days off and have more holidays than Finns. Also in these cases the participants felt like it is hard to get things done while nothing is happening. On the other hand, the participants really liked that they have proper breaks and that everyone leaves work on time. For instance one participant mentioned that it is nice to be able to sit down and eat one's lunch. Therefore, it seems that regulations about working times and rest breaks discussed in the theoretical framework apply in the Norwegian working life. Further, good salary and meetings where everyone can participate were things that Finnish people liked in the Norwegian working culture. The participants said that they enjoy that everybody's opinion is heard and taken into consideration. This describes well the consultative style Norwegians have in their decision-making process. Also this feature of the Norwegian working culture was covered in the theoretical framework.

The relaxed attitude in Norway was also one of the biggest surprises that the Finnish people had in the Norwegian working culture. As a Finn this reflects my own experiences. When staying in Norway for the first time during my studies the relaxed mind-set surprised me as well, since I thought Norway would have as efficient-oriented culture as Finland. What was interesting about this issue was that it always evoked feelings and attitudes among the participants. Other things the respondents were surprised of were that there is not as direct communication in Norway than there is in Finland and that there is so many different nationalities working in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry. However, this multiculturalism didn't come up in the theories I used during my thesis process. Hence, it was an unexpected finding for me as well. Then again, it is not unexpected that good salary, good working conditions and possibility to find work easier pull workers from other

countries. Another unexpected finding for me was that Norwegians value their free time so much that they sometimes might leave work earlier on Friday's or otherwise change the work schedule more convenient. I don't know how this works in practise, since it sounds a bit strange that employees can just show up later or leave earlier than agreed. Maybe this means that there are more flexible rules about this than there is in Finland. It is also possible that this only applies to a certain group of people who for one reason or another have the possibility to do that. It also came up in the interviews there is no kind of exploitation of employees in Norway. In general, I got a feeling that Finnish employees would be more prepared to work overtime without questioning it, whereas Norwegians are seldom even expected to do so.

The job seeking process was rather easy for the participants, most of whom had been looking for a job through an online channel. There seemed to be a consensus that it is quite easy for a Finn to find work from the Norwegian hotel, restaurant and tourism industry as long as they have good skills either in Swedish or in Norwegian. Also, it seems like Norwegians don't want to work as much in this industry which means that Norway also needs workers from other countries. However, there is competition for example from Sweden and nowadays also from the Baltic countries, which makes it harder to get a job than it has been before. Overall, the job seeking process works the same way as in Finland and seems to have been rather easy for all the participants. The ones that had difficulties in the beginning found a job after getting to know the culture, the language and the locals better.

Attributes that are respected in a job seeker in Norway were said to be very much similar to the ones in Finland like being hardworking, positive, open and having self-initiative. In addition, education and work experience from one's own field were said to be important. The participants are under the impression that Finnish workers have a good reputation in Norway. Finns are seen as hardworking, honest and conscientious but also serious and shy. Consequently, the fact that Finnish people have a good reputation improves their possibilities to find work. However, the results to the question of how Finnish people are seen as workers in Norway are based on personal opinions and there might also be a risk of stereotyping. Thus, the participants who didn't really know what to answer to this question maybe used some sort of stereotypical adjectives like hardworking, conscientious or shy. Anyhow, the results to these questions are completely based on personal experience and therefore cannot be generalized. The results that I got can only be applied to the interviews that I had.

### 5.3.5 Hofstede's cultural dimensions

In one of the questions I asked the participants to rate Norwegian and Finnish working culture based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions. Some of these results were visible also in Essi Pohjasniemi's bachelor thesis where she studied the cultural differences between Finnish, Swedish, Norwegian and Danish office managers. Also she found in her study that Finland has bigger power distance than Norway. (Pohjasniemi 2014, 3.) This means for example that Finnish working culture was seen more hierarchical.

Finland was also rated to have a more individualist working culture than Norway. The biggest differences between these working cultures, however, were in the dimensions of masculinity and uncertainty avoidance. Norway was described as a more feminine society where the quality of life is the most important thing whereas in Finland hard work is highly valued. Also Pohjasniemi found in her study that Norway has the most feminine values compared to the other Nordic countries. (Pohjasniemi 2014, 3.) The fact that both my and her study reflect similar results adds their repeatability and validity.

Moreover, Finland was rated to have bigger uncertainty avoidance meaning that Finnish people were said to follow rules more precisely while Norwegians were said not to stress about things as much. In addition, Norway seems to have a slightly shorter time orientation than Finland. Norway was also said to have a more indulgent culture where free time is very important. Yet, people are able to have fun in both countries.

When comparing my results to Hofstede's earlier research results I can see similarities but also differences. In the dimensions of power distance, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance and long term orientation I got similar results to Hofstede, meaning that Norway and Finland were rated similarly compared to each other. Both according to my study and Hofstede's research results, the differences between Norway and Finland were not big. Yet, in my results there can be seen a bigger difference between the countries in the dimensions of power distance, individualism and uncertainty avoidance. However, since the participants in my study have not considered the scale from 1-5 with other country examples than Finland and Norway it is possible that they have sometimes overestimated their answers. If I would have included a third country with a completely different culture the participants would probably have seen the perspective on the scale more clearly.

