

**THE ADAPTATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE  
WITHIN HUMAN RESOURCES IN ROVANIEMI**

Tourism and hospitality companies

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The subject of this research was the use of artificial intelligence in the HR processes of tourism and hospitality industry, researching the use of AI within the industry participants in Rovaniemi area. Objectives of this research included investigating the use of AI in the HR processes of Rovaniemi's tourism and hospitality companies, understanding what factors limit the use of AI in HR processes of the target industry, and providing useful information about AI's benefits and risks for the human resource department of the target industry.

The main research question was: How extensively are AI tools being utilized in HR processes by tourism and hospitality companies in Rovaniemi? Other research questions were: How can AI tools be utilized by tourism and hospitality companies? What factors have influenced the decision of using or not using artificial intelligence in HR?

The knowledge base of this research discussed topics such as human resource management, tourism and hospitality industry, artificial intelligence and artificial intelligence in HR processes of tourism and hospitality industry. The research followed a qualitative research methodology, and the primary data was gathered with a survey. For the analysis of data, content analysis method was used. A SWOT analysis was crafted to conclude the gathered information into a compact, easy-to-understand format.

The results of the research showed that in the industry companies in Rovaniemi, AI is being utilized in HR processes, such as recruitment, training and employee development. There are many benefits found in AI use, however there are disadvantages as well. The results of this research are beneficial for the HR department of the tourism and hospitality companies. Additionally, the results can be utilized by companies and entrepreneurs which are considering integrating AI technology into their operative tasks.

**Keywords** Artificial intelligence, Human resources, Tourism and hospitality industry, HRM

Kansainvälinen liiketalous  
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Tämän opinnäytetyön aiheena oli tekoälyn hyödyntäminen matkailu- ja ravitsemisalalan HR-prosesseissa ottaen tutkimuskohteeksi tekoälyn käytön alan yrityksissä Rovaniemen alueella. Tutkimuksen tavoitteisiin kuuluivat tutkia tekoälyn käyttöä HR-prosesseissa Rovaniemen matkailu- ja ravitsemisalalan yrityksissä, ymmärtää mitkä tekijät rajoittavat tekoälyn käyttöä kohdealan HR-prosesseissa sekä tarjota hyödyllistä tietoa tekoälyn hyödyistä ja riskeistä kohdealan henkilöstöhallinnon osastolle.

Tutkimuksen pääkysymys oli: Kuinka laaja-alaisesti tekoälytyökaluja hyödynnetään matkailu- ja ravitsemisalalan yritysten HR-prosesseissa Rovaniemellä? Muut tutkimuskysymykset olivat: Miten tekoälytyökalut ovat hyödynnettävissä matkailu- ja ravitsemisalalan yrityksissä? Mitkä tekijät ovat vaikuttaneet päätökseen käyttää tai olla käyttämättä tekoälyä henkilöstöhallinnossa?

Tutkimuksen tietopohja käsitteli aiheita kuten henkilöstöhallinta, matkailu- ja ravitsemisala, tekoäly sekä tekoälyn käyttö matkailu- ja ravitsemisalalan henkilöstöhallinnossa. Tutkimus noudatti kvalitatiivista tutkimusmenetelmää ja primaarinen aineisto kerättiin kyselyllä. Sisällönanalyysia käytettiin aineiston analyysimetodinä. SWOT-analyysia käytettiin kerätyn informaation päätelmien laatimiseen helposti ymmärrettävään muotoon.

Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittivat, että tekoälyä hyödynnetään HR-prosesseissa, kuten rekrytoinnissa ja työntekijöiden kehittämisessä alan yrityksissä Rovaniemellä. Tekoälyn käytöstä löytyi useita etuja, mutta myös haittoja. Tämän tutkimuksen tulokset ovat hyödyllisiä matkailu- ja ravitsemisalalan henkilöstöhallinnon osastolle. Lisäksi yritykset ja yrittäjät, jotka harkitsevat sopeuttavansa tekoälyteknologiaa yritystoimintaansa voivat hyödyntää tutkimustuloksia.

Avainsanat                      Tekoäly, henkilöstöhallinto, matkailu- ja ravitsemisala, HRM

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Digitalization has introduced the world to new technologies that are heavily involved in the common lives of human beings. In business today, it becomes more important for companies to utilize and develop technologies into their practises to keep up with competitors and gain competitive advantage. This allows companies to improve their efficiency and allocate resources to other day-to-day business tasks that need more human intervention. Therefore, implementing new technologies has become a crucial part of modern-day business practices.

Functional and efficient HR processes are often needed to promote the wellbeing of employees and ensure that a company can acquire talent whenever needed. The development of artificial intelligence has taken major leaps in the recent years and AI has become more involved in business operations including in human resources. The use of AI in HR processes requires careful thought and preparation since artificial intelligence goes through considerable amounts of data which can be sensitive in nature (Rigotti & Fosch-Villaronga 2024). There are also other concerns which should be well examined when it comes to the utilization of artificial intelligence tools.

The tourism and hospitality industry are a major business sector in Rovaniemi which allows the author to gather information from this specific area for the research. Furthermore, due to the seasonality of the industry, these businesses suffer from high employment turnover, which creates a need for efficient human resource processes. The industry is a major actor in the business world and the number of jobs which the industry has already created will be increasing in the future based on the predicted further growth of tourism and hospitality industry (Ruel & Njoku 2021).

Already this year, the amount of registered overnight stays in Rovaniemi has increased from February 2024 by four percent, and the number of registered overnight stays has been growing consistently over the recent years based on the statistics provided by Visitory (2025). The growth of the industry is, for instance, due to globalization which sees more people desiring to travel and experience

activities in other regions than their own local environment. This creates additional need for new employees in the industry.

The purpose of this study is not to create knowledge on how AI systems work, how they are operated or to find out what specific kind of AI tools are used in the target industry. Rather, the purpose is to gather insight into the use of artificial intelligence in HR processes in tourism and hospitality companies in Rovaniemi, create information which can be utilized to begin the use of AI in the HR of a company and find possible gaps for improvement. The author chose this specific industry due to the beliefs that artificial intelligence could aid the HR department of the target industry's companies by utilizing automation to reduce workload of the HR department of seasonally thriving companies.

