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**FOREIGN FOOTBALLERS' INTEGRATION  
CHALLENGES IN FINLAND**

Case: Jalkapallon Pelaajayhdistys



Bachelor's thesis

Degree Programme in International Business

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ABSTRACT

The amount of the foreign footballers in Finnish divisions has risen in the wake of globalization. The average of the foreign footballers in the two top divisions in Finland 2012 is approximately 5 players per team. The commissioning organization, Football Player Association of Finland (FPA), was interested to see the level of the foreign players' well-being and adaptation in Finland. The purpose of this thesis was to research, do foreign footballers have integration challenges, and if so, can those be developed.

The main goal of the research was to explore foreign footballers overall adaptation, amount of the support received for integration and reasons for culture shock. Players' feelings about Finland and Finnish football were considered as well. The research group consists of different nation footballers, that all have played in Finland during the season 2012. The study was conducted as a qualitative research by electronically via Webropol – program.

The final results of the research showed that the most significant challenges related to integration in Finland are language and weather. Finnish football also differs in various ways from footballers' home country football. The players support for "outside of field" - issues is in a high level. The whole research group admitted: there is no need for more support. According to the research integration of the foreign footballers in Finland is in a good stage.

**Keywords** integration, culture shock, adaptation, foreign footballer.

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## TIIVISTELMÄ

Ulkomaalaisjalkapalloilijoiden määrä Suomen sarjoissa on lisääntynyt globalisaation myötä. Keskiarvo kahdella ylimmällä sarjatasolla vuonna 2012 on noin 5 pelaajaa per joukkue. Työn toimeksiantaja, Jalkapallon Pelaajayhdistys (JPY) oli kiinnostunut näkemään, kuinka ulkomaalaiset pelaajat voivat ja kuinka he ovat sopeutuneet Suomeen. Opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena oli tutkia, onko ulkomaalaisjalkapalloilijoilla sopeutumisvaikeuksia ja mikäli näin on, kuinka niitä voidaan kehittää.

Tutkimuksen tavoitteena oli selvittää ulkomaalaisjalkapalloilijoiden yleistä integroitumista, sopeutumistukea ja syitä kulttuurishokkiin. Pelaajien tuntemuksia Suomesta ja suomalaisesta jalkapallosta tutkittiin myös. Tutkimusryhmä koostuu eri kansalaisuuksien jalkapalloilijoista, jotka ovat pelanneet Suomessa kaudella 2012. Tutkimus toteutettiin laadullisena tutkimuksena sähköisesti Webropol-ohjelmalla.

Lopulliset tulokset osoittivat, että merkittävimmät haasteet Suomeen integroitumisessa ovat kieli ja sää. Myös suomalaisen jalkapalloilun erilaiseen luonteeseen on sopeuduttava. Pelaajien saama tuki kentän ulkopuolisiin asioihin on korkealla tasolla. Koko tutkimusryhmä oli samaa mieltä: lisätuki ei ole tarpeen. Tutkimuksen mukaan urheilijat kokevat integroituneensa Suomeen hyvin.

**Avainsanat** integraatio, kulttuurishokki, sopeutuminen, ulkomaalaisjalkapalloilija.

**Sivut** 46s. + liitteet 7 s.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Backgrounds of the thesis

“Football is arguably the only truly global game and its influence cuts across economic, political, social and cultural spheres.” (Independent European Sport Review 2006, 22).

As mentioned above, football is a global game. Relying on this, the globalization has affected development of the football, especially in Finland. The amount of the foreign footballers in Finnish divisions has risen in the wake of globalization. This is a kick start for this thesis. The average of the foreign footballers in the two top divisions in Finland 2012 is approximately 5 players per team. This is a substantial number.

Related to previously mentioned issues, foreign players' integration to Finland is extremely important. Well integrated footballers can be more useful to clubs, than poorly adapted. When well-being is in a good stage, the level of the playing is also high, and this lead to good results. The purpose of this thesis is to research, do foreign footballers have integration challenges, and if so, can those be developed. Like already told, the topic is current and very challenging. The limits of the research are focused only foreign footballers in Finland, because integration is as a term very wide.

The commissioning organization, Football Player Association of Finland, was interested to see the level of the foreign players' well-being and adaptation in Finland. The objectives and description of the chapters are told in later. Overall, the topic is current and pleasing for the writer. The writer's own background in football inspired the thesis as well. Mutual interest for foreign footballers' integration was a good starting point and as a result this work was created.

### 1.2 Commissioning organization

Football Player Association of Finland (FPA) is the commissioning organization of this thesis. FPA's main point in the Finnish football is to be on the side of the player and the game. The target group of the FPA is footballers and their well-being. It operates under FIFPro, the world's biggest single lobbying athlete organization. Every profession has their own lobbying associations and FPA is such for footballers. (Jalkapallon Pelaajayhdistys, 2012a)

The association provides useful benefits for their members, among other things:

- Legal, Financial, Contract and Insurance advices.
- Educational opportunities during and after career.
- Agency Company.
- Tournaments for unemployment players / Transfer list.
- Foreign players support.

FPA was founded 7.5.1990, but it was registered officially after a couple of years. It has operated over 20 years. Actions developed year by year and new members become involved. The major leap was in 1994, when FPA got own lawyer, Mika Palmgren. That increased credibility and improved actions. After the millennium FPA become under FIFpro. From year to year operation has moved on and the players have become more active about issues of Football Player Association of Finland. Players have realized how much help and support the association can provide for playing and outside of pitch. For example they “fight” to get standard player contract to tiers 1 to 3 since 2010. The FA of Finland agreed to the contract and it will be bring to use 1.1.2013. This will prevent contractual dispute and conflicts between players and employees. (Jalkapallon Pelaajajyhdistys, 2012bc)

Football Association of Finland has members approximately 90% of the top three tiers players. The vision is to get all players (up from tier 3) involved during the year 2012. The executive manager is Markus Juhola and the Chairman Hannu Tihinen. (Jalkapallon Pelaajajyhdistys, 2012a)

### 1.3 Objectives and chapter preview

The main purpose of this thesis is to clarify:

“Do foreign players have integration challenges and if so, could their adaptation be developed”

According to above mentioned research question, the following objectives were determined:

- To research foreign footballers overall adaptation, the amount of support received for the integration and the reasons for culture shock.
- To see players' feelings of Finnish football and society.
- To analyze how to develop foreign footballers integration.
- To present data and advices of Finnish football, community and culture shock issues.

After the introduction, the second chapters' meaning is to introduce Finnish football. It comprises for example Finnish football system and info of the foreign footballers in Finland. Section three is the theoretical framework of the thesis. It includes the theory of the integration, adaptation and culture shock. The fourth chapter deals with the things that are connected culture shock, in Finland. The meanings of introduced sections are important, because these data could be used as a source for survival guide for foreign footballers.

The fifth chapter tells about the research. It determines the objectives and methods of the research. The research method is qualitative research. Sixth section is about the results of the research. There are collected data and analyzed answers. The last part is the conclusion.

In a nutshell: the thesis provides topical information of Finnish football and society, causes of the culture shock in Finland and the research results are very useful data in future, and now.



## 2 OVERVIEW OF FINNISH FOOTBALL

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce Finnish football society. The main point is to submit the situation of Finnish football and tell current data (2012) about foreign players. This section also includes information about the FA of Finland and the systems of the divisions.

### 2.1 Community of Finnish football

#### 2.1.1 The Football Association of Finland

The Football Association of Finland (The FA) is the main federal and responsible of all actions in football and its development in Finland. There are over 1000 member clubs in Finland and 115000 sign-upped players. The Main idea of the FA is develop football to international top level and keep it there. Also increasing audience to Finnish stands is major. (Suomen Palloliitto, 2012a)

The FA takes care of Finnish National teams and all tiers, except The Finnish Premier League, what is a separate organization. Tiers after the third level are under the control of 12 regional systems. (Suomen Palloliitto, 2012a)

The FA was founded in 1907 and the organization joined to FIFA (International Federation of Association Football) in 1908 and to UEFA (Union of European Football Associations) in 1954. The chairman of the FA is Pertti Alaja. Former chairman was Sauli Niinistö (2009–2012), the current President of Finland. (Suomen Palloliitto, 2012b)

#### 2.1.2 The popularity of football in Finland

Sports Federation of Finland and Suomen Gallup do a survey in every fourth year to measure the amount of the sport hobbyists in Finland. There are three categories:

- All hobbyists in the sport.
- Members of the clubs.
- The amount of the licenses.

Football is the biggest team sport in Finland, combined all three previous categories. The number of players is 357 000. (Kilpa –ja huippu-urheilun tutkimuskeskus, 2010)

The total popularity of the football has dropped from years 2005 – 2006 11.8 % to 2009 - 2010. But the amount of the club players and the license owner's has stayed quite stable. (Kilpa –ja huippu-urheilun tutkimuskeskus, 2010)

Why is football the most popular team sport in Finland? Football is a cheap and very easy to start. The only equipment that the beginner needs is a ball. Football is not dependent on the location, it can be played everywhere. Grass, asphalt, sand and even snow are possible fields to practice and play football. The media displays a lot of football, because it is the most popular sport in the whole world. Even though Finland is a northern country, the volume of the football hobbyists remains high, due to the worldwide popularity, easiness of the sport and the development of the circumstances.

### 2.1.3 The Finland national football team

The Finland national team is organized by the FA of Finland. The home arena of the team is Helsinki Olympic Stadium. The head coach is Mixu Paatelainen and the captain is Niklas Moisander (Ajax, Amsterdam). The most notable players in recent history have been Jari Litmanen and Sami Hyypiä. Litmanen is the most capped player (137 caps) in the history. They were the main parts of the golden generation (Finland National team in the beginning of 2000s) of Finnish football. (Suomen tietotoimisto, 2012)

National team has never played in the European Championship or World Cup. The team has always been eliminated in the qualifications. The September 2012 FIFA- ranking (96) is the lowest in the history. Ranking is calculated according to the men national games results and there are along all the member teams of the FIFA. The basic logic of these calculations is simple: any team that does well in world football earns points, which enable it to climb the world ranking. The best ranking of the Finland is 33 from the year 2007. Then Finland was very close to succeed in the European Championship 2008, under the coach Roy Hodgson. (FIFA/Coca-Cola World Ranking, 2012)

The lack of ultimate players, the level of the production junior players and power of the ice hockey are the topical reasons for the level of Finnish football. The average age of the National team is also low, so that will affect a lot. The mission is to be in the top 10 European football country in 2020. To achieve that goal, team Finland need to find the net in the pitch as fast as possible. (Suomen Palloliitto, 2012c)

### 2.1.4 Finnish players abroad

The development of Finnish football and globalization has helped Finnish players to go play abroad. The golden generation players have been trend-setters for younger players. Jari Litmanen (Ajax, Amsterdam) and Sami Hyypiä (Liverpool) played during their careers in the absolute peak of football in the world. They are the icons of Finnish football overseas.