What comes to the dimensions of individualism and indulgence I got different results than Hofstede. This actually surprised me because I personally would answer to these two dimensions the same way as my participants did. Based on my experiences Finnish people

seem more individualist than Norwegians who are for instance extremely family-oriented. In my opinion also the fact that Norwegians don't take work as seriously as Finns and that they value greatly their free time shows that they have more of an indulgent culture than Finland. In addition, it is for example more discreet to show that one is doing well financially in Finland. Nevertheless, Hofstede got opposite results. This is interesting since I expected to see even more reflection of Hofstede's results. However, this is only my personal opinion on the matters. Naturally, the results are also affected by the industry the research was made in and the size of the sampling.

Overall, the question about Hofstede's cultural dimensions turned out to be very difficult for the participants. Some of them hadn't even heard of Hofstede and his culture theory which made it important to define all the cultural dimensions carefully before asking the question. Even though I let the participants read the definitions themselves I still feel that they understood them differently from one another. Also, it is possible that a couple of the participants put same scores for both countries just because they didn't fully understand the idea of the dimensions or they didn't have enough work experience from both countries to compare them properly. Thus, all these dimensions are very much linked to the specific work place and different personalities and therefore can reflect big changes in the answers. This means that the answers of this question might not be the most valid. However, I think I still got interesting answers and was able to compare them to the research results Hofstede got earlier.

### **5.3.6 The benefit of international work experience**

The biggest benefit of international work experience in Norway was said to be the new language skills. In addition to this, the respondents feel that they are more open and confident and are happy to have friends from other countries. In general, they have a wider perspective on life. Having international work experience myself I can definitely agree to all these things. Even though I haven't worked in Norway I still think that whenever a person works in another culture he or she learns tremendously. This kind of experience is priceless and also valued by employers.

The participants hope that Finnish people would relax more in the working life and they feel that there should be more balancing of work and free time. Also team meetings where everyone can participate should be included more in the Finnish working culture. It is true that relaxing every once in a while is very important. Like the participants said, having a good balance between work and free time and being able to relax more is something Finnish people could do better. Moreover, when I think about my own work experiences in

the Finnish hotel, restaurant and tourism industry it is also true that there could be more meetings where everyone could share their opinions. Sometimes it feels like only the management level employees make most of the decisions even though many of those decisions have a big impact on the work of their subordinates.

#### **5.4 Development ideas and suggestions for further research**

As mentioned also before a quantitative research method would suit well when finding out the biggest attraction factors in Norway and the biggest motives for Finnish people to work there. Further, this could be applied to Hofstede's cultural dimensions. It would be interesting to see whether a quantitative research method with a larger sampling would reflect similar themes.

When considering the question about Hofstede's cultural dimensions I think it would be better to ask the participants to rate their answers on a scale from 1-10 instead of 1-5. I think this would create a more clear perspective and therefore enable more valid results. As I mentioned earlier, the participants didn't fully understand the perspective of the scale from 1-5 and sometimes overestimated their answers. With a bigger scale slight differences between these two working cultures would come up more clearly. Maybe also mentioning example countries that stand in both ends of the scale would clarify the overall perspective. In addition, a scale from 1-10 would be more easily applicable to Hofstede's research results since he used a scale from 1-100.

Another idea for further research could be to choose only one of the themes that I had in my study and make a more thorough qualitative research about that. In this kind of qualitative research for example the adaptation to the culture could be the most central phenomenon and it could be examined more closely. Moreover, using different kind of data collection methods like observation or conducting group interviews might bring out new angles to the studied matters.

A similar qualitative research to mine could also be made in a single organisation to see whether the results differ from the results of this study. Although, the challenge would be to find a big enough organisation that has enough Finnish employees. One idea could be to conduct it in a hotel chain. Of course it would also be possible to include participants with different nationalities to see how their perspective differs from the Finnish people's perspectives. Especially since there is a multicultural work force in the Norwegian hotel, restaurant and tourism industry, this would bring out interesting answers.



Since my study was rather small and most of the answers were based on personal experiences I cannot generalize any of the answers. The purpose of the whole process, however, was to get a good overview on the studied subjects rather than generalize the results. Overall, I think I got reliable and repeated results that contain feelings and attitudes. Thus, this was the main research objective that I wanted to achieve with my qualitative research method. The results of my study also reflect the theory basis I wrote for my thesis. I think the results are applicable for further research as well.

## **5.5 Benefit for the commissioner and the industry**

One of the benefits for the commissioning party is to realize the importance of the versatile Swedish language education in Haaga-Helia. The fact that knowing Swedish has benefited the respondents by getting a job from Norway, learning Norwegian language more easily and in general adapting to the Norwegian culture emphasizes how valuable it is for a Finn to know Swedish. Also, knowing and understanding Norwegian culture better will help the cooperation and the communication between the commissioner and its Norwegian contacts. Knowing that Norwegians are more relaxed in the working life might for example cause longer answering times for emails. Overall, the International Office is now more aware of these subjects and is able to forward this information to the students of Haaga-Helia. In addition, knowing that international work experience develops individuals in becoming more open and confident is a good reason for the commissioner to encourage the students of Haaga-Helia to study and work abroad, or more specifically in Norway.