The research objectives of this study are to investigate the use of AI in the HR processes of Rovaniemi's tourism and hospitality companies, understand what factors limit the use of AI in HR processes of the target industry and to provide useful information about artificial intelligence, its benefits and risks for the human resource department of the target industry.

The research questions of the study are: How extensively are AI tools being utilized in HR processes by tourism and hospitality companies in Rovaniemi? Sub-questions are as follows: How can AI tools be utilized by tourism and hospitality companies? What factors have influenced the decision of using or not using Artificial Intelligence in HR?

For this study a mostly qualitative research method is applied to allow a thorough observation of the topic and theoretical framework. Therefore, the data from tourism and hospitality companies of Rovaniemi is gathered via a survey that is to be sent through email to the target companies. The research data will be analysed with the appliance of content analysis.

## 2 TARGET INDUSTRY AND HRM

The knowledge base of this study entails key concepts relevant to the research which are human resource management, tourism and hospitality industry, artificial intelligence and artificial intelligence in HR processes of tourism and hospitality industry. This chapter provides an overall background for the study as well as directs the subject to further research of the chosen target industry and group.

### 2.1 Tourism and hospitality industry

Customer service, customer satisfaction and memorable experiences are one of the main qualities of tourism and hospitality industry, which include companies within the service industry such as activity services, restaurants and hotels, for instance. Especially in Rovaniemi, where northern lights, Santa Claus and snow are arguably the main attractions for international travellers and are somehow incorporated into many of the tourism and hospitality companies' services, many of them are offering outdoor activities. Some of the companies offer their services only during the winter season, which is the peak season for tourism in Rovaniemi and therefore not all of the industry companies offer work all year around, which creates more need for seasonal workforce.

In Rovaniemi, where there are over 4600 companies according to Business Rovaniemi (2025), the tourism and hospitality industry are heavily involved in the business environment, and it is one of the more noticeable business industries of the city centre. Over half a million tourists visit Rovaniemi in a year (Business Rovaniemi 2025), which means that Rovaniemi is a city with high tourism, and this has created a suitable and thriving environment for tourism and hospitality companies. The industry companies in Rovaniemi include everything from husky safaris to restaurants. Some of the industry companies belong to the same concern, which allows some tourism and hospitality companies to promote and sell additional services for tourists through their websites.

The industry faces struggles created by significant employee turnover for reasons such as low salary, lack of balance within free time and work, overall discontent and not having many opportunities for employee career development (Ruel &

Njoku 2021). The seasonality of the work also often affects the length of a worker's career journey in a tourism and hospitality sector's company, which as well contributes to the high employee turnover of the industry.

## 2.2 Human resource management

Human resource management (HRM) is a feature of business in which a company manages its employees and employee relations with various means. This entails aspects such as recruitment, taking care of employee's needs and concerns, payroll and employee training (Rowley & Jackson 2010, 27). Over time, HR has faced changes due to digitalization which has taken many of the traditional HR tasks from offline to online. Human resource management is highly human oriented which often acquires some kind of human interaction and therefore raises questions of whether fully technological HR processes are ever possible.

Recruitment is an aspect of HR in which a company in need of an employee is seeking to discover potential employees best fit for their needs. Originally recruitment was handled by posting work adverts into newspapers and gradually it has made its way to the online world. (Sýkorová, Hague, Dvouletý & Procházka 2024.) The recruitment of new employees requires substantial use of assets and time from the industry's companies (Johnson, Stone & Lukaszewski 2021). Therefore, the industry benefits of utilizing new technologies such as artificial intelligence in their HR which is already recognized by many of the industry participants across the globe.

Due to the work in hospitality companies being mostly contact oriented between employees and customers, the professionalism of the employees is a major selling point and a factor for the success of a company. Therefore, the industry is putting significant resources to human resource management. (Rabiul, Sigala & Karim 2025.) Employees are often the ones making the customer experience by interacting with them, and therefore shaping the image received of the company by the customers and public. If the customer service is not up to expected standards because of the employees' work performance, it can have a big impact on the company's reputation and later success.

### 3 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

#### 3.1 AI and business

In recent years artificial intelligence (AI) has become more involved in different aspects of ordinary life tasks such as studying, working and leisure as well as business operations. Artificial intelligence is a concept that has been around already from the 1950s and from there it has been gradually developed into a working tool (Häußermann & Lütge 2022). Artificial intelligence is relatively challenging to explain since there are multiple definitions for the term. Shortly, it is a technology that mimics human intelligence, and it can for example commence actions to achieve desired results and learn by loops of information. (Sheikh, Prins & Schrijvers 2023, 15.)

In the business world the potential of using AI to enhance or perform certain activities is already being recognized and implemented in different business sectors not only locally but also worldwide. Sectors such as manufacturing, finance, healthcare and many others have implemented artificial intelligence into different tasks from customer service to business operative tasks (Samala, Katkam, Bellamkonda & Rodriguez 2022). The main benefits which can be reached by applying AI tools into one's business operations are being able to allocate tasks to AI which are otherwise time- and resource consuming. In addition, the companies can operate more efficiently and reduce their costs.

In human resource management processes such as managing performance and training and development of employees, artificial intelligence can have a positive impact on the employees and business operations of a company. In performance management, the digitalization of processes allows collected data to be analysed which helps with assessing employees and to identify individuals or areas that could be improved with different preventative measures. For training and development of employees, AI enhanced processes allow employees to customize their learning experience, for instance, by leveraging e-learning modules and AI-powered assistants, with the opportunity to access materials freely. Using e-learning platforms promote more engagement and accessibility for employee learning. (Ahmić & Ćosić 2025.)

The implementation and adaptation of artificial intelligence may not be so easy for all companies because of the region which they operate in has not invested in the development of the technology. This can affect companies' abilities of integrating AI into their business practices. This is due to the companies having more abilities to develop technologies if the region is supporting these innovations by having a technologically well-advanced atmosphere. Other factors that can affect the use of AI tools are the availability of professionals and data that is within excellent standards and the monetary means. (Marino, Gil Lafuente & Tebala 2023.)

