

## **Tourists' view on shopping opportunities**

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This thesis is a research about tourists' view on shopping opportunities in Finland. It aims to find out what tourists from different countries buy or expect to buy in Finland, if the supply corresponds the demand and what are the shopping trends. The thesis is commissioned by Visit Porvoo.

The theory part of the thesis divides into Finland as a tourism destination and shopping tourism theory. In the Finland section, the destination is analysed by different approaches and shopping opportunities are also discussed. The shopping tourism part consists of theories and its importance from different aspects is explained.

The empirical part begins with describing qualitative and quantitative methods which are used in this research. It also includes the designing process of the questionnaire and the collection of data. Validity and reliability are explained and discussed from the point of this research.

The research was conducted in two cities by interviewing tourists face-to-face on the streets. The questionnaire received 110 responses, approximately half gathered in Helsinki and other half in Porvoo. Data collection was started in spring 2015 and finalized in the beginning of the year 2016.

Finally, the results, conclusions and suggestions for development are presented in detail. The results were analyzed carefully by using Webropol online survey tool. Conclusions and suggestions for development are made based on the findings.

Most valuable findings of the research were that shopping experience in Finland is mostly positive and selection of high-class design is good. Mostly tourists like to buy food and beverage, clothing, souvenirs and design products but the price level seems to be too expensive. In general the supply corresponds the demand, however, there are minor points that could be improved.

**Keywords**

Shopping Tourism, Finland, Tourism Destination, Research

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# 1 Introduction

Shopping can be a part of the travel experience or the main reason for travelling. The trend of shopping as a tourism activity has become an important travel form. Tourists are taking advantage of unique goods or lower prices, being motivated by the exchange rate, buying goods with cultural identity and shopping for gifts and souvenirs.

The objective of this thesis was to investigate the tourists' shopping trends in Finland. The thesis was commissioned by Visit Porvoo. The main idea was to find out what incoming tourists buy or expect to buy in Finland and how they feel about shopping experience in Finland including customer service and the price level.

The survey was conducted in Helsinki and Porvoo by asking tourists to fill in the questionnaire in order to collect the information. Thus, although the aim of the study was to investigate the topic for Finland in general, the results reflect tourist shopping behaviours in Helsinki and Porvoo. In addition, based on the results of the questionnaire, there will be some suggestions how to improve shopping tourism in Finland for both customers and shops.

The main problem to be discussed is if there is something that tourists would like to buy in Finland but they cannot find. In other words, if the supply corresponds the demand. Also, this thesis aims to find out what is the current state of shopping tourism in Finland. This does not only include what tourists buy or expect to buy but also where they spend their money and how they feel about the whole shopping experience.

Chapter 2 introduces Finland as a tourism destination. Different destinations and seasons will be discussed which gives a general idea where to go and when. This chapter also provides travel info about Finland including tips how to get around. In addition, shopping tourism in Finland will be covered in this chapter. It focuses on what are the key elements that bring people to Finland when it comes to shopping.

Shopping tourism and its background will be discussed more in depth in chapter 3. This chapter covers motivations of the shopping tourist and the economic impacts of shopping tourism. Also, it explains how this concept has developed in Europe and outside of Europe. Furthermore, this chapter discusses the importance of shopping venues and shopping destinations.

Chapter 4 focuses on the research process and its methods. It explains how the interview was conducted and takes a closer look at qualitative and quantitative research methods. It also includes the designing process of the questionnaire and the collection of data. In the end of this chapter, validity and reliability of the research are reviewed and discussed from the point of this research.

In the chapter 5 the results of the research are presented. Analysis is done by highlighting the most important topics in order to get the answers to the main questions. The results include both positive and negative facts which will be taken into consideration in the further discussion.

The last chapter summarizes the gathered data and the results of the survey through the key findings. It presents the conclusions and offers suggestions for development. This chapter also includes the reflection of the whole thesis process by the authors. In the end of this thesis, there is a list of references and appendices.

## **2 Finland as a tourism destination**

A tourism destination is a place that attracts many travellers. It can be a country or a city where tourists travel to see historical sites, natural wonders or buildings. Some tourism destinations might include activities. (Wise Geek 2016.) This chapter presents Finland as a tourism destination and discusses what is there to see and do.

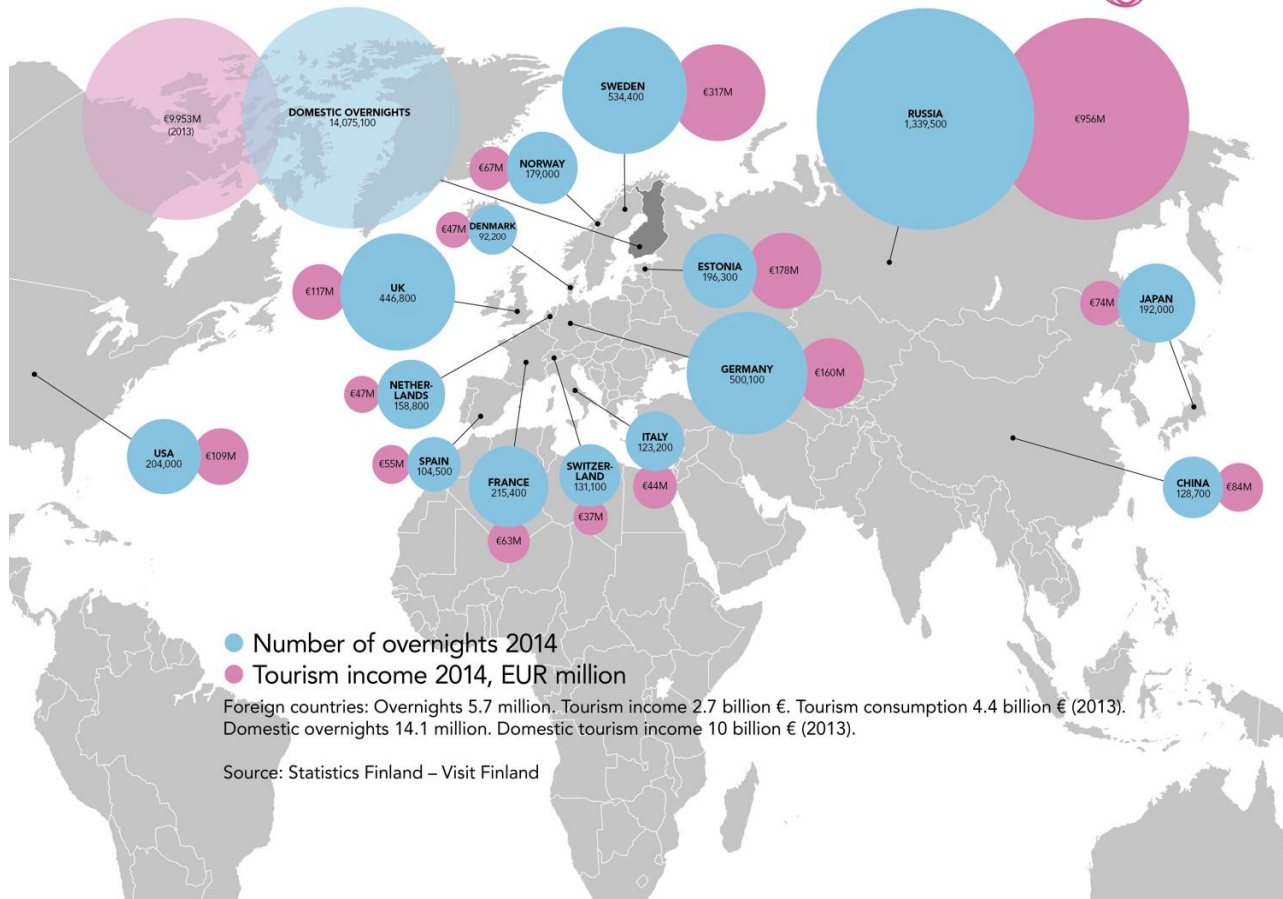
Finland is a unique destination for foreign tourists with the midnight sun. The other elements that make it special are the Northern Lights, wild nature, Finnish sauna, ski re-sorts and routes, Finnish design and Santa Claus. Finland is often called as the land of a thousand lakes since there are over 188 000 lakes and a similar amount of islands in the country. As a big part of Finland is covered in water it makes it distinguishably different from other European countries. (Visit Finland 2016a.)

Finland is a destination with a high standard of living and a great education system, low crime and corruption rate and a booming technology industry. Finland can offer off-to-beaten-track experiences in the wilderness with great travel connections. (Symington 2009, 16.) Finns love their nature and there are endless opportunities for outdoor activities such as walking, cycling, swimming or skiing depending on the time of the year (Sparks 2008, 5). What sets Finland apart from the rest of Nordic Europe is a distinctive language and culture.

### **2.1 Tourism in Finland**

Finland attracts tourists who want to enjoy the wild nature, cultural life or peacefulness. This Nordic country offers a great escape from the rushed modern life as there is space to breathe with less people. However, tourists can also enjoy interesting cultural life as Finland has a lot to offer when it comes to music and design. This part presents further details about tourism in Finland such as where do the visitors come from and what are their purposes.

## Tourism and income flows to Finland



**Figure 1: Tourism and income flows to Finland (Visit Finland 2016.)**

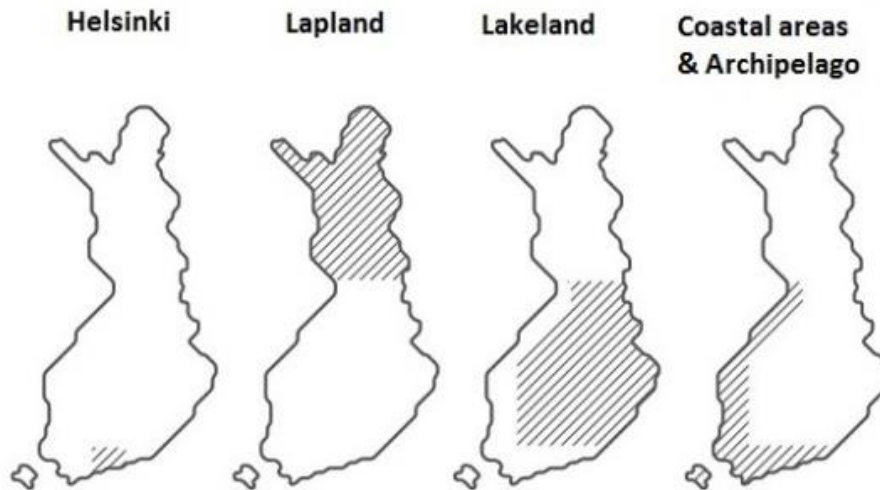
Tourism is a growing business and a significant employment provider in Finland. In 2014, there were 7.6 million tourists visiting Finland who brought 2.5 billion euros to the country. International tourism grows at an annual rate of four percent. (Visit Finland 2016b.) The figure 1 shows that most visitors come from neighbouring countries such as Russia and Sweden but the country is also popular among German and British tourists. In the future, Asia, especially Japan and China, are interesting possibilities for tourism in Finland. Finnish airline Finnair is actively making strategies for bringing Asian people to Finland. (Visit Finland 2016c.)