My thesis shows that there are work opportunities available in Norway. This is positive since Finland is struggling in the current economic situation. Since the adaptation to the working culture seems to be rather easy, a Swedish speaking Finn might find more job opportunities in the Norwegian hotel, restaurant and tourism industry. This can be seen beneficial for the individuals who then get international work experience and learn a new language. Thus, these individuals will most likely have a better chance in finding work in Finland in the future due to these learned abilities. On the other hand, this means that Finland would lose some of its professional work force to Norway. Then again, if there are simply not enough jobs in Finland this shouldn't be an issue at the moment. Another positive fact about working in Norway is that it supports Nordic cooperation. The mobility between Finland and Norway is very beneficial and brings these two countries closer together.

## 5.6 My own learning during the thesis process

My thesis subject is very interesting and personal for me. I did my exchange studies in Norway and have visited the country many times. Since I have a Norwegian boyfriend I am very interested in the culture and have plans on working there myself. Consequently, I have had a very good motivation throughout the whole thesis process. Besides being beneficial for the commissioning party and the industry in general I knew the thesis would also be valuable for me and my professional development.

Overall, my thesis process went according to plans. I started thinking about the subject in the autumn of 2015 and decided on a final topic before Christmas. At that time I also started looking for participants for my study whom I was able to collect quite quickly. I spent about a month writing the theoretical framework. I felt like this part of the thesis was the most challenging and time consuming for me. I spent a lot of time finding good and reliable academic sources in order to create a profound entity. As I mentioned earlier, I needed to make slight changes in the research questions after my first interview. The purpose was to streamline the process and make the questions clearer for both the participants and myself. Writing the results didn't take long since I had already been going through the main findings on my mind. The discussion part felt a bit challenging since at first I wasn't exactly sure how to start analysing the results. However, after asking for advice from my supervisor and reading instructions for the discussion part I got a clear idea of what to do. It was also interesting to examine my research process as a whole and analyse its validity.

Overall, the schedule I made for myself for this process was realistic and precise. Yet, I still wanted to leave some space for possible changes or risks that might occur during the process. Therefore, I didn't want to make the schedule too tight and for example decided on what to do on a monthly level. I also noticed that I enjoyed the thesis process since I made enough time for it. To conclude, I can say that the time management during my thesis process was successful.

I think Hofstede's culture theory is presented well in the theoretical framework of my thesis and I had a good idea of applying it also to my study. Yet, its implementation could have been better. Having a bigger scale for the answers and defining the dimensions more thoroughly might have made a difference to the results. I still wouldn't say that this was a complete failure in my study. After all, I managed to get answers to this question and was able to compare them to Hofstede's earlier research.

In general, having more time to finalize the research questions might have erased the fact that I had to change them after the first interview. Due to my schedule I had agreed the interviews quite early beforehand and therefore realized that there wasn't too much time to reflect the interview questions. Although, making those slight changes to the interview questions was part of my learning process when making a qualitative research.

I feel like I have learned tremendously while working on my thesis. I now have the skills to perform a small research. In addition, I have learned a lot about information seeking and using academic sources. In general, I have also learned about the Norwegian and Finnish economies, these countries' hotel, restaurant and tourism industries and other themes related to my subject. During the interviews I learned about the qualitative research methods and how to make slight improvements to them if needed. Additionally, the discussion part of my thesis developed my analysing skills.

All in all, even though the thesis process was sometimes very stressful I found it also very interesting. It required a lot of individual thinking and therefore I feel like I learned more during this process than in some of Haaga-Helia's courses that only concentrated on group work. I knew from the beginning that I wanted to write thesis alone since I enjoy individual work and wanted to be able to decide on all the aspects of the thesis myself. I wanted to create a well-written entity of all the elements around my chosen topic. In my opinion I got fascinating results that live up to the expectations and the purpose of my study and benefit the commissioning party.

## 6 References

Alverson, M. 2002. Understanding Organizational Culture. SAGE Publications Ltd. United Kingdom.

City of Helsinki 2014. Kulttuurit ja uskonnot Suomessa. URL: <http://www.infopankki.fi/fi/tietoa-suomesta/perustietoa-suomesta/kulttuurit-ja-uskonnot-suomessa>. Accessed: 30.3.2016.

CDA Media 2013a. Finnish Business Structures. URL: <http://www.worldbusinessculture.com/Finnish-Business-Structures.html>. Accessed: 17.2.2016.

CDA Media 2013b. Finnish Communication Styles. URL: <http://www.worldbusinessculture.com/Finnish-Business-Communication-Style.html>. Accessed: 17.2.2016.

CDA Media 2013c. Finnish Management Style. URL: <http://www.worldbusinessculture.com/Finnish-Management-Style.html>. Accessed: 17.2.2016.

CDA Media 2013d. Finnish Meetings. URL: <http://www.worldbusinessculture.com/Business-Meetings-in-Finland.html>. Accessed: 17.2.2016.

CDA Media 2013e. Finnish Teams. URL: <http://www.worldbusinessculture.com/Business-Teams-in-Finland.html>. Accessed: 17.2.2016.

CDA Media 2013f. Norwegian Communication Styles. URL: <http://www.worldbusinessculture.com/Norwegian-Business-Communication-Style.html>. Accessed: 17.2.2016.

CDA Media 2013g. Norwegian Management Style. URL: <http://www.worldbusinessculture.com/Norwegian-Management-Style.html>. Accessed: 17.2.2016.

CDA Media 2013h. Norwegian Meetings. URL: <http://www.worldbusinessculture.com/Business-Meetings-in-Norway.html>. Accessed: 17.2.2016.