Since the 90s Finnish player flow to higher leagues has increased. This is necessary for the development of the Finland national team and Finnish

football. Finnish football need new fixed stars in order to raise the visibility and status in ice hockey oriented country. Teemu Pukki and Alexander Ring (both playing in Bundesliga, Germany) have got their chances, but will they use them, we will see in a few years.

## 2.2 Divisions of Finnish football

### 2.2.1 The Finnish Premier League

Finnish top division is called Veikkausliiga in Finnish, because of its main sponsor Veikkaus. Veikkaus is a leading betting agency in Finland. The Finnish Premier League is founded 1989 and it manages The Finnish Football League Association by itself according the contract with Football Association of Finland. They separated in 1990. The Premier League is a kind of independent organization, but the FA is responsible of the licences of the clubs, referees and discipline issues. Other things are demanded by the board of the league. Lasse Lehtinen is the chairman of the board. (Veikkausliiga, 2010a)

In The Finnish Premier League there are twelve teams and they plays three rounds. The last one of the season will be relegated to first division (second high level). The season starts normally on April and end on October. The most successful team in Finland is HJK, what has been the champion eight times since 1990. (Veikkausliiga, 2010a)

### 2.2.2 Level of the Finnish Premier League

The Finnish Premier League has developed during the past decade, to professional. In the early 90s it was totally an amateur league. Players had occupation and their trainings were in the evening because of the day jobs. Before millennium it started to change, because HJK survived to Champions league and the Finland national team played equal matches against big football countries. Of course the visibility raised attractiveness abroad.

The Premier League's trend was rising until the year 2008 recession started. This led to the fact, that many clubs were forced to close their wallets. In the conversations football people have spoken about the return of amateur players.

The level of the League is hard to determine. There is not a reliable enough method for that. One option is scope the success of the clubs in UEFA competitions. UEFA has some ranking systems. According by Club Coefficient's ranking Finland is the thirtieth (30) in Europe. This ranking is based on the results of each association's clubs in the five previous UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League seasons. (UEFA rankings, 29.6.2012)

### 2.2.3 Lower divisions in Finnish football

After the Premier League, there are lower divisions in Finnish football. The First division, the Second division and the Women's league are under the control of the Football Association of Finland. Lower divisions are regional leagues.

In the First division there are ten clubs and the best team will be promoted to the Premier League and the last two will be relegated to the Second division.

There are four groups in the Second division and those are provincial. Only two teams can be promoted totally up. The Women's league has ten clubs and the last one will be replaced by the best team of the Women First division. (Suomen Palloliitto, 2012de)

### 2.3 Foreign footballers in Finland

#### 2.3.1 Basics for going to foreign fields

Worldwide every talented footballer's dream is normally to become a football star and earn millions, or just to get the job as footballer. Dream comes true only for fraction of this group. Players from different circumstances will end up to different leagues and tiers. To manage abroad, players need something special to separate of mass. This is the most important thing no matter where the player goes.

From football's point of view a typical foreign player needs to be good enough physically, technically and tactically. Mentally, the player needs to be in equilibrium. A footballer's self-confident and desire has to be at a high level. Of course he should not be afraid of adversities. The life will not always go like planned and abroad there are not so many comprehensive support networks. Sometimes you have to survive alone. Mentally a strong player is always in a strong position, when teams need players. That is the difference that separates the players with equal skills. The above mentioned are just properties that are generally okay, when success is good abroad.

In addition to personal characteristics there are other matters to take care of. Connections are urgent. Agents, friends and acquaintances are useful to market a player overseas. Timing is also special. It is like in the business world: The time is right, demand and supply meets and there are no barriers nearby. This chapter is based on the writers own experiences and information that have collected in discussions with footballers, who have played abroad.

#### 2.3.2 Statistics of foreign footballers in Finland

Globalization and visibility of Finnish football has increased foreign players' numbers in Finnish divisions during the last ten years. In addition the

reputation of the level of Finland has spread over Europe since Finnish players have earned success in European top series. Finnish football can be grateful for Jari Litmanen and partners, who have made Finland known also as a football country.

The amount of the foreign footballers in Finnish divisions is hard to determine. All the time is going on transfers between clubs and trustworthy data of lower division players is hard to find. According to the FA of Finland, they do not have records or any register of foreign footballers. The Internet is full of football sites where to seek much-needed information. In this section about determining the number of foreign players in Finland the site soccerway.com has been used. That is a database, where is player statistics info of many divisions of the world. I went through the Finnish Premier League and First Division clubs, and collected the data of players who are not Finnish. Of course the reliability of the statistics is not perfect, but at least the page gives some kind of picture about the number of foreign footballers in Finland. There are a plenty of foreign players in lower divisions in both women's and men's series in Finland. Following statistics are only from the Premier League and the First Division and relates to season 2012. Calculations are based on soccerway.com:

- 326 players in the Premier League of Finland. (Veikkausliiga, 2010b)
- 64 foreign footballers in the Premier League.
- 47 foreign players in the First Division.
- Average in the First Division team is 4.7 foreign players.
- Average in the Premier League team is 5.33 foreign players.
- Average in both divisions is 5.1 foreign players per team.
- Almost 20 % of the Premier League players are foreign.
- In line-ups almost 30% of the players are foreign (If named).

(Soccerway, 18.9.2012abcdefghijklmnopqrstuv)

The above mentioned statistics about foreign footballers in Finland provide a good starting point for this work purpose. Almost a fifth of the Premier League players are foreign. This work's intend is to find out, do foreign players have integration challenges and if so, could their well-being be developed?

### 3 THEORY OF INTEGRATION AND CULTURE SHOCK

This section is called the theoretical framework of the thesis. In this chapter the concept of integration and culture shock are described and the definition of both used in this study is clarified.

#### 3.1 What is culture?

Culture is a term with several meanings and it is hard to determine. We are all guided by our cultures, own experiences and personal developments, which form an assembly. There are no people without culture. Individuals perceive and produce culture. On the other hand community defines and limits an individual's opportunities to live, experience and share their relationship with the surrounding world. (Forsander, Ekholm & Hautaniemi 2001, 12)

Many assume that culture and ethnicity are the same. Ethnicity is all about to belong to certain group. In ordinary discussions people prefer that culture is about art, painting, music, literature etc. Normally we think that culture is high level action with intelligent. A culture more generally, can be determined as a community's (social group, nation) accepted way of the life. The problem of this definition is the scope. According to this determination, culture is then everything. It is our talks, walks, actions and thoughts. (Forsander et al. 2001, 13-14)

Community and culture live in a symbiosis. There can't be culture without hosting and updating community. And vice versa, community can't exist without from "father to son" inherited culture. Culture can be defined a very narrow phenomena such as drugs, business or cuisine culture. These are called subculture. Subculture is a part of the bigger culture determination. In this thesis we understand a word culture in width definition. It is as previously determined, a way of life of the whole society. Then we can speak for example: Finnish Culture. (Alho, Lehtonen, Raunio & Virtanen 1994, 69-70)

To understand a term culture it could be crystallized as follows: Culture is a combined total, what includes learned habits, beliefs, skills and knowledge that transfers from one community's member to another.

#### 3.2 What is Ethnicity?

People normally combine culture and ethnicity to each other. Although those are of course connected together, but those means different things. Ethnicity is not a simple concept. To understand ethnicity, we must define ethnic group and ethnic identity.

Ethnicity has replaced words racial, tribal and people, which the third one is only in use in these days. Still to word ethnicity are connected to human racial differences, although we Finns can see ourselves as an ethnic group.

In general, ethnic group means, that it has accompanied by the following group formation criteria (Nygren 1995; Bjöklund 1983):

1. Common origin: partly common history and belief to common ancestry.
2. Common culture: ethnical special features and default of cultural uniqueness.
3. Ethnical group identity: Others recognized members of the group as a separated category of humans.
4. Ethnical group interaction.
5. Supposition of ethnical group is a solitary group of society, but also that the group has correlation with the surrounding society and other groups.

According to this background, we can say the ethnicity means: People identifies to ethnic groups by thinking and behaving the same way as the people in the same ethnic group members. (Forsander et al. 2001, 16-17)

Identity is a central concept for many sciences and it is also used in everyday discussions. Identity has two sides: First is the persons own picture about himself and secondly, the external view of person. Identity is generally mentioned, when we are talking about personality and sociocultural environment. Self-image is only one of the people identities. "We can say that, identity is a process that changes all the time and includes many ways to be in relation to itself and others". (Forsander et al. 2001, 23)

Ethnical identity can be combined to feeling to belong in something, usually group. What determines an ethnical identity? Here are listed some of the notions that affect specifically to ethnical identity:

- Religion. It is personnel, but also connected to group experiences.
- Culture. Clothing, music, fashion and items define for its part the identity of the people.
- Economy.

(Forsander et al. 2001, 22-25)

Ethnical identity is like a subjective membership to own ethnic group. It is also that how others see your ethnicity, not just how yourself see it. It is individual, but also collective. The ethnical identity is extremely important, especially then when it is at "risk position". Ethnical identity may be endangered, when moving abroad. In this position ethnical background appears, when cultural differences in language and scheme of things faces. In this kind of crossroad a social and a personal identity might be in a rollercoaster. Identity has content and value, which are determined by the situation. Foreign footballers have their own ethnical backgrounds and they are incompatible with their ethnical identities, when coming to play in Finland. In this case players need to conform at least a little bit their ethnical identity to integrate Finnish society. (Hoffren, n.d)

### 3.3 Acculturation process

Acculturation as a concept describes intercultural encounter, which have cause changes both or only to other culture. Term acculturation is from anthropology and it is used mostly to describe the cultural changes between community levels. Today, the term is used to define the individual-level occurring psychological and social change. (Liebkind, Mannila, Jasin-skaja-Lahti, Jaakkola, Kyntäjä & Reuter 2004, 46 - 47.)

