

# CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN HIRING PRACTICES: INTERVIEWS

Finland, the Netherlands and Spain

## Abstract

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Title of publication <b>Cultural Differences in Hiring Practices: Interviews</b> Finland, the Netherlands and Spain		
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Abstract <p>The aim of this study was to find out the main cultural differences between three European countries in hiring practices. The focus is on the interview part for it is the part where most of the communication happens. The countries studied are Finland, the Netherlands and Spain. It is important to familiarize oneself toward this subject because a) hiring process done poorly can cost a lot of money for the company and b) migration is popular and cultural differences must be taken into account in business communication.</p> <p>The thesis is divided into two sections: theoretical and empirical. This study uses qualitative research methods with deductive approach. These methods were chosen to gain as deep level of understanding from the subject as is possible. The secondary data for the theoretical part were collected from theories related to the cultural behaviour within these countries. The empirical part uses primary data, collected through an online survey.</p> <p>The key findings from the survey were used as the primary data for this thesis. Some major differences were found through the answers of the survey. The biggest were about differences in countries laws, communication styles, adaptation skills and body language. The empirical research and their findings had support from Hofstede's dimensions, especially with the part relating to power distance and the differences in that area within countries.</p>		
Keywords Cultural differences, hiring practices, human resources, Europe, HR		

## Tiivistelmä

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Tiivistelmä <p>Tämän tutkimuksen tavoite oli löytää olennaisimmat kulttuurierot työhönottossa kolmen Euroopan maan välillä. Tutkimus keskittyi haastatteluosuuteen, sillä se on osuus, jossa suurin osa kommunikaatiosta tapahtuu. Tutkimuksen kohteena olleet maat ovat Suomi, Alankomaat ja Espanja. On tärkeää tutustua tähän aiheeseen, sillä a) huonosti toteutettu työhönottoprosessi voi tulla hyvin kalliiksi yhtiölle, ja b) muutto liikkeen yleistyessä kulttuurierot on tärkeää ottaa huomioon välttääkseen väärinymmärryksiä liiketoiminnan kommunikaatiossa.</p> <p>Opinnäytetyö on jaettu kahteen osaan: teoreettinen ja empiirinen. Tutkimuksessa käytettiin kvalitatiivisia tutkimusmenetelmiä kera deduktiivisen lähestymistavan. Sekundaarinen data, joka kerättiin ensimmäisessä osuudessa, saatiin kulttuurieroihin liittyvistä teorioista näiden kolmen maan sisällä. Empiirinen osuus käyttää ensisijaista tietoa, joka kerättiin verkkokyselyllä.</p> <p>Verkkokyselyn avainlöydöksiä käytettiin tämän opinnäytetyön ensisijaisena tietolähteenä. Joitakin merkittäviä eroavaisuuksia löytyi kyselyn vastauksien avulla, ja suurimmat liittyivät eroavaisuuksiin maiden lakipykälissä, kommunikaatiotyyleihin, sopeutumiskykyyn ja kehonkieleen. Empiirinen tutkimus ja sen löydökset saivat tukea Hofsteden tutkimuksista kulttuurien ulottuvuuksista - etenkin osuudessa, joka käsitteli valtaetäisyyttä ja eroavaisuuksia niiden suhteen maiden välillä.</p>		
Asiasanat Kulttuurierot, työhönotto, henkilöstöhallinto, Eurooppa, HR		

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Thesis background

With the globalization and the world getting smaller, it is very important to orientate to cultural factors that influence modern business world. This helps to understand our surroundings better and hereby add value on, for example, international trade. (Kolb 2019.)

When talking about cultural differences, the roots of the culture itself should initially be explored carefully. Then, as the factors that affect on one country's culture are clear, it is possible to draw some lines between the culture and its effects on country's business world and more specifically, with its hiring practices.

Hiring practices studied with this thesis cover the form of the application, interview situation and post-interview communication. These fields were analysed culturally.

After a more profound comprehension of the hiring methods and cultural differences were gained, a connection with the theory to the empirical part was drawn. In this way a deeper understanding on why people in different countries, with their different hiring practices, behave the way they do.

Author chose this subject because of the pure fascination in how cultural differences influence on human resource management. Finland, the Netherlands and Spain were selected based on the empirical experience gained through the author living in the studied countries and thus having some kind of knowledge base of the cultures, and cultural practices.

## 1.2 Thesis objectives, research questions and limitations

The main object of the thesis was to find out what are the major cultural differences in recruitment processes with the three countries mentioned above. In the survey, the emphasis was on the interviewing as that is the phase where face-to-face contact happens and thus best reveals cultural differences and differences concerning behaviour.

For the thesis background it was important to orientate on every country's cultural aspects and the factors that has formed it. This includes also the history, as that has formed the country's present. This helps to understand the behaviour models in recruitment processes and also to have clear connection between culture and hiring process. Simplified: why do people – in this case recruiters – behave the way they do?

The main research question:

*What kind of recruitment process is practiced in the three countries of the research: Finland, the Netherlands, Spain?*

Sub-questions:

*What are the similarities/differences in the recruitment process between all three countries?*

*How formal is the recruitment process?*

*How does the country's culture reflect on the recruitment process?*

The concepts of culture and hiring practices are very broad. This is why some limitations must be set. First of all, culture that is discussed in this thesis relates to country, even though there are many sub-cultures inside one country. Thus, in this thesis, culture is the same thing as a whole country. Other limitations concerning this thesis is the hiring practices. The aspects of hiring practices that will be studied with this thesis are: CV/application, interviewing situation and communication in post-interview situation. The study will concentrate on the interview situation as it is where most of the communication happens and thus cultural differences are shown the best.

### 1.3 Theoretical framework

In the first theoretical part the reader is introduced to the concepts of culture and the researcher's ideas of it. This area includes culture theory based on a Dutch social psychologist Geert Hofstede and Richard Lewis, a linguist from Great Britain.

In the second part the countries and their cultural norms are introduced: starting from history and culture, then moving on to Hofstede's dimensions and Lewis' insights studied for every country. The third and final theoretical part is about hiring practices, culturally presented.

### 1.4 Research methodology and data collection

Theory is a perspective on reality (Pihlaja 2001, 45), a perspective to some kind of a phenomenon. According to Lewin, practice and theory overlap: theory creates a foundation for research. This is what happens also with this thesis: theory is not only the base for this study but also a confirmation for the study and survey emphasizing the research results. Theory is needed not only for backgrounding but also for data collection design; theory is a tool for structuring. (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka 2006, 11-12.)

As a data acquiring method, more qualitative than quantitative techniques were preferred. It is a method trend, where the aim is to understand the quality, features and meanings of

the object (Jyväskylän Yliopisto 2015). Qualitative research method enables diversity and many different solutions – although sometimes this may become a burden (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka 2006 4). Also, deductive approach was used to connect theory and empirical study together. A deductive reasoning is convenient method as it is a method where initial assumptions will inevitably lead to a true conclusion. A general conclusion is drawn on the general case. (Peda.net 2019.)

Theory was gathered from books, articles and internet journals such as Hofstede's and Lewis' online journals. Hofstede's studies were used because of his recognition of long history in studying the field of culture and cultural differences. Another researcher that has been especially conversant on this field, is Lewis, whose theories were also used to create base for empirical part. The reason why Lewis' theories were chosen was because of his understanding on different cultural aspects affecting the business life.

Needed data for the empirical part was collected through an online survey, which was sent out to pre-selected group of people. The group was selected based on best knowledge to find the study group that meets the criteria of being involved in the field of human resources, and hiring processes. The survey was conducted with Webropol Surveys, as it is the online service used by the university the author is studying at. The survey consisted of 20 different questions with three different sections: The importance of application, the course of the interview and getting in touch with the applicant after the interview. Survey emphasized the course of the interview as the main research question was to examine the cultural differences in behavior in an official meeting such as an interview.

## 1.5 Structure of the thesis

Thesis starts with an introduction part, covering background information, thesis objectives, research questions and limitations, then theoretical framework, research methodology and data collection and lastly introducing the structure of this thesis. It is important to introduce some background information for the reader to get familiar with the topics that will follow. Objectives, research questions and limitations are also an important part for it will explain more of the "what" and "why" of the thesis. Structure of the thesis explains in more depth, how the thesis is formed

After the introduction part, the thesis is divided into two sections: theoretical and empirical. Chapter two of the thesis covers a general formatting about culture: what is culture, its historical roots and different perspectives from different researchers of culture. Then the part moves on to the researchers and their studies, and as previously mentioned the thesis is based on Hofstede's and Lewis' theories. On chapter three an overview of the countries'



living conditions, culture and history are presented. This is to provide overall picture and gain an understanding for each different culture. With each country same points are handled: geography, weather, religion, employment situation, number of foreigners and other visible factors affecting culture. Then a brief overlook to country's history is done. After this the business culture of the country is studied. Then is the part where Hofstede's dimensions for each country are listed. Lastly comes the part with the Lewis' insights for every country and where every country's negotiation habits are analysed using Lewis' theory.

In the empirical part, in chapter four, the research methods and data analysis are introduced. In chapter five the empirical part is covered, where the survey questions are presented and studied and an analysis is made – connecting to used theories. Finally, part six covers conclusion to connect theory and practice together. Chapter seven is the summary for the whole thesis.

## 2 CULTURE

The definition of 'culture' is complex and it has been studied a lot. Still, there are many different variations on how to define the term in a nutshell and a big reason for this is the different usages of the term. One of the most used definitions – at least amongst anthropologists – is Edward Tylor's version:

*Culture or Civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society (Tylor 1871).*

Concept "culture" and the word itself comes from a latin word "cultura" which means cultivation and was actually first used in the sense of "cultura agri" – cultivation of the field. Later the term spread to become "cultura animi" which means "the cultivation of spirit" (Rauhala 2005). This is actually a very representational description and opens up well this term. Hofstede, a famous dutch social psychologist and a professor, explains that culture is always a collective phenomenon and requires at least two individuals in order to happen (Hofstede 2011).

Culture in our modern world consists of many areas of living, but one of the most valid areas regarding this thesis, is habits and how we behave in our own society. What is normal behaviour in one country, might be odd, or even offensive in another. Hofstede talks about this behaviour-affected culture with his cultural studies. Also, Hofstede explains about multiculturalism in a sense that people usually belong to more than one cultural group. Cultural "levels" can be, for example, national, regional/ethnic/religious, gender, generation or social class level. (Hofstede 2010, 10.) This is also why cultural aspects and dividing people into different groups just because of their country of residence is not so unambiguous. But, for the sake of simplification, with this thesis culture is same as country.

### 2.1 Geert Hofstede's studies

Geert Hofstede is a dutch social psychologist born in 1927. He has done a pioneering study of cultures across modern nations. During his first years Hofstede worked as an engineer and then as a personnel manager. He got interested in human behaviour and did his PhD in organizational behaviour. This led to a job with the personnel research department of IBM international and where Hofstede created his first four cultural dimensions. Since then the first cultural dimensions have been further developed to entail six dimensions. (Hofstede 2019a.)

Through his research, Hofstede created an analysis on how to compare cultural differences. This analysis contains now – after the latest additions on the 2000's by Bulgarian scholar Michael Minkov and Hofstede himself – six dimensions, which are:

- Power distance
- Uncertainty avoidance
- Individualism vs. collectivism
- Masculinity vs. femininity
- Long term vs. short term orientation
- Indulgence vs. restraint

(Hofstede & Minkov 2010).

Power distance index is a term that describes the way society perceives inequality. In other words, it measures the inequality in organizations and institutions (which can be for example family or workplace) (Clearly Cultural 2019). Uncertainty avoidance is a dimension that measures the way how society deals with the fact that future cannot be known or controlled, and how people react to it. Does it bring anxiety or do people try to avoid situations that create these unknown situations? Individualism vs. collectivism has to do with the degree of independence in a society: do people look after themselves mainly, or are they living in a collectivist society where everyone is being loyal towards each other by taking care of them? Fourth dimension is about masculinity vs. femininity and the key issue here is whether society is masculine – driven by achievements and competition, or feminine – caring of each other and improving quality of living. Long term vs. short term orientation discusses about the relationship that people have towards their past and challenges in the future. Normative societies like to maintain traditions and are cautious about changes. Pragmatic cultures think the opposite: futuristic and modern efforts are a good way to prepare for the future. Last dimension is about indulgence vs. restraint. This describes the amount that people try to control their indulgence and having fun. Low score indicates that people are restrained and high score refers to people being indulgent. (Hofstede 2019a.)

## 2.2 Richard Lewis communication

Richard Lewis is a famous linguist born in Great Britain in the 1930s. He grew up in humble conditions to being now an advisor for governments and corporations on cultural diversity. (CrossCulture 2019a.) He travelled to Finland in 1952 for the Olympic Games and became interested in the Finnish language and decided to learn it himself. He stayed in

Finland and eventually opened up language training centres in Helsinki, ultimately spreading the language centres to Japan and Brazil. (CrossCulture 2019b.)

In the 1980s a Finnish company called Valmet Paper Machinery asked Lewis for advice for their approach to different markets, as they noticed that more is needed in cross-cultural communication than just knowing English language. This is where the Lewis Model of Culture began. The brand is now known as CrossCulture. (CrossCulture 2019b.)

