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**RUSSIA AS AN EXPORT DESTINATION FOR EXPORT OF
FINNISH EDUCATION**

Case Centria University of Applied Sciences

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ABSTRACT

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<p>This thesis focuses on the current higher education export issues in Finland and especially on the Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences. The thesis work describes the problems related to degree programs for international students in English after the introducing of tuition fees for education in Finland. As a case study is chosen Centria UAS, a University of Applied sciences situated in the region of Central Ostrobothnia in Western Finland. Centria is one of the 24 Universities of Applied Sciences in Finland. The work describes also some features of export of Finnish higher education to Russia and the current position of Centria UAS related to export of higher education to Russia.</p> <p>The aim of the research is to reveal perspectives of Finnish higher education export to Russia for a Finnish regional higher education institution. Some other aspects of further competitiveness and development of Centria on domestic and international higher education market are considered in thesis. A general SWOT analyze for Finnish education export gives the picture of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of this field of export for Finland. There is also a SWOT analyze for Centria UAS.</p> <p>The research of the empirical part of the thesis was done in Russia among potential students for degree programs conducted in English. The research was conducted in Moscow and Saint-Petersburg during the Study in Finland education fair organized by CIMO Center for International mobility in September 2015.</p> <p>The research has an observing character, considering needs, interests and possibilities of potential degree students from Russia. The conclusions and the recommendations will serve as help for those who are going to work on educational fairs in Russia.</p> <p>According to research results, potential students from Russia have much interest in degree programs of HEI in Finland. This shows that Finland definitely has opportunities in exporting higher education to Russia.</p> <p>Interviews with specialists in education of Centria UAS provided a view on the perspectives of education export for a regional UAS internationally and for Russia.</p>		
Key words Centria, UAS, higher education, tuition fee, education fair, Study-in-Finland, Russia.		

CONCEPT DEFINITIONS

BRIC	Brasilia, Russia, India, China
EEA	European Economic Area
EU	European Union
FINNIPS	Finnish Network for International Programmes
IMF	International Monetary Fund
HEI	Higher Education Institution
NICARM	Russia's National Information Center on Academic Recognition and Mobility
PBL	Problem Based Learning
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
SME	Small and Medium sized Enterprises
UAS	University of Applied Sciences
WTO	World Trade Organization

ABSTRACT
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1 INTRODUCTION

The importance of education is constantly growing in the global economy. Education is a part of global service economy. It serves all the parts of manufacturing industries and promotes their growth, research and development. Service sector occupies about 70 % of employment and value added in OECD countries. The role of manufacturing sector is decreasing in post-industrial global economy. On the other hand, the importance of service economies is growing rapidly in global business. These factors demand development of export of services between the countries. There is also a strong global demand of exporting of educational services. (OECD, 2005)

Global service trade is implementing according to WTO General Agreement on Trades in Services GATS (General Agreement on trade in Services (GATS): objectives, coverage and disciplines, World Trade Organization)

Interest for importing services from the EU is especially growing in the emerging markets and countries with transition economy (for example, Russia and other BRIC countries).

The European Union was the world's largest exporter and importer of services in 2013, with a trade surplus of EUR 173.2 billion. The EU-28's trade in services with Russia produced a EUR 14.7 billion surplus. (Eurostat 2015).

The theoretical frame of the thesis is written using mainly internet sources which provided most recent information on the topic.

1.1 Research and structure of the thesis

Questions considered in the thesis have already been for several years under discussion in Finnish society, Finnish media and in Finnish HEIs by teachers and students. Finnish students even protested against introducing tuition fees already in 2010 (Dobson, 2010) and in 2015 (Finland Times, 2015) when the tuition fees were finally introduced. This illustrates how important of the educational issues are for Finnish society and especially for the youth.

The research questions were “in the air” – what will be the future of Finnish education and its export after introducing tuition fee. The author was inspired to make the research before leaving for the Study in Finland fair organized by Centre for International Mobility CIMO in Russia. There were excellent possibilities to do the research – hundreds of fair visitors interested in studying in Finland. The entire structure of the thesis is shown in Figure 1.

The thesis consists of a theoretical part on the research field, Finnish education and its export, international and Russian marketing of Finnish education, description of current economic situation in Russia. The empirical part consists of a research among the potential students from Russia who are interested in studying in Finland. The research was conducted in September 2015, but before introducing tuition fees and without knowing of tuition fee expenses for the students. When describing future plans of Centria, an example is given for the tuition fee (14 000 EUR for a study program), but specialists cannot yet define exactly, if it will be definitely the usual format of tuition fees for Centria. This issue demands further consideration.

1.2 The aim of the research and the research questions

The aim of the research is to observe the perspectives of a new working environment for Universities of Applied Sciences after introducing tuition fees in Finland and new possibilities for the export of education. The research also reveals even some contradictory issues as a possible significant decrease of number of international students in Finland after introducing tuition fees and plans of HEIs in this perspective with Centria UAS as a case study. Russia is discussed as one of the possible education export destinations for Finland. The perspectives of education export to Russia are also considered. The thesis gives the general current picture of Finnish education export and picture of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities for Finland in general, and Centria UAS in particular.

There is also a description of Centria UAS’s future plans based on interviews with Centria’s education specialists and recommendation on working on education fair in Russia (Chapter 4.3), based on the experience of the author. The research survey shows the expectations and interests of potential Russian students for studying in Finland.

One of the most important questions put in the survey gives the answer to the question, if Russian students are still interested to study in Finland after introducing tuition fees.



FIGURE 1. The structure of the thesis

2 FINNISH EDUCATION AND ITS EXPORT

Finnish higher education consists of two complementary sectors: universities and polytechnics (also known as universities of applied sciences, UAS). The mission of universities is to conduct scientific research and provide instruction and postgraduate education based on it. Polytechnics/UAS train professionals in response to labor market needs and conduct research and development which supports instruction and promotes regional development in particular. (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2016).

Higher education institutions in Finland are especially important for promoting and developing of export of education. They are researching and developing made-to-order programs for export of education. Introducing tuition fee-paying will give additional opportunities to higher education institutions in increasing resources and developing more educational export activities. Fee-paying systems can be an encouraging factor for higher educational institutions in assuming a key role in educational export operations. (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2010). However, introducing tuition fees means changes in the organizations. It may bring new challenges or even threats for institutions of higher education in Finland, like a decreasing amount of new students, increasing competition between the national institutions and globally, need for new marketing strategies.

2.1 Finnish education system

The Finnish education system is considered to be one of the most developed in the world, despite of the fact, that Finland is a small country with limited resources. The international interest to the Finnish educational system is globally significant. Moreover, Finnish educational system is considered to be one of the most effective in the world. Finland has to take an advantage of its worldwide excellent reputation, reliability and Finnish quality brand.