Social psychologist John Berry defines acculturation as a system. This acculturation model is a very popular in Finland. Acculturation is a process, where individual is connected to cultural environment, what is different from own. Acculturation is a concept that can be divided in different terms: Integration, separation, marginalization and assimilation. The jungle of the terms with ethnicity is very dense, but this Berry's model has clarified and simplified understanding of ethnicity. (Forsander et al. 2001, 37)

Is it considered to be of value to develop relationships with the larger society?	Yes	Assimilation	Integration
	No	Marginalization	Separation
<b>John Berry's Acculturation Model (Berry et al. , 1992)</b>		No	Yes
		Is it considered to be of value to maintain one's cultural heritage?	

Figure 1 Acculturation model. (Forsander et al. 2001, 37)

#### 3.3.1 Definition of the terms

When person feels like he belongs to ethnic minority group and respects that, but also have actions with other ethnic groups, like major society, we are talking about integration. Separation is being only with your own ethnic group with avoiding contacts to other groups. (Forsander et al. 2001, 37)

Assimilation has Berry determined as a hope to belong to majority. In that case, a person divests its minority identity and wishes to come a part of the bigger population. Many immigration people have assimilated to countries by the time. Little by little their own culture has “disappeared” and they have merged more and more the major society. (Forsander et al. 2001, 37-38)

Marginalization is the most damaging model of the acculturation. There a person has passed by his own cultural context, but does not belong to known any other ethnic groups, not even the majority of the population.



According to John Berry, the integration is the best model of the acculturation process. In integration process individual maintains his own cultural roots and origin, and is brave enough to show it. Later is a good thing that this model does not rule out the possibility of action with other ethnic groups such as the society. (Forsander et al. 2001, 38)

### 3.4 Specification of the integration

Integration term replaced quite late words acculturation and assimilation in migration research. In the century 1980 integration's content and meaning was started to moot in more detail. Integration is used a lot in the migration research, but it does not have a clear and simple determination. Generally, there are two factors, when determining integration: the first one is the bigger body, ordinary the society and the other is the immigrant party, either individual or community level. Generally, review of the examination is the immigrant party integration to bigger group and the changes that happen in this process. (Forsander et al. 2001, 38-39)

Common for many integration definitions is the increasing participation or becoming part of something. Also, many integration analysts remind that integration is a moving process to the center of the society. Integration could be review for example following three perspectives:

- Integration to the major community.
- Integration between ethnic groups.
- Integration inside the own ethnic group.

Integration to the major community includes different parts: political, economic and social integration. It is called a structural integration. Integration between ethnic groups refers to the interaction between each other. In this case the groups could find common interests in relation to major society. Integration inside the ethnic group increases a possibility of the structural integration. For example, inside integrated immigrants, could form associations, schools etc. and thus reborn community and social support. Inside integrated communities can also fight of their position in the prevailing society. (Forsander et al. 2001, 39-40)

Integration could be interpreted in a two ways, as a space and a process. Internal cohesion of the group refers to space, while external parts joining to the structural majority population means process. (Forsander et al. 2001, 41)

Integration could be viewed as a big picture. Then, for example, the Nordic well-being ideology is built upon that all the people will integrate to society. Society integrates its members by work and education. Integration is called a positive and worth of pursuing, while marginalization is the lack of integration and it is negative. Marginalization is the opposite of the integration and it is deficiency of the integrative factors. (Forsander et al. 2001, 40-42)

All of the people (also marginalized) integration into the middle of the society is desirable. Well-being countries use many ways to integrate persons to majority population. In Finland the year 1999 law obligates immigrants to take part in integrative actions, for example education and work placements. These references and facts are mostly connected to immigration, but this gives a picture about the integrations changing nature. (Forsander et al. 2001, 42-43)

### 3.4.1 Integration in this thesis

The thesis topic: Foreign footballers' integration challenges in Finland are a clear subject. It is easy to understand and set up the limits. In the previous chapter was determined the concept integration's wide and opaque background. The purpose of this section is to specify integrations determination in the simply way. Derived from Latin, word integration means respectively, how different ingredients are able to merge with each other as to form a balanced entity. Integration also refers to being in a particular case or in the middle of the entity, and the fact that the individual is in society as anyone else member of society. (Kinnunen 2003, 14-15)

In this thesis the concept of the integration means, first and foremost merger and adaptation into Finnish society and Finnish football world. Thesis subject area includes following two concepts: adaptation and culture shock. Overall, the integration term is an overview that includes the adaptation and culture shock to Finnish society and football.

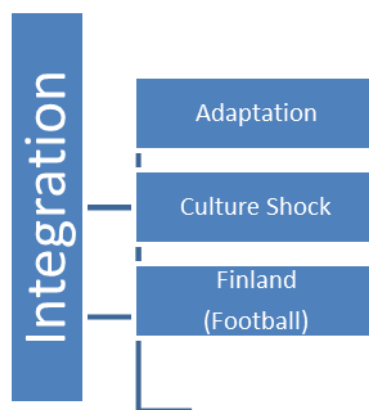


Figure 2 Integration factors in thesis.

### 3.5 Specification of culture shock

Anthropologist Kalervo Oberg was the first researcher that presented the concept of culture shock and this was published in 1960. As a concept, he has tried to describe both phases of adaptation to a new culture and its associated possible confusion. Oberg is also the first to distinguish the phases of adaptation. Culture shock – term explains itself already that entering a new culture can be uncomfortable, a shock. The experience might be unexpected and the person may has to evaluate own culture in negative

marks. In any case, culture shock is a normal reaction to arrive a new culture. Culture shock begins, when a person does not find familiar social habits from the new environment, what he already has embraced in “the previous life”. (Oberg 1960, 7: 177 - 182)

### 3.5.1 What is culture shock?

Culture shock is a personal experience and everyone identifies it differently. In every case, the culture shock is not the same for two persons. As previously mentioned, it is a sudden immersion into a nonspecific state of uncertainty. It can occur in any situation, where previously learned issues do not fit to new social system. The new environment need not to be a new country, it can be family, organization, town or school. (Hofstede, Pedersen & Hofstede 2002, 22)

Culture shock can be a stress and tension mode, which causes by losing familiar characters and meanings in the new environment as already advised. A person has his own “cultural luggage” in his backpack that travels everywhere he goes. Facing the new culture with backpack, it is perfectly natural to experience the differences between cultures and through that frustration. (Alho et al. 1994, 115-116)

There are at least six indicators that one is experiencing culture shock:

1. Familiar cues about how others are supposed to behave are missing or the familiar cues now have a different meaning.
2. Values that the person considers good, desirable, beautiful, and worthy are not respected by the host.
3. One feels disoriented, anxious, depressed, or hostile.
4. One is dissatisfied with the new ways.
5. Social skills that used to work do not seem to work any longer.
6. There is a sense that is horrible, nagging culture shock will never go away. (Hofstede et al. 2002, 22)

Culture shock comes and goes. Sometimes there occur symptoms caused by culture stress. Culture stress - term means due to culture change consequential long-term effects that will feel for years later: at home was better. (Alho et al. 1994, 116)

Culture shock is an action that happens mostly for everyone. For each in own way and in different strengths, but normally people go through the stages of the adaptation. Briefly in nutshell: Culture shock is the process of initial adjustment to an unfamiliar culture. (Hofstede et al. 2002, 22)

### 3.6 Culture shock in practice

The change of life and all transitions of life require adaptability of the people. These kinds of changes might be transformation from student to employee, move to new city, establishment of family, death in the circle of acquaintances etc. In all these life's basic structures are changing. (Alho et al.1994, 117)

Moving to foreign country is a same kind of episode. Many of the external factors are changing in-depth. People react to changes in their own ways, but many researchers have identified a lot of similarities between people, when adapting to new culture. This makes it possible to speak by generalizing culture shock or steps in adaptation. (Alho et al.1994, 117)

Own behaviour can be predicted, if you know own reactions in stress situations. Moving to new country is different incident than death of the close person, but after the first reaction, there are many similarities to changed situation. (Alho et al.1994, 117)

Defence mechanisms are used under the pressure. People wanted to forget negative feelings or the bad state of affairs. Recrimination, casuistry, reasoning, alcohol and drugs might give help for some time. (Alho et al.1994, 117)

There are individual differences how to react to stress situation. Between adults and children, the difference is huge. The children's worldwide is unfinished and it has space for changes. This explains the kid's better flexibility to adapt new culture. Grown-ups world is already finished and it acts with specific rules. Hence, moving to abroad and to new culture means more comprehensive adaptation to adults and because of that, difficulties arises. (Alho et al.1994, 117-118)

### 3.7 Stages in culture shock

Adapting to a new culture is a studied concept. Culture shock is frequently described as a series of stages that a person goes through. Many researchers have identified of four steps, which durations varies a lot. Personal features: liberality, flexibility, adaptability and stress tolerance defines much of the intensity and length of the steps. The four stages of the adaptation are:

1. Honeymoon
2. Frustration
3. Acceptance
4. Adaptation

Previously mentioned phases have as many different nominations as many researchers, but in this thesis the terms are named as told. (Alho et al. 1994, 118, Hofstede et al. 2002, 23)

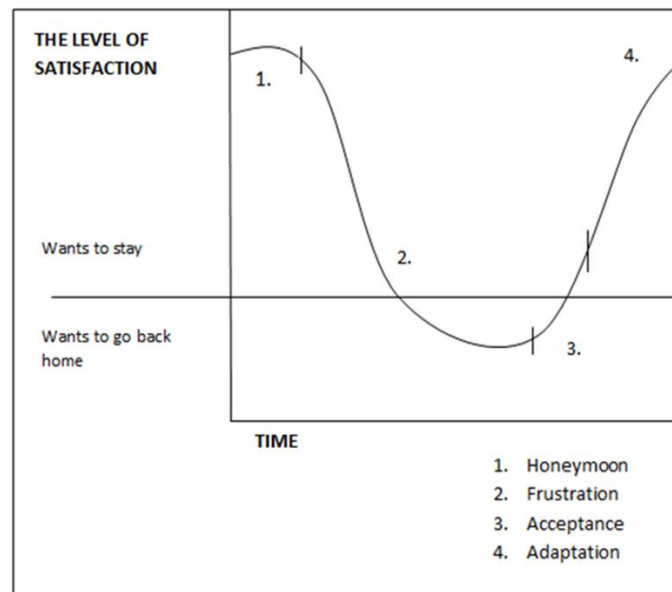


Figure 3 Example model of the steps of the adaptation. Everyone has their personal curves. (Alho et al. 1994, 118)

### 3.7.1 Honeymoon

The first step in the adaptation is called honeymoon, because of the nature of this period. This section applies to the same things as real honeymoon, but instead of a spouse, person get to know a new culture. It is generally exploring and a wonderful time.