CDA Media 2013i. Norwegian Teams. URL: <http://www.worldbusinessculture.com/Business-Teams-in-Norway.html>. Accessed: 17.2.2016.

Communicaid Group Limited 2016. Indulgence vs. Restraint – The 6<sup>th</sup> Dimension. URL: <https://www.communicaid.com/cross-cultural-training/blog/indulgence-vs-restraint-6th-dimension/>. Accessed. 23.2.2016.

Crowe, S., Kresswell, K., Robertson, A., Huby, G., Avery, A. and Sheikh, A. 2011. The Case Study Approach. BMC Medical Research Methodology.

Dagens Næringsliv 2008. Sjekk startlønnen i 75 yrker. URL: <http://www.dn.no/karriere/2008/03/13/sjekk-startlonnen-i-75-yrker>. Accessed: 16.4.2016.

Erez, M. and Earley, P.C. 1993. Culture, Self-Identity and Work. Oxford University Press.

Euromonitor International 2015a. Intranet. Finland: Country Profile. Accessed: 3.2.2016.

Euromonitor International 2015b. Intranet. Norway: Country Profile. Accessed: 3.2.2016.

European Commission 2014. Tourism Industry Sub sectors, COUNTRY REPORT, FINLAND. URL: [http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/tourism-business-portal/documents/business/internationalisation/finland\\_country\\_report.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/tourism-business-portal/documents/business/internationalisation/finland_country_report.pdf). Accessed: 11.2.2016.

Fellesforbundet 2015. Welcome to Norway! URL: <https://www.fellesforbundet.no/information-for-foreign-employees/information-in-english/>. Accessed: 11.2.2016.

Finland Promotion Board 2015. Finland in Facts. URL: <http://finland.fi/facts-stats-and-info/finland-in-facts/>. Accessed: 10.2.2016.

Forex Bank 2016. Valutakalkulator. URL: <https://www.forex.no/Valuta/Valutakalkulator/>. Accessed: 9.2.2016.

Gerlach, M. 2015. The Lewis Model: How to Understand Every Culture in the World. URL: <http://www.society30.com/lewis-model-understand-every-culture-world/>. Accessed: 25.2.2016.

Gesteland, R. 2012. Cross-Cultural Business Behaviour. A Guide for Global Management. 5 ed. Narayana Press, Gylling, Denmark.

Gillham, B. 2005. Research Interviewing: The Range of Techniques. McGraw-Hill Professional Publishing, Berkshire, Great Britain.

Haagensen, K. 2014. Nordic Statistical yearbook 2014. Nordisk statistisk årsbok 2014. Volume 52. Nordic Council of Ministers, Copenhagen. URL: [http://www.keepeek.com/Digital-Asset-Management/oecd/environment/nordic-statistical-yearbook-2014\\_nord2014-001#page2](http://www.keepeek.com/Digital-Asset-Management/oecd/environment/nordic-statistical-yearbook-2014_nord2014-001#page2). Accessed: 3.2.2016.

Hearst Newspapers 2016. Workplace Culture Definition. URL: <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/workplace-culture-definition-2949.html>. Accessed: 12.2.2016.

Hickson, D.J. and Pugh, D.S. 2012. Great Writers of Organizations. Gower, Abingdon, Great Britain.

Himanen, E. 2015. Pakkoruotsipuhe hämmentää – ”Suomalaiset menettäisivät tämän edun.” URL: <http://www.kauppa-lehti.fi/uutiset/pakkoruotsipuhe-hammentaa---suomalaiset-menettaisivat-taman-edun/6GDNsRzW>. Accessed: 9.2.2016.

Hirsch, E., Kett, J. and Trefil, J. 2002. The New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy. 3 ed. Houghton Mifflin Company.

Hofstede Centre 2016a. What about Finland? URL: <http://geert-hofstede.com/finland.html>. Accessed: 15.2.2016

Hofstede Centre 2016b. What about Norway? URL: <http://geert-hofstede.com/norway.html>. Accessed: 15.2.2016.

Holmström, P. 2015. Norjalaiset haluavat suomalaisia töihin – ruotsin kielen taitoja etsintäkuulutetaan. URL: [http://yle.fi/uutiset/norjalaiset\\_haluavat\\_suomalaisia\\_toihin\\_\\_ruotsin\\_kielen\\_taitoja\\_etsintakuulutetaan/8247403](http://yle.fi/uutiset/norjalaiset_haluavat_suomalaisia_toihin__ruotsin_kielen_taitoja_etsintakuulutetaan/8247403). Accessed: 17.2.2016.

IndexMundi 2015. Finland GDP (purchasing power parity). URL: [http://www.indexmundi.com/finland/gdp\\_%28purchasing\\_power\\_parity%29.html](http://www.indexmundi.com/finland/gdp_%28purchasing_power_parity%29.html). Accessed: 17.4.2016.

Innovation Norway 2015. Key Figures for Norwegian Travel and Tourism. URL: [http://www.innovasjon Norge.no/Global/Reiseliv/Markedsdata/IN\\_n%C3%B8kkel-tall\\_eng\\_WEB\\_enkel.pdf](http://www.innovasjon Norge.no/Global/Reiseliv/Markedsdata/IN_n%C3%B8kkel-tall_eng_WEB_enkel.pdf). Accessed: 8.2.2016.

