

Saimaa University of Applied Sciences
Tourism and Hospitality
Degree programme in Tourism

**Turkish Travellers' Preferences on Travelling Abroad and Possible
Interest to Travel to Northern Part of Europe, Especially Finland**

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Bachelor's Thesis 2013

ABSTRACT

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“Turkish Travellers’ Preferences on Travelling Abroad and Possible Interest to Travel to Northern Part of Europe, Especially Finland”, 55 pages, 1 appendix

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The Purpose of the research was to examine the preferences of Turkish travellers on going abroad and based on these preferences, to analyze possible interest to travel to Northern Europe countries (e.g. Finland).

The key concern of the theoretical part was to find out Turkish tourists’ travel preferences on travelling abroad. Because travel preferences are dependent on characteristics, buying behaviour, purchasing power, social class, family interest, past experiences and such different aspects that cannot be fully analyzed. The most reliable information was gathered by author on travel survey that was made in Turkey among 200 people. This questionnaire survey was carried out in hotel, city centre and airport of Ankara. This survey helps author to support his ideas on empirical part which are possibilities to travel to Northern Europe and possible attractions that can catch Turkish tourists’ attention. The data was collected with qualitative research method from ready-made materials such as documents, reports and articles. Besides qualitative research, quantitative research was used as main source of empirical information.

Results of the study show accurate findings and conclusions based on interests of Turkish travellers and tourism potentials of Nordic countries. The results of the study can be useful for travel and tourism companies in both Finland and Turkey.

Key words: Nordic tourism, Turkish tourists, travel preferences

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Appendix 1 Questionnaire Survey

1 Introduction

The purpose of the thesis was to study Turkish travellers' travel preferences on travelling abroad and to find out possible interest to travel to Northern Europe, especially interest in Finland.

1.1 Introduction to the subject of the thesis

Turkey is one of the leading tourism countries because of its perfect destination and hot climate. Turkey is located between two continents; in the west Europe and in the east Asia. This good location provides really significant tourism attractions such as long and clean beaches, national and cultural heritages, warm climate and more. Total length of Turkish coastline is 8333km (Black Sea on north, Aegean Sea in west and Mediterranean Sea in south).

In consequence of this tourism potential in Turkey, Turkish tourists mostly prefer to spend their holiday in Turkey. Therefore it is important to find out what are the aspects affecting decision-making process of Turkish tourists. This study will show concrete examples concerning travel preferences. Information will be gathered by author with questionnaires and analyzed based on various aspects such as age range, income, previous experiences and factors affecting their decision and so.

According to the information in official travel site of Finland, Finland has unique and unforgettable activities places. As an example, Finland is popular for its untouched nature and nature based activities such as husky sledging, living in an igloo village in Saariselkä, spending a night in ice & snow hotels in Lapland, visiting Santa Claus in Rovaniemi, Nordic lights, snow castles, renting a cottage near lake and many others. But a big question mark pops up if we ask a question such as "How many people are aware of this natural beauty and willing to travel?" (Visit Finland.a.)

Finland has a growing rate of tourists after year 2009 (in 2008-2009 tourist arrivals were decreased due to global economic crisis) and it continues to grow every year. To be more accurate, in 2011, Finland received 7.3 million foreign visitors. The number of foreign visitors has increased by 17 per cent from the year 2010. (Border Interview Survey.)

Based on this information, I have completed my study mostly based on Finland as a potential destination for Turkish tourists. Because I believe that Finland is not that eminent destination among Turkish travellers and this is enough to analyze possible interest for the future travellers. More precise information and statistics can be found inside of the study such as;

- How many Turkish tourists visited Finland?
- What were the aims of visit?
- How many days and nights they spent?

Furthermore, among academic writings, there is not such study published or researched before. Therefore this study is important for both countries. On the Finland's side, it can be useful for the companies bringing tourists to Finland. When it comes to Turkey's side, Turkish companies can create trips or tours to Northern European countries or make advertisements to create interest.

1.2 Objectives of the thesis

The key objective of this study is to find out concrete factors that are affecting decisions of Turkish travellers. This study will show most important aspects for Turkish tourists, create a tourist profile of Turkish travellers and ways to catch their attention.

I would like to mention that information collected to analyze this study cannot cover the whole population of Turkey. The survey does not represent the whole population of Turkey. According to CIA statistics, Turkish population increased to 79.8 million people but this study was done among 200 citizens only. Therefore; generalization cannot be done due to the lacking amount of the respondents of the survey. Results show only the factors among the sample. (Haberturk 2012.)

Turkey has a growing rate of tourist arrivals every year. Of course this has massive affect on Turkish economy but this rising rate affects Turkish domestic tourism negatively. Every year all the tourist facilities are set for international tourists due to differences in currencies. As a result of that Turkish tourists are seen as second priority and often considered as "foreign" in their home country. Because of these

facts, travelling abroad has become more popular among Turkish tourists. (Turizmguncel.) But there are factors affecting their decisions such as visa, health insurance and expensive travel costs.

As mentioned above, Turkish tourists mostly prefer to spend their holiday inside of Turkey but this becomes more and more difficult every year due to high prices. Prices are high because tourism companies want to focus on international market and therefore all the prices are in euros or dollars. Hotels are not providing different or discounted prices for Turkish citizens and even some rates can be higher than the tourist rates. These factors show that Turkish tourists are not the first priority customer segment in their home country because international tourists bring and spend more money to the companies. As a result of high price strategy against native tourists, Turkish tourists are bore to less star rating hotels or suitable abroad tours due to relatively cheaper prices.

1.3 Research methods

Research in common parlance refers to a search for knowledge. One can also define research as a scientific and systematic search for pertinent information on a specific topic. In fact, research is an art of significant investigation. Research is an academic activity and as such term should be used in a technical sense. Research is, thus, an original contribution to the existing stock of knowledge made its advancement. It is the pursuit of truth with the help of study, observation, comparison and experiment. (Kothari 2004, 1.)

The purpose of research is to discover answer to questions through the application of scientific procedures. The main aim of research is to find out the truth which is hidden and which has not been discovered as yet. Though each research study has its own specific purpose, research objectives can be seen as falling into a number of following broad sections as to gain familiarity with a phenomenon or to achieve new insights into it, to portray accurately the characteristics of a particular individual, situation or a group, to determine the frequency with which something occurs or with which it is associated with something and to test a hypothesis of a causal relationship between variables. (Kothari 2004, 2.)

In research methodology, there are two basic approaches to research; quantitative approach and the qualitative approach. The former involves the generation of data in quantitative form which can be subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis in a formal and rigid fashion. Quantitative approach can be further sub-classified into inferential, experimental and simulation approaches to research. The purpose of inferential approach is to research and form a database from which to infer characteristics or relationships of population. Experimental approach is characterized by much greater control over the research environment and in this case some variables are manipulated to observe their effect on other variables. Simulation approach involves the construction of an artificial environment within which relevant information and data can be generated. Qualitative approach to research is concerned with subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions and behaviours. Research in such a situation is a function of researcher's insights and impressions. (Kothari 2004, 5.)

This is a research based thesis and there will be two different data to be analyzed, primary data and secondary data. To collect primary data, qualitative method will be used since the main idea is to find out preferences of Turkish travellers and possible interest to travel Finland. Qualitative researches' interests are non-measurable issues, meaning and meaning's systems and understanding the reasons.

Documents, reports, articles, memoirs, bulletins, pictures, films, advertisements, handouts etc. are the most common data collection materials of qualitative research material. Besides ready-made materials, interviews, triangulations, documentation of the material and observations can be used as well. Qualitative research method finds answers to questions like why and how. (Tonder 2009.)

When it comes to secondary data collection, quantitative research method will be used. The quantitative research's interests are measurable issues, numeric research data and statistical methods. Quantitative research method answers the questions of what, what kind, when, how much, how many, where and etc. (Tonder 2009.)

This research based study deals with both qualitative and quantitative methods. Because, as it is mentioned above, on the one hand qualitative method will be used to collect information from materials, documents, articles and reports. The collected information will help to solve the research questions. On the other hand, quantitative method must be used to analyze data of statistical information. To collect measurable data, questionnaire survey method will be used.

In this study mostly qualitative research methods will be used on doing research from ready-made material. The aim of this is to condense and clarify the content on the material. According to the Veal (1997, 130), it is wiser to use qualitative research method for tourism based techniques as it corresponds more with the nature of phenomenon being studied. Basically, qualitative techniques involve a more flexible method to overall research that helps to understand in a better and detailed way.

It can be clearly seen from the theory mentioned above that qualitative research method will be the best method to complete the majority of this thesis work. Desk study method will be used to complete my theoretical framework to analyze tourism in Turkey, tourism in Nordic countries, basic travel preferences and such information. It must be also underlined that, without usage and support of quantitative method, study would not be convincing enough.

A questionnaire survey was done to analyze Turkish travellers' preferences. Location of the survey was Ankara city centre, lobbies of some hotels and entrance of Ankara Esenboğa airport. The survey was done on 22nd of December in Ankara city centre and in front of nearby hotels from 12:00 to 15:00. Survey also continued on 23rd of December in Ankara Esenboğa airport from 11:00 to 14:00. The survey was done by me and my friend Mustafa Mehmet Bayar. Total of 243 respondents answered the survey but 43 of them were insufficient to analyze based on wrong or missing answers. Analyses can be found in different forms in further chapters.

1.4 Main research problem and questions

A research problem, in general, refers to some difficulty which a researcher experiences in the context of either a theoretical or practical situation and wants to obtain a solution for the same (Kothari 2004, 24).

In this study, main research questions are;

- What are Turkish travellers' preferences on trips abroad?
- Is there a possible interest to travel to northern part of Europe especially Finland

In order to solve this problem I asked these questions to find useful information that is needed to study and complete my thesis;

- What are factors affecting travel preferences?
- What are basic differences in tourism of Turkey and Northern EU
- Is there a possible interest in trips to Northern EU especially Finland

2 Introduction to Turkish tourism

Turkey has so much to offer her visitors; breathtaking natural beauties, unique historical and archaeological sites, steadily improving hotel and touristic infrastructure and a tradition of hospitality and competitive prices. Therefore, it is not surprising that this country has recently become one of the world's most popular tourism destinations. Due to Turkey's diverse geography, one can experience four different climates in any one day. The rectangular shaped country is surrounded on three sides by three different seas. Its shores are laced with beaches, bays, coves, ports, islands and peninsulas. The summers are long, lasting as long as eight months in some areas. Turkey is also blessed with majestic mountains and valleys, lakes, rivers, waterfalls and grottoes perfect for winter and summer tourism and sports of all kinds. Skiing fans, mountain climbers, trekkers, hikers and hunters can enjoy new and unforgettable experiences in Turkey. Turkey is, above anything else, a huge open-air museum, a repository of all the civilizations nurtured by the soils of Anatolia. The huge amount of historical and archaeological wealth in Turkey seems more appropriate for an entire continent than a single country. Recently, a new field of tourism has opened up: health tourism. The country is in fact rich with hot springs, healing waters and healing muds, which come highly recommended by the medical authorities as a remedy for many diseases. For centuries, Turkey has also been a crossroads of religions, not only of Islam and Christianity, but also of many others now forgotten by history. Many religious devotees can find a site, a shrine, a monument, a tomb or a ruin connected with their faith or belief. (Official Tourism portal of Turkey.)

2.1 Shortly about development of Turkish tourism

Turkey should be separated into 2 parts, namely before and after the Republic of Turkey. During the period of Ottoman Empire, Orient Express can be practically regarded as an activity which enabled tourism to be born in Turkey. Railway was the most useful way to travel and it was the only tourism infrastructure at those times. In 1923, Republic of Turkey was founded and tourism began to change as the society of Turkey transformed into new, modern society. Some guilds related to tourism began to be established. Another big step was the foundation of Turkish Airlines in

1925. Tourism evidently developed until the World War II. During the World War II, tourism in Turkey was affected as happened in the other countries. (Ugurlu 2010.)

