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HOW HAVE KOUVOLA CITIZENS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS FOREIGNERS
CHANGED FROM 2005 TO 2010

Bachelor's Thesis 2011

ABSTRACT

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RINNE, EMMI	HOW HAVE KOUVOLA CITIZENS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS FOREIGNERS CHANGED FROM 2005 TO 2010
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The purpose of this thesis was to examine, interpret and compare the results of two nearly similar attitude surveys that were conducted in Kouvola in 2005 and 2010. Based on the results, the aim was to find out how Kouvola citizens' attitudes towards foreigners had changed from 2005 to 2010 and in specific, what were the most significant changes and consistencies in the results.

The research method used in the study was a survey in which the respondents independently filled in a two-page questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of different attitude statements and attitude evaluations where the respondents were asked to rate their attitudes towards a set of nationalities and different foreigner groups.

After examining the survey results, it can be concluded that Kouvola citizens' attitudes towards foreigners have tightened. The changes are not particularly dramatic, but appear in all sections of the survey. As an example, the attitudes towards different foreigner groups and many foreign nationalities were less positive in 2010. In addition people felt more often that foreigners cause social burden to the society. The possible reasons for the changes can be found in the national economy; further to other similar studies on the subject, indications of recession having a negative impact on attitudes towards foreigners and immigrants are strong. Moreover, the recent changes in the public attitudinal atmosphere seem to be more permissive to expression of critical opinions without full social condemnation.

TIIVISTELMÄ

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RINNE, EMMI	MITEN KOUVOLALAISTEN ASEENTEET ULKOMAALAISIA KOHTAAN OVAT MUUTTUNEET VUODESTA 2005 VUOTEEN 2010
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Tämän opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena oli tutkia, tulkita ja vertailla kahden samankaltaisen asennetutkimuksen tuloksia ja selvittää miten kouvolaisten asenteet ulkomaalaisia kohtaan olivat muuttuneet vuodesta 2005 vuoteen 2010. Asennetutkimukset toteutettiin Kouvolassa kyselytutkimuksina. Tulosten tutkinnassa ja tulkinnassa haluttiin erityisesti kiinnittää huomiota niihin kohtiin, jotka olivat muuttuneet eniten tai pysyneet muuttumattomina.

Kyselytutkimuksen ydin oli kaksisivuinen kyselylomake, jonka vastaajat täyttivät itsenäisesti. Kyselylomake koostui erilaisista asenneväittämistä sekä asennearvioista, joissa vastaajien tuli arvioida omaa asennettaan tiettyjä kansallisuus- ja ulkomaalaisryhmiä kohtaan.

Tutkimustulosten perusteella voidaan todeta, että kouvolaisten asenteet ulkomaalaisia kohtaan ovat kiristyneet. Muutokset eivät olleet erityisen dramaattisia, mutta asenteiden kiristymistä oli havaittavissa tutkimuksen jokaisella osa-alueella. Muun muassa ihmisten suhtautuminen erilaisiin ulkomaalaisryhmiin ja eri kansallisuuksiin oli keskimäärin negatiivisempaa vuonna 2010 kuin 2005. Lisäksi ihmiset olivat entistä useammin sitä mieltä, että ulkomaalaiset lisäävät yhteiskunnan sosiaalista taakkaa. Mahdollisia syitä asenteiden kiristymiseen voidaan löytää maan taloudellisesta tilanteesta; samankaltaisissa tutkimuksissa on lamalla todettu olevan huonontava vaikutus ihmisten asenteisiin ulkomaalaisia kohtaan. Lisäksi viimeaikaiset muutokset yleisessä asenneilmapiirissä näyttävät sallivan entistä kriittisemmät kannanotot ilman välitöntä tuomiota yhteiskunnalta.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Motivation

In the past few decades Finland has become more and more international as the amount of foreigners living in Finland has steadily grown (Statistics Finland 2011). After a long historical tendency of Finns only migrating to other countries, the situation took a remarkable turn in the beginning of 90s when the dissolution of the Soviet Union brought a lot of people from Russia and Estonia to the country, and at the same time the amount of asylum seekers and refugees from Somalia and former Yugoslavian area sought to Finland (Ali-tolppa-Niitamo & Söderling 2005; Myrskylä 2010). Later in 2000 crises in the Asian area have increased immigration from Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq, to mention a few (Myrskylä 2010). Furthermore, the expansion of EU along with new statutes about free movement of people within the area, have added to the amount of foreigners in Finland (Rapo 2011).

The perspective to immigration has then largely focused on humanitarian and ethnic standpoints, marking Finland out from many other European countries, where the main cause for receiving foreign immigrants has been work (Ali-tolppa-Niitamo & Söderling 2005). However, this perspective has lately been challenged with the upcoming changes in the Finnish demography and labour force, which have led the government into drawing up agenda to increase occupational immigration in particular to support sufficiency of labour in the future. This means the foreigners in Finland will represent increasingly diversified backgrounds with regards to ethnic origin, education and family relations.

It is clear that foreigners are and will be a permanent part of the Finnish society. The change into a multicultural society is inevitable, but the adaptation will require a good deal of time and effort from both sides. The progress so far has been slanted with the previously mentioned humanitarian and ethnic standpoints, which differ substantially from the occupational immigration aspect. Reciprocal adaptation has had its ups and downs, and challenges with relation to understanding different habits, traditions and language have occurred regu-

larly. Moreover, there are significant regional differences in the amount of foreigners in the country; whereas Helsinki metropolitan region's share of foreigners is at the moment about 7.0%, in Kymenlaakso region the equivalent number is 3.1% and in Lapland region only 1.7% (Statistics Finland 2011). Therefore the circumstances in relation to adaptation, execution of possible integration and training programmes and local acceptance can vary depending on the location in the country.

Over the years, there have been several national surveys defining the Finnish citizens' attitudes towards foreigners and immigrants. The findings, however, have rarely been fully comparable because the studies have been conducted by various directions, in a different scale and in various forms. In addition, local differences, as mentioned, can be important and findings on a national level may not be entirely applicable on a regional level.

In 2005, a group of students from Kymenlaakso University of Applied Sciences in Kouvola conducted a research on citizens' attitudes towards foreigners as a part of their research work course. At the time the research covered two cities, Kotka and Kouvola. In 2010 the same research was carried out by a new group of students; this time only Kouvola citizens' attitudes were studied. The method used in the research was a survey, and for the most part, the questionnaire used was exactly the same both times to make the results comparable with those from 2005. Some additional attitude statements were inserted in the latter version to match the current circumstances. Having results from the same survey five years apart offered a great opportunity to examine what kind of changes there could be seen in Kouvola citizens' attitudes and are there any views that would have remained the same. Turning the comparison into a thesis was in fact logical, because the results derived from a research.

There are several directions that could find the results of this thesis beneficial: the immigration office, the city of Kouvola and Kymenlaakso University of Applied Sciences, too. Before people's attitudes were studied for the first time in 2005, there had not been done a similar research before and therefore the re-

sults had a significant informative value. Nonetheless, one separate research only reveals attitudes at that time, thus, in order to see the possible changes in them, the research needs to be repeated. This comparison provides a suggestive direction in which the attitudes are moving and how do the citizens of Kouvola feel and have felt about foreigners. For the immigration office, being aware of the possible changes in local people's attitudes might help them to develop or improve possible existing adaptation programmes and for instance to increase the awareness of what nationalities are more prone to challenges in the eyes of the locals. For the city it could be more like an image issue to know what kind of attitude its citizens have, and is there something to work on or is there a need to do something in order to change the direction of attitudes. As Kymenlaakso University of Applied Sciences is attracting more and more foreign students, it could be beneficial to make good use of the knowledge from the research to do as much as we can to bring locals and students, especially foreign students, closer to each other.

1.2 Research questions and objectives

This thesis focuses on comparing the results of two similar surveys, from 2005 and from 2010. The main research question is:

- How have Kouvola citizens' attitudes towards foreigners changed from 2005 to 2010?

To examine the results and to define the main research question more in detail, the subquestions are:

- What are the most significant changes in the results?
- What are the reasons for the most significant changes?
- What are the most significant consistencies in the results?
- What are the reasons for the most significant consistencies?

1.3 Research method and the scope of the research

The original research was carried out in a form of a survey, in which the questionnaire included several attitude statements, attitude evaluations and optional free comments. The questionnaire also included a set of background questions that were designed to define the respondents' age, gender, educational background and additionally their possible contacts and dealings with foreigners. In this thesis presentation of the research results will be entirely based on the data collected through the survey questionnaires. Only Kouvola citizens' responses are taken into account; this means that from 2005 survey results only Kouvola citizens' responses are used.

1.4 The structure of the thesis

Examining the research topic will start with setting up a conceptual and factual framework to each subject in the study. Different types of foreigners and foreigner groups in Finland will be presented added with statistical data of the amount of foreigners in Finland, and in Kouvola in particular. Definitions of the key concepts concerned in this thesis will also be embraced in the chapter. National research results of similar studies will be covered in chapter three.

The research method and data collection of this study will be introduced in the fourth chapter, added with the specification of research arrangements and the process itself. An evaluation of the validity and reliability of the research will also be given at the end of the chapter.

The comparison of the survey results from 2005 and 2010 will be presented in chapter five along with graphical demonstration of each part of the study. Comments and experiences from the commissioner of this thesis, Kouvola Immigration Office, will be given in chapter six as the interview of immigration coordinator Satu Kurri will be elaborated. In chapter seven discussion on the comparison of the results will concentrate on finding answers the research questions. Finally the main conclusions will be drawn with suggestions for further studies.

2 CONCEPTUAL AND FACTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

In this chapter the research topic will be approached by specifying different foreigner types and foreigner groups in Finland. From the statistical point of view the study will be supported with the latest figures of the amount of foreigners in Finland as well as in Kouvola. Finally, the most essential concepts associated with the study will be presented and defined.

2.1 Different types of foreigners in Finland

The title of this research refers to foreigners (in Finnish: ulkomaalaiset) in general, without specifying their purpose or length of stay in Finland. Depending on the grounds of their entry, a further specification can be made into immigrants (in Finnish: maahanmuuttajat, siirtolaiset), returnees (in Finnish: paluumuuttajat), asylum seekers (in Finnish: turvapaikanhakijat), refugees and quota refugees (in Finnish: pakolaiset – kiintiöpakolaiset). These specifications are herein explained in more detail.

Foreigner

The Finnish law (2011a, 2011b), Finnish Red Cross (2011) and Finnish Immigration Service (2011) all define unambiguously a foreigner as being *a person who is not a Finnish citizen*.

Immigrant

According to Finnish Immigration Service an immigrant is *a person moving from one country to another; a general concept which applies to all migrants with different reasons for moving* (2011). As the word immigrant has two translations in Finnish language, the Finnish Red Cross (2011) makes a difference between these two: similarly to Finnish Immigration Service, 'maahanmuuttaja' is a general concept applying to all migrants with different reasons for moving, yet 'siirtolainen' is a person who is moving from one country to another because of work. Contrary to this, Finnish Immigration Service (2011) does not

bind work as the distinctive factor but parallels both terms to describe individuals immigrating to Finland with a purpose of permanent residence.

Additionally, Kouvola City Council (2010) gives its own corrective to the definition by stating in its migration policy programme that an immigrant is a general term describing a person who is born abroad and is moving to Finland with the intention to reside in the country at least for one year. Moreover, researchers and professors studying immigration in Finland have formed their own definitions when examining the subject. One of the first groundbreaking researchers in the field of ethnic relations, Karmela Liebkind (1994), professor of social psychology in University of Helsinki, presents immigrants as persons who with a permanent purpose move into another country to make a living.

Returnee

This term refers mainly to former and present Finnish citizens who return back to Finland; additionally, it has also been applied to Ingrian Finns, who come from the former Soviet Union area, but have a Finnish origin (Finnish Immigration Service 2011; Finnish Red Cross 2011). This dispensation originates way back to history when numerous Finns populated the closest border areas in the former Soviet Union area. In 1990 the president of the time decided to grant the Ingrian Finns a free entry by application provided that they are for instance Finnish by nationality themselves, or one of their parents or two of their grandparents are Finnish by nationality (Finnish Immigration Service 2011). However, since 1 July 2011, this arrangement has become another part of the history as the remigration system was dismantled by government decision; in future Ingrian Finns may immigrate to Finland according to normal regulations stated in the Aliens Act (Ministry of the Interior 2011a)

Asylum seeker

According to Finnish Immigration Service (2011), an asylum seeker is *a person who asks for protection from and right of residence in a foreign country*. In other words, this term refers to a temporary state which results in the seeker

receiving a residence permit or alternatively deportation. In case a residence permit is granted, the decision is made based on refugee status, secondary protection if the asylum seeker is threatened by torture or inhuman treatment, or humanitarian protection if the asylum seeker cannot return to his home country due to nature disaster or current lack of security (Ministry of Interior 2011b). Before the decision is made, other options for granting the residence permits are also examined (Finnish Immigration Service 2011).

Refugee and quota refugee

Finnish Immigration Service defines a refugee as *an alien, who has well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a social group or political opinion. Refugee status is granted to a person who is granted asylum by a state or who is declared to be a refugee by UNHCR (the UN's refugee agency) (2011)*. Ministry of Interior (2011b) explains that a quota refugee also has a refugee status by UNHCR, but it has been declared already before the entry to another country, and the entry is defined by the state's annual quota. In Finland the annual quota has in the recent years been 750 people (Ministry of Interior 2011b). The most critical difference then is that a refugee enters the country without being a refugee as of status yet, whereas a quota refugee is transferred to another country because of his/her refugee status.

2.2 Different foreigner groups in Finland

According to Koskinen et al (2007, 263) foreigner in Finland can roughly be divided into four main groups:

- 1) Ingrian Finns who are of Finnish extraction and other returnees who have changed their nationality while staying and living abroad.
- 2) Foreigners who have married a Finn.
- 3) Refugees and asylum seekers.

- 4) Foreigners (and possibly their family members) who have immigrated due to studies, work or other similar reason.

Naturally, these groups are partially overlapping but this division functions well as a guideline. In the light of all the different types of foreigners introduced in the previous chapter, this division includes all of them.

The most common reasons for immigration are marriage, work or studies (Refugee Advice Centre 2011) which basically sets the most of the immigrants into two of these groups. Multicultural families in particular have increased in numbers within the last fifteen years and there are already over 60,000 families in Finland of which at least one of the parents represents another nationality (Ministry of the Interior 2011b). Huttunen (2009, 118) mentions that this large group of foreigners tends to be forgotten in public discussion where the division is often done only into refugees and occupational immigrants. Moreover, Finns themselves are still the biggest group of immigrants (Myrskylä 2010) which according to Koskinen et al (2007, 264) adds up the relevance of the returnees-group in the book *The Finnish population*. However, many of the official definitions allow the returnees to have kept their Finnish nationality, which partially challenges the statistical follow-up of annual immigration numbers.

