

# LAPLAND'S PUSH AND PULL FACTORS

Sandholm Milla

Bachelor's Thesis  
School of Business and Administration  
Degree Programme in International Business  
Bachelor of Business Administration

2018

Liiketalouden ja Kulttuurin ala  
International Business  
koulutusohjelma  
Tradenomi (BBA)

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<b>Tekijä</b>	Milla Sandholm	Vuosi	2018
<b>Ohjaaja</b>	Eija Turunen		
<b>Työn nimi</b>	Lapland's push and pull factors		
<b>Sivu- ja liitesivumäärä</b>	55 + 5		

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Tämän opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena oli tutkia Lapin työntö- ja vetovoimatekijöitä, sillä huomattiin, että Lappi houkuttelee yhä hakijoita jopa sen jälkeen, kun vuonna 2017 EU:n ja ETA:n maiden ulkopuolisille hakijoille tuli lukuvuosimaksut, mikä herättikin kiinnostuksen tutkia, mitkä tekijät motivoivat ihmisiä tulemaan Lappiin. Lukijalle haluttiin antaa perustavanlaatuisen ymmärryksen Lapista ja sen suurimmista ihmisvirtalähteistä: turismista, opinnoista ja muuttoliikkeestä. Teoreettinen tausta opinnäytetyölle tuli tutkinnasta turismin motivaatioon, työntö- ja vetovoimatekijöihin ja siihen, miten ne näkyvät turismissa, opinnoissa ja muuttoliikkeessä. Myös kolmen Lappilaisen yrityksen sekä Lapin Ammattikorkeakoulun ja Lapin Yliopiston markkinointia tutkittiin, että nähtäisiin, miten ”Lappisuutta” ja vetovoimatekijöitä hyödynnetään.

Tietoa tähän opinnäytetyöhön kerättiin kyselyn kautta, joka tavoitti 21 kansainvälistä opiskelijaa, ja myöskin toisen pienen kyselyn kautta, joka oli suunnattu kahden kyseisten koulujen markkinointityöntekijöille. Kysely rajattiin vastattavaksi vain kansainvälisille opiskelijoille, sillä haluttiin kuva Lapista heidän näkökulmastaan. Tämä opinnäytetyö käytti kvalitatiivisia tutkintametoodeja materiaalia analysoiden.

Kyselyn tulokset viittaavat siihen, että Lappiin tullessa opiskelijoita yleensä houkuttaa elämyshakuisuus ja Suomen hyvä koulutustaso. Suurin osa tunsivat itsensä tyytyväisiksi opintojen suhteen, mutta jotain kritiikkejä nousi esiin, joita mahdollisesti voisi tutkia pidemmälle. Lappiin vaikuttavat työntö- ja vetovoimatekijät tunnistettiin, ja miten ne vaihtelevat suhteessa eri asioihin ja ihmisiin.

Avainsanat                      työntö- ja vetovoimatekijät, Lappi, turismi, muuttoliike, opiskelu, markkinointi, kysely

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<b>Author</b>	Milla Sandholm	Year	2018
<b>Supervisor</b>	Eija Turunen		
<b>Title of Thesis</b>	Lapland's push and pull factors		
<b>Number of pages</b>	55 + 5		

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The purpose of this thesis was to study Lapland's push and pull factors, because it was established that Lapland keeps attracting applicants even after a tuition fee for non-EU and ETA countries was introduced in 2017, raising an interest to study what factors motivate people to come to Lapland. The aim was to give the reader a basic understanding of Lapland and its major sources for the flow of people: tourism, studies and migration. For the theoretical background, tourism motivation, push and pull factors and how they can be seen in tourism, studies and migration were studied. Three Lappish companies' marketing alongside with the marketing of Lapland University of Applied Sciences and University of Lapland were researched, to see how the Lappish factor and pull forces are being utilized.

The data collected for this thesis included a survey that reached 21 international students and another small questionnaire aimed to the marketing employees of the schools in question. The survey's audience was limited to only international students, as an image of Lapland was wanted through their eyes. This thesis used qualitative research methods in analysing the material.

The results of the survey indicate that the students are generally drawn to Lapland for the experience and the great education in Finland. Most felt pleased with their studies, however some critique came up that could possibly be researched further. It was also established, what specifically are the push and pull factors that affect Lapland, and how they vary in different cases and people.

Key words                      push and pull factors, Lapland, tourism, migration, studies, marketing, survey

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

The idea for this thesis came from reading a thesis by Juhana Vanhanen, which concluded that after all Finnish UAS had to implement tuition fees to students coming from outside of EU and ETA countries in the 2017 spring joint application, Lapland UAS had quite an average change in applicants compared to the other schools. This shows, that Lapland is still a desired place to study, as well as it is to travel to, of course. Vanhanen stated, that after free education is not a marketing advantage for these schools anymore, study satisfaction and motivation should be followed closely, as students having to pay the tuition fee may be more driven to succeed in their studies. This also means that the schools must find other factors to attract applicants than to promote free education as it is not the case anymore. Though not enough time has passed since the introduction of the tuition fees to draw any conclusions on its effect on study motivation, how the marketing has changed since one big marketing advantage has been taken out will however be investigated. (Vanhanen 2017, 35, 45-46)

The fact that Lapland is a quite popular study destination lead to questions that were aimed to explore in this thesis. These questions included why people wish to apply here, how satisfied they are with the reality of their studies, are there factors that could help with the level of satisfaction, and more. The questions lead to making a survey for international students mainly for the wish to acquire and give helpful information to Lapland UAS and University of Lapland in order for them to have some newfound knowledge that could help them anticipate certain things to be prepared for, ultimately to give more students a positive experience. Therefore, the want arose to study Lapland's push and pull factors and other motivations, both in studies, migration and tourism. This thesis will also take a look at the marketing practises of tourism companies in Lapland and the two schools examined further in this thesis, University of Lapland and Lapland University of Applied Sciences, in order to see how they engage the Lappish factor in their marketing. Tourism and educational marketing will also be compared in order to see, whether the same pull factors are being used and whether they actually can be used.

## 2 THESIS PROCEDURE AND GOAL

This thesis is a qualitative research. The research methods for this thesis come from the information search of literature found via the Web and the Finna database, online articles, previous studies and theses. First, Lapland as a destination will be examined from different points of view. There will be a look at the migration to Lapland, tourism and studies. For the theoretical background for this thesis, push and pull forces are explained about in general, which ultimately is the main focus of this thesis, and other motivations that can affect tourism. The theory of push and pull factors is divided to three sub-sections to give the reader an understanding of what push and pull factors are involved in tourism, studies and migration. Thoughts will also be summarized on what Lapland's push and pull forces are. Then, the thesis will dive more in to the "thoughts" of students in Lapland, examining what results have accumulated from a survey made for international students. It will also be researched what kind of marketing is used by these two schools under observation, Lapland University of Applied Sciences and University of Lapland, and how they engage the Lappish factor as a motivation to student acquisition.

The goal of this thesis is to explore what is desirable about Lapland, to give the reader a basic understanding of Lapland and its different motivational areas and factors, to explore the push and pull factor theory and how they are taken in to account by local companies and the two schools in question. The aim is to provide the schools with information that may help with marketing and student satisfaction, and to possibly find some push and pull factors that Lapland's tourism sector – the individuals and companies – could utilize to improve their operations and marketing. The goal is to provide a research that explains about the general yet important factors in Lapland, meaning migration, studies and tourism, for any person possibly interested in the Lapland region, whether that person be a possible school applicant, someone interested in investing in Lapland or starting a business here, or someone interested in moving to Lapland.

### 3 LAPLAND AS A DESTINATION

#### 3.1 Lapland in figures

Lapland is the largest region in Finland. It is 100 366 km<sup>2</sup> wide, taking up 30% of the whole area of Finland. There are a total of 21 municipalities, Rovaniemi being the capital. Even though Lapland is the largest region in Finland, its population density is the smallest in Finland at two people per km<sup>2</sup> (Tilastokeskus). Only 3% of Finnish citizens live in Lapland. Lapland has a total of 180 197 residents, and there are nearly as many reindeer in Lapland as there are people. The value of exports in Lapland is 3.8 billion euros, which is 7% of all exports in Finland. The tourism income in Lapland in 2016 was 632 million euros. There were 2.36 million registered overnight stays. Out of those visits, 187 635 came from Great Britain, 129 882 from Germany, 105 395 from France, 67 428 from Russia, 66 488 from Norway and 468 136 from other countries. Lapland's 2040 vision is that Lapland is an international, developing and inspiring center of Arctic business, education and research, to be the most well-known tourist attraction of Arctic areas, and that it is nice to be and live in Lapland. The next chapters explain about three major things that bring people to Lapland: tourism, migration and studies. (Lappi lukuina 2017)

#### 3.2 Tourism

Tourism in Lapland is blooming. Every year thousands of tourists come to Lapland from all around the world. Many are mesmerized by the idea of the magic of Lapland, the winter wonderland. The Santa Claus theme, attractions in different towns in Lapland, clean and beautiful nature, sports possibilities and the Arctic location are just some of the many things attracting people to flock to Lapland. The constant rise in tourism in Lapland is also indicated by investments, as the past year around 200 million euros was invested in tourism (Mehtonen 2017).

Rovaniemi is the capital of Lapland and named The Official Hometown of Santa Claus. This Santa Claus is actually an official brand that has been licensed since the year 2000. There are around 100 licensing partners, for example Finnair is the official airline of Santa Claus, and Silja and Tallink own Santa's official ships.