Education system in Finland

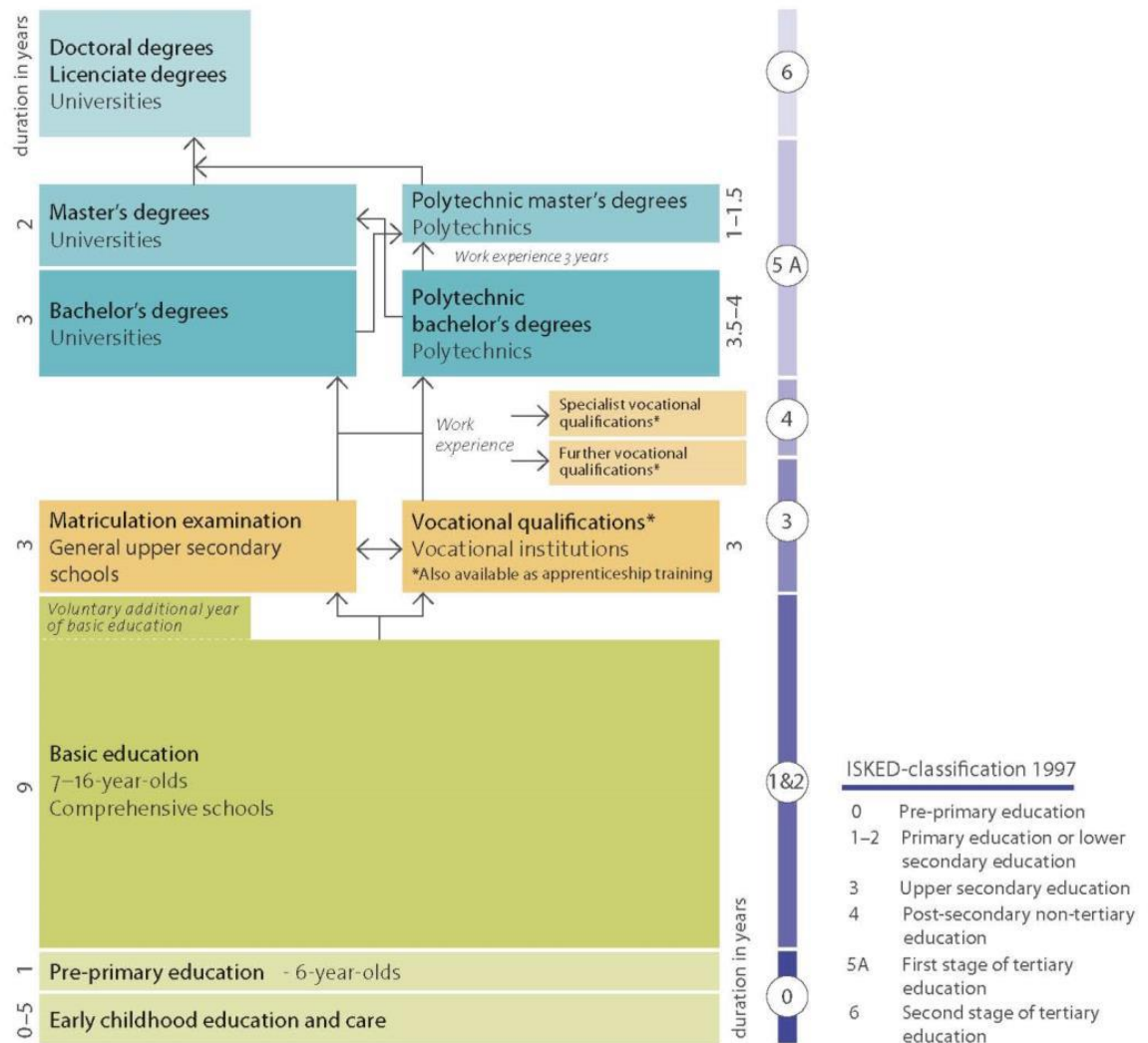


FIGURE 2. Education system in Finland. Finnish National Board of Education.

2.2 Tuition fees in 2017

Before 2017 the Finnish higher education was free of charge for all students regardless of the country of origin. The situation will change in 2017 after introducing the new legislation in December 2015 about charging a tuition fee for foreign students. (Ministry of Justice, Finland, 2015). The introduction of tuition fees in all institutions for higher education is new in Finland, although in several Finnish Universities there were some master programs with a tuition fees already. In 2010 in Finland was introduced a tuition fee trial period for master's

degrees in some Finnish HEIs (Centre for international Mobility CIMO, 2016). An overall introduction of tuition fee can be seen as a new resource opportunity for Finnish educational institutions and at the same time as a threat, for example, in case of decreasing of the number of international students.

Tuition fees will be introduced for non-EU/EEA students in Finland from August 2017 onwards.

The fees will concern non-EU/EEA degree students who start their studies in English-taught Bachelor's and Master's degree programs in August 2017 or after that.

The minimum annual tuition fee as set in the legislation is 1500€. The educational institutions have right to determine how much the tuition fee will be paid by the students.

The application fee of 100 euro for the same categories of applicants was introduced for the first time in Finland already in 2016. (Centre for international Mobility CIMO, 2016).

2.3 Export of Finnish education

Educational export is a developing business in the world and it can become a new source of export opportunities for Finland. Finland has to benefit from its good reputation and expertise on global educational market. According to Pasi Sahlberg, an expert in Finnish education, export of education can even become “a new Nokia” for Finland. (Pasi Sahlberg blog, 2016). It means that export of education can bring much contribution to country's GDP and general economic growth.

The Finnish higher education is especially praised in the world: Times Higher Education lists seven Finnish universities as world-class centers of educational excellence. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2015). Ministry of Education and Culture of Finland had set some strategic lines for Finnish education export already in 2010. One of the most important of these strategic lines (targets) is that the proportion of education, knowledge and expertise exports would have a significant growth in relation to all Finnish exports (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2010). Finland's education exports (including all kinds of education) were EUR 268 million in 2014 (Mörk, 2015).

2.4 SWOT analyze of current situation in education export in Finland

Strengths:

Finland has quite a lot of strengths in the field of the education export at the moment.

Finland can propose to potential students the following strengths:

- The most efficient education system in the world (The efficiency index 2014)
- Living in the most peaceful and sustainable country in the world (Fragile States Index 2015)
- Training their skills in the most innovative country in the world (World economic Forum 2015)
- Cleanest air in Europe (environmental performance Index 2014)
- The cleanest food in Europe (European food safety Authority 2013)
- International student's friendly environment (Student Satisfaction report 2014)

(Study in Finland 2016)

Weaknesses:

Finland is a small country with limited resources. That means that educational institutions are also rather small and it is difficult for them to compete with, for example, world-famous higher education institutions of Central Europe, Great Britain and the USA. One more weakness is the fact, that Finland remains a quite unknown country for the rest of the world. That is why internationalization, international marketing and worldwide promotion are most important issues for a successful export of education in Finland. The importance of developing of ready-made educational products, educational programs for export and promoting their export should be also taken into account in Finland.

-Opportunities

The education market in the world is growing and globalizing. Taking this into account, the higher education institutions of Finland provide a wide range of study programs in English and good services for international students. Digitalizing, system of developing of innovations, teacher's education, pedagogic expertise and culture of cooperation offer a sustainable environment for developing and testing educational innovations and creating new educational products. (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2010)

- Threats

One of the main threats for Finland as an exporter of education on global market are English-speaking countries with their oldest and world-famous educational institutions like Stanford, Oxford, Harvard, Cambridge, Princeton. These institutions already have quite a lot of traditions and experience in exporting their education and implementing tuition fee based study programs and processes. Finland will introduce the tuition fee in 2017 for the first time and it can be one more challenge or even threat for Finnish educational institutions. The introducing of tuition fees can reduce the quantity of new students dramatically. It could be, for example, possible to compete with mentioned above institutions by introducing a lower priced tuition fee and/or developing of some special study programs that no other institutions have.

2.5 Global international marketing of Finnish higher education

The strategies of internationalization and global marketing of Finnish education laid by the Ministry of Education and Culture in 2010 are implementing quite successfully. There are several organizations working at the moment in Finland promoting Finnish education internationally and globally.

CIMO www.cimo.fi was established in 1991 under the supervision of Finnish Ministry of Culture and Education. CIMO is a national agency for promoting the internalization of Finnish education in many different ways. Agency coordinates exchange programs, trainee opportunities and scholarship schemes and implement and inform about the EU education programs in Finland. CIMO supports the teaching of Finnish language and culture in universities outside Finland and raises the international profile of Finnish education.

FINNIPS is a Finnish network for international study programs. FINNIPS organizes entrance examinations for international students outside Finland. FINNIPS network consists of 20 Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences. These Universities of Applied Sciences offer close to 50 Bachelor's Degree Programmes that are fully conducted in English.

Education Export Finland (www.eduexport.fi) is promoting Finnish education globally as an export issue. This program is a part of FINPRO (www.finpro.fi). FINPRO helps Finnish SMEs to go international, encourages foreign direct investment in Finland and promotes travels to Finland. FINPRO is a public organization consisting of Export Finland, Visit Finland and Invest in Finland.