The idea behind the Lewis Model is that cultures and mainly people in them, can be divided into three different groups based on their behaviour: Linear-active, Multi-active or Reactive. In a nutshell, Linear-active people include the English-speaking world. People like to carry out one task at a time, plan ahead step-by-step, be polite but direct, logical and job-oriented and rather impatient with limited body language. With Multi-active – being more scattered over eg. Mediterranean countries, Southern Europe, South-America, Sub-Saharan Africa and Arab to name few – people behave practically the opposite when compared to Linear-active. They speak a lot, execute many tasks at the same time, plans include outlines only, show their emotions easily, let feelings come before facts and have unlimited body language. The reactive group is located in Asia – excluding India, which is a mixture of Multi-active and Reactive. Reactive people are listeners with reactions to partner's actions, follow general principles, are polite and indirect, do not interrupt or show emotions, prefer diplomacy over truth and use only subtle body language. (CrossCulture 2019c.) Below you can see a visual presentation of the model:

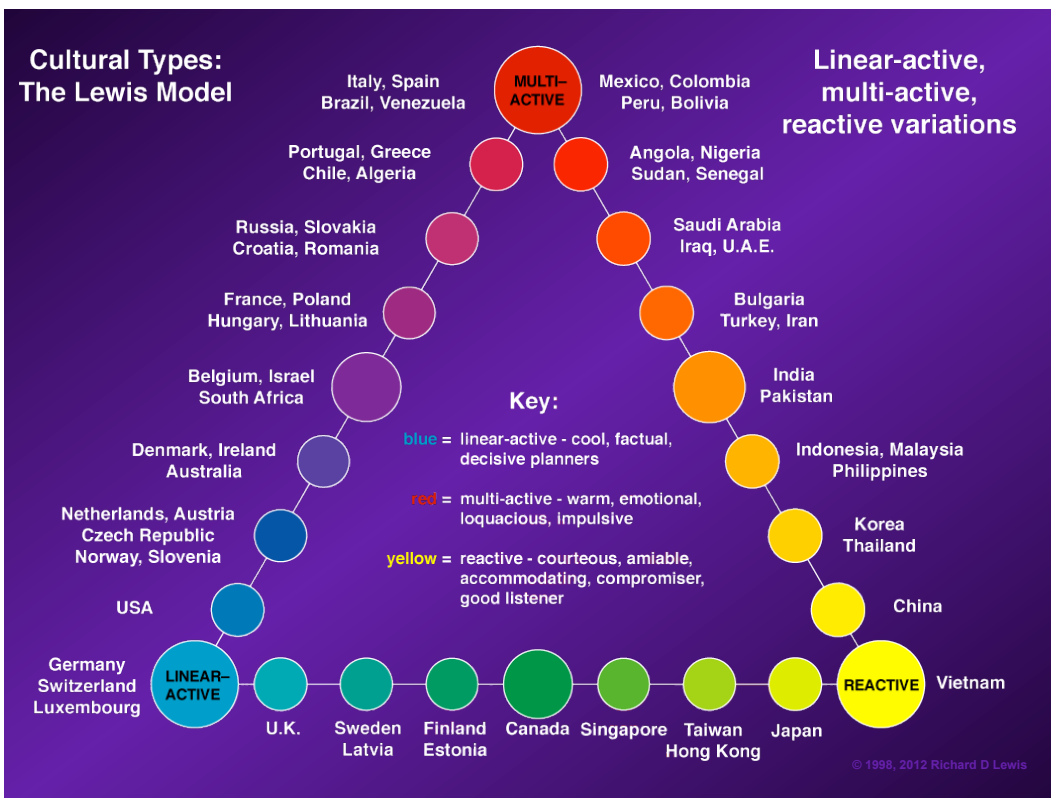


Figure 1 The Lewis Model (CrossCulture 2019c)

### 3 COUNTRIES

In order to understand the cultural dimensions of three different countries presented in the thesis, we must examine the history and the past that has formed the present of the country. Also, the geographical factors – how the country is located on a map, the amount of sunlight per year, weather conditions – must be considered when orientating to country's culture. In this study some of the critical factors are also religion and its impacts on people's behaviour, the number of foreigners in a country and population's average income. All these affect on the culture and the people living in a specific regional area.

*One cannot overestimate the importance of geographic conditions, including climate, and their influence on the development of the... mindset (Lewis, 2005).*

As Hofstede's dimensions were chosen to be used in this study, during the following paragraphs the subject will be examined deeper through comparing the three countries to each other. In the dimensions 100 is the highest score and 0 the lowest. Below, in Figure 2, is the visualization of the dimensions and country comparisons:

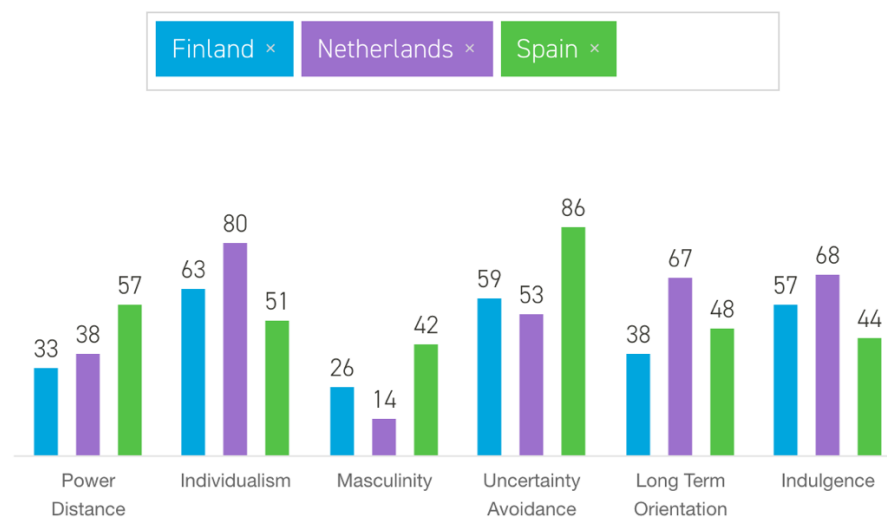


Figure 2 Country comparison (Hofstede 2019b)

#### 3.1 Finland

As an outcome, based on theories and researches examined in these next chapters it could be stated that the factors that most affect on Finnish behaviour and culture are climate and more specifically the amount of sunlight per year, low population density, social safety and the impacts of neighbouring countries possession over Finland. In the next paragraphs these factors will be represented furthermore.

Finland is a country geographically located in Northern Europe, between Sweden and Russia. Up north Finland's Lapland is surrounded by northern neighbour Norway. The population is about 5,51 million in total. Finland is a bilingual country, including Finnish and Swedish languages. There are a little over 360,000 persons living in Finland with foreign background – a little under 58,000 that are born in Finland and a little under 307, 000 that are born elsewhere. The largest share from all the foreigners in Finland are Estonian (20,7%), Russian (11,7%), Iraqi (4,7%) and Chinese (3,5%). (Statistics Finland 2018.) Thus it can be stated that Finns are familiar with living amongst many different cultures and have had some influences from both Swedish and Russian population. Also, bilinguality creates some challenges to Finns cultural behaviour. It can be summed up so that language, culture and thinking are linked together and affect each other (Kangasaho 2013, 16). Also, the aftermath of living under the rule of both these countries has left a mark on Finns and they still struggle with their cultural identities (Laurinolli 2014).

Finland's gross domestic product per capita is about 251,88 € at the moment (Trading economics, 2019). Unemployment rate has gone down a bit in last few years and the largest employment sector is manufacturing; electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning and water supply. Even though Finland pales in comparison to other Nordic countries when comparing the GDP, it has been nominated as the happiest country in the world in the World Happiness Report in 2019. Happiness Research Institution points out that it is not the money but the social safety combined with job satisfaction that makes the Finns happy. (Swanson 2016.)

The climate in Finland is rather varied because of the radiation energy of the sun, which divides very unevenly throughout the year. The radiation is also very different in South of Finland compared to northern parts. In summer the sun barely sets in Northern Finland but then again in the winter you can only see the sun for couple of hours during the day. Temperatures also vary in different regions. The average annual temperature in Southwestern Finland is about 5.5 celsius degrees, decreasing towards northeast. (Finnish Meteorological Institute 2019a.) The highest temperature was measured on July in the year 2010 at Joensuu airdrome: 37,7 celsius degrees. The lowest temperature was measured in Kittilä on January 1999: -51,5 celsius degrees. (Finnish Meteorological Institute 2019b.)

*I think it was the climate that gave me the greatest surprise when I went to Finland. It wasn't at all how I thought it would be. We all seem to have a perception of long dark days in the middle of winter and Finland being so very, very cold. And yes, Finland is like that. But the surprising thing is that it can be so very, very hot. (Swallow 2011.)*

### 3.1.1 History and culture

Finland has had a colourful history under the dominance of its neighbouring countries. Although Finland is now a strong and independent country, it has not always been this way always. And even though the history of Finland goes a long way in the past (about 9,000 BC), country that we know today has not existed in its current form for long – only for 100 years. (Swallow 2011 26-33.)

The Finns were under Swedish rule for almost seven centuries: until year 1809 when the Russians conquered Finland and the Swedes had to cede Finland to Russia. This period under Russian rule lasted for 108 years. The Russian revolution in year 1917 resulted the Finnish senate to declared independency on 6 December 1917. One important factor about Finland's equality and low power distance is the fact that Finland was the first country in Europe to grant women full political rights on year 1906. (Swallow 2011 26-33.)

### 3.1.2 Business culture

Regardless of the small size of the country, Finland is successful in business world and advanced in technology: the reason may be globally envied (tuition-free) education system, or the Finnish mindset and guts – or both. Business-wise Finland can be seen a bit paradoxal: they are dependant on traditional industries such as paper but, simultaneously, have been at the leading edge in many high-tech sectors. Finns do not like to talk too much but, at the same time, are very gifted in foreign languages. Also, Finns tend to be rather nationalistic but criticise lightly national defects. As the Finns are being authentic also in the business-life, this paradoxal communication can seem a bit enigmatic. (World Business Culture 2017a.)

The bottom-line for Finnish communication could be stated to be silence and non-existing body language. This makes the Finns hard to read and may sometimes cause misunderstandings in business communication. Finnish tend to use humour – even black – in business situations. Self-targeted jokes are very common. Meetings are structured and follow the agenda carefully. There is always one speaker at a time and the permission to speak is often asked. Attendants are expected to be well prepared as the Finns do not want to speak unless the subject is valid for the case. (World Business Culture 2017b.) Modesty and sticking to facts is often the key to success. Finns are also modest in giving feedback for a well-executed job, but it does not mean that the good job has been left unseen. It is just a form of modesty. (Passport to Trade 2.0, 2019a.) Overselling is a big “no” for the Finns. Over-enthusiastic approach can be seen as unreliable behaviour and thus will not be taken seriously. (World Business Culture 2017a.)



Greetings are also a very restrained moment. The Finns do not like to be touched by strangers and this is why hand shakes are as maximum of contacts there will be in the business world. Face-to-face contact is not required and many times Finns prefer e-mails over a meeting. Also, this saves a lot of time, which is also important in Finnish mindset. (Passport to Trade 2.0 2019b.)

### 3.1.3 Dimension values

Finland scores low on the power distance dimension with score of 33 out of 100. This means that hierarchy is for convenience only and equality is important. Other factors related to low power distance score are: being independent, superiors are accessible, and management facilitates and empowers staff. Power is decentralized rather than only in the hands of the management and team members are trusted. Employees expect to be asked for advice and to be involved in decision-making. Control by the superiors is not a valued feature and the relation with managers is informal. With communication Finns prefer direct and participative speech. (Hofstede 2019b.)

When discussing about the degree of individualism, Finland scores quite high – 63. This means that Finland is indeed an individualistic country where everyone is expected to take care of themselves – and closest family members. In individualistic countries the relationship between employees and employers are contract based and mutual advantage is a requisite. Promotions are deserved merit-basis. (Hofstede 2019b.)

With Finland scoring 26 on masculinity dimension, means that Finland is a feminine country. This indicates to Finns' attitude of "work in order to live" and not the other way around. In the event of conflict, compromising and negotiation is used instead of arguing. Equality is a valued feature. Free time and well-being are favoured and this shows for example from long summer holidays. A good manager is considered supportive and decisions are made alongside with conversations and involvement. (Hofstede 2019b.)

Finland scores 59 from uncertainty avoidance dimension, which is rather high. This means – in a nutshell – that rules are important and are emotionally needed, and they seem to increase the feeling of safety. Time is money and thus punctuality is a standard way of life. Busy lifestyle and working hard are also basic features in countries scoring high on this dimension. High score on uncertainty avoidance can also affect on resistance over new innovations. (Hofstede 2019b.)

Finnish culture can be categorized as normative because of the low score of 38 from the dimension called long term orientation. This refers to people's will of always establishing

the truth and their thinking is very normative. Traditions are important as is living in the moment, and quick results are pursued. (Hofstede 2019b.)

The last dimension is indulgence, where Finland scores relatively high score of 57. This refers to Finns being rather impulsive when it comes to enjoying life. Positive attitude and optimism are common. This leads to people wanting to act as they please and appreciating their leisure time. (Hofstede 2019b.)