The trademark allows Rovaniemi to be the only one to be able to call themselves the Official Hometown of Santa Claus in the EU, USA, China, Japan, and Russia, among other countries. This is a great thing since the Santa Claus Village is one of the biggest tourist attractions in Rovaniemi and all of Lapland. I believe it is also great to have the official brand and trademark, so tourists can truly say that they have been to these official Santa Claus approved places. (Passoja 2017)

Moreover on Rovaniemi, it is a unique city balancing busy student life, locals and the tourist flow and you could also say that it is a combination of the peaceful nature, urban activity and Nordic culture. Rovaniemi is Lapland's educational, cultural, administrative, sports and commercial centre. Rovaniemi's town plan and several of the city's buildings were designed by the late Alvar Aalto, a popular designer and architect. Rovaniemi is the third most popular destination in Finland by foreign travellers. Rovaniemi has gotten very positive rankings in the recent years. In rankings of best Christmas destinations, Forbes placed Rovaniemi in the top ten in 2011 and CNN in the first place in 2012. Rovaniemi was also awarded the title of Europe's best winter destination in 2012 and ranked as the second best holiday destination for families in 2013, both by Lonely Planet. Rovaniemi is interestingly the largest city by area in Europe at 8017 km<sup>2</sup>. Rovaniemi is located right on the Arctic Circle, meaning that Finland is actually the only country to have a major city located at this latitude. The main runway of Rovaniemi's airport bisects this invisible line. There are also indicators of the Arctic Circle line in some places in Rovaniemi, making it a popular ritual for tourists to take pictures while crossing the line. (Rovaniemi Marketing & Tourism Ltd. 2016-2017. 1-2, 9, 14)

In the year 2016 Lapland's tourism did very well and rose 20.6% overall in comparison with the previous year's December. There were a total of 422 000 overnight stays in Lapland in 2016, of which 86 000 were by Finnish travelers and 336 000 by foreigners. Finns' stays rose by 1.9% whereas foreigners' by 26.5%. 149 000 travelers arrived in Lappish pensions (meaning different places of accommodation), raising arrivals by 26.4% since the previous year. Once again, foreigners' increase was massively bigger than Finns', as foreigners' arrivals rose by 34.6% against Finns' rise of 1.2%. The sales of these accommodations was 21.8 million euros with an increase of 27.8%. The average price of an overnight



stay in 2016 was 51.5 euros. Out of these accommodations 55 000 were business travelers and 367 000 were leisure travelers. (Matkailutilasto yhteenveto 2017)

Even though Lapland is often seen and promoted as a winter wonderland, it is also encouraging tourists to visit during other seasons as well. After all, Lapland is the home of amazing natural phenomena that happen during different seasons – Aurora Borealis, the polar night, the midnight sun and autumn colors. Spring, summer and fall are also great for exploring the beautiful Lapland and doing sports and activities such as hiking, fishing, camping, horseback riding, mushroom and berry picking, water sports, rock climbing and much more. Lapland's travel marketing now focuses more and more on the breakthrough of summer tourism, especially to the fast-growing tourism market of China and other Asian countries. The percentage increase of Chinese tourists in 2017 was the largest, though in numbers Germany, France, Britain, The Netherlands and Switzerland were still leading. The CEO of Visit Rovaniemi, Sanna Kärkkäinen, has been on a mission in China to push forward this Lappish summer idea to their local travel agencies, charming the clients with her vision of Lapland's summer with beautiful pictures and videos. Kärkkäinen believes in the international breakthrough of summer tourism in the near future, as clean air, rain, cool climate and light may prove to be invaluable to people who do not necessary get these things in their home country. (Leisti 2018)

### 3.3 Migration and labor shortage

There is quite a conflict with migration and the tourism industry in Lapland. Tourism is on a rise in Lapland and it does not seem like it is slowing down any time soon. This also means that the job market in the tourism sector is open for new work force, and new jobs open up frequently as more tourists equals more help needed. Nevertheless, the population in Lapland is decreasing. The population was at its highest at over 200 000 residents in the year 1993, and in March of 2017 the population has fallen under 180 000 residents. In Lapland, both the migration between regions and the birth rate compared to the mortality rate is on a negative rate. People move the most to the Oulu and Helsinki areas from Lapland. Positive net migration was in turn gotten from immigration, and

Rovaniemi profited from the student flow coming from other municipalities. (Mehtonen 2017)

The tourism sector is not the only market in need of employees. As the tourism industry in Lapland grows, it will have an effect on other things as well, such as the nearby shops and restaurants, which may have to expand their operations sometime in the future due to the increase in customers. Another sector in need of work force is the large-scale industries. Lapland has gone through great economic growth recently, which major competitive advantages are international tourism expertise, ICT expertise, well-functioning traffic connections and logistics, great research & development and education supply, strong traditional industry, as well as clean environment and the high quality of life. Tourism, the forest industry, mining and metal working are currently important positive sectors in Lapland. Lapland has some promising mining projects, and there are investors to this business from all over the world, for instance Canada and Africa. Minerals such as gold have been discovered in Lapland. The latest bio-fuel projects in Kemi and Kemijärvi are expected to have a great impact on the jobs and traffic of the region. The Kemi-Tornio region especially is very promising for industrial investments, and the location is perfect for transporting the raw materials to Norway, Sweden and Russia. Lapland Chamber of Commerce CEO Timo Rautajoki agrees that there is a shortage of skilled labor in the Lapland area in many industries, and that they are trying to attract people to come and live there. (Lapland: Above Ordinary)

Indeed, some industries in Lapland are hungry for qualified labor. This means, that companies should attract people to move to Lapland to work for them, and they must think of great incentives that will help the people in making such a big decision to move to another region. If these companies cannot compete with e.g. the pay rates in the Helsinki area, they could instead offer something extra with the contract such as accommodation or a company car. Landing a permanent job is quite difficult in some areas of work, as some mostly offer fixed-term contracts nowadays. In tourism, fixed-term contracts are quite normal as the jobs are often during specific seasons, therefore mostly requiring seasonal workers. So, if these companies in need of work force are able to provide permanent contracts, possibly with benefits, that would be a great incentive.

### 3.4 Studies

Lapland is a unique place for studying. There are several options to choose from, such as higher education institutes, folk high schools, vocational schools and more. In this thesis, however, I will only focus on the University of Lapland and Lapland University of Applied Sciences. Every year, a fresh group of students come to study in these two schools. Some of them from a smaller municipality in Lapland, some from another country and many from all over Finland. For example, three fourths of the new students at the University of Lapland come from outside of the region of Lapland (Ronsi 2017).

The University of Lapland was founded in 1979 and it is the northernmost university of science and arts in the European Union. There are four main faculties: social sciences, law, art and design and education. There are around 4400 students at the university, a fifth of the new students being foreigners. Their educational and study fields include arctic questions and tourism on top of the four faculties mentioned earlier. The University of Lapland provides education for about a fifth of Finland's lawyers and a fourth of the people with a high education in art and design. The strategic pivotal focus areas at the University of Lapland are sustainable development, rights and justice, work and education, Arctic wellness, responsible travel and culture-oriented service design. (Lapin Yliopisto)

Lapland University of Applied Sciences was merged in 2014 from Kemi-Tornio University of Applied Sciences and Rovaniemi University of Applied Sciences. Therefore, different fields and degrees are stationed at one of these three locations. It is the northernmost university of applied sciences in the European Union. The main fields of expertise that Lapland UAS offers are: business and culture; social services, health and sports; travel and tourism and industry and natural resources. There are around 5500 students at the school, and annually around 600 international students. Their 2020 vision is to be pioneers in Arctic expertise, and to be an educator, partner and developer recognized internationally with their areas of emphasis. The Arctic factor is present in their operations, for instance they say that success in Arctic conditions and making use of those conditions is at the core of the school's profile. (Lapland UAS)

Between these two institutions of higher education, there is certainly room for many possibilities for one's studies. Even if you choose to study something specific in either of the schools, there is no need to worry about missing out on anything as you can even take courses from the other school and receive credits for it. Education is definitely one of the major pull factors driving people from all over Finland and the world to come to Lapland. However, education can also be seen as a push factor in a sense that some local Lapps may find themselves in a situation that their choice of study cannot be found in any of the schools in the area. Though the choice in study fields is vast even between just the two schools introduced above, there are some things that can only be found in a few selected cities for example going to Helsinki to study veterinary medicine.

Exchange studies are supported and encouraged heavily in both schools. Not only are there hundreds of exchange students in these schools each year, but the local students go for their own exchange studies. Going to a foreign country to study is a great thing. You get to practise your language skills, learn personally about the differences in culture which affects studies, business and much more, you learn independence, varied skills and subjects that might not be possible to learn in your home country, you gain confidence in traveling and last but definitely not least, you improve your personal development. Exchange studies are also very useful for your future: you get new friends and possible business connections, and gain new experiences and skills which will look great on your resume once you are applying for a job. Coming to Lapland to study is something I would highly recommend to anyone, as you not only get to experience education in Finland, which is often praised as one of the best school systems in the world, but also experience the wonders of Lapland – the “eight seasons” and the beautiful landscape, Santa Claus, the best place for winter sports and activities, Arctic excellence and the kind Lappish folk.

## 4 MOTIVATIONS FOR COMING TO LAPLAND

### 4.1 Push and pull factors

Push and pull factors are causes for something happening. These causes may be for instance economic, environmental, social or political. To better understand push and pull factors, here are a couple of examples from migration. A push factor affecting one to migrate would be unemployment whereas a pull factor to migrate someplace would be better job opportunities. Another push factor could be war whereas a pull factor would be political security. You can apply push and pull factors as a reasoning for many cases. This chapter will explore how push and pull factors affect migration, tourism and studies. (Gilbert 2017)

#### 4.1.1 Push and pull factors in tourism

Motivation is just one of the variables explaining tourist behaviour, it is still considered one of the most important ones, for motivation is a compelling force behind all behaviour. Moreover, the study of tourist motivations specifically based on the concepts of push and pull factors has been generally accepted, though while much has been written on push and pull factors, few researchers have actually examined the relationship between those forces as factors of tourist motivation. It is needed to understand both push and pull factors as well as the relationship between them in order to effectively market a destination, as knowledge of the matter can help the marketers and developers of tourist destination areas decide what is the most thriving coupling of push-pull factors as tourism product bundles. This in turn may provide a basis for segmenting those who are travelling for pleasure. (Baloglu, Uysal 1996)

People travel because they are pushed and pulled by “forces”, which are motivational factors that explain how people are pushed by motivational factors to making a travel decision, and how they are pulled by the destination area. Push factors explain the desire to travel, and the pull factors explain the destination choice. Furthermore, push factors are considered socio-psychological motivations that incline someone to travel, and pull factors are what attracts someone to a specific destination after the decision to travel is made. Most push

factors that are origin-related are intangible desires of an individual traveller, like the desire to escape, rest and relaxation, health and fitness, adventure, prestige, and social interaction, whereas pull factors emerge from the attractiveness of a destination as it is seen by the traveller, including tangible resources like mountains, historic resources and recreation facilities and also the traveller's image and expectation like novelty, benefit expectation and the image of the destination that is being marketed. (Baloglu, Uysal 1996)

In short, the usual push factors for tourism are the desire for escape – whether you want an escape from work, domestic life or something else, adventure, health and fitness, rest and relaxation, and social interaction. Pull factors are often things like unique natural environment, easy access and affordability, different culture, shopping, safety of the destination, services and entertainment offered, sightseeing and the local culture, and so on.