3 RUSSIA AS AN EXPORT DESTINATION FOR FINLAND

Russia and Finland have many economical, historical and cultural ties. Russia has always been one of the main trade partners of Finland, there is much cooperation in the field of tourism and culture. Finland is one of the main tourist destinations for Russians, especially from the North-West region of Russia and Saint-Petersburg. There were over 5 million tourists from Russia crossing the Finnish-Russian border in 2015, although this number has declined. (Nilsen, 2015).

Russia is an important partner in export and import operations for Finland and the European Union especially in energy supply and natural resources. Russia is an especially important trade partner for Finland because of a common border. Before 2013 Russia was one of the three largest trade partners of Finland together with Sweden and Germany. However, in 2015 Finnish exports to Russia decreased even up to 32 %, total exports to Russia in 2015 was 3,2 bn. Euro. (Suomalais -Venäläinen kauppakamari, 2015). But still Finland has a long history of trade relations with Russia and much experience and expertise in it. The increase of education exports to Russia can help to improve the general situation with exports to Russia for Finland. Despite of the export crisis, Russia remains an attractive market for education export for Finland.

Population of Russia: 142,470,272 (July 2014 est.)

15-24 years: 10.7 % (male 7,828,947/female 7,482,143) – up to 15 million young people who are planning their future and education. (CIA World Factbook, 2014). It can be even up to several million potential students, which is very attractive target group for Finnish institutions for higher education. Average salary in Russia was in March 2016 35570 rubles (about 456 euro a month) (Ministry for Economic Development of Russia, 2016)

Russia's economy is among the 10 largest economies of the world. Currently Russia's economy is passing through a recession due to oil prices, the Ukrain crisis, economic sanctions against Russia and countersanctions of Russia against the EU countries. The national currency rouble lost in 2014 some 45 % of its value against US dollar. Despite of this, there are some positive forecasts about Russian GDP growth already for 2017:

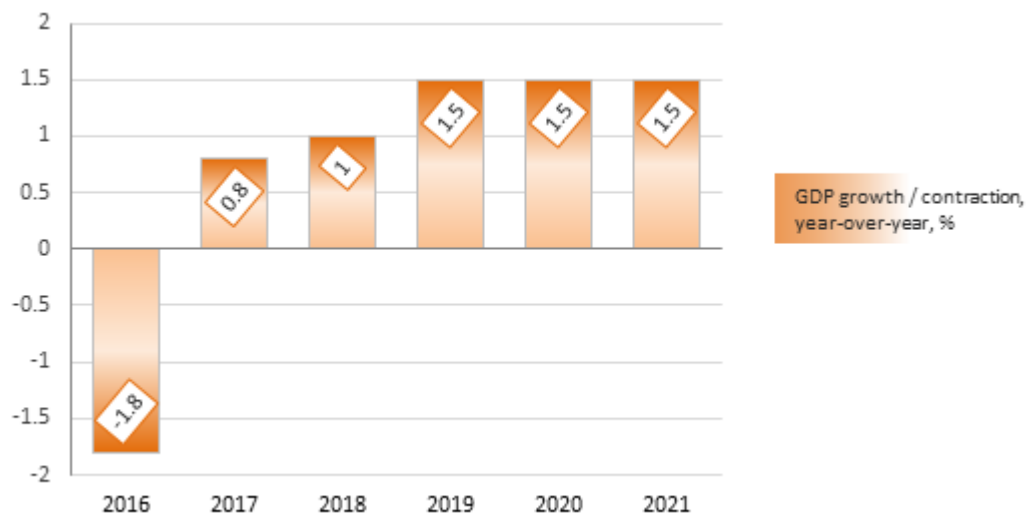


FIGURE 3. IMF: Russian GDP Growth Projections until 2020 (April 2016)

Positive forecasts for Russian economy can be favorable for the prospects for Russian students studying abroad and thus, for the export of Finnish education to Russia.

3.1 Higher education in Russia

Higher education is praised in Russia very much. Russians have always shown a great concern for higher education. Higher education is for Russians even a kind of status-symbol and a deposit in a successful future for young people. In Russian families especially parents are always deeply concerned about the future of their children.

There are 950 universities in Russia (548 state universities, 29 national research universities, and 402 private universities (The Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, 2015). Currently Russian HEIs are implementing an educational system similar to that of Europe and the USA: 4 years for a Bachelor's degree and 2 years for a Master's degree. It became possible after joining the Bologna process by Russia in 2007. Before 1991 during the Soviet Union time Russia had an education system different from the European. However, despite of the relatively well-developed education system, Russians are interested in studying abroad very much for getting internationalization, globalization and deeper integration in world's global economy. There is also a definite lack of expertise in Russian education in definite fields, like information technologies, construction, environmental fields

and others. According to Tarja Päivärinne, Finpro's expert on Russia in 2012, Russia does not provide enough versatility or competitive products on a global scale as its main export products are raw materials and thus there is a need for modernization. (Sosunov 2012, 45)

Education fee was introduced in Russia already in 1990's after the fall of the Soviet Union. Current education fee rates in Russia in most famous higher education institutions of Moscow: 300000-500 000 rubles for a study year - about 4500-6500 euro with current rate 78 rubles for 1 euro. (Platnoe obuchenie. Tuition fees in Russia study year 2013-2014). However, education fees at the HEIs outside the capital region of Russia can be much lower. Russian HEIs also have quotes for free-of-charge education. The current system of Russian education is close enough to the European and the Finnish one. But there are also some differences: for example, in Russia there are no Universities of Applied Sciences in such a form as we know it in Finland.

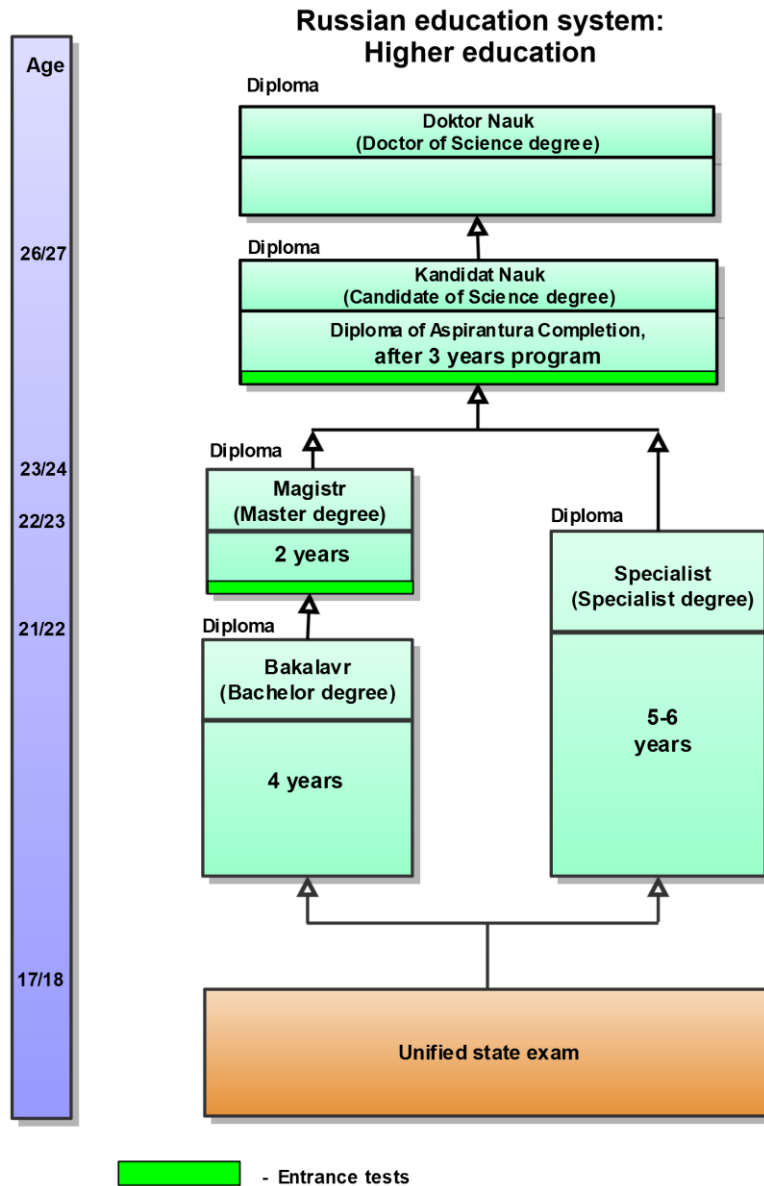


FIGURE 4. Russia Higher Education. Russian National Information Centre on Academic Recognition and Mobility.