When arriving to new country the excitement and curiosity levels are in the maximum. This is called the tourist phase. Nature, sights, unusual food and people provokes fascination. The living environment could be a normal tourist hotel, where English is spoken. The home country will pass out of mind and life is favourable. In practice, everything goes as it should be and the smile on the face is massive. (Alho et al. 1994, 118-119, Hofstede et al. 2002. 23)

This step will end at some point, so all of the benefits should take out of it. The senses are more sensitive than normal during this initial excitement period. Also, the learning process about the culture differences and the new environment is in high level. By observation, the basics of the language are possible to learn. If someone is so clever, he could collect a database of the new culture and develop this information later on. Some of the people override this stage in couple weeks, but for some it could last a few months. (Alho et al. 1994, 119; Hofstede et al. 2002. 23)

### 3.7.2 Frustration

The honeymoon has ended and the everyday and working life begins. Language skills will not develop so fast as would like. In part of the result, the practicalities: apartment issues, children school arrangements and nav-

Integration cause difficulties and frustration. In everywhere is stumbled with communication problems. (Alho et al. 1994, 119)

People that have lived abroad agreed that the biggest difficulties of the adaptation come from the non-understanding of the non-verbal communications messages of the new culture. In our own culture, we can interpret the non-verbal communication: moves of the body, gestures and facial expressions, dressing etc. Succinctly the things, that gives the precise meaning of the words. (Alho et al. 1994, 120)

In the own culture wordless notes are easy to understand, but in foreign culture vice versa. In the foreign country, people need to learn different way to react these messages. The habits are different and all of the nations have their own ways to send non-verbal messages. For example, thumb up can mean both, depending on the country: the sign of approval and the total opposite, "shut up". (Alho et al. 1994, 120)

According to some of the communication theories 75 % of the intercourse between humans happens different way than verbally. During talking we get all the time tips and notes of the interlocutor and that discloses is he following, agreeing, understanding or not. A lot of these little signs are linked with the culture. As previously told, some actions may mean one thing in another culture. (Alho et al. 1994, 120)

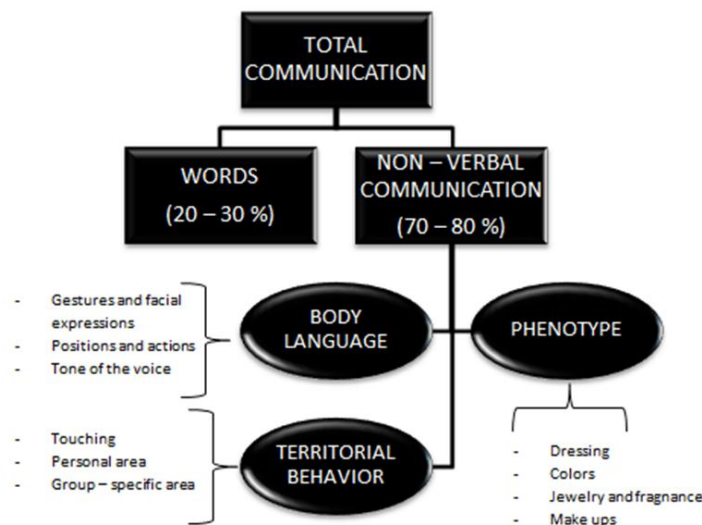


Figure 4 Divisions of the communication. (Alho et al. 1994, 121)

Predictability is possible, when non-verbal communication is understandable. It leads to basic safety in the relationships and life. We know our own relations to others, but as outsider in the foreign culture, we do not know the worldwide of the people. To get insider to the new culture have been invented the medicine: acquisition of the data. Finding data of the new culture is important and desirable. Literature, internet, social media, papers, friends, television etc. are easy and simple way to exploring information. Theoretical information is easy to access, but with own experi-

ence is the only way to adapt deeply to new country. (Alho et al. 1994, 121 - 122)

Aggressions that come from frustration focus normally on the host country's circumstances, habits and especially the people. Characterized to stage are the meetings, where foreign people together complain the difficulty of the life. It is pleasant to spent time with the people who are in the same situation. Criticism is a clear pressure revelation, not clever thinking of improving the position. Anger against the new culture is also possible. All depends on the personality of the people. (Alho et al. 1994, 122; Hofstede et al. 2002, 23)

Defence mechanisms are natural ways to survive pressure, when people are not yet ready to solve the real problem. By using defence mechanisms, the feeling could com better. The big problem occurs, when people are locked to defence mechanisms instead of finding solution of the core problem. (Alho et al. 1994, 122)

Here are listed some examples of the most common defence mechanisms:

- Not grant negative emotions and forget aversive emotions.
- Hostility targeting to new culture.
- Withdrawal aside.
- Pressure discharge, without connection to cause. (Alho et al. 1994, 123)

Using the defence mechanisms poses tiredness, because of the continuous mental and physical stress of the body. And that reason, the normal life suffers. (Alho et al. 1994 124)

This stage is the most critical. If survive and takes a frustration constructively, can step over. Some people decide in this stage to buy return ticket to home country. (Alho et al. 1994 124)

### 3.7.3 Acceptance

Recovery of the previous stage begins, when understand, the environment won't change; the change needs to happen in oneself. Start to learn more new language and culture, furthers the communication problems. Self-confident returns little by little, when understanding more. (Alho et al. 1994, 124)

Some of the people want to identify perfectly to new culture: Accommodation, cuisine, hanging out with local people and dressing. They think of being accepted and trustworthy in this way. But the fact is foreign people are always outsider, in some scale. Previously told pursuit is called "going native"- solution. In fact, this is escaping: People want to leave back their own culture and blend to new one totally, even they haven't internalize it. The style of life is not credible in the local people eyes neither own country people. (Alho et al. 1994, 124-125)

The other extreme mode to solve adaptation problems is to retreat to foreign subculture. Isolation of the major popularity and their culture is also escaping. International associations and clubs are important support to foreign people, but if those become permanent getaway, people should check their motives. Local people may not respect people that exists, but never see. (Alho et al. 1994, 125)

How much people should adapt? Performance can be the meter. Performance is affected by the surviving of culture shock, balance of the life, learning of the new language and culture. People that have used previously mentioned models will not achieve goals. The best solution is somewhere between these two solution models: "going native" and retreat to foreign in subculture. (Alho et al. 1994, 125)

### 3.7.4 Adaptation

The people feel home at new environment. A person has become fluently comfortable in both the old and new culture. Local culture is just different alternative to live, but equal. People have learned to enjoy life. Marks of pressure appear still sometimes, but it is a transient. The adaptation is as complete as possible. "The perfect" integration is impossible, but sufficient is acceptable. (Alho et al. 1994, 125-126; Hofstede et al. 2002, 23)

Going through successfully culture shock stages, the people know clear own backgrounds. Their field of vision is now wider: People know the code language of the both cultures and can act with them. The ability to anticipate is a clue of the knowing new culture. The result of the adaptation can be described: "knowing and using the rules of the two games, when before aware was only one. (Alho et al. 1994, 126)

The four stages of the adaptation describe experience-based learning. The culture knowing developed to self-study. Some anthropologists have defined this self-confrontation shock that start from negative experience. (Alho et al. 1994, 127)

### 3.8 Factors of the stress

The stress is the body condition, which occurs when the performance does not satisfy the requirement level. It usually forms of life crises, like culture shock. In this chapter the symptoms of stress and how to treat it are explained. (Tohtori,fi, 2011)



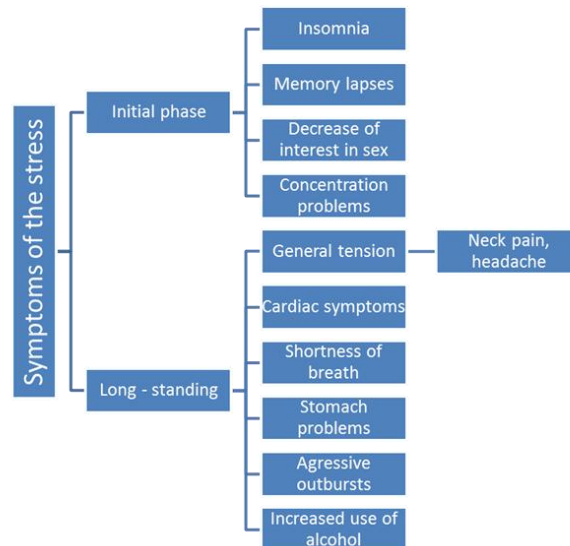


Figure 5 Symptoms of the stress. (Tohtori,fi, 2011)

### 3.8.1 How to treat stress?

The stages in culture shock expose stress. The wise is to identify reasons for pressure, which the most commonly is result of the change of scene. Everyone have pressure and frustration is some point. Talking with close ones might help and normally you are not the only fighting with the spoken issues. (Alho et al. 1994, 127)

In this list are some of the treatments and preventions to stress:

- Distance to everyday life gives a new perspective, and do not remove problems. For example a holiday in other place or immersion to beloved hobby
- Don't set goals too high in the beginning of the job. Non-realistic expectations and failure of them lead to frustration.
- Prevention of the misunderstanding and mistakes in behaviour. For example learning beforehand some of the language, etiquette and rules from guidebooks. (Alho et al. 1994, 128- 129; Tohtori,fi, 2011)

Overall, the best treatment to stress is to solve the original reasons for it and recognize and accept the existence of stress. Efforts must be made to bring the change in the factors that are the causes of stress. (Tohtori,fi, 2011)

## 4 CULTURE SHOCK IN FINLAND

The meaning of the following chapter is to briefly inform important data of Finland. Intention is to disclose the most important facts about Finland, not to tell a complete description.

The second part of this section is all about culture shock causes in Finland. There have been reviewed factors that may cause culture shock in particular country. The later part includes also advices to prepare into Finnish life.