#### 4.1.2 Push and pull factors in migration

Push factors for migration are those reasons that compel the person to move away from somewhere. These factors compel the person to move involuntarily or voluntarily through experience-seeking or other internal factors, and sometimes people are forced because of some risk factor if they stay. Pull factors in migration, on the other hand, are the factors that pull you in to choosing that specific city or region. They are the things that the target destination offers, which encourages the person to leave their current destination. Those factors are called place utility, meaning the desirability of that place that attracts people. (eSchoolToday b)

There are many push and pull factors that come into play when people migrate. Originally, the aim was to only discuss domestic migration, but a little bit will also be written about immigration to Lapland. There are different types of migrating. For instance, when someone returns to their hometown after a while, which is called return migration, or seasonal migration for example when someone moves somewhere to do seasonal work, rural-urban migration when you are speaking of the move from the countryside to the city, and long- and short-term migration. These four examples are definitely something that may happen in Lapland either

to migrate here or away from here. Especially seasonal migration may happen often in Lapland's tourism sector, as a lot of the jobs are seasonal. Intercontinental migration may also take place, which means moving from one continent to another. Forced migration and impelled migration, meaning migration for a necessary reason such as war or hunger, is something that does not happen in domestic migration in Finland. However, these may be the push factors for some immigrants that come to Finland or Lapland. (eSchoolToday a)

Sometimes people may have a perception of a place that is not necessarily true, but they see it as a pull force to that region. For example, someone could want to move to Lapland because of their thought as a pull force saying, "I should move to Lapland, it is such a beautiful place that everyone is surely happy there 100% of the time!" but when the Polar Night, total darkness during winter, hits Lapland, the person may change his mind when the depression of the dark creeps in. However, some people feel blue during this time but others do not really even feel a difference. Often, people prefer opportunities closer to their location than some similar opportunities farther away, also, people often like to move to places with better political, cultural, climatic and general terrain in closer locations than those locations farther away. Now, some push and pull factors are listed below, that can affect migration, with the push factor in front of the dash and the related pull factor after, to make their connection clear. The factors affecting migration can be: conflict, war – political safety; drought, floods – geographically sound place; high crime rate – low crime rate; famine – no shortage on food, better economy; poverty – better wealth; loneliness – friends and family; unemployment – better job opportunities; poor wages – higher wages; lack of services – better services provided; lack of proper health care – better health care services; lack of decent education, nonexistence of a specific study field or degree – better education; persecution, racism – safety and finally, pollution – cleanliness of nature, better environment. (eSchoolToday b)

#### 4.1.3 Push and pull factors in studies

The demand for especially higher education is often a product of expectation for the graduating student to have a better social and economic status, and as in some places achieving this high education is difficult, more students travel to

study in places where this is possible, hence the rising number of international students. Push factors in international studies are based in the student's home country and they are what initiates the student's wish and decision to pursue international studies. Pull factors are what is within the host country to make it appealing for the student in order for him to make the decision to want to go there. Some of those factors may be also within the students themselves. Some factors determining the direction of the international student flow are historical or colonial links between countries, commonality of language, quality level of education, close proximity of the host and home country, wealth and GNP growth rate and availability of technology and science-based programs. One study examining international student flow of 18 developing countries to developed countries concluded, that the push factors involved the economic wealth level, level of the developing country's involvement in world economy, the developing country's priority placed on education by the government and finally the home country's educational opportunities. The pull factors included the sizes of the economy compared between the two countries, the economic links between the two countries, the host country's political interest in the home country through cultural links or foreign assistance and lastly the host country's scholarships or other assistance to the support of international students. (Mazzarol & Soutar 2002)

There is a three-stage decision-making progress that happens when a student is choosing to go study internationally. First, the decision to study internationally rather than locally is made, which is affected by push forces coming from within the student or the home country. For example, the student may want to gain knowledge and skills that can only be achieved if he leaves, or he may be bored of domestic life and wants to experience something new. Second, the student makes the selection of the host country, affected by the pull factors that make this country stand out to the student. Some of the main factors include the level of knowledge of the host country in the student's home country, the level of referrals or personal recommendations from peers, parents, relatives and other "gatekeepers", costs including expenses, social costs and travel costs, the environment, geographic proximity of the home and host country, and social links, referring to someone the student knows personally to live in the host country or to have had studied there in the past. It should also be noted that parental



influence can be quite pressing especially to underage or young students. Third, the selection of the educational institution is made, which is heavily influenced by pull factors. These include pull factors such as the range of courses, the institution's reputation for quality, geographical location within the country, staff expertise, level of innovation, sights and culture, coalitions or alliances, promotion and marketing of the institution, market profile, hobby and free time possibilities, and size of the alumni base. (Mazzarol & Soutar 2002)

Other similar studies in Australia have found push factors that drive students to study abroad. These include a perception that a course of studies overseas is better than a local one, factors related to whether the student can enter local programs i.e. if the home country does not offer specific study programmes, the student makes a choice to study abroad, wanting to gain a better understanding of the "West" and finally the desire or intention to migrate after graduating. A study was also made in Australia that consisted of 466 international and 413 local students' opinions on how they scaled factors that influenced their choice of an educational institution from 1 to 7, 1 meaning of little or no importance and 7 meaning extreme importance. The results can be seen from the table (Table 1) on the next page. The discriminant rating function in the table examines the differences between the Australian domestic students and the international students, indicating if the variable was negative or positive in differentiating international from domestic students. A positive score suggests, that the variable was significantly more important to international students, whereas significantly less important when negative. Though this study was made in Australia, its results are not bound to just that country, but the results can be applied to any educational institute to provide helpful information on push and pull factors from the mouths of students themselves. (Mazzarol & Soutar 2002)

Table 1. Results of Australian study on choice of an institution (Mazzarol & Soutar 2002)

Factors influencing choice of an institution – Australian sample

Factors influencing choice in selection of institution	Mean	Discriminant rating function
<b>The Institution ...</b>		
has a reputation for quality	5.66	Positive
was willing to recognise my previous qualifications	5.65	Positive
has a reputation for quality and expertise of its staff	5.48	Positive
has links to other institutions known to me	4.42	Positive
has a large number of international students enrolled	4.45	Positive
has a strong alumni through which I learnt about it	4.03	Positive
offers qualifications that will be recognised by employers	6.10	Not significant
offers a broad range of courses and programs	5.45	Not significant
makes use of the latest information technology	5.40	Not significant
has a reputation for being responsive to student needs	5.33	Not significant
is well known for innovation in research and teaching	5.19	Not significant
has a large campus and excellent facilities	5.10	Not significant
is financially stable	4.96	Not significant
offers flexible entry throughout the year	4.94	Not significant
is noted for its superior use of technology	5.10	Negative
was well known to me	4.96	Negative
advertises and promotes itself strongly	4.68	Negative

A quick analysis of the table above shows that the highest mean score went to the qualifications offered, and that all of the 17 factors were quite highly valued as none of them scored below four. The factors that appeared more important to international students were the institution's quality and reputation, recognition of qualifications, quality of the staff, links to other institutions, strong alumni and a large number of international students. (Mazzarol & Soutar 2002)

#### 4.2 Tourism motivation

Tourism is not always just about the leisure – it can also mean business or educational trips. Tourism involves the traveller's lifestyle, personality, values and attitudes and incorporates new experiences, places, people, cultures and traditions. Looking into psychology and human motivation is a great thing to do if one wants to learn more about motivation. In this chapter, it is only possible to scratch the surface of motivation and motivational factors that may affect tourism. (Šimková & Holzner 2014, 660)

In one article researching motivation in rural tourism, Maslow's five-stage theory on motivation is applied. People are motivated to fulfil their basic needs before

moving on to other, according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs. Level one is physiological needs. Physiological needs and safety is something that every tourism destination must have. The physiological needs often refer to accommodation and gastronomy in tourism. In Lapland and overall Finland, the level of safety is quite excellent, even to the point that Finland was named the safest country by World Economic Forum in 2017 (Leach 2017). Gastronomy, meaning the relationship between food and culture, is quite big in Lapland. The Lappish culture overall is very strong and unique, and the culture seeps through in to the food culture as well. There are plenty of restaurants in Lapland offering great traditional Lappish foods, many of them prepared from reindeer, of course. Level two is safety needs, which is a reflection of a location's character, social life and risk of undesired pathological characters. Tourists in rural areas mainly require calm, safety and peace. This can definitely also be found in Lapland. Lapland is a place to come to in order to take a break from the busy lifestyles, to calm down and breathe some of the cleanest air in the world. The Lappish people are also very humble, down to earth, nice, helpful and talkative. (Šimková & Holzner 2014, 661)

Level three and four are about social needs – being a part of a group and in rural tourism, requirements include hospitality, personality, uniqueness and hosts' courtesy. Once again, I do believe these requirements are met in Lapland's tourism. Lapland is still quite a small place population-wise, making it easier for tourists to get a personalized experience and a feeling of a tight-knit community. Of course, this may also vary between accommodation places, but especially if one were to book something unique like Kakslauttanen's glass igloos for example, the overall feeling and experience might be much more enjoyable compared to a quite regular city visit and accommodation. Level five and six are the cognitive and aesthetic needs. Cognitive needs are described in the way of knowledge and understanding local lifestyle, traditions and heritage. Aesthetic needs are the appreciation and search for beauty, balance and form – this is also one of the main pull factors of Lapland. Many come to Lapland to go on hikes in the beautiful nature, and the nature's beauty is also cashed in by some tourism companies, for example by offering tours to see the Aurora Borealis. The final level seven deals with self-actualisation or realisation needs and they include the

need for personal cultivation and realizing personal potential, self-fulfilment, seeking personal growth and peak experiences. This is on the top of Maslow's hierarchy. These needs could also be pointed as push factors for especially students whom then choose to study abroad. (Šimková & Holzner 2014, 661-662)

#### 4.3 Lapland's main push and pull factors

After learning about the different reasons for coming to Lapland, as well as push and pull factors in general, some conclusions can be made as to what some of the most important push and pull factors are for Lapland. Starting with tourism, it has been established that Lapland is a very popular tourism destination in Finland, especially in the wintertime. The pull factors include the magic of Lapland, the winter wonderland, the Santa Claus theme seen around Lapland and especially in Rovaniemi, the Arctic factor and location, possibility to cross the Arctic Circle, different attractions and activities like husky- and reindeer safaris, sports and hobby possibilities. The clean and beautiful nature is definitely one of the main pull factors, as the Lappish nature, air and water are so clean, some people cannot get those things in their home country so they come here to relax and breathe. Also, the many natural phenomenon are great pull factors, such as the Aurora Borealis, the "eight seasons" and the Midnight Sun. The assumption could also be made that Lapland is an area for mostly experience- and escape-seeking tourism activity. Regarding the push factors from Lapland for tourism, for the locals at least the want to go someplace warmer and perhaps busier and more shopping-oriented may be strong once the coldness and calmness in Lapland gets too much to handle.