3.2 Study in Finland education fair in Russia in 2015

Global and international marketing is an important issue for Finnish higher education export, internalization of Finnish higher education and increasing of international student mobility. International fairs are an effective marketing tool for promoting the possibilities of Finnish higher education to potential students abroad, exchanging information, experience, establishing networking and finding new partners. Finnish higher educational institutions are taking part in educational fairs worldwide. Markets of particular interest are at the moment

developing and emerging markets like Asia and BRIC countries with Russia among them. In Finland Center for International Mobility CIMO organizes international study fairs Study in Finland for promoting Finnish education worldwide.

Finland is quite famous and popular among Russians in different spheres. First of all, this is one of the most popular tourist destinations with pure, peaceful, beautiful nature and interesting culture. Finland is also famous in Russia as a country of high technology, digitalization, high-quality manufacturing and construction industry. Russians also know about the high quality of Finnish higher education. Moreover, Finland has a common border with Russia and for many young Russians who are planning their studies in Europe, Finland seems the best destination for studies. Especially young Russians in the North West of Russia regions as Murmansk, Archangelsk, Petrozavodsk, Saint-Petersburg, situated close to Finnish border, are interested in studying in Finnish universities. Also young people of the capital region of Russia, Moscow and surrounding and other remote regions of Russia as Volga region, South of Russia, Ural, Siberia, Far East are interested in studying in Europe. People from these regions are much less acquainted with the education possibilities Finland can offer people living in the European part of Russia.

Study in Finland Fair in 2015 was organized in Russia 25-26 September 2015 by CIMO in cooperation with the Finnish Embassy in Moscow and the Finnish Consulate in Saint-Petersburg. 21 Finnish institutions for higher education and one vocational college took part in this fair in 2015. The event was organized for future degree students from Russia who were planning to study in EU/Finland. Centria UAS participated in the Study in Finland fair in Russia for the first time in 2014. At that time Centria visited only the fair in Saint-Petersburg. In 2015 Centria took part in fair's both parts in Moscow and in Saint-Petersburg. On the fair in Moscow were some 200 visitors and on the fair in Saint-Petersburg some 500.

The mission of the representatives from Centria was to promote Centria's study programs and give information about the region, education and job opportunities in Western Finland. The author of this thesis was also among the representatives of Centria on this fair. The fair was organized in premises of Finnish Embassy/Consulate and every educational institution had an own stand with information on their education programs in English/Russian and visitors could get the information from the representatives. There were also slide presentations

of educational institutions done in English/Russian by their representatives. Most of the visitors on the fair in both cities were young Russians (15+ years old) who were planning their future studies, although there were also adults who were interested in getting a second degree or master's degree. In Moscow there were also representatives of Russian universities from different regions of Russia as Ural and Siberia, who were interested in exchange programs. Young Russians were often seen together with their families. Most of them were accompanied by their friends, parents, brothers, sisters and even grandparents. Sometimes the whole family stood in front of the institution representatives and the information should be given to the whole family. That is why providing information in Russian language was important. Many visitors were already "experienced", or had visited other education fairs of other European countries also held in Saint-Petersburg or visited Study in Finland fair in recent years. Centria's representatives introduced to the visitors the six bachelor's degree study programs conducted in English and one master's degree study program:

- Environmental Chemistry and Technology
- Business management
- Information Technologies
- Industrial Management
- Nursing
- International Business
- International Business Management (Master's degree).

During the fair the visitors were offered to fill in a questionnaire about their interests, expectations and preferences in studying in Finland (Appendix 1).

4 RESEARCH AMONG POTENTIAL RUSSIAN STUDENTS

The survey distributed among the potential students, was rather short. There were 5 questions with multiple choice (5-8 choices) and 1 question with a choice yes/no/don't know. This is suitable for busy working conditions on a fair when there are hundreds of visitors, especially in Saint-Petersburg, changing fast. However, 50 responses were got after some 2 and a half hours working on the fair.

The research was conducted as follows:

Qualitative part or spoken semi-structured interviews face-to face, sometimes in groups (when with families). The interview was done originally with marketing purposes, as it was the objective of the whole fair and Centria trip to Russia. In the interview discussed approximately the same questions which were set in a questionnaire. The visitors also set a lot of questions, as the purpose of their visit to the fair was to get information about studying in Finland.

Quantitative part: After the interview the fair visitors were proposed to fill in the questionnaire (Appendix 1). The questionnaire was the quantitative part of the research, which gives an opportunity to see the results of the research in numbers. All in all over 50 questionnaires were filled. The research has an observing character, giving the picture of interests and preferences of potential students from Russia.

4.1 Survey results

The survey was presented to fair visitors in Russian language. The results in numbers of the responses are shown on graphs. An explanation after each graph gives also the percentage of the responses. There are more answers than questionnaires filled, because the respondents were so interested that they always would choose more than one answer of the choice, despite of the request to choose only one answer.

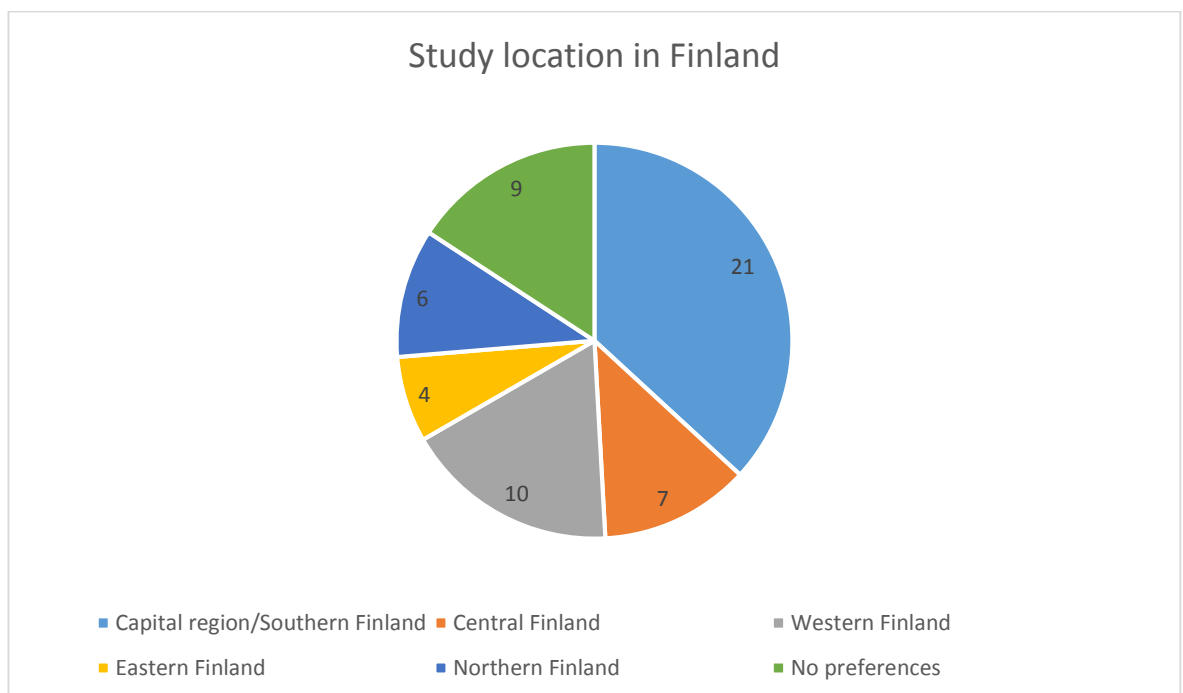
Survey for Russian future students (enrollees) who are interested to study in Finland**GRAPH 1. Why do you like to study in Finland**

According to GRAPH 1 of the survey, the most important reason for studying in Finland was answer “no education fee” (19 responses, 30 %). Cultural interest to Finland (culture, travelling, nature, entertainment) 24 %. Closeness to Russia was also important for potential students (21 % preferences). Next important issue is country’s safety – 16 %. Other factors made up 10 % of responses. Other factors: friends or relatives already studying, working or living in Finland, possessing of real estate like summer cottage in Finland by family, Finnish relatives living in Finland, Finnish origin.