Major steps have been taken in the legislative process regarding AI in recent years. Generally, Europe has taken actions to promote safe and rightful integration of artificial intelligence within its companies and people. European Union has developed an AI act which is one of the earliest extensive artificial intelligence frameworks according to the European Commission. The act identifies and defines rules to four types of risks regarding the use of artificial intelligence that needs to be recognised by AI users and developers. These risks include minimal-, limited-, high-, and unacceptable risks in relations to AI (European Commission 2025a; European Commission 2025b.)

Finland has also taken steps to make artificial intelligence more accessible and encourage utilizations of the tool in different business sectors. In 2017, an artificial intelligence Programme was established as the first measures of artificial intelligence use in Finland to set goals for further inspection of AI and acknowledge its risks and opportunities. The goal is to make Finland a country which can compete with other countries in AI expertise and attract competent employees to work in Finland. The report highlights in total eleven main actions to achieve these goals. For the year 2025, the Programme has a vision of Finland regarding artificial intelligence which entails attracting employees, as well as having citizens who are self-sufficient and educated on the subject. (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment 2019, 12, 119.)

By having these general guides and restrictions, some major risks may be avoided which could affect not only the users of AI tools, such as businesses, but also the stakeholders of a company. They also encourage businesses within a region to take AI use into consideration as well as focus on those key concerns

in their business operations with AI. The significance of having functional regulations in place is highlighted to reduce risks involved in the use of AI and guarantee proper use of the technological tool (Marino et al. 2023).

However, AI is constantly developing and is not perfect, therefore the appliance of AI has its own risks, which every business should be aware of and acknowledge before starting to use AI. Failing to take these risks seriously or take actions to properly protect data poses further risk to stakeholders of the company such as customers, business partners and employees for instance. It is also problematic from the ethical standpoint to not act on these concerns whenever they are noticed. If a company is considering utilizing AI in their HR processes, the possible negative effects of the technology should be well considered (Rigotti & Fosch-Villaronga 2024).

An example of a real-life scenario of what could happen with the use of artificial intelligence in recruitment processes without taking into account the ethical considerations is with the case of Amazon. The company developed an algorithm which would aid screening resumes during the recruitment process and help select candidates. However, when the algorithm was made, the previous data of which type of candidates had been chosen before for technical roles was used. This resulted in the algorithm accidentally discriminating against other participants by favoring men during the selection process. The algorithm was never utilized, nonetheless this provides an example of what can happen if AI is not used carefully. (Rigotti & Fosch-Villaronga 2024.)

### 3.2 AI in HR of tourism and hospitality industry

Overall, artificial intelligence is already used in tourism and hospitality companies and their tasks. As explained in the journal of Samala, Katkam, Bellamkonda & Rodriguez (2022), from the said industry participants, 85% use AI in their operations based on the research of Tata Consultant Services. The utilization of AI has major potential, and it is also already being utilized in customer service-related tasks such as translation, chatbots, visual tours and handling reservations (Samala et al. 2022). In the context of human resources, AI is mostly being utilized in the recruitment processes of the tourism and hospitality industry.

In the tourism and hospitality sector, the intensive turnover of employees creates major effect on labor costs and takes up resources (Johnson et al. 2021). Therefore, the adaptation of AI in recruitment processes could reduce the cost by making the processes more efficient and lessen the need for human intervention in employee acquisition. Artificial intelligence is already being used in recruitment practices such as screening applications, posting new job vacancies across multiple platforms, and identifying potential future employees suitable for a specific job vacancy (Rigotti & Fosch-Villaronga 2024).

### 3.2.1 E-recruitment and E-selection

E-recruitment as a concept works towards recognizing and attaining suitable employee candidates with the goal of keeping their focus on the company during the start of the recruitment process. With e-recruitment, which utilizes communication technologies such as websites, a company can reach more suitable candidates and therefore they can choose the most fit candidate for the open job position. (Johnson et al. 2021.) For the tourism and hospitality sector, which constantly needs more new applicants, this kind of advanced AI tool would be highly beneficial. It is also examined that recruitment costs can be reduced by up to 95% with the use of e-recruitment (Johnson et al. 2021).

E-selection helps with analysis in the recruitment process which recognizes the specific requirements a company has set for an open job position. For employees, meaningful factors that affect their decision to work for a company consist of the compatibility between the company and the employee within values, aim, and general requirements for the open job position. Applicants who meet the criteria are said to aid with the satisfaction of employees within the organization due to them having a higher work attitude and performance. It is also noted that there are higher chances for employees of the company to stay longer in the company if these values align. (Johnson et al. 2021.) Considering these qualities of e-selection, the industry companies could keep qualified employees and at the same time reduce their recruitment costs.

### 3.2.2 Benefits of using AI for industry companies

Leveraging artificial intelligence in human resource management can provide multiple benefits for the tourism and hospitality industry and its organizations. Generally, digitalization of processes such as managing performance and training employees can help companies, for example, to find improvement areas or individuals which need additional training. Companies can also provide online training materials that have AI-learning assistants which allow employees to access materials on their own time. (Ahmić & Ćosić 2025.)

In recruitment practices, AI allows recruiters to process vast volumes of data to make various recruitment processes more efficient (Rigotti & Fosch-Villaronga 2024). AI can be used to reach potential employees who are most comparable with the recruiting company by recognizing employees most qualified for the position available (Johnson et al. 2021). Therefore, the industry participants can find professional employees for their open job positions more efficiently than before.

The advantages of utilizing AI tools in recruitment are said to aid with discarding of bias in the recruitment processes, efficiency and precision as well as decrease the cost of these employment operations (Sýkorová et al. 2024). By using AI in recruitment, the recruitment processes can become less biased towards applicants (Panda, Dash, Samadhiya, Kumar & Mulat-weldemeskel 2024). However, the risk of bias is only reduced if AI is trained correctly to not favor specific characteristics within the applicants.