From a statistical point of view it is relevant to take into account what is a foreigner by definition, in other words, what is the basis of a person being foreigner. In his article "Who is an immigrant" Markus Rapo (2011), chief actuary in Statistics Finland, discusses the various ways to define foreigners and immigrants. Using nationality, country of birth or native language as a single defining factor will all result to a different population group and thus can create distorted images and conclusions, especially when the choice of definition is not mentioned in the context. After 2000, every third immigrant moving to Finland has originally been born in Finland, which, as an example, would mean that the annual number of people immigrating does not equal with the amount of foreign citizens moving to Finland. Additionally, roughly a fifth of those immigrants, who were born abroad, speak Finnish as their native lan-

guage which would again result to a different population group if only native language would be the single defining factor. Therefore it is suggested that the most reliable figures are drawn by combining the factors: people who were not born in Finland and do not speak Finnish as their native language. (Rapo 2011.)

2.3 The concept of occupational immigration

During the last ten years occupational immigration (in Finnish: työperäinen maahanmuutto) has often been mentioned in the context of social politics, the Finnish demography and immigration itself. One significant point of reference for the discussion was a draft of the government migration policy programme in 2005. The draft was prepared by a working group set up by the Ministry of Labour (2005) and among other things it mentioned demographic changes and the shift in industrial operations as its starting points. Demographically the grounds for discussion are clear: already by the year 2000 the population pyramid illustrated moderately declining birth rates, but the younger population groups still outnumbered the older. Calculations show that by the year 2050 the pyramid gains more of a rectangular form, with all age groups from 0 to 85 being close the same size (Koskinen et al. 2007). Consequently this has led to speculations whether there will be enough work and labour to support the social welfare system where the amount of pensioners will be larger than ever before, and is there a real need for Finland to start reinforcing the labour capacity with foreign workers. The draft of the government migration policy programme observed there being an increasing interest into occupational immigration in all industrialised countries with declining birth rates, but as for the expected structural challenges in the labour force, occupational immigration will not be a sole solution (Ministry of Employment and the Economy 2005). Consequently, in 2006 the government defined in the migration policy programme, based on the draft that occupational immigration is to be promoted in order *to prevent the future shortfall in labour and to strengthen the skills matrix of the population base* (Ministry of Employment and the Economy 2006).

Also Ministry of Interior (2010) has discussed immigration strategies and mentions one of the key issues in immigration policy being the development of occupational immigration according to the national need. Already at the moment Finland suffers from a severe lack of care industry labour; nurses, doctors, social workers and staff working with the aged. Ministry of Interior underlines that immigrants are increasingly important competitive factor for Finland; as the amount of elderly citizens will increase, it is crucial assure national economic growth and thereby the essential welfare services. Through occupational immigration the amount of Finnish labour force can be balanced and these objectives achieved.

Aside from national policy making, the city of Kouvola (2010) has entered a chapter about occupational immigration in its own migration policy programme. In addition to the support in labour force, the city of Kouvola regards increasing immigration as a means for moderate population growth in the region.

In reference to Finland's unfavourable demography, Sund (2011) observes that this disadvantage is temporary. By 2030 the situation will be balanced out, but in the meantime it is important to maintain the national economy competitive enough and there the increasing immigration could be more than helpful.

2.4 The amount of foreigners in Finland and in Kouvola 2005 - 2010

As explained in the context of different foreigner groups in Finland, the total amount of foreigners in the country varies tremendously depending on how the foreign population group is defined. Statistics Finland uses all of the three before mentioned factors, nationality, country of birth and native language, individually when compiling statistics on the amount of foreigners in Finland, hence one single unambiguous figure cannot be formulated (Statistics Finland 2011). When presenting the total amounts in the following figures, the emphasis is on nationality. However, to illustrate the difference in amounts

depending on the defining factor, figures based on the country of birth and native language are also presented for comparison.

In the end of 2005 there were about 114,000 foreigners (based on nationality) living permanently in Finland (figure 1).

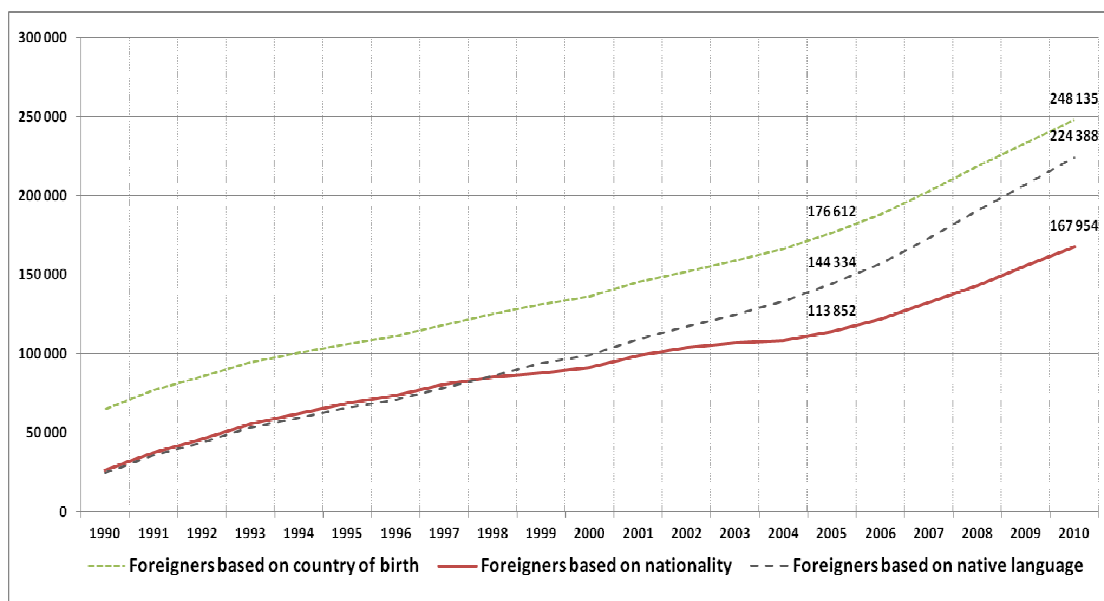


Figure 1. The amount of foreigners in Finland from 1990 to 2010 (based on Statistic Finland 2011)

From a statistical point of view it is important to take into account that in addition to these figures, in 2010 there were nearly 55,000 people in residing Finland with dual nationality; the most of them with Russian, Swedish or the United States nationality. In statistics, these people are counted among the Finnish citizens.

In addition to official registers, the fact is that there are numerous foreigners in the country without documentation and official permit. The most recent estimates of the amount of unregistered foreigners shift between 2,000 and 4,000. The more moderate estimate, from two to three thousand, was given by the National Bureau of Investigation, as the higher number, up to four thousand, was based on estimates given by humanitarian workers and immigrants. (Aamulehti 9 August, 2011; YLE 2011.)

The largest nationality groups were Russians, followed by Estonians, Swedes and Somali. By the end of 2010 the total amount of foreigners had increased up to about 168,000 with Estonians being the largest nationality group (figure 2) followed by Russians, Swedes and Somalis. (Statistics Finland 2011.)

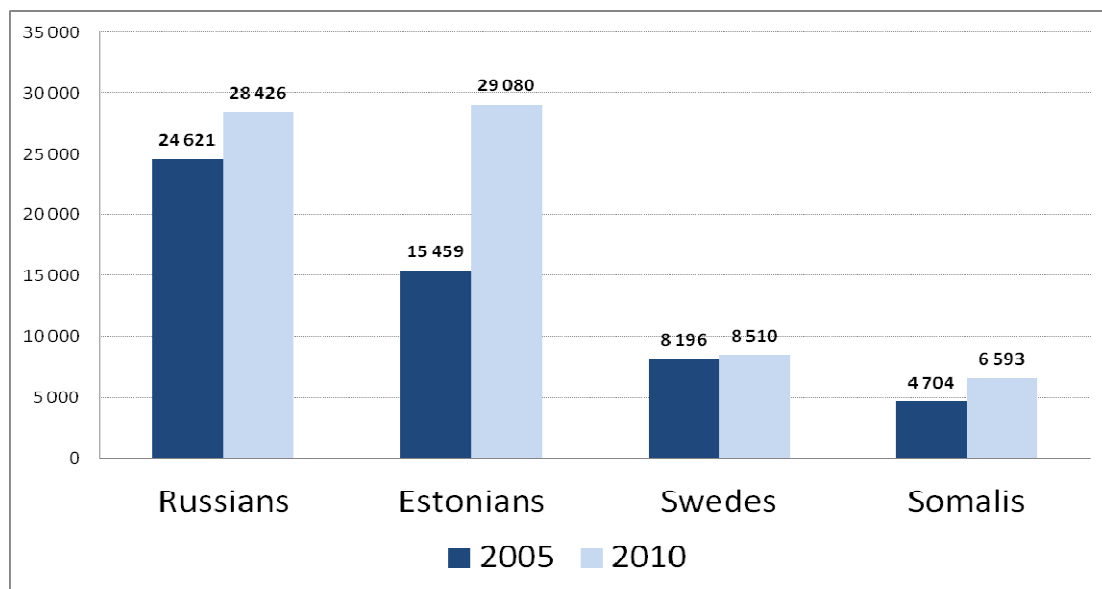


Figure 2. The largest nationality groups in Finland 2005 and 2010 (based on Statistic Finland 2011)

Statistics Finland (2011) also provides regional figures which are based on the native language. In 2005 the total number of foreigners in Kouvola region was about 1,200. At the time the actual city of Kouvola was slightly smaller by its population, and only in 2009 through consolidation of municipalities the population grew close to the amounts it is today. However, it is mentioned that these earlier figures have been modified to match the current population, thus these figures can be compared. In 2010 the equivalent number of foreigners in Kouvola was about 1,850. (Statistics Finland 2011.)

The relative amount of foreigners in Kouvola is quite modest in comparison with other cities in South-Western and Southern Finland. According to Statistics Finland (2011) the share of foreigners (based on nationality) of the whole population of Kouvola was 2.1% in 2010, whereas in the neighbouring city Kotka the relative amount was 4.9%. Helsinki has the highest number of foreigners with 7.5% of the population. The average for the whole country is

however fairly low, 3.2% as the average share of foreigners in EU27 – countries is 6.4% (European Commission 2011).

2.5 Definition of other concepts used in the research

Attitude

In this research the subject of measuring, attitude, is a latent and somewhat abstract concept that cannot be directly perceived. In his book *Attitudes and Persuasion* Phil Erwin (2005, 12) notes that the existence of attitude cannot be seen nor directly be measured, and that the only way to really find out people's attitudes is to follow their behaviour. One of the most known definitions for attitude was formed by Gordon Allport, an American psychologist who contributed in the field of social psychology between 1930 and 1960. According to him, an attitude is a learned disposition to think, feel and behave in a particular way towards a certain subject (Erwin 2005, 12). Specific for this definition is its equal emphasis on affect, cognition and behaviour, which is also called the tri-component model. A simpler model, in which only the affect is underlined, was presented by Louis Leon Thurstone; attitude is a positive or a negative affect towards a psychological subject (Erwin 2005, 11). In addition to these, there numerous different variations, however many of them concentrate on the same three key components – only the emphasis varies. (figure 3)

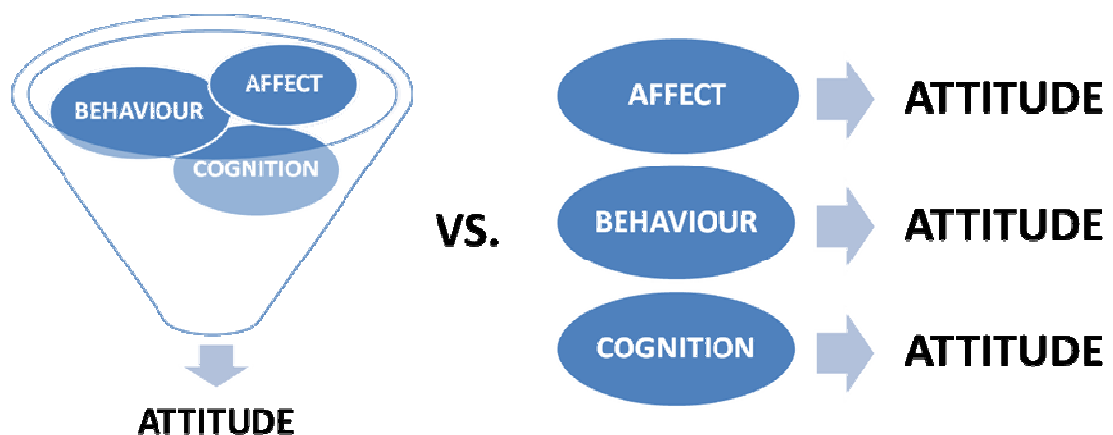


Figure 3. A comparison of different ways of attitude formation

Rantanen and Vesala (2007) explain that there are several theories and definitions for attitude, many of them with common elements such as connecting the attitude to an individual, describing an individual's positivism or negativism towards a certain subject, and assigning value judgement to a certain subject. This mainstream thinking is strongly based on the idea that it is a discrete inner attribute, learned and stable to some degree. This suggestion, however, has drawn a lot of criticism despite its rather solid endorsement. For instance, the significance of the context would be crucial to take into account when studying attitudes: an individual always has the chance to actively study and based on his own experience, evaluate the situation at hand, and then to adjust his attitude to suit the occasion. Second, there are various lingual options people can construct and describe their social reality with, and especially when studying people's attitudes, it is not self-evident at all that the subject of attitude would be the same for all. Finally, the most divergent viewpoint underlines the social nature of attitude; it does not reject the idea of being attached to an individual only, but sees it as a concept of relation which describes individual's functional and communicative attachment to the social world. (Rantanen & Vesala 2007, 11–61.)

Conflict theory and contact theory

The related national survey, which will be covered later on in this thesis, reflects the results into two contrary theories often linked to social research: the conflict theory and the contact theory. The conflict theory in the context of race and ethnicity has often been based on Lange-Westin's theory which is founded on an assumption that discrimination and negative attitudes towards foreigners grow with time when different groups are dealing with each other; that is when the relative size of the minority group increases and both majority and minority groups are dependent on the same, limited resources (Liebkind 1994, 21–49; Jaakkola 2003, 10). The socioeconomic threat, whether it is actual or imagined, can be experienced not only individually, but collectively for example in form of a high unemployment rate (Jaakkola 2009, 37).

The other theory, so called contact theory, has also been often referred to in various immigrant- and attitude-related studies. It suggests that prejudices decrease when contacts between majority and minority groups increase, become more versatile and personal, and when these contacts are bound between people with equal status (Jaakkola 2003, 10). Negative stereotypes and prejudices for that matter are then likely to be replaced with more positive perceptions when people are getting to know each other (Amichai-Hamburger & McKenna 2006).

3 FAMILIARISATION WITH RELATED NATIONAL STUDIES

In order to support the research with a national framework, key findings of a similar, notable study will be presented. This study has been conducted as a series of surveys on a national level between 1987 and 2007. Additionally, more recent findings from national attitude and value surveys (from 2009 and 2010) concerning the attitudes towards foreigners and immigration will be presented at the end of the chapter.