After the World War II, tourism industry began to be concerned governmentally. A new legislation in order to stimulate entrepreneurs to invest in tourism by giving credit with very low interest came into force. There is no doubt that it would affect the whole tourism industry within following years. (Ugurlu 2010.)

Foundation of TÜRSAB (Association of Turkish Travel Agencies) enabled tourism industry to get organized easier. Nevertheless industry did not have a legislation which rules the sector. Because of that the Law of Travel Agencies and The Association of Travel Agencies was put into action in 1972. Also, airports were being constructed and terminals upgraded to handle ever-growing passenger traffic. Several maritime ports were either under construction or being planned to relieve congestion around Turkey's industrial and commercial centres within those periods. As the super structure side, numbers of accommodation establishments were increasing and new travel agencies were opening. (Ugurlu 2010.)

Turkey has different climatic regions ranging from temperate rainy climate of the Black Sea Region, to the continental in the Central Anatolia and subtropical Mediterranean on the south. From west to east there are also considerable differences and contrasting climatic regions, with hot summers and mild winters in the Marmara and the Aegean region to the Eastern Anatolia with extremes of temperature where the winters are long with heavy snow fall. (Tursab. a.)

Turkey is a destination of mostly leisure travellers, business travellers and sightseeing travellers. Coastal tourism is much more developed than the other tourism fields. Turkey has been a centre of sightseeing travellers through wealth of its historical sites. (Ugurlu 2010.)

UNWTO stated that due to global economic crisis erupted in 2008 they were expecting a decline in international tourism between 2 per cent to 3 per cent but Turkish Tourism had good season and even international arrivals increased 13 per cent to 26.336.677 visitors. (UNWTO 2009)

2.2 Turkish inbound tourism

Inbound tourism, also known as incoming tourism, means the travellers arriving from different countries to the home country. Turkish inbound tourism has made a remarkable progress over the last two decades. Tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing sectors of Turkey. Since mid 1980s both the number of foreign arrivals and the tourist receipts have grown at a tremendous rate, though fluctuating at times due to the clearly known external factors beyond the control of the sector (Tursab. b.)

Successive records both in terms of number of arrivals and the tourism revenue have continued over the recent years. In the year 2009 the number of international arrivals in Turkey increased by 3 percent as against last year's figure and reached a total of 27 million 77 thousand, representing a new record.

There is a consensus of opinion that Turkey has an enormous development potential; few countries offer such a great variety of natural resources, cultural values, and tourist attractions. Long term prospects indicate that Turkish tourism will continue to grow at a rate even higher than the world's and the European average towards the year 2020. The research findings also confirm this view. (Tursab. b.)

2.3 Turkish domestic tourism

Domestic tourism means the native travellers going for vacation inside their home country. The domestic tourism market in Turkey has been neglected as a result of growing concentration on international tourism. For many years, domestic tourists in Turkey have been seen as a fall back market, a buffer, in periods when there have been problems with international tourism. Perfect definition for Turkish domestic market was made by Köfteoğlu (1998) that domestic tourists were seen as a nuisance and looked down on in many holiday resorts, though they had to pay a lot more than the international tourists. Large international tour operators have been able to bring down prices for their customers due to relatively stronger bargaining power against Turkish incoming tour operators (Yarcan & Peköz 1998).

According to Ministry of Culture and Tourism, development of the domestic market is as important as that of the foreign market for the growth of Turkey's tourism industry. The states that literally attract the greatest number of travellers from around the globe appear to have achieved an impressive level of development in their local industries engaged with domestic travel business. (Ministry of Culture and Tourism 2007, p.15)

2.4 Turkish outbound tourism

Outbound tourism basically happens when a native traveller goes abroad for vacation. In the early 1980s the Turkish economy was liberalized and major reforms were put into implementation to this end. Restrictions on travelling abroad, such as currency limitation have been abolished. Business travel, both in the country and abroad has shown a rapid growth. The diversity of new products offered by the Turkish travel agencies stimulated the tourist demand, and the number of Turkish tourists going abroad has eventually increased. The number of the Turkish citizens increased from one million 795 thousand in 1980 to 2 million 917 thousand in 1990 and reached a record in the year 2000 taking the total to 5 million 284 thousand. Because of the economic situation this number decreased by 8 percent in 2001 making a total of 4 million 856 thousand. (Tursab. c.)

In 2009, tourism expenditures were realized as 4 billion 145 million dollars. 3.78 percent of the Turkish citizens going abroad travelled by air, 68 percent by land, 28.08 percent by rail and 0.14 by sea respectively in the year 2008. (Tursab. c.)

The most popular destinations for Turkish citizens taking holidays abroad are well known cities of Europe and the USA. Also growing number of Turkish people are taking interest in the Asia, Pacific and other far away destinations. Turkish people are open to new ideas and flexible in decision making. Fashionable products are also tempting for them. They are particularly interested in city culture and sightseeing as well as shopping. There is also a large number of citizens travelling every year for pilgrimage visits. (Tursab. c.)

TURKISH CITIZENS TRAVELLING ABROAD	
YEARS	MILLION TRAVEL
1975	1,3
1980	1,7
1990	2,9
1993	3,3
1994	3,4
1995	3,9
1996	4,2
1997	4,7
1998	4,6
2000	5,3
2001	4,9
2002	5,1
2003	5,9
2004	7,2
2005	8,2
2006	8,2
2007	8,9
2008	9,8

Figure 1 (Tursab. d.) shows the amount of Turkish citizens travelling abroad annually. Thus it is quite clear to see that the number of Turkish citizens travelling abroad has increased rapidly in recent years.

Turkish government and Ministry of Culture and Tourism expect these figures to be relatively high in 2015 – 2020 and 2023 as it will be 100th anniversary of Turkish Republic.

Another fact affecting Turkish outbound tourism is high number of inbound travellers. Turkey hosted 31,456,076 foreign visitors in 2011 (Border Statistics

2011)

Figure 1 Turkish Citizens Travelling Abroad (Tursab. d.)

This figure shows that there is a great increase in travelling abroad due to the growth in Turkish economy in recent years. More and more people are willing to go and explore outside of Turkey due to the “almost” same price as domestic tourism and increasing international arrivals. But there is a big problem that, although millions of people are travelling to Europe, not more than a couple of thousands people prefer to go to Northern Europe because of knowledge and awareness factors. Here is the information concerning the number of Turkish citizens travelling Finland in 2007 and 2008, comprised to the rest. (Border Interview Survey.)

YEAR	Number of Turkish citizens travelling abroad	Number of Turkish citizens travelling to Finland
2007	8.9 million	≈5000
2008	9.8 million	≈5000

Figure 2 Turkish travellers visited abroad (Border Interview Survey.)

The number of Turkish citizens visiting Finland is quite low. The figure is lower than 0.1 per cent of all the trips Turkish citizens made abroad. The main reason for this can be explained in different ways. First of all, Finland and other Northern European countries are not that well-known destinations among Turkish travellers. In addition to that, if two climates are concerned, Finland has much cooler climate that is not much attractive for Turkish travellers because in Turkey it is possible to see four different seasons in a year. During winter season, there are many winter holiday destinations due to the high altitude. Of course there are many interesting and attractive events and holiday possibilities in Northern Europe that can catch attention of Turkish travellers. But the main problem is, as it has been mentioned before, awareness. If Finland is concerned, not many Turkish citizens know that they can spend a night in an igloo, ride husky or reindeer sledges or watch northern lights. To sum up, if awareness and knowledge increase because of good word of mouth advertising and increased Finnish image in globe, it is quite likely to see more Turkish citizens visiting Finland.

Further information concerning the number of Turkish citizens visiting Finland, main reason for travel and length of stays will be shown later on in this study.

3 Tourism in Nordic countries

This third chapter will provide a broad introduction to importance of Nordic countries and the Nordic Concept. The chapter also provides an introduction to Nordic tourism and major tourist attractions.

3.1 Importance of Northern Europe

The term “Nordic” refers to the countries of northern Europe: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden and the associated territories of Greenland, Faroe Islands and the Åland islands. The term derived from the Scandinavian language equivalent of *Norden*, which is *Pohjola* or *Pohjoismaat* in the Finnish Language, meaning northern or northern countries. However, the term does not just refer to a geographical space but is also a reference point to a political space, primarily occupied in institutional terms by the Nordic Council; a cultural space, in terms of common elements of a northern identity, as well as the related historical linkages and relationships between the various territories; and economic space, with the respect to the economic agreements that link the countries as well as substantial intra-regional trade that occurs. Finally, related to the various ways in which the Nordic idea is understood, as well as the openness of movement between the Nordic countries, is the tourism space of the Nordic countries. (Hall, Müller, Saarinen 2008, 3)

Figure 3 below shows the countries of Scandinavia region.

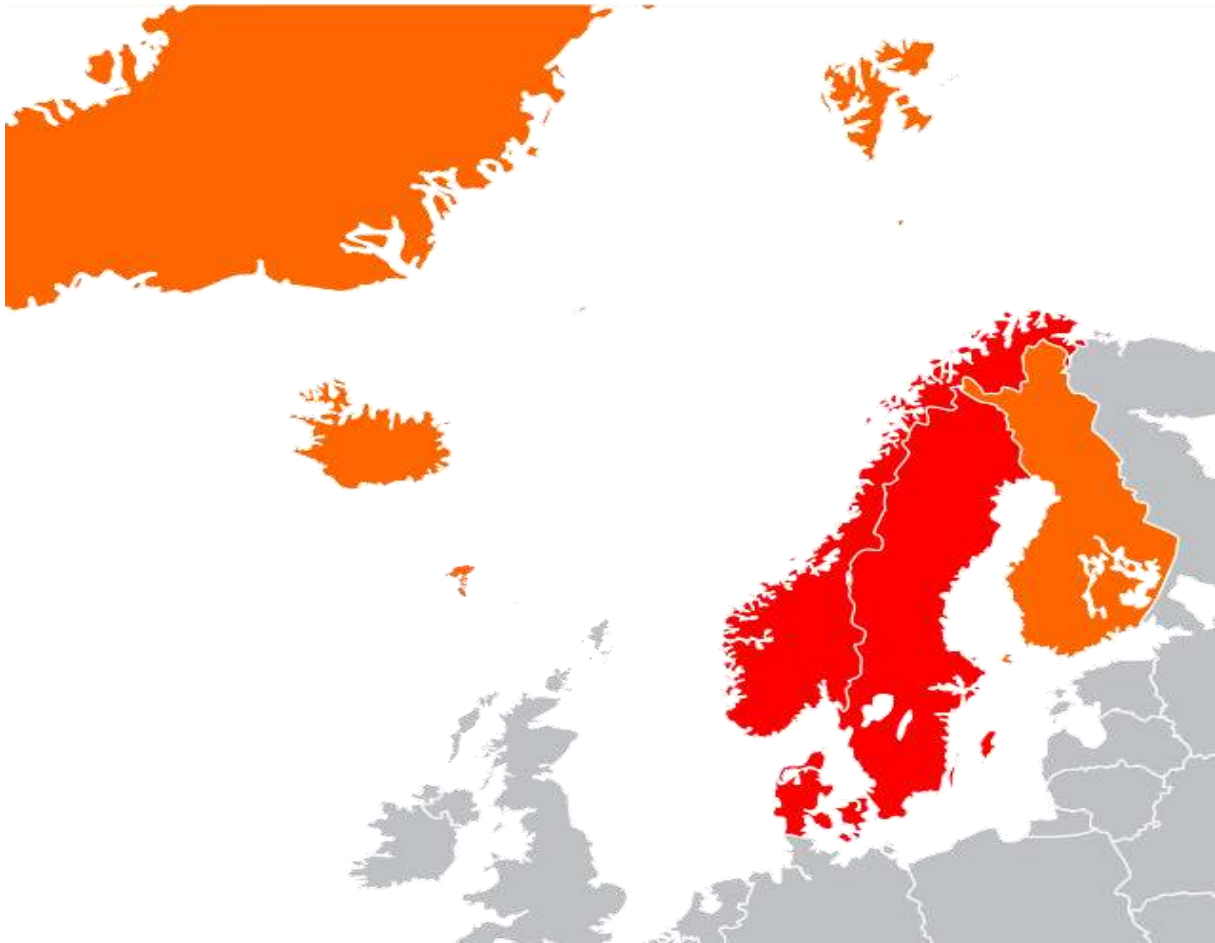


Figure 3 Scandinavian states. (Wikipedia 2011)

On the map above, basic difference between Scandinavia and Nordic countries has been pointed out in colours. Countries shown in red colour indicate the countries/regions that form Scandinavia. Countries shown in orange colour indicate the countries considered as Nordics or often called Northern European countries.