### 3.2.3 Concerns and disadvantages for industry participants

There are multiple benefits of AI utilization in various HR processes such as recruitment, however the disadvantages of the tool should also be considered. In recent years concerns such as fairness and especially the ethicality of Artificial Intelligence use has been discussed about more and more. For instance, it has been understood that AI can create bias that is either positive or negative towards an applicant or applicants. This can be due to AI being trained or built based on the previous performance data which benefits specific groups, as happened with Amazon. (Asante, Sarpong & Boakye 2024.)

Even though AI is well valued, it does not yet fully serve the purpose of exceeding human intelligence. One of the considerable issues involving the use of AI is data security and privacy, not only in tourism and hospitality sector but also in other sectors. (Samala et al. 2022.) Artificial intelligence goes through vast amounts of data which, in the recruitment context, is sensitive in nature and can be a risk to the applicants' rights (Rigotti & Fosch-Villaronga 2024). When processing sensitive data, there is a need to have good data security practices in place to protect stakeholders' rights, personal information and to ensure that any information about individuals is never shared. This highlights the importance of data protection measures and legislation which should be standardized in all business sectors.

In the tourism and hospitality industry, an industry in which human interaction is a big part of the business concept and correlates to customer satisfaction and experience, Artificial intelligence reducing the need of workers can be problematic (Ruel & Njoku 2021). If the roles of employees change, it can create confusion and distrust within the employees of the company. Also, there is a risk of employees rising demotivation when HR processes are operated by using artificial intelligence.

The high costs regarding the utilization of AI are an obstacle to some companies which do not have the funds to develop artificial intelligence tools to match their HR needs. At this moment, artificial intelligence may not be affordable for all companies of all sizes, since the development of artificial intelligence and integrating it into HR practises can be costly and time consuming. This could indicate that especially small businesses might not be able to utilize it to its full capacity.

The utilization of technologies exposes its users to potential outside risks such as cyber-attacks from actors with malicious intentions. Therefore, utilizing artificial intelligence in the hospitality industry calls for greater measures to protect the private data handled by the tool. Without proper protection measures, companies may suffer major financial and reputational damage if they fall victims to cyber-attacks. (Pipyros & Liasidou 2025.)

## 4 METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Approach

Qualitative method refers to research with multiple data gathering methods that provide less structured data, which is analyzed in a more descriptive manner than quantitative data (Hammersley 2013). The aim of this method is to deeply understand the phenomenon in question as well as provide interpretation of the research topic (Kananen 2014, 18). Qualitative research is suitable due to this research focusing more on the characteristics of HR in the target industry and the artificial intelligence qualities in HR rather than statistics as well as the gathered data being more descriptive. Qualitative research has multiple data gathering methods, however for this research, the method used was an online survey sent to companies via email.

Survey is a common method for quantitative research; however, survey can produce both quantitative and qualitative types of data (Moilanen, Ojasalo & Ritalahti 2022, Chapter "Data acquisition in surveys"). In this research, the survey had multiple questions with open-ended qualities which encouraged the participants to give more detailed information about their answers, which align with qualitative research. The research was mostly qualitative with few quantitative qualities in gathered primary data which means that the data collected from the survey could be analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. For the analysis of data in this research, content analysis was used.

A survey was chosen due to the tourism season being ongoing during the research process which could have affected companies' abilities to participate in interviews. The survey was a safer and more suitable option rather than doing interviews due to the limited time frame of the research. If the author would have used interviews as only data gathering method, the author should have known which of the companies uses AI to be able to reach the research objectives of understanding how AI is being utilized in the HR processes of the industry in Rovaniemi. Furthermore, this method would have required more time and preparation from the author and research participants.

## 4.2 Target group and choice of data provider

The target group of the study entails an array of companies within the tourism and hospitality industry which are operating in Rovaniemi. Reachability of the target group depends on the research problem and topic (Kananen 2014, 31). Target group of this research was gathered by using Finder, Visit Rovaniemi website and the companies' own websites. In qualitative research, the number of participants needed for the completion of a research is often stated to be maximum of fifteen participants, and the number of materials collected for the research varies depending on when there is enough data to complete the research (Kananen 2014, 98).

The target group of this research included 129 companies, which is well over the amount of fifteen participants. However, due to the topic, the target group is specific, and the number of answers needed to complete the research is not predictable due to the likeness that not all the target companies use AI in their HR processes or even answer the survey. The answers of the survey participants are the primary data source of this study. The secondary data used in this study consists of scientific articles, statistics and books relevant for the research primarily found online from websites and scientific databases such as ScienceDirect and Emerald Insight or from LUC-Finna library.

## 4.3 Data collection process

The primary data collection process for the research was carried out by sending a survey via email to the tourism and hospitality companies which currently operate in Rovaniemi (see Appendix 1). This data gathering method was chosen due to the target group being larger but closed and the research having time limitations. The survey was conducted both in Finnish and English due to the international nature of the industry.

The survey was an online survey which was structured so that the company could first identify whether AI is being used in their HR processes, and after the survey was divided into two pathways. If the company used AI, the survey showed more specific questions about which processes AI was being utilized for, as shown in

Figure 1. To guarantee qualitative data for the purpose of the research, the survey included additional text fields as part of the response options, in which the respondents could specify how AI is being utilized in the company.