3.1 “The Attitudes of Finns towards Immigrants” – a national survey between 1987 and 2007

Senior researcher, sociology lecturer Magdalena Jaakkola conducted a series of surveys on the attitudes of Finns towards immigrants between 1987 and 2007. Her findings were already introduced during the research period, but the first extensive report Jaakkola published in 2005 and the latest, updated report in 2007. The material was collected approximately every five years: the respondents, who were fifteen years of age or older, represented the whole population in each survey in the matter of region, livelihood, age and gender (Jaakkola 2003, 15). Because of the long research period, the Finnish society went through many changes. For example the amount of foreigners, irrespective of the reason for their entry, grew sevenfold within those twenty years (Statistics Finland 2011). Before 1990 there were only a few refugees applying for asylum in Finland, but during the following couple of years after the turn of the decade the amount of refugees grew substantially. In addition to these,

changes in the national economy had extensive impacts; in the beginning of the 90's Finland suffered a significant recession which evidently had a hardening influence on people's attitudes. Consequently, when the economical turmoil settled down few years later, the attitudes were clearly alleviated despite the fact that the amount of immigrants and refugees grew constantly.

The importance of occupational immigration and wider discussion on it also grew essentially during the latest years of the research period: Jaakkola mentioned this topic having been under special scrutiny in the 2007 report because of its current nature. With regards to subject matter, Jaakkola mentioned the survey in 2007 being slightly more limited compared with previous surveys, but enough to illustrate the most strategic changes in people's attitudes through two decades. (Jaakkola 2009, 9)

With reference to the previous chapter about concepts: it is relevant to mention that the title of Jaakkola's research referred to immigrants (in Finnish: maahanmuuttaja), unlike the title of the research for this thesis. However, Jaakkola points out that ever since the first survey, the term used in the questionnaire was 'foreigner living in Finland' (in Finnish: Suomessa asuva ulkomaalainen) because the term 'immigrant' was not really established in the late 80s and early 90s. Despite the wider use of 'immigrant'-term later on, the original form of the questionnaire was kept unchanged (Jaakkola 2005, 30).

3.1.1 The key findings in Jaakkola's study

In her study Jaakkola observed that Finns' approving attitudes towards immigrants increased during the research period. In the last survey in 2003 the majority of the respondents thought that Finland should receive at least as much skilled foreigners, students and entrepreneurs as before (at the time). Finns' attitudes towards refugees fluctuated: in 1987, before the recession, more than 80% felt that Finland should receive equally much or more refugees than before whereas in 1993, during the recession, the equivalent percentage was 54. During the last two surveys the attitudes eased off and the corresponding figures settled around 65%, despite the fact that the amount of

refugees increased and the amount of asylum seekers doubled. (Jaakkola 2005, 19–23)

When examining the attitudes of different population groups Jaakkola observed that the positive development in Finns' attitudes existed throughout the society: reserved attitudes decreased within all gender and age groups, regardless of the level of education or political orientation. A higher tendency to have a positive attitude towards immigrants was within females and people with higher education, vast experience on travelling and who lived in the Helsinki metropolitan area, and people who personally knew foreigners living in Finland. More reserved attitudes could be found among young boys (15 to 17 years old) and senior citizens. (Jaakkola 2005, 31, 128)

Jaakkola discovered that the Finns still regarded different nationality groups in a different way and that the 'ethnic hierarchy' was fairly deeply rooted into population's minds. During the whole research period Finns seemed to have had the most positive attitude towards immigrants from Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon countries which resemble Finns the most by culture and living standards. More reserved attitudes appeared towards immigrants with a different culture and an appearance differing from the original population and which most likely were from countries with lower living standards. Positive attitudes towards the Russians grew significantly within the last ten years of the research period as well as the Somali who were seen more affirmatively after the recession. Both of these nationality groups, however, still had rather low position in the 'ethnic hierarchy'. (Jaakkola 2009, 52, 79)

In her literature review, Jaakkola presents two theories that explain attitudes towards immigrants. The core ideas of these theories were presented in detail in chapter 2.5. The conflict theory was backed up with results from recessionary period 1993 when nearly a half of respondents totally agreed that "many foreigners come to Finland only to take advantage of our social benefits", but in 2003 the equivalent amount was shrunk to one third. Percentagewise very similar changes between 1993 and 2003 could be seen in responses to

statement “foreigners’ immigration to Finland should be restricted as long as there is unemployment in Finland”. (Jaakkola 2009, 38–40)

The results endorse the existence of the other, contact theory in various sections of the study: respondents, who had contacts with foreigners, expressed more positive attitudes towards foreigners in general, had for example more affirmative view to marriage with foreigners, they indicated far less racist attitudes and were less worried about the threats commonly related to immigration. (Jaakkola 2009, 73–77)

3.1.2 Current view on Jaakkola’s studies

Jaakkola’s (2005; 2009) study is undoubtedly the most extensive national research on the topic of attitudes towards foreigners and immigrants. Still, the twenty year’s time frame in the research slightly excludes the years when the greatest annual immigration numbers were recorded – between 2007 and 2009 immigration increased the population more than the natural population growth (Rapo 2011). As an example, the expansion of Schengen area in the end of 2007 (Europa, Summaries of EU Legislation 2011) eased the movement of people within Europe. At the time Estonia was one of the countries to join, which explains the previously presented remarkable increase from 2005 to 2010 in the amount of Estonians in Finland. The last few years Finland, among other countries, has still been floundering in the aftermath of the recession that hit the economies in autumn 2008. As Jaakkola noticed in her study, recession had a notable negative impact in the results in 1993 (Jaakkola 2005). In June 2011, TV-channel MTV3 reported results of a survey they had commissioned, concerning the attitudes towards foreigners and refugee policies. The results indicated that over a half of the respondents thought that Finn’s attitudes towards foreigners have recently turned more negative (MTV3 news 9 June 2011). It would be interesting to see further results if Jaakkola continues her series of researches. Executing yet another survey in 2012 would reveal what kind of influence the recent events have had in Finns’ attitude.

3.2 EVA attitude and value survey results 2009 and 2010 regarding attitudes towards immigration

Finnish Business and Policy Forum (EVA) has regularly studied and reported Finns' values and attitudes for over 20 years. Themes in the study have handled mainly market economy, working life and politics, and the survey has been modified each year to match current affairs. In 2009 the report revealed that for the first time in ten years the positive development of citizens' attitudes towards immigration had stagnated. Both in 2009 and 2010 nearly a half rejected the idea of facilitating immigration to Finland based on aging and diminishing population. Five-six years earlier the idea was rejected by one third of the respondents. In 2009 and 2010 there were also even less respondents who thought increasing immigration would bring valuable international influence to Finland. However, there have been moderate fluctuations in the results during the long history of the study, and especially 2009 results were highly likely heavily influenced by the recent economical turmoil in the country. The strong effect of recession to peoples' attitudes was also observed and mentioned in EVA's studies. Therefore the researchers suggest that it could be justified to wait and let the economy recover, and wait for more results from the forthcoming couple of years before making any sharp interpretations. (Haavisto & Kiljunen 2009; Haavisto 2010.)

4 THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter introduces and analyses the research method used in the study. In addition, the data collection and the research process will be presented in details concluding with a critical evaluation of the research method. As the writer of this thesis participated only in conducting the latter survey in 2010, all arrangements and process description relates solely to that.

4.1 Research method and data collection

The actual starting point for the research was International Business students' two compulsory courses during the second year's studies: 'Research Work'

and 'Quantitative Research Methods'. The students were expected to put their hands into a real research process and as a course work implement a survey, which would find out Kouvola citizens' attitudes towards foreigners. This survey was essentially based on a previous survey, which was similarly carried out as a course work back in 2005. Therefore this research method was selected for the study because the previous study was also based on a survey.

Due to the nature of the study, a questionnaire was a favourable option: it would be easy to fill out independently and thus give the respondents privacy to answer the questions. In addition, using a ready-made form would quicken the interview, specify the data saving, guarantee objectivity regardless of the interviewer and make processing the results faster (Holopainen & Pulkkinen 2008, 42). Besides, in this research process the previous survey and its questionnaire had a strong influence, which eventually led the group to finish the 2010 questionnaire in line with the earlier form. Of course, having two comparable surveys available assisted in creating the topic for this thesis, too.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the questionnaire was largely based on the form from 2005 survey. The questionnaire included twenty one attitude statements, each scaled from one to five to describe respondent's opinion to the statement: one represented 'totally disagreeing', two 'somewhat disagreeing' with the statement, three expressed neutral 'not agreeing or disagreeing', four 'somewhat agreeing' and five 'totally agreeing' with the statement. The list of statements was designed so that each row required attention, without the previous statement giving any direction on which end of the scale the next statement should be placed. Additionally, similar statements were presented mainly apart from each other. Seven statements were added to the earlier questionnaire to match and reflect the current situation better. These statements are specified in details in chapter five where the comparison of the results is presented.

The second part of the questionnaire consisted of an attitude evaluation towards certain nationalities. The list was gathered based on the most common foreign nationalities in Kotka and Kouvola in 2005. In order to make the data

comparable, the list remained the same. Furthermore, attitude evaluations were made towards different foreigner groups in Finland. These groups, too, were identical in both questionnaires. The evaluation scale was set from one to five where one represented very negative attitude and five very positive attitude. Finally, before the background questions, respondents were given a chance to express freely what else they would like to say about foreigners in Kouvola.

The background questions determined the respondents' gender, age and education level, if they had or had not worked or studied abroad, what kind of contacts they have had with foreigner and finally, what would be their estimation concerning the number of foreigners in Kouvola. The questionnaire form both in English and in Finnish can be found in appendices one and two.

4.2 Research arrangements and process

The target was to collect a sample of 200 respondents out of Kouvola area's 88,000 inhabitants. As a support for the decision on this particular amount Israel (2009) confirms that when the size of the population grow bigger than 10,000, it is insignificant to increase the size of the sample above 200 when a certain level of precision is in target. Holopainen and Pulkkinen (2002, 38) note also that adding up to the size of the sample does not substantially increase the accuracy. Taken that the degree of variability for this study would be the highest possible, 50%, the error margin would be ± 7 percentage points (Holopainen & Pulkkinen 2002, 38). For this kind of research, confidence level of 95% was considered sufficient (Heikkilä, 1998, 42).

To ensure the high quality in the sample, it needed to have an even gender distribution and realistic age structure according to the actual demography in Kouvola. This required convenience sampling and thereby careful beforehand planning of the process. To reflect the current age structure, one fourth of the samples had to consist of citizens over 65 years old (Statistics Finland 2011). The rest of the samples were equally divided into age groups, starting from

citizens around 18 years old. Each age group was consequently divided into half to male and female respondents.

The group of students participating in the study consisted both of Finnish and foreign students. Logically, the work was divided so that the Finnish students got to do the fieldwork and find people to answer the questionnaire, when foreign students' responsibility was to handle the filled forms and enter the collected data into statistical software. Each Finnish student was responsible of collecting 20 filled questionnaires. Along with empty questionnaires, each student was also provided with exact directions on how many male and female respondents from each age group were supposed to be interviewed.

Eventually the amount of returned questionnaires was 181. The realisation of the age structure was moderately close to the plan: in general, there were only few minor additions and reductions within the required age groups. However, the eldest age group lacked 12 samples out of the 50 that would have been required, which theoretically interfered with the intended realistic age structure. Luckily, the lack in the eldest age group had balanced out evenly in all the other age groups as, like mentioned, there were no particular changes in them compared with the plan.

4.3 Validity and reliability of the research

A basic requirement and top-priority quality criteria for any research is validity: to measure the right subject supposed to be measured. Heikkilä (1998) underlines the importance of predefined planning and reminds that the questions in the questionnaire need to measure the right subjects unambiguously and also cover the whole research problem. As mentioned earlier, attitude as such is not the easiest research subject to measure, but given that the criteria presented above were met, the surveys were successful in terms of validity.

Reliability of a survey indicates its ability to result non-coincidental outcome (Holopainen & Pulkkinen, 2002, 17). Both the questionnaire and the predefined sample aimed at improving the reliability: the sample represented the

population and the questionnaire was designed to embrace the whole research problem. However, like Heikkilä (1998) also mentions, because of the diversity and variability of the society, results from one particular study may not be accurate in another time or in another society. This statement is especially applicable in this context when the subject of research is attitude. Another aspect to the reliability is the chance of systematic error, which in an attitude survey means lying and thus cannot be disregarded. In sensitive topics people tend to palliate the truth and adjust their answers according to what would be more desirable than what they would actually think (Heikkilä, 1998, 187). This particular aspect will be covered also later on in chapter seven when the results are discussed.

With regards to this thesis, its research problem covered both surveys, and therefore a close examination of both of them was needed in order to confirm their validity and reliability. For the comparison and the interpretation of the survey results a high level of objectivity was retained. Any personal perspectives or convictions were to be avoided; within the discussion part of the thesis all personal assessments are clearly specified.

5 THE COMPARISON OF THE SURVEY RESULTS

In this chapter the survey results are presented and compared to illustrate both changes and consistencies in Kouvola citizens' attitudes towards foreigners from 2005 to 2010. The results have also been examined relative to the respondents' background information. In contrast to the questionnaire, the comparison will start from the background questions and then move on to the attitude statements. To clarify the wide selection of statements in the questionnaire, they are here divided into four categories based on the nature and direction of the statement. Attitude evaluations towards different nationalities and foreigner groups are presented before finally moving on to samples of free comments.

5.1 Respondents' gender and age

The sample size in 2010 survey was eventually 181 and in 2005 it was 156. For both surveys, the division between sexes was nearly half and half (figure 4).

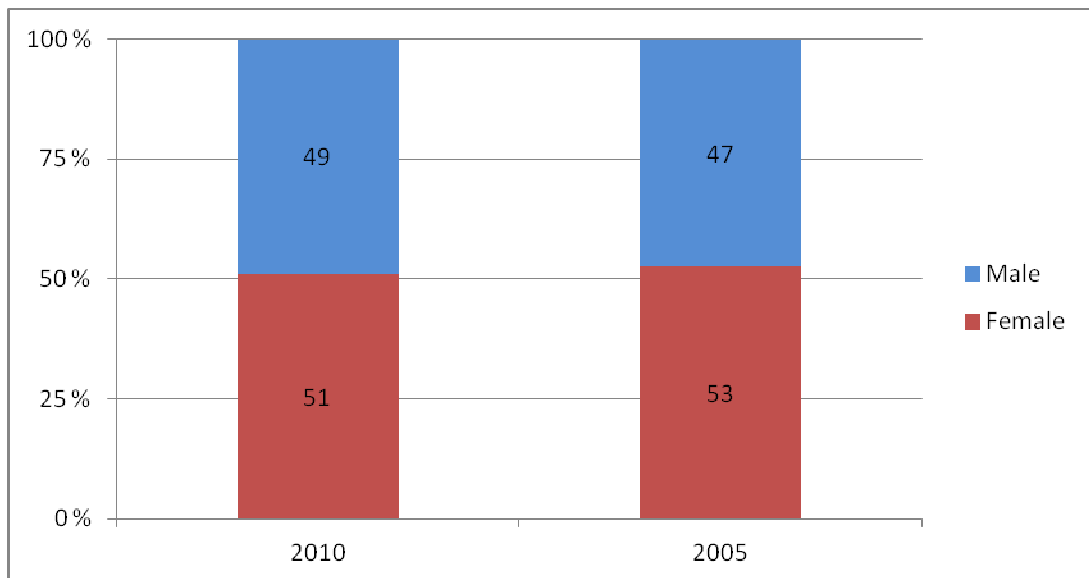


Figure 4. The respondents' gender distribution

In 2010 survey the age distribution was fairly even among all age groups (figure 5), which resulted from survey's predefined execution plan. However, in

2005 the youngest age group, aged between 15 and 24, was rather distinguishable with 28% of all respondents. In 2010 the amount of respondents corresponded with the actual amount (13%) in the population of Kouvola (Statistics Finland, 2011). Respectively in 2010, the eldest age group, 65 to 83 years old, was represented with 21% more accurately according to the actual age distribution (24%) in the population of Kouvola (Statistics Finland, 2011), compared with 12% in the corresponding age group in 2005. The average age of respondents in 2010 was 46.3 years and 39.3 years in 2005.