Mainly tourists come to Finland for a business trip or to do shopping, visiting friends and relatives or other leisure purposes. The structure of tourism is closely related to travel season, area and preferred activities. Tourism is important especially for the remote areas and the number of jobs are expected to grow significantly in the future. Tourism provides employment to people skilled in other fields as well. Southern Finland and the archipelago are the most visited areas by tourists. However, the Lakeland area is becoming increas-

ingly popular and Finnish Lapland keeps attracting as many tourists as always. (Visit Finland 2016b.)

## 2.2 Destinations

Finland is a large country as the whole length from tip to toe is over 1000 kilometres. Landscape and weather conditions differ a lot between northern and southern Finland. All different areas in Finland have their own unique features.



**Figure 2: Finland divided into 4 regions (Visit Finland 2016.)**

Finland has a total area of 338,000 square kilometres and the population of 5,5 million people. (Wikipedia 2016). The country can be divided into four distinctive regions which are Lapland, Lakeland, Coast & Archipelago and Helsinki as it can be seen in figure 2. Lapland is the country's northernmost area where the Northern Lights can be seen in winter and the sun never sets in summer. There are many ski resorts, national parks and also Santa Claus lives in Lapland. Most of Finland's glittering lakes can be found in Lakeland which is situated in the southeast of Finland. Finnish people love their cottages and cabins and there are plenty of them in Lakeland. (Visit Finland 2016d.) Coast and archipelago area in the southwest of Finland has most of Finland's best beaches and this area is characterised by maritime culture. The ideal ways of exploring the west coast are walking, cycling, sailing and kayaking since the scenery is generally rolling. (Sparks 2008, 66.)

The modern capital Helsinki which is situated by the Baltic Sea is known for its design, architecture and high technology. Helsinki's Art Nouveau buildings are examples of impressive architecture and it was the World Design Capital in 2012. (Visit Helsinki 2016a.) Yet it is surrounded by beautiful nature and around 300 islands. In fact, a third of the Finnish capital is covered in green areas such as parks and forests. There are great ferry con-



nections to many islands such as the fortress of Suomenlinna which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Helsinki is a cosmopolitan city which mixes influences from the East and the West. Also, it offers great possibilities for shopping and nightlife. (Visit Finland 2016e.)

### **2.3 Seasons**

All four seasons in Finland are very distinctive. Even though the summer season is not very long, it can be very bright with around-the-clock sunlight. In summer Finns love to be outdoors and enjoy all the summer activities especially around water such as swimming, fishing, canoeing, rowing and sailing. Tourists love the Finnish summer as well which makes it a busy season and many places are packed. Autumn is a beautiful season with the trees and hillsides turning golden brown. This is a good time to go hiking since there are less mosquitoes than in summer and enjoy the beauty of Finnish nature with attractive landscapes. (Symington 2006, 13.)

Winter is ideal time to see the Northern lights since there is enough darkness and clear skies. Furthermore, winter is also a good time to go skiing and Finnish Lapland is a skier's paradise. The snow season in northern Finland begins usually in November and lasts until May but in southern parts of the country there is snow from December until March. However, there still might be some snow on the ground when spring arrives in April. (Visit Finland 2016f.) In spring, nature and the people wake up again as the sun comes out.

### **2.4 Travel info**

Getting around in Finland is easy. There are good flight connections to Finland from all over the world. Finnair, the Finnish national carrier, Norwegian, Flybe and SAS are the major airlines which run domestic and international flights. The main gateway is the Helsinki-Vantaa airport and nearly all flights to Finland land there. (Visit Finland 2016g.) Besides air travel, there are good transport networks by rail, road and water. Busses and trains run on time so travelling is easy, hassle-free and not too expensive. Trains are clean, comfortable and punctual and the rail network covers almost the whole country. And if there's a destination where the trains won't go, the busses will cover it. The bus service network covers 90 percent of Finland's roads. The trams and metros are only operating in Helsinki. (Symington 2006, 352.)

Also, driving in Finland is pleasant since it is pretty stress-free and traffic jams are uncommon. Scenery is beautiful along the way and the roads are well-maintained. In winter, the roads might be slippery and snowy though. Finland is a mainly flat country so cycling is an excellent way of getting around. There are lots of bike paths for cyclists which are in good

condition. (Symington 2006, 349.) In Finland there are also many kind of ferries operating between various islands and coastal towns. Almost all of Finland's coastal and lakeside towns are accessible by boat. Furthermore, several cruise companies organize sightseeing and charter cruises. (Visit Finland 2016g.)

## **2.5 Shopping in Finland**

Finland is a true design country. There are high range and quality of goods available in the shops. However, the price level is quite expensive. Finnish design is famous for its originality and high-quality and many kinds of art goods can be found such as glass, jewellery, weaving, paintings and other hand-crafted products. Iittala, Aarikka, and Kalevala Koru are some of the most popular brands when it comes to buying Finnish design souvenirs. (Sparks 2008, 156.)

Fashion design is unique and there are traditional labels such as Marimekko but also many new designers. Young Finnish designers are combining traditional style with the latest trends. (Visit Helsinki 2016b.) Also, Finland attracts many architecture fans from all over the world since some of the world's admired architects come from there. Alvar Aalto was a famous architect and designer from Finland who designed buildings, furniture, glassware, jewellery and lamps. He also established Artek with his wife Aino which is a good example of Nordic home ware style. Design District Helsinki is an area which includes design shops, galleries and museums, with many cafes, bars and restaurants. In summer, visiting flea markets might be a good idea for finding bargains. (Sparks 2008, 156.)

## **2.6 Shopping in Helsinki and Porvoo**

This thesis research was conducted in two cities Helsinki and Porvoo. Helsinki is the capital and it offers the best shopping opportunities in Finland. Especially it is an ideal place for finding designer goods and discovering fresh designer culture. Minimalism and clean lines are typical features of Finnish design. In Helsinki there are many shopping centers and department stores that make it enjoyable and suitable to shop. (Visit Helsinki 2016c.) In addition to the big malls Helsinki has a wide range of Finnish design shops and a variety of second-hand clothing shops and flea markets. Helsinki is a diverse, modern and trendy city. It is internationally known place for shopping and in a summer time Helsinki has also open-air markets which are enjoyable places to visit. (Visit Helsinki 2016b.)

Porvoo is Finland's second oldest town. "Porvoo offers an historic old town milieu with idyllic wooden buildings, lovely gardens and attractive boutiques along its narrow cobble-

stoned streets.” (Visit Porvoo 2016a.) Because of the old town Porvoo is quite famous one day visit destination. It is close to Helsinki and easily accessible with a direct bus. Porvoo does not offer a shopping paradise but for antique and vintage hunters is it a great place to visit. Porvoo is more for spontaneous shopping with unique Finnish design, hand-crafts and souvenirs. (Visit Porvoo 2016b.)

### **3 Shopping tourism**

This chapter reviews shopping tourism from many aspects: what does it mean, what are the motivations of the shopping tourist, the economic advantages of it and how the concept is understood in Europe and outside of Europe. Also the best venues and destinations are presented. Because shopping tourism is quite a recent definition in travel and tourism, in this chapter, the real meaning and importance of it is explained.

#### **3.1 Definition and background**

It is said that shopping tourism is a global industry worth of multibillion-dollars even though is not possible to measure its exact size. There is significant evidence that shopping plays a big role in tourism industry. While determining where tourists go and how they spend their money shopping is one of the prior motivations. (The Economist Intelligence Unit Ltd, 2011, 2.)

Without a doubt, shopping tourism is one of the major components in travel and tourism. Obtaining a good understanding of the shopping tourism at each destination and providing solutions based on the information is not only beneficial for improving tourists' satisfaction level, but also for improving the quality level of tour agency services and economical profits at the destination. For these reasons, a large number of researches have been conducted in order to obtain tourists' behavior at several destinations and to provide suggestions to improve the shopping tourism.

As Dallen (2005a, 11) has observed, "consumption is not just about products. It is about consuming places, spaces and time". According to that the growing space that shopping occupies is also one of the major components in shopping tourism and of course, also in the destination management. When tourists are travelling and going for holidays or even just planning a trip, shopping is one of the main interests. It is one of the primary motivations for travel and it hugely affects to the choice of the destination. All the time increasing mobility have made it easier to go more further to shop. (Dallen 2005b, 42.)

In 2004, Moscardo (2004, 294-307) proposed that until the year 2004, the consumption of tourists focused on more traditionally to specific goods and services (hotels, restaurants, cultural or entertainment offers). Nowadays the travelling habit has changed and we can define a group called "modern tourists". They enjoy the pleasure of a high purchasing power. They are consumers of inclusive goods, such as fashion, crafts and design. The number of modern tourists is increasing all the time and for that reason shopping tourism is becoming more widely known concept.

However, it is not easy to define shopping tourism. There are several researchers who have offered various answers and definitions, focusing on different elements of the experience. (World Tourism Organization, 2014, 13.) Butler (1991, 287–295) has observed that people's shopping behavior differs a lot when going on holiday. Traveling to a new place, away from home makes people spend more. People feel more open to purchase new items, clothes and even non-essential products. Also the time when purchases are made is different than normally. A day or the time does not matter because a holiday is a break from normal routine. Whenever is a good time to do shopping. This shows how tourists act differently and how their behavior differs from domestic people what comes to shopping. It is certain that shopping is one of the major leisure activities for tourists.

“One approach may be to define shopping tourism as a contemporary form of tourism fostered by individuals for whom purchasing goods outside of their usual environment is a determining factor in their decision to travel.” (World Tourism Organization, 2014a, 13.) Leisure has always been the most important motivation for travelling. It contains many kinds of enjoyable activities what tourists like to do outside of their homes and abroad. Like already mentioned before, it is not for a long time that shopping has been considered as a leisure activity, not to mention it is becoming powerful force to operate and implement tourism. (World Tourism Organization, 2014a, 13.)

What comes to shopping tourism it is important to define a shopping experience. All the experiences vary a lot between individuals. Also when shopping, people do, see and feel differently which creates their personal experiences from something what has happened. Experience can be positive or negative. Positive shopping experiences boost the sales and bring more customers. Retailers need to make tourists get a wow factor from the shopping experience in order to get rewarded by customers sharing their good experiences. Destinations with a great level of shopping experience invite more shopping tourists. (Forbes, 2009.)

Overall, it is clear that shopping tourism is not simple, rather complicated system including many aspects such as location, nationality, unique background of location, and more. Therefore, it seems very important to know what critical aspect for each specific destination when shopping tourism research is planned.

### **3.2 Motivations of a shopping tourist**

Motivations are internal and external factors that make people behave in a certain way. People get motivated by different things since motivations involve the biological, emotion-

al, social and cognitive forces that stimulate behavior. In everyday usage, the term motivation is normally used for describing why a person does something. (About health, 2016.)

There are plenty of motivations for travelling and they form an integral part of travel behavior. Travel motivations have been widely researched and applied to tourism marketing strategies. The main travel motivators consist of physical, cultural, interpersonal and status motivations which gives people the different needs for travel. Primary assumption is that tourists travel because they believe to find valuable experiences by doing so. (Venkatesh, 2006, 95.)