Regarding migration, the pull factors in Lapland are the availability of jobs in many fields, as discussed, that there is some labour shortage in Lapland, the clean nature and being a less stressful place to live. The return migration and seasonal migration may be quite present in Lapland, as Lapland is a nice and peaceful place to return to, for example once a person has retired. Seasonal migration is also definitely something that could pull people to Lapland to work the seasonal jobs, especially during the winter tourism season. The push factors in Lappish migration may be the cold weather that some cannot handle, the large amount of

seasonal work for the people who want a permanent job, and the “far-away” location, though the travel connections in Lapland are quite good.

In studies, there are many options to choose from in Lapland. Lapland is definitely a unique place to study in, and some of the major pull forces include the Arctic location and the nature and possibilities that come with it, the range of courses, Finland’s reputation for excellent quality of education, Lappish innovation, sights and culture, partner schools and recommendations, the promotion and marketing of Lapland and the schools, and the many hobby and free time possibilities that may not be possible in the applicant’s home country. Also, the notion that one can learn many useful skills in this Northern location may be a big pull force to some, and the fact that these skills will be great for future working life. The skills include improved language and personal development, cross-cultural working and communication skills, and learning to take the most challenging weather conditions and long distances in this Northern location into account. There are different types of applicants from different countries and cultures, where in some the biggest pull factor is the Lappish nature, Santa Claus and winter whereas for some the biggest pull factor is the quality of education and teaching. Therefore, the applicants can be experience-seeking or degree-seeking. The push forces in this case may be the unavailability of a degree programme in Lapland, which is then sought after elsewhere. Another push factor could be the wish to experience something new, whether that be in a bigger city in the south, or going abroad to study.

## 5 FOREIGN STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES IN LAPLAND

### 5.1 Introducing the survey

A survey was made on the online survey tool Webropol, because the wish was to hear from students themselves about a few subjects featured in this thesis. The aim was to discover what reasons were behind the students' journey to Lapland, i.e. what Lapland's push and pull factors are from students' perspective. The aim was also to see whether their expectations of Lapland and their studies were met, and if they were overall satisfied. The thought was that if something that needs more attention would be discovered, for instance if the students would report feeling bad culture shock at first, this information would be important for the schools in Lapland to have, as they could then find means to help the students, in this case provide support and tools for the culture shock. As the schools would be more prepared for possible problems, the students would be more likely to have an even more positive experience, eventually leading to more word-of-mouth marketing which brings more new students to Lapland, as discussed in the push and pull factors in studies -chapter. It was thought, that the results of this survey may prove something important to the schools' marketing and student acquisition teams.

After a failed attempt to reach one group of exchange students via the school email, social media was resorted to, in true modern-day fashion. Some current and former international students were reached out to through a couple of Lapland UAS Facebook groups. To get responses from not only Lapland UAS but also the University of Lapland, a Facebook -page called "University of Lapland International Students" was contacted, which then promoted the survey on their page. This method of contacting students via social media proved itself more effective in this case, as responses started to show up shortly after. Furthermore, the reason why it was chosen to limit the research and survey to international students, is the aim to get opinions from people that come from all over the world and from different cultures to see Lapland through these international students' eyes.

The survey consisted of 15 open questions, as the aim was that the students were able to write freely what they were thinking, in order to get as authentic responses as possible. There were a total of 21 respondents to the questionnaire. Next, the questions will be gone through one by one and the responses to them will be discussed.

## 5.2 Examining the survey's results

### 1. Shortly introduce yourself

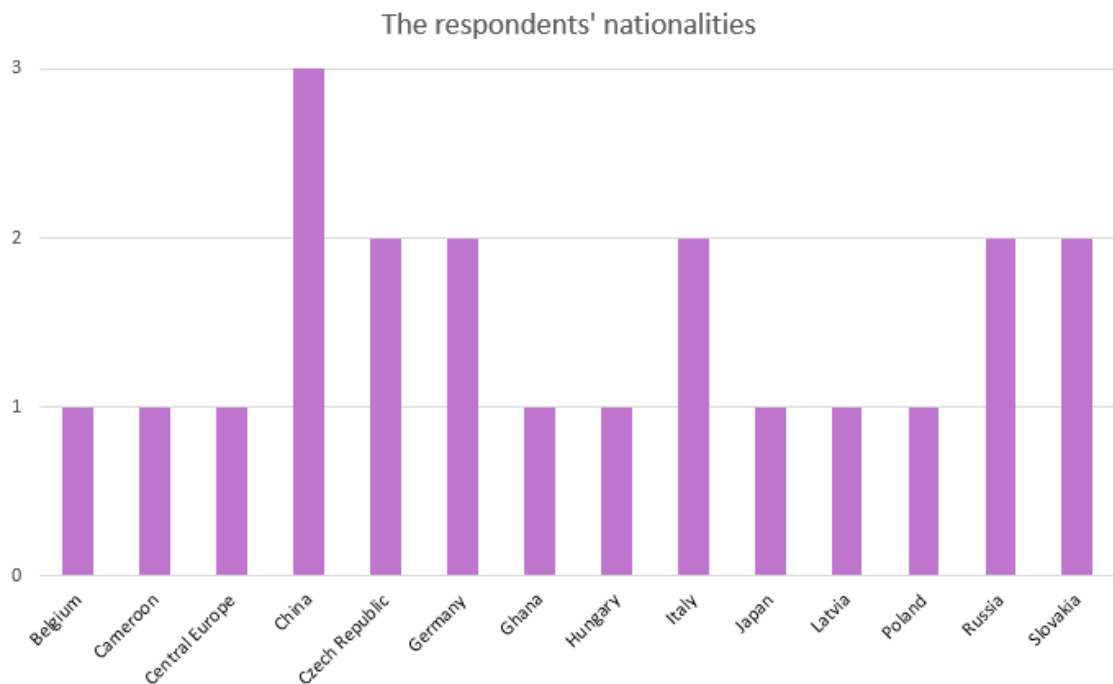
The reason why this question was chosen not to be specified for example to state their names and what they are studying and where, because I wanted to get a generalized image of the students of Lapland. Furthermore, some people do not want to put their names on anything, and I did not want that to be a deciding factor for some not to respond to my survey. This way, the students had free hands to share whatever they wanted about themselves.

Seven people stated their names, most did not. Around half stated their age, and the average age was 22,5. Six of the respondents mentioned Lapland UAS, one mentioned LYY (Student Union of the University of Lapland), and some just mentioned their studies in Lapland or Rovaniemi or their study field unspecified which institution they are studying at.

### 2. Where do you come from?

For this part, a table was created (Table 2) to showcase the nationalities of the respondents easier. On the bottom of the chart are the nationalities, and the number of respondents of that nationality is on the left side. I was pleased to see that there were responses to the survey from so many different places – different countries in Europe and going all the way to African and Asian countries. Three respondents were from China, two students replied from Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Russia and Slovakia and the remaining came from single respondents from Belgium, Cameroon, Central Europe (unspecified), Ghana, Hungary, Japan, Latvia and Poland. A couple of students also specified the cities they come from – one from Prague in the Czech Republic and the other from Cracow, Poland.

Table 2. The survey's respondents' nationalities



### 3. Why did you choose to leave and study in another country?

Questions three and four were probably the most important ones regarding this thesis, as in these it would be possible to find out about the push factors that have lead the students abroad, and Lapland's pull factors in the reasons why they chose to apply here. Originally, the aim was to use screenshots to show all of the responses, but the text ended up looking so small that it was feared, that it would not be visible enough to read. Every response is important, especially to these two questions, so they will all be listed here with some corrected English to improve the flow and understandability of the text. The reasons the respondents chose to leave their home countries, also meaning the push factors for these individuals are...

- Because I want to know more culture and different perspectives of Business study.
- Because it will give me a great experience for the future
- Find more opportunities
- Finland has the best education system in the world



- I was bored at my home university and wanted to discover some other country
- It was spontaneous decision, I wanted to study law but I did not get enough points to be in top class! So, I just put everything besides me and left
- To experience different cultures and different ways of doing things
- Prefer to study in a more practical way
- Because it is a once in a lifetime opportunity and I wanted to gain more experience
- New experiences
- Getting to know new people
- Actually, I did not leave, I just participated in an exchange programme what lasted a semester
- I am already studying in another country than the one I am from, but I really wanted to go on Erasmus to experience another whole new country I had never been to before
- I wanted to gain some new experiences, meet people from all over the world and to improve my English skills
- To improve my language skills, adventure, meet new people, and get to know more about North and Finland
- It was my motivation ever since high school
- Because I like international environment
- There was a sound in my head that I should go and try something new
- It is international and useful in helping me to get an international educational background and also it was free to attend.

- I have always thought about living and getting the chance to know people from different countries and cultures. I think it is something very useful to get to know different cultures in today's world
- Because I had never been to other countries until I was 20 years old and I wanted to challenge to discover my possibility in another world
- To experience new environment and culture.

#### 4. Why did you choose to come to Lapland?

Similar to the previous question, the responses for this question are listed here. The reasons why the students chose to come to Lapland, meaning the pull forces of Lapland for these respondents were...

- there was a cooperation between Chinese university and Lapland UAS, so that was the biggest reason
- Basically I applied for few university's in Finland I was chosen by Lapland
- It was not my first choice
- To explore. I had heard so much about the Arctic and wanted to have a great experience.
- A better school than my other options and the excitement of the Nordic environment
- One graduated student came to our high school and started to tell everything about school and Lapland, so I decided to take this opportunity
- Because it was Santa's hometown
- My partner lives here
- It was the last choice
- Northern lights

- New experiences
- Never been to a northern country
- Some of the previous Erasmus participants recommended it, and I found Finland and Lapland interesting also myself
- I choose Lapland specifically for the special experience I could gain there in terms of landscapes, weather, etc... Also, Finland is well known for its great school system, so I wanted to try that out
- I've chosen Lapland because I was interested in the country itself, the nature, the culture of the Sámi people and of course the Northern Lights and the reindeers
- To get to know about North and Finland, it was my first time in Lapland, I have never been at North
- I preferred north of Europe and Lapin AMK was available for us.
- I found it really challenging to experience the perks of living in Lapland as for instance the lack of daylight and cold weather.
- I knew I wanted to go to Finland. I had two choices and I chose the very North.
- Free education, fresh air and unique study environment for me
- I have always been fascinated by Lapland and Finland in general, but never had the chance to go there
- Because I'm interested in forest resources in Finland and my university has an agreement with Lapin AMK where I can study forestry
- Free education, safe society, unique nature

#### 5. What was your expectation of Lapland before arriving here?

14 of the respondents mentioned the cold weather or snow among their expectations. Actually, 17 of the 21 respondents mentioned nature in some way in what they were expecting from Lapland. One respondent did not have any expectations as she just wanted to see it for herself, and another reported that they did not have any expectations except for the cold weather – another student also adding that the coldness they expected was not as cold as what the reality was.