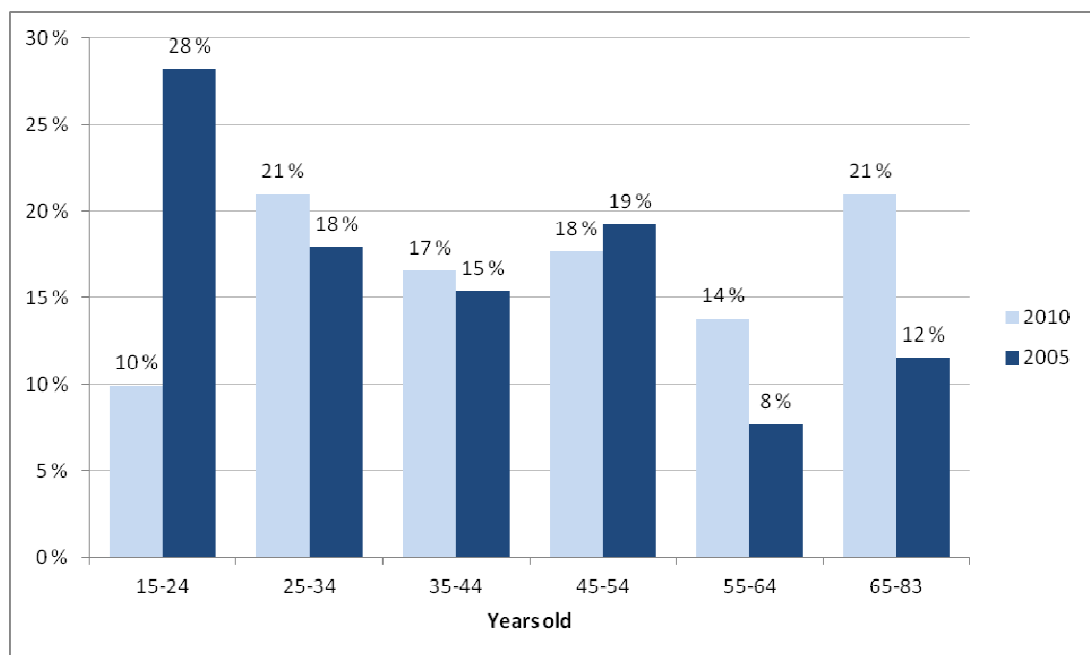


Figure 5. The respondents' age distribution in age groups

5.2 Respondents' education and experience of working or studying abroad

The composition of respondents' educational background remained nearly the same: about a one third of the respondents had education from university of applied sciences or university, roughly a half had secondary/vocational education and the rest had gone to primary school (figure 6). With regards to gender, there were no considerable differences between sexes in the level of education.

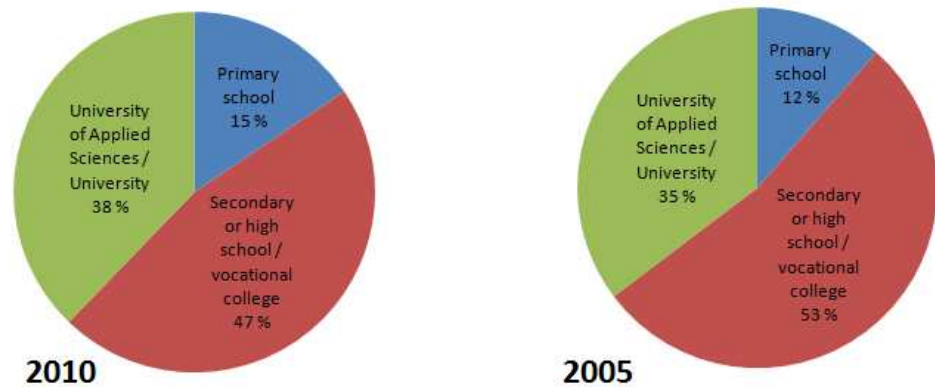


Figure 6. The respondents' educational background

The share of respondents with experience of working or studying abroad stayed almost the same, too: in 2005 the figure was 29% when in 2010 it was 27%. The experience from abroad was connected to the level of education: both years on average 62% of respondents with experience from abroad had studied in a university or in a university of applied sciences.

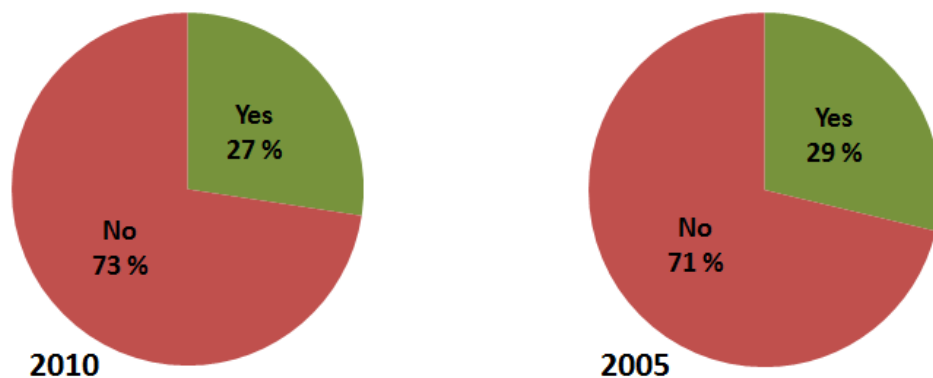


Figure 7. The respondents' experience of working or studying abroad

5.3 Respondents' contacts with foreigners

When the respondents explained their contacts with foreigners, the most common contact mentioned in both surveys was made at tourist destinations (figure 8). Having contacts with foreigners at work increased significantly from 48% in 2005 to 60% in 2010. A parallel increase could also be seen in having foreign friends and neighbours. The amount of respondents with no contacts with foreigners whatsoever remained precisely the same.

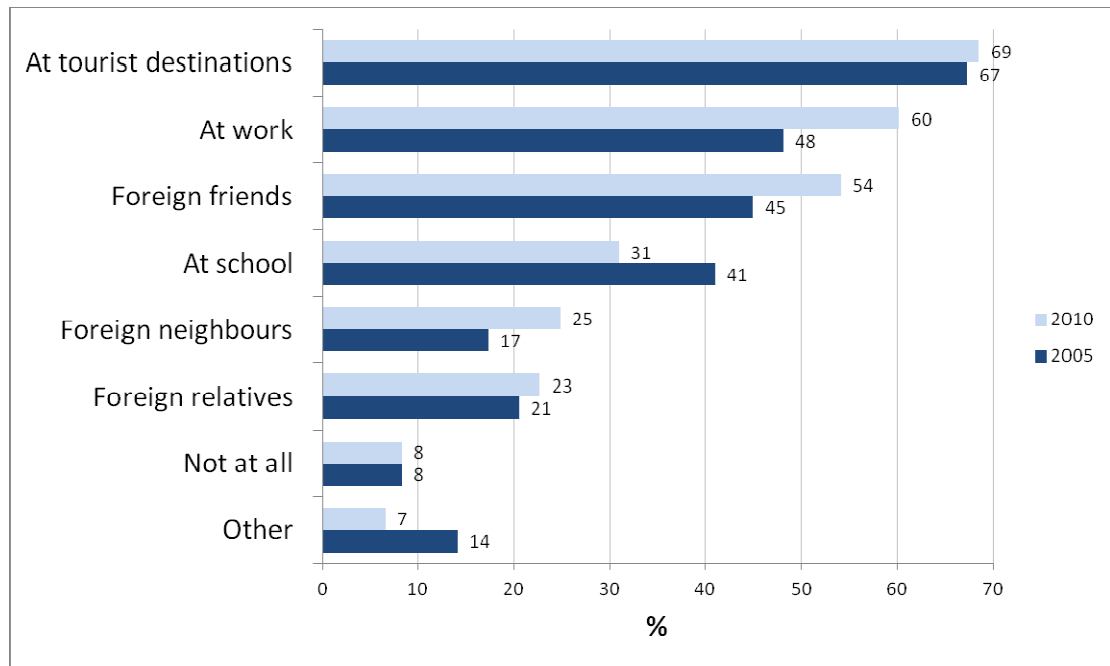


Figure 8. The most common types of contacts with foreigners

The previously mentioned youngest age group in the study was a lot smaller in 2010 and it can also be seen in the same year's amount of contacts made at school: there were clearly less contacts at school, but respectively remarkably more contacts made at work. This partly reflects the higher average age of the respondents in 2010 and partly the higher amount of foreigners in Kouvola in general. Having more foreign neighbours in 2010 also gives evidence of the increased amount of foreigners.

Respondents, who had more experience from abroad, had both in 2005 and 2010 more contacts with foreigners at work and had more foreign friends. The amount of respondents with no contacts with foreigners whatsoever increased gradually from younger age groups to older, starting from the age group 35 to 44 years old. Other types of contact included having met foreigners in bars and restaurants, through hobbies and in the army.

5.4 Respondents' estimates concerning the number of foreigners in Kouvola

Respondents were asked to give their estimate concerning the amount of foreigners in Kouvola. This question was open-ended, thus it did not give any

direction or a range of the actual amount at the time. In 2010 the tendency was towards larger amounts than in 2005 (figure 9). The most frequent estimates in 2005 were 1,000 and 500 and in 2010 respectively 1,000 and 2,000. The actual amount of foreigners in Kouvola in 2005 was 1,200 and five years later approximately 1,850 (Statistics Finland, 2011). The estimation was given by nine out of ten respondents in 2005 and eight out of ten in 2010.

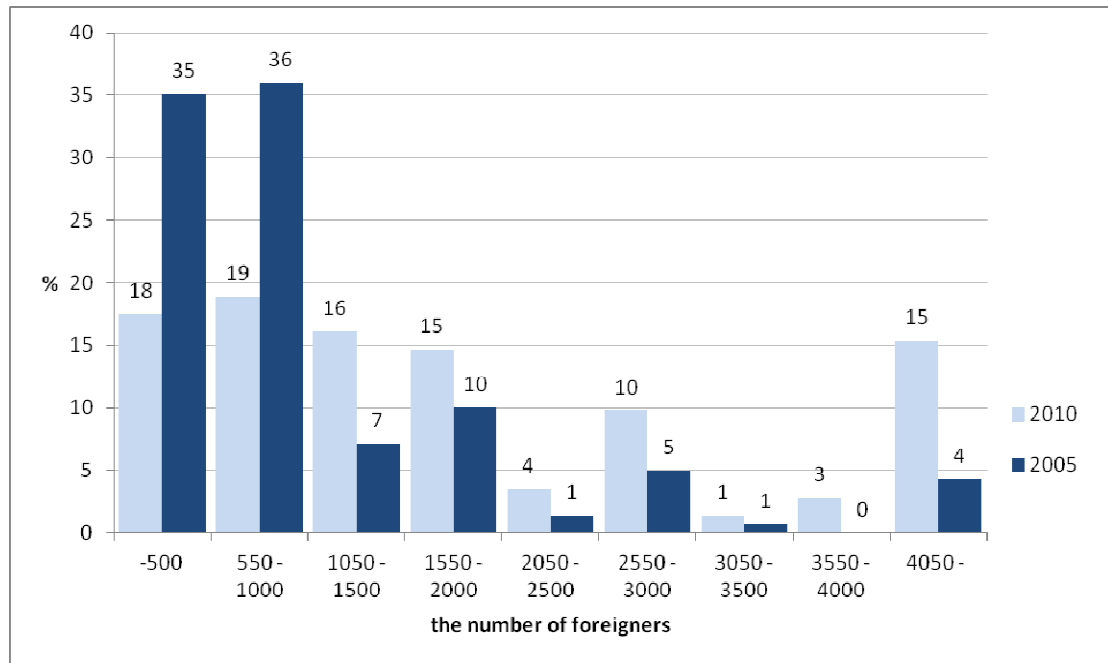


Figure 9. The estimates concerning the number of foreigners in Kouvola (2010 $n = 143$, 2005 $n = 139$)

5.5 Responses to attitude statements

In the earlier survey the questionnaire included a list of fourteen different attitude statements, which were presented in a random order regardless of the positive or negative tone of the statement. Respondents were expected to state their opinion towards the statement in the scale of one to five, in which one would represent totally disagreeing end and five totally agreeing end, respectively. With regards to expressions used in this thesis, it is important to notice that when there is a reference to 'agreeing responses', it includes all responses to agreeing alternatives in the attitude statements, 'totally agree

with the statement' and 'somewhat agree with the statement'. The same applies reversely to disagreeing responses.

In 2010 seven more statements were added to the questionnaire based on current public discussion: for instance statements relating to health care, 'I don't mind being treated by a foreign nurse' and 'I don't mind being treated by a foreign doctor' were reflecting the fact that the number of doctors with foreign roots has doubled in Finland within five years (MTV3 News 2011). Relating to this and previously mentioned concept of occupational immigration, statements like 'Foreigners should learn Finnish language skills' and 'In the future Finland needs foreign labour' were well reasoned. By adding a statement 'People in Kouvola have a positive attitude towards foreigners' the respondents were also given a chance to assess their fellow citizens' attitudes. A statement 'Finland provides too much social welfare benefits to foreigners' was put in to examine what kind of endorsement this common perception would receive. Finally, 'I could not imagine marrying an immigrant' was added to the list to explore how people feel about the idea of intercultural marriages formed in Finland.

5.5.1 Statements with positive general nature

When looking into the first group of statements, responses located on the right, closer to the totally agreeing end, refer to more positive attitudes and nature towards immigration, foreigners and foreign culture. All of those statements with comparison material from 2005 had somewhat decreased average value in 2010, indicating that the attitudes have turned to slightly less positive.

The respondents' interest in foreign cultures remained the same with approximately 70% of agreeing responses in both surveys (figure 10). Although in 2010 people were less eager to state that 'foreigners enrich the Finnish culture', yet 54% of all respondents agreed with the statement. Both in 2005 and in 2010 female respondents and those with experience from abroad were

more interested in foreign cultures and agreed more with the idea of foreigners enriching the Finnish culture.

With regards to having the right number of foreigners in Kouvola, the majority (53% in 2005, 41% in 2010) did not agree nor disagree. The rest of the responses settled to both ends of the scale with the emphasis being on the agreeing end in both surveys; that is to say, there is a right number of foreigners in Kouvola. Yet the dilemma with this particular statement is that the interpretation of disagreeing opinions can be done into two directions: whether the respondents think the number of foreigner is too small or then they think it is too big. When reflecting the responses of this statement to the estimates concerning the number of foreigners, there was no distinctive correlation between the estimate and the agreement or disagreement.