Nordic countries enjoy rich, untouched tracts of wilderness, pure water and fresh air. One of the most important thing that comes to the mind is of course nature and clean environment. Nowadays, it is a matter of issue that worries Nordic citizens to protect untouched environment for the future generations. The Nordic countries have a long-standing tradition of working together on matters related to nature and the environment.

The Nordic Region is home to more than 100 national parks that are governed by the laws of nature. Nordic citizens believe that humans must tread carefully in these areas and ensure that no one causes any harm. In 2008, Denmark opened its first national park, on the north-west coast of Jutland, and more are due to follow. It must be mentioned that natural parks are just a very small part of its huge natural area (Nordic co-operation.)

In Northern Europe, it is possible to dive into fascinating culture and history all the way back to the Viking Ages, while at the same time enjoying modern innovations in lifestyle, fashion, and design. World-class attractions can be found throughout Nordic countries, from Sami sites and royal castles to contemporary galleries and cutting-edge museums. Plus, one can get to know the shapes and colours in furniture, interiors, fashion, architecture, glass, and textiles that make Nordic design world-famous. (Travelocity.)

In North Europe there are different climates and temperatures vary widely between the regions. For example, weather in Denmark follows a marine west coast climate which is typical for its location in Europe. The same is true for the southernmost part of Sweden and the milder coastal climate touches the west coast of Norway as well, affecting the weather in Norway. The central part of Scandinavia from Oslo to Stockholm has a more humid continental climate, which gradually gives way to subarctic climate further north, a lot like the weather in Finland. Parts of the mountains in Norway and Sweden have an alpine tundra climate with very cold temperatures, especially in winter. Arctic climate with cold winters is possible to see in further north, especially in the region of Greenland and Iceland. (Goscandinavia. a.)

When it comes to safety, Northern European countries are one of the best and safest destinations in the world. According to the press release of European Safety Observatory, Sweden has lowest rates of burglaries in the whole EU, Finland is almost crime-free. Crime rates have been rising only in Denmark in recent years but Danes are considered as “crime haters” so that all population is against crime. (EUICS 2005)

It is impossible not to mention Nordic cuisine and its various ingredients of fish and meats, like pork and poultry, as well as beets, potatoes, cucumbers, broiled, baked, and smoked apples, and much more food. Just like Nordic design, the Nordic cuisine sticks to basics. (Goscandinavia. b.)

In Nordic countries, many food ingredients come from the sea, a fresh-water lake, or even the earth. There is even a bit of Scandinavian history behind Nordic food: The Vikings' meals always contained oysters or mussels, sometimes with some mutton, cheese, cabbage, apples, onions, berries and nuts. When ordering food in North Europe, fish is usually least expensive. In regards to meat, there is a lot to choose from as well. Deer, elk, and bear meat is always available. (Goscandinavia. b.)

This region is also very important for its various heritages coming from long and rich history. It is the home for many important world heritages. According to UNESCO World Heritage sites, Denmark has four, Norway has seven, Sweden has fourteen, and Finland has seven different world heritage sites that attract millions of people every year. (Goscandinavia. c.)

Richness is a fact of life in Northern Europe. The cause of this richness is numerous. Shortly, the most important reason is that Nordic countries are the combination of a large area and small population living there. Some North European countries have relatively larger scale in map than other European countries but when it comes to population, it is much smaller. This means very high GDP per capita. Here are some other important facts;

- Northern Europe is surrounded by large and highly developed countries,
- Specialization in particular product or service (mobile phones for Finland, steel for Sweden and etc.)
- High taxes for governmental and national growth,
- EU membership (only Sweden, Denmark and Finland)
- Lowest crime rates, secure and peaceful way of life,
- Due to dark and cold, less time for socializing and more time for work
(Touristmaker.)

3.2 Tourism in Northern Europe

Tourism is widely called the world's largest and fastest growing industry, and there is no indication that its growth is likely to end. In Finland, too, especially in northern Finland, the tourism industry plays an important, growing and crucial role in the regional economies and in everyday life. Tourism and tourists provide more employment opportunities in Finnish Lapland, for example, than any other field of the economy that makes direct or indirect use of natural resources. In the year 2000 the estimated employment effect of tourism was approximately 4000 full-time jobs in Lapland. (Müller & Jansson 2006, 41.)

Especially in peripheral and rural areas, tourism has been used as a tool for economic growth, welfare and promotion of jobs. In Nordic countries the economic and political significance of tourism for regional development has increased considerably in recent years, to the extent that in some peripheral regions it has become a crucial policy issue. Tourism is commonly looked on as having favourable economic and social impacts, introducing new, external sources of income and opportunities for employment and large amounts of public money spent nowadays on the development of tourism in peripheries. (Müller & Jansson 2006, 42.)

According to Müller and Jansson (2006), in the past few years tourism has developed intensively in northern Finland. On the basis of the tourism statistics, however, the development has been more moderate than rapid. The reason for this seemingly slow growth, especially in Lapland, is the nature of the statistical system in tourism in Finland: only larger units, i.e. more than 10 rooms, cottages or caravan places per enterprise, are included in the statistical system. Thus, smaller accommodation capacity – private, semi-private or commercial cottages and second homes – and changes in their use – are mostly unknown as is their total number in terms of tourist beds. Thus, statistics are little misleading the real fact as they only count accommodation with 10 rooms or more.

As a result of intensive growth in tourism, travel to Northern Europe has become more and more popular every year due to various types of attractions, events and locations. Every single traveller who has been to Nordic countries has a great and unique story. One animates his 007-style role as top husky sledge in the wild, clean air of Swedish Lapland. Another reveals Nordic secrets shared by one of Denmark's Michelin-starred chefs. As well as inspirational Icelandic encounters with Midnight sun, waterfalls, glaciers and volcanoes. (Goscandinavia. d.)

Wild and relatively cold climate attracts different travellers from all over the world. Especially Nordic winters are popular with their attractions and events. The main attraction of Nordic tourism is to explore nature based wild life. It should not be forgotten that Arctic region is popular for its wild life and many people from all around the world are gathering in this region every year to experience this unseen wonder of nature. Although some forms of tourist activity in the Arctic are similar to those in Antarctica, such as observing and photographing the scenery and wildlife, other types are far more consuming of resources, including hunting and fishing. Snow-based activities such as skiing are also particularly significant in mountain and high-latitude areas of the Arctic. This region is not only important for winter based tourism; it is also valuable for hiking and walking opportunities. (Müller & Jansson 2006, 164.)

There are various factors affecting tourism in North Europe. Of course the most important factor is winter and winter based attractions. Besides this, cruise trips, food & drink culture, shopping, visiting modern and historical art, seeing important sights (world heritages) and also long and rich historical culture such as Vikings, Samis , etc. (Visitscandinavia. a.)

Northern Europe is not only a place for winter tourism, summer tourism and summer based attractions such as summer skiing and fishing are relatively popular in this region. (Visitscandinavia. a.)

The Nordic countries are a significant international tourism market for a number of destinations as a result of the high standard of living that the countries share, with the exception of some extremely peripheral regions. However, inbound and domestic tourism is important for their economies, especially in rural and peripheral areas that have undergone significant economic restructuring in recent years. Moreover, tourism, particularly to the cottage and summer house, which have become increasingly winterized second homes in recent years, is an extremely important part of Nordic identity. (Hall, Müller, Saarinen 2008, 22.)

According to UNWTO Tourism Highlights of 2012, International Tourist Arrivals of Northern Europe have been rising in recent years. However, the amount of increase in 2010 was 8 per cent, this amount reached 17 per cent in 2011 and expectations from 2012 were nearly 20 per cent increase compared to last year. Table 2 below shows foreign passengers visiting Finland from 2007 to 2011. (UNWTO 2012)

In 2011, Finland received 7.3 million foreign visitors. The number of foreign visitors increased by 17 per cent or by one million from the year 2010. Foreign visitors brought 2.2 billion euro to Finland, which was approximately 180 million euro more than in the previous year. These data derive from the Border Interview Survey by Statistics Finland and Finnish Tourist Board. (Border Interview Survey.)

When it comes to the purpose of visit; 53 per cent of the foreign visitors were on a leisure trip in Finland. The number of leisure trips increased by 21 per cent from the previous year. 12 per cent came to see friends or relatives, this number increased by 16 per cent from the previous year. 21 per cent of the visitors came to Finland on business, the number of business trips increased 11 per cent from the previous year, but in all the share of business travellers in the total number of travellers has decreased in the past six years. 9 per cent of the visitors were on a transit trip through Finland. (Border Interview Survey.)

Country of residence	Year					
	2007 (1000 pass.)	2008 (1000 pass.)	2009 (1000 pass.)	2010 (1000 pass.)	2011 (1000 pass.)	Change 2010- 2011, per cent (%)
All visitors	5 736	6 072	5 695	6 182	7 260	17
Russia	2 070	2 331	2 192	2 561	3 261	27
Estonia	561	522	583	561	708	26
Sweden	768	765	753	712	681	-4
Germany	350	376	332	363	399	10
Great Britain	312	316	267	263	278	6
Norway	194	187	160	195	216	11
Japan	103	105	142	109	150	37
France	131	120	94	132	145	10
United States	120	114	104	89	121	35
Spain	83	116	123	110	120	8

Figure 4 Foreign Passengers Visiting Finland from 2007 to 2011 (Official statistics of Finland (OSF) a.)

Table above shows that travelling to Finland has become more and more popular every year. Expectations were over 8 million tourists by an increase of 10 per cent for 2012.

Although the increasing rate of international arrivals, it is still not enough for North Europe, especially for Finland. The majority of the tourists in northern Finland are domestic visitors on holiday. In 2003 the rate of domestic overnight visits in Lapland was approximately 60 per cent, and the rate of leisure tourism was over 80 per cent. The growing international tourism is concentrated on larger cities and some major resorts, such as Levi, Ruka and Saariselkä, and in certain tourism seasons such as Christmas. In general, the tourism trade in northern Finland is a highly seasonal one. In addition to Christmas, the peak season is spring (mid-February to the end of April), with activities such as Nordic skiing, slalom and snowmobiling. The other, but recently less important seasons, are summer (mid-June to August) and autumn (early and mid-September). (Müller & Jansson 2006, 45.)

When it comes to the point how Turkish travel preferences can meet with the tourism in Northern European countries, it is quite likely to say that culture and nature will be the key factors. Turkey comes from more than a thousand years of history (including the Ottoman Empire) and the land itself has seen more than five big empires such as Byzantine, Rome, Ottoman, Hittite, Lydia and many others. (Bilgispot.) This richness of cultures and history of the territory made culture such an important part of life style for Turkish citizens. Therefore rich culture of Northern Europe will play a key role on attracting Turkish travellers. Besides this, untouched nature and different activities and life style will be also very essential if it is advertised enough.