Regarding the studies, here is what the respondents were expecting from Lapland: nice study environment, small class, lots of lectures, not much free time, high quality school system, praxis-oriented studies, different type of studying, and higher level of education. One of the respondents also added that they were also prepared for challenges concerning the language knowledge related to business.

Regarding other factors that the respondents mentioned, apart from the cold and the snow that have already been mentioned, they included: quiet, reindeer everywhere, few people, more tourists during winter, calm, magical, exciting place, lots of adventures, beautiful, clean, crisp and rural landscape, distant people, friendly people, well English-speaking people, Santa Claus, dark, amazing, desolate, and the northern lights. One respondent expected to meet people from different parts of the world. One also expected that there probably would not be much to do, explaining that he is comparing Rovaniemi to bigger cities with frequent concerts, parties and events.

#### 6. Has that expectation been different to the reality?

Thirteen of the respondents reported feeling somewhat that the expectation has not been different to the reality, and the rest felt that Lapland has been beyond their expectations. Starting off with the students who got what they were expecting, here are some things that they added. One student said that there was not much differences, but there was less entertainment than he expected. Another wrote that it was just as expected: during summer reindeer were everywhere and winter was very cold. One felt that all has been positive – he has not had troubles relating to the language, and had much more free time than he

thought he would. One student wrote, "It was indeed very cold but I really enjoyed my stay" and another commented that they loved the exchange, mainly because of meeting the other Erasmus students in Rovaniemi.

The rest of the respondents felt that the reality has somewhat been different to the reality. One student reasoned this with his comment that there are not that many people compared to the bigger cities, nonetheless it was way more than he imagined, also the weather was colder than he ever imagined or experienced before but all in all, the people in Lapland are welcoming more than what he expected. One gushed that the reality preceded their best expectations and that they loved it in Lapland; the nature, the atmosphere, and the student life in Kuntotie (the area of student apartments by DAS, mostly accommodated by international students). One replied that the reality was somewhat different as they eventually ended up burying themselves in their studies to checkout earlier than they expected. There was no further explanation with this response, so I am not sure whether this implied that the respondent was not very happy in Lapland which is what made them want to leave earlier, or what happened. One wrote that there was not much difference with their expectations vs. reality, except that the cold was more intense than what they expected, and the public transportation was not the best, though other than that, the school was fine. One expected more facilities and entertainment in Rovaniemi whereas another wrote that it was not as cold as they expected, and that there are plenty of possibilities how to spend their free time. One commented, that the dark days were not so depressive as they expected, and that they got used to the cold pretty soon. Another also thought that bearing the Finnish cold would have been harder, and they have also found out that Rovaniemi has not been such a desolate town as expected. Finally, one respondent felt that the reality has been different in a good way, that Lapland has very beautiful, pure nature all the time, saying that only its existence makes him so relaxed, and that even though Lapland is a rural area in the very north, Lapland is also an international area and demanded as a tourism destination.

7. Did you have specific expectations on the level of Finnish education?

Questions 7 and 8 were to see how the international students' expectations of the education have been met with the reality, as this is obviously a big thing that can affect the overall student satisfaction. A few responded that they did not have any expectations, some adding to this that they had only heard that it was really good or among the best in the world. Here are the students' expectations of Finnish education from the responses: independent studies and self-motivation to accomplish something; very high level; education at its best, no improvements needed; difficult; praxis-oriented; well-developed with lots of discussions on topics of actuality; more groupwork, smaller courses and lots of workload during the semester, but in the end there are nearly no exams; more workshops; no homework; and finally, an expectation to learn something special from its educational system.

8. How do you feel about it now after coming here, has the reality been better or worse?

The responses and opinions for this question were definitely divided. Around nine of the respondents reported feeling somewhat that the reality matched their expectations. One respondent said that everything is good, yet sometimes it is boring here and it is hard to look for something to do. Though, it is assumed that that referred more to leisure time than school. One replied, that some things are better and others have not impressed him, though nothing has been worse compared to the expectations. One wrote that he did not have specific expectations, so it was hard to say. One response stated: "I think it lives up to the hype. The Finnish educational system is definitely worth the paper on which it is written". Three students replied that it has been just as expected, one adding that meeting international people and the education and teaching styles have been excellent. One student wrote that staying in Lapland feels good, though sometimes depressed in the middle of studies, but that generally everything is nice. Another said that everything has its advantages and disadvantages too, continuing that the advantages were the educational system and the disadvantages were the accommodation by DAS which was too far from the school and the lack of public transport.

Eight students responded that they felt that the reality has been even better than the expectation of the studies. One respondent wrote that the people are open-minded and helpful, especially tutors and teachers, and the landscape is awesome, adding that he cannot believe that he has seen the Northern Lights. One wrote that the education was higher level, a good experience and more interesting, and another added that it has been surprising and that he has liked the way his University works and he did not find it really hard, but stimulating. One respondent said, that Japan is always clouded and a competitive place, therefore Lapland can be dream place to her in a way. Another student's response had a lot of good points, so I wanted to quote it here fully. "It is much better than higher education in my home country but that is my personal preference. I have always preferred to put into practice what I learn. I have to say that even though the amount of contact lectures is less I feel I have learnt much more compared to I would have in a traditional university. Real life cases and work together with theory makes me ready for working life during the degree studies. It is however not for everyone as you have a lot of independence and the work you do is demanding. You have to have great disciplines to be able to complete your studies in time." One student also wrote that the reality was of course better, but expressed letting himself down with study motivation, adding that he does not regret coming and studying here, but is disappointed in himself for being lazy and his lack of motivation.

The remaining four students felt that the reality was somewhat worse than what they expected. One student wrote "we have a way better education in Belgium with a deeper knowledge" and another compared the experience with his University in the Netherlands, saying that he felt that the level was a bit lower, adding "but that also means that I had a relaxing 4-month period!". The other two respondents also based their opinion on a worse-than-the-expectation experience by the notion of easy or simple studies. One felt slightly disappointed, saying that he does not think Finnish education is efficient at all, that they usually spent plenty of time at the university, but did not learn that much, and on the top of that, it was really easy to get good grades. Another student wrote that the reality might be a little worse, that he expected the University to be much harder although he really likes the way they have been taught.

However, no conclusions will be drawn from this issue that some have had with the level of education in the two universities in Rovaniemi as some students have felt that the studies have been very difficult, and time and effort commanding whereas others have felt that it has been too easy to pass. I believe that this is not a case of comparing schools to see who has better education, more so that the culture from which the student is coming from and the educational practises they are accustomed to and also the expectations of the education which the student has within them plays a big part in what their final experience ultimately is. Furthermore, we are all individuals and different people, and not everyone can have the same experience as others. The results are not in any way belittled or dismissed, of course the schools can look in to the matter, as the reality is that a few students felt that the education was not deep or efficient enough. Though, according to my personal experience studying in Lapland University of Applied Sciences, the education has been of excellent quality, combining different ways of teaching, and the fact that the studies are very practise-oriented is great for the student to become prepared for working life. Of course, all courses and study fields have different practises and expectations from students, and this can vary quite much.

9. Have you felt a sense of a close community in your school, have you made friends?

Out of the 21 respondents, 19 said that they have made friends. Many said that they had friends from many different cultures that they are frequently in touch with even after studies. A couple of students reported that the students tend to stay between exchange students, even just communicating with their compatriots. A couple reported feeling that it was hard to make friends with the local citizens, one specifying that it was difficult to speak with Finnish boys, and one did not feel so close to the local community, though they did make friends at school. One student said that they felt a strong sense of community between the exchange students, but did not meet or stay in touch with many or almost any of the Finnish students. It seems like there is something to improve between the relationship between the exchange students and the Finnish students. What I would recommend, is that whenever new exchange students come to the school and start courses with the local students, any local students that feel like they can be



people that the new students can count on with help, someone to talk to and so on, could let the teacher know that. So, when the new classes would start, the teacher could then announce these helpful students, sort of like “unofficial tutors”, so the exchange students may feel more relieved that they have someone who speaks the local language to help them if they are going through a hard time. Also, creating spaces online such as on Facebook could be an easy way for the exchange students to get to know the Finnish students or to get help with something, if they are too shy to just go talk to these “unofficial tutors”.

10. Have you had help whenever you've had problems?

My motivation for this question once again lay on the agenda to see if there are any problems that would affect the basic satisfaction of the students' experiences, as if something were to come up, the information would be beneficial to the schools. In this question, however, the responses were overwhelmingly positive. Only one response was that they got help when needed most of the time, though it remained unclear whether the student had tried to contact teachers or peers to help. One response simply stated, “not yet”, assuming it referred that they had not had problems yet. One student said that they often just solved the problem themselves. One respondent wrote that they did not remember having problems, but “everyone was super nice to me, so I guess it wouldn't be a problem to get some help, if needed”. The rest of the responses stated that yes, they have had help. Many praised the people that had been very helpful to them: the teachers, the Finnish students, and other peers and classmates. One mentioned their tutor, and another also added that their friends and people of Rovaniemi have been very nice and helpful constantly. Some also mentioned that they got help to issues on and off campus, which is nice that the help also extends outside of the school perimeter and school issues. Finally, one respondent wrote “Yes, always. Finnish people are super polite and willing to help. School teachers and student tutors were always available for any issue”.

11. Have you had problems with the level of your English skills or the skills of a teacher?

Eleven of the respondents said that they did not have any problems with their or the teachers' English skills, some of them even praised the teachers' English.

Though, out of these respondents one brought up another issue that they had had with a teacher who had said that this student “didn’t have to broadcast my opinion because I was studying in Finland for free”. There is not more information on this incident but according to the student, he expressed his dissatisfaction and set the teacher straight. Three people had had problems with the teachers’ language skills, one adding that some had difficulties expressing themselves or did not have good command of the language, and another specified that “there are some teachers who should not possibly teach international students as they do not understand or are ignorant for cultural differences”. Seven of the respondents reported having problems with their own language skills at first, but that they overcame it and improved their English.

12. Is there a big difference between your culture and its values and those here?

For this question, the answers were quite divided – but that is to be expected as the respondents were from a lot of different places. Overall, it could be said that the replies were divided quite evenly in three answer categories: yes, just small differences, and no. One student who said that there was a big difference added that in Lapland the values are more about calming down, goodness and relaxing, one added living style, food habits and local customs and one mentioned the way to approach people in Finland, naming it the “Finnish bubble”. A couple of students added that life in Lapland is not so stressful and hectic as in their home country, the other adding that “I had felt time running slowly when I was in Lapland. And you cherish your own value not others. But in my country, because of so many people everywhere, something push you and let you do same things with others. Otherwise you would feel that you are left behind from others or something like this”. To get more culture specific, one student wrote that the Finnish and Russian cultures are pretty different. One wrote that the Chinese have different values in many ways, and another said that the Chinese like food, prefer more activities and are hardworking, but that Finns chasing more about life quality and quiet – summarizing that in a nutshell, Chinese are about collectivism whereas Finns are about individualism.