As already explained before, there are people who mainly travel with the aim of shopping. In these cases shopping is the main motivation for the trip. Nevertheless, people do not go for a vacation with a shopping list. There are multiple reasons which affect to tourists' shopping behavior. Shopping motivations do vary depending on individuals rather it is said shopping becomes a by-product of other experiences. (Kinley, Josiam, & Kim, 2014a, 7-9.)

According to Wilson (2012) there can be found several factors which could be categorised as motivations for shopping tourists. A lot is always depending on the individual person. For some shopping can be a form of relaxation as well as for some it is just a social interaction. When meeting friends and relatives shopping can be just one activity how to spend more relaxed time. (Kinley, Josiam, & Kim, 2014b, 11) Shortly, shopping is an enjoyable experience meeting the social needs. Basically shopping can be one part of the travel experience or the primary focus on travel. Shopping tourists look for exciting shopping opportunities while travelling. (Wilson 8 April 2012.)

When determining motivations, two motives are emerged: personal and social. In the research of Kinley, Josiam & Kim (2014, 24) the most important motivations were all personal: "to enjoy a vacation", "buy something special for others" and "to treat myself". This can be explained since mostly mall advertisements focus on personal enjoyment and individual feelings instead of the pleasurable aspects of the shopping center. (Kinley, Josiam, & Kim, 2014c, 24-25.)

Understanding of tourists' shopping behavior is all-important for destination stakeholders to satisfy their needs and expectations. Customer satisfaction needs to be ensured. (Wilson 8 April 2012.) Burns and Warren (1995, 4-12) have observed that tourists find shopping very important and they get satisfaction already from shopping itself, apart from the purchased product. One motivation to travel further to shop is individuality. Finding some-

thing different than home can serve to enhance an individual's desire for uniqueness. The joy of shopping is increased when finding stores which are more unique and not well known back home. Using products from this kind of stores make individual feel more exceptional. (Burns and Warren, 1995, 4-12.)

While shopping abroad in a new destination, souvenirs have become a tangible proof of the travel experience purchased to sustain memories of the trip. When getting to the destination money has been set aside for spending and more non-essential items can be bought just to be a nice memory. Even though there is more time to browse, decision has to be made while being in the destination. (Kinley, Josiam, & Kim, 2014b, 11.)

Shopping tourists will be also motivated by a variety of factors related to the price and the product. Price of the goods is normally one of the key attractions. The attractiveness of the destination is similarly higher when price level is more preferable for the tourist. This unavoidably form part of the decision-making process when planning travel. Especially when purchasing clothing and shoes whereas they are ranked as the most important items for purchase among shopping tourists. (World Tourism Organization, 2014e, 61.)

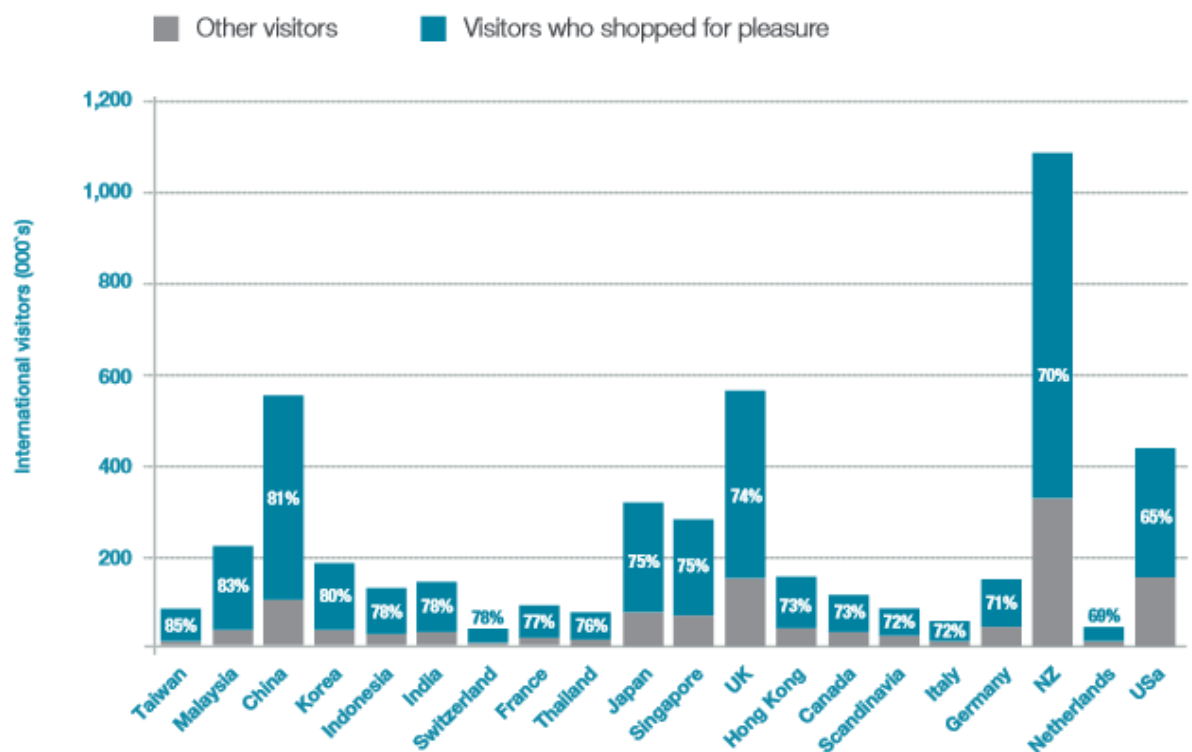


Figure 3: Visitor Propensity for Shopping, FY 2012. (World Tourism Organization, 2014a, 54)

It is also measured how big is the propensity for shopping in different countries. As the figure 3 above shows visitors from Asia, more specifically from Malaysia, China, Korea, Indonesia, India, Japan and Singapore are the most disposed to do shopping for pleasure. However, from all the countries taken part on this research much more than a half of the visitors have been shopping for pleasure rather than just travelling.

### **3.3 Economic impact of shopping tourism**

“Shopping tourism generates a significant amount of spending in the destination” quoting Wilson (2012). Therefore, shopping plays a crucial role in a regional economy. High visibility must be provided for commercial exchanges since it regularly offers the additional revenue needed for local businesses to remain financially sustainable. (Wilson 8 April 2012.)

Like already mentioned earlier, shopping tourism is a global industry worth of multibillion-dollars. Shopping tourism has a massive impact on the economy of a travel destination. Shopping is a growing trend which cannot be ignored. There is a need to develop destinations more towards being commercially profitable. Tourists are looking for shopping malls and shopping centers which drives all the commercial exchanges to the high visibility. Even though increased shopping behavior can affect to the destination negatively it also generates high number of jobs directly and indirectly in regional economies. If a tourist comes to a destination to do shopping, it also leads to growth in the other infrastructure such as hotels, restaurants, culture, transportation, etc. (Wilson 8 April 2012.)

Heung and Cheng assessed satisfaction level of tourists with shopping in Hong Kong. According to them, tourism has economically significant meaning since tourists spend approximately 50% of their budget on shopping. They interviewed two hundred tourists in order to assess what aspects in their shopping experience influence their satisfaction level. Their survey revealed that tourists' satisfaction mostly come with appearance of shops, opening hours, and window display and the most disappointment come from the product reliability. Most importantly, they identified that staff service quality has the largest impact on the tourists' satisfaction followed by product value and reliability. (Heung & Cheng 2000, 396-404)



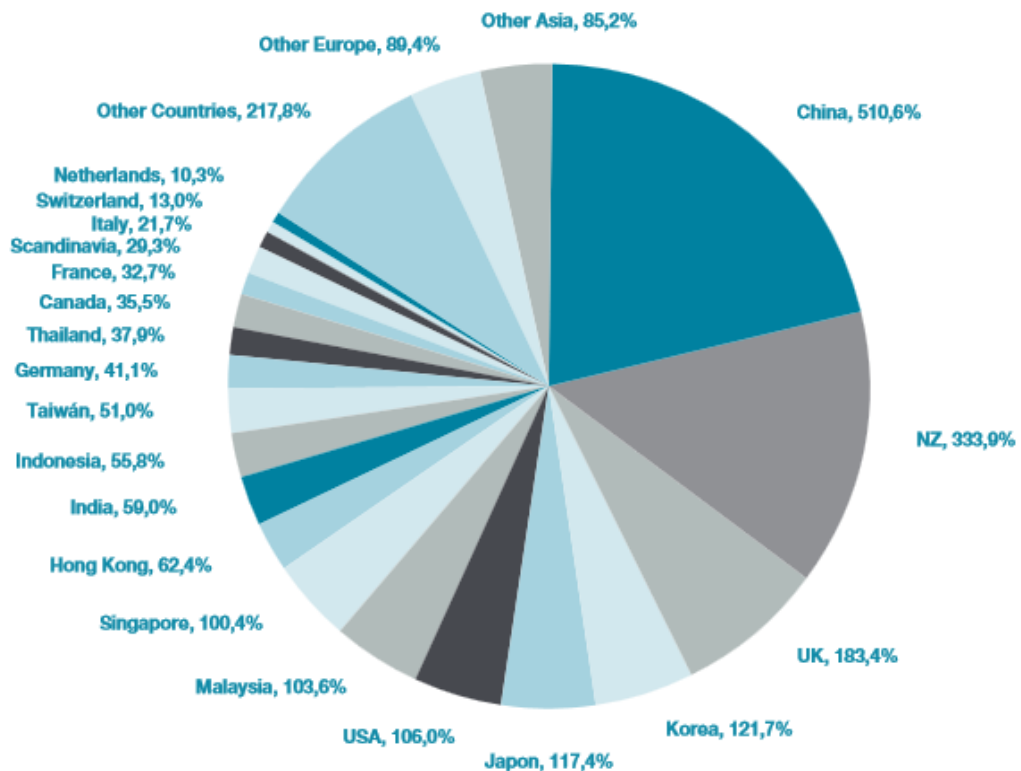


Figure 4: Total Visitor Expenditure on Shopping, FY 2012 (\$m) (World Tourism Organization, 2014b, 54.)

The figure 4 above shows top countries/areas by spending on shopping in international tourism in year 2012. From the figure you can see that main spending countries are: 1) China, 2) New Zealand, 3) United Kingdom, 4) Korea, 5) Japan, 6) United States, etc.

It is not easy to calculate the expenditure on shopping tourism, rather it is a challenge, for the reason that it is difficult to differentiate between spending by tourists and non-tourists in the destination. Tourism trips can be classified according to main purpose. One of these being 'shopping', from the perspective of demand, in the other words, visitors making a trip with shopping in their minds. (World Tourism Organization, 2014b, 10.)

Credit card companies such as Visa and MasterCard are able to take some measurements from customers shopping and spending in cross borders. The processing of tax refunds on purchases made by eligible non-residents has also become a growing industry and also offers indications on visitors' spending. (World Tourism Organization, 2014b, 10.)

### 3.4 Shopping tourism in Europe

Europe gets great benefit in the shopping tourism market. According to the World Tourism Organization almost one-half (44%) of global earnings from international tourism are spent

in Europe. In addition, in a study of tourists' shopping behavior in the International Journal of Tourism Research (2010) observed that Europe has the image that it is seen as the world's leading destination for luxury shopping. Especially among a tourist group who are the most interested in shopping while on holiday. (The Economist Intelligence Unit Ltd, 2011, 2.)