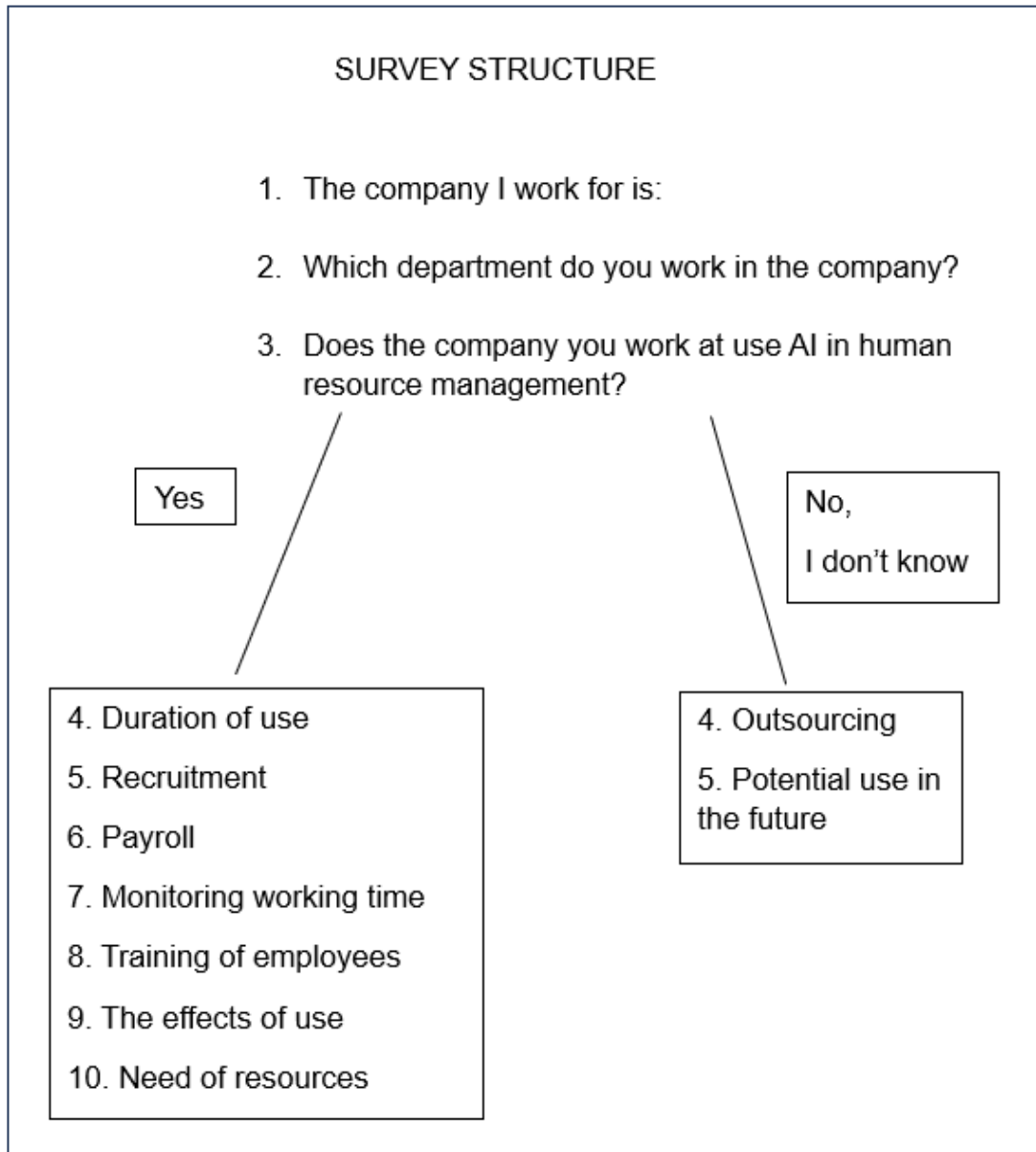


Figure 1. Survey structure with simplified topics of the asked questions.

The survey was sent out on 31 March 2025 to the companies which belonged to the target group and could be reached by email. The survey was open for two weeks after which new participants were no longer able to participate in the research. The use of a survey allowed the author to gather data from as many companies as possible to gain knowledge of the overall AI utilization in the HR processes of Rovaniemi's tourism and hospitality companies.

#### 4.4 Analysis of data

To analyse the result of the survey, content analysis is used. Content analysis is a popular analysis method within qualitative research. The analysis method is utilized to identify repeating words and concepts within the gathered data (Saldana 2011). This method was chosen due to the need to identify repeating qualities of artificial intelligence utilization from the answers provided by the survey participants and gathered secondary data. Furthermore, this analysis method allows categorization of results to negative and positive, to assess the whole impact of artificial intelligence and reach the research objective of providing useful information about the risks and benefits of the tool for the human resource departments of the target industry.

Based on these results and the knowledge base of the study, a SWOT analysis is crafted to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of artificial intelligence use in the HR processes for the industry and target group. A SWOT analysis is an assessment tool of the internal and external qualities for businesses, the internal qualities being factors which can be influenced by companies themselves, and external qualities being factors which companies are not in control of. It is an analysis tool which can be utilized in various contexts and help build strategies for companies. (Benzaghta, Elwalda, Mousa, Erkan & Rahman 2021, 57-58.) The use of SWOT analysis provides a clearer picture of the nuances of utilizing artificial intelligence in HRM within the target group and industry.

## 5 RESULTS

The survey was answered by 21 companies within the target group. The target companies which answered the survey varied from hotels, restaurants, activity and experience services to others, which were specified to be everything above, a camping area, and a company including accommodation, activity, and catering services. The identification of the company's operations allowed the research to have more diverse data of which type of tourism and hospitality companies in Rovaniemi are utilizing artificial intelligence, and how it is utilized within the target group. Out of the respondents, seven companies were using artificial intelligence in some of their HR processes and fourteen of the respondents responded that it was not used for the human resource management in their company. In this chapter, the survey results are presented and examined further.

The first question was to identify what kind of company the respondent works at, to understand what part of the industry utilizes artificial intelligence and to ensure that a mix of different industry participants have answered the survey. The second question was to identify in which department the participant works in the company. Out of the respondents, eight work at the HR department, four in marketing, and nine in other departments. The others were identified to be sales, upper management, reception, an entrepreneur of the company and "all the departments" possibly referring to the company being small in scale or not having specific departments. There were also participants from office, management and financial management departments. This question was intended to give insight on what kind of information the respondent may have, for instance first- or second-hand information. This information is later used to assess the reliability of this research.

Third question, which determined whether the participant got more identifiable questions about the AI use or not, was the following: Does the company which you work at use AI in human resource management? Out of the participants seven said yes and fourteen no, none of the participants chose the option "I don't know". From this, the seven who chose yes, got further questions about how long they have used AI, its use in recruitment, payroll, monitoring working time, training of employees, and the possible effects of its use. The fourteen individuals who

identified that AI was not used in their HRM, were given questions about outsourcing and if they have considered using AI in the future.