Many said that there are some differences, but nothing too big. One added that when she is speaking with a Finn, they might find some surprising differences. One said that Finns are much more open-minded than Germans, and also more interested in meeting new people to show them their home and to integrate them in their daily life. One reported that there are some differences but the values are quite the same. One student wrote that “there are differences, however it is not like everything would be on the other end of the spectrum. There is nothing which would make it impossible to fit in”. Finally, an opinion from one of the students who reported feeling that there are not big differences, stated that we have “the same kind of humor and sort of a similar history of the country within Europe. But there was a stronger sense of community there”.

13. Do you think that the skills you learn here will help or harm you in your working life when you return to your home country?

The reason why it was chosen to include this question, is for a few reasons. It is a continuation to the previous question about the differences in culture and values. It was wondered, that if a student for example studies in Lapland and learns a specific skill, quality or way of doing business, for instance to actively share and bring forward her opinion and be vocal in conversation, and this student then returns to her home country where it is more courteous to be silent, this could possibly be problematic, or at least require the student to readjust her business demeanour. The hope was to find something important from the students' answers that could help the schools to tackle these issues and speak about them during lectures. However, looking at the answers, most of the students seemed to think that the skills learned will only be useful.

Moreover, 19 of the respondents agreed that the skills learned in Lappish schools will help them in the working life back home. One student added that they learned more personal skills here, one said that they learned to work with people from foreign countries, their different values and ways of working, and one student wrote that they got new insights from completely new subjects to them. One student wrote that they are now braver with communication with people and speaking in English, and another student was also saying that they are now more confident, believes in themselves, and feels like they can solve any task or

problem in future work. One respondent wrote that the skills will absolutely help in their future, gaining many important things, stating that they are sure this experience will make their life go well.

One student wrote that they did not think the skills would help them in the working life per say, but they would not be harmful either. One pondered that it was hard to say, as we have totally different cultures, but ultimately agreed that due to globalisation the skills would be more helpful in working life. One of the respondents had a different experience than the others, stating that unfortunately, if they return to Russia, all knowledges will be lost because Russia goes in a very different way of business etc. This was an interesting discovery, and as Russians come to Lapland to study in quite big numbers, this could definitely be something to investigate further, perhaps between the students and teachers.

#### 14. Or do you have plans to possibly stay in Finland?

Out of the 21 respondents, nine replied with “no” or “not yet”. One respondent added: “I enjoyed the time when I was there, but I feel it was more a one-time experience”. One also added that they would not stay in Finland but would like to return to the North to another destination. Four remained unsure as to whether they would stay in Finland, as they were still in the middle of their studies, two of those specifying that they really enjoyed their stay in Finland and would like to come back at some point. One respondent was coming back to Finland to do another semester in Helsinki, and another wrote that they were back in their home country now, but would return to Lapland soon to continue with a Master’s degree and stay here afterwards. Finally, five respondents said that they will stay in Finland, one adding that if they find a job in Finland or Europe, and another adding that if they learn Finnish, then yes.

#### 15. Here you can write freely anything that comes to mind

A free space at the end was added, so that if some of the respondents had something they wanted to say and it did not fit under any of the questions, they could write it here. Eleven of the respondents had something to add to this section. The answers consisted of mostly praises about Finland, Lapland, and the studies, and a few good luck wishes for my thesis. The students wrote that

Finland and Lapland are amazing places, that it was a good adventure and a great experience, one adding that it changed his life forever and another even stating that it was the best experience in his life. A former student's reply that I wanted to share fully is this: "Finland, the city of Rovaniemi, Lapland UAS and Innobarentslab have been quite instrumental in shaping and moulding my academic and professional growth. I really do appreciate. As an Entrepreneur currently in the US, the skills acquired have been indispensable in the acquisition and development of knowledge and aptitude". There was also a couple of replies that included some things that could be improved. The first student wrote that the only problem he had was the difficulty to have friends and his inability to speak Finnish, also adding that he has been to bigger cities like Oulu, Helsinki and Jyväskylä and according to him the people there were more open and friendly than in Lapland. The other student wrote that "The school might spend more time to build the bridge of communication between international students and locals".

### 5.3 Summary of the survey's results

There were 21 respondents to the Webropol survey, and their average age was 22,5 years old. The respondents came from Russia, and countries in Europe, Asia and Africa. The reasons why these students wanted to study in a foreign country, centred around wanting to explore and experience different cultures and environment, seeking the great education in Finland, wanting to gain new experiences, and improving their language skills. This could lead to the assumption, that at least for these young international students, the push forces for international studies are mostly about the need to explore something new and the wish for better education and improved language and future working life skills. The reasons why the respondents chose Lapland centred around cooperation between schools, recommendations from former students, being selected by Lapland, wanting better education, free education, the unique nature and natural phenomenon, and new experiences and exploring. The assumption for this case could then be made, that these international students' pull forces towards Lapland were the superior education and the recommendations for it, and the experiences and nature in Lapland.

Some common factors that the respondents said to have expected of Lapland before arriving here, were cold weather, snow and beautiful nature and natural phenomenon, high level of education, silence, friendly people, Santa Claus and the “magic” of Lapland. Nearly two thirds of the respondents felt that their expectations of Lapland have been similar to the reality. The respondents who felt that the reality turned out to be different, were surprised by the coldness and that Rovaniemi is not as desolate as they thought, and some overall felt that the reality was even better than expected. Many respondents had expectations of a high-level education in Finland, which is quite difficult and practise-oriented with small classes, group work and workshops. 17 of the respondents felt that the reality of the Finnish education was just as expected, or even exceeded their expectations. The remaining four however felt that the level of education was not as good as they were expecting – that it was easy and not very efficient. However, some of the respondents who felt positive about the reality reported feeling that the studies were challenging, so I concluded, that it really comes down to the student’s own expectations and previous study experiences, how they will perceive studies elsewhere.

Nineteen reported that they had made friends, though an issue came up with a couple of students saying that people tend to stick with their fellow exchange students or even just the people from their country, and two respondents also felt that it was difficult to make friends with the local citizens. I think that the Finnish students should be encouraged to talk to and offer help to the international students more, and shuffling the groups for workshops, group assignments etc. is a great way for everyone to get to know the students they normally do not speak with. Regarding the question of whether the students had had help whenever they had problems, the responses were really positive and no issues came up with this one.

Around half of the respondents did not have problems with their teachers’ or their own language skills, seven said to have had problems with their own linguistic skills at the beginning of the studies but that they had overcome it, and some applauded the teachers’ language whereas three people had felt that there were some issues with the language skills of some teachers – one also adding that they did not like some teachers’ lack of knowledge or ignorance for cultural

differences. Regarding whether there are big cultural and values' differences, the responses were quite evenly divided to three answers, yes, only small differences, and no. Many thought that Lapland is more about life quality, calm and not so stressful as their home country. The responses for the question regarding if the skills learned in Lapland will be helpful once returning to the home country, the responses were very positive. The students valued the skills they had learned, including personal skills and development, multicultural work, confidence with communication and English skills and task solving. However, once issue came up from one student, who wrote that once they return to Russia, the knowledge will be lost because Russia goes in a different way of business. As Russian students are frequent applicants in Lappish schools, this could be something to investigate further. Five respondents were planning on staying in Finland after their studies, two students were coming back to continue their studies, one in Helsinki and the other in Lapland, four remained unsure, and the rest did not have plans to stay in Finland.

## 6 MARKETING LAPLAND

### 6.1 Lapland's tourism marketing

This chapter will be a look into what Lappish companies operating in the tourism sector do to utilize the Arctic factor. The aim is to see if they know how to take advantage of their knowledge of Lapland's push and pull factors. The webpages and social media sites of different Lappish companies were searched online, and it led to making a short analysis on three companies operating in different types of tourism businesses in different municipalities of Lapland.

Visit Rovaniemi is the local tourist board of Rovaniemi. They engage in image marketing, communications and PR, media visits, tourist information, and congress marketing. Visit Rovaniemi says to be the guardian of Rovaniemi's Christmas brand of "the Official Hometown of Santa Claus". According to their own website, they keep the Christmas brand values central throughout their operations, and those values are authenticity, giving and caring, surprise and innovation, and constant presence. Furthermore, by utilizing these in planning and realising everyday activities, high-visibility events or communication, they strive to help Rovaniemi achieve the reputation it deserves. Their four values are definitely what can be seen in their marketing as well. Their tasks, which concern my task of investigating their marketing, also include promoting Rovaniemi as an international travel destination, coordinating regional joint marketing efforts, selling and promoting Rovaniemi as a destination for meetings and congress, and maintaining Rovaniemi a subject in international media. (Visit Rovaniemi a)

Visit Rovaniemi is obviously an expert at marketing, and being able to promote Rovaniemi to the max. Though, of course, that is what they exist to do. When you open their webpage, the first thing you see is a large moving image of Santa Claus hugging a visitor. The wintery opening image is balanced with a highlighted heading, "8 reasons why you should visit Rovaniemi in summer". When you scroll down a bit, the four main factors they are promoting on the main page right now with big images that lead to subpages, are Santa Claus, Northern Lights, Arctic Circle and Midnight Sun. At the very top of the page, there are links to their social media channels: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube, and after that, links



to current events, weather and webcams. After that there are 5 headers that open several subheadings, providing great information about Rovaniemi. Under “love” you can learn about Santa Claus, nature and the natural phenomenon, the Arctic Circle, local food, and others. Under “plan” you can learn about getting here, when to go, getting around, map and other practical information like this. Under “stay” you can browse different hotels and places of accommodation. Under “see & do” there are activities, events, sights, eat and drink, shopping and other services. Finally, under “features”, there are some tips, lists, articles and things like that. The Visit Rovaniemi page is such a great site to learn anything and everything about Rovaniemi, things are easy to find in the categories, and the information is displayed beautifully with bright images and visually pleasing themes. (Visit Rovaniemi b)

After scrolling Visit Rovaniemi’s Facebook page from the beginning of April to mid-May, they post quite often daily, with at most three days between posting. Their posts generally promote Rovaniemi effectively with beautiful photos and videos of the nature, compelling-looking articles, countdown to the Midnight Sun, and even a competition to win a summer trip to Rovaniemi. Their Instagram page is also very visually pleasing, you feel like you could scroll the picture feed of Lapland’s nature, huskies, activities, the Northern Lights and more endlessly. There is definitely something just right in the way Visit Rovaniemi handles its marketing. Their Facebook page alone has 110 942 followers currently. They seem to know exactly what to promote, when and how, and how to appeal to specific markets. (Visit Rovaniemi - the Official Hometown of Santa Claus Facebook; Visit Rovaniemi Instagram)