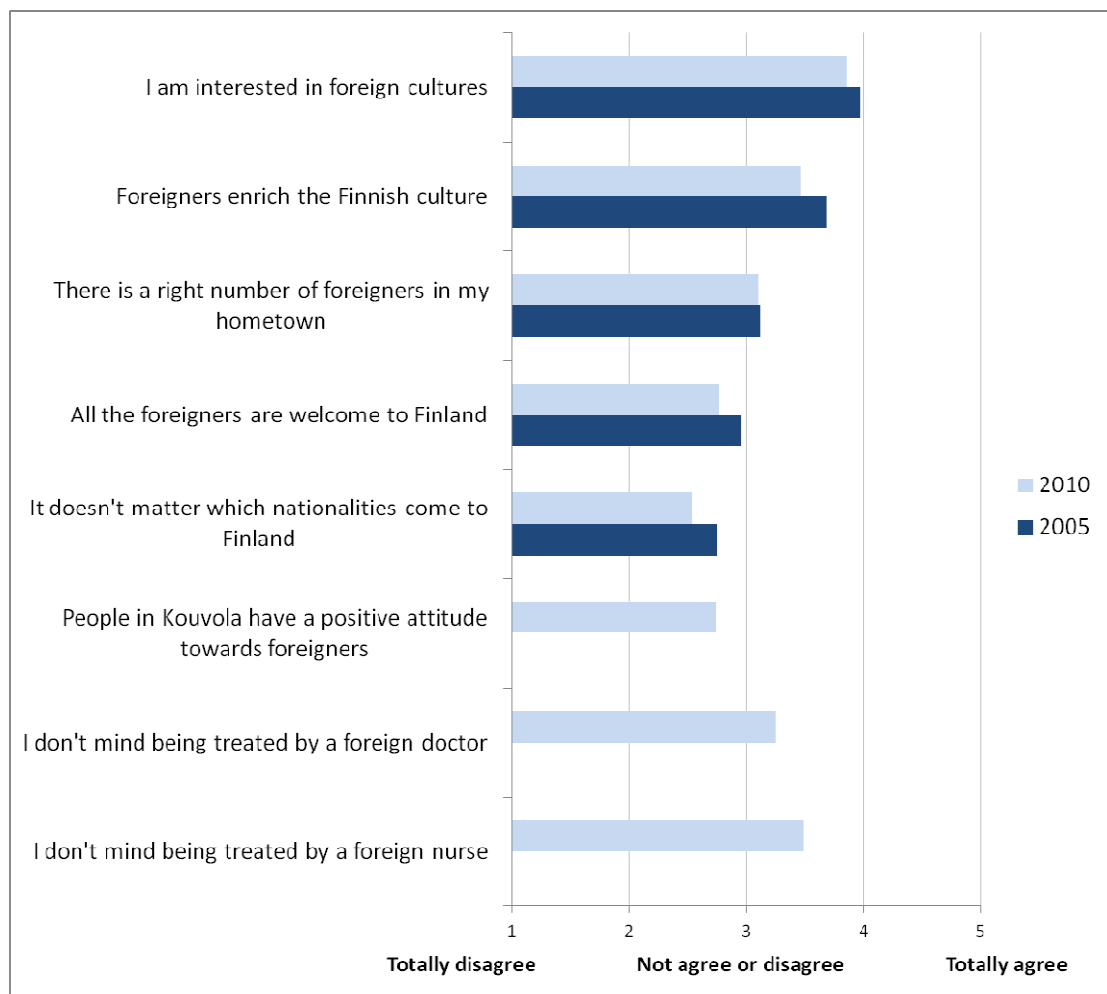


Figure 10. The average value of statements with positive general nature

On average, in 2010 the respondents were more reluctant to welcome all foreigners to Finland than earlier, though the amount of disagreeing responses remained exactly the same. In 2005 female respondents, people with experience from abroad and higher education agreed more often, but in 2010 differences based on these same factors were less distinctive. Respondents of younger age groups in both surveys agreed more often than those of older age groups. Responses to the statement specifying the nationality of foreigners coming to Finland were coherent with the preceding statement: in 2010 altogether 58% of the respondents disagreed that it did not matter which nationalities come to Finland. Accordingly, in 2005 there was a more positive tendency in responses from females, people with experience from abroad and those with higher education, but again in 2010 no differences stood out.

One of the new statements in the 2010 survey dealt with people's perceptions on their fellow citizens' attitudes. On average, respondents did not really agree with the idea of the people in Kouvola having a positive attitude towards foreigners, although there was an equal amount of disagreeing responses and responses not agreeing nor disagreeing. Of all respondents 20% felt that people in Kouvola do have a positive attitude towards foreigners. In relation to background information, responses were united regardless of gender, age, education or experience from abroad.

Another pair of statements added in the 2010 survey concerned foreigners in caring industry. They both gained acceptance as more than half of the respondents agreed they would not mind to have a foreign nurse or a doctor treating them. A foreign nurse was more favourable with a total of 57% of agreeing responses compared with doctor's 51%. Additionally, mutual acceptance could be seen from younger to older people as there were no significant differences in responses between different age groups.

5.5.2 Statements relating to work and studying

When examining the list of statements relating to work and studying, the average settled gently on the agreeing end of the scale, which in this case, too,

indicated more positive attitude towards foreign workers, foreign students and the idea of having foreign workers in the national labour market (figure 11). A high level of consistency could also be seen in the responses, because all the work- and study-related statements got very similar average values.

The support for the idea of foreign students staying in Finland after their graduation increased in 2010 when altogether 45% seconded the statement. Yet as many as every third respondent did not agree or disagree with this statement. Though not as endorsed as in 2005, the majority (43%) of respondents still felt that Finland should receive more foreign students. The need for foreign labour was recognised within the respondents as the majority (45%) agreed with both of the related statements.

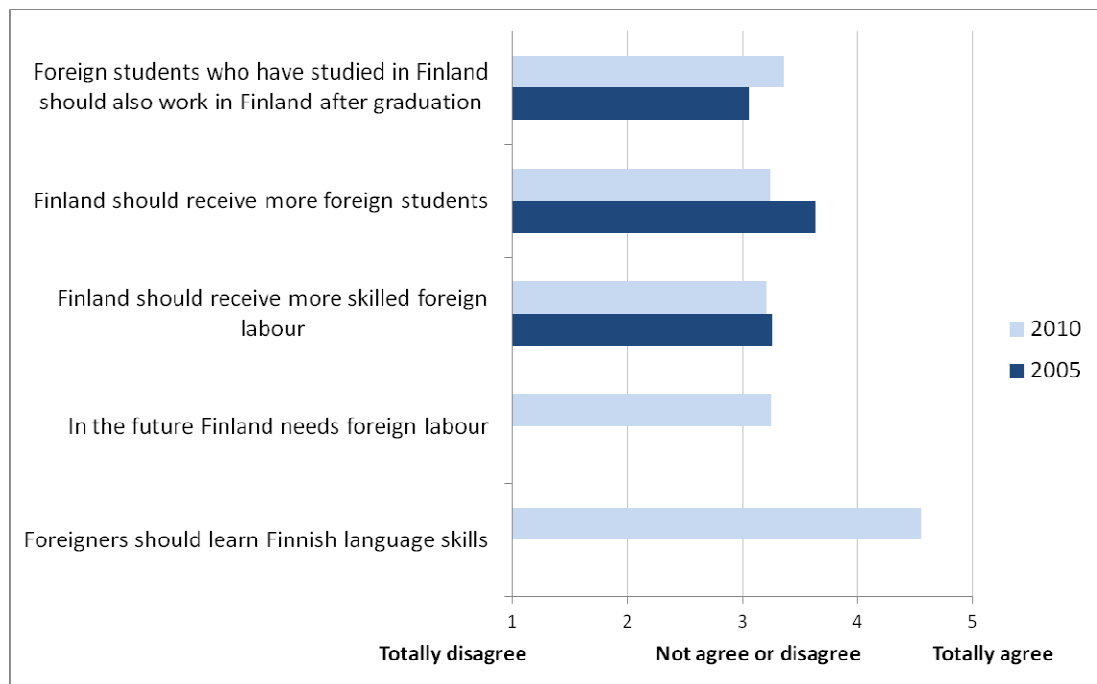


Figure 11. The average value of statements relating to work and studying

The new statement concerning foreigners' Finnish language skills received the most unanimous support in the whole survey: altogether 93% of the respondents agreed. At the same time this particular statement scored the lowest 'not agree or disagree' percentage in the whole survey (4%), indicating that the respondents had a clear opinion about the matter, also regardless of their background.

5.5.3 Statements relating to prejudice and negativity

The next group consisted of prejudice-related statements and statements with a negative tendency. The most consistent result was to be found in respondents' opinions about prejudice towards foreigners – with 77% in 2005 and 76% in 2010 people agreed that Finns are prejudiced towards foreigners (figure 12). In fact, none of the respondents in 2010 totally disagreed with the statement. The reverse statement about foreigners being prejudiced towards Finns was in both surveys mostly not agreed or disagreed, leaving the average value in 2010 close to 3.

On average, in 2010 the respondents felt more often that foreigners are a burden to Finland. However, a closer look at the same year's distribution of opinions reveals that the amount of those agreeing with the statement remained percentually the same (29%) which naturally resulted in an increase in responses not agreeing or disagreeing in 2010. In both surveys, men agreed more often than women.

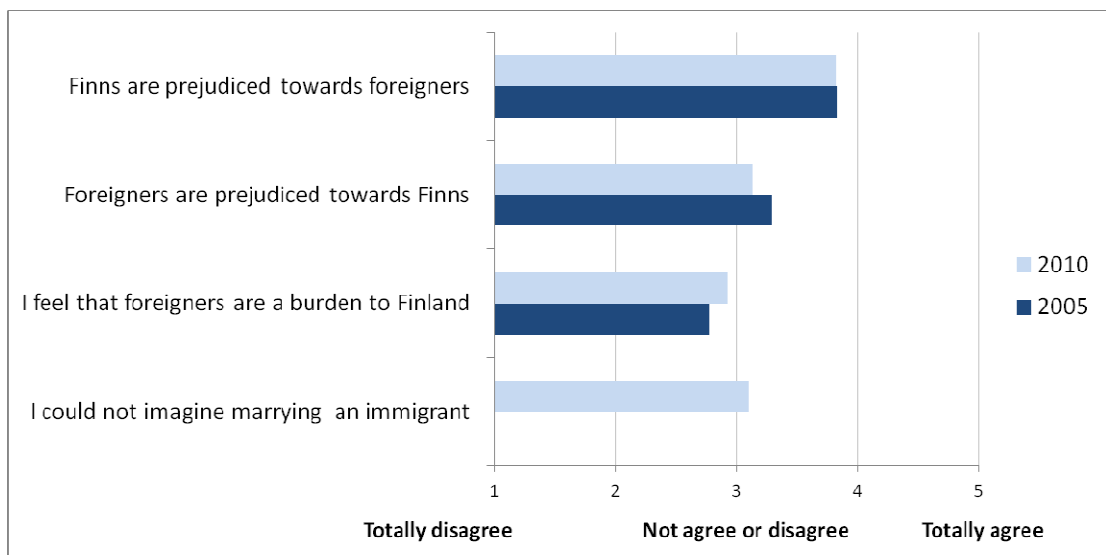


Figure 12. The average value of statements relating to prejudice and negativity

The new statement in this group handled intercultural marriages, and especially the kind of marriages that would be formed in Finland. Responses were quite equally spread to all opinion options, with one fourth of the respondents

not agreeing or disagreeing. The emphasis was on the agreeing end of the scale, meaning that the most of the respondents (41%) could not imagine themselves getting married with an immigrant. The biggest difference in relation to background information was to be seen between different age groups: the older the respondents, the less likely they could imagine marrying an immigrant.

5.5.4 Statements relating to social policy

The last group of statements focused on social policy-related issues (figure 13). Here the direction of the statements was variable, producing average values that did not directly implicate negative or positive attitudes, but it depended on the individual statement. Concerning the background information, the respondents appeared to be quite united in their opinions regardless of their gender, age, level of education or experience from abroad, because no remarkable differences within the groups were observed.

In 2010 the opposition to immigrating foreigners with criminal records grew further. In average values the increase was modest, but when examining the distribution of opinions, the amount of agreeing responses grew from 74% to 85% suggesting that a vast majority were in favour of Finland denying access from foreigners with criminal records.

The agreeing responses to the statement 'most foreigners live on social support' decreased slightly in 2010, though the average was still left on the agreeing half of the opinion scale. The new statement about Finland providing too much social welfare benefits to foreigners gained more support as over a half of the respondents (54%) agreed with the statement. Concerning these two statements, it is important to observe that in both cases and both years, over one third of the respondents did not agree or disagree.

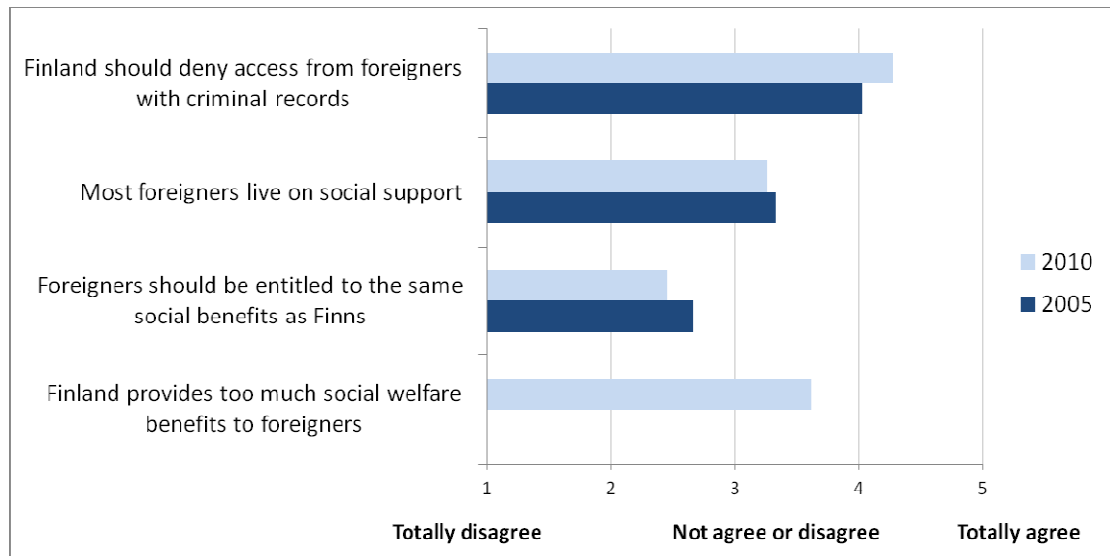


Figure 13. The average value of statements relating to social policy

Through both surveys, the respondents were not too eager to entitle foreigners the same benefits as to Finns. In 2010 there were even fewer agreeing responses resulting into a small decrease in the average value.

5.6 Attitude evaluation towards different nationalities

The attitude evaluations in the questionnaire was defined in a scale of one to five, in which one represented very negative attitude and five very positive attitude. The list of thirteen nationalities was identical and in the same, random order in both surveys.