There are various activities that might be interesting for Turkish travellers such as; ice fishing, husky sledging, visiting Santa Claus, watching Northern Lights, staying in a Eskimo house, cross-country skiing, ice climbing and such activities. Besides activities, beautiful Northern modern design in life style and architecture might also affect Turkish travellers.

There are two nations in the world that have used “sauna” culture from the early past, Turkey and Finland. Turkish sauna often called “hamam” is an old historic event and nowadays Turkish citizens are willing to see something different and therefore Finnish sauna is an alternative to hamam in Turkey. Many sport houses and gyms are serving with a Finnish traditional and steam sauna inside. It is quite likely to attract Turkish travellers with a trip including visits to traditional sauna and afterwards diving to ice cold lake. This is something totally different from Turkish culture and life style.

According to the e-mail received from Official statistics of Finland (OSF), there are only few observations in Finnish database on passengers living in Turkey, varying between 25 and 40 interviews per year. Despite the fact of that, OSF could support the study with following general outlines;

- Number of Turkish visitors from year 2007 to 2011

YEAR	NUMBER OF TURKISH ARRIVALS
2007	5000
2008	5000
2009	10000
2010	29000
2011	23000

Figure 5 Number of Turkish visitors from 2007 to 2011

- Main reason of travel

MAIN REASON	PERCENTAGES
Leisure trips	32 %
Visiting friends and relatives	28 %
Business trips	26 %
Study	6 %
Transit passengers	6 %
Others	2 %

Figure 6 Main reason for travel

- Length of stay in Finland has average length of 9 nights for Turkish travelers and the same-day-visitors (no overnight stays) has been 18 % of all visitors.

3.3 Major tourist attractions

As it has been mentioned above, main tourist attractions of Nordic countries are based on winter and winter attractions. It starts from any type of skiing in northern regions of Norway, Finland and Sweden, from cross-country to telemark and snowboarding to off-piste and continuing with ice skating on frozen parks and canals, experiencing Finnish sauna, ice fishing trips, glacier golfing and dog sledding to the renowned ice hotel outside Kiruna in Swedish Lapland. It should not be forgotten that amazing Northern Lights are also available during the winter period. Also living in winter village or igloo is another most important winter attraction that Northern Europe offers to its visitors.

During New Year it is hard to imagine a bigger Christmas treat than going to meet Santa in his home in Lapland. Santa Claus attracts thousands of families every year. Making a trip to frozen winter wonderland of deep snow and pine forests with huskies is just the most amazing attraction that a child can have. (Mawer 2010.)

Sport and activity based tourism plays important role for Nordic countries. Most important factors of this tourism are cross-country skiing, husky sledding, reindeer sledding, ice safaris, ice climbing, hiking and many others. (Visitscandinavia. b.)

Besides these factors, another major factor that affects Nordic tourism is architecture & design. It is possible to see great design and architecture every single place in Northern Europe. Nordic life is marked by a distinctive sense of style. Tourists notice striking Nordic design in buildings, shops, hotels, restaurants and even in the clothes people are wearing. There is much to find: everything from the 'Falun red' cottages of Dalarna and the art glass of Orrefors, to objects and design of Alvar Aalto and many other Finnish architects and designers, making its mark on the international stage. Rich architecture and design culture is coming from "royal" life of Northern Europe region. Various castles, churches, stylish buildings, monuments, chateaus and houses are just some examples of many others. (Visitscandinavia. c.)

Eco-tourism is becoming a new phenomenon in Northern European countries. Nordic people are paying more attention to keep attractions ecological friendly and untouched. These attractions include kayaking, mountain biking, ice sledding, hiking, fishing or simply keeping the large amount of forest clean and untouched for wild life observation or reindeer and brown bear watching. (Nordicreach.)

It is impossible not to mention Nordic cuisine. Anywhere you visit in Northern Europe you can expect great food. The capitals are crammed with exciting restaurants, offering everything from traditional meals with added modern tastes to any international flavour. In the countryside, you will enjoy more traditional gastronomy such as elk and reindeer stews, meatballs and fish in any shape and form. (Visitscandinavia. d.)

In the land where the sun never goes down, summer in Scandinavia is truly magical. Not only one can rub shoulders with happy and cheerful locals, also enjoy a plethora of fun outdoor activities such water skiing, sailing, swimming, island hopping and BBQs in the archipelago, biking in the capitals and on Danish islands, and hiking in the mountains. For entertainment, enjoy a 'stor stark' at any of the outdoor restaurants or visit the many cultural and musical festivals that are on offer during the summer season. (Visitscandinavia. e.)

According to the Official travel site of Finland 4 different factors need to be mentioned; (Visit Finland. b.)

1. Why to come Finland?

- Get off the beaten track of traditional European tourist attractions
- Need to hide
- Want to do something that your friends have not done
- Being bored of crowded places
- Want to see Santa
- Want to experience clean nature (while the world still has it)
- Like to have fun in the snow
- Love the Moomins
- Want to learn real driving
- Feel cold (Come to the land of the sauna)

2. What to do in Finland at least once?

- Swim in an icy pool
- Go to the sauna
- Be inspired in the homeland of legendary composer Jean Sibelius
- Hop from island to island in the Archipelago of south-western Finland
- Buy a Finnish design classic
- Rent a cottage by a lake
- Take a walk in an old wooden town (Porvoo, Rauma, etc.)
- Meet Santa Claus and ask if he really exists
- Eat a 'Karjalanpiirakka' (fast food that looks like a boat)
- Walk in the woods
- Drive on an icy road
- Meet a herd of reindeer while skiing in Lapland

3. Finland boasts...

- The biggest archipelago
- The craziest summer activities
- The fastest rally and Formula drivers
- The one and only Santa Claus
- The most saunas
- The world's cleanest nature
- The world's cleanest tap water
- The biggest ferries
- The biggest snow castles
- The most honest public officials
- The biggest milk drinkers

4. What you will miss when you leave Finland?

- The confident women
- The honest people
- The endless summer nights
- Space to breathe
- Clean water from the tap
- Shiny green grass of spring
- Birch trees
- That after sauna feeling
- The feeling after swimming in a hole in the ice
- The smell of the forest
- Party attitude
- The peace and quiet
- The taste of real bread

4 Factors affecting travel preferences

This fourth chapter will show general consumer behaviour in travel and the main idea will be supported with global trends in consumer behaviour. Moreover, this chapter will also show the travel preferences of Turkish travellers.

4.1 Consumer behaviour in general

According to Hudson (2008), there are several factors affecting travel demand of a customer based on consumer's own behaviours.

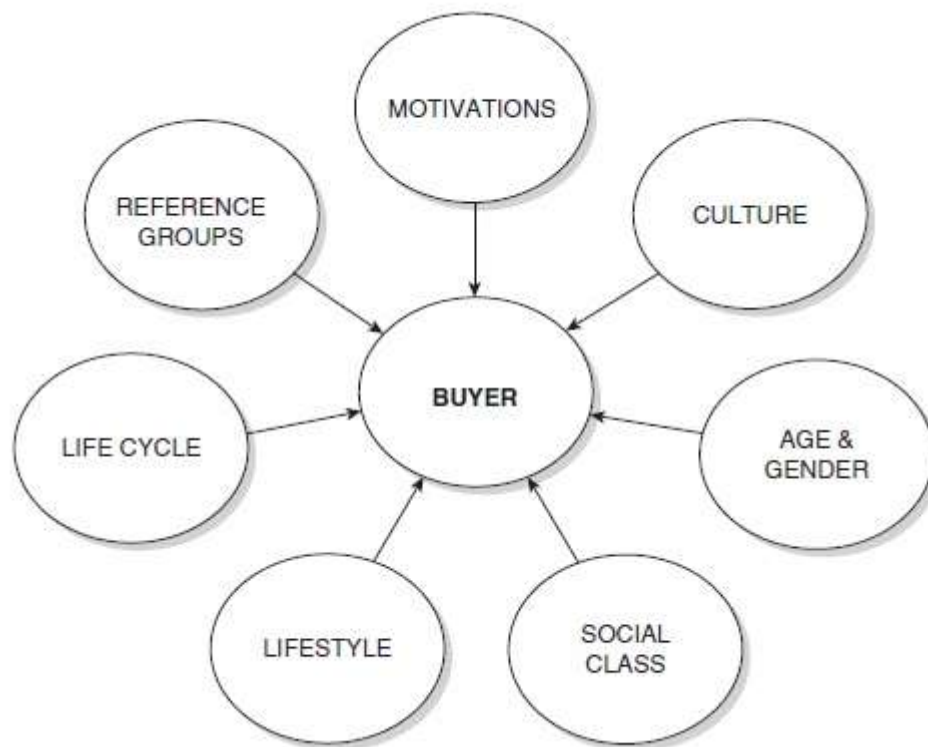


Figure 7 Factors Influencing Consumer Behaviour (Hudson 2008, 41)

Motivation is often seen as a major determinant of consumer behaviour, but cultural, personal, and social influences will also have an important effect on consumer purchases.

Motivations are inner drives that cause people to take action to satisfy their needs. Understanding consumer motivation is one of the most effective ways of gaining

competitive differential advantage. Understanding the key triggers that lead to the purchase of a tourism or hospitality product, such as a visit to an attraction or a hotel booking, is recognized as one of the main factors in the success of competitive organizations. (Hudson 2008, 41.)

Hudson (2008) also mentioned that needs are seen as the forces that arouse motivated behaviour and it is assumed that, to understand human motivation, it is necessary to discover what needs people have and how they can be fulfilled.

Besides these factors, learning, beliefs, attitudes and perception are also important factors influencing consumer motivation. As an example, one can learn through taking holidays, by listening to others and from a variety of other sources. These learnt experiences affect customers' future decisions when planning for a holiday or choosing for a destination. Beliefs refer to the thoughts that people have about most aspects of their lives. In tourism business, consumers have beliefs about products, services and companies including tourism offerings and destinations. These thoughts can be positive such as trust that comes from a good reputation and image or negative such as security or a fear. However attitudes are more difficult to change, they affect the motivation in a majeure way because attitudes are often hard to defy as they are genuine feelings. As an example, many people have negative attitude towards flying and this attitude affects their travel choices. Finally perception is an overall mind-picture of the world, shaped by information that people filter and then retrieve. (Hudson 2008, 43-44.)

Culture can be defined as the norms, beliefs and rituals that are unique to each person. These different factors influence how we live, communicate, and think about certain things; culture can also dictate how a person will act in a certain situation. Most people seek to satisfy their desires in a way that fits societal norms. For example, it is acceptable to be a green consumer, but sex tourism is viewed disparagingly. Culture plays an important role when it comes to the differences coming from origins (geography, history, political economy, technology and social institutions) and elements (cultural values, rituals, symbols, beliefs and ways of thinking). Languages, societal practices, institutions and subcultures are also important decisive factors of culture. (Hudson 2008, 46.)

Besides these two major factors, people's age, gender, social class, lifestyle, life cycle and reference groups are affecting the consumer behaviour. Among these other aspects, the most affective factor is social class as it is the position one occupies within society, determined by such factors as income, wealth, education, occupation, family prestige, value of home and neighbourhood . (Hudson 2008, 47.)