### 5.1 AI utilization

Fourth question was regarding the amount of time which AI has been utilized for in the company. This question was completely open-ended, due to the reason that the participants were free to determine the time of use and give further details if they desired to. The question was asked due to the additional value it can bring to the overall results. The longest time that AI had been used in the industry company's HR processes was less than two years: "Artificial Intelligence has been used since the opening of the hotel, so about 1,5 years". Three of the participants had similar answers of the time being "about one year", "one year", "far as I know for a year". Two of the participants replied that it had been used for "less than a year" and "around half a year", which were the shortest amount of time it has been utilized for within the respondents.

Then participants were asked about whether AI is being used in recruitment, which is where AI is commonly well-utilized in the HR of tourism and hospitality industry around the globe. If the answer was yes, participants were required to identify how it was used to understand which part of the recruitment process it is being utilized in. First participant specified that it is used "in the making of job notifications". Similarly, two others identified it to be used "in the writing of recruitment -notifications" and "to format job notifications", with the latter respondent adding that it is also used "to plan out automated responses". The last respondent of the question wrote that artificial intelligence was utilized "to construct responses" and "in summaries" during the recruitment process.

The participants of the survey which responded that the company they work at use AI in HRM, three of the respondents answered negatively and four, which is little over half, chose the option of "I do not know or prefer not to say" when asked whether AI was being used in payroll. Similarly, when asked whether AI is being used for monitoring working time, all the participants that answered the said question answered that it was not used for that purpose in the company they represent.

When asked whether AI was being used for the training or development of employees, the responses for the question were quite similar with each other. First participant identified it to be used in “doing different training materials”, as did the second participant: “For example in designing of training materials”. The last participant included further use, responding: “In drawing of training materials and as a part of system training”.

## 5.2 Effects of AI and future foresight

After specifying questions on which different areas artificial intelligence was used in, the participants were asked what the possible effects of utilizing AI in human resource management have been. For this question, the first respondent identified that the “biggest advantage in the use of AI has been the breaking of language barrier”, specifying that “we have employees, which have only little English-speaking skills, so communicating with these employees is pretty much in the hands of artificial intelligence”. Second respondent identified both the positive and negative side of the use: “Saves time especially in writing- and copywriting work. However, the origin can be easily recognized from the text created by AI”.

The time saving quality was recognized by others as well with one participant stating that the advantages are “higher quality text content. Have sped up the finalizing of processes”, and another participant stating that it “Has sped a lot of things up when AI has been utilized. Also have been able to check things up thinking about the instructions”. The last comment could indicate that AI is being used to find information from a source to make sure that something is being executed correctly or within the instructions of the company.

“Clearer communication, finalizing of ideas and planning of materials”, summarized the fifth respondent as advantages of AI. Even though time was again an advantage to be recognized within one of the respondents, there were also a recognizable disadvantage which last of the participants pointed out: “Advantages → Saves time. Disadvantages, not necessarily so reliable, and no delicate information can be used at all”, another participant stating that AI is “Sometimes a useful tool for information searching, however reliability not always high. In our work we handle a lot of delicate stuff that cannot be given to AI to solve”.

As mentioned earlier in this research, data security needs to be taken seriously when using AI technology.

The last question for the participants which identified that AI was used in the company they work at were asked whether the start of AI utilization needed additional resources from the company or its employees. Many of the answers were simply “no”, with one responding “not specially”, however also clarifying that there was “a half a day of training” to go through. A single respondent commented on the overall impact of using AI for the company resources: “The use of AI has decreased resources at the basic level”.

The participants which at the beginning of the survey had identified that AI is not used in the HRM of the company they work at were asked a question: Are the company’s human resource management tasks outsourced? Only one of the participants replied yes to this question and the rest of the participants replied negatively. This question was intended to map out whether it would be likely that the participants which recognized that AI was not used in the HRM of the company, were not able to answer positively even if it was used due to HR processes being outsourced and not having the needed information. Considering that no more than one of the participants chose positively on this question, it is not so likely that this would have been the reason why among the respondents, there were less participants using AI in their HR processes than ones that were not using AI.

After the question about outsourcing, the final question of the survey was about whether using artificial intelligence in human resource management of the company has been considered for the future. First respondent described there to be “a need to streamline work in all sectors” specifying that “artificial intelligence is in everyday use for instance in marketing and sales work” in the company they work at. The second participant chose positively as well, reasoning their response with “it is the future”. Also, another participant showed interest for future use, however some of the processes the participant is wanting to handle by themselves: “In some levels can be tried out. Need to first find out what the opportunities are. I want to deal with recruitment, interviews by myself. Need to get to know people before you decide to hire people”. There were also respondents that did not, at least at this point, seem to consider using AI in their HR processes in the

future. One respondent reasoned their answer with “I know how to do the work without artificial intelligence”, and the last respondent replied shortly with “No trust”, possibly indicating that the reliability of AI is one of the reasons AI is not in consideration.

## 6 DISCUSSION

### 6.1 Review of results

The knowledge base of this research showed that artificial intelligence tools can be harnessed to aid companies in various HR tasks. These tasks include performance management, employee training and development, as well as recruitment and selecting of new workforce. Based on the conducted survey, artificial intelligence is used in human resource processes of around 33% of the 21 Rovaniemi's industry companies, not only in recruitment processes but also in the development of employees. In recruitment, AI is mostly utilized in the making of job notifications and responses. In the training and development of employees it is mostly utilized in the planning of training materials and for system training. Main concepts regarding AI utilization which are repeating throughout the research data include data protection, training materials, time reduction, work notifications, bias and cost reduction (Figure 2).

<b>Main concepts</b>	<b>Primary data</b>	<b>Secondary data</b>	<b>Number of repeats</b>
Data protection	2	5	7
Training materials	3	2	5
Time reduction	4		4
Work notifications	3	1	4
Bias		3	3
Cost reduction		2	2

Figure 2. Content analysis of the main concepts found in gathered research data.

As understood, the utilization of artificial intelligence has some disadvantages especially if the tool is not used with great consideration. Major disadvantage that was identified includes data safety and not being able to use any information that can be disclosed as sensitive. Additionally, within the research participants, it was recognised that information presented by AI may not be reliable and text made with artificial intelligence can be recognized as a creation of the tool. This indicates that even though AI can be used to create text and other content, the content produced by AI should be assessed and modified before it is used. There was one quality found in secondary data from multiple sources, which indicated that artificial intelligence can either have a positive or negative impact for the bias

of applicants during the recruitment process, depending on how AI is trained and used.