### 4.1 Basic information of Finland

#### 4.1.1 Recent history of Finland

Finland was a part of Russia from the year 1809 until the year 1917. In 1917 Finland gained its total independency and due to the Independence Day is celebrated on 6.12. 30.11.1939 – 13.3.1940 was the Winter War and followed by The Continuation War 25.6.1941 - 19.9.1944 between Finland and the Soviet Union. After the war and according to the treaty, Finland had to cede areas of its east border to the Soviet Union. These two wars, included to the World War two and Finland nonetheless defended its freedom successfully maintaining its independence. (CIA: the World factbook, 2012; Lonelyplanet, 2012)

In 1952, Helsinki hosted the summer Olympics, which should have been in 1940, but they were cancelled because of World War II. After the mid of 1900s, Finland started to develop from forest economy to modern industrial economy. (CIA: the World factbook, 2012; Lonelyplanet, 2012)

In the beginning of the 1990, the economy went through the worldwide recession. The collapse of the housing markets, rose of the unemployment and increase of the tax load were results of the economic downturn.

Economy situation improved little by little from the year 1994. Finland became a member of the European Union in 1995. New euro currency entered into Finland in 2002. In 2000, the first woman president in Finland, Tarja Halonen, was elected. The current president is Sauli Niinistö, elected in 2012. (CIA: the World factbook, 2012; Lonelyplanet, 2012)

#### 4.1.2 Facts of Finland

The Finland is called the land of thousand lakes and forests. It is located in the Northern Europe and it is part of the Scandinavia. To keep knowledge as simple as possible, the best way to submit facts about Finland is a table. In the following table are listed basic and important points of Finland and Finnish society.

Table 1 Finland in a nutshell. (CIA: The world factbook 2012; Väestörekisterikeskus 2012; Tilastokeskus 2012)

Subject	Author
The President	Sauli Niinistö (since 1.3.2012)
The Prime Minister	Jyrki Katainen
Location	Northern Europe, Scandinavia
Area	338,145 sq km
Population	5418784 (31.08.2012)
Capital	Helsinki ( 601035, 31.08.2012)
GDP	192 billion € (2011)
Currency	Euro
Official Language	Finnish (90%), Swedish
Time Zone	UTC+2
Callin code	358
Structure of the industry	Agriculture: 3% Industry: 29.2% Services: 67.8% (2011 est.)

In addition to the above Finland is perceived as a safe well-being country. Finland is the world's most successful country in 2012 according the international comparison. The threat of the collapse of the Finland is the lowest in the world. The annual Failed States Index (FSI) is published by an independent American Foundation. The final result of the research is determined after analyzed millions documents of the state's properties among other things recession, poverty, military forces and human rights. (Helsingin Sanomat, 21.8.2012)

Finland is very well known in the world, because of Nokia, the mobile phone company. Words and terms that are connected to Finland are such as sauna, education, pure nature, snow and Santa Claus. Formula and rally drivers from Finland are famous in the world as well as hockey players in the North- America. Also skiing, ski jumping and javelin have brought fame and glory to Finland in recent years.

These days Finland is a welfare country, what is known of its excellent education and social systems, blazing technology zones and equality standards.

### 4.2 Culture shock causes in Finland

Culture shock is a normal phenomenon for every foreign people, who come to new country to live. The new culture could be totally different than get used to. Finland is a well-being country, what have its own culture and tradition. The purpose of this specific chapter is to describe and determine habits, issues and people that are general in Finland. These matters may be very strange to foreign people and it makes the information

very important. Things that are typical to Finnish culture are divided in sections and have been presented and illustrated superficially.

### 4.2.1 Typical Finn

Determining a typical Finn is absolutely a very hard job, because of the diversity of human beings. But some description of the typical Finn is possible to define, if based on the common and general view of Finnish people.

The popular adjectives that are connected to Finnish people are silent, reserved, fair, calm and trustworthy. The Finns are silent people by nature. They answer with minimum information and not with the biggest smile in face. Finnish people are used to silence. They need also a little personal space. Sometimes Finns want to be close to nature and alone, and other Finns respect that. Behind the quiet exterior, they are humorous people. Bragging is not typical for Finns, vice versa. They are modest and belief in hard work. Snootiness is not "acceptable" in the Finns eyes. But the globalization develops Finns to become more open and extroverted. The Finnish people come more open in two ways: After getting known better or after couple beers. Overall, when get to know the Finns, they become more social and appear that they are very nice and honest people. (Swallow 2001, 59-63)

### 4.2.2 Language

Finland has two official languages: Finnish and Swedish. Swedish is spoken about 6 % of the population. Finnish have borrowed words of the neighbor countries and the language is still developing. The Finnish alphabet has three extra letters: Å, ä and ö. Language is phonetic, with words, where every letter is pronounced. Finnish is not the easiest language to learn, because of the difficulty of the logic and the process of the language structure. Basic vocabulary, without grammar, can be learned relatively easily and it would be desirable if the Finnish is coming home country. Learning Finnish grammar will take more time and hours, being a challenge, but not impossible. (Swallow 2001, 80-83)

Finnish people speak English and Swedish as well. Those are taught in primary schools. Foreign people can survive with English in Finland in some point. The Finns are shy to speak English, but they generally are able to do that. Shortly, if staying in Finland may survive with English, but learning the basic words of Finnish will help a lot in adaptation in the new country.

### 4.2.3 Life style

In this chapter are listed some important points and habits of the Finnish people. The best way to show issues is to form a list:

- Weather. Four seasons, and during the winter, very cold and a lot of snow.
- Sauna. The Finns enjoy being in sauna, and many of the houses and apartments includes sauna. Normally people are naked in sauna.
- Coffee. Use of coffee in Finland is the top of the world. People normally socialize with a cup of coffee.
- Santa Claus. Father Christmas lives up north in Finland, Lapland.
- Punctuality. Be on time – attitude is very important for Finns.
- Alcohol. Use of the alcohol is connected to weekend activities. Part of the Finns drinks to get drunk, and this is an external picture. Note this, since 2005, alcohol has been a working-age men and women, the most common cause of death.
- Food. Finnish food is “ordinary” European and Scandinavian mix, having of course some own cultural differences and dishes.
- Traffic. Lack of traffic and rush hours comparing the big cities in Europe. The right-hand traffic is in Finland. Driving conditions may be difficult, because of the snow in winter.
- The education system. Comprehensive school length is nine years from the age seven. High school and vocational school are common options of secondary level. High school is a kind of stepping stone to University.
- Equality. Men and women are both in same level and family values are strong.
- Emergency number in Finland is 112. (Infopankki 2005; Keski-suomalainen 2012)

Above mentioned issues is just a short collection of the Finnish culture, and give some perspective to foreign people. More information is available in many publications and guides to related Finland. The purpose of this section was to give tips and some advices to understand and adapt Finnish culture.

4.3 How to learn Finnish culture?

Cultures are the people and people are the cultures. Encounter of the cultures happens, when the people meets. The best way to learn new culture is to meet person from the specific culture, in this case a Finn. Preliminary information may seek from literature, or those, who have already been in Finland. But the fastest way to find data about Finland is to use the Internet. It is full of guides, articles and data banks of many countries, including Finland. The Internet is current and the quickest option, where the changing data will be updated. Already before moving to Finland, net-surfing is desirable. It will give facts and from the forums is possible to seek people's opinions and experiences. The forums may not be the most trustworthy source, but at least give some perspective of the country. All these aspects: Internet, literature and discussions with people have been in Finland form together a pre-package, what will give a lot of useful data already before arrival to Finland. (Alho et al.1994, 132)

The more you learn to see of the host country citizens' point of view, the more influential you become and problematic issues of the adaptation, uncertainty, will reduce. The sender and receiver represent different cultural backgrounds, and they have different data banks. In talks the sender's information system is displayed and in listening, he uses the same system to read receiver. The communication event is perfect, when receiver has internalized the message in his own data system. The listening skills are extremely important between cultural communications. The better people know listener way of thinking, the easier is the communion. (Alho et al.1994, 132)

The previously mentioned sources to find information of the new culture are useful. However, what kind of data should be sought, to explore new culture? There are no right answers, but questions connected following themes would be useful:

Table 2 Culture themes. Explore in the beginning or before the arrival. (Alho et al.1994, 132 - 141)

Theme	Question
Attitude to foreigners.	
Greetings.	The most common greetings.
Facial expressions, gestures.	Is some actions insulting?
Speaking and introducing.	
Shopping and tips.	Chaffer and the use of tips.
Travelling.	Taxis and busses etc.
Working life.	Habits and rules?
Conception of time.	Be on time, what that means?
Dressing.	What is suitable?
Social values and equality.	
Life style, motivation, development.	Overall things of living.
Religion.	The main one? Attitude to others?
Art, sport, history, music etc.	

The previous table included some examples of the issues, what is advantageous to explore, when knowing the new culture. Questions are just cues, and more is desirable to ask of the themes. Nonetheless, it is recommended that everyone make own views individually and start to explore new cultural environment open-minded.

## 5 RESEARCH

### 5.1 Backgrounds

Starting point to conduct research was the sum of many issues. I was myself very interested in about adaptation of the foreign footballers, because of my own football backgrounds. I have many friends in football who are non- Finns. I contacted the FPA of Finland and presented the vision of the thesis and research. Discussions with them were productive. Commissioning organization was a very interested to see how well the foreign footballers feels in Finland. Mutual interest of the foreign footballers' adaptation and culture shock was a good take off for this research.

View of the larger scale, the topic is current. The number of foreign players in Finland is quite big. Results of the research may be useful data about the footballers' integration in Finland. Just like previous sections narrated facts about Finnish football and Finland. As mentioned, the commissioning organization may use these facts in a guide for foreign footballers.

### 5.2 Mission and objectives

The purpose of this research is to solve: Do foreign footballers have integration challenges in Finland, and if so, how to develop their adaptation in Finland? The research is limited to concern foreign footballers and their integration. The target country of integration is only Finland. In other words, the research tries to settle overall adaptation, support of the integration and the reasons for culture shock. In the conclusion part, the meaning is to find solutions for above-mentioned themes.

The objectives of research:

- To find out the integration challenges and reasons of them.
- To clarify the amount of support the players get in adaptation.
- To determine differences between cultures.
- To see players feelings of the Finnish football and society.
- To analyze, how to develop foreign footballers integration.