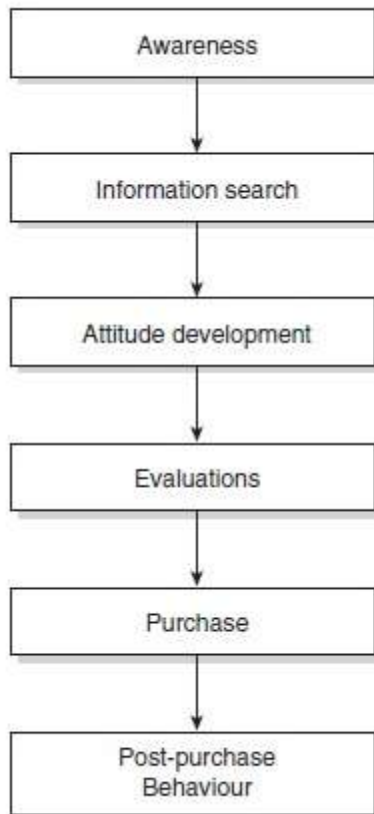


Figure 6 nearby shows the consumer buying process. It starts with the awareness of a certain product or a trip that may be initiated by promotional efforts, by word of mouth or through an online search. Then it continues with obtaining more information, forming of an attitude and evaluation. After all those actions, process continues with purchasing of that product or trip. Majority of the customers prefer to book their trip in advance to guarantee the chosen trip. Process finishes with post-purchase behaviour if the experience is satisfactory and this process continues in the future like a life cycle. (Hudson 2008, 56-57.)

Figure 8 The Consumer Buying Process (Hudson 2008, 56)

4.2 Global trends in consumer behaviour

In tourism industry there are some global trends that are affecting everyday business life nowadays. These trends vary from learning and enrichment, ethical products, nostalgia to customization and many others.

One of the major trends in tourism today is the desire of the tourist to have a learning experience as part of the vacation. Today's travellers are seeking experiences that provide them with greater insight, increased understanding, and a personal

connection to the people and places they visit. Rather than choose their vacation by the destination, many are first determining the experiences they want, and then choosing the destination where these experiences are located. Basically, learning and enrichment travel refers to vacations that provide opportunities for authentic, hands-on, or interactive learning experiences, featuring themes such as adventure, agriculture, anthropology, archaeology, arts, culture, cuisine, education, forestry, gardening, language, maritime culture, mining, nature, science, spirituality, sports, wine, wildlife and many others. (Hudson 2008, 59.)

International leisure travellers are increasingly motivated to select a destination for the quality of its environmental health and the diversity and integrity of its natural and cultural resources. Studies of German and US travel markets indicate that environmental considerations are now a significant aspect of travellers' destination-choosing process, down to the environmental programmes operated by individual hotels. Thus, usage of ethical products is also another major trend that affects tourist's choice. (Hudson 2008, 62.)

A more health-conscious society is often attributed to the influence of the baby boomer. Health consciousness has been a topic for studies nowadays to examine the demographic characteristics of baby boomers and their growing interest in active tourism as they age. Baby boomers are generally healthier, better educated, financially wealthier and often more interested in different experiences and novelty than other older people. These factors are creating an impact on the health and wellness industry. (Hudson 2008, 64.)

Moreover, another trend rises for customized or personalized vacations. "Customer for business" phenomenon has changed to "business for customer" point of view. Therefore, many businesses changed their operation to meet the demands. As an example, in addition to a hotel trip, travel agents today are arranging customized wine tastings, visits to authentic places and events. (Hudson 2008, 64.)

An increasing number of tourists are seeking experiences that have a sense of unpredictability (Hudson 2008, 66). For example, during April 2010, many people travelled to Iceland and witnessed the area of volcanic events at Eyjafjallajökull even though it caused enormous disruption to air travel. Unpredictability and unpredictable actions have become a trend among curious travellers and nature lovers.

Besides these, spiritual enlightenment, service quality, experiencing the different and re-living the nostalgia are other important trends that affect nowadays tourist choice.

4.3 Factors affecting Turkish travellers' preferences

According to the study of Bir (1997), travel preference of Turkish tourist starts within social and cultural factors such as culture, family, social class and forms in physiologic factors such as life style, characteristics, learning, attitudes and such matters. Buying process starts with searching for different alternatives concerning the vacation. After searching, it is time to evaluate the alternatives based on personal/family requirements. Then continuing with decision-making phase among all choices and finally buying of the desired product/vacation.

Resting plays the most important role when it comes to the top reason why Turkish people go for a holiday. After long and hard working period, Turkish people desire for a relaxing holiday. Besides to rest, to enjoy sun and sand, experience new cultures and places, to have entertainment, to go to certain cities to visit friends are other most common reasons why Turkish people travel. (Bir 1997, 26.)

According to the online article, gender ratio on travelling abroad is $\frac{1}{4}$, which means that only one female goes abroad against four male. Also in this article they revealed the most popular destinations for Turkish travellers in 2012 summer period. The top countries were; Greece, Syria, Bulgaria, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Spain and the Ukraine. Among all of these, majority of the travellers (85,000 people) visited Greece (turizmtrend. a.). As a personal opinion, I believe that economical crisis in Greece and Greece as an easy location to access factors played crucial role in Turkish travellers' opinion. Greek government informed that prices would not be as high as in previous years and thus they tried to attract more tourists. When it comes

to the easy access factor, Greek islands are half an hour away by a boat from west coast of Turkey.

Study has been made by Dr. Burhan Sevim to figure out the affect of climate change on tourist behaviours. He indicated that tourism sector is highly affected by the factors resulting from changes in climate such temperature, humidity, rain and wind. As a result of changes in temperature of air, level of sea is rising or decreasing, temperature of sea is changing and even the earth itself is giving more heat. Basically eco-system is changing in the world and thus people feel each year differently. Each summer is different, one is higher another one is lower. Also these climate changes cause environmental pollution nearby touristic destinations. After all these happenings, Mr. Sevim believes that Turkish citizens will be choosing abroad destination in the future. Because the average temperature of Turkey is increasing every year and less rain falls to ground. As a result of that if global warming continues this fast, soon Turkey will have severe drought problem. (Sevim 2009, 44-50.)

Even though Turkish people are willing to travel, still there are factors that need to be developed. Experts believe that it is wiser for Turkish travellers to spend their holidays inside the country to keep the money inside, to learn the inner-cultures from all the regions, to meet with the people from other regions, to develop the less developed cities or areas and to share the money among the regions equally. (Ünal 2007, 67-68.) Ünal also mentioned that Turkish domestic tourism suffers from these reasons;

- Lack of travel culture
- Economical problems (low income, high inflation, high rate of touristic properties and products)
- Low amount of travel agencies that offers domestic tours
- Different periods of annual leaves for each person
- Prevalence of having summer houses

5 Results of the questionnaire

As it was mentioned above this questionnaire survey was done to analyze Turkish travellers' preferences. Location of the survey was Ankara city centre, lobbies of some hotels and entrance of Ankara Esenboğa airport. The survey was made on 22nd of December in Ankara city centre and in front of nearby hotels from 12:00 to 15:00. Survey also continued on 23rd of December in Ankara Esenboğa airport from 11:00 to 14:00. The survey was carried out by me and my friend Mustafa Mehmet Bayar.

Survey has been carried out by author and his friend in various places like airport, hotel and city centre of Ankara city. Survey consists of twelve questions asked from 200 respondents. Actual amount of surveyed respondents was 243 but when analyzing the answers given, it was clear to see that they just marked everything, nothing or just a couple of questions or randomly. As an example, there was a respondent who was male, widowed, less than 20 years old and earns more than 4500 Turkish Liras per month. It may sound possible but in Turkish conditions it is possible to say that respondent was randomly marking and I had to reject these questionnaires. Thus, 43 of them were not valid to analyze and thus the survey was analyzed from 200 respondents.

Quantitative method has been used in this part of the study. Aims of the thesis work were to analyze the travel preference of Turkish travellers and to find out a possible interest in travelling to Northern part of Europe, especially Finland.

Questionnaire survey method has been used to gather and analyze statistical information concerning travel preferences and background information of the respondents. This background information (such as sex, age etc) is useful to analyze the statistical information; as an example, almost half of the respondents were married (47.50%), over half of the respondents were between 20-40 years of age (55%) and majority of the respondents prefer to spend their holidays inside of Turkey (84%). By analyzing this information, it can be said that mostly young married couples are planning to spend their holidays inside their country.

It was quite difficult to stop people and ask them to answer to the survey. Many people asked me more questions than I have in the questionnaire such as: Why are you doing this survey? Do you get any money for it? How will this survey help you? How would you understand if I mark randomly? Are you going to pay for me? Why are you studying in Finland? Is it really cold there? How did you go there? How can I/my child/my nephew go there to study? After all the obstacles and questions I and my friend have managed to get 243 questionnaire surveys.

Personal information of surveyed people has not been asked in the questionnaire in order to get more realistic answers. It was structured, non disguised and close ended questionnaire form which means that questions were listed in a pre-arranged order, respondents were told about the purpose of collecting information and respondents were asked to select from a fixed list of replies (multiple options). Here are the results collected and analyzed from survey answers.

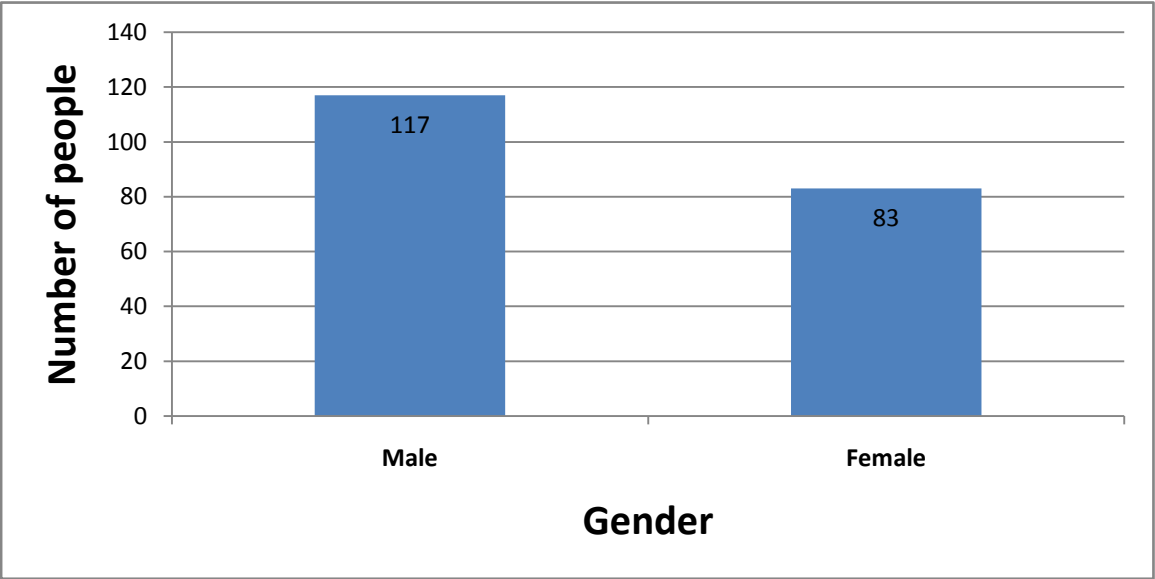


Table 1 Gender Distribution

First result indicates the gender distribution among all the respondents. Majority of the respondents were male with 117 respondents and the rest 83 were female. This means that 58.50% of the respondents were male and 41.50% were female.