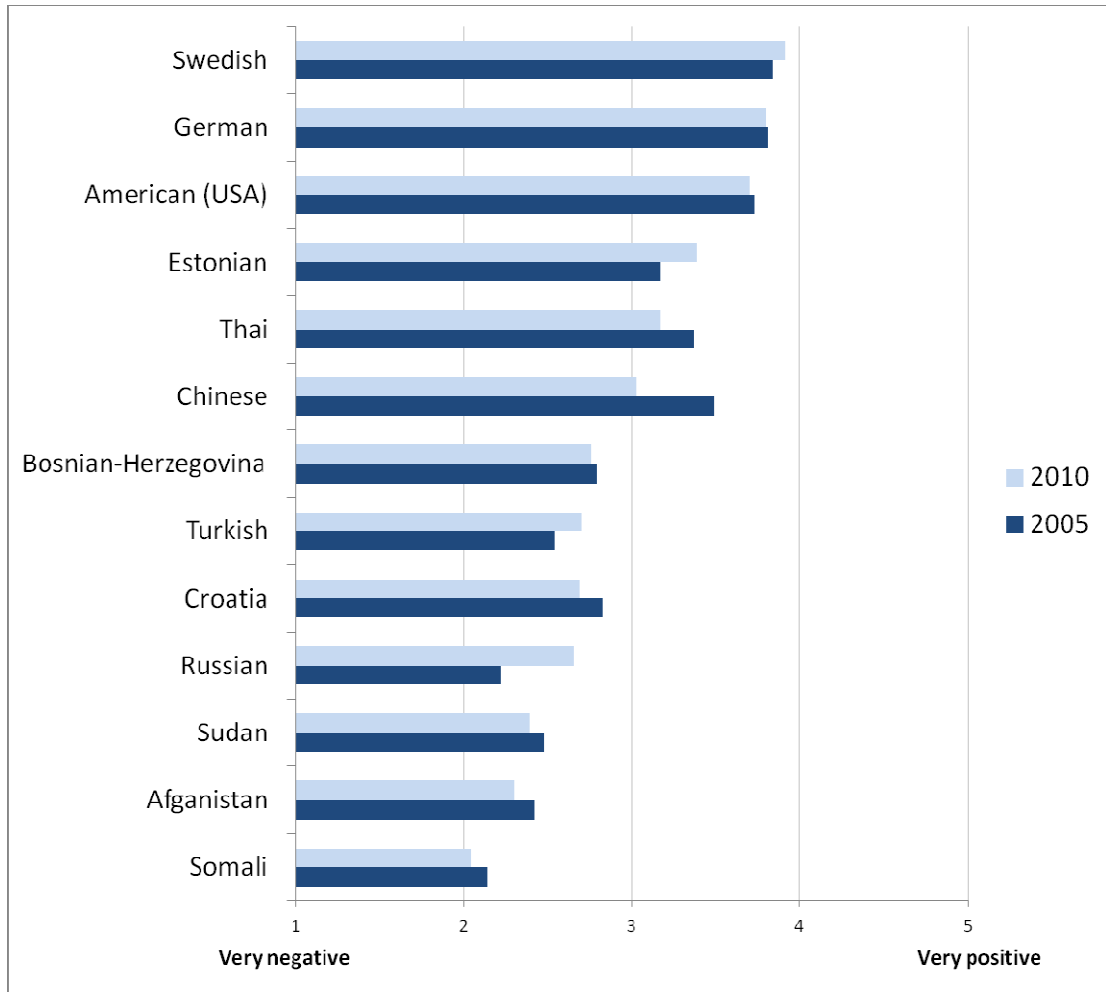


Figure 14. The average value of the attitude towards different nationalities

Both years, the final ranking order of nationalities from the most favoured to the least favoured remained nearly the same (figure 14). The attitudes towards Swedish, German, American and Estonian people were the most positive. At the other end of the scale the least positive attitudes appeared towards Somali, Afghan, Sudanese and Russian people. When calculating the average value of all nationality groups together, the difference between the surveys is minuscule: in 2005 the average value was 2.99 and as close as 2.96 in 2010. The greatest positive changes in attitudes could be seen towards Russian and Estonian people, whereas the attitudes towards the Chinese tightened the most. The opinions towards the Chinese were, however, more divided in 2010, representing a wide variety of responses from the very negative to the very positive end of the scale.

The most consistent difference was to be found in opinions between female and male respondents. In both surveys female respondents had without exception more positive attitude towards each nationality. A similar tendency appeared also in opinions between people with, or without experience from abroad: those who had worked or studied abroad had more positive attitude towards most of the nationalities in both surveys. Additionally, in 2005 respondents with a higher level of education had clearly more positive attitude towards all nationalities; in 2010 the tendency remained, but the differences between levels of education were narrower. When comparing all background data with all nationalities in terms of the average value, the most positive attitudes appeared towards Swedish people within the age group of 45 to 54 year olds (4.22). Respectively, the least positive attitudes appeared towards Somali people within the age group of 15 to 24 year olds (1.83).

5.7 Attitude evaluation towards different foreigner groups

The most positive, unanimous attitude was both years towards foreign tourists (figure 15). In 2005 foreign students and working foreigners were equally popular, but in 2010 both of these groups lost grounds, placing foreign students as the second popular group. The attitudes towards working foreigners tightened the most, but the average value still remained on the positive end of the scale. Foreign refugees was still the only group with an average less than 3.

Compared with attitudes in 2005, of all four foreigner groups only foreign tourists were more popular in 2010. The average for all groups together was consequently slightly lower in 2010 than it was in 2005.

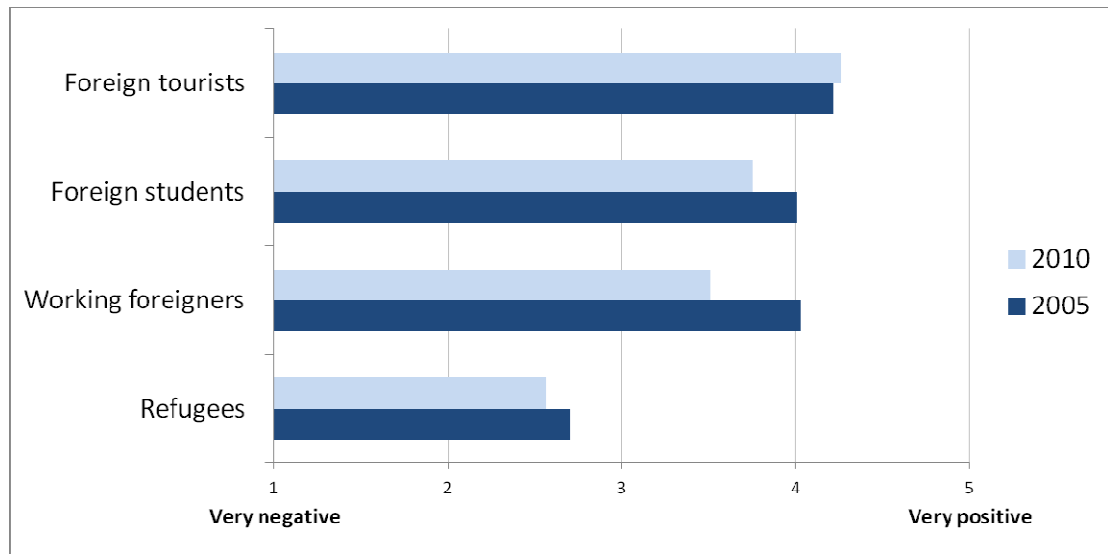


Figure 15. The average value of the attitude towards different foreigner groups

When reflecting the attitude evaluations with respondents' background information, there were very similar tendencies to be found as there were with attitude evaluations towards nationalities. In both surveys, female respondents and those with experience from abroad and had systematically more positive attitude towards each foreigner group. Additionally, a higher level of education resulted more positive attitude evaluations.

5.8 Free comments

In 2010 men were slightly more eager to state their comments than women, however only 31 respondents out of 181 left free comments in the first place. In 2005 the amount was percentually a little lower, as 21 respondents out of 156 left an additional free comment. Both years the respondents complimented on the enriching influence of foreigners to the city of Kouvola. Some thought there are not too many of them yet in Kouvola and felt Kouvola would need even more foreigners. The importance of learning Finnish language was highlighted as well. The balance between positive, negative and neutral comments was both years rather even. Here are few samples of both positive and negative opinions Kouvola citizens wanted to share:

- A positive addition in the city. (female, 42 years/2010)

- No more social burden. (female, 43 years/2010)
- There should be more chances arranged for foreigners to get acquainted with us native Finns and with the language and culture. (male, 59 years/2010)
- Enough. (male, 75 years/2010)
- They bring variety to Kouvola. (female, 39 years/2005)
- They should go to their own country. (female, 83 years/2005)
- We need more foreigners in Kouvola. (male, 26 years/2005)
- Foreigners are OK when they don't cause trouble. (male, 44 years/2005)

6 THE CLIENT'S POINT OF VIEW TO THE SURVEY RESULTS AND TO THE LOCAL IMMIGRATION ISSUES IN GENERAL

This thesis was commissioned by the immigration office of the city of Kouvola, and the person in charge, immigration coordinator Satu Kurri was interviewed as a qualitative part of the study. Before the interview Satu Kurri had a chance to familiarise herself with the comparison of the results and in the interview she shared her views on the results. In addition, the most typical challenges between the foreigners and the locals were discussed along with all kinds of experiences from within the last five-six years. Finally, the activities promoting the communication between the foreigners and the locals were covered and further suggestions on how Kymenlaakso University of Applied Sciences and the immigration office could make common causes were presented. The preliminary list of questions is presented here, however the order in which the issues were handled and consequently elaborated in following chapters departed from the list:

- What kind of thoughts the survey results evoked?

- How well the results reflect the conception You and the immigration office had in general on the attitudes of Kouvola citizens towards foreigners?
- What are the most common challenges between foreigners and Kouvola citizens?
- How do the foreigners react in these challenges? Or in integration in general?
- What kind of experiences You and the immigration office have on possible changes in dealings between foreigners and Kouvola citizens within the last 5 to 6 years?
- How does the immigration office support the communication between the foreigners and the locals?
- Do You have any ideas or suggestions on how our university of applied sciences could participate in improving the relations and contacts between the foreigners and the locals?

6.1 Personal history as an immigration worker

Satu Kurri has professionally worked with multicultural issues for over 20 years and in her own words, has been “a proponent of refugee matters”. Before working for the city of Kouvola, she was working for the Finnish Red Cross as a planner of refugee work. Satu Kurri has had her appointment in the city of Kouvola since 2005. She mentions that working in a municipal organ differs a lot from working for a civic organisation: bureaucracy is a lot heavier on a municipal level, but at the same time it offers a lot more possibilities. She adds that theoretically the consolidation of municipalities in Kouvola area in 2009 gave the city preparedness for handling immigration issues better and stronger. In spring 2011 when the interview was conducted, Satu’s own working career was coming to an end as retirement was closing in forthcoming

summer. She wished to see her continuator to go ahead with the development achieved so far, and to pursue bringing the foreigners and the locals closer together. (Kurri 2011.)

6.2 Comments on the survey results, challenges, experiences and future prospects

Having gone through the comparison of the results from 2005 and 2010 Satu Kurri's (2011) first impression matched her ideas of what the local attitude in outline would have been like and in that regard the comparison brought no surprises. She was glad to notice there were not that many clearly negative aspects shown and for example the majority of the attitude statements reflected positive attitudes. She recognised an expected result concerning foreigners granting social benefits: *many people imagine all foreigners live on social support which is not true at all, but that is just the way the Finns stubbornly tend to think*. Similar delusional mindset Satu found in people's opinions towards Somali. She criticised that there are very few people who would actually know any Somali people, yet most of the people are eager to mock them. Satu contemplated that as both of the surveys were conducted in the 21st century, the opinions were not that emotive as they probably would have been if the same questions would have been asked in the beginning of the 90s. (Kurri 2011.)

With relation to the first survey in 2005, Satu pointed out that now there are a lot more foreigners in the Kouvola street scene. Stemming from this, Satu mentioned the immigration office having had to deal with prejudiced attitudes after the office moved to a location right next to the main street in the city centre of Kouvola. She found this absolutely absurd since the change in the location was in fact more or less a hundred meters, but when people started to actually see more foreigners in the heart of the city, the atmosphere tightened. Satu noted that as annoying as it is, the loudest voices are often negative ones and they tend to reach the media, too. She reminded that there are of course people who strongly disagree with "the loud ones", but they often lose out. Adjustment is demanded both ways, she added. (Kurri 2011.)

Satu told one of the roughest experiences to her knowledge related to Somali people when someone, from a Finnish origin, had spat them on the face out in the city. She contemplated that some of these Somali people really fear for their families left behind in Somalia, they have suffered from hunger before coming to Finland, to a civilised state, to seek asylum – and here, spitting on the face is what they have to put up with. Satu found this impossible to understand and she truly felt ashamed of behaviour like this, which to her moral is not behaviour of a citizen representing a civilised state. Satu herself has also encountered rude behaviour due to her profession, but she did not address the issue any further. (Kurri 2011.)

One of the most gratifying experiences relates to habitation: a private property owner in Kouvola had rented a flat for an immigrant family and as the family had grown and the flat turned out too small for them, the property owner offered to buy a bigger apartment for them when there was one available in the same building. Satu remarked this having been the only occasion during her career when someone's honest desire to help truly took by surprise. (Kurri 2011.)

Satu feels the attitudes of foreigners towards Finns vary. According to Satu some of them feel the need to make excuses and explain that they are not here to make crimes or to engage to any other socially unaccepted activities. Others tend to be more sensitive and see prejudiced behaviour in virtually any situation in which setbacks or negative responses are involved. However, the majority tolerates the current atmosphere and as Satu added, often no news is good news in reference to expressing extreme attitudes in either side. (Kurri 2011.)

When discussing the ways to gradual change in the multicultural atmosphere in Finland, the attention turned to education and upbringing. One important educational aspect Satu recognises in communication between children and their parents. From experience she knows that parents' influence to children from a multicultural perspective in particular can be anything except broad-minded: some time ago Somali children from a near-by reception centre were

temporarily located to a local kindergarten and during the first days the Finnish children were highly enthusiastic about the different looks of the Somali children and they got to know each other frankly and fully open-minded. However, after a few days the enthusiasm disappeared and was replaced with unequal behaviour and avoidance. Satu with other workers in the reception centre and kindergarten were fairly convinced that the “education” received at home had a lot to do with the behavioural changes. It would be crucial not to pass on one’s own negative attitude models to younger generations, but to let them decide for themselves after they have gathered more personal experience and got acquainted with people from different cultures. (Kurri 2011.)

With regards to activities that aim at bringing foreigners and locals closer together Satu mentions culture- and cuisine-related activities being the most favoured ones. Satu would also like to see more locals participating in helping foreigners in their normal daily lives, for instance encouraging young men into regular sports activities with the locals. Satu admits that non-commitment tends to bother the foreigners after the first enthusiasm has waned, especially in sports and culture hobbies. Limited resources and money seem to be an eternal problem with nearly any activity – and therefore the natural turn in the discussion was towards students and Kymenlaakso University of Applied Sciences. Foreign students and other immigrants with a different purpose for their entry share a great deal of similar stages when they arrive to Finland. Challenges with for instance people, culture, language, food and climate are most likely common within all foreigner groups. These experiences could be useful to share with those immigrants who are just arriving and starting their new lives in Finland – and the experience heard and learned from another foreigner would definitely have more credibility. Moreover, international students have already conducted several identical projects that aim at easier integration so expanding the target group into other foreigners than just students should not require an enormous additional effort. In addition, arranging international events that would be open for all young foreigners in Kouvola area would provide social contacts to those foreigners who are not taken up with school or work. As there are many young foreigners who do not care about

going out in the bars, a chance to meet other young people through the university-related events would be a great opportunity. Furthermore, introducing the university, studies and student life to interested, gifted young foreigners could even add up to the amount of future students. (Kurri 2011.)