### 5.3 The research method

#### 5.3.1 Qualitative research

The method in this research is called a qualitative research. The purpose of this method is to collect in-depth information, which basis are not intended



to generalize, but to understand and interpret the research problem. Qualitative research was chosen, because the research group was deliberately selected bunch, not a random sample. (Alasuutari 1999, 231)

Data were collected by half- structured interview, and in this case Webropol- program. The questions are pre-planned and same for all of the interviewees. The research included two types of the questions: multiple-choice and open. In open questions, the answers are not bound to response options, and the participants can respond in their own words. This is important in this kind of method and helps the researcher to find deeper solutions. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2009, 47)

Qualitative research method is suitable for this work also, because; the purpose is to achieve the objectives of this work and research. The main point is to find reasons of foreign footballers' integration challenges and using qualitative research, the received data will be inclusive.

### 5.3.2 Webropol – program

Webropol is an electronic use program that is used via Internet. The program use is fun and easy as basic computer user and demanding professional user. IT expertise is not required to exploit the application. The main idea of the system is to create easily surveys and questionnaires. The program gives several options to select various question forms. After the collected data, the system will complete charts and reports to speed up interpret of the research. (Webropol, 2010)

Webropol – the application package is in Europe and Asia widely used by the universities. It is a useful tool for final degrees data collection and data processing. Webropol 2.0 - application was used in this thesis. Choice of this system was easy to make. Previous experiences with the easiness of the program and it is free of charge use for the students of the University of Applied Sciences favored the selection. The range to interviewees was long, so using Webropol, enabled to do research distantly. (Webropol, 2010)

### 5.3.3 Questions of the research

To Interview were selected questions, which correspond to certain pre-defined research problems. The survey was carried out using a Webropol – program. Research included the both: open and multiple-choice questions. With multiple-choice matters, can easy see, whether the participants agree or disagree options. In open questions, the target group can answer with own clauses and hence, we get search for true answer to the question why? Webropol – survey is done via internet. Consequently, the possibility of misunderstanding exists, because the lack of straight opportunity to ask clarification for questions.

Determining the questions was used in a number of ways: Background interviews with foreign players, tips from theory books and researchers own

experience of the topic. The main point of the questions was to achieve goals, and best possible was chosen for this purpose.

The interview consisted of a series of questions, with a total of 36 questions. The questions were grouped into five different sections according to topic areas:

- Background information (interviewee's basic information., questions 1-9)
- Coming to Finland (reasons to come Finland etc., questions 10-15)
- Finnish Football (picture of the Finnish football etc., questions 15-20)
- Culture shock in Finland or not? (culture shock issues, questions 21-31)
- Last words. (the final points, questions 32 – 36)

The division of the interview base clarifies the questionnaire a lot. Questions are presented in appendix one.

### 5.3.4 Data collection, participants and analyzing

Background interviews for the research with the foreign footballers were conducted by the date 24.8.2012. Footballers from four different nationalities was interviewed voluntarily. These meetings were more like “small talks” than real interviews, because of the nature and preparation of them. The purpose was to discuss about integration in the way: What pops in mind? Duration of the small talks was about 15 minutes, and all of those were recorded. Use of these records gave a lot of information to determination of the final questions of the research.

The survey (=Webropol) was ready in the beginning of the September. Survey was sent during the September via e-mail and Facebook messages. Last responses were received in the beginning of October. Participants of the survey were selected group. The group is six footballers, who have played in Finland during the season 2012. All of the nationalities are various. Involvement was totally voluntary. All respondents are anonymous in this thesis, so that their privacy is maintained. Also unpublished names increased more courage to answer honestly for sensitive issues. The invitation message is presented in appendix 2.

Before analyzing, the reports and graphs of the survey were carefully read. The analysis was to find a number of mostly emerging themes, and, therefore, to find answers to research questions. All five sections results were analyzed. Examination results went through in original order. Of all five question totalities are summarized, the most important information for the research.

Classification of the data is an integral part of the analysis. That create basis, whereby the interview material can be later interpreted, simplified and summarized. Classification parses structured data by comparing the material of the different parts to each other. It is essential that the research ma-

terial is separated from the similarities and differences. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2009, 147)

### 5.3.5 Reliability and ethics

The reliability of qualitative research is not as clear as a quantitative research. The interview material reliability depends on its quality. Quality can be sought in beforehand by doing carefully the body of the interview. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2009, 184-185)

This qualitative research is not meant to be generalized, because of the amount of the research group. Nevertheless, some connections between answers will be explored although the main focus is to study in more depth as discussed above. The research is not "completely" dependable and it gives a 6 different perspective on citizenship and the footballers' point of view.

The research is ethical as evidenced by the involved persons are voluntary basis and their identity will not be revealed in this study at any stage. The reliability of the answers is hard to determine, but the unpublished identities will have an effect in a positive way. Fundamental ethical principles are: informed consent, confidentiality, consequences and privacy. This research followed previously mentioned principles as well as possible. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2009, 20).

## 6 RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

### 6.1 Background information

The first issue of the research (Appendix 1, questions 1-9) was to collect basic information of the interviewees for example: nationality, age, gender, language skills, and educational background. All of the six participants are originally from different countries. Identities will be kept secret and thus the names will be not revealing. The study population consists of two Europeans (Norwegian and Irish), two Africans (Somalian and Nigerian), one Brazilian and one American. All of the participants are male and they are adults (over 18 years). Four respondents marital status is single. Four of the players play in League, one in Second Division and one lower. Only one is playing as an amateur status and the rest of the interviewees are professional footballers. This subject is interpreted by themselves, because professionalism is a wide term. Five of six answered to educational background question and all of them have done or are doing some degree. So, even though the most are professional footballers, they have some educational background. Players' language skills were considered important to find out, because it is connected strongly to adaptation and culture shock. Footballers' mission was to rate their language skills in the question nine (Rate 1-5. How well you speak / understand proposed language. 1 = not at all, 2 = basics 3 = good 4 = fluent 5 = perfect/ mother tongue).

Table 3 All respondents' averages of language skills.

	1	2	3	4	5	In total	Average
English	0	1	1	0	4	6	4,17
Finnish	2	2	1	1	0	6	2,17
Swedish	3	1	0	1	0	5	1,8
Spanish	3	2	1	0	0	6	1,67
Germany	5	0	0	0	0	5	1
Other, what	1	0	0	0	1	2	3
In total	14	6	3	2	5	30	2,3

As shown in the table, English is in hands by the whole bunch very well. Two understand the basics of the Finnish, whereas two can speak or understand Finnish quite well. Swedish and Spanish are in less control. One respondent speak perfect "other" language, but this is explained of his mother tongue. Even though all six players are all over the world, English is in a good stage. This means reductively, English is a global language and taught everywhere.

### 6.2 Coming to Finland

The second part of the interview (Appendix 1, questions 10-15) was to find out, inter alia, the reasons for coming to Finland. Half of the footballers have played abroad before Finland. Three of the players had already some of the "related party" living in Finland. Period of the players living was wide: from 3 months to more than 10 years. These are consequential issues, when thinking integration. Prior data before the arrival is received from the most: friends, agent and via Internet. This is not a surprise, because the Internet is an easy way to seek the information. Close ones can also help by giving a useful data.

Two players did not come to play football, but another significant reason. The most reasons to come play in Finland are connected to improving as a player and getting to bigger leagues. Also learning the new culture was mentioned:

- To understand the level of European football and taking my career to the next level.

Half of the study group could "maybe" stay in Finland after the football career, but it depends on for example the work situations and family issues. One participant would like to stay in Finland and this is clearly connected the length (over 10 years) he has already been in Finland.

### 6.3 Finnish football

The third section (Appendix 1, questions 15-20) was based on to settle the adaptation to Finnish football. In discussions the differences between Finnish football and home football, the answers were divided totally. Here is listed collection of the answers:

- American and Irish thinks the intense is less in Finland.
- Norwegian says the training and games are similar.
- Irish and Nigerian think the technical level is higher in Finland.
- Somalian tells the technical and tactical levels are less in Finland.

Division of the answers can be partly explained by the level of the series, previous experiences and the different football backgrounds.

The one of the major things was to clarify the amount of support the players get in adaptation. This was investigated in the question 17: How well your club takes care of the following issues?

## Foreign footballers' integration challenges in Finland

Table 4 How well your club takes care of the following issues? Rate 1 - 5. (1 = not at all, 2 = little, 3 = normal, 4 = good, 5 = perfect).

	1	2	3	4	5	In total	Average
Injuries (Doctor appointment, recovery trainings)	0	2	0	2	2	6	3,67
Living arrangements (Apartment)	1	0	1	1	3	6	3,83
Bank Account, Insurance	0	0	2	1	3	6	4,17
Rules (Team rules, Laws)	0	1	0	2	3	6	4,17
Practicalities (Cell Phone, Where to find shops etc.)	2	0	0	3	1	6	3,17
In total	3	3	3	9	12	30	3,8

As appears in the table, all of the “outside of the field”- issues are taken care overall in a good level. Couple rated not at all (1) to living arrangements and practicalities and little (2) to injury issues, which is explained the level the players are playing (second division and lower). It is nice to see, that all clubs in league are taken care these issues at least in normal level. That is extremely important, to speed up and help the integration.

Footballers get the information to previously mention “outside of the field” – issues the mostly from sport director / team leader and playmate. Also, coach, agent and friends are selected. 100 % of the research group agrees that foreign players will not need more help on the issues that are presented in the question 17. This indicates the support and assistance is available for foreign footballers use.

### 6.4 Culture shock in Finland or not?

The fourth slice of the research (Appendix 1, questions 21-31) is all about the culture shock in Finland. Integration and adaptation are substantial concepts for this section. In the first question (21) of this section, respondents wrote freely first thoughts about Finland. Four of the participants mentioned one word, coldness:

- I was amazed by how cold it was already in October!
- It was so cold!!! I've never experience anything like it before. -30 degrees and snow that covered the whole town.
- Very cold country.
- Very cold.

Leaning on this, Finland is a cold country. Nothing other specific were not in answers.

The next question's (22) aim, was to solve the need of the Finnish language. Majority agreed Finnish is not necessary to learn. But if staying

longer in Finland, it would be useful to understand and learn. Nigerian thinks Finnish is important, because without it is hard to prosper. The major part of the participants had an opinion that you can survive with English in Finland:

- I can definitely survive with English For sure but I will definitely be looking to improve on my Finnish if I stay in Finland.