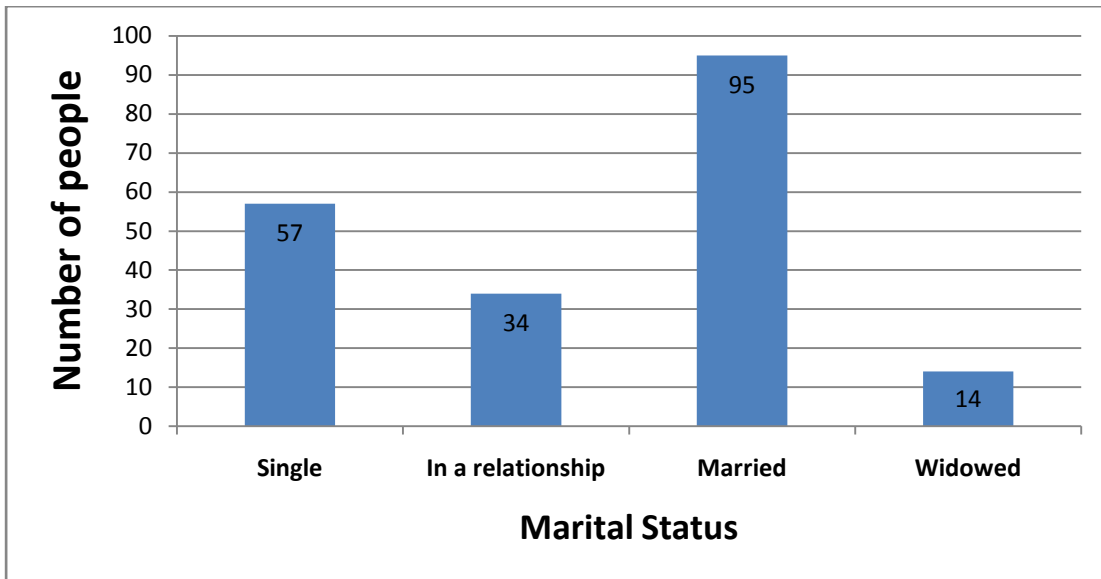


Table 2 Marital Status Distribution

Second chart indicates the marital status of all the respondents. Majority of the respondents were either married or single. Percentage of the married respondents was 47.50 and the single respondents were 28.50.

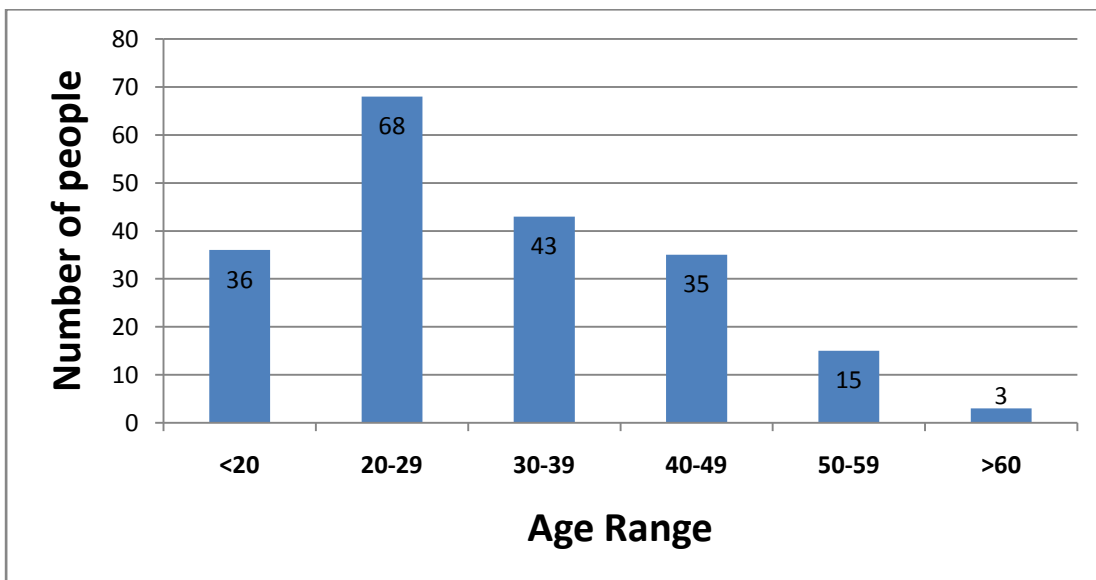


Table 3 Age Range Distribution

Third chart indicates the age range among all the respondents. Due to the high amount of young age people in Turkey, majority in this survey was also 20-29 year old people (34% among all respondents). This information is so important for the survey itself because young people are considered as “future”, therefore their opinions shows the possible future decisions that they most likely are going to make.

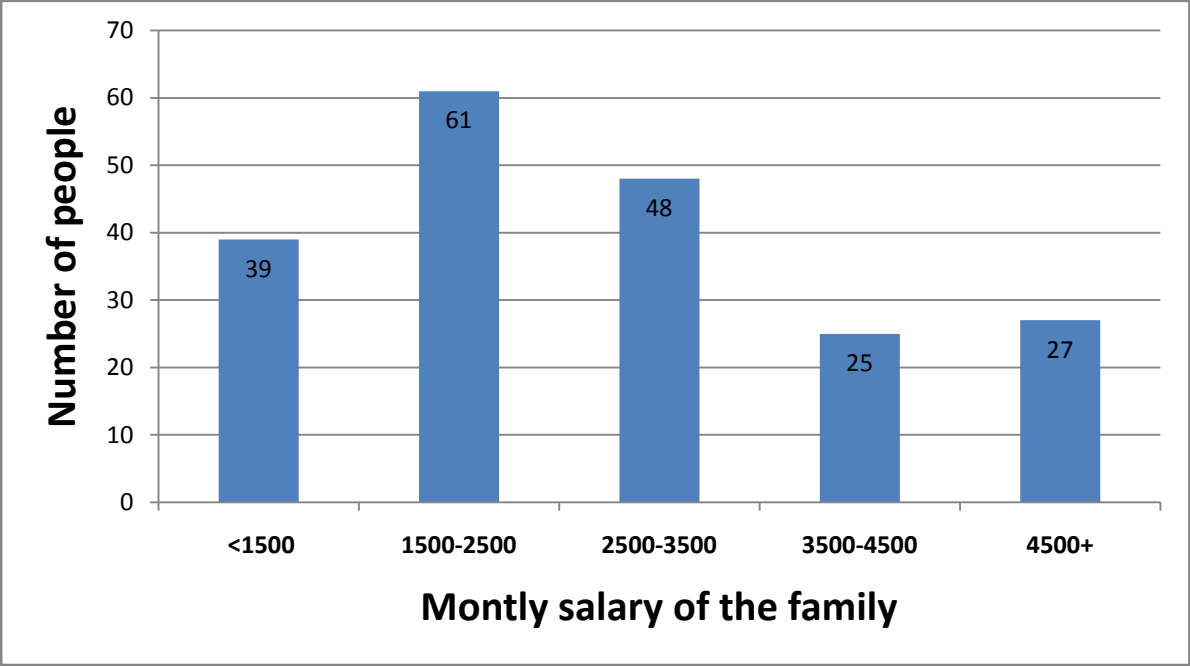


Table 4 Monthly Salaries Distribution

Above it is possible to see the monthly salary of the family in Turkish Liras. According to the rates on the Turkish Republic Central Bank on 28.Dec.2012, one euro is equal to 2.3517 Turkish liras. Majority of the respondents earns between 1500-2500 Turkish liras per month. According to the level of minimum wage in Turkey, which is 774 Turkish liras, this majority is living either under the poverty level or just on it. Therefore, it is possible to say that, a Turkish citizen earns minimum of 329 euros per month, and this amount includes all the expenses of the person such as rent, electricity, water, kitchen expenses and personal expenses. If we take this into consideration, then it is not that possible for this ordinary person to travel outside of Turkey, especially to the euro zone, due to decrease of money value. (Milliyet 2012.)

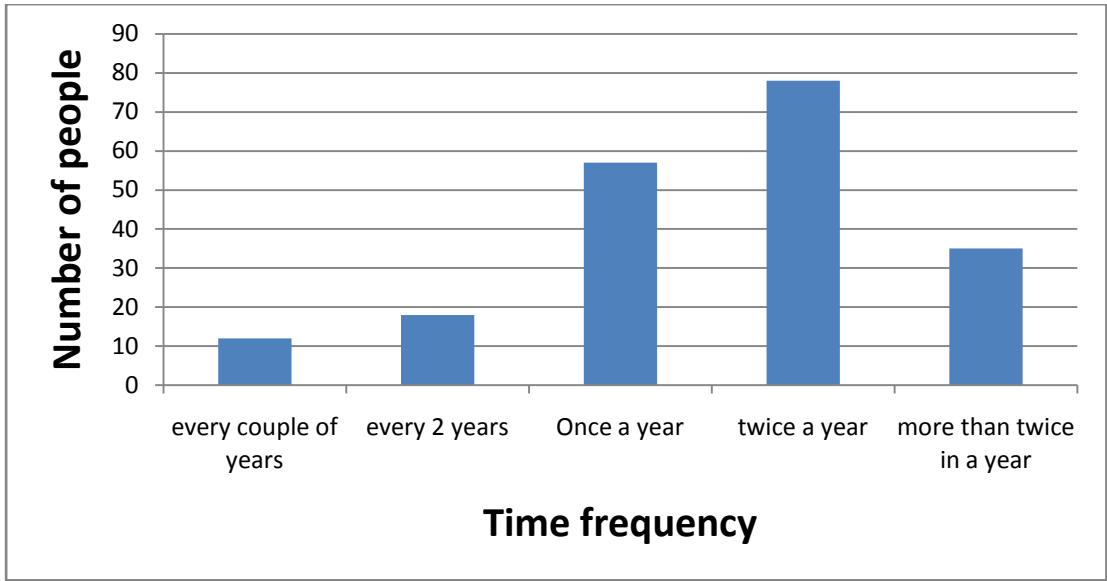


Table 5 Frequency on Travelling

In questionnaire a question has been asked to find out the travel frequency of Turkish people. Results showed that majority of the Turkish travellers go for a holiday at least once a year, sometimes twice a year. There are several possibilities to make holiday for Turkish people within a year. Most of the holidays are due to Bayram (National Festivals). Besides Bayram, there are holidays in the winter and summer time as well. Therefore, Turkish people have enough possibilities to make a holiday. Above it is possible to see the travel frequency chart. This result showed that more than 67% of the respondents are going on a holiday at least once a year and 39% of them prefer to go on a holiday twice a year.

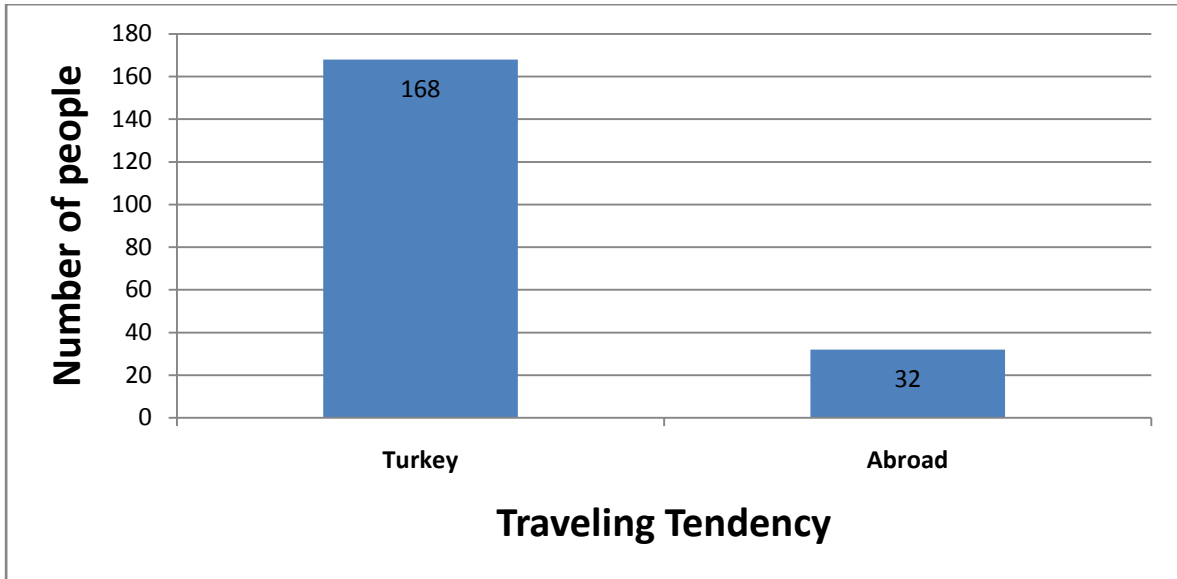


Table 6 Travelling Tendency Distribution

There were also some specific questions asked from the respondents such as, would you prefer to spend your holiday in Turkey or abroad. Surprisingly majority of the respondents, 84%, preferred to the domestic travel to going abroad. This result shows that even though all the deterrent factors performed to local tourists, Turkish tourists still would like to spend their holidays inside their country.