The largest benefit which has come across the primary data multiple times is the time -saving quality of utilizing AI in different HR processes. In the target companies, HR professionals utilize AI in tasks such as writing, creating materials, or, for example, in doing work notifications. Artificial intelligence is also identified to aid with making higher quality content and in communication by providing translations or by helping to go through materials, as less identified benefits.

The cost- saving ability of AI was mentioned a couple of times within secondary data. Most of the participants of the survey did not identify this as an advantage for their employer company, except for one participant stating that it has helped to “decrease the use of resources at the basic level”, which correlates to cost reduction. Of course, there is the possibility of AI not providing this advantage for most of the companies at least from the period of which it has been utilized. This, however, does not necessarily mean that the companies participating in this research are not saving costs with the use of AI, but rather that the cost reduction ability may not be as visible to them as other qualities that the tool is able to provide.

Overall, artificial intelligence is being utilized in some of the tourism and hospitality industry companies in Rovaniemi which could be positive considering the benefits that the use of AI tools can provide for these companies. However, within the research participants, over half of the survey respondents identified that AI was not used in their HR processes, and whenever AI was being utilized, the time of use was always under 1-2 years. This shows that even though artificial intelligence is already being used in HR processes across the world in this industry, the companies in Rovaniemi have started utilizing the technology for this purpose relatively recently.

The possibilities of utilizing artificial intelligence in the industry companies that are not using the tool for their human resource management had mixed responses. The potential of the technology was recognized, indicating that more companies are interested in using AI in their HRM in the future. However, few of the participants did not consider utilizing AI in their tasks for reasons such as not

trusting the technology, not knowing the opportunities fully or wanting to do tasks traditionally.

The only notable difference found within the data of the knowledge base was regarding the possibility of bias caused by using AI as part of recruitment processes. The qualities of AI-created bias were disclosed in separate sources, providing opposite views on the matter. The primary data gathered from the target group of the research had similarities within the responses, however none of the responses touched on the subject of recruitment bias.

The gathered primary data did not reveal major differences when compared to the knowledge base of the research, which could be due to the amount of primary data not providing enough responses to find any differences that could be revealed. Even though AI is used in different parts of the human resource management processes within the companies, it does not let us make assumptions of the knowledge being common or true for all the companies utilizing AI. Therefore, it could still be utilized in other parts of HRM that were not revealed in this research of the target group.

Information about all the meaningful benefits and risks of artificial intelligence in human resource management are compiled with appliance of SWOT analysis (Figure 2). SWOT analysis categorizes the collected data into four main areas: internal qualities which are the opportunities and weaknesses of AI utilization, and external qualities covering the opportunities and threats of the tool.

<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cost reduction</li> <li>Promotes efficiency</li> <li>Help create materials</li> <li>Reduce bias in recruitment</li> <li>Translation abilities</li> </ul>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data security</li> <li>Sensitive data cannot be used</li> <li>Reliability</li> <li>Can create bias in recruitment</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Faster recruitment processes</li> <li>Better employee match</li> </ul>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing/changing legislation</li> <li>Cybercriminals</li> </ul>

Figure 3. SWOT analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of artificial intelligence utilization in human resource processes of tourism and hospitality industry.

Strengths and opportunities indicate the positive qualities of AI that could bring savings and other benefits to the industry companies. These strengths include cost reduction abilities, promoting efficiency in various tasks such as writing, aiding in creating of materials, reducing bias in the recruitment process, and helping with translation tasks. Faster recruitment processes and better employee match during the selection phase are opportunities of the tool.

Weaknesses and threats are the qualities which should be considered and assessed throughout the use of the technology, the weaknesses including data security and the use of sensitive data, reliability and the risk of bias in recruitment practises if the technology is trained using data which favours others. One threat of AI is the developing and changing legislation which requires users to adopt to new regulations and measures. Additionally, cybercriminals act as another threat

to companies using AI as they may cause major harm to a company by taking advantage of poorly operated software.

The result of this research provides useful information which can be utilized by companies to make future decisions regarding the use or implementation of AI technologies in HR processes, offering input on the possible effects of the tool not only for the target industry companies but also for companies and entrepreneurs with similar use intentions. It can also provide value for future strategies and risk assessment which allow companies to use the tool for their specific needs and minimize risks of the technology.

The research objectives included investigating the use of AI in the HR processes of Rovaniemi's tourism and hospitality companies, providing useful information about AI, its benefits and risks for the human resource department of the target industry as well as understanding the factors of limitations of AI use in HR processes of the target industry. The research aimed to reach these objectives with the help of assigned research questions which were: How extensively are AI tools being utilized in HR processes by tourism and hospitality companies in Rovaniemi? How can AI tools be utilized by tourism and hospitality companies? What factors have influenced the decision of using or not using artificial intelligence in HR? Considering the results and analysis, these research questions were answered with the research results and therefore the research objectives are met.

## 6.2 Ethical considerations

In research, it is important to ensure that the rights and dignity of all participants are valued during the whole research process, and ethicality is especially important, with Finland having general code of ethics to abide by. (TENK 2019, 7.) How data is being managed need to be considered and made clear for those who participating in the research data to ensure transparency throughout the research process. A participant has the right to receive knowledge of factors such as the research structure, what the research includes, how it is organized and how the data is handled (TENK 2019, 9-10).

The primary data gathering process of the research began by sending an email message and a survey link to all the industry participants which were reachable at the time of the research process. In the email, the author provided information of what purpose the research was conducted for, who the author is and what the survey results are used for. The participants were made aware that the survey is anonymous, and that the answers are used for the purposes of completing this research, after which all given answers will be deleted once the research has been completed. Every company that the survey and email message were sent to did have an individual link which meant that the participants were not able to find out which of the other companies were in the target group list. All the participants had the option to remove themselves from the email list if they desired to do so, which indicated that the survey was optional.