### 3.1.4 Lewis' insights

Figure 3 below shows that the Finns tend to appreciate short and succinct negotiations. There is no need for any social small-talk in the beginning as Finns tend to jump right to the point. After minimal speech, often follows miscomprehension, which will be corrected fast. This leads to summarizing the topic. The whole negotiation situation is aiming for clarity. (Lewis 2006.)



Figure 3 National Communication Patterns (Lewis 2006)

The Finns position themselves in the middle of Linear-active and Reactive, being more in the end of Linear-active. This suggests that Finns are organised planners and oriented to doing one task at a time – still carefully avoiding confrontations

and aiming for a consensus. Finns tend to be silent thinkers and listeners, and target for punctuality and reliable delivery dates. (CrossCulture 2019d.)

### 3.2 The Netherlands

With Netherlands, it seems that the factors that most affect on people and culture are high population density, weather and the aftermath of war. These factors have formed the Dutch people to be adaptable in many ways. Further in-depth analysing will be done in the next sections.

The Netherlands is a country in western Europe with rather small surface area and with high population density – being actually one of the most densely populated countries in the world. The population is about 17,3 million in total. (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek 2019a.) It is fair to say, that the Dutch are familiar with being close to each other. High population density has formed the Netherlands to being a melting-pot for people from many different backgrounds, living side by side. This has increased tolerancy amongst Dutch people – as long as no-one gets hurt or offended. (Beets & Nimwegen 2000.)

The Netherlands' neighbouring countries are Belgium in the South and Germany on the East side (North Sea on the northwest). The capital of the Netherlands is Amsterdam but the seat of government is in The Hague. Official language in the Netherlands is Dutch, Frisian language being second. Also, Lower Saxon and Limburgish are recognized as regional languages. (Rijksoverheid 2019.)

The Netherlands is a small yet colourful country – with 23 percent of the whole population having migration background, the culture of the Netherlands is quite saturated (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek 2019b). Largest ethnical groups there are Turkish, Moroccan, Afghan, Syrian, Iraqi and Polish. Below Table 1 introduces the household composition by background. This is one of the points that emphasize the fact that the Dutch are used to – even required to, in order to keep the peacefulness in the country – being tolerant and adaptable.

Table 1 Household composition by background (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek 2019)

Household composition by background, 1 January 2016 (%)

	Couple, 2 partners migration background	Couple, 1 partner migration background	Single household	Single- parent household	Other types of household
<b>Four largest non-western origin groups</b>					
Turkish	53.6	6.6	26.5	12.1	1.2
Moroccan	48.6	6.8	29.5	12.5	2.7
Surinamese	22.0	18.5	40.0	18.5	1.0
Antillean	13.7	23.6	44.5	17.2	1.0
<b>New EU</b>					
Polish	31.1	18.6	43.1	6.8	0.4
Bulgarian	29.5	9.9	52.8	7.2	0.6
Romanian	23.9	25.3	45.4	5.0	0.4
<b>Refugees</b>					
Afghan	47.7	3.2	35.3	10.4	3.4
Eritrean	12.5	0.7	77.8	8.8	0.2
Iraqi	39.5	5.4	40.9	11.9	2.3
Iranian	28.7	12.2	48.6	9.4	1.1
Somalian	21.9	2.5	48.3	25.7	1.6
Syrian	45.1	3.0	46.0	5.1	0.8

Religion does not seem to play a big role in the Netherlands – over half of the population is irreligious (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek 2018). Still, Netherlands is considered very conservative and religious in some of the smaller municipalities. A good example from this is the “Bible Belt” – a Protestant village grouping, going from Zeeland to Overijssel, with the highest concentration of orthodox protestants. (Hudson 2007.) So, even though religion itself does not show in the working life, it has formed Dutch people to be somewhat conservative, at least in some parts of the country.

GPD per capita is about 826,2 € at the moment (Trading economics 2019c). Unemployment rate has decreased significantly from year 2014 and average taxable income is about 28, 800 € per year and this makes about 2,400 € per month (Centraal Bureau voor Statistiek, 2018b). The largest employment sectors are agriculture and food industry, energy industry (natural gas) and chemical industry (Worldatlas 2018).

The Netherlands has a temperate maritime climate with rather cool summers and middling winters. Average temperatures in summer time are between 2 to 6 celsius degrees and in winter from 17 to 20 celsius degrees. Fall and winter time are rather stormy and breezy, especially on the coastal areas. Rainfall is divided quite evenly throughout the year, although there is a dryer period from April to September. (WeatherOnline 2019.) The ever-

changing weather has shaped the Dutch to be eager to talk about weather (and complain about it a lot) (Chow 2017).

### 3.2.1 History and culture

The Netherlands has a rich and far-reaching history, starting from as early as 40 000 years ago where earliest humans were to inhabit the land. The culture itself began to take its form about 4800 B.C when first settlements began to appear. (Netherlands Tourism 2019.)

Dutch were under Romans rule for 450 years and almost 30 years under the Spanish rule and this has, with no doubt, influenced the Netherlands' culture. Nevertheless, so called "Golden Age" of the Dutch republic was 1600-1690 when massive growth was happening: trade, migration and intellectual boom. In 1810 Napoleon Bonaparte annexed the Netherlands to France – this however ended at the Battle of Waterloo where Napoleon and his army was defeated with the help of Prussian army. (Netherlands Tourism 2019.) Belgium and Luxemburg were part of the Dutch Kingdom until Belgium started to revolt on year 1830 and Luxemburg on year 1890 when Dutch King William III died. A big influencer to Dutch and their cultural heritage is the World War II where the country was invaded by the Germans. The whole country suffered from the German terror and the resistance against Nazis is further in the minds of Dutch people. (Amsterdam.info 2019.) Approximately 107, 000 Dutch Jews were deported to concentration camps, most perishing there. On year 1945 The Netherlands became officially liberated and later, on August, the war finally ended.

After the war the Netherlands rose quickly back on its feet and has since then continued to grow economically, being now one of the most developed and wealthiest countries in the world (Netherlands Tourism 2019).

### 3.2.2 Business culture

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Netherlands and its people are used to being tolerant and adaptable. So much so, actually, that they have made up their own word to describe it: *gedogen*. This is an untranslatable word that means the ability to tolerate an exception to a rule. (Passport to Trade 2.0 2019a.)

Dutch business culture is not hierarchical – actually the opposite of it. Dutch people will ignore authority with ease, when seen necessary. Thus, the Dutch openness is well reflected in business life also. Managers and employees are more seen as co-workers than in a

formal boss-subordinate-relationship. The only formalities necessary are, when speaking to an older person or person with notably different rank. (Labour Mobility 2019.)

Although the Dutch are very pluralistic, they have some taboo behaviours which should be avoided, especially in more formal circumstances such as: initially calling people by their first names, walking into office without knocking the door, talking with hands in pockets, yawning without covering mouth, chewing gum or breaking promises (Passport to Trade 2.0 2019a).

Dutch do make physical contact in the business life also, but with malice aforethought. This means shaking everyone's hand and introducing themselves with polite phrases. In social occasions people, who already know each other, greet each other with three kisses on the cheeks. This, however, is not considered as appropriate behaviour in business world. (Passport to Trade 2.0 2019b.)

The Dutch like to have a lot of meetings. Business meetings are quite informal but follow the agenda and schedule. All those present at the meeting, are expected to contribute with the issues on the table regardless what their position is in the company. (Labour Mobility 2019.)

### 3.2.3 Dimension values

Countries in the Germanic area (where German, English, Dutch, Danish, Norwegian and Swedish are spoken) are located at the lower end of the power distance index (Hofstede 1991).

The Netherlands scores 38 from the first part, power distance, thus being quite similar when compared to Finland. The characteristics with low power distance were that equality is important and hierarchy not favoured, people being independent, superiors are being accessible, and management facilitates and empowers staff. Managers count on employees' expertise and employees expect to be consulted. General atmosphere towards managers is quite informal and first name basis is practiced. Communication is direct. (Hofstede 2019b.)

With individualism, the Netherlands isolates itself from Finland a bit more: with a score of 80 the Dutch are very individualistic – even more so than the Finns. This means that social framework is loose and people tend to take care of themselves and the closest family members only. As in Finland, the relationship between employees and employers are contract based and mutual advantage is requisite, and promotions are deserved merit-basis. (Hofstede 2019b.)

Also, with masculinity, there is a bigger difference when compared to Finland and especially Spain. The Netherlands scores only 14 from this dimension and is hereby very feminine country. This includes the Dutch being very keen on keeping work and other areas of life separated. Also, solidarity and equality are valued in work life also, and managers are expected to behave fairly. Compromises and negotiations are a big part of discussions – which may take a long time before consensus is reached. (Hofstede 2019b.)

The Netherlands scores 53 from uncertainty avoidance, and positions itself in the middle with this dimension. The Finns and the Dutch seem to be quite similar when comparing them from this point-of-view - Spain being separated from others. With score of 53 the Netherlands hereby indicates slight preference for avoiding uncertainty. Need for rules does exist and time is money. With work, people like to keep themselves busy and work diligently. Being precise is part of cultural features and security is important. (Hofstede 2019b.)

With the dimension “Long term orientation”, the Netherlands stands out from the rest. With the score of 67 from this dimension, the Dutch are far more pragmatic and adaptable than Finns and Spanish. This score also indicates that even though being fair is important, the Dutch consider truthfulness being dependant of the situation, time and place. Achieving results is often sought after. (Hofstede 2019b.)

With the last dimension – indulgence- the Netherlands also scores a bit higher than Finland and Spain. With score of 68 the Dutch seem to appreciate their leisure activities and enjoy life. With high score from indulgence, people tend to follow their impulses easily. Positive attitude is a visible sign from this score. (Hofstede 2019b.)

#### 3.2.4 Lewis' insights

Lewis' insights show that the Dutch tend to focus on facts and figures but at the same time like to talk – while being excellent in it. This follows with a resistance to see if the opposite side is bluffing. Final conclusions are rarely done without long Dutch debate, which can often lead to over-analyzing. Decisions will not be made in a rush and rather sleep on it and decide tomorrow. Again, visualization can be seen in the figure below. (Lewis 2006.)



Figure 4 National communication Patterns (Lewis 2006)

The Netherlands positions itself between Linear-active and Multi-active, being at the end closer to Linear-active. This means that the Dutch prefer direct communication, are task-oriented without the fear of confrontation. Thus, result-orientation thrives the Dutch to make compromises when necessary. Multi-active features add impulsiveness and talkativeness to a Dutch communication. Rules and regulations may not always be seen as positive and respect for the authority is limited. (CrossCulture 2019d.)

### 3.3 Spain

With Spain, it seems that the factors that have most influenced the current culture and people are the weather; the amount of sun and the summer heat, tourism and country's vivid population, pride achieved through its colonies and impacts of the civil war. Again, in the next sections these factors will be analyzed furthermore.

Spain is a large kingdom in southwestern Europe. The country is large not only by area but also by population: about 46,5 million people live in Spain making it the 30<sup>th</sup> biggest country in the world (ranked by population) (Worldometers 2019).

Climate in Spain is one of the most valid factors when talking about Spanish culture. Still, we must notice that Spain covers a total area of over 500, 000 sq kilometres so the country offers a wide range of different climates. In the North there is a lot more rainfall



than in the Southern parts – thus the Northern parts are also a lot greener. Then there are the mountains in the central of Spain called Meseta: a plateau with hot summer days and even freezing winters. Then comes the Mediterranean Spain where they have more fertile landscapes with citrus and palm trees as well as vineyards. The more south you go, the drier and mountainous it gets. Southern Spain is again much greener – not to forget the never-ending beachlines. It may come as a surprise that even though the climate is warm throughout the year, there are plenty of options for skiing and downhill skiing for example at the mountains of Sierra Nevada. (Graff 2008.) One of the main points with Spanish weather and its affects on Spanish culture is “siesta time”. Although the roots to siesta (short naps on the late afternoon) are in Italy, the term is connected quite firmly on to Spain nowadays. One of the reasons why siesta is spent, is the mid-day heat. Traditionally on the fields, workers suffered from extreme heat during the hottest hours, so they had to seek for cover and have a short break, just to feel refreshed and to continue working later in the evening. (Corrigan 2019.)

Spain is a multilingual country, although Spanish is the official language. Other co-official regional languages are Basque with about 715, 000 Basque speakers (EuskoGuide 2019), Catalan being spoken by about 17% of the whole population, Galician spoken by 9% and Occitan in Catalonia. Other recognized regional languages include Aragonese, Asturian, and Leonese (Pariona, 2018a). This also associates with the fact that Spanish are very adaptable and permissive in many ways. See Table 2 for all languages spoken in Spain.