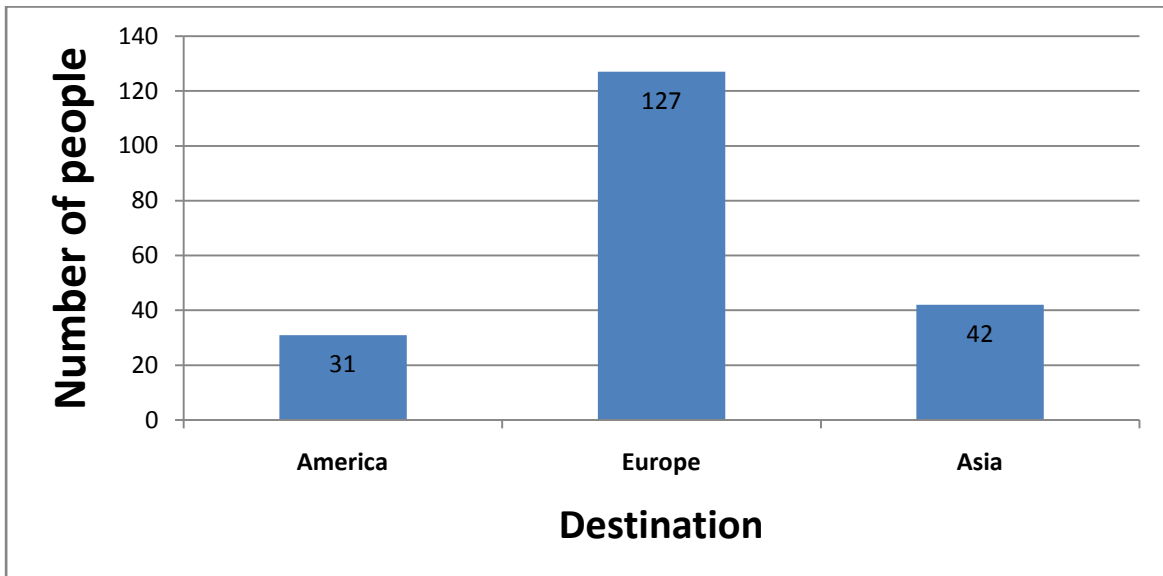


Table 7 Destination Distribution

Seventh question in the questionnaire was asked to figure out the popularity among top three destinations. These are Europe, America and Asia. Question was “Which of these continents would you prefer or preferred before” Results showed that the most popular destination for Turkish travellers is Europe, with 63.50% of the respondents. There are several factors for this choice. In my opinion, during 60’s and 70’s there was a huge migration movement to Germany, to find a job, concerning unemployed people. Nowadays so called “German Turks” are 5% of the whole German population. Besides Germany, Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Austria and Switzerland, basically neighbours of Germany are also the most popular countries to visit for Turkish people due to visiting a friend or finding a way to settle. Therefore, among all the continents, Europe plays the most important role.

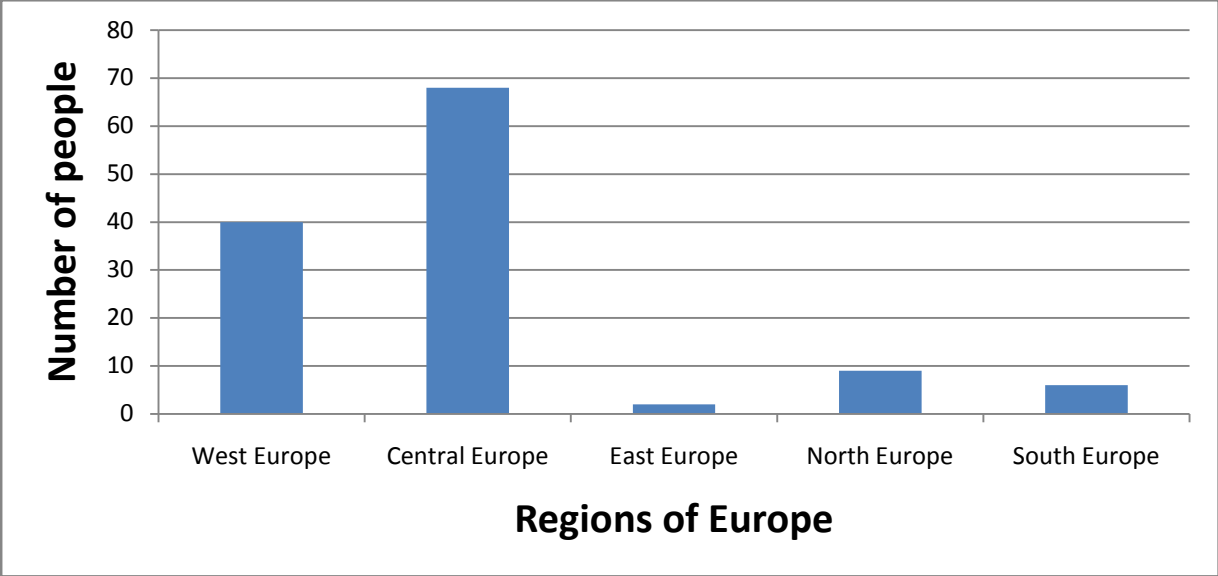


Table 8 Region Distribution of Europe

On the chart above the most popular regions for Turkish people within Europe can be seen. Result of the survey pointed out that the most important region for Turkish travellers is Central Europe, which is Germany, Switzerland and Austria. North European countries were the third most popular destination and East Europe was the least popular. When it comes to the percentage levels; Central Europe has 53.50%, after that West Europe has 31.50%, North Europe has 7%, South Europe has 4.72% and East Europe has 1.57% of 127 respondents who preferred Europe.

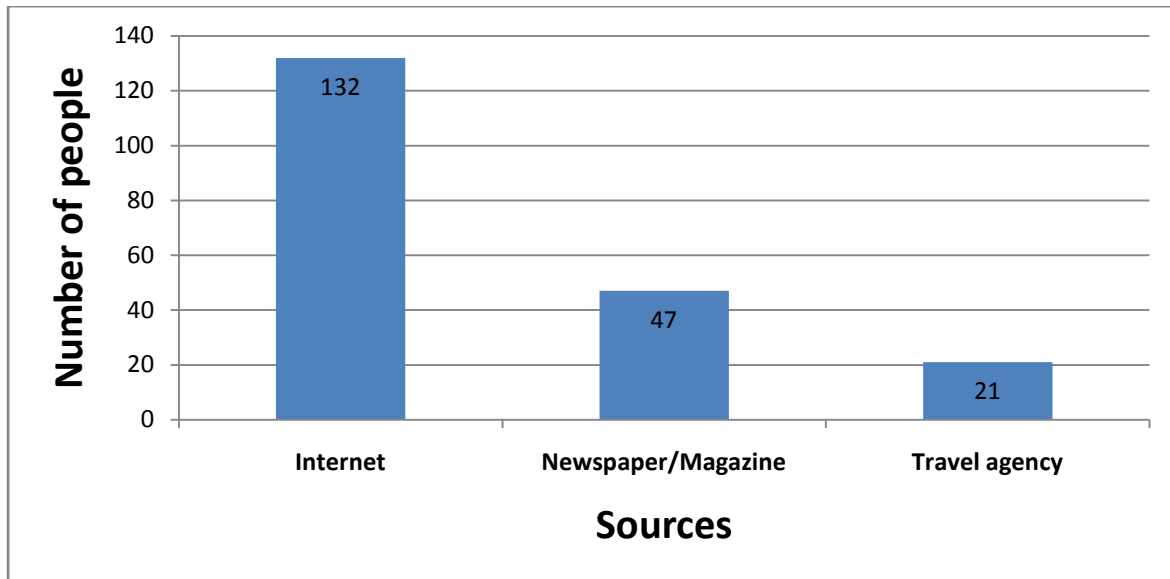


Table 9 Usage of Sources Distribution

Also a question has been asked to find out what sources Turkish travellers use when they are searching or purchasing a trip. Majority of the respondents, with 66% of the responses, chose the Internet as the most useful source. Using of Internet is really popular in Turkey due to high amount of young people. Elderly people have recently started to use Internet in their daily lives. This is the reason why using of internet is rising while using of travel agency is decreasing.

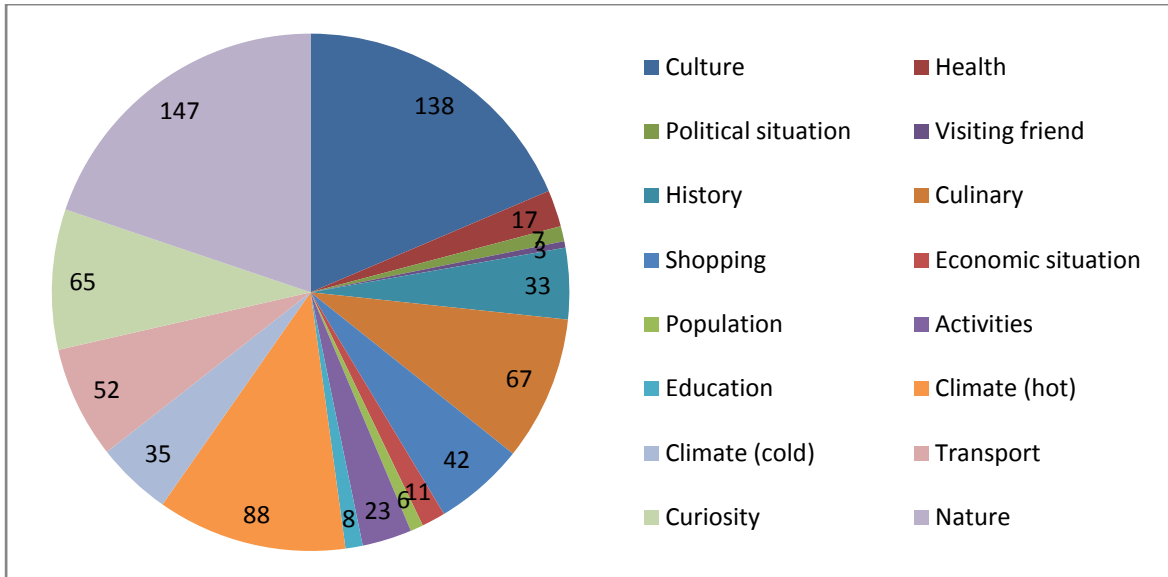


Table 10 Factors Affecting Travel

The most useful information was collected concerning factors affecting travel preferences. This question was available for multiple answer and total of 742 options marked. Majority of the respondents chose nature (73.50%), culture (69%), hot climate (44%), culinary (33.50%) and curiosity (32.50%) as major decisive factors. The least decisive factors were visiting a friend (1.5%), population (3%), political situation (3.5%), education (4%) and economic situation (5.5%).