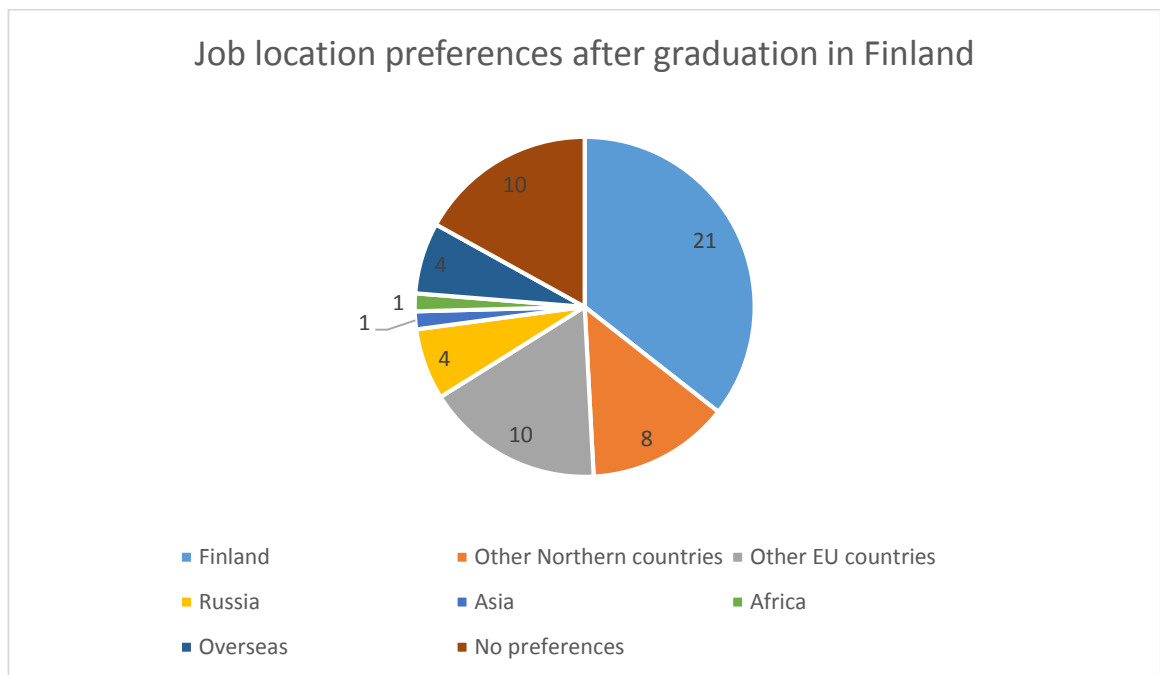
GRAPH 2. Which study program you are interested in

Most popular study programs were: Business studies 26 %, Engineering 21 %, IT 19 %. Nursing was less popular with 14 %. Arts and music gained only 9 % of responses, other programs like journalism, pedagogy and linguistics together 12 % (GRAPH 2).



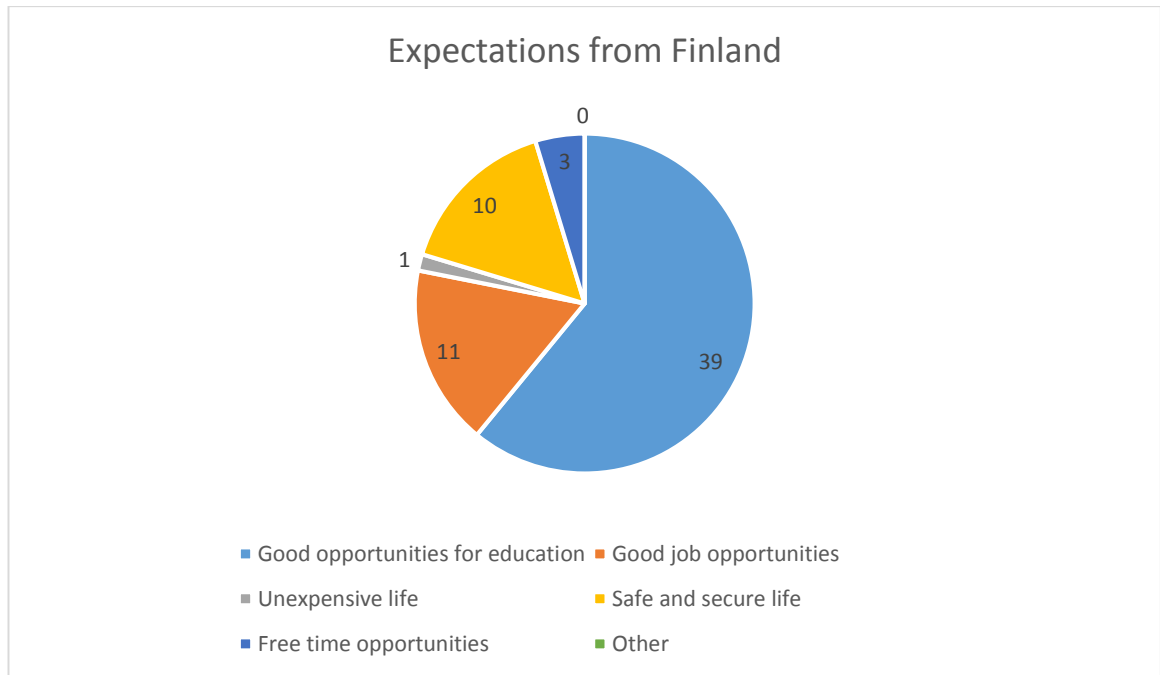
GRAPH 3. Which part of Finland do you want to study?

GRAPH 3 shows that the majority of the respondents prefer for the studying the capital region of Finland (37 %). Western Finland was rather unexpectedly the second most popular (18 %). 16 % answered “no region definition”. Central Finland was the next popular (12 %). 11 % preferred Northern Finland and Lapland. The last region wanted was Eastern Finland.



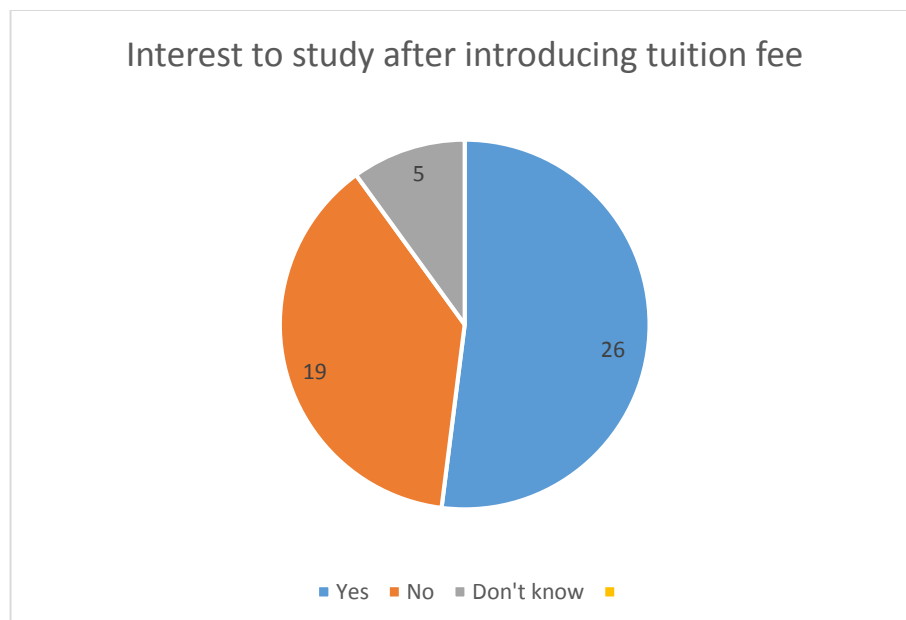
GRAPH 4. Job location preferences after graduation in Finland

GRAPH 4 shows that 37 % of the respondents planned to get a job in Finland after the graduation. 31 % in other EU countries or Nordic countries. 17 % did not make their choice yet. Only a small amount of respondents planned to get a job in Russia (7 %), the same amount (7 %) planned to get a job in overseas countries. In job in Africa or Asia were interested only 2 % of the respondents.