As it is said that Europe it is a great place to do shopping, particularly for purchasing clothing and shoes but also all the other kind of goods. For example price, convenience and city ambience, easy accessibility among other factors makes Europe the perfect place to shop. (Stone A. 2009, 49.) Also the culture and climate affects to the index of shopping destination rankings for the inclusive set of criteria it covers. (The Economist Intelligence Unit Ltd, 2011, 2.)

Overall score			Shops			Affordability		
1	London	67.3	1	London	80.6	1	Sofia	86.4
=2	Madrid	67.1	2	Paris	74.7	2	Bratislava	83.6
=2	Barcelona	67.1	3	Madrid	69.3	3	Bucharest	79.0
4	Paris	65.5	4	Dublin	61.9	4	Kiev	78.7
5	Rome	62.9	5	Amsterdam	61.7	5	Belgrade	75.9
6	Berlin	62.3	6	Barcelona	61.2	6	Budapest	75.7
7	Lisbon	61.6	7	Milan	59.9	7	Lisbon	72.1
8	Amsterdam	61.3	8	Moscow	58.6	8	Athens	72.0
9	Prague	59.7	9	Vienna	56.7	=9	Rome	70.9
10	Budapest	59.6	10	Rome	56.1	=9	Barcelona	70.9
11	Milan	59.3	11	Berlin	51.8	11	Berlin	69.7
12	Vienna	59.1	12	Istanbul	51.1	12	Madrid	69.3
13	Istanbul	58.4	13	Stockholm	50.7	13	Lyon	69.2
14	Dublin	57.6	14	Lisbon	48.2	=14	Istanbul	67.2
15	Brussels	56.8	15	Prague	47.9	=14	Edinburgh	67.2
16	Athens	56.2	16	Brussels	47.0	16	Warsaw	67.0
17	Munich	55.5	17	Munich	46.0	=17	Hamburg	66.5
18	Copenhagen	54.1	18	Budapest	44.5	=17	Brussels	66.5
19	Moscow	53.9	=19	St. Petersburg	44.0	19	Dublin	66.3
=20	Stockholm	53.4	=19	Lyon	44.0	20	Vienna	66.1
=20	Hamburg	53.4	21	Warsaw	43.7	21	Munich	64.1
22	Lyon	53.3	22	Oslo	43.5	22	Milan	62.1
23	Bratislava	52.3	23	Hamburg	43.3	23	Prague	59.0
=24	Sofia	52.2	24	Copenhagen	42.7	=24	London	55.0
=24	Bucharest	52.2	25	Edinburgh	42.2	=24	Helsinki	55.0
=26	Kiev	51.4	=26	Kiev	41.7	26	Amsterdam	54.4
=26	Edinburgh	51.4	=26	Helsinki	41.7	27	Copenhagen	48.7
28	Warsaw	50.9	28	Bucharest	40.3	28	Paris	48.6
29	St. Petersburg	49.1	29	Sofia	37.5	29	St. Petersburg	46.2
30	Helsinki	48.2	30	Athens	37.2	30	Moscow	42.8
31	Belgrade	43.6	31	Belgrade	32.0	31	Stockholm	36.9
32	Oslo	43.1	32	Bratislava	30.9	32	Oslo	27.4
33	Geneva	41.0	33	Geneva	28.3	33	Geneva	27.3

Figure 5: All scores 0-100 where 100=best shopping environment (The Economist Intelligence Unit Ltd, 2011, 5)

In figure 5 above there are listed and ranked 33 European cities by shops, affordability and by the overall score of those. These cities on the list offer the best shopping opportunities in Europe. Top scored cities are London, Madrid and Barcelona. Helsinki can be found from the 30th place when it comes to overall score.

In this list Barcelona is in the shared position (number two) with Madrid. Nevertheless, according to the research from ESADE (2015) in Barcelona, Spain, tourists are spending comparably more money on shopping than in any other European city. It is calculated that one in three visitors in Barcelona defines shopping as their main reason for the trip. (ESADE 2015.) More than 165 business establishments are part of the Barcelona's shopping line. They are firm to be providing expertise based first-hand experience of serving the millions of visitors who visit the city each year and are spending across the city's retail establishments. (World Tourism Organization, 2014c, 22.)

In a study conducted by Kemperman and his colleagues, they analyzed how route choice behavior influence the shopping in a downtown historic area of Maastricht, located in the Southern part of the Netherlands. They found that route choice was influenced by shopping supply, accessibility, physical appearance, and history of the route. Authors suggest that the result of this study should be utilized to make changes in physical appearance to enhance shopping experience. (Kemperman, Borgers & Timmermans 2009, 208-218.)

### **3.5 Shopping tourism outside of Europe**

Shopping plays an integral part also outside of Europe. In Asian tourism, for example in Taiwan, a conducted study found that the most common activity for incoming tourists is shopping (by 85%). In addition, in Hong Kong, the latest data from the research shows that 87% of arriving tourists go shopping. (The Economist Intelligence Unit Ltd, 2011, 2.)

Asian countries like Singapore and Malaysia are used to tempt foreigners for spending but also geographically small country like South Korea makes huge profit from nationwide sales. At the same time, tourism strategies in the regions repeatedly are seeking ways to make visitors spending more in stores. For one example, Thailand's "Amazing Thailand" tourism advertising campaign included an "Amazing Thailand Shopping Paradise" and an "Amazing Thailand Grand Sale" in their campaign to attract more shopping tourists and make the visitors spend more. (The Economist Intelligence Unit Ltd, 2011, 2.)

The most popular activities for international visitors in United States according to the US Department of Commerce and the US Travel Association are shopping and dining. World Tourism Organization (2014) illustrates: "On average 19% of international visitors' holiday

budget is spent on retail. Visitors from Singapore to the United States spend 73% of their trip budget on retail; visitors from Mexico 60%, from Japan 59%, from Australia 47%, from Germany 40% and from the UK 37%.” (World Tourism Organization, 2014d, 24.)

Yearly, about 1.8 million non-American tourists visit the state of Hawaii in the USA. Among them, over 1.3 million people are Japanese tourists. Therefore, understanding their shopping behavior is important in terms of providing solution to make Hawaiian economy to grow. Rosenbaum and Spears conducted a research in which they revealed that Japanese tourists tend to go duty-free shopping while American tourists usually enjoy more cultural activities and fine dining. They also found that Japanese tourists prefer three types of outlets in Hawaii: duty-free stores, factory outlets, and designer boutiques. (Rosenbaum & Spears 2006, 467-473.)

Many studies have been conducted in order to understand shopping tourism in each destination. In Hong Kong, in the study mentioned before, it was identified that staff service quality plays the important role in tourist shopping satisfaction. The study in Hawaii was a good example showing that shopping behavior may differ depending on the nationality so that the caution is needed when the action for better shopping tourism is planned.

### **3.6 Shopping venues and world’s best shopping destinations**

Malls and shopping centers are the key attractions for shopping tourists. Because a shopping tourists travel to do shopping, the venues are extremely important. Quality of the shops, selection, variety and the shopping experience affect mainly to the tourist satisfaction. (Kinley, Josiam, & Kim, 2014a, 7-9.)

Type	Example
Informal	Roadside hut, farmhouse, hawker/street vendor selling fresh foods, fruit, vegetables or handicrafts
Automated retail	Vending machines, kiosks
Market (fixed)	Daily or weekly market held in a fixed location. Covered and or/outside.
Market (seasonal)	Christmas market, summer festival
Market (roaming)	Travelling market selling produce from another destination
Transport infrastructure	Shops located at airport, railway station, highway service station, ferry/cruise terminal
Urban centre	Village shops, town high street/shopping district, city centre precinct
Peripheral nucleus	Out-of-town entertainment and retail complex (ERC), outlet, retail park

**Figure 6: Overview of the different retail areas which tourists may visit when visiting a destination (World Tourism Organization, 2014c, 17.)**

The figure 6 above shows overview of the different retail areas which tourists may visit while visiting destinations. In the figure the main shopping venues are divided to the different types including; informal places, automated retail, markets, transport infrastructure, urban centre and peripheral nucleus. When talking about shopping tourism the most used type is urban centre. Generally shopping tourists are looking for huge markets, mass production and big shopping streets and centers.

World is full of good shopping opportunities and the best shopping destinations are found in North America, Europe and Asia. When thinking worldwide where to go shopping, according to TripAdvisor (2016) top destination for the shopping tourist would be New York in the United States. New York has been described with the words: "Perhaps the world's top shopping spot".

After New York, the next best places for shopping are found in Europe. Paris, France and Milan, Italy are the cities which are known from their high fashion culture. However, from the most exclusive fashion there are also other possibilities to do lower scale shopping which make these destinations desired. Selection is outstanding and both of the cities are easily accessible. (TripAdvisor 2016.)

Furthermore, the cities with the great shopping venues are Tokyo, Japan; San Francisco, United States and London, England. In all of mentioned cities shopping opportunities are overwhelming. It is said that there is basically nothing that you cannot buy when doing shopping in these destinations. (TripAdvisor 2016.)

## **4 Conducting research**

This chapter focuses on to the research methods, design process of the questionnaire, data collection and validity and reliability. The research methods are explained and examined and as a conclusion, the implementation of the research will be gone through by explaining how the results were collected. The results of the research will be presented further in the chapter 5: Results.

### **4.1 Research methods**

This research was conducted by a survey that tourists filled in. Survey was made by using Webropol online survey tool and it consisted of open-ended, closed, multiple choice and scale questions. First in the survey there was introduction presenting the research and its purpose. It was told that all the information will be collected anonymously and used for the bachelor's thesis.

Using the tourism in Finland and overall theory from the shopping tourism as a framework, this research examined how tourists see Finland as a shopping destination and what are their opportunities towards shopping. Research was mainly conducted in two cities, Helsinki and Porvoo.

In order to get reliable results, in this research tourists were answering to the questions using their own experiences and expectations. Respondents were mainly picked up randomly from the streets to guarantee the validity and the reliability.

Webropol as the chosen online survey tool facilitated clear but effective design and outlook of the survey. It enabled gathering both, quantitative and qualitative questions which are further explained. Webropol allowed easy use while creating the survey and it was also used for analysis.

#### **4.1.1 Quantitative research**

The quantitative approach is mainly based on the collection of numerical data. It is usually strictly structured and relies on numbers to draw conclusions or to test hypotheses. In order to get reliable results, it is often necessary to study relatively large amount of people. (Veal 2016, 34.) Quantitative research is not only ideal for providing more comparable results but also for collecting and analyzing data rather fast. Reliability is the key in quantitative approach (Richards & Munsters 2010, 35).

This thesis research is quantitative as a large amount of people were being interviewed in order to get reliable results. The interview method was a questionnaire survey which is a typical example of a quantitative research. The survey was semi-structured which includes specific questions but also allows the respondents to explain themselves and share their ideas (Finn, Elliott-White & Walton 2000, 75).

#### 4.1.2 Qualitative research

The qualitative approach focuses on words, written or spoken, and it might also include images or sounds. The qualitative method aims to provide in-depth understanding of the subject area and it is a good way of getting specific and exact information. However, analyzing qualitative data can be rather time consuming. (Veal 2016, 34.) The main difference between quantitative and qualitative methods is that numbers provide more reliable results and comparable data, whereas words give more in-depth information.