Investopedia 2016. Gross Domestic Product – GDP. URL: <http://www.investopedia.com/terms/g/gdp.asp>. Accessed: 26.2.2016.

Lewis, R. 2004. Finland, Cultural Lone Wolf. Nicholas Brealey Publishing, Yarmouth, ME, USA.

Liesimaa, P. 2015. Suomi on edelleen Euroopan kalleimpia maita. URL: [http://www.iltalehti.fi/uutiset/2015062319911032\\_uu.shtml](http://www.iltalehti.fi/uutiset/2015062319911032_uu.shtml). Accessed: 30.3.2016.

MaRa 2015a. Toimiala. URL: <http://www.mara.fi/toimiala>. Accessed: 3.2.2016.

MaRa 2015b. Matkailu- ja ravintola-alan työllisyys heikkenee edelleen: oikeilla toimilla työllisyys nousuun. URL: <http://www.mara.fi/matkailu-ja-ravintola-alan-tyollisyys-heikken>. Accessed: 10.2.2016.

May, T. 2002. Qualitative Research in Action. SAGE Publications Inc., London, Great Britain.

Merriam, S. 2014. Qualitative Research. Jossey-Bass, Somerset, USA.

Mind Tools Ltd. 2016. The Seven Dimensions of Culture. URL: <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/seven-dimensions.htm>. Accessed: 25.2.2016.

Mäkäläinen, T. 2013. Työskentely Norjassa – Maassa työskennelleiden kokemuksia. URL: [https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/62371/Makalainen\\_Teresa.pdf?sequence=1](https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/62371/Makalainen_Teresa.pdf?sequence=1). Accessed: 4.4.2016.

National Geographic 2005. Atlas of the World. 8<sup>th</sup> ed.

Nav 2015. Working in the Tourism Industry in Norway. URL: [https://www.google.fi/search?q=nav+working+in+the+tourism+industry+in+norway&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&gws\\_rd=cr&ei=sHDdVrGKGKj36AShiqqoCQ](https://www.google.fi/search?q=nav+working+in+the+tourism+industry+in+norway&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&gws_rd=cr&ei=sHDdVrGKGKj36AShiqqoCQ). Accessed: 8.2.2016.

The Nordic Council; The Nordic Council of Ministers a. Facts about Finland. URL: <http://www.norden.org/en/fakta-om-norden-1/the-nordic-countries-the-faroe-islands-greenland-and-aaland/facts-about-finland>. Accessed: 10.2.2016.

The Nordic Council; The Nordic Council of Ministers b. Kielet. URL: <http://www.norden.org/fi/tietoa-pohjoismaista/kielet>. Accessed: 1.3.2016.

The Nordic Council; The Nordic Council of Ministers c. Tietoa Norjasta. URL: <http://www.norden.org/fi/tietoa-pohjoismaista/pohjoismaat-sekae-ahvenanmaa-faersaaret-ja-groenlanti/tietoa-norjasta>. Accessed: 5.2.2016.

The Nordic Council; The Nordic Council of Ministers d. Työnhaku Norjassa. URL: <http://www.norden.org/fi/sinun-pohjolasi/tyoeskentely-pohjoismaissa/tyoeskentely-norjassa/tyoenhaku-norjassa>. Accessed: 8.2.2016.

The Nordic Council; The Nordic Council of Ministers e. Väestökisteröinti Norjassa. URL: <http://www.norden.org/fi/sinun-pohjolasi/muutto-pohjoismaihin/muutto-norjaan/vaestoer-ekisteroeinti-norjassa>. Accessed: 8.2.2016.

Nordic Statistics 2015. Intranet. MIGR01: Immigration by reporting country, country, sex, time and citizenship. Accessed: 10.2.2016.

The Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education (SIU) 2007. Languages & Dialects. URL: <http://www.studyinnorway.no/Living-in-Norway/Languages-dialects>. Accessed: 8.2.2016.

Norwegian Labour Inspection Authority 2007. Guide to the Working Environment Act and the Holidays Act. URL: <http://www.arbeidstilsynet.no/binfil/download2.php?tid=97753>. Accessed: 22.2.2016.

Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2015. Minifacts about Norway. URL: [http://www.ssb.no/en/befolkning/artikler-og-publikasjoner/\\_attachment/225814?\\_ts=14d005aeb20](http://www.ssb.no/en/befolkning/artikler-og-publikasjoner/_attachment/225814?_ts=14d005aeb20). Accessed: 5.2.2016.

The Norwegian School of Economics 2008. Norwegian Culture and Values. URL: <http://www.nhh.no/Default.aspx?ID=785>. Accessed: 1.3.2016.

The Norwegian Trade Portal 2013a. Business Meetings and Negotiations. URL: <http://www.nortrade.com/invest/norwegian-business-culture/business-meetings-and-negotiations/>. Accessed: 1.3.2016.

The Norwegian Trade Portal 2013b. Small Talk with Norwegians. URL: <http://www.nortrade.com/invest/norwegian-business-culture/small-talk-with-norwegians/>. Accessed: 1.3.2016.