Table 2 What Languages Are Spoken in Spain? (WorldAtlas 2018)

Official languages	Co-official Regional languages	Recognized Regional Languages	Unofficial Regional Languages	Main Immigrant Languages	Main foreign languages
Spanish	Basque, Catala, Galician, and Occitan	Aragonese, Asturian/Leonese and Catalan	Cantabrian, Extremaduran, Judaeo-Spanish, Riffian Berber, Eonavian, Fala, Portuguese, Iberian, Romani, and the Gomeran whistled language	Spanish (Latin American Spanish), Bulgarian, Ukrainian, Arabic, English, German, Romanian, French, Italian, Portuguese, Chinese, Russian.	English French German

Religion and especially Catholicism shows widely around Spain, and Catholicism has been a strong force throughout the history after it was declared the sole religion by the Romans in 380 AD (Graff 2008). Although there is nowadays freedom to practice religion, Roman Catholicism is still the major religion – covering almost 68% of the population. However, only 14% report going to mass every Sunday. About 20 to 22% of the population considers themselves as irreligious – Atheists or Agnostics. Islam is Spain's fastest growing religion – covering now about 4% of the population's religion. (Pariona 2018b.)

The Spanish economy is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest in Europe – not least because of the fact that Spain receives the largest number of tourists from all of the European countries on yearly basis (EURES 2019). GDP per capita in Spain is now 1,311 billion (Trading Economics 2019a). The unemployment rate at the moment is 14,1% (Trading Economics 2019b) and although it has gone down a lot in past few years, it is still considerably higher than in Finland or in the Netherlands. According to Spain's statistical institute (Instituto Nacional de Estadística 2018), an average taxable income per year is about 23, 000 €. This makes about 1,917 € on monthly basis. Tourism and other services are with no doubt the largest employment sector in Spain – covering over 76 percent of the work force. (Statista 2019.) Low GDP and high unemployment rate affect on country's culture and moreover hiring practices – in businesses GDP is often used as a tool to analyse whether or not it is advisable to expand the business (Sarfin 2017). People that are born in wealthier countries, can be expected to live longer than people born in poor countries (Gordon & Biciunaite 2014), thus increasing even more the uncertainty avoidance (see sub-header 3.3.3), which is already high in Spain.

### 3.3.1 History and culture

Spain has not only extremely wide acreage, but also very broad set of historical events. Around 2000 BC, the first people came to settle in Spain – these were Phoenicians and the Greek. On the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC came the Romans (masters of all Iberia) and the influences from Romans are still visible for example with the Romance languages: Castilian, Catalan and Gallego. One important face in Spanish history was also The Moors establishing a caliphate in the South stretching their power all over peninsula. This was no short chapter, as it took the Spanish Christians seven centuries to end the Muslim rule in Spain. To this day it is still celebrated throughout in Spain with a festival called “Moors and Christians”. (Graff 2008.)

In 1519, when Charles I became the Holy Roman Emperor, began the Spain’s “Golden Century”, as he and his conquerors won a whole continent including West Indies, Mexico, Peru, Paraguay and New Granada – calling this “The New World”. Spain was wealthy and culture flourished. Other golden age for Spain was the 17<sup>th</sup> Century for painters, when art started to flourish. However, decline was ahead when in the 18<sup>th</sup> century it was realised that The New World was too hard to govern from distant Spain and the Bourbons replaced the old dynasty. (Graff 2008.)

Country’s first constitution was drawn in 1812. At the break of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Spain started having identity crisis and civil war broke out in 1936. At this time general Francisco Franco dominated Spain: he not only restored monarchy and professional army, but he was also a great and vicious dictator. Despite his ruthless dictatorship, law and order was restored in Spain. After Franco democracy started to blossom, King Juan Carlos I became the new monarch, known to be very modest. One of the biggest reasons of Spanish people being so varied, is the eventful history of the country. (Graff 2008.)

### 3.3.2 Business culture

The situation with Spanish economics has been a bit stormy for the past few years, but things seems to be calming down now and GDP growth has been solid for a good period of time. With its connections to South America and good position with regards to Northern Africa, Spain has started to look like a compelling market. Some great changes in economy has been done after the “Franco-era”, and these changes still affect the Spanish business world. (World Business Culture 2017c.)

The Spanish tend to be very friendly and outgoing even with first meetings. Spaniards are good in infiltrating to other cultures thanks to their social skills. Thus, Spaniards appreciate character above all in business encounters. In order to gain a Spaniards trust, it is

important to listen and be patient, and show honour, to gain personal respect and mutual trust. Sarcasm is not welcomed as it may hurt someone's feelings, but being entertaining and humorous with good manners is always a good idea in Spanish business culture. (Passport to Trade 2.0 2019.) The Spaniards rarely follow any agendas in meetings and if they do, the outlines are rather changeable, as strict guidelines with meetings may feel as disturbing creativity and free expression (World Business Culture 2017d).

As personality is of great importance, so is the personality of the boss. Only by good personal attributes one can gain the maximum respect by subordinates. Admired personality characters in a boss are eg.: honour, courage, seriousness and trustworthiness. (World Business Culture 2017e.)

It is important to dress well in business world in Spain. In order to gain respect of the counterpart – dress well and with quality (World Business Culture 2017f).

### 3.3.3 Dimension values

In the countries of the Romanesque language – where Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and French are spoken – the power distance rate is high (Hofstede 2010, 42-75). The rather high score of 57 from this dimension means that Spain is quite a hierarchical society with everyone having their own place. This shows also in work places: centralisation is popular, workers expect to be told what to do with autocratic but kind leadership. (Hofstede 2019b.)

Also, with individualism Spain isolates itself from Finland and the Netherlands for being a collectivist country, scoring 51 from this dimension. Because the score is just above 50, it however refers to Spain being individualistic on a global scale. This makes Spanish people quite easy to relate to. On a working environment team work is a norm. (Hofstede 2019b.)

Spain scores 42 from masculinity level, which refers to Spanish being keener on consensus, than excessive competitiveness. This score makes Spanish more feminine than masculine. The score is still higher than with Finland or Netherlands so, according to this, Spanish people do stand out being a bit more masculine when it comes to working manners. Still, young children are educated not to take sides and live in search of harmony. Managers tend to consult their subordinates and make decisions according to it. (Hofstede 2019b.)

Uncertainty avoidance is the dimension that describes the Spanish people very well. With high score of 86, Spanish are obliged to have a lot of rules and at the same time avoid them because in many cases they do not make a lot of sense. Confrontations are avoided

due to causing stress and escalating to a personal level very easily. Changes and undefined situations are not wanted. (Hofstede 2019b.)

Spain scores 48 from dimension long term orientation. Thus, this is an intermediate score, Spain is a normative country. People like to live in the moment with not much worry about tomorrow – after all Spain is the home country of “fiestas”. Clear structures and rules exist as opposed to relaxed way of living, especially in the long term. (Hofstede 2019b.)

With a quite low score of 44, Spain is not an indulgent country. It may come as a surprise, but Spanish people tend to be more cynical than Finnish or Dutch people. Spanish people do not emphasize leisure time and desires are often put aside. This score refers to people thinking it is somewhat wrong to indulge themselves and having a fear that it is not considered appropriate in the light of social norms. (Hofstede 2019b.)

### 3.3.4 Lewis' insights

Spanish negotiation style is to achieve maximum amount of expressiveness. No emotion is lacking even from negotiation situations and often romantic eloquence keeps increasing towards the end, Figure 5. The aim is to establish loyalty and be respectful towards each other. At the end one can assume that all has been said. (Lewis 2006.)



Figure 5 National Communication Patterns (Lewis 2006)

Spanish position themselves at the high end of Multi-active world. This refers to Spaniards functioning with impulses and feelings, and like to talk a lot with face-to-face-communication. Many tasks are done at the same time and push for the time tables is being feared. Silence is something to be considered odd and even disrespectful. Multi-active people have limited respect for authority, however they feel themselves comfortable within their hierarchical system, everyone having their own place. Schedules are only thin guidelines which are seldomly followed. They prefer setting feelings before facts and tell the flexible truth. (CrossCulture 2019d.)

## 4 HIRING PRACTICES

Hiring process is an important step for a company. In order to find a suitable person to fulfil the job post, it is important to carry out well put-up plan to execute as effective hiring process as possible. It can cost a lot of money for the company if a wrong person gets chosen – and again hiring process done well can help the company grow with their talents. (SmartRecruiters 2019.)

As the world has gotten smaller through globalization, the chances are – in bigger companies at least – that hiring people from different countries and cultures could come in handy as expanding views is rarely a bad decision. Thus, recruiters should consider the cultural backgrounds of the interviewee such as is s/he comfortable with being emotionally expressive (Spanish and Dutch) or unexpressive (Finns), avoiding confrontations (Spanish and Finns) or comfortable with confrontations (Dutch). (Petronne 2015.)

### 4.1 Finland

A CV and application that employers in Finland appreciate, are well put, stylish and clear with no mistakes. The norm with applying to a job in Finland is attaching an application letter (not more than one page in length) and a CV (not more than two pages in length), accompanied by a short note with forewords and contact details. With the CV the applicant should try to stand out in a positive way, with CV remaining professional.

With the application, the guide lines are not very strict as long as the appearance is neat. No document standard is needed. (Public employment and business services 2019.)

There are some laws in Finland that control the recruitment process. These are for example questions you are not allowed to ask: You should not ask about pregnancy, childcare or other family matters in the job interview (Tasa-arvoaltuutettu 2010). Also, the Non-discrimination Act sets some rules to hiring practices as it is against the law to either directly or indirectly discriminate on the basis of eg. age, ethnicity, religion, opinion, health issues or sexual orientation. The same act means that women and men should be treated equally or leaving women unemployed because of their family responsibilities. (Ministry of employment and the economy 2012.)

For the employee it is very important for the applicant to show his/her interest and motivation. The applicant should be genuinely interested in the job. (InfoFinland.fi 2019.) Finns also value honesty. “Selling yourself” to the company with big adjectives may come across as lying or exaggerating. Listening skills are also valued and shows respect towards the counterpart. (GoinGlobal 2017.)

Finns do not have strict dress codes for interviews yet, and value down-to-earth-impressions. Outlook should be neat and conservative, without being too ostentatious. Also, the ever-changing climate has formed people to be more practical in their dressing and it is considered to be ok. (Wikitechy.com 2019.) After hiring the applicant, no formalities are usually needed. Finnish prefer democracy in every situation (Global affairs Canada 2018a).

## 4.2 The Netherlands

A good CV in the Netherlands is much like in Finland: fact-based and no more than two pages. The application should appear clear and professional, showing the applicant's motivation for the job. Honesty is highly appreciated in a Dutch recruitment process. Also, as leisure time is highly appreciated in the Netherlands and it is important to keep job and spare-time separated, you should mention also hobbies on the CV. (I amsterdam 2019.) Cover letter is very important in Dutch job-hunting – often more important than the CV. The language in cover letter should not be too eloquent as Dutch employers prefer simple and straightforward language. (Gardoş 2015.)

Dutch people value opinions and honesty – even in formal meetings such as a job interview. Also, confidence is an admirable feature but to mix things up – the Dutch also value modesty, so there should be a good combination of these two features. Honesty is the key to success in a Dutch interview. Another valued feature in the minds of recruiters are teamwork skills: being able to compromise and listen. Asking questions from the interviewer is only a good thing and shows that the applicant is interested in the job. The applicants are encouraged to ask questions even if the applicant feels like everything has been covered in the interview. (Klop-Sowinska 2014.)

Being punctual and arriving to an interview on time is extremely important. After introducing yourself to everyone – with a firm handshake – the applicant should wait for the interviewer to ask to sit down. It is considered bad manners to sit down before being asked to. (GoinGlobal 2018.)

Dress code in the Netherlands is generally not very strict, but people do like to dress up for the job and interviews: male wearing dark suits and women wear jacket and neat pants or skirt. Exaggeration is not good with dressing either – dressing smart is a good guideline. (Klop-Sowinska 2014.) After hiring the applicant, people tend to use first names and titles only when speaking to a much older person or person in much higher position. Decisions are done by the management but employer's consent is strived for. (Global affairs Canada 2018b.)



### 4.3 Spain

Spanish CV and application follow the same guide lines with Finnish and Dutch protocols: CV should be clear and well-structured with no spelling mistakes, not longer than two pages. Hobbies should be excluded from the CV as it is important to keep it professional and not too personal. Application, or the cover letter, should also be short, punctual and direct. Formal language should be used. (Expatica 2018.)

As Spanish like to have rules and regulations, also employment is rather regulated. Every job field has its own regulations that are to be followed. This affects also on the hiring procedure. (StrongAbogados 2019.) Still, as an exception to Finnish regulations, it is acceptable to ask the applicants' marital status and age. (Expatica 2018.)

Even though it is common in Spain to give kisses on the cheeks, in an interviewing situation it is not considered appropriate. Even handshake should begin on the initiative of the recruiter. And also, different from everyday life, you should be early at an interview – it is not considered ok to be late. (Dunham 2013.)

At the end of the interview, it is common for the interviewer to invite to ask some questions. Answering that there are no questions, may come across as disinterest to the job. (Joblers 2019.)

The dress code is quite important in Spain. Applicant's appearance will be judged the same way as his/her CV. (Dunham 2013.) It is an usual habit in Spain, that if not getting chosen for the job position, the applicant may not hear from the recruiter ever again. Thus, it is adviseable to, for example, send an email or call to the company, to emphasize your interest towards the job. (Joblers 2019.) After hiring the applicant, the atmosphere between employer and employee remains quite formal. It is not common to talk about personal issues with boss and it is expected, that the decisions are made by the management. (Global affairs Canada 2018c.)