GRAPH 5. Expectations from Finland

Expectations from Finland (GRAPH 5) were following: 61 % expected good education opportunities. 17 % expected to find good job opportunities and 16 % appreciated safe and secure life. 2 % expected inexpensive life.



GRAPH 6. Interest to study after introducing of tuition fees

Question about introducing a tuition fee in Finland (GRAPH 6) was answered as follows: 52 % answered that they are still interested to study in Finland after introducing a tuition fee.

38 % answered that they will not be interested any more. 10 % could not give a definite answer.

4.2 Summary of the research

The survey results from the fair Study in Finland showed much interest of potential students from Russia to study in Finland. Russia and Finland are neighboring countries and have many economical, historical and cultural ties. Finland is famous in Russia and is an attractive tourism destination for Russians. According to GRAPH 1 of the survey, most important reason to study in Finland was answer “no education fee” (19 responses, 30 %). Cultural interest to Finland (culture, travelling, nature, entertainment) 24 %. The fact that future students are so interested in Finnish culture is an important benefit for Finland. Closeness to Russia was also important for potential students (21 % preferences). Next important issue is country’s safety – 16 %. Other factors made up 10 % of responses. Other factors could be the following, according to the fair’s visitors: friends or relatives already studying, working or living in Finland (word-of-mouth), possessing of real estate like summer cottage in Finland by family, Finnish relatives living in Finland and even Finnish origin.

Most popular study programs were: Business studies 26 %, Engineering 21 %, IT 19 %. Nursing was less popular with 14%. Arts and music gained only 9% of responses, other programs like journalism, pedagogy and linguistics 12 % (GRAPH 2). The interest to business, engineering and health protection shows the realistic approach of future students in Russia to their future profession and employment possibilities.

The majority of the respondents planned to study in the capital region of Finland (37 %, GRAPH 3), as it is also most popular with tourists from Russia and is not so far from the Russian border. Russians also know more about this region in general and its education opportunities. Western Finland was rather unexpectedly the second most popular region (18 %). The reason was presumably the fact that the respondents just got the fresh new information about Western Finland and Centria UAS and this affected their choice. This shows how important the communication and getting information is. The third largest part of the respondents answered “no region definition” as they did not make their definite choice yet.

GRAPH 4 shows that 37% of the respondents planned to get a job in Finland after the graduation. This issue is very important for Finland, because one of the main intentions of Finnish educations is that young specialists would stay in Finland after graduation, get jobs and pay taxes in Finland. 31 % planned to work in another EU countries or other Nordic country. 17 % did not make their choice yet. Only a small amount of respondents planned to get a job in Russia (7 %), the same amount planned to get a job in overseas countries. Only 2 % of the respondents were interested in job in Africa or Asia. Expectations from Finland (GRAPH 5) were as follows: 61 % expected good education opportunities as it was the main intention. This shows that Finnish education is excellently appreciated in Russia. 17 % expected to find good job opportunities and 16 % appreciated safe and secure life. Only one person expected inexpensive life, as Russians know that living expenses and taxes are high in Finland. In this issue Russians are also realistic and have tourist experiences in Finland.

An important question about introducing a tuition fee in Finland (GRAPH 6) was answered as follows: 52 % answered that they are still interested in studying in Finland after introduction of a tuition fee. 38 % answered that they would not be interested any more. 10 % could not give a definite answer, as the rate of potential tuition fee was not known yet. As can be seen, still the majority of potential students would be interested in studying in Finland even after the introduction of a tuition fee.

4.3 Recommendations for working on Study in Finland education fair in Russia

Recommendations are designed for those who will represent Centria on Study in Finland educational fair in Russia in future. The visitors of the education fair come very often with whole families. Mostly the future student had English skills but his family did not. That is why is important that explanations, instructions and materials are given in Russian language or interpreted into Russian. Yet, financial funding of the degree education abroad is in Russia very often namely done by the family of the future student. The help of the state is extremely difficult to get, although there are some Russian Government and Finno-Ugric Minorities Scholarships in Russia (CIMO Scholarships, 2015). The family and close relatives are usually funding the student who begins studies abroad. This is one of the reasons why families often accompany the future student on the education fair.

Representatives should be ready for even hundreds of visitors in Saint-Petersburg (500), in Moscow there were much less (200). First of all, the location of Centria should be explained well, since Ostrobothnia is an absolutely unknown region for Russians. There should be always a clear map of the location and some information on the region and transport options. There are some differences between the education systems of Finland and Russia that should be taken into consideration. In Russia there are no Universities of Applied Sciences in such a form as in Finland. Most of the visitors do not know the difference between the universities and the universities of applied sciences in Finland and very often they need an explanation.

Often visitors ask if it is possible to apply if the certificate of secondary education is not yet ready (in Russia secondary school graduates get their certificate later than the entrance exams in Finnish Universities end). In Russia it is called “discreet admission” (diskretnoje postuplenie) and admission in this case is possible in Centria. Many visitors asked about the English language tests, TOEFL or IELTS, how many points they should have and where they can pass the English tests in Russia. The majority of the visitors are interested in entrance examinations conducted in Russia. Nordic school institution (*Skandinavskaja shkola*) in Moscow and Saint-Petersburg is the partner of FINNIPS network when organizing the entrance examinations in Russia. Nordic school does much cooperation with Finnish, Swedish and Norwegian HEI (Nordic School).

Visitors are interested in all possible things connected with enrollment, entrance examinations, study, living expenses, future work placements, jobs and so on. Most frequently asked question was the question about the tuition fees and the consequences of its introducing. Besides, frequently asked questions were the exam materials, exam tasks and how the entrance exams are organized. Concerned parents even asked questions about child protection authorities, as some future enrollees were under 18.

Russian visitors were also concerned about HEI international and Finnish ratings and asked, which Finnish university is “better” or “best”. Sometimes there is need to explain, that most of Finnish HEI are equal and some universities are only relatively “better” than the others. Some few visitors studied Finnish language before on different levels. In Moscow and especially in Saint-Petersburg there are many possibilities to study Finnish language and for these people it is good to have some materials even in Finnish language. These visitors were also interested in study programs in Finnish language.

Among the most popular programs with Russian enrollees were programmes in Business Management. Often enrollees asked a question about “specialization” of a Business management programmes offered by Centria. One of most frequently asked questions was question about Business programme in Logistics.

After introducing tuition and admission fees there can be also financial questions even about the banks and the ways of doing payments. Many Russians still prefer cash payments inside Russia and many Russians are not experienced to make payments abroad. So there can possibly be questions when they need to make payments abroad. Most important financial question will be the rate of the tuition fee, it can be also a key factor in choosing a definite HEI for studying. There were also even hundreds of other questions, usually asked in Russian. An effective working on Study in Finland education fair in Russia needs a definite expertise in Russian realities and Russian language.