Next, the website of Husky & Co – a safari organizer in Saariselkä that offers guided husky, reindeer, snowmobile, and aurora safaris was analysed. The website is visually pleasing, showing images of the different safaris in beautiful winter setting. They appeal to the travellers wish to party and explore, adding that in Finnish Lapland you can do both, encouraging the traveller to “let us take you out into the wilderness and make your vacation memorable”. As you scroll down the page, they are currently promoting summer season. “Come visit us during the magical summer when sun never sets and sky was painted with thousands of different colours. Walking through the forests and climbing up the fells allows us

to be one with the nature.” Husky & Co definitely seems to know how to utilize many of the pull factors of Lapland, specializing in nature. Though, that is understandable as they are essentially a company that only operates in the Lappish nature. (Husky & Co)

Finally, the webpage of Nellim Wilderness Hotels & Safaris was checked out. Wilderness Hotel Nellim is a family run hotel, that decorates its hotel rooms and suites following the surrounding nature and the Sami culture. They also have Aurora Bubbles for watching the Northern Lights. They have expanded their operations, so they now run the wilderness hotel Nellim, Muotka, Inari and Nangu. They do a good job appealing to the tourists that are interested in Lapland’s nature. They mention relaxation, outdoor activities, the nature, and getting away from all noise and light pollution in their introduction. Their Facebook- and Instagram pages were also looked over, as the aim was to see what kind of imagery they put out to attract tourists to choose them. A common theme was noticed inside their website and social media pages, that they like to post a very large amount about the Northern Lights – perhaps, that is one of their main selling points and they know it, hence promoting it vastly. On their Facebook page, they often post about the nature, sharing beautiful photos with small facts about Lapland and the nature. It is refreshing that the page is not just an endless promotion of the hotel and packages, more so a beautiful stream of reasons why you should come to Lapland. Their Instagram feed is also a beautiful stream of pictures taken from the Lappish nature and activities, like the Northern Lights, sunsets, animals, Sami people and snowy landscapes. This company seems to know what the pull factors for especially foreign tourists are, and they are able to play to that advantage. (Wilderness Hotel Nellim Facebook; Wilderness Hotel Nellim Instagram)

## 6.2 Marketing at the schools

Originally, the idea was to have interviews by both Lapland UAS’ and University of Lapland’s communications or marketing representatives, though it was only possible to get in touch with Lapland UAS. Therefore, the University of Lapland’s website and social media channels are analysed to gather some information also on how Lapland can be seen in their online marketing, and the interview of

Lapland UAS is presented later in the chapter. Both of the schools do lots of newspaper marketing, attend student fairs and other events, and reach out to other schools in many ways, but since information on these things cannot be easily accessed by myself or the international applicants, the information search is limited to what can be found online: the university's webpage, social media channels, and possibly other sites.

The website of the University of Lapland itself is a very basic looking website for a University, you can browse for information about admissions, studies, and such. One thing that was noticed while browsing the different sub-pages, is that the compelling imagery and marketing of Lapland or the school as a region cannot be found, such as what is on Lapland UAS' website and their joint website #defineland which is introduced later in the chapter. What is found on the website however, is the student stories, which can be found when you click the first tab, admissions. For a possible applicant browsing the website, these student stories may be quite alluring as they give a face to the studies, allowing one to picture themselves at the school. I would, however, like to see more imagery to attract people to Lapland specifically. An article was found on their website that prescribes the best things in Lapland in their opinion: experiencing the unknown, freedom, adventure, the Northern Lights, reindeer and the beautiful nature. Furthermore, the interaction of the urban and wild is reported to have had captivated the thoughts of the international students. (University of Lapland; University of Lapland 2017)

The Facebook page of University of Lapland seems to be posting frequently, oftentimes a few times a day and sometimes a couple of days in between of posting. Their posts are mostly promotions of their events and application rounds, and links to blog pieces and other news. Their Instagram account, however, looks to appeal more to the Arctic factor, sharing pictures of snowy Lapland. It is still quite surprising that they do not seem to be taking advantage of the Lappish factor and the pull forces of Lapland as well as, for example, Lapland UAS does. (University of Lapland Facebook; University of Lapland Instagram)

A joint marketing mission of both Lapland UAS and University of Lapland was discovered, going by the name and hashtag of "defineland". It looks to be

created for international students/possible applicants to acquire information on studying in Lapland from one single page. The website features links to both Lapland UAS and University of Lapland in the top corner. Then, a big logo of the #defineland which students seem to be using on social media. A large set of images automatically roll on the front page, consisting of six statements of Lapland: It's diverse – It's extreme – It's woody – It's light – It's clean – It's smart. Each statement has a once-sentence explanation under it, and a describing picture. For example, it's smart – smart at the heart and wild by nature. The website then tells basic information of Lapland and studies there, introducing the different degrees one can study there. There is a feed of Instagram posts using the #defineland and even a FAQ answering great questions such as “What is student life like in Lapland?” and “I have been told it is cold and dark, how will I survive?”. There are then introductions to a few student stories, and contact information. This website absolutely amazing. The fact that Lapland UAS and the University of Lapland are not pitted against each other, but more joined together to bring students to Lapland, is inspiring. It also seems that they have done a great job taking the pull forces of Lapland into consideration. (DefineLapland)

### 6.3 Interview with the Marketing Coordinator of Lapland UAS

Marketing coordinator of Lapland University of Applied Sciences, Miia Salminen, was successfully reached out to. The short questionnaire was emailed to her, consisting of four questions. The questionnaire was conducted in Finnish, but the questions and answers will of course be translated. The questions were constructed in a way to give an understanding of how Lapland is being marketed by the school to different student groups, how marketing has changed since the tuition fees and how Lapland affects her everyday work in marketing. The answers acquired from this “interview” were really great, useful and relevant to this thesis. The answers were beyond any of my expectations and it was great to learn so much about how Lapland UAS perceives the Lappish factor and its relevance in marketing.

Question 1: “Now that tuition fees have been introduced to students from outside of EU and ETA countries and free education can no longer be seen as a marketing advantage, have you had to alter the marketing to these students?”

How?” Salminen confirmed that yes, they have had to alter the marketing. They have also had to start investing more into the marketing, because Lapland UAS has gotten many great students from outside of the EU and ETA countries, such as Russia, China and Vietnam, and they want to keep getting applicants/students from these countries. They have made an effort to find new channels and means of marketing what the school offers to these areas in question, among others. Furthermore, after the introduction of tuition fees, Lapland UAS has also targeted their marketing to those European countries that the tuition fee does not concern, for instance Eastern European countries. They have also boosted the marketing of the international degree programmes to Finns or foreigners living in Finland in order to acquire more applicants from them than previously. These measures have been taken for example for the reason, that they know that the tuition fees will affect the number of applicants concerning specific countries.

Question 2: “Which things are in your opinion the most important things to include in marketing, when one wants to make Lapland compelling to international applicants?” Salminen commented, that it very much depends on which countries the marketing is targeted to – which things they find interesting and appealing. She continued with an example, that in some countries the most compelling factor is the Lappish nature, winter and Santa Claus whereas in some countries the quality of education and teaching is more appreciated. Based on this, they have divided the target groups to the “experience-seeking” and the “degree-seeking”. The aimed vision/mental image that Lapland UAS wants to create with its marketing include for example Lapland’s exoticness and nature, the Arctic surroundings, quality, being easily approachable and acting together. They have compiled authentic facts about Finland and Lapland for the use of international marketing, which they then divide to the marketing of different countries based on what possibly could appeal in which country. Salminen shared some examples of these things: safety, purity, the Northern Lights, the Midnight Sun, the forests, exoticness, innovativeness, connections, the quality of education, and so forth.

Question 3: “Which things are in your opinion the most important things to include in marketing, when one wants to make Lapland compelling to domestic applicants? Are there big differences between the marketing for domestic and international applicants?” Salminen wrote, that there is a very big difference

between the marketing for domestic and international applicants. She explained that as their target group for the “regular studies” (fin. päiväopinnot) is 19-24-year-olds whereas to multiform studies (fin. monimuoto-opinnot) 25-45-year-olds, based on these age groups the marketing for just the domestic applicants is already different. Foreigners appreciate the quality of education, safety, and Lapland’s exoticness (reindeer, the Northern Lights and Santa Claus) a lot, which in return do not raise much interest within Finland. Moreover, she explained that in Southern Finland people do appreciate Lapland’s nature, the seasons, a proper winter and the sense of community, that can be seen at school for instance in that the study groups are much smaller here than in bigger educational institutes and the teachers know the students by name, whereupon you do not feel like just one in a mass. Even though Lapland University of Applied Sciences is mid-sized in Finland’s scale, it is often perceived as small just because of the location.

Salminen further explained, that while marketing Lapland to domestic applicants and especially when the marketing is targeted outside of Lapland, they want to emphasize the fact that even though it feels like Lapland is far away from everything, there are still very good travel connections via train, airplane and more. Regarding applicant marketing, she says that it is important to bring forward the fact that there is also a wide variety of, among others, different services, events, and hobby and exercise possibilities for students. Furthermore, the internationality of Lapland is a good advantage to have, as Rovaniemi is the second biggest tourism destination in Finland, following the capital, Helsinki – however, for instance the price level of apartments in Lapland is lower than in Southern Finland. The conditions in the north also affect many study fields so that when you study here, you learn to take even the most challenging weather conditions and long distances into account, learning many skills like control of distances. These skills may prove themselves as great advantages in working life, so this is what they also want to bring forward.

Question 4: “Is Lapland visible in your everyday work in marketing? How? For example, do you use the Arctic factor or something like that as a theme in all publications/events/social media posts...?” Salminen replied, that they want to bring things forward from the mouths of Lapland UAS’s own students, regarding why one should come to Lapland UAS/Lapland in general to study, as this gives

a much more convincing impression. They also want to bring forward that Lapland is in addition to the beautiful nature, also a very lively place with the same services as is in bigger cities, but also has some space to calm down.

#### 6.4 Final thoughts on marketing Lapland

Finally, to compare the marketing for Lapland overall, the question “Have the right pull factors for marketing been discovered by the tourism companies and schools I observed?” is tried to answer. The answer is yes, these companies and schools in question have done a good job bringing forward the image of Lapland and utilizing it in their marketing – though, some better than others. The observation is also noted, that the marketing for tourism and education is ultimately not that different. Both appeal to the Arctic location, nature, magic and excellence, though of course the schools also promote the great educational system and other factors that make Lapland an excellent place to study. Tourism companies also often promote only specific things that are related to their business – for example safari companies may mostly show wintery and summery Lappish scenery in their marketing whereas for example Lapland UAS shows a wider image of Lapland to attract applicants. Even yet, both tourism companies and schools have generally taken advantage of the knowledge of Lapland’s pull factors, and that overall the same type of marketing can be used between the both sectors.