In addition to being quantitative, this thesis research is also qualitative. The questionnaire survey includes open-ended questions which is one form of informal in-depth interviewing and it allows the respondents to share their thoughts and insights. In order to improve the shopping experience for tourists in Finland, it was crucial to ask respondents for their development suggestions and opinions. Quantitative and qualitative methods complement one another in this research.

#### 4.2 The questionnaire

According to Veal (2011, 256.) a questionnaire can be defined as “a written/ printed or computer-based schedule of questions”.

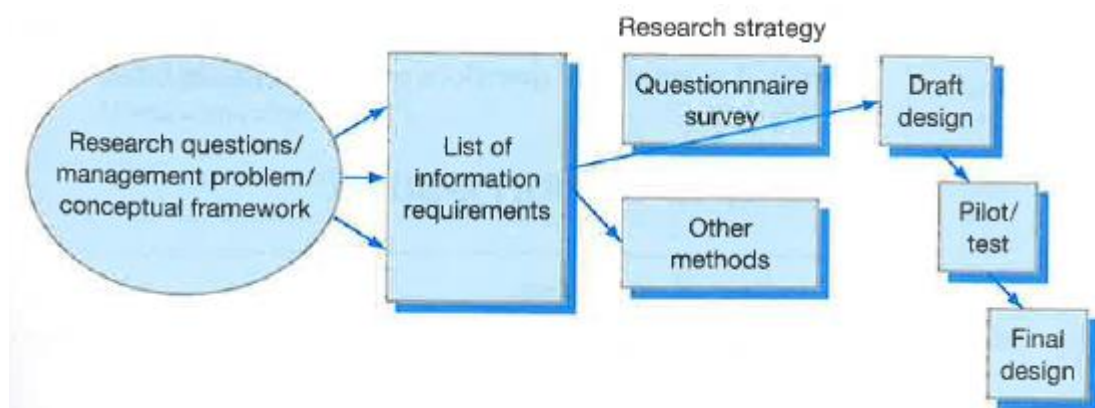


Figure 7: Questionnaire design process (Veal 2011, 279.)



Careful planning is the key for designing a questionnaire. As figure 7 shows the questionnaire design process should start with planning research questions, management problem or conceptual framework carefully. This should be followed up by making a list of information required to address the problems. Research strategy involves deciding the research methods including questionnaire survey and other methods. Every question included should be linked back to the research questions and it is always good to remember why research is being done. Draft design is the first stage of the final questionnaire. It will be followed up by pilot version which will be tested and developed until the final design is ready. (Veal 2011, 279.)

This thesis questionnaire started with deciding the right research questions. Then the structure of the questionnaire was planned carefully. In order to get the best results, the questionnaire included closed and open-ended questions. The idea was to include some structure but also give respondents freedom to express their thoughts. It was important to let respondents describe their shopping possibilities in Finland before answering multi-choice questions which could have influenced their answers. After closed questions respondents were able to give their improvement suggestions. The questionnaire was first showed to Eva, thesis coordinator, and after her comments it was developed further. The next version was tested online by other students who gave their feedback. After further improvements the final version was ready. The questionnaire is in English and it can be found as an attachment in the end of this thesis.

### **4.3 Data collection**

Data in this research was collected via face-to-face interviews. According to Kananen (2013, 147): "in face-to-face interview the costs of collecting information grow high as each interview results in separate interview expenses". It was important that the questions in the questionnaire followed a logical order.

The research took place in Helsinki and Porvoo in different times throughout a year. Data collection was started in the spring 2015 and finalized in the beginning of the year 2016. Respondents were mainly picked up randomly from the streets to guarantee the reliability. Questionnaire was aimed to take no more than 10 minutes of the respondents' time and to be as user-friendly as possible.

This research was conducted by two graduating tourism students from Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences and it was commissioned by Visit Porvoo. The aim was to

gather at least 100 answers, half collected in Helsinki and the other half in Porvoo. The final amount of the answers was altogether 110.

While conducting interviews, the biggest challenge was to interrupt tourists when they were focusing on their own things. It was essential to smile and be polite. The most important thing was to know the questionnaire inside out to be able to answer respondents' following questions. The questionnaire was created to be quite simple and quick to answer. Two page long survey with both, qualitative and quantitative questions, worked well.

A couple of questions appeared to be a little bit tricky for some but when explained those better, everything seemed to be understood by respondents. All in all conducting the interviews went smoothly without any major problems and people did not mind to help graduating students. Survey was functional and desired answers were gathered.

#### **4.4 Validity and reliability**

In every research there is a general importance of the validity and reliability. A few factors may affect to the quality of the research. Reliability refers to the research as a whole. If a research is not executed properly and the observed facts are not proven to be correct, the research is not reliable. Reliability can be guaranteed if the research process is repeated and the all times when the research is conducted the results are remaining the same. (UK Essays 2015.)

Validity is a way to ensure quality in measurement. Validity is very similar to reliability of the research. The main difference is that usually validity of the research is possible to tell only after the whole process. Then it is possible to say if the obtained results are valid or not and do they meet all of the requirements of the scientific research method. (Explorable, 2012.)

The validity and reliability in this research are taken into the consideration. As many questionnaires as possible are conducted in order to gain reliable results with a larger amount of respondents. The given results should not be incorrect or unusable since all the information gathered is from the tourists visiting Finland who were picked up on the streets randomly.

There may be couple of factors which may affect this research negatively. Respondents are from different countries and it is not certain if all of them understood the questions correctly. The survey was conducted in English which is not the native language of majority of the respondents. In addition, when conducting a research on the streets, respond-

ents may not be focused 100% on answering to the questions and referring to this some data may be invalid.

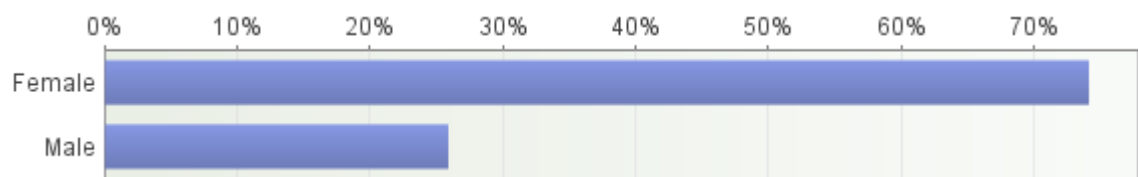
Some of the respondents were spending a little bit longer time in Finland than a regular visitor. There were some respondents who were doing their university exchange or internship. It leads to the issue that the data in these cases may not be valid. When analyzing the results the data does not exclude the students. Luckily the major percentage of respondents were real tourists and the amount of data gathered was big enough.

## 5 Results

In this chapter the outcomes of the research are presented. The most valuable questions have been picked up and the answers have been analyzed. First, this chapter shows the basic information of the respondents and after that the most important questions and answers are presented. In the end of this chapter, there is explained some differences between Helsinki and Porvoo, which were the cities where the research was conducted.

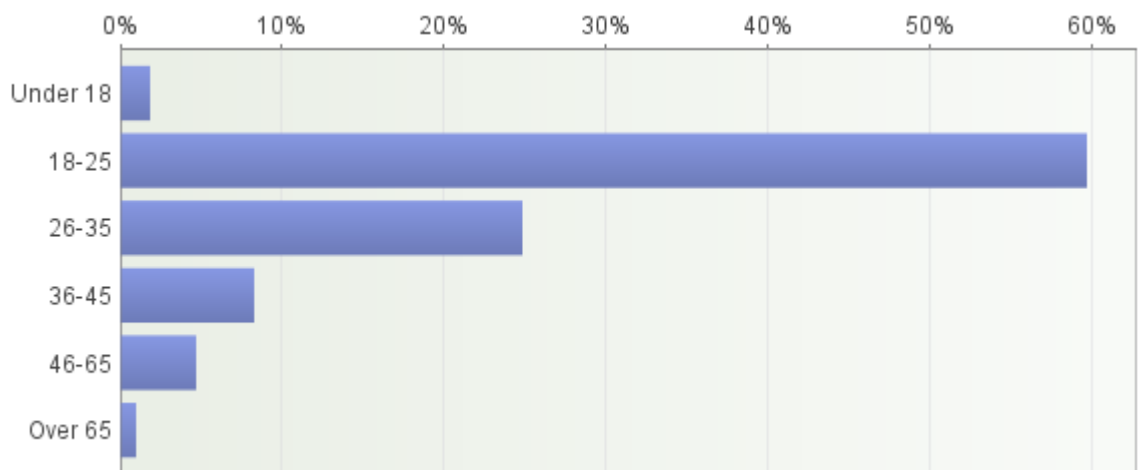
### 5.1 General information

This part presents the basic information of the respondents, their gender, age, nationality and the main reason for travelling.



**Figure 8: Gender (n=109)**

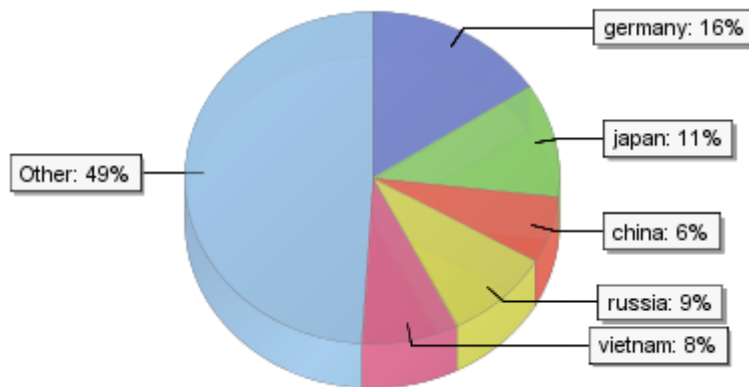
As it can be seen from figure 8 most of the respondents were female. 73% (80) of the answers were from women and 27% (29) from men. One reason for this could be that women tend to be more interested in shopping than men.



**Figure 9: Age (n= 109)**

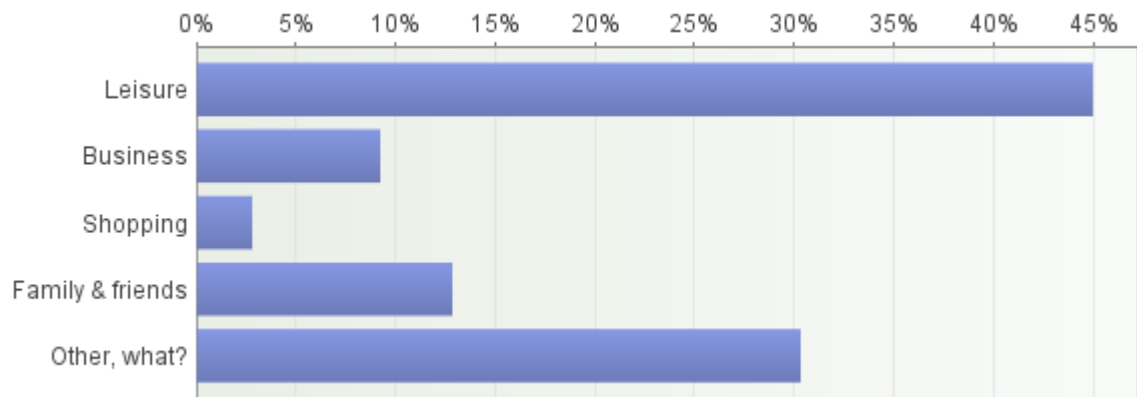
Figure 9 shows the age distribution of the respondents: Almost 60% were 18-25 years old, 25% between 26-35 years old, 8% between 36-45 years old, 5% between 46-65 years old, 2% were under 18 and less than 1% over 65. Perhaps it was easier to reach younger

people when interviewing people on the street and that explains why there are so many respondents between ages 18-25.