All of the respondents answered with the same kind of adjectives, when their mission was to tell first impressions of the typical Finn (23). But many of the study group said, that when getting known better (24), Finnish people become more friendly and social. In addition, confidence, caring and outgoing words were mentioned, when becoming familiar with the Finn.

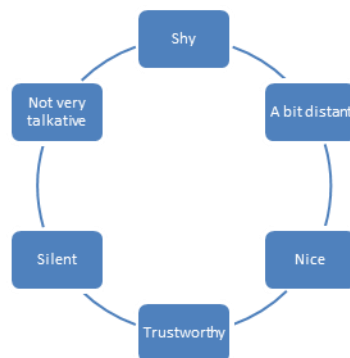


Figure 6 First impressions of the Finn.

Players' descriptions coincide with Deborah Swallow's determination of the typical Finn:

- Finnish people are used to silence.
- They need also a little personal space.
- Sometimes Finns want to be close to nature and alone. (Swallow 2001, 59-63)

In the questions 25 – 28, the meaning was to see the development of the culture shock. This question set is very important of the research's point of view. Research group's task, was to pick up the three best suitable alternatives to questions about the most difficult things in Finland. Next are collected all respondents' answers to the previous questions in charts.

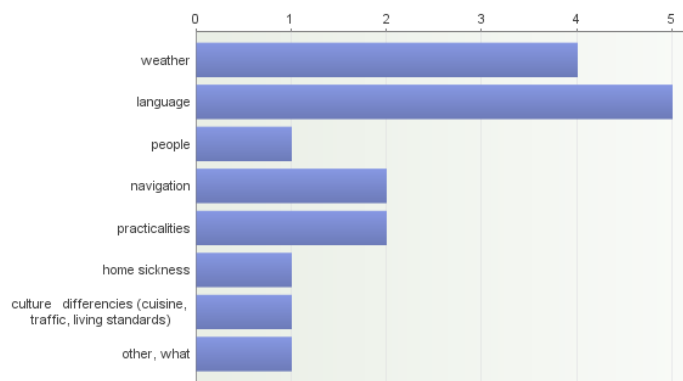


Figure 7 25. What were the most difficult things in Finland during the first month?

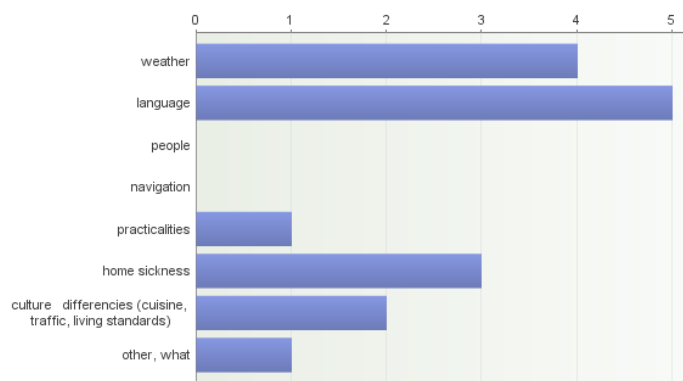


Figure 8 26. What were the most difficult things in Finland after a half year?

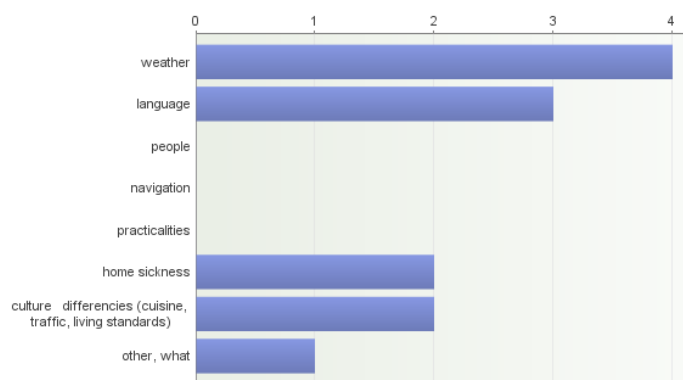


Figure 9 27. What were the most difficult things in Finland after two years?

Charts show the truth. Like already mentioned, foreign footballers first thoughts of Finland was the coldness. Weather conditions stay as difficulty, through the adaptation process. Language is also stable and the most picked, which is kind of weird, because many of participants agreed, Finnish is not necessary learn. Researcher assumes that they mean the difficulty level of the Finnish language, not surviving with some other language (= English).

Navigation and practicalities are difficult in the beginning, but when starting to integrate, these issues will be reducing from difficulties. Overall



culture differences will stay to some extent. Brazilian selected culture differences to be difficult all the time and Nigerian after first month. This could be explained by very different traffic, food and life style stuff.

Overall inspecting of homesickness, it is lower during the first month. This is called the honeymoon stage. When arriving to new country the excitement and curiosity levels are in the maximum (Alho 1994, 119; Hofstede 2002. 23). Based on this homesickness does not exist so strongly in the beginning of the integration. However, it rises the longer time goes, as the charts are shown in among these footballers. The reasons for changes in difficulties with time were expected. For example, getting to know better with people and environment.

In next questions (29-30) studied cultural differences. The footballers' purpose was to rate (1-5) the biggest differences between their home culture and Finnish culture (29) and give some examples of the differences (30).

Table 5 The biggest differences between home culture and Finnish culture. Rate 1 - 5. (1 = not at all, 2 = little, 3 = pretty much, 4 = a lot, 5 = totally)

	1	2	3	4	5	In total	Average
cuisine	2	1	1	2	0	6	2,5
family habits	0	2	2	0	2	6	3,33
celebration	1	1	1	1	2	6	3,33
religion	1	2	0	1	2	6	3,17
laws / rules / traffic	2	0	0	2	2	6	3,33
weather	1	0	1	0	4	6	4
In total	7	6	5	6	12	36	3,28

Synopsis to table displays, the biggest culture differences are in weather. This is also one difficulty for the research group. The cuisine aspects have the lowest average and it is the half of the maximum. According to this table, culture differences exist in all categories among the study bunch.

Concerned of the individual level, the following issues found:

- Norwegian did not find anything big differences. (Average of all: 1,33)
- Irish found many differences, for example: naked saunas, left-side traffic and night outs in Finland. (Average of all: 4)
- American found differences in cuisine, religion and weather, for example: food is more unhealthy and fatty, religion is a bigger thing and winter starts in December in home country. (Average of all: 2,33)

- Brazilian found the biggest differences in cuisine, laws etc. and weather in Finland. (Average of all: 3,5)
- Nigerian feels that culture is a lot of different: food is not spicy, people celebrate too much, they get too drunk, and people are not that religious and winter exists in Finland. (Average of all: 4,17)
- Somalian identifies the most differences: big use of alcohol in partying and the spent time with family together is low in Finland. Traffic rules and laws are better in Finland. (Average of all: 4,33)

Summarizing, the most differences between cultures found Africans. This explains the total difference in cultures, what is in overall known already. Norwegian found nothing different, which explicates the similarity of their home country to Finland.

Related to the above questions, this entirety last mission was to pick up the main obstacles to not integrate in Finland (31). In total, the same matters came out from the players as seen in the chart. Language, weather, long distance and homesickness are the main barriers in integration.

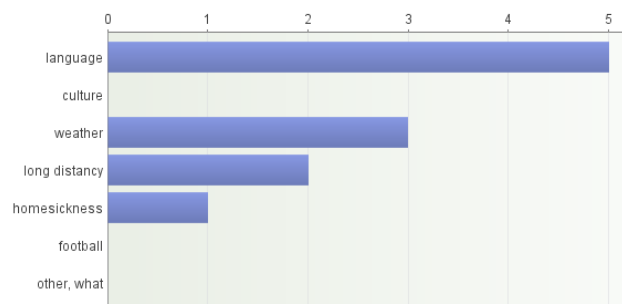


Figure 10 The main obstacles to not integrate in Finland.

### 6.5 Last words

Last part of the research (Appendix 1, questions 32-36) included the final points of the success of the integration. Answers of the easiest things in integration (32) were divided strongly:

- Most things were easy initially. I found that things got more difficult as time has gone on, says American.
- Food and settling in was easy as the people are so helpful and welcoming. Accommodation and internet to communicate with friends was easy also, tells Irish.
- Football and culture were easy according to Nigerian.

- Nothing, everything was difficult specifies Somalian.

Interpretation of the question gives a many opportunities to answer in many different ways. Previous comments are all totally different, so any unifying conclusions cannot be made. However, 83.3 % of the study group agreed, that they have integrated well in Finland (33). Comments were similar to each other, and all were related to adaptation process:

- Have been here so long.
- Because I am rarely homesick and most people hear speak excellent English so communicating is easy.
- Yes because now i have adapted to the situation here.
- I'm doing well. I work, I've had a lot of friends and I study.

Only one answerer disagreed:

- I have kind of made a little cocoon for myself and insulated myself from Finnish culture. I also spend most of my time off the field with other foreign players.

The only one, who has not integrated well in Finland, is from the perspective of acculturation process, connected to separation mode. Separation is being only with your "own" ethnic group with avoiding contacts to other groups (Forsander et al. 2001, 37). This is just a little contact, because the player is in touch with the other groups as well. So nothing more of this issue should not be analyzed.

In the question 34, the footballers rated issues, what are connected to integration.

Table 6 Rate following issues. Rate 1 - 5. (1= totally false, 2 = false, 3 = hard to say, 4 = true, 5= totally true)

	1	2	3	4	5	In total	Average
I had a culture shock	1	3	1	0	1	6	2,5
Culture shock affected my performances in the pitch	5	0	1	0	0	6	1,33
Clubs take care of their players	0	0	4	0	2	6	3,67
Clubs need to develop their support for foreign players	1	0	4	1	0	6	2,83
Finland feels like home	2	0	1	3	0	6	2,83
Integration problems are general in every country	1	0	1	2	2	6	3,67
In total	10	3	12	6	5	36	2,81

As we see on the table, there are a collection of the clauses in context to integration. Four picked up totally false or false in the first claim (I had a culture shock). Interesting is, only one admitted (selected 5), was Irish. Overall, it is amazing, that so many do not feel that they had a culture shock, because in the previous questions all answerers did have differences between home culture and Finnish culture.

A very pleasant is a culture shock did not affect the performances in the pitch. In addition, the clubs responsibility of the players is in good level, or it is hard to determine. Only Nigerian thinks, clubs need to develop their support to foreign players.