At the beginning of the survey, the participants were met with further description of what the survey was for, the topic, what information was gathered from the participants and how the information was used. This information was provided to ensure transparency of the research, as well as allow the participants to examine whether they decide to partake in the research. The contact information of the author was in the description, as well to make it easy for the participants to send any questions, comments, and observations regarding the survey. After the description, the consent for the handling of information were asked about before the survey could be answered. In research with human beings as partakers, one of the key principles of ethicality is consent (TENK 2019, 9). At this stage of the survey, the target group could decide whether they wanted to give their consent for the handling of their information or not and close the survey. Whenever consent was given, the survey participants were able to begin answering the survey.

Because many of the tourism and hospitality companies in Rovaniemi have international employees, the email message and survey were provided both in Finnish and English. This made it possible for the people who do not understand Finnish to take part in the research if they desired to. The survey questions were phrased so that they would not be leading the respondents to answer in any way other than their own knowledge and opinion. Many of the questions were compulsory to guarantee data collection, meaning that those questions needed to be an-

swered before continuing. However, for some of the questions there was a possibility for the participants to choose “I don’t know or I prefer not to say”, if there were questions which they did not want to respond or know how to answer.

For this research, gathering of more specified information from the participants was not needed or justified, therefore the survey was anonymous and only general questions of the company and department which the participant worked at were asked about. The language of the survey and survey questions were formatted so that they would not have influenced any of the participants to answer in a way that did not reflect their true opinions. Reflecting on the research process, the author did her best to work aligning with ethical principles from the beginning until the end.

### 6.3 Examination of reliability

Out of the seven participants who shared that AI was being used in their HR processes, five of them were identified to be from the human resources department, one from the upper management of the company, and one participant from marketing. Considering these results, it could be determined that most of the participants which were able to answer positively may indeed have first-hand information of AI utilization in this context. This is because most of these participants are working at the HR department and potentially using the tool in their work. Additionally, one participant is in leadership position and possibly having detailed information about the company’s business operations, including about the use of AI. It may also be that the respondent who is working at the marketing department is aware if and how AI is used in the company’s HR processes, however the certainty of this should be considered.

In qualitative research, saturation can be used to confirm reliability of the results. Saturation refers to the repetition of data retrieved from various sources, which means that the same conclusions are found across multiple sources. (Kananen 2014, 153.) Within the primary data, the respondents of the survey had identified similar use, advantages and disadvantages of utilizing artificial intelligence in their company’s HR processes. This indicates that enough responses were obtained to conclude the main qualities of the tool within the target group. Many of

the qualities found in the primary data were also repeated in the secondary data which gives validation to the overall results and the crafted SWOT analysis of this research. However, it is possible that further data from the target companies could have given more variation within the results which should be considered, yet the possibilities of this are unknown.

Many of the answers in the survey were in Finnish which meant that for the reporting of this research the answers needed to be translated into English. The goal was to translate the primary data gathered in a way that any of the meanings or tones were not changed, which ensured that the analysis was made authentically and with the intent of honouring the participants' own opinions of the research topic.

The opportunity to choose "I don't know or I prefer not to say" minimizes the possibility that the participant chooses "yes" or "no" as an answer just because they do not know or want to identify something. However, there is still a chance that some of the participants did not want to identify artificial intelligence being used in their HRM for reasons such as it being considered as a business secret or as other competitive advantage quality.

The anonymity of the data gathering process encouraged target companies of this research to answer the survey and give their insight on the topic, giving variety to the gathered primary data and results. The topic of artificial intelligence is current, therefore many of the secondary data used is recent and offer different viewpoints of the topic in the contexts of HRM and tourism and hospitality industry. For the verifiability of qualitative research, information found from multiple sources can be compared with the authors own conclusions or with each other to find out whether similar knowledge is being repeated (Kananen 2014, 152). In this research, the repetition in information was acknowledged.

#### 6.4 Topics for further research

The ethical aspect of utilizing artificial intelligence is highly debated. Therefore, further research of the subject could assess how the ethicality of artificial intelligence use is managed and supervised within the companies of the target group.

Another perspective for future research could be through the lenses of data safety. In the future, artificial intelligence and qualities of the technology might change throughout its development, which generates a need to conduct updated research, especially of the risks, rightful use, as well as benefits of the tool to allow industry companies to adapt to changes with more ease.

A guidebook for artificial intelligence utilization in HR would as well be highly beneficial for tourism and hospitality companies in Rovaniemi due to the results indicating that not all the industry participants are aware of different factors regarding the potential use of the tool.

Final suggestion would be to research the effects of utilizing artificial intelligence for the employees of Rovaniemi's target industry companies. This research did not focus much on the perspective of employees, nevertheless, this area should be researched in the service heavy industry, especially when the use of artificial intelligence can affect HR processes and the communication between HR and employees.

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## APPENDICES

## Appendix 1

## Survey

**1. I approve the handling of my information for the purposes of making a thesis**

\*

Yes

**2. The company I work for is \***

Hotel

Restaurant

Activity or experience service

Other, which?

**3. Which department do you work for in the company? \***

Human resource management

Marketing

Other, which one?

**4. Does the company you work at use AI in human resource management?**

\*

Yes

No

I don't know

**5. How long has the company used AI in their human resource management?**

\*

**6. Is AI being used in recruitment? \***

- Yes, how?
- No
- I don't know or I prefer not to say

**7. Is AI being used in payroll? \***

- Yes, How?
- No
- I don't know or I prefer not to say

**8. Is AI being used for monitoring working time? \***

- Yes, how?
- No
- I don't know or I prefer not to say

**9. Is AI being used for the training/development of employees? \***

- Yes, how?
- No
- I don't know or I prefer not to say

**10. What have been the effects of using AI in human resource management? (Possible advantages/disadvantages)**

**\***

**11. Has the start of AI utilization needed extra resources from the company or its employees?**

**12. Are the company's human resource management tasks outsourced?**

\*

- Yes
- No
- I don't know or I prefer not to say

**13. Has the company thought about using Artificial Intelligence in their human resource management in the future?**

\*

- Yes, because
- No, because
- I don't know or I prefer not to say