**Figure 10: Nationality (n= 107)**

According to figure 10 most of the respondents were German with 16% of the respondents. 11% were Japanese, 9% Russian, 8% Vietnamese, 6% Chinese and 49% came from somewhere else. This includes a variety of countries from all over the world such as Sweden, England, Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, Korea, USA, Canada and many others. The results are not surprising with German and Russian tourists but they also show that Finland is pretty popular among Asian tourists.



**Figure 11: Reason for travelling (n= 109)**

Figure 11 presents that leisure is the most common reason for travelling to Finland with 45% of all respondents. 30% answered that they have other reasons for travelling and the most common reason was studying. Other reasons were nature, work or music. 13% of the respondents were visiting family or friends. 9% travelled to Finland for business reasons and only for 3% of the respondents shopping was the main reason for their visit.

## 5.2 Shopping expectations

Expectations are normally created before arriving to the destination. Expectations vary a lot due to the individuals because everyone has different needs, reasons and past experiences. In this research, for some of the tourists it was their first time to visit Finland and some of them had already been there before. Expectations may differ from the reality if the destination is not known before.



Figure 12: Describe your shopping opportunities in Finland (n=87)

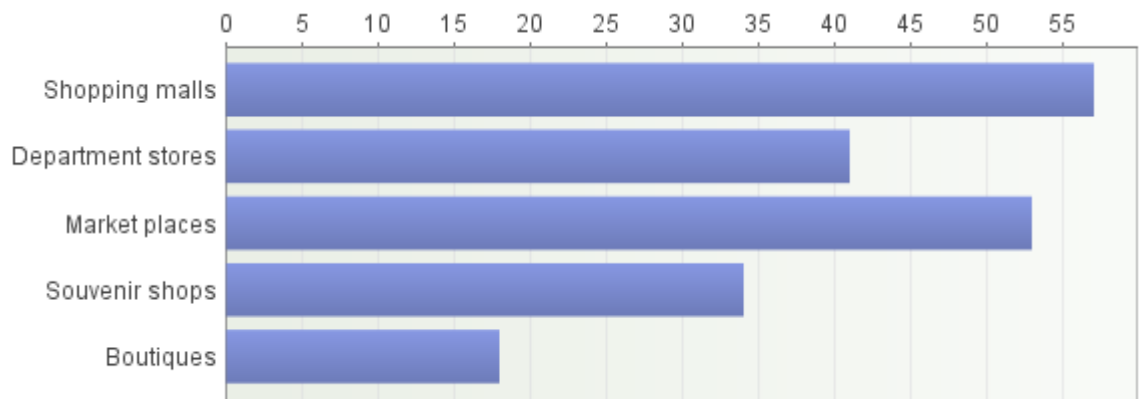
Finland is known to be high-priced but the country where great amount of design is made. Figure 12 reveals the main words used when describing shopping opportunities in Finland. Respondents were mainly expecting Finland to be very expensive with not a lot of variety. Several shops and shopping malls can be found but only with limited brands. There are many brands which cannot be purchased in Finland which decreases shopping possibilities. Many respondents had similar feelings with this sentence: "I find it quite expensive in general and there are not many shops available compared with other countries I have visited". Exchange students cannot afford shopping in Finland and they principally do only compulsory grocery shopping.

Design shoppers have high expectations because they travel to shop specific products from the brands which are already known before such as Moomin, Iittala, Marimekko and

Arabia. Finland has good variety of design products and the quality of products is expected to be good. Even though Finland is not thought to be the best place to do shopping it has quality products like high class shoes and clothes.

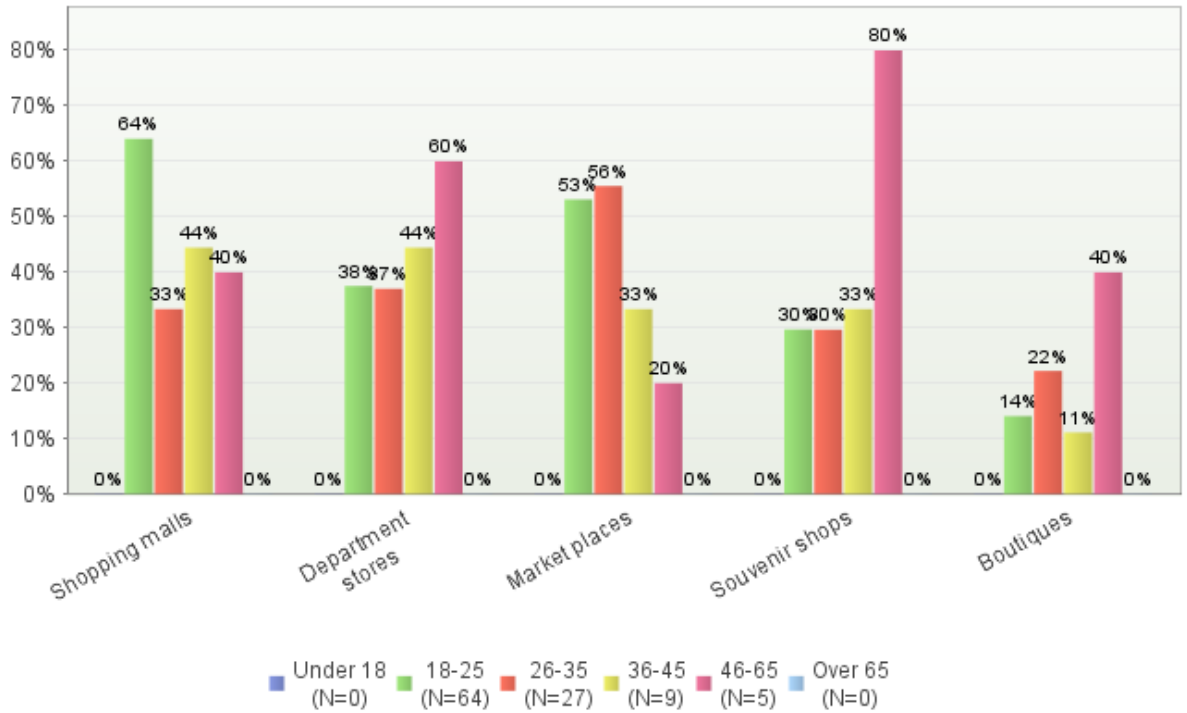
### 5.3 Differences in shopping interests between different age groups

In this part it is presented how shopping interests differ in age groups. Firstly, overall pictures where tourist like to shop and what they like to buy are given and then these questions are specified by age groups.



**Figure 13: Which places you prefer to go shopping? (n=106)**

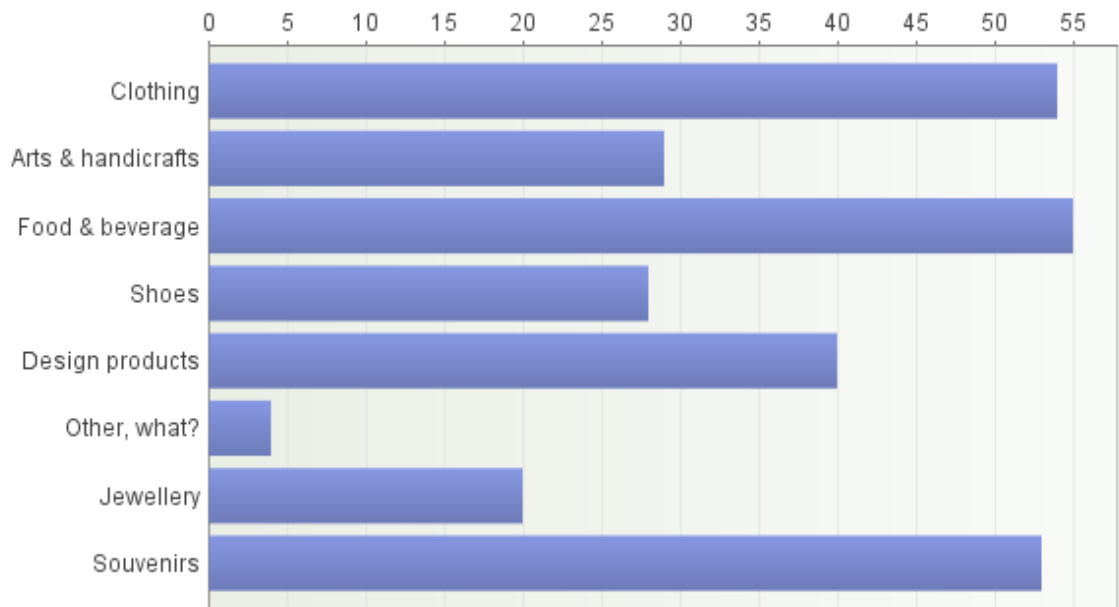
Figure 13 shows where tourists prefer to go shopping. In this question there were possibility to choose various options. Most popular places are shopping malls 54% (57) and market places 50% (53). Also department stores 39% (41) and souvenir shops 32% (34) attract tourists to shop but boutiques 17% (18) not in the significant meaning. Partly the reason can be the fact that there are not that many boutiques available.



**Figure 14: Preferred places to go shopping divided by age groups (n=106)**

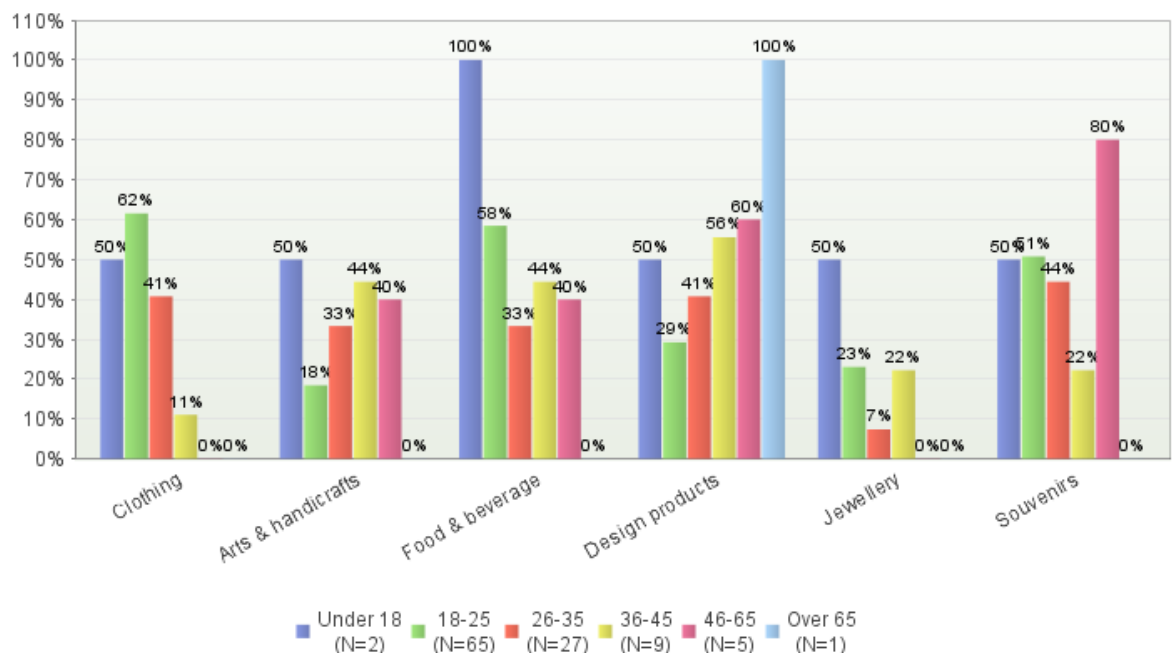
Figure 14 shows the differences in shopping places in different age groups. Age group 46-65 mainly do shopping in souvenir shops (80%) and in department stores (60%) when shopping malls (64%) and market places (53%) are more popular among people aged 18-25. Then we look at the age group 26-35, most of them prefer market places (56%) but shopping malls (33%), department stores (37%), souvenir shops (29%) and boutiques (22%) are also part of their interest. Age group 36-45 is quite equally interested to do shopping in all of these places but mostly in shopping malls (44%) and department stores (44%) and lastly in boutiques (11%).