## 5 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH AND DATA ANALYSIS

### 5.1 Design and formulation of the research

The survey questions were asked from pre-selected group: professionals of the human resources management from different fields of business in Finland, Spain and Netherlands. The survey was planned in February but the questions were fully ready on March 21, 2019 and this was the day when the link for the survey was sent out to the respondents. The link was open for two weeks so it was closed on April 5, 2019. The questions were planned so that they would give as versatile overview of the potential differences there could occur between these three different cultures. The connections to respondents were found with the help of locals that were already familiar to the author from the time the author had lived in those countries. The purpose of the survey was to see the cultural differences in hiring practices between these three countries and see the connections with their cultural dimensions to the business world and more specifically, recruitment process. The survey questions were in English.

The survey included 20 questions of which the first three questions was about pre-interview situation: application, on what basis the people are asked to an interview and keeping other employees informed about the process. Second part – which was the most essential part considering this subject - had 15 questions altogether concerning for example: meeting place, matters of physical contact, dress codes, gender aspects, perspective on personal questions, use of humour and body language. Last part was about getting in touch with the applicant after the interview: how, where and perspective on how important it is to keep the applicants informed. In the survey most of the questions were multiple choice questions and with open end questions for the respondents to add their own comments. Also, the question about body language was fully open for the respondents to describe verbally what kind of body language in their culture's job interview is or is not considered appropriate.

The survey was conducted in Webropol and it was open for the respondents to answer for two weeks from March 21 to April 5, 2019. This time was just enough to gather all the answers. The survey was the main source of the primary data, and the aim was to create a comprehensive picture from the cultural differences throughout the recruitment process. This survey was the best method for this research as it was the most effective way to collect information from people all around Europe.

Answers from the questionnaire was collected 15 in total: five respondents per country. This was the minimum amount set for the survey answers in order to get a good overview

from all the studied cultures. The survey questions can be found in Appendix 1. The survey answers can be found in Appendix 2.

## 5.2 Data analysis

The purpose for data analysis is to analyse the collected data and to get answers for the research questions. Data analysis started by downloading all the answers to Microsoft Excel and Powerpoint: these were the tools that were easiest to use when analysing the answers and best illustrating the distribution between different answers and countries. With Excel the answers were categorized to three sheets: Finland, The Netherlands and Spain. Then the author started reading and analysing the answers one country at a time. The clearest way was to first open up the research results of each country, and then compare to each other to spot the main differences. Then, the connection between theory and empirical part was linked through the connections found from the respondents' answers.

In this part the answers will be analyzed furthermore. The questions are dealt with individually and the results are connected to the theories studied previously in this thesis. The aim is to make key findings related to countries' cultural differences. With this part a deductive reasoning is convenient method as it is a method where initial assumptions will inevitably lead to a true conclusion. A general conclusion is drawn on the general case. (Peda.net 2019.)

**Question 1: When the hiring process starts, do you think it is important to keep other employees informed about the process?**

- A. Yes, absolutely**
- B. Only if the recruitment process is (also) internal**
- C. No, never**
- D. Other comments**

Finland:

As the recruitment process starts, it is considered common to keep other employees informed. Three out of five respondents answered that it is absolutely important. However, two of the respondents answered that it is not important or only important, if the recruitment process is also internal.

The Netherlands:

At the beginning of the recruitment process, it is important to keep other employees informed about the process, as based on respondents' answers – 100% answered “Yes, absolutely”.

Spain:

In Spain too, at the beginning of the recruitment process, it is important to keep other employees informed about the process, as based on respondents' answers – 100 % answered “Yes, absolutely”.

With the first question Finland separated itself from the Dutch and Spaniards as they had 100% response percentage on “Yes, absolutely” – Finns having the percentage only 60. This could emphasize the fact that the Finns prefer short and succinct communication (see sub-chapters 3.1.2 and 3.1.4), and thus only delivering the news when a new employee has been chosen.

**Question 2: The most important factors of the application/cv is (put in order from 1 to 5 with numbers first being the most important and last least important):**

- A. professional or stylish look**
- B. spelling**
- C. content matching with job advertisement (applicant's qualification)**
- D. good and clear photo of the applicant**
- E. something else, what?**

Finland:

With ranking the most important factors of the application/CV, respondents had the same thoughts: the most important thing in application is that its content is matching with job advertisement. Second place was distributed equally between professional look and spelling. A good and clear photo was considered to be the least important thing.

The Netherlands:

With Netherlands also, the respondents were also really unanimous: the most important factor is content matching with job advertisement, the second most important is spelling, then comes professional/stylish look, and on the last place was the importance of clear and good photo.

Spain:

With Spain, on first place was unanimously content matching with job advertisement. On second place was spelling and on third place the importance of professional and stylish

look. Again, clear and good photo of the candidate was considered to be the least important factor.

In question number two not much of a variation was seen as every country considered “Content matching with job advertisement” being the most important factor and photo the least important. Only with professional look and importance of spelling a slight difference was noticed: the Finns consider spelling and professional look to be as important, whereas the Dutch and the Spaniards ranked spelling to be more important factor than professional look. With so little difference conclusions can not be done.

Question 3: **Do you think it is more important that the applicant has:**

- A. an adequate education for the job image**
- B. an adequate work experience**
- C. suitable personality and social skills**
- D. something else, what?**

Finland:

Three out of five answerers said that work experience is most important factor. The other two disagreed stating that suitable personality and social skills are more important.

The Netherlands:

With this question a bit more dispersion is noticed: three out of five answered that suitable personality and social skills are more important, and two out of five answered an adequate work experience being more important.

Spain:

With question number 3 the answers were divided evenly between every option. Two of those answering “something else” commented that it depends of the job position but it is a combination of all those three.

With this question, the Finns emphasized the importance of adequate work experience. The Dutch, however, gave more emphasis on personality and social skills. The Spaniards were torn between all of the answers. This question gave a good look into these three cultures. The Finns traditionally respect work experience highly: it was not until year 2015 with the national recruitment survey, when the recruiters started to value more personality than working experience. Change is quite slow, and still the emphasis on previous work experience is very high. (Duunitori 2018.) Dutch respondents’ answers may indicate to the Dutch respecting applicant’s capacity to co-working and appreciation of adaptation skills and tolerance (see sub-chapter 3.2.2). With Spain, more than the answers themselves,

there could be some assumptions made based on the diversity of the answer options with this question. As the votes split up quite effectively with this question, it could tell something about the Spanish adaptivity and the fact that Spanish usually go “with the flow” with business meetings and prefer for proceed according to the situation rather than by some plan (see sub-chapter 3.3.2.)

Question 4: **Meeting of the applicant:**

- A. at the office/workplace**
- B. online**
- C. in the cafeteria or some other public building**
- D. somewhere else, where?**

Finland:

With meeting place the responses were coherent: five out of five answered that they want to meet the applicant at the office/workplace. The same with greeting habits: 100% from the respondents said that when an applicant arrives, they shake hands.

The Netherlands:

Meeting of the applicant happens at the office/workplace, as per the uniformity of the answers with this question: all of the respondents answered option A.

Spain:

With meeting the applicant, there were no surprises: everyone answered they would prefer to meet at the office/workplace.

As every country had 100% same answers with where to meet the applicant and how to greet them (at the office and with a hand shake), no other conclusions can be made other than the fact that with this part no cultural differences occur.

Question 5: **When an applicant arrives you:**

- A. shake hands**
- B. give a hug**
- C. give kisses on the cheeks**
- D. no physical touch**
- E. something else, what?**

Question 6: **Are there more than one person interviewing the interviewee?**

Finland:

With interviewing process, three out of five answered that there are more than one person interviewing, and one answered, that team members should be included to an interview as early as possible. Only one answered that there is just one person interviewing the candidate.

The Netherlands:

When an applicant arrives, all of the respondents agreed that shaking hands is the way to greet. Also, when asking whether there are more than one person interviewing the interviewee, all answered "Yes".

Spain:

With Spain also, every respondent agreed that they would greet the applicant with a handshake. When asked about whether there are more than one person doing the interview, two out of five answered "yes" and other two answered "no".

When asked if there are more than one person interviewing the applicant, Finland and Netherlands had quite uniform answers; Spain had no-answers a bit more (two out of five, and one "depends on the position that is to be covered). This refers to Spain having hiring process to be concentrated on one certain person rather than on many team members. With this question can be seen the difference with power distance, as was listed in the part where Hofstede's dimensions were covered: *The rather high score of 57 from this dimension means that Spain is quite a hierarchical society with everyone having their own place.* (See sub-chapter 3.3.3)

Question 7: **Are there some dress codes in the interview?**

- A. Yes, the applicant should dress formally and not show too much skin**
- B. No specific codes but the applicant should dress presentable**
- C. The dress code is not important**
- D. Other comments:**

Finland:

Answers with dress codes were distributed so that three out of five respondents stated that there are no specific codes but the applicant should dress presentably. Two out of five answered that the dress code is not important.

The Netherlands:

With dress codes there is again consensus: four out of five answered, that there are no specific codes but the applicant should dress presentably. One answered, that the code is important: applicant should dress formally and not show too much skin.

Spain:

With dress codes, Spaniards prefer neat looks: four out of five respondents answered that there are no specific dress codes but the applicant should dress presentably. Only one answered that the dress code is not important.

With question number 7, only small difference shows with the answers: in Netherlands and Spain it is important to dress presentably (with the answer rate of four out of five), whereas in Finland two answered that dress code is not important. This strengthens the notion that the Finns emphasize the content rather than the appearance. As mentioned in chapter 4.1.1: *“Outlook should be neat and conservative, without being too ostentatious. Also, the ever-changing climate has formed people to be more practical in their dressing and it is considered to be ok. (Wikitechy.com 2019.)”* Also, as noted in sub-chapter 4.3, in Spain *“Applicant’s appearance will be judged the same way as his/her CV. (Dunham 2013.)”*. Also Dutch prefer to dress up for the job.

Question 8: **Who does the interviewing at your company:**

- A. Only males**
- B. Only females**
- C. Both males and females**

Question 9: **Is it ok for the applicant to independently ask questions (without the interviewer asking to)?**

- A. No.**
- B. Yes.**
- C. Other comments:**

Finland:

When asking about the interviewer’s gender there seems to be no specific importance: five out of five answered that both males and females do the interview. Also, with question number 9 there was 100% unanimous opinion: it is totally ok for the applicant to independently ask questions – without the interviewer asking to.



The Netherlands:

Also with Dutch respondents, when asking whether there are more than one person interviewing the interviewee, all answered “Yes”. Everyone also answered that both males and females do the interviewing at their company.

Spain:

Everyone agreed that the interview is done by both males and females. Also, five out of five answered that it is ok for the applicant to independently ask questions – without the interviewer asking to.

Both males and females do the interviewing in all of the three countries so no cultural differences were seen with that subject. It is also ok, from the viewpoints of all three countries - and actually desirable - for the applicant to ask questions independently. One Finnish respondent answered that “*Asking questions independently shows interest and initiative - so only a good thing!*”. This reflects the rather low score in power distance and masculinity with every country – neither of the countries are driven by competition and societies need to be equal.

**Question 10: Is it ok for the interviewer to ask about applicant’s personal issues such as family (for example kids: planning on having any?), marital status etc.?**

- A. Yes, it is the interviewers right**
- B. Yes, but it is not common**
- C. No, it is not considered appropriate**
- D. No, it is forbidden to ask such questions**

Finland:

With question 10, also unanimous answer rate was gained with all of the respondents saying that no it is forbidden to ask about applicant’s personal issues such as family.

The Netherlands:

With Netherlands, a bit more dispersion occurred. Two out of five answered that it is forbidden to ask about applicant’s personal issues such as family (for example planning on having kids), marital status etc. Also, two responded that yes, it is ok to ask such questions although it is not common. One answered that it is not considered appropriate.

Spain:

When asked about if it is ok for the interviewer to ask about applicant's personal issues, three out of five answered that it is ok but not common. One answered it to be forbidden to ask such questions and one answered that it is not considered appropriate.

With question number 10 more differences occur. From Finnish respondents, everyone answered that it is forbidden to ask questions related to applicant's personal issues such as marital status or planning on having any kids. This emphasizes the fact that it is against the law in Finland to ask things related to family, and not to hire someone based on their gender or whether or not they are planning on having children sooner or later in their lives. As mentioned in sub-chapter 4.1.1: "You should not ask about pregnancy, childcare or other family matters in the job interview (Tasa-arvoaltuutettu 2010)." In Netherlands only two answered that it is forbidden and the rest stated that they could ask about such things, but it is not common. In Spain the answers were somewhat similar to Netherlands – a percentage is a bit higher though with people answering that it is either forbidden or not considered appropriate to ask such question (according to 3 out of 5 respondents). With Netherlands this supports the fact that the Dutch are more keen on speaking directly and honestly, than Spanish, that prefer to be considerate with communication. (CrossCulture 2019d).

Question 11: **During the course of the interview, the situation is**

- A. formal, with surnames/titles**
- B. quite formal but with first names**
- C. informal**
- D. something else, what?**

Finland:

During the course of the interview, the situation is rather informal: three out of five answered that it is quite formal but with first names and two out of five answered the situation being informal.