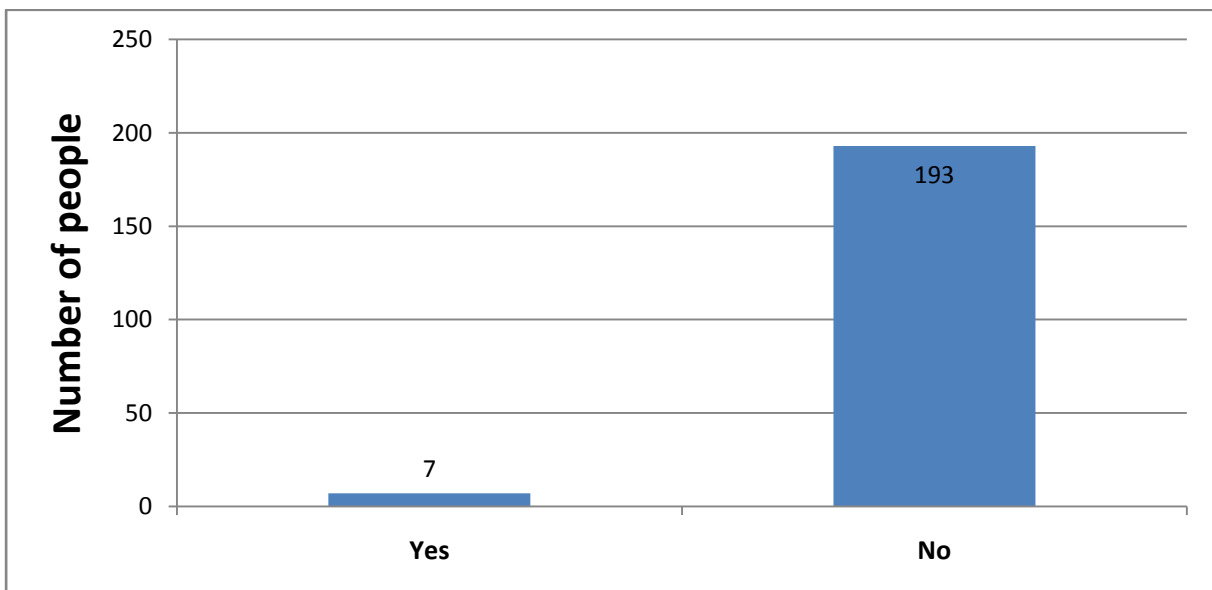


Table 11 Number of Nordic Visitors

Last two questions (Chart 11 &12) were just out of curiosity to find out how many of the respondents had visited North Europe before and where. Above, results show that only seven people out of two hundred surveyed travellers had visited North Europe which is equal to 3.5% of all the respondents.

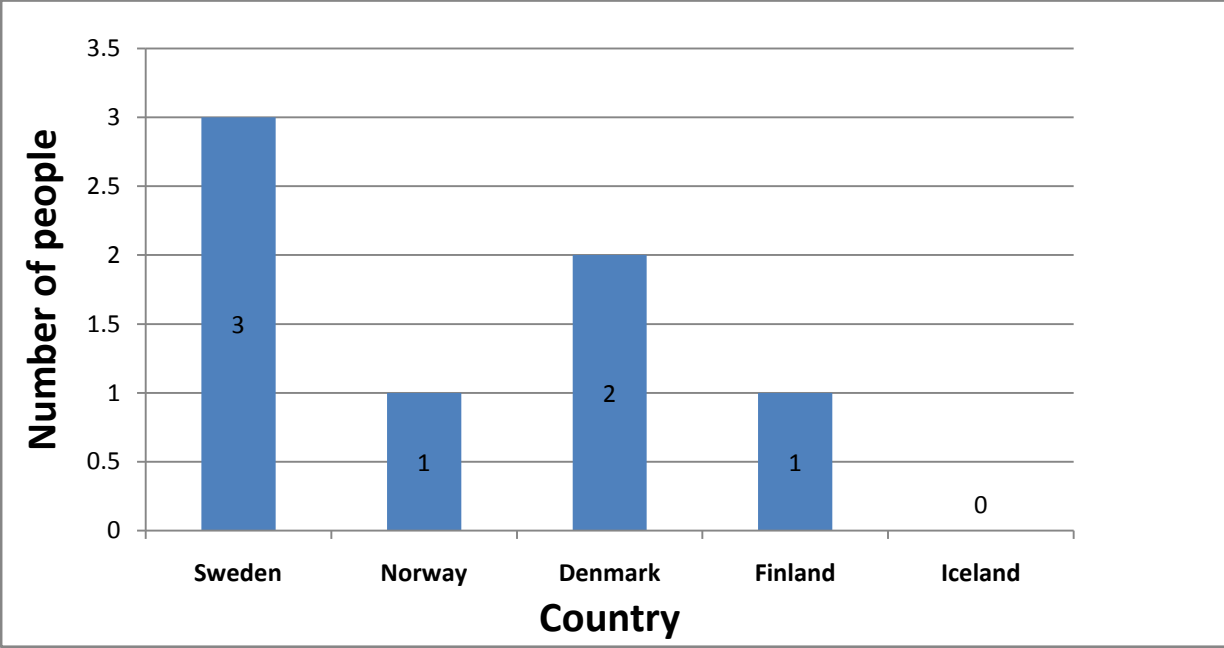


Table 12 Nordic Distribution

Out of seven visitors, only one traveller has been to Finland before (less than 1% of all respondents). Majorities were Sweden and Denmark (together 2.5% of 200 respondents). These two figures show roughly how popular it is to go to Nordic countries.

6 Conclusions and recommendations

Objectives of the study were to find out and analyze the travel preferences of Turkish travellers on going abroad and possible interest to travel to Finland. Results showed some critical answers on travel preferences and the collected information was supported by the quantitative analysis. It can be said that research was limited in some factors such as time and distance.

The study was mostly based on survey answers and limited to 200 respondents and surveyed only in Ankara. Besides these factors, specialization in possible interest in Finland limited the research. In future, a possible study can be done on analyzing possible interest in researcher's home country from the studied destination. In my case, it would be also possible to research, after living 5 years in Finland, the possible interest of Finns to go to a specific region or destination of Turkey.

Research was successful to find out some concrete answers as nature and culture. What it meant by nature are untouched rich forest, rich flora, no air pollution, clean environment, mountains, rivers, trees, animals and many other phenomena. From the cultural point of view, it means rich characteristics of particular group of people by their cuisine, social habits, music, art, language and religion. I highly believe that results of the research would be different if the surveyed city was somewhere else than Ankara. Because Ankara is the capital city of Turkey and all the governmental organizations are located here. This brings more formality and seriousness to the citizens in their daily and work lives. People have more time to work than to rest. Seeking for a nature to relax and enjoy the silence can be a result of this seriousness and hard working in daily life. After all, if the survey was done in another city of Turkey, in case of Antalya (touristic, hot, coast city with rich nature) for example, results might be different so that they might be more interested in going to a holiday in cold or calmer climate and they might be looking for attractions other than sun, sand and sea as they have it all year round.

When it comes to the results, travel preferences of Turkish travellers have been modified due to the tendency against domestic tourism and the level of outbound tourism has been increased. Despite the fact of rise of outbound tourism, the majority of people still prefer domestic tourism. Due to research made above, the following factors could affect Turkish travellers' decision in the near future:

- Simplified visa requirement due to EU membership
- Increase in inbound tourism
- Better economic situations on wages
- Courage in exploring new destinations

Survey results showed that Turkish travellers are mostly looking for nature and culture. On the one hand, culture is an important fact for Turkish people because they really appreciate it and see the importance. On the other hand, nature is essential because Turkish people could not protect the nature in Turkey and they are looking to see its beauty in another country. This means that any country in the world with such culture and nature could be a good destination for Turkish travellers.

As a personal opinion of a native person of Turkey, it is quite important to show how rich or powerful a person is in Turkey. If you have money and you are not spending it, you would be considered as stingy in the society. It is always a fact of showing where you went or what you bought or what car you have. Besides these, going abroad for a vacation is also showing status in society because of the economic factors. This means that if there is a possibility to go abroad for a Turkish traveller, s/he would not prefer to spend it inside of the country. Shortly, mostly Turkish tourists are spending their time in Turkey but at the same time looking for new destinations abroad. Income plays crucial role here, if the family or person earns more than average level of income, it is quite likely to spend more money on leisure tourism abroad.

By using results of the survey blended with personal observations and experience as a native, basic Turkish traveller profile can be made as below;

- Home country-oriented
- Low-budget tour seeker
- Young people are looking for a friendly adventurous holidays
- Middle-aged people are looking for complete family tours
- Male travellers
- Frequent traveller
- Feels European when choosing destination
- Becoming less traditional, more curious for “new and different”
- Internet searcher
- Sun, sand and sea seeker
- Looking for experiencing new tastes
- Nature lover
- Seeking for a strong and historical culture
- Short distance traveller to keep more time for relaxing

Although travelling to Finland has become more popular lately, it is still a difficult destination for Turkish travellers. Several reasons can be mentioned on this statement as such;

- Cold climate
- Visa requirement
- Euro factor
- Not well-known country

I highly believe that Finland can be a better known destination if it is well advertised on Turkish market. It cannot be a coincidence that less than 1% of the surveyed citizens and annually 5000 Turkish tourists visit Finland. Finland is a nature-land with its breathtaking landscape, combination of snow, forest and lake, and has strong and old culture, but as it was mentioned above, there are serious outer-factors affecting their choice.

It is quite challenging for Turkish tourists to explore “new or unknown” because culture says, the best is the known. Therefore, even though looking for something different is a new trend, there is a huge amount of people always looking in the traditional way. As it was mentioned above, there are a couple of countries that have always been popular for Turkish tourists. These countries are well-known destinations among Turkish travellers and thus there is always a trust to go.

Visa issue plays an important role on deciding for a destination, because it is possible to say that Turkish travellers are lazier than others in tourism field. Applying for a passport and visa is considered as “too much work” to do for Turkish people. Therefore, they are looking for easy buy-and-go packages. Going abroad might be a better choice for young and single travellers because visa might be harder to get for all the family members.

As final word and conclusion, as a touristic destination, unfortunately Finland is not on the top of the list for Turkish travellers. The most considerable reasons are cold Finnish climate, more popular neighbour countries, long visa application process and loss in the Turkish currency against euro. According to the article online the amount of Turkish tourists visiting Russia increased 30% in 2012 and on the first 9 months 75,000 Turkish tourists visited Russia due to the fact that there is no visa requirement for Turkish people in Russia plus Turkish currency has more value against Russian ruble (turizmtrend.b.). As a personal opinion, if Turkey enters the EU, Turkish travellers’ preferences will change from top to bottom. It will be trendier to go abroad and everybody will go to the similar destinations. After a while, people will be looking for the destinations that were not popular before and trying to be different in the society. In that case, Finland will be more popular than before and will have quite a good rise on annual arrivals from Turkey. But at the moment, even though Finland has increasing attention on Turkish travellers, unfortunately, it is not one of the top-desired destinations to visit.

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Questionnaire Survey

1. Sex? Male Female

2. Marital status?

Single In a relationship Married Widowed

3. Age range?

<20 20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60+

4. Total monthly salary of the family?

<1500 1500-2500 2500-3500 3500-4500 4500+

5. How often do you travel?

- Once in a couple of years
- Once in two years
- Once a year
- Twice a year
- More than three times a year

6. Would you prefer spending you holidays abroad or in Turkey?

In Turkey Abroad

7. Which of these continents would you prefer to go? Or preferred before?

Europe Asia America

8. Which of these regions would you prefer in Europe?

- West Europe (Belgium, the Netherlands, France, etc)
- Central Europe (Germany, Austria, Switzerland, etc)
- East Europe (Greece, Hungary, the Ukraine, etc)
- North Europe (Finland, Sweden, Norway, etc)
- South Europe (Portugal, Italy, Spain, etc)

9. Which of these features affect your decision? (Can be multiple answers)

- Cold Climate Nature Curiosity Transportation
- Hot Climate Education Activities (skiing, rafting etc.)
- Population Economical Situation Shopping
- Culinary History Visiting a friend
- Culture Health System Political Situation

10. What sources are you using to purchase your trip?

- Internet Newspaper/Magazine Travel agency

11. Have you ever visited Nordic Countries?

- No Yes

12. If yes, where?

- Sweden Norway Denmark Finland Iceland