7 DISCUSSION

This chapter will concentrate on discussing the most significant changes and consistencies in each part of the survey. In terms of potential reasons for change or consistency, the discussion is based on literature, research material and news coverage on the subject and my own reflection as a Finnish citizen.

7.1 Discussion on the results concerning the attitude statements per group

Statements with positive general nature; work- and study-related statements

The average values of all statements with positive general nature were lower in 2010 than in 2005, indicating slightly less positive attitudes down the line. However, when examining the response distribution of individual statements, the differences were rarely formed from striking changes from one extreme end to the other, but from modest increases in somewhat agreeing responses or in non-agreement/disagreement responses. As an example, both years there were the exactly same amount of respondents who thought that not all foreigners are welcome to Finland – the drop in the average value consisted completely of the increase (8% → 17%) in not agreeing or disagreeing responses. Naturally, this amount was off the agreeing responses, but as a conclusion it would be accurate to say that in 2010 people were more undecided with their opinions concerning all foreigners being welcome to Finland. The verifying statement ‘It doesn’t matter which nationalities come to Finland’ illustrated somewhat tightened attitudes as the amount of disagreeing responses grew from 51% to 58%. Huttunen (2009) observes that often the public discussion of immigration divides foreigners only into two groups, refugees and occupational immigrants. Simultaneously it also categorises these people by their country of origin, meaning that refugees come from one group

of nations and occupational immigrants from another. Huttunen (2009) notices that in general occupational immigrants are often preferred over refugees, although many of the refugees would have similar potential over time. Additionally, Jaakkola (2005, 69) observes that throughout her whole research period, Finns showed more positive attitudes towards immigrants from countries nearby and with higher living standards. In my opinion, these perceptions and observations support the respondents' stand with emphasising the relevance of nationality of the immigrants.

From statements relating to work and studying it could be seen that the attitudes towards the amount of foreign students tightened as in 2010 up to 22% thought Finland should not receive more foreign students when the corresponding figure in 2005 was only 9%. Nevertheless, another interpretation could be that this statement's disagreeing responses expresses respondents being content with the present amount of foreign students. In addition, there is a possibility this change having derived from the different age distribution within the respondents in 2010 when the youngest age group was substantially smaller compared with the equivalent age group in 2005; when the concern is about people their own age, younger respondents could express their assent more eagerly. Considering this, it is worth pointing out that the respondents' attitudes towards foreign students as a foreigner group also tightened in 2010. This same reasoning would be applicable in evaluating the reasons for the possible reasons for the change in that particular group. Another alternative explanation could be found in current social policy-related issues. Higher education in Finland is mainly free of charge for Finnish as well as foreign students, but the public discussion has lately addressed its expenses especially in relation to the amount of students who stay in Finland after their graduation. Finnish Immigration Service and CIMO (Ministry of the Interior 2011b) estimate that 55% to 60% of all master-level graduates stay in Finland, however this estimate does not show the duration of residence after graduation. Therefore it could be concluded that if the respondents feel the expenses exceed the benefits to the Finnish society, they are more likely to disagree with Finland receiving more foreign students. From this perspective

there could also be a reasoning for the increase in the amount of respondents in 2010 who agreed that foreign students who have studied in Finland should also work in Finland after graduation: the increase from 2005 was 13 percentage points. This relates directly to recognizing the future need for foreign labour – mentioned not only in this study, but in the public and governmental discussion on occupational immigration. Alitolppa-Niitamo (2005) notices that when seeking employment, immigrants often confront many obstacles including employer's prejudices and insufficient language skills. In 2010 study the respondents' stand to language issues was united: 93% agreed that foreigners should learn Finnish language skills. Forsander (2001, 34) confirms this by stating that working life language skills are prerequisites for immigrants' employment. Contrary to this, Söderqvist (2005, 71) observes in her research that when recruiting, the employers give preference among other things to attitude towards work, motivation and expertise; in fact, Finnish language skills were ranked fourteenth in a list of twenty most important criteria for recruitment. After familiarising myself with several interviews and news articles about foreigners' employment in Finland I feel the real-life needs support the respondents' and Forsander's stand, and that the condition to possess adequate Finnish language skills in order to find employment is unquestionable.

Prejudice, negativity and social policy-related statements

A very precise consistency remained in the amount of respondents agreeing that foreigners are a burden to Finland: both years the amount was exactly 29%. A minor signal of a tightened atmosphere was that in 2010 there were fewer respondents who would have disagreed, which naturally increased the amount of non-agreement/disagreement responses. Increasingly strict was the respondents' views on foreigners with a criminal background. Resistance to allow entry for foreigners with criminal records was high (74%) in the first place, but in 2010 up to 85% of the respondents agreed that Finland should deny access from foreigners with criminal records. Jaakkola (2005, 102) notices that age influences on people's perceptions on the threatening factors associated with foreigners and immigration. The higher average age of the respondents in 2010 could have increased the resistance in this particular issue.

The statements covering straightforward prejudices did not provide many changes. The respondents were equally undecided when they had to evaluate if foreigners are prejudiced towards foreigners – 43% to 44% of the respondents did not agree or disagree. When the evaluation was about Finns being prejudiced towards foreigners, three out of four respondents agreed. Helsingin Sanomat (23 October 2011, A8) and TNS Gallup commissioned recently a small-scale survey in order to find out do ethnic minorities in Finland find Finnish people racist. The sample size was 100 individuals and the responses were collected in 9 large cities around Finland. It is mentioned that although the results are not statistically relevant, they can still be considered suggestive. The results revealed that with the statement 'Finnish people are racist' 34% agreed and the majority, 60% disagreed. Similarly, 57% said they have never personally encountered racism, leaving 43% saying they have. Along with quantitative results, the survey provided some qualitative outcome in form of free comments. It was concluded by the interviewees that some of the responses were slanted with discretion, but direct opinions were also presented. As an example, after four years experience in Finland a Nepalese student was ready to state that Finnish people are racist; yet some of the respondents had not recognised racism in Finland at all. A Somali male concluded that it will take a long time before Finns get used to foreigners and that prejudices and fears cause racism. A Nigerian male mentioned that mostly Finns are nice people and racists are a minority.

The questionnaire included three statements which all aimed at indicating respondents' views on foreigners' entitlement to social security. Both years over a half of the respondents thought foreigners should not be entitled with the same social security as Finns. An equal amount of respondents thought Finland provides already too much welfare benefits to foreigners. The differences between results were just a few percentage points up or down, but when measured as an average value, the ones with reference value from 2005 did decrease in 2010.

Within the past three-four years the tone in the public discussion on immigration has changed and it has at times reached a very intense and critical level.

The discussion basically started from the disputes between political parties about immigration policy and aliens act, and as the arguments came public, citizens pursued participating in the discussion in internet forums, newspapers and sharing their critical view in opinion polls. As before, recession has been suggested to have influenced the heated discussion, but also the increased amount of asylum seekers was interpreted to have caused concerns about the sustainability of the national economy and social welfare system. In addition, the role of the media has often been highlighted as being responsible for provoking all parties involved in the fuss: using overstatements, threats and emphasising negative side-effects and phenomena in reporting immigration does not support executing any kind of policy programmes. Instead, it only helps generating critical views on anything that relates to foreigners and immigration. (Elonen 2009; Keskinen 2009, 33–45; Kyntäjä 2005, 155–156.)

The final statement in the 2010 questionnaire explored respondents' personal view on intercultural marriage. Here it is very important to notice that this statement in the questionnaire was the only one in which the word immigrant (in Finnish: maahanmuuttaja) was used. The rest of the statements referred to foreigners (in Finnish: ulkomaalainen). Personally, as I had dealt with the subject of this thesis for about one year, I used numerous chances to discuss these terms and their use in the present-day Finnish society with native friends and acquaintances. The reflection usually started from the comparison of the three most common terms: foreigner, immigrant and refugee. As children of the late 70s, my friends and I were still in comprehensive school when the amount of foreigners started to increase. As mentioned earlier in this thesis, the beginning of the 90s brought first refugees from Somalia and former Yugoslavian area to Finland and the term refugee was more widely taken into use. At the time and especially for children, foreigners were people who lived in other countries and only came to Finland as tourists. The term refugee never had too much of a positive tone in it, most likely due to the different and alien nature of the phenomena in the first place. The difference nowadays is, however, that unless the focus of the conversation is exactly asylum seekers and refugee matters, the natives rarely refer to refugees anymore, but instead

the term immigrant has established itself as a current term to describe all foreigners that are perceived as what formerly would have been called refugees. Often the reflection ended up discovering that the term immigrant has unfortunately turned substantially less neutral within recent years, even though the group comprises of the same people as its common nominator group, foreigners. Immigrants, on the other hand, can represent all nationalities, regardless of the purpose of their entry. Would the results have been different if the marriage-related statement had been phrased with the term foreigner – for this particular study it remains unknown, but the speculation certainly gives a suggestion for further studies. After all, with a small emphasis on those who could not imagine marrying an immigrant, the responses were still distributed rather equally to all levels of agreement/disagreement.

As a conclusion of all attitude statements it can be mentioned that many of them were supported with Jaakkola's (2005, 105) observation on the positive influence on attitudes if the respondents had had experience from abroad. Apart from that, the contact theory appeared often as many of the respondents with more contacts with foreigner showed more positive attitudes towards foreigners in their responses. This was also one of the few permanent consistencies throughout Jaakkola's (2005, 104) long series of studies. Additionally, a connection between higher education and more positive attitudes was found in many of the statements, which is a phenomena that seems to be observed across different cultures and age groups (Ostapczuk, Musch & Moshagen 2009, 1).

7.2 Discussion on the results concerning the attitude evaluations

Attitude evaluations on different nationalities

Although the majority of nationalities lost a few decimals in their average value in 2010, it is important to notice that when all nationality average values are calculated together, the difference between the results in 2005 and 2010 was as low as -0.04 percentage points. Based on this, it can be concluded that the attitudes have remained nearly unchanged.

The biggest positive increase (0.44 percentage points) was towards the Russians. There is chance that the increased amount of Russian people (Statistics Finland 2011) resulted in local people having more contacts with them, referring to the contact theory presented previously in this thesis. Another possible motive for improved attitudes can be found in different samples: in 2005 could have included particularly many respondents who had less positive attitude towards Russian people – after all, within the optional free comments in 2005 the most repeated reference was that there are too many Russians in Kouvola.

In 2010 the respondents described their attitudes towards the Chinese a lot less positive than in 2005. The decrease in the average value was 0.46 percentage points. The biggest motive for this change could most likely be the events and unexpected turns relating to the local entrepreneurial China Centre-project. This project got started in 2005 and 2006 when the city of Kouvola started enhancing and developing relations to China in order to increase direct trade from China. The Chinese trading partners ventured into setting up both a wholesale business and a welfare centre in Kouvola which eventually did not succeed as planned and the operations were heavily unprofitable. Further, in August 2007 the National Bureau of Investigation announced they had put China Centre's operations under surveillance due to suspicions concerning visa abuse. The whole chain of events culminated in November 2009 when the police together with Boarder Guard raided the premises under suspicion of arranging numerous illegal entries for the Chinese under cover of business operations in China Centre. The whole episode received wide media coverage and although the accused individuals represented both Chinese and Finnish nationalities, an unfortunate fact is that the accusations are easier cast on foreigners than locals. (YLE 2009.)

Attitude evaluations on different foreigner groups

On average, all foreigner groups together were seen in slightly less positive light in 2010. Foreign workers lost the most of all groups, dropping from the average value of 4.0 to 3.5 in 2010 in the scale of five to one from positive to

negative end. The influence of recent recession in relation to work has challenged even the employment of locals and most likely the fear of socio-economic threat, as Jaakkola (2005) also mentions, has tightened the attitudes towards working foreigners. In addition, within certain business branches, such as construction, cleaning and catering businesses, there are employers who hire foreign workers with conditions that go below the current norm in terms of legal aspects concerning pay and taxes (Sund 2011). Although the employers are here to blame, people may be in principle against the idea of being replaceable with “cheap” foreign workers, especially when there are numerous examples of large enterprises transferring their operations from Finland to countries where production is cheaper.

Kouvola received the first full municipal quota of refugees in 2010 (Kurri 2011). Reflecting to this, the modest decrease in the average value of the attitudes towards refugees could be interpreted as a favourable result when the change could have been more dramatic. Jaakkola (2005) observes that the recession in the beginning of the 90s had a rather significant tightening influence on people’s attitudes towards refugees. A similar tendency is remarked by Keskinen, Rastas and Tuori (eds: Huttunen 2009, 16) with an annotation that recession cannot be considered as the only influential factor. Within this study it could be interpreted that if the recession had its influence in the results, it showed more outstandingly in other foreigner groups except for refugees.

7.3 Analysis of the free comments

Optional free comments were both years few in number compared with the sample size. Regardless, the comments included adequate examples of positive, negative and neutral attitudes. The only specific comment appearing repeatedly was, as mentioned in the discussion on attitude evaluations towards different nationalities, to be found in 2005 results when many respondents felt that there were too many Russians in Kouvola at the time. Another theme that was met with several comments was the idea of all foreigners being alright as long as they do not cause trouble or commit crimes.

One significant difference between the two surveys is that in 2005 there were no comments whatsoever that would have related to social policy-related issues whereas in 2010 there were several references to these issues. As for neutral comments the respondents encouraged foreigners to work and make a living like locals. This perspective would actually support the well-being of foreigners in more ways than just providing salary – foreigners' employment is thought to decrease discrimination and prejudice (Paananen 2005, 461). Criticism was expressed towards social burden, the exploitation of social welfare system and preferring foreigners over locals.

Interestingly the consistency in relation to background information that was recognised with previous parts of the survey did not exist in the free comments: there was no significant difference in female and male comments as they both included negative and positive comments. Same applied to the age groups – respondents of different ages stated both positive and negative comments. Nevertheless, the total amount of free comments was fairly modest and the motives for leaving or not leaving comments vary within the sample. Not having enough time to think of anything special when filling in the questionnaire, not having anything else to comment in the first place, or choosing to restrain further personal comments could all have been motives for not leaving the optional free comment. Respectively, recent experiences that may have urged a respondent to react, wanting to have one's voice heard – even anonymously – or general willingness to share personal views all could have motivated the respondents to add their own comments.

8 CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

The comparison of the two surveys from 2005 and 2010 reveals that the Kouvola citizen's attitudes towards foreigners have tightened. The change is compounded of small differences in all sections of the study and very few significant attitudinal turns are to be recognised in the results. People prove to be more selective than before as they would be less eager to welcome all foreigners to Finland. Regardless, people are clearly aware of current issues relating to occupational immigration and agree that in future Finland will need

more foreign labour. Contrary to this, attitudes towards working foreigners have turned less positive, which seems to be a challenging combination with previously established need for foreign labour. Also foreign students are less favoured than before although people expect graduated students to stay in the country more often. Sensitive social security-related topics are regarded more reserved than earlier, but assessments of the Finns' prejudices have remained the same. When attitudes towards different nationalities are individually evaluated they prove to be less positive than before, but on average when all nationalities are compared the attitudes have remained the same.