5 CENTRIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Centria UAS is one of 24 Universities of Applied Sciences in Finland (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2016). Centria is situated in Western part of Finland in the region of Central Ostrobothnia on the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia. This is a dynamic, international and multidisciplinary University of Applied Sciences. One of the working principles of Centria is cooperation with local companies and satisfaction of their needs in high-qualified international workforce. From own experience of participating in Russian trade seminars and courses, visiting enterprises author can conclude, that nowadays there are many enterprises in Ostrobothnia and Central Ostrobothnia area implementing cooperation with many international partners worldwide, among others with Russia. SK-Tuote Oy, Hägblöm Oy, OY Woikoski AB, Oy M. Rauanheimo Ab, Port of Kokkola Oy, FinnSpring Oy, ICEPRO Oy and many others have succesful cooperation with Russian partner enterprises. Fennovoima nuclear project is also an important Finnish-Russian new project in Bothnia area.

According to Birgitta Niemi, Principal Lecturer at Central Ostrobothnia University of Applied Sciences, Centria has as its target to have an international profile and focus on entrepreneurship in its education. Centria regularly contacts companies in the area to hear their opinions about the programmes and how the curricula can be adjusted to companies' needs. Centria UAS has had the policy to regularly update and improve the programme curricula and try to meet the requirements of international and global knowledge and skills the local companies need. (Niemi 2015, 24-25).

The very first international degree programme in English was launched by Centria in 1996. It was the Bachelor Degree Programme in Business Management. The programme structure was based on a research of the needs of some 200 companies in the surrounding area. The research helped to find out the needs of these companies in definite knowledge and skills. The programme was focused on the internationalization of the companies as many local companies in Ostrobothnia area dealing with international trade. Currently exports of Bothnia area stand for 12 % of total Finnish export (Niemi 2015, 25).

Later on Centria introduced other international programmes conducted in English as Chemistry, IT, Nursing, Industrial management, Tourism. Also MBA programme in International Business Management is offered. International Tourism programme is not offered any

longer. International Degree programmes conducted in English are supporting the companies in the area to meet the requirements of the Ministry of Education and Culture (Niemi 2015, 24). Centria's strategy is part of the Bothnia strategy 2015. The Bothnia area covers Oulu-South, Central Ostrobothnia and the Jakobstad area. Most of Centria graduates are supposed to be employed in Bothnia area, so the business development of Bothnia area should positively affect the development of the education of the area. (Niemi 2015, 25).

Current facts about Centria (According to Elina Ovaskainen, Centria's Admission office officer) in 2015:

Number of students 3061

International students 602 (20 %), under these 40 with Russian citizenship (15 % of all international students).

Staff 250

Fields of study: Business management, Technology, Health care and Social Sciences, Humanities and education.

Language of instruction: Finnish, Swedish and English

All degree programs in 2015-2016: 15. Among them 6 international Bachelor's degree programs conducted in English (Centria UAS. Bachelor's Degrees in English).

One international master's degree program (Centria UAS. International Business Management, MBA).

Turnover 28 M €

Centria's presentation (Welcome to Centria University of Applied Sciences! Video presentation 2015).

Centria has international cooperation agreements and partnership with over 100 partner institutions around the world. Every year hundreds of students came to Finland for exchange programs and leave from Finland abroad for an exchange. There are also international training programs for teachers. Student's and teacher's mobility play a significant role in internationalization and globalization of education.

5.1 SWOT Analyze for Centria

SWOT for Finland relates to Centria UAS internationally, as Centria is a Finnish HEI. This SWOT analyze is showing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of Centria locally for the case if Finland is already chosen as a study country and there is need to choose a definite UAS in a definite region.

- Strengths

Centria offers European education and one of the main strengths of this UAS is its degree program offers. Centria offers one of the widest ranges of international study programs offer in Finland (currently 7 Bachelor degree programs and one Master's degree program). This is the widest range of international study programs in Western Finland. The field of these study programs is also a strength, for example, Environmental Chemistry and Technology is a program very rarely offered by Finnish UAS. There are also several study programs in Business management offered. In Centria is much work in internationalization as it takes part in Erasmus exchange study programs, China exchange, Overseas and other student exchange programs worldwide. There are also programs for double-degree students and exchange programs for teachers and staff.

Degree programs of Centria are often focused on entrepreneurship and excellent connections with the working-life, provide a good basis for combining theoretical knowledge with career skills. Centria UAS is as an international university of applied sciences that also encourages research, development and innovation. Centria is developing new products for successful education export – the new Shanghai commercial degree program in nursing (Centria UAS. **SUHMS – Bachelor's Degree in Nursing**). Location in 3 campuses is one more strength of Centria. Local industries of Kokkola, Pietarsaari and Ylivieska are definitely a strength in Centria's position. A deep port in Kokkola, an airport close to Pietarsaari, a railroad are excellent possibilities for logistics.

- Weaknesses

Centria is a relatively small and unknown UAS and there is certainly need for more promotion locally, internationally and globally. The resources are also limited, therefore some study programs were cut after 2010, as Tourism and Hospitality in Pietarsaari and Theatre

study program in Kokkola. Some study programs need updating, as there are several programs in Business management with no specialization as it could be, for example, Business management and logistics. Centria's location can be also seen as a weakness, as it is situated in the distance of over 500 km from the capital region.

- Opportunities

A deep port in Kokkola, an airport close to Pietarsaari, an excellent connection by railroad with most of regions of Finland are also opportunities for Centria study programs, work placements, cooperation in working life and business. There are also many cultural issues which can be interesting for international students: peculiar culture and two official languages used in Central Ostrobothnia, music festivals, museums and a theater give many opportunities for spending free time and get acquainted with a new culture. Research, Development and Innovation activities are a great opportunity for Centria. R&D department of Centria is closely linked to teaching activities, which allows Centria's students to benefit from a learning environment based on the real working life.

Centria University of Applied Sciences in the research and development department are currently employed around 70 staff members. Centria has an excellent network on that field, there are about 60 R&D projects ongoing each year. In 2015, Centria's R&D's total volume was 4,9 M€, of which outside funding accounted for 2.3 M €. The major public financiers for R&D projects are Tekes (the Finnish Funding for Innovation), the EU (ERDF, ESF, INTERREG and the Commission), regional councils as well as ELY centers (Finnish Centers for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment). The UAS was involved in 11 Tekes projects, representing a financial input of 5,5 M€. There were 12 international projects underway in 2015, accounting for a total of 4,9M€ (Centria UAS, 2015)

- Threats

One of the main threats is global and international competition between UAS and Universities inside EU and globally as well and between the other 24 UAS inside Finland. Universities of Finland also offer a competition for international students who are planning to get higher education in Finland. The introduction of a tuition fee can reduce the number of students dramatically. In this connection Centria needs an updated competition and marketing strategy for successful export of education in changing global business environment.

5.2 Centria's plans for the future

According to Hannele Teir, educational director of Centria, introducing tuition fees can reduce the number of international students in whole Finland and in Centria dramatically. Finland is not so famous worldwide, it is a cold country with a difficult language. For example, in neighboring Sweden in 2011 after introducing tuition fees in all HEIs the amount of the enrolment from outside the EU and ETA countries reduced even 79% (Sauli, 2012). Hannele Teir explains, that in case the situation in Finland resembles the Swedish one, there is a possibility to take more Finnish and EU students on their place. In fall 2016 Centria is planning the last enrollment for international students without tuition fee. These students can begin their studies in January 2017.

There are also some plans to reduce the offer of degree programs. The decision is not yet taken, but there are some plans for reducing some business programs as there are 3 business programs in Centria. Attention will also be paid to double-degree programs and integration of international study programs and study programs conducted in Finnish. In the field of the education export there is a new commercial study program, developed by Centria with a tuition fee of 14 000 EUR as an export product. This is SUMHS Bachelor Degree in Nursing study program (Centria UAS. SUHMS – Bachelor's Degree in Nursing). 14 000 EUR is a price which is high enough, but there is a possibility to compensate it with a scholarship of 2 000 EUR for students who are making progress in their studies successfully according to the study plan. This study program is intended for those who complete their nurse's education in China and will get a European Nursing Degree in Centria. Centria has a long cooperation with China (already 20 years) and much expertise and experience in cooperation. This new SUHMS pilot program can also become an export product also for another non-EU and non ETA countries like Russia.