The Netherlands:

During the course of the interview, four out of five answered that the situation is quite formal but with first names. One responded that the situation is informal.

Spain:

With Spain, five out of five respondents answered that the situation is quite formal, but with first names.

When asked about the formality of the interviewing situation, it was quite clear that Finnish prefer a bit more informal communication compared to Netherlands and Spain. With Spaniards and Dutch it is more important to remain formal – with the use of first names, though. With these answers few statements can be made: the power distance index, according to Hofstede, is lowest in Finland in comparison with these three countries. This refers to Finland not being hierarchical culture at all, and that power is distributed equally (ClearlyCultural 2019). Also, it points out the communicational differences with Finns compared to Dutch and Spanish. As Lewis' Communication Pattern shows, Spanish want to respect dignity of people. This affects on the style of communication being rather too formal than too informal. The same features can be found from Dutch communication also, although not as strongly as in Spain. Still, positioning themselves in the middle ground of linear-active and multiactive communication, emotions and respecting counterpart's dignity are involved in the business communication, making the communication somewhat more formal than in Finland.

**Question 12: Do you think it is considered appropriate to tell jokes during the interview?**

- A. Not appropriate in any circumstances**
- B. Appropriate only to answer on interviewer's joke**
- C. It is ok to tell relaxed, but appropriate jokes**
- D. Even black humor is allowed**
- E. Some other comments:**

Finland:

With telling jokes during the interview Finnish answers were again quite uniform: three out of five thought that it is ok to tell relaxed, but appropriate jokes. One answered, that even black humor is allowed. One commented, that "Maybe not jokes, but if you can create a relaxed atmosphere with smile and entertaining/pleasant stories, it is always a good thing."

The Netherlands:

Four out of five from Dutch respondents answered it to be ok to tell relaxed but appropriate jokes, and one answered that it is only appropriate to answer an interviewer's joke.

Spain:

Spanish respondents had the same answers as the Dutch: four out of five answered it to be ok to tell relaxed but appropriate jokes, and one answered that it is only appropriate to answer an interviewer's joke.

Not many differences were in the answers of this question. With almost 100 % agreement, the answerers said that it is ok to tell relaxed, but appropriate jokes. However, one Finnish respondent answered that it even black humour is allowed and 1/5 answerers from the Netherlands and Spain answered, that it is only ok to answer an interviewer's joke. This underlines the honesty and down-to-earth-impression that Finns tend to have even in a bit more formal situations, as discussed in sub-chapter 4.1. Also, this emphasizes the statement done in sub-chapter 3.1.2, that Finns tend to use humour – even black – in business situations, and self-targeted jokes are very common (World Business Culture 2017b). It also reflects again the higher power distance index in Spain, and also strengthens the fact that Dutch like to have long conversations and debates in business communication, which can often lead to over-analyzing. Decisions will not be made in a rush and it is better to sleep on it and decide tomorrow (Lubin 2016). Jokes or sarcasm does not belong to this scenario.

As stated before, sarcasm is not welcomed in Spanish communication as it may hurt someone's feelings, but being entertaining and humorous with good manners is always a good idea in Spanish business culture. (Passport to Trade 2.0 2019.)

**Question 13: What kind of body language is there in the interview? Is it considered appropriate to “sit back and relax” or is it important to appear professional eg. with posture? What kind of body language is not considered appropriate – eg. some hand gestures, sitting with legs crossed or open, elbows on the table, something else? Please add your own comments.**

Finland:

With this open question, three out of five emphasized more on the content that the applicant has to offer, rather than appearance: relaxed and not too formal. One answered that body language should be professional. One respondent stated that the applicant should come across as being interested: smiling and looking the opposite part. “Legs crossed is ok, but arms crossed not.”

The Netherlands:

With this part, as a summary could be said that open body language with good posture is appreciated – not too relaxed because it shows arrogance, but not too formal either as the situation should be natural. "I prefer a bit relaxed but professional posture. Sitting back too much might come across as if you are not really interested. Legs crossed/open or elbows

on the table is no issue. Putting your elbow on the table to support your head with your hand is not done because it comes across as inactive/tired."

Spain:

With this question the answers split slightly. Three out of five had the same idea that the applicant should act moderately and sit straight, looking the interviewer in the eyes. Especially one comment emphasized the meaning of acting professional. "Here in Spain, most interviewers/recruiters consider it more appropriate for the applicant to appear professional, sit down straight on the chair, etc. If you sit back relaxed, or cross legs, or whatever, you better consider applying for another job". Also, two out of five commented that it is important to act relaxed as it is something that the interviewer observes.

With body language, it was quite clear that amongst Finnish respondents the posture and appearance is not as important as amongst Dutch and Spanish. Finnish respondents' answers were:

"My opinion is that the interviewee can sit "back and relax" during the interview."

"Relaxed is ok. Not too formal."

"Focus on the content more than how individual express themselves, but of course good posture without hands akimbo."

"Professional"

"Good posture, smily face and looking at the opposite party with interest tells that you really wish to make a most of the interview. Legs crossed is ok, but arms crossed not."

This supports the statement that the bottom-line for Finnish communication could be said to be silence and non-existing body language. This makes the Finns hard to read and may sometimes cause misunderstandings in business communication (World Business Culture 2017b). Finns aim to clarity and they tend to appreciate short and succinct negotiations (Lubin 2016).

Dutch respondents' answers were:

"Open body language is appropriate."

"Just normal conversation situation gives the best image. No special requires. But not too relaxed, it shows arrogance, it is never good."

"The applicant should look interested, thus not laid back. An active posture is the norm in interviews to show interest."

"I prefer a bit relaxed but professional posture. Sitting back too much might come across as if you are not really interested."

"Legs crossed/open or elbows on the table is no issue. "

"Putting your elbow on the table to support your head with your hand is not done because it comes across as inactive/tired."

In a nutshell could be stated that Dutch prefer open body language and not too informal nor relaxed appearance with good posture. The answers go well hand-in-hand with the theories and studies done earlier: confidence is an admirable feature but to mix things up – the Dutch also value modesty, so there should be a good combination of these two features (Klop-Sowinska 2014), and although the Dutch being very pluralistic, they have some taboo behaviours which should be avoided, especially in more formal circumstances such as: initially calling people with their first names, walking into office without knocking the door, talking with hands in pockets, yawning without covering mouth, chewing gum or breaking promises (Passport to Trade 2.0 2019a.).

Spanish respondents' answers were:

"I believe is always good to appear professional, avoiding rigidity. Moderate hand gestures are quite normal in the Spanish context."

"You need to be open and somewhat relaxed. You should not bite your nails or things like that, but all postures are fine as long as they're not forced or too aggressive (as a result of nervousness)"

"Maintaining a relaxed posture and breathing calmly are two things that the interviewer can easily observe"

"It is important to sit down properly and make eye contact."

"Here in Spain, most interviewers/recruiters consider it more appropriate for the applicant to appear professional, sit down straight on the chair, etc. If you sit back relaxed, or cross legs, or whatever, you better consider applying for another job :)"

As a summary, based on these answers, can be said that professional posture with relaxed appearance is important in interview situation. This supports the fact that – as per Lewis' insights - the aim in negotiation situations is to establish loyalty and be respectful towards each other (Lubin 2016). Also, as stated in sub-chapter 3.3.2, "...in order to gain a Spaniards trust, it is important to listen and be patient, and show honour, to gain personal respect and mutual trust. Sarcasm is not welcomed as it may hurt someones feelings, but being entertaining and humorous with good manners is always a good idea in Spanish business culture" (Passport to Trade 2.0 2019).

Question 14: **During the interview do you prefer to**

- A. sit face to face at the table**
- B. sit face to face with no table**
- C. sit side by side around the table or at the sofa/on chairs**
- D. stand/walk**

**with the candidate?**

Question 15: **Strictly business or small talk too?**

- A. In the interview you only speak about the things considering the job**
- B. It is ok to have some small talk**
- C. The conversation runs fairly free**

During the interview five out of five respondents said that they prefer to sit face-to-face at the table. Also, four out of five answered that it is ok to have some small talk too, and one answered that the conversation runs quite freely – meaning that no guidelines or agenda with the interview is needed.

The Netherlands:

With this question the answers were divided like this: three out of five think it is ok to have some small talk, too, and two out of five responded that the conversation can run quite freely.

Spain:

When asked about if it is ok to have small talk at the interview, four out of five answered that yes, is ok to have some small talk. One answered that in the interview you only speak about the things relating to the job.

With question 14, 80% of the respondents answered the same way (option A). With only two answers being divergent, not much conclusions can be made other than no cultural differences occur with these answers.

With question 15, all of the Finnish respondents answered option A or B. This refers to the point brought out earlier, that the power distance index is the lowest in country comparison with these three countries. It means that the relationship between employer and employee is equal and there is no need for formalities. Also, it emphasizes the long term orientation dimension and a very low score from it, which brings out that Finns prefer to be truthful in every situation: even in the most formal ones. (Hofstede 2019.)

Also in the Netherlands everyone agreed that it is ok to have some small talk and/or conversation can run quite freely. With this being said, it also tells about the low power distance index that the Netherlands has, and also the low score from masculinity level highlights the fact that consensus and equality are valued in their working lives: thus it is considered ok to be true to yourself even in formal situations.

With Spain, 1/5 answered option C. Even though the percentage is quite low and most of the respondents answered option B, it can still tell something about Spanish power distance index and uncertainty avoidance being much more higher than in Finland and in Netherlands. In other words, formalities are necessary in Spanish business communication as they bring feeling of safety. This can also tell something about the fact that "There is great concern for changing, ambiguous and undefined situations" which can be avoided by sticking to facts. (Hofstede 2019.)

Question 16: **Do you think the interviewee should**

- A. prepare to interview well by rehearsing and practicing the answers, gestures etc (it is important not to stutter and to be clear with answers)**
- B. prepare something but not the answers**
- C. no rehearsal needed – it is important that the interview is genuine and spontaneous**

Finland:

With question about how well to prepare to the interview, the answers divided more unevenly. Two out of five respondents answered that no rehearsal is needed, as it is important that the interview is genuine and spontaneous. Other two answered that it is important to prepare well for the interview by rehearsing and practising the answers, gestures etc. as it is important not to stutter and to be clear with answers. One answered that something should be prepared but not the answers.

The Netherlands:

With the Netherlands, the answers were divided between all the three answer options: two answered that no rehearsal is needed for it is important that the interview is genuine and spontaneous. Other two responded that something should be prepared but not the answers. Only one said that the applicant should be well prepared by practicing the answers, gestures etc – as it is important not to stutter and to be clear with answers.

Spain:



With Spain, the answers yet again split: two out of five answered that an applicant should prepare well by rehearsing and practicing the answers, gestures etc. Two answered that no rehearsal is needed as it is important that the interview is spontaneous. One answered that something should be prepared but not rehearsing the answers.

With this question quite a lot of dispersion occurred both inside the countries and between the countries. This is why it is difficult to draw specific conclusion from this question. Also, some miscomprehensions could have happened with this question as the question might have been too improperly set. In a nutshell: it seems that it is valued in every country to appear honest and genuine in the interview situation, as most of the answers were either B or C. Thus can be stated that not much cultural differences occur here.

**Question 17: With the questions, do you mainly focus on**

- A. career history**
- B. education**
- C. other qualities such as character**
- D. something else, what?**

Finland:

When asked about where the questions mainly focus on, the answers had again more consistency: most of the respondents are most interested in applicant's character and personality. Only one said that would mainly focus on career history with their questions.

The Netherlands:

With the questions, three out of five respondents answered that they would mainly focus on career history. One answered to focus on other qualities such as character. One commented to focus on "a mix of experience, character but also attitude/ambition".

Spain:

With Spanish respondents, one prefers to mainly focus on career history and one on education. Three answered "something else" and two continued with stating "all of them" (career, education and personality). One commented to mainly focus on "experience and character".

With this question, only one answered option B and option A also gathered very few answers. Most of the respondents answered option C or D (with open answer stating that all of the above are important). Also with this question was seen that the question may have

been poorly set as the idea of the question was not clear to everyone – should have been more specifically phrased that only one option may be selected and note the respondents to point out only one most important core issue.

Still, a few conclusions can be made based on these answers. Firstly, based on Finns' answers – with most of the respondents answering option C - it is clear that character is important. It indicates that Finns prefer honest appearance, and for the employee it is very important for the applicant to show his/her interest and motivation. The applicant should be genuinely interested for the job. (InfoFinland.fi 2019.)

With Netherlands, career history was more pointed out. This supports the statement that Dutch are very result-oriented and that affects their thrive in business world also (Cross-Culture 2019d). With Spain, three out of five answered that all of them are as important. This could underline the multiactive character of Spaniards, where they like to talk a lot with face-to-face-communication. Many tasks are done at the same time and push for the time tables is being feared. Silence is something to be considered odd and even unrespectful. (CrossCulture 2019d.)