Personally I believe the motives for the tightened attitudes are mainly based on two factors: the recent recession and changes in the public atmosphere in the society that nowadays allows expressing increasingly critical opinions about social politics and immigration without specific social condemnation. Nevertheless, this comparison of results was based on two surveys of which the latter was conducted at a time when the national economy was still weakened from the recession few years earlier. As the changes in the results were not highly dramatic, it would be very interesting to know to which direction the attitudes will take turn next, taken that changes in the national economy will also occur. Conducting a consecutive survey on Kouvola citizens' attitudes in 2015 would be my most recommended suggestion for a further study.

The subject itself provides a variety of other topics for research. From the foreigners' perspective it would be useful to know what kind of activities or events they would like to participate in and how they would prefer meeting the locals. From an employment perspective it would be useful to find out what kind of prerequisites local companies have on employing foreign workers, if they have future plans in which they would require a specific language to be used or if they already have foreign workers, how is their adjustment supported and how do the foreigners themselves feel about it.

As for enhancing the international project material in Kymenlaakso University of Applied Sciences, an applicable suggestion would be that cooperation with Kouvola Immigration Office would take place and mutual benefits would be

sought after. Satu Kurri mentioned that lack of resources slows always down executing projects, and as immigrants and foreign students share similar challenges in adjusting to Finland, these similarities could be turned into mutual initiatives that would provide help and assistance to both parties. Regardless of the apparent business orientation in the Business department, it is equally important to learn how to follow through a project; to plan, execute, supervise and review the results. Projects with more of a humanitarian perspective would definitely serve this purpose and besides, these projects would be real, with a real idea and a fair meaning. Moreover, these projects could be applied to Finnish students, too, to expand their internationalisation within studies. With regards to many subjects covered in this thesis, having an international mindset will be a prerequisite and a valuable asset for every student in future labour markets.

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Appendix 1.

ATTITUDES TOWARDS FOREIGNERS IN KOUVOLA

Survey autumn 2010

1. Hometown: New Kouvola

If other, terminate the interview!

2. Which alternative describes best your opinion concerning the following attitude statements?

	Totally disagree	Somewhat disagree	Not agree or disagree	Somewhat agree	Totally agree
1. All the foreigners are welcome to Finland	1	2	3	4	5
2. Foreigners enrich the Finnish culture	1	2	3	4	5
3. I feel that foreigners are a burden to Finland	1	2	3	4	5
4. I am interested in foreign cultures	1	2	3	4	5
5. Foreigners are prejudice towards Finns	1	2	3	4	5
6. Finns are prejudice towards foreigners	1	2	3	4	5
7. Foreigners should be entitled to the same social benefits as Finns	1	2	3	4	5
8. It doesn't matter which nationalities come to Finland	1	2	3	4	5
9. Finland should deny access from foreigners with criminal records	1	2	3	4	5
10. Finland should receive more foreign students	1	2	3	4	5
11. Most foreigners live on social support	1	2	3	4	5
12. Foreign students who have studied in Finland should also work in Finland after graduation	1	2	3	4	5
13. Finland should receive more skilled foreign labour.	1	2	3	4	5
14. There is a right number of foreigners in my hometown	1	2	3	4	5
15. I don't mind being treated by a foreign nurse.	1	2	3	4	5
16. People in Kouvola have a positive attitude towards foreigners	1	2	3	4	5
17. I don't mind being treated by a foreign doctor	1	2	3	4	5
18. Finland provides too much social welfare benefits to foreigners.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Foreigners should learn Finnish language skills	1	2	3	4	5
20. In the future Finland needs foreign labour	1	2	3	4	5
21. I could not imagine marrying an immigrant	1	2	3	4	5

3. What is your attitude towards following nationalities?

	Very negative			Very positive	
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Russian	1	2	3	4	5
2. Chinese	1	2	3	4	5
3. Swedish	1	2	3	4	5
4. Thai	1	2	3	4	5
5. Turkish	1	2	3	4	5
6. Estonian	1	2	3	4	5
7. American (USA)	1	2	3	4	5
8. German	1	2	3	4	5
9. Somali	1	2	3	4	5
10. Afghanistan	1	2	3	4	5
11. Croatia	1	2	3	4	5
12. Sudan	1	2	3	4	5
13. Bosnian-Herzegovina	1	2	3	4	5

4. What is your attitude towards the following groups of foreigners in Finland?

	Very negative			Very positive	
	1	2	3	4	5
1. Working foreigners	1	2	3	4	5
2. Foreign students	1	2	3	4	5
3. Refugees	1	2	3	4	5
4. Foreign tourists	1	2	3	4	5

5. What else would you like to say about foreigners in Kouvola?

Background

6. Gender 1. Female 2. Male

7. Age _____ years

8. Education

1. Primary school
2. Secondary / high school / vocational college
3. University of Applied Sciences / University

9. Have you worked or studied abroad? 1. Yes 2. No

10. What kind of contacts have you had with foreigners? (You may choose several options)

1. Not at all
2. At work
3. At school
4. Foreign friends
5. Foreign relatives
6. Foreign neighbours
7. At tourist destination
8. Other, what _____

11. Give your estimate concerning the number of foreigners in Kouvola: _____

Thank you for your time!

MIELIPIDETUTKIMUS KOUVOLALAISTEN ASEENTEISTA ULKOMAALAISIA KOHTAAN**1. Kotikaupunki:** (uusi) Kouvola**Jos muu, keskeytä haastattelu/kysely!**

Syksy 2010

2. Valitse vaihtoehto joka parhaiten kuvaa mielipidettäsi seuraaviin väittämiin:

	Täysin eri mieltä	Jokseenkin eri mieltä	Ei samaa / ei eri mieltä	Jokseenkin samaa mieltä	Täysin samaa mieltä
1. Kaikki ulkomaalaiset ovat tervetulleita Suomeen.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Ulkomaalaiset rikastuttavat suomalais- ta kulttuuria.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Ulkomaalaiset ovat taakka Suomelle.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Olen kiinnostunut muista kulttuureista.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Ulkomaalaiset ovat ennakkoluuloisia suomalaisia kohtaan.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Suomalaiset ovat ennakkoluuloisia ulkomaalaisia kohtaan.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Ulkomaalaisten tulisi olla oikeutettuja samaan sosiaaliturvaan kuin suomalaisten.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Ei ole merkitystä mistä maista ulkomaalaisia tulee Suomeen.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Suomen tulisi kieltää maahanpääsy ulkomaalaisilta joilla on rikostausta.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Suomen tulisi vastaanottaa enemmän ulkomaalaisia opiskelijoita.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Suurin osa ulkomaalaisista elää sosiaali- ltuella.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Suomessa opiskelleiden ulkomaalais- ten tulisi jäädä töihin Suomeen valmistumisensa jälkeen.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Suomen tulisi vastaanottaa enemmän koulutettua työvoimaa ulkomailta.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Kouvola on sopiva määrä ulkomaala- laisia.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Minua ei haittaa jos minua hoitava sai- raanhoitaja on ulkomaalainen.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Kouvolaalaisilla on positiivinen asenne ulkomaalaisia kohtaan.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Minua ei haittaa jos minua hoitava lääkäri on ulkomaalainen.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Suomi maksaa liikaa sosiaalietuuksia ulkomaalaisille.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Ulkomaalaisten tulisi opetella suomen kieltä.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Tulevaisuudessa Suomi tarvitsee ulkomaista työvoimaa.	1	2	3	4	5
21. En voisi kuvitella maahanmuuttajaa puolisoikseni.	1	2	3	4	5

3. Valitse vaihtoehto joka parhaiten kuvaa asennettasi seuraaviin kansallisuuksiin:

	Erittäin negatiivinen			Erittäin positiivinen	
1. venäläiset	1	2	3	4	5
2. kiinalaiset	1	2	3	4	5
3. ruotsalaiset	1	2	3	4	5
4. thaimaalaiset	1	2	3	4	5
5. turkkilaiset	1	2	3	4	5
6. eestiläiset	1	2	3	4	5
7. amerikkalaiset	1	2	3	4	5
8. saksalaiset	1	2	3	4	5
9. somalit	1	2	3	4	5
10. afganistanilaiset	1	2	3	4	5
11. kroaatit	1	2	3	4	5
12. sudanilaiset	1	2	3	4	5
13. bosnia-herzegovinalaiset	1	2	3	4	5

4. Valitse vaihtoehto joka parhaiten kuvaa asennettasi seuraaviin ulkomaalaisryhmiin Suomessa:

	Erittäin negatiivinen			Erittäin positiivinen	
1. Ulkomaalaiset työntekijät	1	2	3	4	5
2. Ulkomaalaiset opiskelijat	1	2	3	4	5
3. Ulkomailta tulleet pakolaiset	1	2	3	4	5
4. Ulkomaalaiset turistit	1	2	3	4	5

5. Mitä muuta haluaisit sanoa ulkomaalaisista Kouvolassa?

Taustakysymykset:**6. Sukupuoli**

1. Nainen
2. Mies

7. Ikä

_____ vuotta

8. Koulutus

1. peruskoulu
2. lukio / ammattikoulu / toisen asteen tutkinto
3. ammattikorkeakoulu / korkeakoulu / yliopisto

9. Oletko työskennellyt tai opiskellut ulkomailla?

1. Kyllä
2. En

10. Miten/missä olet ollut tekemisissä ulkomaalaisten kanssa? (voit valita useita)

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. En lainkaan | 5. Ulkomaalaisia sukulaisia |
| 2. Töissä | 6. Ulkomaalaisia naapureita |
| 3. Koulussa | 7. Ulkomaisissa turistikohteissa |
| 4. Ulkomaalaisia ystäviä | 8. Muuten, miten _____ |

11. Anna arviosi ulkomaalaisten tämänhetkisestä lukumäärästä Kouvolassa: _____

KIITOS AJASTASI!

Appendix 3. Percentage-based frequency tables of the responses to the attitude statements

Table 1. All foreigners are welcome to Finland

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	12 %	12 %
Somewhat disagree	36 %	36 %
Not agree or disagree	8 %	17 %
Somewhat agree	34 %	30 %
Totally agree	10 %	4 %
TOTAL	100 %	100 %

Table 2. Foreigners enrich the Finnish culture

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	2 %	4 %
Somewhat disagree	14 %	13 %
Not agree or disagree	19 %	29 %
Somewhat agree	45 %	41 %
Totally agree	21 %	13 %
TOTAL	100 %	100 %

Table 3. I feel that foreigners are a burden to Finland

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	10 %	7 %
Somewhat disagree	35 %	30 %
Not agree or disagree	26 %	34 %
Somewhat agree	25 %	25 %
Totally agree	4 %	4 %
TOTAL	100 %	100 %

Table 4. I am interested in foreign cultures

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	3 %	3 %
Somewhat disagree	8 %	6 %
Not agree or disagree	17 %	22 %
Somewhat agree	33 %	42 %
Totally agree	39 %	27 %
TOTAL	100 %	100 %

Table 5. Foreigners are prejudiced towards Finns

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	2 %	1 %
Somewhat disagree	14 %	22 %
Not agree or disagree	43 %	44 %
Somewhat agree	34 %	29 %
Totally agree	6 %	4 %
TOTAL	100 %	100 %

Table 6. Finns are prejudiced towards foreigners

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	1 %	0 %
Somewhat disagree	6 %	6 %
Not agree or disagree	17 %	18 %
Somewhat agree	62 %	67 %
Totally agree	15 %	9 %
TOTAL	100 %	100 %

Table 7. Foreigners should be entitled to the same social benefits as Finns

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	14 %	18 %
Somewhat disagree	37 %	37 %
Not agree or disagree	21 %	24 %
Somewhat agree	23 %	18 %
Totally agree	5 %	3 %
TOTAL	100 %	100 %

Table 8. It doesn't matter which nationalities come to Finland

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	17 %	23 %
Somewhat disagree	34 %	35 %
Not agree or disagree	18 %	14 %
Somewhat agree	19 %	19 %
Totally agree	12 %	8 %
TOTAL	100 %	100 %

Table 9. Finland should deny access from foreigners with criminal records

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	5 %	3 %
Somewhat disagree	9 %	4 %
Not agree or disagree	13 %	8 %
Somewhat agree	28 %	32 %
Totally agree	46 %	53 %
TOTAL	100 %	100 %

Table 10. Finland should receive more foreign students

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	1 %	4 %
Somewhat disagree	8 %	18 %
Not agree or disagree	37 %	34 %
Somewhat agree	36 %	35 %
Totally agree	19 %	9 %
TOTAL	100 %	100 %

Table 11. Most foreigners live on social support

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	3 %	5 %
Somewhat disagree	19 %	17 %
Not agree or disagree	33 %	38 %
Somewhat agree	33 %	28 %
Totally agree	12 %	12 %
TOTAL	100 %	100 %

Table 12. Foreign students who have studied in Finland should also work in Finland after graduation

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	6 %	4 %
Somewhat disagree	20 %	12 %
Not agree or disagree	43 %	38 %
Somewhat agree	26 %	35 %
Totally agree	6 %	10 %
TOTAL	100 %	100 %

Table 13. Finland should receive more skilled foreign labour

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	6 %	6 %
Somewhat disagree	22 %	17 %
Not agree or disagree	23 %	32 %
Somewhat agree	37 %	38 %
Totally agree	12 %	7 %
TOTAL	100 %	100 %

Table 14. There is a right number of foreigners in my hometown

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	3 %	8 %
Somewhat disagree	17 %	16 %
Not agree or disagree	53 %	40 %
Somewhat agree	20 %	30 %
Totally agree	8 %	6 %
TOTAL	100 %	100 %

Table 15. I don't mind being treated by a foreign nurse

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	---	3 %
Somewhat disagree	---	23 %
Not agree or disagree	---	16 %
Somewhat agree	---	37 %
Totally agree	---	20 %
TOTAL	0 %	100 %

Table 16. People in Kouvola have a positive attitude towards foreigners

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	---	6 %
Somewhat disagree	---	34 %
Not agree or disagree	---	40 %
Somewhat agree	---	19 %
Totally agree	---	1 %
TOTAL	0 %	100 %

Table 17. I don't mind being treated by a foreign doctor

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	---	9 %
Somewhat disagree	---	28 %
Not agree or disagree	---	13 %
Somewhat agree	---	32 %
Totally agree	---	19 %
TOTAL	0 %	100 %

Table 18. Finland provides too much social welfare benefits to foreigners

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	---	2 %
Somewhat disagree	---	9 %
Not agree or disagree	---	35 %
Somewhat agree	---	33 %
Totally agree	---	21 %
TOTAL	0 %	100 %

Table 19. Foreigners should learn Finnish language skills

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	---	1 %
Somewhat disagree	---	2 %
Not agree or disagree	---	4 %
Somewhat agree	---	29 %
Totally agree	---	64 %
TOTAL	0 %	100 %

Table 20. In the future Finland needs foreign labour

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	---	7 %
Somewhat disagree	---	16 %
Not agree or disagree	---	32 %
Somewhat agree	---	35 %
Totally agree	---	10 %
TOTAL	0 %	100 %

Table 21. I could not imagine marrying an immigrant

	2005	2010
Totally disagree	---	18 %
Somewhat disagree	---	15 %
Not agree or disagree	---	26 %
Somewhat agree	---	17 %
Totally agree	---	24 %
TOTAL	0 %	100 %