**Figure 15: Please mark what kind of products you would like to buy in Finland? (n=110)**

The figure 15 shows that food and beverage 50% (55), clothing 49% (54) and souvenirs 48% (53) are clearly the most wanted products to buy. Also design products 36% (40), arts and handicrafts 26% (29), shoes 25% (27) and jewellery 18% (20) interest tourists. In this question there were also a possibility to choose an option other 4% (4). This answer was specified with bags and cosmetics by the respondents. In this question respondents could choose various options.



**Figure 16: Products wanted to buy in different age groups (n=110)**

Figure 16 reveals how different products interest different age groups. Unfortunately age groups are not divided equally since in this question there are only two respondents in a group under 18 and only one person in a group over 65. Also, in this question respondents were able to choose various options. Age group 18-25 and 26-35 are quite equally interested in all of the options but least in jewellery. Respondents from the age group 36-45 are not so interested in clothing but design products, food and beverage and arts and handicrafts. Age group 46-65 does not show any interest in clothing or jewellery but significantly to souvenirs and design products.

#### 5.4 Products which are not offered in Finland

One of the main objects of this research was to find out if there is something that tourists would like to buy which is not offered. Wide range of answers were given to this question. This question was designed to find out what people think, giving them freedom to write what is in their minds due to the open ended question. This question was essential to know how to develop Finland as a shopping destination.



**Figure 17: Is there anything you would like to buy in Finland which is not offered? (n=57)**

As already mentioned, this question was an open-ended question. All the respondents did not give answer to this one due to their busy timetables. Here in the figure 17 you can see the most common words used for an answer high-lighted with bigger letters. As you can see from the figure most of the answers were about missing clothing brands or different variety in food products. According to this figure, the main clothing stores which are needed also in Finland are Bershka, Footlocker, Pimkie and Stradivarius. Food products which are difficult to find in Finland are seafood, biscuits, exotic tropical fruits, vegan food and Asian spices.

Respondents mentioned that it is expensive to eat out in Finland and some more well-known fast food brands were missing like KFC. Some people were wanting to find more African customized outfits or clothes with African flavor. As already told above there are not enough brands of clothing companies. Footlocker was being missed and as an explanation for that it was told that stores like Intersport and Stadium do not offer enough selection for casual shoes.

From the food and beverage side, it is hard to find some vegetables and fruits like mangoes. In addition seafood was being missed. It is easy to find seafood in other European countries but not in Finland. It was thought that in Finland there is a tendency to support local products, which is taken as a positive thing, but there are some foreign products that cannot be replaced by Finnish products and while traveling tourists need those. Furthermore, it was noticed that alcohol is very expensive and better, cheaper wine is needed.

## 5.5 Shopping experiences

Experiences vary a lot between individuals as already explained in the chapter number 3. People do, see and feel differently which creates their personal experiences from something what has happened. In this part respondents' shopping experiences in Finland are analysed.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
Finland offers a wide range of shopping opportunities	15%	59%	25%	0%	110
Offer of branded design is good	25%	61%	14%	0%	105
The staff in Finnish stores is friendly	39%	47%	14%	0%	110
Shopping in Finland is a memorable experience	9%	50%	36%	5%	108
The price level in Finland is expensive	44%	46%	8%	2%	110
The quality of products offered in Finnish stores is good	35%	61%	4%	0%	109
Finnish products interest me (more than international ones)	14%	48%	30%	8%	108
I would recommend Finland as a shopping destination	7%	37%	48%	8%	107
It is easy to find information about shopping in Finland	17%	51%	30%	2%	109
<b>Total</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>976</b>

**Figure 18: Shopping in Finland (n= 110)**

Figure 18 shows respondents' opinions about shopping in Finland. 59% of the respondents agreed that Finland offers a wide range of shopping opportunities compared to 25% who disagreed with that statement. Finland seems to do well when it comes to offering design as 61% answered that they are happy with the selection of design and only 14% didn't think so. Also, tourists seem to think that staff is friendly in Finland as 39% strongly

agreed and 47% agreed. Opinions differ more when people were asked if shopping in Finland a memorable experience as 50% of the respondents thought so.

According to figure 18 respondents consider Finland as an expensive shopping destination as 44% strongly agreed and 46% agreed. However, when it comes to the quality of products, the results are positive as 35% strongly agreed and 61% agreed that there are high-quality products in Finnish stores and only 4% thought that is not true. Finnish products seem to be slightly more interesting than the international ones as 48% agreed with this statement. 37% would recommend Finland as a shopping destination but 48% would not so there is still something to improve. 51% agreed that it is easy to find information about shopping in Finland compared to 30% who disagreed.



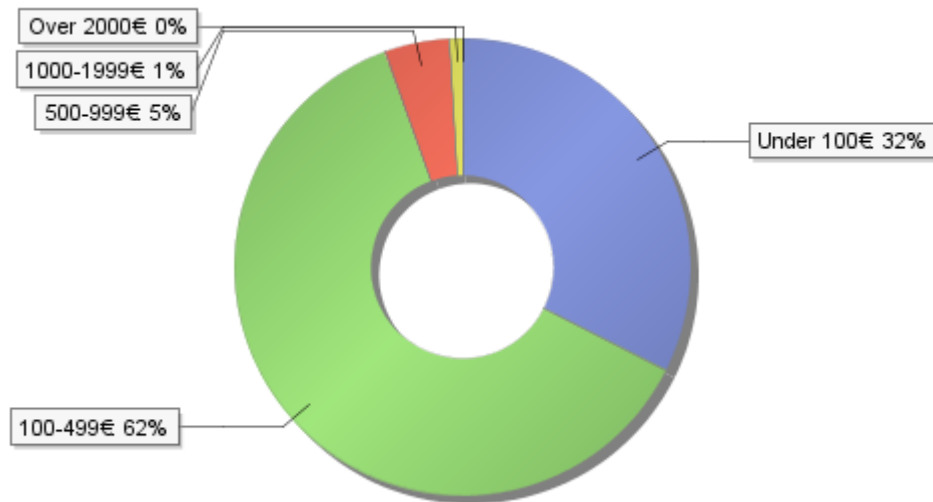
**Figure 19: What would improve your shopping experience in Finland? (n= 62)**

Figure 19 presents respondents' thoughts of how shopping experience in Finland could be improved. Most of the respondents answered that the prices should be cheaper and that was the main finding that came up. The price level seems to be too high especially when it comes to the Finnish local products. Some people suggested discounts, promotions and bonus cards for tourists.

Also, quite a few people thought there should be more information available in English and they were struggling with product instructions. Some respondents were hoping for more shops and variety. They wanted to see more international brands in Finland. However, one respondent from the U.S. said that the products are exactly the same back home and in Scandinavia for example H&M. Some people wanted to see more special shops outside of Helsinki such as musical instrument shops.

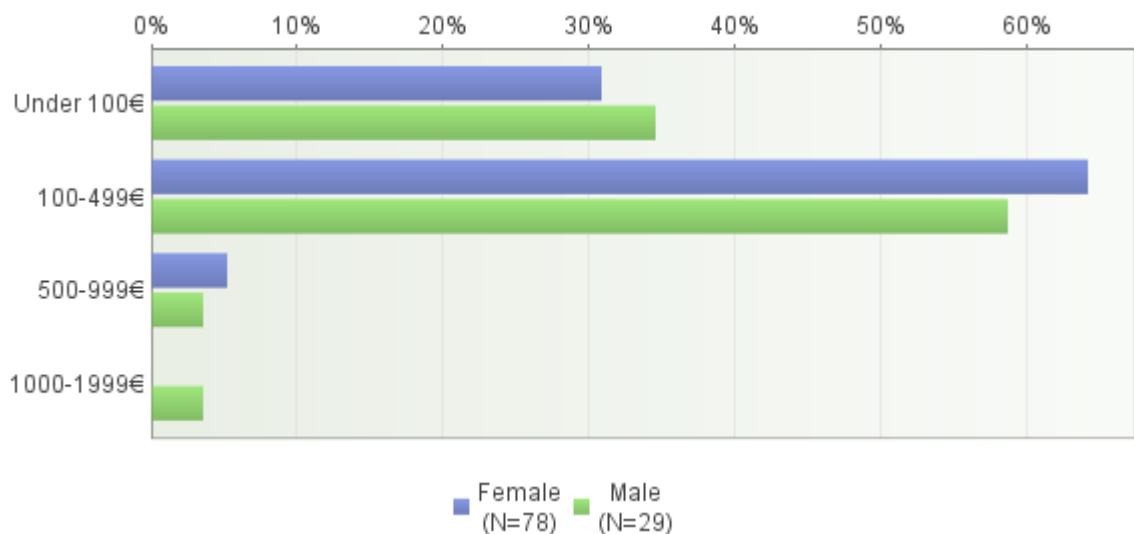
## 5.6 Differences in spending on shopping between female and male

This part presents how much tourists are planning to spend in Finland. It also shows the differences in spending between female and male respondents.



**Figure 20: How much money are you planning to spend on shopping? (n=108)**

As the figure 20 shows, major part of the respondents were planning to spend 100-499 euros 62% (67) on shopping during their visit. 32% (35) of the respondents were thinking of spending only under 100 euros and 5% (5) were planning to spend 500-999 euros. Only 1% of the respondents thought of spending 1000-1999 euros and no one more than that.



**Figure 21: Shopping spending between female and male (n= 108)**

As it can be seen from figure 21 women tend to spend slightly more on shopping than men in general. However, the respondents who spent the biggest amounts were men. There were no female respondents who spent 1000-1999 euros or more. Also, none of the respondents, male or female, said they spent more than 2000 euros. The amount of answers from female and male respondents is not equal though as there were 78 women and 29 men answering this question.