- OSF: Statistics Finland 2015. Finnish Travel. Intranet. 10.32 Overnight Stay Trips by Finnish Residents, 1991-2014. Accessed: 11.2.2016.
- Passport to Trade 2.0 2014. Suomi. URL: <http://businessculture.org/fi/northern-europe/finland/>. Accessed: 1.3.2016.
- Pedersen, P. 1995. The Five Stages of Culture Shock. Critical Incidents around the World. Contributions in Psychology, book 25. Greenwood Press, Westport, London.
- Pohjasniemi, E. 2014. Pohjoismainen johtaminen finanssipalvelukonsernissa. URL: [https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/79050/Pohjasniemi\\_Essi.pdf?sequence=1](https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/79050/Pohjasniemi_Essi.pdf?sequence=1). Accessed: 4.4.2016.
- Saldana, J., Leavy, P. and Beretvas, N. 2011. Fundamentals of Qualitative Research. Oxford University Press, NC, USA.
- Salmi, R. 2004. Norjalaisten businesskulttuuri on demokraattista. URL: <http://www.taloussanomat.fi/arkisto/2004/05/22/norjalaisten-bisneskulttuuri-on-demokraattista/200431486/12>. Accessed: 1.3.2016.
- Sanomamedia Finland Oy 2015. Lähes 300 ammatin palkat selvisivät - katso pärjäätkö. URL: <http://www.taloussanomat.fi/raha/2015/08/20/lahes-300-ammatin-palkat-selvisivat-katso-parjaatko/201510609/139>. Accessed: 10.2.2016.
- Sayago, S. 2015. The Construction of qualitative and quantitative data using discourse analysis as a research technique. Quality and Quantity, 49, 2, pp. 727-737.
- Schein, E. 2004. Organizational Culture and Leadership. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, California, USA.
- Semkina, S. 2015. Yrittäjä: Nyt kannattaa mennä Norjaan. URL: <http://www.kauppalehti.fi/uutiset/yrittaja-nyt-kannattaa-menna-norjaan/eGMgg4B9>. Accessed: 9.2.2016.
- Statistics Finland 2015. Accommodation Statistics. Intranet. 10.29 Nights Spent in Accommodation Establishments, 2000-2014. Accessed: 11.2.2016.

Statistics Norway 2015. Lønn for ansatte i hotell- og restaurantvirksomhet, 1. oktober 2014. URL: <https://www.ssb.no/arbeid-og-lonn/statistikker/lonnhotell/aar/2015-02-27>. Accessed: 9.2.2016.

Sæther, G. 2015. Slik oppfattes norske sjefer av utlendinger. URL: <http://www.dn.no/2015/01/16/1639/Ledelse/slik-oppfattes-norske-sjefer-av-utlendinger>. Accessed: 1.3.2016.

Ten Have, P. 2004. Understanding Qualitative Research and Ethnomethodology. SAGE Publications Inc., London, Great Britain.

Thompson, M. 2006. Norway Career Guide. Going Global Inc., AL, USA.

Thompson Rivers University 2016. Adventure Tourism. URL: <http://www.tru.ca/act/adventure/programs/adventureguide/adventuretourism.html>. Accessed: 9.2.2016.

Tilastokeskus 2013. Ruoka- ja alkoholittomat juomat Suomessa 19 prosenttia EU:n keskitasoa kalliimpia. URL: [http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/kvhv/2012/kvhv\\_2012\\_2013-06-24\\_tie\\_001\\_fi.html](http://tilastokeskus.fi/til/kvhv/2012/kvhv_2012_2013-06-24_tie_001_fi.html). Accessed: 30.3.2016.

Trading economics 2016a. Finland GDP. URL: <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/finland/gdp>. Accessed: 10.2.2016.

Trading Economics 2016b. Norway GDP. URL: <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/norway/gdp>. Accessed: 5.2.2016.

Trompenaars, F. and Hampden-Turner, C. 2000. Building Cross-Cultural Competence, How to Create Wealth from Conflicting Values. Yale University Press, New Haven, London.

Trompenaars, F. and Hampden-Turner, C. 1997. Riding the Waves of Culture. Understanding Cultural Diversity in Business. Nicholas Brealey Publishing, London, United Kingdom.

Työaikalaki 9.2.1996/605.

Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö 2013. Keskeisimmät matkailun toimijat Suomessa. URL: [https://www.tem.fi/files/28212/Keskeisimpia\\_matkailualan\\_toimijoita\\_Suomessa.pdf](https://www.tem.fi/files/28212/Keskeisimpia_matkailualan_toimijoita_Suomessa.pdf). Accessed: 11.2.2016.

Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö 2015. Työsopimuslaki. URL: [https://www.tem.fi/files/26154/2\\_2015\\_Tyosopimuslaki\\_01072015.pdf](https://www.tem.fi/files/26154/2_2015_Tyosopimuslaki_01072015.pdf). Accessed: 22.2.2016.

Uderingsministeriet 2012. TEMA – KULTURFORSKELLE. URL: <http://www.netpublikationer.dk/um/11186/html/chapter07.htm>. Accessed: 1.3.2016.

Valtavaara, M. 2014. Suomalaisia houkutellaan töihin Norjaan – "Hurjan palkkatason luulisi kiinnostavan". URL: <http://www.hs.fi/kotimaa/a1388812675350>. Accessed: 9.2.2016.

Venås, K. and Skjekkeland, M. 2016. Dialekter i Norge. URL: [https://snl.no/dialekter\\_i\\_Norge](https://snl.no/dialekter_i_Norge). Accessed: 27.3.2016.

Wang, W. 2011. A Content Analysis of Reliability in Adverting Content Analysis Studies. ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, East Tennessee State University.