According to Hannele Teir, with Russia Centria does not have so much expertise as with China. Also the recession of the economy and dramatic decline of the rate of Russian national currency decreased the median income of Russians and possibilities to study abroad for them. Hannele Teir does not see the political situation in Russia as an important factor for education export cooperation. Russia as a neighboring country and an important trade partner is an important market also for the export of Finnish education. Centria UAS is also interested in cooperation with Russia in this field (Teir, 2016)

In the words of the new rector of Centria UAS Kari Ristimäki, the strengths of Centria also are a traditional good reputation and high quality of all Finnish products in the neighboring countries and worldwide. Ostrobothnia region was historically known in Finland for its industry and business opportunities. In Centria's curricula PBL is a definite advantage, because neither all Finnish HEIs are using that nor is this method used widely abroad. Weaknesses can be high living expenses as anywhere in Finland, language difficulties on finding employment. Still Finland is a rather unknown country in the world and is an "exotic" Arctic country, but this can even arise an interest among the potential students. There is also an advantage for Russian students as there are only a small amount of Russian speakers living in Ostrobothnia and studying in Centria in comparison with Eastern and Southern Finland. Russians who come to study and to work in Central Ostrobothnia, can use their Russian language skills and Russian business expertise as an advantage.

As for education export, Kari Ristimäki explains that confidence and relations are the key factors in cooperation with Russian and any other educational institutions. Creating of confidence and effective working relationships affects the development of education export positively. Centria is currently developing a new marketing and education strategy. The effective implementation of Centria 2020 strategy is the most important issue for successful export of education. As for future tuition fee rate, these are planned to be approximately the same as in a new export study program SUHMS (14 000 EUR). According to the rector, Centria will not compete with other Finnish HEIs by means of lower tuition fee rates. (Ristimäki, 2016).

6 CONCLUSION

Implementation of the education export strategy laid out by Ministry of Education in 2010 can get new challenges and opportunities after introducing tuition fees in 2017. Finnish HEIs can face even considerable decrease of international degree students. Finnish HEIs can face a problem how to recruit enough international students for their international programs. For effective implementation of educational strategies and international marketing of education some changes most likely should be done. There are discussions among education professionals, how export products or study programmes should most likely be changed in structure and duration to adjust them for export needs of Finnish UAS. For example, there are suggestions to change Master's degree programs by offering one-year long full-time education instead of one and a half-two years of part-time education and to remove UAS 3-year working experience requirement which is common to Finnish UAS (Juntunen 2015, 74)

According to Kari Ristimäki, the rector of Centria UAS, some study program offers can be decreased in the future. For Centria it would most likely be Industrial Management. According to Hannele Teir, education director of Centria, it could possibly be one of the three Business Management programmes still offered by Centria in 2016.

As a summary of the research for this thesis much interest for studying in Finland among Russian enrollees even after introducing tuition fees were showed. Finnish HEIs have to benefit from their interest, their wish, their enthusiasm for Finland. Long-time relations, cooperation in different fields and mutual expertise can effectively contribute to export of Finnish education in Russia. Finland has enough possibilities for an effective promotion of higher education to Russia. Organizing of education fairs by CIMO in Russia and possibility to pass entrance examinations in Russia, organized by FINNIPS, provide to Finnish HEIs more opportunities for recruiting more Russian students. FINNIPS arranges entrance exams in Russia even in three places in Russia in 2016 – in the subarctic city of Murmansk, in Saint-Petersburg in North-West of Russia and in Russian capital area close by Moscow in the town of Dmitrov (FINNIPS). If Finnish HEIs use these possibilities more intensively, it can contribute more to Finnish education export in general.

In 2016 there are 40 students from Russia studying in Centria UAS on different study programmes. This is about 15 % of all the international students of Centria. This number could

possibly increase. The rector and educational director of Centria consider Russia as a promising country for education export also after introducing of tuition fees even despite of current economy crisis in Russia. This country can still offer many opportunities to Finland in the field of education export.

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APPENDIX 1

Questionnaire for Russian enrollees who are interested to study in Finland

1. Why do you like to study in Finland:

- a) No education fee
- b) Closeness to Russia
- c) Safe country
- d) Interesting country (culture, travelling, nature, entertainment)
- e) Other

2. Which study program are you most interested in?

- a) IT
- b) Engineering
- c) Business
- d) Nursing
- e) Arts
- f) Other, what?

3. Where would you like to study in Finland most of all?

- a) Capital area (Helsinki) and southern Finland
- b) Central Finland (Jyväskylä, Tampere)
- c) Western Finland (Turku, West Coast)
- d) Eastern Finland
- e) Northern Finland and Lapland
- f) No preferences

4. After graduation in Finland, where would you like to get a job?

- a) Finland
- b) Other Northern countries
- c) Other EU countries
- d) In Russia
- e) In Asia
- f) In Africa
- g) In Overseas countries
- h) No country/continent definition

5. What do you expect from Finland?

- a) Good opportunities for study
- b) Good job opportunities
- c) Inexpensive life
- d) Safe and secure life
- e) Free time opportunities
- f) Other, what?

6. Would you still be interested to study in Finland after introducing tuition fee?

Yes/No/Don't know

APPENDIX 2

Comparison of study programs offer for some Finnish UAS in 2016

For Centria SWOT analyze some benchmarking in international study programs with the another Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences was done to get the picture of Centria's local competitiveness in international study programs offer for study year 2016-2017:

Vaasa UAS offers 2 Bachelor programs conducted in English, no Master's degree program (Vaasa UAS. International Bachelor's degree programs 2016).

Seinäjoki UAS offers 2 Bachelor programs in English and one MBA master's degree program and this one is conducted in Centria UAS (Seinäjoki UAS. International Degree programs 2016).

Oulu UAS offers 3 Bachelor programs in English and no Master's degree program (Oulu UAS. International degree programs 2016).

Haaga-Helia UAS in capital region offers 9 Bachelor programs in English (Haaga – Helia UAS. International Bachelor's degree programs 2016).

Haaga-Helia offers also 4 international Master's degree programs (Haaga – Helia UAS. International Master's degree programs 2016).

APPENDIX 3

Asiantuntijan haastattelu kysymykset

24.5 2016 klo 9.15

Hannele Teir

Centria Ammattikorkeakoulun Opetusjohtaja

1. Mitkä tekijät vaikuttavat yleensä suomalaisen ja Centrian korkeakouluviennin kysyntään kansainvälisesti?
2. Miten maksullisen koulutusjärjestelmän käyttöönotto vaikuttaa suomalaisen ja Centrian korkeakouluviennin kehityksen ja kilpailukykyyn?
3. Kuinka merkittävä korkeakouluvientialue on tällä hetkellä Venäjä Suomelle ja Centrialle?
4. Uusi sairaanhoitajan Kiinan koulutusohjelma SUMHS Centrian uusi vientituote?

APPENDIX 4

Asiantuntijan haastattelu kysymykset

29.5 2016 klo 10.00

Kari Ristimäki

Centria Ammattikorkeakoulun Toimitusjohtaja, rehtori

1. Mitkä tekijät vaikuttavat yleensä suomalaisen ja Centrian korkeakouluviennin kysyntään kansainvälisesti?
2. Miten maksullisen koulutusjärjestelmän käyttöönotto vaikuttaa suomalaisen ja Centrian korkeakouluviennin kehityksen ja kilpailukykyyn?
3. Centrian vahvuuksia, heikkouksia, mahdollisuuksia ja uhkia maksullisella koulutusjärjestelmällä.
4. Kuinka merkittävä korkeakouluvientialue on tällä hetkellä Venäjä Suomelle ja Centrialle?
5. Uusi sairaanhoitajan Kiinan koulutusohjelma SUMHS Centrian uusi vientituote?
6. Lukukausimaksun määrä.