### 5.7 Differences between Helsinki and Porvoo

Lastly, the differences between Helsinki and Porvoo are presented. This research was conducted relatively equally in Helsinki (52) and Porvoo (58) but there were not any major differences found in the responses. This can be due to the fact that usually all people who visit Porvoo also do shopping in Helsinki. Anyway, some small details showing difference are analyzed in this chapter.

Shopping in Helsinki is easy, from fashion to second hand articles and there are shops from big department stores and malls to the boutiques. Obviously, Helsinki as a capital offers much better possibilities for shopping than Porvoo. In a city center there are two big shopping malls and a huge Stockmann department store. Porvoo is more for spontaneous shopping since there are not so many possibilities. In the old town you can buy vintage clothes and decoration or other old town products like antique or modern Finnish design but the variety is still not that great.

	Location		Location
	Helsinki (N=51)		Porvoo (N=58)
Leisure	45%	Leisure	45%
Business	14%	Business	5%
Shopping	6%	Shopping	0%
Family & friends	16%	Family & friends	10%
Other, what?	20%	Other, what?	40%

**Figure 22: What was your main reason for travelling to Finland? (n=109)**

According to the figure 22 most of the tourists' reason to travel was leisure 45% (23) in Helsinki and 45% (26) in Porvoo. More than a half of the respondents in Porvoo were students 40% (23) and in Helsinki the amount of students was 20% (10). Other main reasons were: visiting family and friends 16% (8) in Helsinki and 10% (6) in Porvoo, and business 14% (7) in Helsinki and 5% (3) in Porvoo.

	Location		Location
	<b>Helsinki (N=50)</b>		<b>Porvoo (N=55)</b>
Shopping malls	60%	Shopping malls	47%
Department stores	44%	Department stores	35%
Market places	40%	Market places	60%
Souvenir shops	32%	Souvenir shops	33%
Boutiques	6%	Boutiques	27%

**Figure 23: Which places you prefer to go shopping? (n=105)**

As you can see from the figure 23 there were some differences in the preferred places to go shopping between Helsinki and Porvoo. In Helsinki majority 60% (30) preferred to go shopping in shopping malls. Also in Porvoo respondents liked to go shopping in malls 47% (26) but even more noticeably they were interested to shop in market places 60% (33). Department stores 44% (22) and market places 40% (20) were also desired places to go shopping in Helsinki but souvenir shops 32% (16) and boutiques 6% (3) not so visibly. Respondents in Porvoo showed more interest towards boutiques 27% (15) but also preferred department stores 35% (19) and souvenir shops 33% (18) more.

## 6 Conclusions

This chapter presents conclusions of the research about tourists' view on shopping opportunities in Finland. Firstly, it was wanted to find out what tourists from different countries really think about Finland as a shopping destination and if the supply corresponds the demand. Obviously, Helsinki is the main city to do shopping in Finland as most of the required brands and products can be found from there. Especially it is an ideal place for finding designer goods and discovering fresh designer culture like already mentioned before in chapter 2.

With this research 110 tourists were reached, 73% (80) of them women and 27% (29) of them men. The respondents were from many different counties and had different reasons for travelling to Finland. As expected the biggest visitor groups came from Germany, Russia and Asia. However, the number of Swedish tourists was not as high as predicted. Also the age of the respondents were asked but unfortunately it was not possible to get an even number in every age group we had categorized.

The first reactions of the respondents to shopping opportunities were mostly knowledge of Finnish design products, main shopping centers in the city of Helsinki and a big Stockman department store which is also located in the Helsinki city center. When it came to the question what to buy from Finland the respondents were mainly talking about food and beverage, clothing and souvenirs. Also design products, arts and handicrafts, shoes and jewellery were mentioned. According to the results, tourists are aware of the design brands such as Iittala, Aarikka and Marimekko. Especially Asian tourists seem to be interested in Moomin products.

There were not many things which were wanted but not found in Finland. Some clothing brands and different variety of food products were brought up. According to the results, the key clothing stores which are also needed in Finland are Bershka, Footlocker, Pimkie and Stradivarius. Food products which are difficult to find in Finland are seafood, biscuits, exotic tropical fruits, vegan food and Asian spices. Furthermore it was noticed that alcohol is very expensive and the strong ones can be only purchased from Alko.

Nevertheless, Finland seems to offer good shopping experiences. Tourists are very happy with the selection of design and they also think that staff is friendly in Finland. In addition half of the respondents considers shopping in Finland as a memorable experience. When it comes to the quality of products, the results are positive that there are high-quality prod-



ucts in Finnish stores. Not so many would recommend Finland as a shopping destination but more than half agreed that it is easy to find information about shopping.

As a conclusion of the results, shopping opportunities in Finland are not the greatest. The results prove the fact that there are better shopping places in Europe as discussed in the shopping tourism theory. A good amount of design products can be found but otherwise the price level is too high for the average tourists to do a lot of shopping. As said shopping plays a critical role in travel and tourism and for that reason it is not ideal that tourists cannot afford shopping in Finland. Nowadays shopping is one of the main motivations when choosing a destination. However, according to the results, it is not the main reason for tourists to come to Finland though as only 3% of respondents said they came for shopping.

Since this research was conducted in two different cities it was wanted to find out if there were major differences between shopping behaviours. Obviously Helsinki as a capital offers more variety than Porvoo, a small city with old town. Anyway, in Helsinki the most of the shopping is done in shopping malls purchasing brand new products as compared to Porvoo where people enjoy visiting boutiques and second hand stores filled with antique and vintage products.

When it comes to developing shopping possibilities in Finland it might be a good idea to focus on excellent customer service. As discussed in subchapter 3.3 the staff service level is highly important. The results suggest that there should more information available in English and this includes the staff as well. It is important that customer service staff have a good level of English and they can create a memorable experience for the customers. Shopping is not only about purchasing a product, it also includes people and places. The whole shopping experience needs to be enjoyable for the customers. Also, the quality of products and variety play a big role in customer satisfaction.

To summarize the conclusion, the main points are presented in bullet points below:

- The first thoughts about shopping opportunities in Finland were high-class design, Helsinki and its shopping centers and department stores
- The shopping experience is mostly positive but price level is found to be too expensive among tourists
- Most interesting products to purchase are food and beverage, clothing, souvenirs and design products

- Products which cannot be found are clothing from well-known brands not offered in Finland and exotic food including spices
- When shopping, Helsinki is the place to go since small cities like Porvoo are more for spontaneous shopping

In order to take this research further it would be good to focus more on to the qualitative part. As methods it is suggested to use both qualitative and quantitative but when interviewing people it would be good to concentrate on what they actually have on their minds and how do they say it in their own words. Besides qualitative questions should be designed to be answered quickly since tourists normally do not seem to have too much time. Questionnaire could be done more carefully to be more easily understood by non-native English speakers and the order should be logical. When choosing respondents it would be good to have approximately same amount of respondents in every age group and preferably half men and half women.

### **6.1 Suggestions for development**

Due to the research it was essential to find some factors which could help developing Finland as a shopping destination. In this chapter those factors are presented. The main thing to consider was the price level. Ideally, tourists would love to do shopping in Finland with lower prices. This is not always possible though so maybe an alternative option for this could be giving more value for their money. For example if tourists receive high-level of customer service they might be more willing to pay higher prices. In overall tourists are looking for memorable experiences. It is essential that people working in customer service have a professional level of English. Correct advertising and marketing could also give a boost for the shopping experience in Finland.

Furthermore, there should be more information available in English. It is important that the customer knows what she/he is buying. This includes not only the information of the products but also general information available for example in the shops and restaurants. Also, more variety of shops would attract a larger number of shopping tourists to Finland as some international brands were being missed. Anyhow, at the same time tourists want to buy unique products which they cannot buy from anywhere else. The solution for this could be giving more awareness to local brands and adding their stores to the main shopping areas.

## 6.2 Reflection

This thesis process has been a great experience for us. The decision to make a research based thesis was easy because during our studies we have conducted multiple researches and the process was already familiar. When we heard about this available topic: "tourists' view on shopping opportunities", we were sure it will be interesting and an enjoyable subject to write about since we both have characteristics of a shopping tourist.

It took some time for us to get the writing part started. It was spring 2015 when we decided the subject and we both were going to Erasmus exchange in autumn 2015 into different countries. We decided to get together in England after the exchange period and write our thesis in spring 2016. Besides, already before the exchange we collected the data separately in Helsinki and Porvoo. In England we decided to be as effective as possible and get it done fast. We divided thesis into different parts that made it possible to write individually. Every week we had a meeting in order to put everything together and to see if writing expectations were met.

The first stage of the writing part was a theory. Neither of us had previously used citation in academic writing. First we were a little bit nervous if we knew how to do it properly but quite fast we learned how to cite other people's texts. In addition, we developed ourselves towards being more professional in many other areas while writing this thesis. Not only finding and sourcing through suitable material in order to highlight the main points but also actually understanding and building up theory as a whole. While writing, we learned many remarkable facts about our subject. We got more precise information about Finland as a tourism destination and how shopping tourism is becoming a worldwide concept.

The next stage was data analysis. This stage we were expecting to go smoothly since we had analysed many researches before. We liked the fact that we had a freedom to choose what points of our research we want to bring out and which facts are the most important ones. While doing the analysis we found some small errors in our questionnaire which could have been done in another way in order to make the analysis easier. For example the order of questions could have been changed as well as the formulation of some questions. Obviously, we had some expected results on our minds and it made this stage the most interesting one in order to see if the actual results covered our expectations.

It was a great experience to write this thesis together. Whenever we were facing any difficulties we got through those by supporting each other. Even though becoming more critical towards your own writing is essential when there is someone continuously giving feed-

back. Skills in time management and flexibility are important factors when writing together. Luckily we had the same goal what comes to the thesis writing: let's do our best. And that is what we did. Overall, we are very pleased with the research, results and how this thesis ended up.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Questionnaire



### **Tourist's view on shopping opportunities**

This survey's goal is to collect tourist's opinions about shopping opportunities in Finland. All the responses will remain anonymous and they will be used merely for research purposes. This survey is conducted by tourism students from Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences.

Thank you for your participation.

1. What was your main reason for travelling to Finland?

- Leisure    Business    Shopping    Family & friends    Other, what? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Describe your shopping opportunities in Finland

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3. How well do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Finland offers a wide range of shopping opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Offer of branded design is good	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The staff in Finnish stores is friendly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shopping in Finland is a memorable experience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The price level in Finland is expensive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The quality of products offered in Finnish stores is good	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Finnish products interest me (more than international ones)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would recommend Finland as a shopping destination	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is easy to find information about shopping in Finland	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. Please mark what kind of products you would like to buy in Finland?

Clothing   
  Arts & handicrafts   
  Food & beverage

Shoes   
  Design products   
  Other, what?

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Jewellery   
  Souvenirs

5. Is there anything you would like to buy in Finland which is not offered?

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6. Which places you prefer to go shopping?

- Shopping malls     Department stores     Market places     Souvenir shops     Boutiques

7. How much money are you planning to spend on shopping?

- Under 100€     100-499€     500-999€     1000-1999€     Over 2000€

8. What would improve your shopping experience in Finland?

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9. Gender

- Female     Male

10. Age

- Under 18     18-25     26-35     36-45     46-65     Over 65

11. Nationality

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**12. Location**

Helsinki  Porvoo