WebFinance Inc. 2016. Purchasing power. URL: <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/purchasing-power.html>. Accessed: 17.4.2016.

Worldatlas 2016. Norway Fast Facts. URL: <http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countries/europe/norway/nofacts.htm#page>. Accessed: 5.2.2016.

The World Bank Group 2016. GDP per capita, PPP (current international \$). URL: <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.PP.CD>. Accessed: 17.4.2016.

World Trade Press 2010a. Finland Society and Culture Complete Report. World Trade Press, Petaluma, CA, USA.

World Trade Press 2010b. Norway Society and Culture Complete Report. World Trade Press, Petaluma, CA, USA.

World Travel and Tourism Council 2015a. Travel & Tourism, Economic Impact Finland.  
<https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic%20impact%20research/countries%202015/finland2015.pdf>. Accessed: 16.4.2016.

World Travel and Tourism Council 2015b. Travel & Tourism, Economic Impact Norway.  
URL: <https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic%20impact%20research/countries%202015/norway2015.pdf>. Accessed: 9.2.2016.

## **Appendix 1. Haastattelukysymykset**

1. Nimi
2. Ikä
3. Sukupuoli
4. Kotipaikkakunta (Norjassa)
5. Koulutus lyhyesti
6. Kielitaito
  - a. Millainen oli ruotsin kielen osaamisesi Norjaan mennessä? (kohtalainen / tyydyttävä / hyvä / erittäin hyvä)
  - b. Asteikolla 1-5, kuinka suuri merkitys ruotsin kielen osaamisella on ollut työn saamisessa?
  - c. Asteikolla 1-5, kuinka paljon ruotsin kielen osaamisesta on ollut hyötyä norjan kielen oppimisessa?
  - d. Millainen on norjan kielen taitosi tällä hetkellä? (kohtalainen / tyydyttävä / hyvä / erittäin hyvä)
  - e. Miten olet panostanut norjan kielen oppimiseen?
7. Kerro työkokemuksestasi hotelli-, ravintola- ja matkailualalla lyhyesti
  - a. Mikä on tämänhetkinen työpaikkasi? (mikäli työskentelet tällä hetkellä Suomessa, kerro viimeisin työpaikkasi Norjassa)
  - b. Työtehtäväsi tällä hetkellä?

### **Suurimmat syyt Norjassa työskentelyyn**

8. Mitkä olivat suurimmat syyt sille, että lähdit töihin Norjaan hotelli-, ravintola- ja matkailualalle?
9. Ennen lähtöäsi Norjaan, mitkä seikat tekivät siitä houkuttelevan paikan työskennellä?

10. Asteikolla 1-5, kuinka paljon Norjan parempi palkkataso vaikutti lähtösi?
11. Luuletko, että Suomen Norjaa suurempi työttömyystilanne kannustaa suomalaisia lähtemään töihin Norjan hotelli-, ravintola- ja matkailualalle?

### **Sopeutuminen työkuulttuuriin**

12. Mitä samaa on mielestäsi suomalaisessa ja norjalaisessa työkuulttuurissa?
13. Mitkä ovat suurimmat erot suomalaisessa ja norjalaisessa työkuulttuurissa?
14. Onko sopeutuminen Norjan työkuulttuuriin ollut mielestäni helppoa vai vaikeaa? Mainitse, mikä on ollut sinulle suomalaisena helpointa ja mitkä ovat olleet suurimpia haasteita.
15. Mistä pidät norjalaisessa työkuulttuurissa?
16. Onko asioita, joista et pidä norjalaisessa työkuulttuurissa?
17. Vastasivatko odotuksesi todellisuutta Norjan työelämässä? Oliko esimerkiksi asioita, joista yllätyit?
18. Millainen oli työnhakuprosessisi? Oliko työpaikan löytäminen sinulle helppoa vai vaikeaa?
  - a. Millaisia ominaisuuksia arvostetaan työnhakijassa Norjassa?
  - b. Onko mielestäsi suomalaisen helppo löytää töitä Norjan hotelli-, ravintola- ja matkailualalta?
  - c. Millaisina työntekijöinä suomalaisia mielestäsi pidetään Norjassa?
19. Vertaile suomalaista ja norjalaista työkuulttuuria Geert Hofsteden kulttuurien ulottuvuuksien mukaan. Sijoita molemmat maat asteikolla 1-5 jokaisessa kohdassa.
  - a. Valtaetäisyys (pieni – suuri / tasa-arvo - hierarkia)
  - b. Yksilöllisyys - Yhteisöllisyys
  - c. Maskuliinisuus – Feminiinisyys (kilpailu - tasaisuus / kovat arvot - pehmeät arvot)
  - d. Epävarmuuden välttämisyypyrkimys (vähäinen - suuri)

e. Aikaorientaatio (tavoitteissa lyhyt aikaväli – pitkä aikaväli)

f. Nautinnontavoittelu - Pidättyväisyys

20. Miten luulet, että kansainvälinen työkokemuksesi Norjassa hyödyttää sinua tulevaisuudessa? Miten se on kehittänyt sinua yksilönä?