## 7 DISCUSSION

Now, looking at the list of things that were aimed to include in this thesis, it was established quite well. In the original draft, the goal was also to write more about study satisfaction on a general level, and to compare annual reports and graduation numbers from Lapland UAS and the University of Lapland to make some conclusions about the students' satisfaction and to explore options on how it could be improved. But, because of the already existing workload and tight schedule, that part was decided to leave out. This could, however, be something to further explore with the results of the survey and by making another survey to reach a wider audience of students.

The aim was to explore push and pull factors in tourism, migration and studies, and to then tie this with the practical example of the Lapland region. These things in particular were accomplished well. The intention was to create a survey for international students to get an image of Lapland through their eyes, and that succeeded well. Though, like previously explained, at first the idea was to contact a specific student group via student email, no student replied, which created the first and probably biggest problem during this thesis. The problem was luckily solved through the power of social media. Even though there were only 21 respondents to the survey, there were several nationalities which provided many different perspectives. Furthermore, there was an idea at first to make another survey to explore those Finnish students' ideas of Lapland whom have moved here from further away. This could be an interesting topic for a later research, to compare how different the push and pull factors are for the students coming from outside of Lapland and outside of Finland. Finally, Lapland's marketing was aimed to study, and to explore the marketing of a few Lappish tourism companies and the two schools. A problem with this appeared as the communications employee of the University of Lapland that was messaged did not respond, however that lead to shortly analysing their online marketing. To be quite honest, it did not turn out so well, as of course to hear from the professional herself would have given a much better overall image. The responses from Lapland UAS Marketing Coordinator, however, were fantastic, and it was a great thing to be able to share in this thesis.



Overall writing this thesis has been challenging, yet oftentimes fun and very interesting and rewarding. Writing and at the same time learning about the themes in this thesis was truly enjoyable. Especially, the theory of push and pull factors and its effects in migration, tourism and studies were very interesting, as the author had no previous knowledge about the subject before diving into it while doing research for this thesis. In the beginning there was a worry, that the subjects planned on researching in this thesis would eventually not produce enough text, and that something new would have to be figured out to add to the thesis somewhere along the way to make it longer. However, these subjects turned out to be very thought-provoking and there were many studies, articles etc. that could be written about, creating a quite wide information package to each and every chapter.

## 8 CONCLUSION

Juhana Vanhanen's thesis, which showed, that Lapland is still a desired place to study after the introduction of tuition fees, sparked the interest for this thesis to study push and pull factors and further, questions arose such as why people apply to study in Lapland, how satisfied they then are with their studies, and more. These questions ultimately lead to the survey that was made for international students, which provided the opinions of 21 students to those questions. The survey's results showed, that these young respondents with a mean age of 22,5 years old wanted to study abroad because of a want to explore and experience a different environment and cultures, to seek the great education in Finland, and to improve their language skills. For these respondents, the push factors to study were the need to explore, wanting better education and to get improved language and working life skills. The students chose Lapland because of exploratory reasons like the nature and new experiences for reasons regarding the school, such as being chosen by the school in Lapland, recommendations from former students and cooperation between schools, and wanting better and free education. The pull forces of Lapland for these students were positive recommendations, and experiences and nature in Lapland. Many students were expecting Lapland to be cold, snowy and silent, and around two thirds felt that their expectations were true to the reality. Many also expected high-level, difficult and practice-oriented education in Finland, 17 of 21 respondents feeling that it was as expected, or even exceeding their expectations. Most students also reported to have gotten friends and help whenever needed, and a few said to have been able to improve their language which they struggled with at the beginning. When comparing values and differences or their home countries and Lapland, many thought that Lapland is more about the life quality and that it is not so stressful here. The students reported to have learned personal skills and development, cross-cultural communication and work, confidence in English and task solving skills in Lapland.

A few issues were brought up by the respondents. Four felt that the education was not as good as what they were expecting – more that it was too easy and not very efficient. A few students felt that other exchange students sometimes stayed in their small groups, and that the Finnish students were sometimes hard

to reach, leading to my recommendation to shuffle the groups more whenever workshops etc. are made to ensure better communication between all students. Three students felt that some teachers were not able to communicate properly in English. One Russian student said, regarding skills learned in Lapland, that the knowledge will be lost once returning to Russia, since the business there goes very differently. As Russians take up a large section of international students in Lapland, this could be investigated further, perhaps between the teachers and students. Though these issues may sound like much, the rest of the responses were overall positive, and they gave me an understanding that studying in Lapland is appreciated and well-liked.

This thesis also gives the reader a basic understanding of Lapland as a destination for tourism, migration and studies. It was discovered, that tourism in Lapland is on a constant rise and on a mission to make summer a bigger tourism season. The rising tourism creates jobs to Lapland, however, the population in Lapland keeps slowly falling and there is labor shortage in some working fields, for instance tourism and large-scale industries. The companies giving incentives like a company car, apartment or a better contract could bring more work force to Lapland.

The basics about the push and pull factors that affect tourism, migration and studies were explained about, and a basic introduction to tourism motivation was provided. The final thoughts were brought forward on what Lapland's push and pull factors ultimately are. The pull factors in tourism regard Lapland's magic and the winter or Santa Claus theme, the Arctic factor and location, the attractions, activities, and hobby- and sports possibilities that Lapland offers, the clean and beautiful nature and natural phenomenon. It seems, that experience- and escape-seeking tourists are most popular in Lapland. Push factors for locals could be the want to go someplace warmer and perhaps busier and more shopping-oriented. In migration, the pull factors are availability of jobs, the clean nature and a less stressful place to live whereas the push factors may be fleeing from the cold weather, perhaps unavailability of permanent jobs in for example tourism, and the far-away location. In studies, the pull factors include the Arctic location, nature, range of courses, Finland's reputation for excellent quality of education, sights and culture, learning skills only possible in the north, partner

schools and recommendations, the marketing efforts of Lapland and the schools, and hobby and free time possibilities that may not be possible elsewhere. The push forces in studies may be the unavailability of some degree programmes, or the wish to explore a new or a bigger city for example in Southern Finland or possibly abroad.

Finally, the marketing in Lapland was studied, taking an example of three tourism companies operating in different places in Lapland, and the University of Lapland was analysed online and Lapland UAS through a questionnaire answered by their marketing coordinator. All in all, the tourism companies seemed to utilize the nature aspects of Lapland's pull factors well in their webpages and social media sites. The University of Lapland could bring more of the Lappish factor forward, so when a possible applicant scrolls their webpages, they will be convinced that Lapland is the place to go. The responses from Lapland UAS' marketing coordinator Miia Salminen provided lots of useful information. Some countries appreciate different things, some the nature and Santa whereas some the quality of education, leading to different kind of marketing for the different target groups: the experience-seeking and degree-seeking. Marketing to domestic and international students is also very different, as rare Finns for instance bother getting excited about Santa Claus and reindeer. For domestic applicants, Lapland UAS wants to explain that even though Lapland may be farther away, the travel connections are good, and there is a wide variety of services, events, and hobby- and exercise possibilities for students. The conclusion was also made, that the tourism- and educational marketing is somewhat able to utilize the same pull factors as motivations for coming to Lapland.

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## APPENDICES

## Appendix 1 1(3). The international students' survey

## Experiences about Lapland

Dear students, I would like to hear about your experiences in choosing to study specifically here in Lapland, your expectations versus reality about Lapland and your studies, and overall thoughts on this school. Don't be scared to tell about the possible negative things. You don't have to answer to each question, if you don't want to. Anything that you could share, would help me a lot with my thesis. Thank you.

**1. Shortly introduce yourself**

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**2. Where do you come from?**

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**3. Why did you choose to leave and study in another country?**

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**4. Why did you choose to come to Lapland?**

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**5.** What was your expectation of Lapland before arriving here?

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**6.** Has that expectation been different to the reality?

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**7.** Did you have specific expectations on the level of Finnish education?

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**8.** How do you feel about it now after coming here, has the reality been better or worse?

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**9.** Have you felt a sense of a close community in your school, have you made friends?

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**10.** Have you had help whenever you've had problems?

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**11.** Have you had problems with the level of your English skills or the skills of a teacher?

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**12.** Is there a big difference between your culture and its values and those here?

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**13.** Do you think that the skills you learn here will help or harm you in your working life when you return to your home country?

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**14.** Or do you have plans to possibly stay in Finland?

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**15.** Here you can write freely anything that comes to mind

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Thank you!

## Appendix 2 1(2). Questionnaire for the schools' marketing teams

*Lyhyesti kerrottuna, opinnäytetyöni tutkii Lapin työntö- ja vetovoimatekijöitä – mitkä asiat tuovat ihmisiä Lappiin (turismi, muuttoliike, opinnot...). Työ tutkii opiskelijoiden mielipiteitä opinnoistaan kyselyn kautta, ja kirjoitan myös yleisesti opiskelutyytyväisyydestä. Yksi kappaleeni koskee markkinointia Lapissa, kuinka Lappi näkyy ja vaikuttaa markkinointiin. Haluaisin siis kysyä sinulta muutaman kysymyksen aiheeseen liittyen.*

Nimi:

Työpaikka:

Työnimikkeesi:

Saako nimeäsi mainita opinnäytetyössä?

Saako työpaikkaasi mainita opinnäytetyössä?

Nyt kun lukuvuosimaksut ovat tulleet kouluihin EU&ETA:n ulkopuolisille opiskelijoille ja ilmaista koulutusta ei voi pitää enää markkinointivalttina, oletko joutunut muuttamaan markkinointia näille opiskelijoille? Miten?

Mitkä asiat ovat mielestäsi tärkeimpiä sisältää markkinointiin, kun halutaan tehdä Lapista houkutteleva **ulkomaalaisille hakijoille**?

## Appendix 2 2(2)

Mitkä asiat ovat mielestäsi tärkeimpiä sisältää markkinointiin, kun halutaan tehdä Lapista houkutteleva **kotimaisille hakijoille**? Onko markkinoinnissa suomalaisten ja ulkomaisten hakijoiden välillä suuria eroja?

Näkyykö Lappi arjessasi markkinointityössä? Miten? Esimerkiksi, käytättekö teemana arktisuutta tms. kaikissa julkaisuissa/tempauksissa/some postauksissa...?

Paljon kiitoksia kysymyksiin vastaamisesta. Vastauksesi auttavat minua paljon antamaan eri näkökulmia opinnäytetyöhöni.

- *Milla Sandholm, International Business opiskelija '14.*