Question 18: **When ending the interview**

- A. You shake hands and use formal language with surnames/titles**
- B. You shake hands but can already call each other by first name (also the interviewee)**
- C. Give a hug/kisses on the cheek – physical touch is totally ok**
- D. No physical touch and formal language**
- E. No physical touch and informal language**
- F. Something else, what?**

Question 19: **When informing the applicant about the results do you:**

- A. Send an email**
- B. Make a call**
- C. Arrange a meeting right away**
- D. If the applicant is not chosen, he/she is (or might be) not informed**
- E. Some other thoughts?**

Finland:

When ending the interview, all the respondents agreed that calling each other on a first-name basis and a handshake is a good way of finalizing the meeting. Also, when informing the applicant about the results, all of the respondents would make a call rather than send an email or arrange a meeting right away.

The Netherlands:

When ending the interview, all of the respondents would shake hands with applicant and call each other by first names. Then, when informing the applicant about hiring results, four out of five would make a phone call and one out of five would send an email. Also, after hiring the applicant, four out of five answered that no formalities are necessary anymore and physical touch is ok. One out of five answered that formal language is still needed but addressing is first-name basis.

Spain:

When ending the interview, three out of five answered that hand shake with calling each other first-name basis is a proper way of communicating. One answered that no physical touch and formal language is better. Also, one respondent answered that a hand shake with formal language (surnames/titles) is needed. Then, when contacting the applicant after the interview about the results, four out of five answered to make a phone call and one prefers sending an email.

With this question, the cultural difference is quite clear. Everyone from Finland and Netherlands answered the option B. This refers to Finns and Dutch having similarities with for example power distance index, equality and respect for the authorities. With Spain, 2 out of 5 answered something else: one said that no physical touch and formal language is needed and one stated that handshake is ok but with formal language. This strengthens again the Hofstede's studies about Spaniards having higher power distance index than Finns and Dutch. Also, as mentioned before, in order to gain a Spaniards trust, it is important to listen and be patient, and show honour, to gain personal respect and mutual trust (Passport to Trade 2.0 2019).

With question 19, again, no specific differences were shown. Most of the respondents would make a call, two answered to send an email – so no cultural differences can be stated with these answers. Even though in sub-header 4.3 was stated that *"It is an usual habit in Spain, that if not getting chosen for the job position, the applicant may not hear from the recruiter ever again (Joblers, 2019)"*, none of the Spanish respondents answered option D. So, either the theory does not match with empirical study, the sampling of the answerers was inadequate, or the answerers were not being truthful. Either way, based on these answers, no cultural differences show here.

Question 20: **After hiring the applicant (you can choose 2 or more)**

- A. she/he is required to call you with title/surname**
- B. formal language is still needed but you can switch to first names**
- C. no formalities are necessary**
- D. physical touch is ok**
- E. physical touch is not ok**

Finland:

After hiring the applicant, all agreed that no formalities are necessary. One respondent added, that physical touch is ok.

The Netherlands:

From Dutch respondents, four out of five answered that no formalities are necessary and two of them added that physical touch is ok. One answered that formal language is still needed but on first name basis, and added that physical touch is not ok.

Spain:

After hiring the applicant, three out of five answered that no formalities are necessary anymore and one of these answerers added, that physical touch is ok. Two out of five answered that formal language is needed but they can switch to first names, and other one also added that physical touch is not considered ok.

With the last question, all of the Finnish respondents answered that no formalities are necessary, and two of them added that physical touch is ok. This again underlines the theory that Finns do not consider hierarchy to be important at all and formalities are rarely necessary. Also, as the low power distance index and its affects on Finns behaviour have been mentioned many times during this analysis, this connects also well to the World Happiness Study done by the Happiness Research Institution: it is not the money but the social safety combined with job satisfaction that makes the Finns happy. (Swanson 2016.) Equal working conditions click well with high job satisfaction.

With Dutch, four out of five had the same answers as the Finns but one critical difference was to be found: one responded with options B and E. This describes well the small difference that Finns and Dutch have with power distance index. Also, the same with Spain: with two out of five answering it shows the steady growth in power distance index in between these three countries.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

### 6.1 Answers to research questions

The main research question for this thesis was *What kind of recruitment process is practiced in the three countries of the research: Finland, the Netherlands, Spain?*

In Finland the recruitment process is done by the book and by obeying the law. It is important to implement a recruitment process by following the Equality Act which prevents any discrimination. In the CV and cover letter it is important to show your skills with clear and well-structured layout. Cover letter's aim is to stand out in a positive way. No document standard is needed. Communication is rather informal, direct and succinct. Small talk is rarely needed and in many cases it is not considered relevant for the hiring process. Low power distance index and the urge for ultimate democracy makes Finnish people and their communication in business life and hiring practices honest and informal.

In Netherlands it is important to attach a well-put together cover letter in addition to clear and good CV. The cover letter should not include too eloquent language and focus should be on clear and good communication. Dutch appreciate co-working skills and ability to adapt. In Dutch communication directness and honesty is appreciated and even verbal confrontations are not to be feared. Body language in interview is important and Dutch employers value good posture with neat appearance. No formalities are needed as long as you are not talking to a lot older person or person in a higher position than yourself. This is when people should be addressed formally. Managers will make the decisions but prefer to get a seal of approval from the staff.

In Spain, the importance of appearance and emotions are highlighted. CV and cover letter should be clear and well-put together with no mistakes, and they will be judged the same way as applicant's appearance. So, appearing to an interview with presentable appearance is important. With Spain being rather hierarchical society with everyone having their own place, the importance of formal language towards managers is being emphasized. Small talk is important and silence is considered odd and suspicious. It is also important to value the dignity of a person, so for example black humour is something not to do in a Spanish interview. Managers are valued for their courage, seriousness and trustworthiness and the employees expect the managers to make all the decisions.

The first sub-question was: *What are the similarities/differences in the recruitment process between all three countries?*

The main similarities between these three countries could be stated to be the importance of good and clear CV, neat appearance of the applicant, greeting manners, gender

equality and how to prepare to an interview. The biggest differences were about differences in countries laws, communication styles, adaptation skills and body language.

Second sub-question was: *How formal is the recruitment process?*

In Finland, the recruitment process is rather informal. This reflects well the low power distance index that Finland has. Formal language nor titles or usage of surnames is needed. Democracy and equality are valued high in Finnish society and this shows in an interviewing process also. In Netherlands also, formal language is rarely needed. Only, when addressing an older person or person in a lot higher position than themselves. Communication style is honest and direct, but there are some manners that must not be used in Dutch business communication, such as initially calling people by their first names or talking with hands in pockets. In Spain the formalities are more welcomed as they seem to bring feeling of safety for the employers. Addressing people formally is not needed unless they are a lot older or in higher positions, but polite way of speaking is important. Good posture is important and the applicant should dress presentably for an interview.

Third, and the last sub-question was: *How does the country's culture reflect on the recruitment process?*

Briefly stated: country's culture reflects the recruitment process extremely well. Especially the links between Hofstede's dimensions and the findings from the survey can be seen easily, and also Lewis' insights got a lot of confirmation from the survey answers. With low power index cultures the hierarchy is not needed in the hiring practices, equality is pursued and democracy is desirable even in the communication between managers and employees. In high power distance index cultures hierarchy seems to bring the feeling of safety for the employees and decisions and commandments are expected to come from the managers without any consultation with subordinates.

## 6.2 Validity and reliability

Both primary and secondary data were used in this thesis. Theory was gathered from books, articles and internet journals such as Hofstede's and Lewis' online journals. Primary data was collected through an online survey that was sent out to professionals of human resources management in Finland, the Netherlands and Spain. The online survey had multiple choice questions with open-ended questions to gather as much information from the questions as possible. Reliability in research refer to gaining consistent and reality matching results (Research Methodology 2019). Validity can be divided into two parts:

*“internal validity refers to how the research findings match reality, while external validity refers to the extent to which the research findings can be replicated to other environments” (Pelissier 2008 12).*

As the answers were studied furthermore, it can be stated that the study meets the criteria of being valid and reliable as the findings from theory match the findings from survey questions, and also – if study was to be made by another researcher the findings would be similar.

### 6.3 Suggestion for further research

During the analysing phase a few realizations were made: few of the questions were either poorly set so that the respondents might have misunderstood the question (such as Questions 3 and 17 where the respondents were asked to name one thing that they thought was most important – many answered “all of them”). Also, with some of the questions the connection to cultural differences was not well-thought-out as regarding to these three countries. The differences, for example, with some Asian countries and Finland could have been much greater with greeting and ways of addressing each other, than what it now was with Spain and Netherlands. Either way, this was also one way of learning about cultural differences and how to study them in depth.

For further research it would be good to give a deeper look at the cultural phenomenoms and to take into account whether the results would be different if the interview was done online, for example via Skype. Also, an interesting suggestion for further research would be that how different would the results be if the countries under research were from different parts of the world – for example from Asia, North America and Africa.

## 7 SUMMARY

The aim for this thesis was to find and point out the major cultural and hiring practice differences between three European countries: Finland, the Netherlands and Spain. This would increase an understanding in companies' human resources management when cultural diversity and their challenges appear. Knowledge increases understanding and decreases misconceptions, and this way better decisions can be done in hiring practices.

At the outset of this thesis, basic theory and concepts of culture and cultural factors were introduced. As the goal was to gain deeper level of understanding how and why every culture under study had evolved, it was important to also take a look at countries' history and for example geographical location. Then, Hofstede's and Lewis' theories were introduced to gather more specific information about cultural behavioral norms, on country basis.

To gather trustworthy information furthermore, empirical study was conducted via an online survey. The survey was sent out to group selected by the author through the connections build when the author was living in these three different countries. Thus reliable respondents were found and the survey was answered by 15 professionals of human resources management.

In the final part the data from online survey was analyzed. Gathered theoretical data and empirical research were integrated and connections with theory and empirical findings were found. The findings from this study stated that some important cultural differences are to be found in these three countries hiring practices. The biggest differences were about differences in a country's laws, communication styles, adaptation skills and body language. The Hofstede dimensions support the study's findings, especially with the part relating to power distance and the differences in that area within countries.



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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 Survey

Dear recipient, I am an International Business student from Lahti University of Applied Sciences, Finland. I am writing my final thesis from subject "Cultural differences in hiring practices between Finland, The Netherlands and Spain". You are receiving this survey because I believe that you are a part of this study's target group.

Answering to this survey would help a lot with completing my studies and to give more understanding in the field of cultural studies. There are 20 questions in the survey so answering to this won't take more than 5-10 minutes of your time. If you feel that you are having difficulties in answering some of the questions, you can add own comments in some of the questions. If you struggle between two or more answers, please select the one that is closest to your opinion.

Thank you in advance and have a nice spring!

Best regards,  
Laura Koivulahti

#### Online survey

##### The importance of application/cv (formality, content, picture etc)

1. When the hiring process starts, do you think it is important to keep other employees informed about the process?

- a. Yes, absolutely
- b. Only if the recruitment process is (also) internal
- c. No, never
- d. Other comments:

---



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2. The most important factors of the application/cv is (put in order from 1 to 5 with numbers first being the most important and last least important):

1. professional or stylish look
2. spelling
3. content matching with job advertisement (applicant's qualification)
4. good and clear photo of the applicant
5. something else, what?

---

3. Do you think it is more important that the applicant has:

- a. an adequate education for the job image
- b. an adequate work experience
- c. suitable personality and social skills
- d. something else, what?

---

### The course of the interview

1. Meeting of the applicant:
    - a. at the office/workplace
    - b. online
    - c. in the cafeteria or some other public building
    - d. somewhere else, where?
- 

2. When an applicant arrives you:
    - a. shake hands
    - b. give a hug
    - c. give kisses on the cheeks
    - d. no physical touch
    - e. something else, what?
- 

3. Are there more than one person interviewing the interviewee?
    - a. Yes.
    - b. No.
    - c. Depends (add own comments):
- 
- 
- 

4. Are there some dress codes in the interview?
    - a. Yes, the applicant should dress formally and not show too much skin
    - b. No specific codes but the applicant should dress presentably
    - c. The dress code is not important
    - d. Other comments:
-

5. Who does the interviewing at your company:
- only males
  - only females
  - both males and females
6. Is it ok for the applicant to independently ask questions (without the interviewer asking to)?
- No.
  - Yes.
  - Other comments:  

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7. Is it ok for the interviewer to ask about applicant's personal issues such as family (for example kids: planning on having any?), marital status etc.?
- Yes, it is the interviewers right
  - Yes, but it is not common
  - No, it is not considered appropriate
  - No, it is forbidden to ask such questions
8. During the course of the interview, the situation is
- formal, with surnames/titles
  - quite formal but with first names
  - informal
  - something else, what?
- 
9. Do you think it is considered appropriate to tell jokes during the interview?
- Not appropriate in any circumstances
  - Appropriate only to answer on interviewer's joke
  - It is ok to tell relaxed, but appropriate jokes
  - Even black humor is allowed
  - Some other comments:

10. What kind of body language is there in the interview? Is it considered appropriate to “sit back and relax” or is it important to appear professional eg. with posture? What kind of body language is not considered appropriate – eg. some hand gestures, sitting with legs crossed or open, elbows on the table, something else? Please add your own comments.
- 
- 