Half of the study bunch feels like home in Finland. Norwegian selected 3 (hard to say) and Nigerian and American don't feel like home in Finland.

Only Irish thinks, integration problems are not general in everywhere. The greater part ponders integration problems exist in every country. Culture shock, integration and adaptation process are terms, which are connected always to immigrant person's life, was the country of any.

The next question's (35) purpose was to see, is there any symptoms with culture shock. Only Somalian felt some symptoms. He had pretty much dejection and anguish. These are normal symptoms, which are related to stress. Stress usually forms of life crises, like culture shock. (Tohtori,fi, 2011)

The last question of the whole research (36) is in context with the commissioning organization (FPA). In FPA: s webpage, is located Welcome to Finland-page, for foreign players. Page includes useful information about

Finnish football and life, in short frame. Third of the research group have checked it.

## 7 CONCLUSION

The collected research material for thesis and the conclusions made on the basis of the material, gives a clear view of the challenges, what foreign footballers faces in integration to Finland and Finnish society. The results were already analyzed deeply in the previous section. The results of the research are only the perspective of the players. Relying on this, it would have been nice to see how the other side, the clubs, thinks on these adaptation matters. Two party perspectives should be brought to the extent of research and specifically inside the research limits. But this was impossible to do, because of the lack of time.

The objectives of the research were achieved very well. Determining the integration challenges, there found two things: the weather and language. This was not a big surprise for me, because many foreign players have not seen snow and in Finland is very cold during the winter. Also Finnish is not spoken anywhere else than in Finland, so language problems are acceptable. The study group agreed that you can survive with English, although this supports the adaptation. But also they admitted, some Finnish should learn, especially if staying in here longer. Football differs from the own culture in many opinions, but in various ways. African players had the most differences between cultures. This is not a big shock for me, because the living style and the total culture are so different than Finland. This was an expected answer. The players support for "outside of field" issues is in a good level. The whole research group admitted: there is no need for more support.

According the research, there are not any too big barriers in foreign footballers integration to Finland. Of course, some challenges do exists and something is evolutionary. What are the possibilities to develop foreign players' integration and adaptation process? Already mentioned language challenges in Finnish are treatable. Possibility of the language courses for players should be desirable. In this case footballers own willingness to learn Finnish has to be huge, because like already told, you can survive with English. Language courses are not big investments, and those will support the learning process even more. I have not yet heard that any footballers have been in courses (organized by clubs) in Finland. However, in the bigger football leagues, this is an ordinary issue.

Even though the integration of the foreign footballers is in a good shape, the development can and must be done. In large scale, in the top leagues, there are persons whose responsible are the adaptation of the players. This would be useful to Finland as well, but the ongoing economic situation reduces already clubs prosperity and for that reason, there is no money for additional issues. In addition, survival and adaptation guides would be very useful. There already exist various fact banks, where to seek information and tips to live in Finland. For example the football side, the FPA of Finland has guidance (Welcome to Finland) in their webpages, where is information for foreign footballers. By using this thesis, Welcome to Finland -package, can be updated and fill in, if necessary.

The integration of the foreign footballers in Finland is good. Only one of the research group thinks, he has not integrated well in Finland, and perhaps the explanation for this is his period of living in here, only three months.

The present research was a very interesting project. Integration is the subject of a current, but also very challenging. In hindsight, the results of the thesis are certainly useful in the future and now. The main objectives were achieved and interesting information came to me. Doing this thesis the picture of the culture shock, adaptation and integration changed wider. More perspectives came up. No specific problems, when doing this thesis existed. The interview schedule was only, that brought a small headache. In total, everything went as it should be and the commissioning organization receives useful data for foreign footballers.

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## QUESTIONNAIRE

### Integration survey for foreign footballers in Finland (JPY)

#### Background information

1. Name

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2. Nationality

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3. Age

under 18 years

18 - 20 year

21 - 25 years

26 - 30 years

over 30 years

4. Sex

Male

Female

5. Marital status

single

in relationship

married

family

6. Status

Professional

Amateur

7. Level

The level of your club in Finland.

League

First Division

Second Division

Other

8. Education

Your educational background.

---

9. Language skills

Rate 1-5. How well you speak / understand proposed language. (1 = not at all, 2 = basics 3 = good 4 = fluent 5 = perfect/ mother tongue)

	1	2	3	4	5
English					
Finnish					
Swedish					
Spanish					
Germany					
Other, what					

Coming to Finland

10. Have you played abroad before Finland?

Yes, where  
No

11. Did you have any connections to Finland before? What kind of?

Travelling, friends etc.

---

12. Where did you get the prior data before arrival?

Pick up a maximum three (3) alternatives!

via internet  
friends  
agent  
club  
family  
other

13. How long have you been in Finland?

---

14. Why did you come to play in Finland?

---

15. Would you like to stay in Finland after your football career?

Yes, why?

Maybe, why?

No, why?

Finnish Football

16. Are the trainings or the style of the game different where you have get used to? How?

---

17. How well your club takes care of the following issues?

Rate 1 - 5. (1 = not at all, 2 = little, 3 = normal, 4 = good, 5 = perfect).

	1	2	3	4	5
Injuries (Doctor appointment, recovery trainings)					
Living arrangements (Apartment)					
Bank Account, Insurance					
Rules (Team rules, Laws)					
Practicalities (Cell Phone, Where to find shops etc.)					

18. Where do you get information about issues in the previous questions?

Pick up the three (3) best suitable alternatives.

Coach

Team leader / Sport director etc.

Agent

Playmate

Friends out of soccer

Yourself / Family

19. Do you think that you or other new foreign players need more help on the issues of the question 17?

Yes

No

20. What kind of help? Why clubs do not invest more of the accommodation of the new players?

Answer only if you answered yes for the question 19!

---

Culture shock in Finland or not?

21. Your first thoughts about Finland.

Free write of your expectations and feelings.

---

22. Do you think Finnish language is necessary to learn if living in Finland? Or can you survive with English?

---

23. What kind of was your first impression of Finnish people?

Describe a typical Finn on your point of view.

---

24. Does the picture change when you have get known better?

Yes, how?

No

25. What were the most difficult things in Finland during the first month?

Pick up the three (3) best suitable alternatives.

weather

language

people

navigation

practicalities

home sickness

culture differences (cuisine, traffic, living standards)

other, what

26. What were the most difficult things in Finland after a half year?

Pick up the three (3) best suitable alternatives.

weather

language

people

navigation

practicalities

home sickness

culture differences (cuisine, traffic, living standards)

other, what

27. What were the most difficult things in Finland after two years?

Pick up the three (3) best suitable alternatives. Answer only, if you have been in Finland for two years!!

weather  
language  
people  
navigation  
practicalities  
home sickness  
culture differences (cuisine, traffic, living standards)  
other, what

28. If your answers changed during the questions 25 -27, what are the reasons for these changes?

Please answer extensively.

---

29. The biggest differences between your home culture and Finnish culture. How much cultures differs from each other?

Rate 1 - 5. (1 = not at all, 2 = little, 3 = pretty much, 4 = a lot, 5 = totally)

	1	2	3	4	5
cuisine					
family habits					
celebration					
religion					
laws / rules / traffic					
weather					

30. Give me a couple examples of the previous differences

Please answer extensively.

---

31. The main obstacles to NOT integrate in Finland

Pick up the two (2) best suitable alternatives.

language  
culture  
weather  
long distance  
homesickness  
football



other, what

Last words

32. What were the easiest things in integration?

Tell shortly.

---

33. Do you think you have integrated well in Finland?

Yes, why

No, why

34. Rate following issues.

Rate 1 - 5. (1= totally false, 2 = false, 3 = hard to say, 4 = true, 5= totally true)

	1	2	3	4	5
I had a culture shock					
Culture shock affected my performances in the pitch					
Clubs take care of their players					
Clubs need to develop their support for foreign players					
Finland feels like home					
Integration problems are general in every country					

35. If you had a culture shock in the beginning, did you have any of the following symptoms?

Rate 1 - 5. (1 = not at all, 2 = little, 3 = pretty much, 4 = much, 5 = too much) Options are in English and (Finnish).

	1	2	3	4	5
dejection (alakulo)					
anxiety (levottomuus)					
anguish (ahdistus)					
indisposition (pahoinvointi)					
indifference (välinpitämättömyys)					

36. I have checked JPY:s Welcome to Finland page

[http://www.jpy.fi/files/cms\\_userfile/Tiedostot/WelcomeToFinland.pdf](http://www.jpy.fi/files/cms_userfile/Tiedostot/WelcomeToFinland.pdf)

Yes

No

Thank you for answering

## COVER LETTER

Hello!

My name is Jaakko Juuti, a former league player (Fc Haka) and now playing for Ilves in second division. I study in HAMK University of Applied Sciences and I am doing my final thesis for Jalkapallon pelaajayhdistys (Football Players Association of Finland). My topic is foreign footballers integration in Finland and that's why I send this e-mail. I am doing a survey (link below), where I kindly ask you to answer. Survey is in English.

The meaning of the research is to find out the problematic issues in integration to Finland and how to develop your integration. There are questions about football, culture shock and Finland overall. Results and answers of the survey will come to my Final Thesis. I won't publish/ tell your names in my Thesis, so you can answer honestly :) If you want to ask something, do not hesitate to contact.

In Finnish:

Olen Jaakko Juuti, entinen liigapelaaja (Fc Haka) ja nykyään pelaan Ilveksessä kakkosdivisioonassa. Opiskelen HAMK:issa ja teen opinnäytetyötä Jalkapallon pelaajayhdistykselle. Minun aiheenani on ulkomaalaisten jalkapalloilijoiden sopeutuminen Suomeen. Teen tutkimuksen, johon pyytäisin sinua osallistumaan. Tutkimus on englanniksi.

Tarkoitukseni on selvittää ongelmakohtia Suomeen sopeutumisessa ja kuinka kehittää integroitumista. Tutkimus koostuu kysymyksistä jalkapallosta, kulttuuri shokista ja Suomesta. Tulokset ja vastaukset tulevat opinnäytetyöhön ja niitä analysoidaan siinä. En kerro sinun nimeäsi opinnäytetyössäni, joten voit vastata rehellisesti. Jos haluat kysyä jotain, ota rohkeasti yhteyttä.

Best Regards  
Jaakko Juuti

Thank you already and have a pleasant journey :)  
Take the Survey