21. Oletko oppinut asioita, joita voisi hyödyntää Suomen työelämässä hotelli-, ravintola- ja matkailualalla?

## **Appendix 2. Interview questions**

1. Name
2. Age
3. Gender
4. Home City (In Norway)
5. Education briefly
6. Language skills
  - a. How were your Swedish language skills when you went to Norway?  
(moderate / satisfactory / good / very good)
  - b. On a scale from 1-5 how important have Swedish language skills been when looking for work in Norway?
  - c. On a scale from 1-5 how much has knowing Swedish benefited you when learning Norwegian?
  - d. How are your Norwegian language skills at the moment?  
(moderate / satisfactory / good / very good)
  - e. How have you attributed to learning Norwegian?
7. Tell about your work experiences in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry briefly
  - a. What is your current job? (if you are currently working in Finland, mention the latest job in Norway)
  - b. Your duties at the moment?

### **The biggest reasons for working in Norway**

8. What were the biggest reasons for you to start working in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry in Norway?
9. Before you left to Norway what were the factors that made it an attractive place to work?



10. On a scale from 1-5 how much did the better salary affect you leaving to Norway?
11. Do you think that the bigger unemployment rate in Finland will encourage Finns to work in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry in Norway?

### **Adaptation to the working culture**

12. What do you think are the similarities in the Finnish and Norwegian working culture?
13. What do you think are the biggest differences in the Finnish and Norwegian working culture?
14. Has it been easy or hard for you to adapt to the Norwegian working culture? Mention what have been the easiest things and the biggest challenges for you as a Finn.
15. What do you like about Norwegian working culture?
16. Are there things that you don't like about Norwegian working culture?
17. Were your expectations met in the Norwegian working life? Were there for example things that surprised you?
18. How was your job seeking process like? Was finding a job easy or hard for you?
  - a. What kinds of attributes are respected in a job seeker in Norway?
  - b. Do you think it is easy for a Finn to find work in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry in Norway?
  - c. How do you think Finnish workers are seen in Norway?
19. Compare Finnish and Norwegian working culture based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions. Place both countries on a scale from 1-5 in each dimension.
  - a. Power distance (small – big / equality - hierarchy)
  - b. Individualism - Collectivism
  - c. Masculinity – Femininity (competition - stable / hard values – soft values)
  - d. Uncertainty avoidance (small - big)
  - e. Short time orientation – Long term orientation

f. Indulgence – Restrictive

20. How do you think your international work experience in Norway will benefit you in the future? How has it developed you as an individual?
21. Have you learned things that could be applied in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry in Finland?

## **Appendix 3. Tool for the Commissioning Party**

### **Working in the Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Industry in Norway**

My bachelor's thesis studied the themes what makes Norway an appealing place to work and why Finnish people have started working there in the hotel, restaurant and tourism industry. Besides this, it also studied the adaptation to the Norwegian working culture. I had altogether 11 participants in my study which I conducted by having interviews through Skype. This document concludes the results of my study. It is made to improve the cooperation and communication between Haaga-Helia's International Office and its Norwegian contacts. Its purpose is also to inform students who are planning to go to Norway due to either an exchange-period or work placement.

- The importance of Swedish language skills came up clearly in the research. Knowing Swedish has benefited the Finns for example in finding work and learning Norwegian language more easily.
- The biggest similarities between Finnish and Norwegian working culture were the mind-set and values, since both are Nordic countries. Other similarities were equality, labour legislation and being able to speak freely about anything.
- The biggest differences between these working cultures was that Norway has a more relaxed working culture, lower hierarchy and more feminine values like quality of life. In Finland work is taken more seriously and it was said to have more masculine values like being hardworking and efficient.
- The biggest attraction factors in Norway were better salary, new and interesting culture, beautiful nature and better possibilities to find work.
- The biggest reasons for Finnish people to go to Norway for work were that they wanted to experience something new, due to a relationship or that they were able to find more work from their own field in Norway.
- The adaptation to the Norwegian working culture for the Finnish people was rather easy. However, the biggest challenges in the adaptation process were the new language and its dialects and the relaxedness in the working life in Norway.
- The relaxedness in the Norwegian working culture was seen both positive and negative. It was positive since work was considered to be only a place where one earns his or her money and it was not taken as seriously as in Finland. Yet, the relaxedness also caused inefficiency and laziness which was felt annoying.
- The international work experience in Norway has benefited the Finns by them learning a new language, becoming more open and confident, having friends from other countries and in general having a wider perspective on life.
- The Finnish people think that their new language skills would benefit them also in Finland. They wish to see more relaxedness and balancing of work and free time in the Finnish working culture. In addition, they hope that there would be more meetings where everyone can participate.

- The results of my study benefit the commissioning party in many ways. Firstly, the commissioner is able to see the importance of the versatile Swedish language education in Haaga-Helia. Based on the results of my study knowing Swedish language has benefited the participants by getting a job in Norway, learning the language more easily and in general adapting to the culture.
- Knowing the biggest cultural similarities and differences between Norway and Finland will improve the cooperation and communication between the commissioner and its Norwegian contacts. Knowing these differences helps for example the understanding of how things are done in the other culture. Knowing that Norwegians are more relaxed in the working life might for example cause longer answering times for emails. Thus, the International Office is now more aware of these matters and is able to forward this information to the students of Haaga-Helia.
- Moreover, knowing that international work experience develops an individual by learning a new language, becoming more open and confident and in general having a wider perspective on life is a good reason for the commissioner to encourage the students of Haaga-Helia to study and work abroad, especially in Norway. Choosing Norway is also a way to improve the Nordic cooperation.