11. During the interview do you prefer to
- sit face to face at the table
  - sit face to face with no table
  - sit side by side around the table or at the sofa/on chairs
  - stand/walk with the candidate?
12. Strictly business or small talk too?
- In the interview you only speak about the things relating to the job
  - It is ok to have some small talk
  - The conversation runs quite freely
13. Do you think the interviewee should
- prepare to interview well by rehearsing and practicing the answers, gestures etc (it is important not to stutter and to be clear with answers)
  - prepare something but not the answers
  - no rehearsal needed – it is important that the interview is genuine and spontaneous
14. With the questions, do you mainly focus on
- career history
  - education
  - other qualities such as character
  - something else, what?
- 
- 

15. When ending the interview
- You shake hands and use formal language with surnames/titles
  - You shake hands but can already call each other by first name (also the interviewee)
  - Give a hug/kisses on the cheek – physical touch is totally ok
  - No physical touch and formal language
  - No physical touch and informal language
  - Something else, what?
-

## 15. When ending the interview

- a. You shake hands and use formal language with surnames/titles
  - b. You shake hands but can already call each other by first name (also the interviewee)
  - c. Give a hug/kisses on the cheek – physical touch is totally ok
  - d. No physical touch and formal language
  - e. No physical touch and informal language
  - f. Something else, what?
- 

## Getting in touch with the applicant after the interview

## 1. When informing the applicant about the results do you:

- a. Send an email
  - b. Make a call
  - c. Arrange a meeting right away
    - i. at the office
    - ii. in cafeteria or other public building
    - iii. online
    - iv. somewhere else, where?
- 

- d. If the applicant is not chosen, he/she is (or might be) not informed
  - e. Some other thoughts?
- 
- 
-

Getting in touch with the applicant after the interview

1. When informing the applicant about the results do you:

- a. Send an email
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    - iv. somewhere else, where?
- 

- d. If the applicant is not chosen, he/she is (or might be) not informed
  - e. Some other thoughts?
- 
- 
- 

2. After hiring the applicant (you can choose 2 or more)

- a. she/he is required to call you with title/surname
  - b. formal language is still needed but you can switch to first names
  - c. no formalities are necessary
  - d. physical touch is ok
  - e. physical touch is not ok
  - f. comments:
- 
- 
-

APPENDIX 2 Survey answers

When the hiring process starts, do you think it is important to keep other employees informed about the process? Open text answers	The most important factors of the application/cv is (put in order from 1 to 5 with numbers first being the most important and last least important):					Do you think it is more important that the applicant has:	Do you think it is more important that the applicant has: Open text answers	Meeting of the applicant:
	Professional or stylish look	Spelling	Content matching with job advertisement (applicant's qualifications)	Good and clear photo of the applicant	Something else			
Yes, absolutely.	2	3	1	4		An adequate work experience		At the office/workplace
Yes, absolutely.	3	2	1	4		Suitable personality and social skills		At the office/workplace
Only if the recruitment process is (also) internal.	3	2	1	4		Suitable personality and social skills		At the office/workplace
No, never.	4	3	1	5		An adequate work experience		At the office/workplace
Yes, absolutely.	2	3	1	4		An adequate work experience		At the office/workplace
Yes, absolutely.	2	4	1	5	3	Something else, what?	It depends of the job position, but probably it is a combination of all	At the office/workplace
Yes, absolutely.	2	3	1	4		Suitable personality and social skills		At the office/workplace
Yes, absolutely.	5	2	1	4		An adequate education for the job image		At the office/workplace
Yes, absolutely.	3	2	1	4		Something else, what?	All above	At the office/workplace
Yes, absolutely.	4	2	1	3		An adequate work experience		At the office/workplace
Yes, absolutely.	3	2	1	4		Suitable personality and social skills		At the office/workplace
Yes, absolutely.	3	2	1	4		An adequate work experience		At the office/workplace
Yes, absolutely.	3	2	1	4		Suitable personality and social skills		At the office/workplace
Yes, absolutely.	3	2	1	4		Suitable personality and social skills		At the office/workplace
Yes, absolutely.	3	2	1	4		An adequate work experience		At the office/workplace

When an applicant arrives you: Open text answers	Are there more than one person interviewing the interviewee?	Are there more than one person interviewing the interviewee? Open text answers	Are there some dress codes in the interview?	Are there some dress codes in the interview? Open text answers	Is it ok for the interviewer to ask about applicant's personal issues such as family (for example kids: planning on having any?), marital status etc.?	During the course of the interview, the situation is
Shake hands	Yes		No specific codes but the applicant should dress presentably		No, it is forbidden to ask such questions	Quite formal but with first names
Shake hands	Depends (add own comments):	Team members as early as possible	The dress code is not important		No, it is forbidden to ask such questions	Informal
Shake hands	Yes		No specific codes but the applicant should dress presentably		No, it is forbidden to ask such questions	Informal
Shake hands	No		No specific codes but the applicant should dress presentably		No, it is forbidden to ask such questions	Quite formal but with first names
Shake hands	Yes		No specific codes but the applicant should dress presentably		No, it is forbidden to ask such questions	Quite formal but with first names
Shake hands	Yes		No specific codes but the applicant should dress presentably		No, it is not considered appropriate	Quite formal but with first names
Shake hands	Yes		No specific codes but the applicant should dress presentably		No, it is forbidden to ask such questions	Quite formal but with first names
Shake hands	No		No specific codes but the applicant should dress presentably		Yes, but it is not common	Quite formal but with first names
Shake hands	Depends (add own comments):	on the position that is to be covered	No specific codes but the applicant should dress presentably		Yes, but it is not common	Quite formal but with first names
Shake hands	No		The dress code is not important		Yes, but it is not common	Quite formal but with first names
Shake hands	Yes		Yes, the applicant should dress formally and not show too much skin		No, it is forbidden to ask such questions	Quite formal but with first names
Shake hands	Yes		No specific codes but the applicant should dress presentably		Yes, but it is not common	Quite formal but with first names
Shake hands	Yes		No specific codes but the applicant should dress presentably		No, it is forbidden to ask such questions	Informal
Shake hands	Yes		No specific codes but the applicant should dress presentably		No, it is not considered appropriate	Quite formal but with first names
Shake hands	Yes		No specific codes but the applicant should dress presentably		Yes, but it is not common	Quite formal but with first names

Do you think it is considered appropriate to tell jokes during the interview?	Do you think it is considered appropriate to tell jokes during the interview? Open text answers
It is ok to tell relaxed, but appropriate jokes	
It is ok to tell relaxed, but appropriate jokes	
Even black humor is allowed	
It is ok to tell relaxed, but appropriate jokes	
Some other comments:	Maybe not jokes, but if you can create a relaxed atmosphere with smile and entertaining/pleasant stories, it is always a good thing.
It is ok to tell relaxed, but appropriate jokes	
It is ok to tell relaxed, but appropriate jokes	
It is ok to tell relaxed, but appropriate jokes	
It is ok to tell relaxed, but appropriate jokes	
Appropriate only to answer on interviewer's joke	
It is ok to tell relaxed, but appropriate jokes	
It is ok to tell relaxed, but appropriate jokes	
Appropriate only to answer on interviewer's joke	
It is ok to tell relaxed, but appropriate jokes	
Some other comments:	I don't have any idea 😊



What kind of body language is there in the interview? Is it considered appropriate to "sit back and relax" or is it important to appear professional eg. with posture? What kind of body language is not considered appropriate – eg. some hand gestures, sitting with legs crossed or open, elbows on the table, something else? Please add your own comments.

My opinion is that the interviewee can sit "back and relax" during the interview.  
 Relaxed is ok. Not too formal.  
 Focus on the content more than how individual express themselves, but of course good posture without hands skimo.  
 Professional  
 Good posture, smily face and looking at the opposite party with interest tells that you really wish to make a most of the interview. Legs crossed is ok, but arms crossed not.  
 I believe is always good to appear professional, avoiding rigidity. Moderate hand gestures are quite normal in the Spanish context.  
 You need to be open and somewhat relaxed. You should not bite your nails or things like that, but all postures are fine as long as they're not forced or too aggressive (as a result of nervousness)  
 maintaining a relaxed posture and breathing calmly are two things that the interviewer can easily observe  
 It is important to sit down properly and make eye contact.  
 Here in Spain, most interviewers/recruiters consider it more appropriate for the applicant to appear professional, sit down straight on the chair, etc. If you sit back relaxed, or cross legs, or whatever, you better consider applying for another job.)  
 Open body language is appropriate.  
 Just normal conversation situation gives the best image. No special requires. But not too relaxed, it shows arrogance, it is never good.  
 The applicant should look interested, thus not laid back. An active posture is the norm in interviews to show interest.  
 I prefer a bit relaxed but professional posture. Sitting back too much might come across as if you are not really interested. Legs crossed/open or elbows on the table is no issue. Putting your elbow on the table to support your head with your hand is not done because it comes across as inactive/tired.  
 I don't have anything more here. Good points said here already.

During the interview do you prefer to	Strictly business or small talk too?	Do you think the interviewee should
Sit face to face at the table	The conversation runs quite freely	No rehearsal needed – it is important that the interview is genuine and spontaneous
Sit face to face at the table	It is ok to have some small talk	Prepare something but not the answers
Sit face to face at the table	It is ok to have some small talk	Prepare to interview well by rehearsing and practicing the answers, gestures etc (it is important not to stutter and to be clear with answers)
Sit face to face at the table	It is ok to have some small talk	No rehearsal needed – it is important that the interview is genuine and spontaneous
Sit face to face at the table	It is ok to have some small talk	Prepare to interview well by rehearsing and practicing the answers, gestures etc (it is important not to stutter and to be clear with answers)
Sit face to face at the table	It is ok to have some small talk	Prepare to interview well by rehearsing and practicing the answers, gestures etc (it is important not to stutter and to be clear with answers)
Sit face to face at the table	It is ok to have some small talk	Prepare something but not the answers
Sit face to face with no table	It is ok to have some small talk	Prepare to interview well by rehearsing and practicing the answers, gestures etc (it is important not to stutter and to be clear with answers)
Sit face to face at the table	It is ok to have some small talk	No rehearsal needed – it is important that the interview is genuine and spontaneous
Sit face to face at the table	In the interview you only speak about the things relating to the job	No rehearsal needed – it is important that the interview is genuine and spontaneous
Sit side by side around the table or at the sofa/on chairs	It is ok to have some small talk	Prepare to interview well by rehearsing and practicing the answers, gestures etc (it is important not to stutter and to be clear with answers)
Sit face to face at the table	It is ok to have some small talk	No rehearsal needed – it is important that the interview is genuine and spontaneous
Sit face to face at the table	The conversation runs quite freely	No rehearsal needed – it is important that the interview is genuine and spontaneous
Sit face to face at the table	It is ok to have some small talk	Prepare something but not the answers
Sit face to face with no table	The conversation runs quite freely	Prepare something but not the answers

With the questions, do you mainly focus on	With the questions, do you mainly focus on Open text answers	When ending the interview
Other qualities such as character		You shake hands but can already call each other by first name (also the interviewee)
Something else, what?	Applicants way of thinking and substance for the position	You shake hands but can already call each other by first name (also the interviewee)
Other qualities such as character		You shake hands but can already call each other by first name (also the interviewee)
Career history		You shake hands but can already call each other by first name (also the interviewee)
Something else, what?	The person as a whole (career, education, character, motivation, how a person has prepared for the interview etc)	You shake hands but can already call each other by first name (also the interviewee)
Something else, what?	all of them	You shake hands but can already call each other by first name (also the interviewee)
Something else, what?	all of the above	You shake hands but can already call each other by first name (also the interviewee)
Education		No physical touch and formal language
Something else, what?	Experience and character	You shake hands but can already call each other by first name (also the interviewee)
Career history		You shake hands and use formal language with surnames/titles
Career history		You shake hands but can already call each other by first name (also the interviewee)
Career history		You shake hands but can already call each other by first name (also the interviewee)
Other qualities such as character		You shake hands but can already call each other by first name (also the interviewee)
Something else, what?	A mix of experience, character but also attitude/ambition.	You shake hands but can already call each other by first name (also the interviewee)
Career history		You shake hands but can already call each other by first name (also the interviewee)

When informing the applicant about the results do you:	When informing the applicant about the results do you: Open text answers	After hiring the applicant (you can choose 2 or more)						After hiring the applicant (you can choose 2 or more) Open text answers	I represent
		She/he is required to call you with title/surname	Formal language is still needed but you can switch to first names	No formalities are necessary	Physical touch is ok	Physical touch is not ok	Comments:		
Make a call					Physical touch is ok			Finland	
Make a call				No formalities are necessary	Physical touch is ok			Finland	
Make a call				No formalities are necessary				Finland	
Make a call				No formalities are necessary				Finland	
Make a call				No formalities are necessary			Comments:	Finland	
Send an email				No formalities are necessary	Physical touch is ok			Spain	
Make a call		Formal language is still needed but you can switch to first names						Spain	
Make a call		Formal language is still needed but you can switch to first names				Physical touch is not ok		Spain	
Make a call				No formalities are necessary				Spain	
Make a call				No formalities are necessary				Spain	
Make a call		Formal language is still needed but you can switch to first names				Physical touch is not ok		The Netherlands	
Make a call				No formalities are necessary	Physical touch is ok			The Netherlands	
Make a call				No formalities are necessary	Physical touch is ok			The Netherlands	
Make a call				No formalities are necessary				The Netherlands	
Send an email				No formalities are necessary				The Netherlands	